

marginal pricing to underprice something to get their foot in the door, and once the foot is in the door we become reliant upon them and then they run off. I am not saying the people who are the private sector are unscrupulous or in any way demeaning what they do. They are out in the competitive world, and they are willing to use their assets to bid below cost just to get in there so that the public sector would no longer have the ability to provide that work. I think the Senator from Utah made a very good point. We are losing that ability today. As the skilled workers, whether they are located in Oklahoma or Utah or Georgia, are leaving, getting into other professions, so we would have—every week that goes by we would have a more difficult time in having this as public sector work that would defend America.

So I conclude, Mr. President—and I do not want to be redundant—by saying that another bottom line is right here. This is a GAO report. The GAO report agrees with what the Air Force initially said on how much money would be saved by closing the two bases and transfer that workload to other ALC's. Then they later on, when this administration took a position against it right before the election, they rescinded that report, but the GAO, which is independent of that political influence, came out and said very clearly if you do it, it is going to cost the defense system an additional \$468 million a year. And certainly the man who is presiding right now, the honorable Senator from Virginia, who is one of the highest ranking members of the Senate Armed Services Committee, is fully aware that if we have to somehow come up with \$2 billion over a 5-year period to take out of the defense budget in order to accommodate an exception to the BRAC recommendations, where is it going to come from? He will remember very well we had the chiefs of the services there, and we gave them the alternatives. It has to come from quality of life, modernization, force strength or readiness. There are only four places it can come from. We cannot predict the contingencies this administration will get us into that are very expensive. We can predict these, and there is no place we can come up with this money. So this is an extremely important fiscal issue, and I wanted to have the opportunity to respond to the senior Senator from Texas.

Mr. President, I observe the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

(Mr. INHOFE assumed the chair.)

Mr. SPECTER. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. COLLINS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

ELIMINATION OF VETERAN BENEFITS FOR CAPITAL OFFENSE CONVICTION

Mr. SPECTER. Madam President, it is my hope that yet this afternoon we will be able to take action on legislation cosponsored by Senator TORRICELLI, Senator NICKLES, and Senator INHOFE which would deal with the issue of eliminating veterans benefits for anyone who has been convicted of a capital offense. This legislation was introduced yesterday and is designed to deal with the situation of Mr. Timothy McVeigh, who last week was convicted of murder in the first degree on 168 murders arising out of the destruction of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City back on April 19, 1995.

I was surprised to learn from my staff on the Veterans Affairs Committee that someone in Mr. McVeigh's situation would be able to receive veterans benefits. There are a wide variety of possible benefits. Exactly which ones apply to Mr. McVeigh would have to be determined, but they are benefits which would include employment training—obviously he cannot do that at the present time—education, other compensation, burial benefits. There was a gap in the law where someone who has been convicted of a number of crimes cannot receive veterans benefits—crimes like treason, sabotage, or espionage—but oddly enough, curiously enough, a conviction for murder in the first degree is not covered.

Senator TORRICELLI had introduced legislation yesterday and so had I. I did not know this when I introduced my legislation and spoke briefly on the Senate floor yesterday afternoon about Senator TORRICELLI's legislation, but I found out about it later in the day and talked to him this morning, and we are coordinating our efforts to produce a joint bill.

I discussed the matter yesterday with the majority leader, Senator LOTT, who said he would work with us to have a prompt determination for the Senate, and we have put it on the hotline, and we are almost complete, with one Senator yet to respond, and there has been a checking now with the administration, with the White House, with the Executive Office of the President, and also with the Veterans' Administration to see if there is any objection. I do not believe that there will be any.

It is my hope we would be able to take action fairly soon this afternoon, or, if we cannot, we may have to put it over until tomorrow. There has been considerable public interest and people expressing surprise that someone in Timothy McVeigh's situation could have veterans benefits and could, illustratively, be buried with heroes from the veterans wars of World War II, Vietnam, Korea, or the gulf war.

So we are proceeding at this time. I wanted to alert my colleagues we are hopeful that bill will come up this afternoon and try to expedite the advice from both the White House and

the Veterans' Administration as to their positions. It is my firm expectation that they will not have an objection but would rather welcome this legislation, but I wanted to inform my colleagues of the status at this time.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FAIRCLOTH. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONGRATULATIONS TO CIA AND FBI

Mr. FAIRCLOTH. Madam President, I take the floor today to congratulate the Central Intelligence Agency and the FBI for their efforts in capturing the terrorist who killed two CIA officers in 1993.

Many thought when Aimal Kansi disappeared into Pakistan in 1993 that he would never be caught. I believe that our men and women who played a role in his capture deserve our thanks for the brave effort they went through to catch him.

Another critical question that I do not think has been answered is why was Mr. Kansi ever allowed in this country in the first place? Why was he here to begin with? He came here in 1991, apparently well educated, as a Pakistani immigrant. He came here on a business visa. Supposedly, he came here for 1 month. He used false names and passports, and then the INS gave him a 1-year work visa. Of course, the plan was that he wanted to stay here forever. There was never any doubt about what he wanted. He wanted to be here permanently. A year later, he applied for political asylum. The political asylum issue has been abused to a greater degree than anything I can think of. The Clinton administration has made an absolute mockery of the words "political asylum." There are almost 100,000 applications for political asylum each year.

Now, here is the scandal. When someone has applied for political asylum, they cannot be deported. When you apply for political asylum, you cannot be deported. This application is a complete ruse for people to stay in this country illegally. These people can stay here for years. Now, one of the reasons this man sought asylum—if you can get this—and talk about stupidity on the part of this country—is that he is part of a militant group in Pakistan that opposes United States policies. That is the reason he needed asylum, so he could stay in this country.

Mr. Kansi apparently moved about frequently. He worked at gas stations and as a courier in Virginia. Madam President, why do we need people coming into this country to work at a gas-line station and as a courier? Is this