

clarify that the National Veterans Business Development Corporation is a private entity.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read the third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements regarding this matter be printed in the RECORD.

Mr. REID. Reserving the right to object, Mr. President, I appreciate very much the distinguished Senator from Virginia moving this matter. As the Senator knows, the ranking member on this important committee, Senator KERRY, wholeheartedly supports the action of the Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. I thank the Senator.

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

The bill (S. 2724) was read the third time and passed, as follows:

S. 2724

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. NATIONAL VETERANS BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION.

Section 33(a) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 657c(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following: "Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Corporation is a private entity and is not an agency, instrumentality, authority, entity, or establishment of the United States Government."

9/11 COMMISSION REPORT

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, Senator DASCHLE and I received the 9/11 Commission report earlier today. It looks as if the Commission did a thorough job and that their writeup is fair and balanced. It is certainly well-documented.

Tom Kean and Lee Hamilton deserve our praise for their bipartisan leadership.

The Commission did not play the blame game. Rather, they focused on how the United States can learn from past mistakes to make all Americans safer in the future.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I join with the distinguished majority leader in expressing my gratitude to Commissioner Chairman Thomas Kean and Vice Chairman Hamilton and the rest of the Commissioners as well. They were able to operate above partisan differences and produce a unanimous report in an incredibly charged political environment. The Commission has painstakingly outlined the numerous missed opportunities to prevent the tragic events of September 11 and provided the Bush administration and the Congress with a solid set of recommendations that I believe, if enacted, can help make us more secure.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, we do want to assure everyone that while mistakes, failures, and missed opportunities occurred in the past, as their report chronicles, the United States still has a very good system to protect the country.

There are thousands of dedicated Americans in the military, the intelligence community, law enforcement, and so on who endeavor every day to keep us safe. They deserve our appreciation and support.

But we can and must do better. We have to get it right 100 percent of the time.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, the Commission divided its recommendations into two major categories. The first lays out a new global strategy for dealing with the threats we face today. This section contains 28 recommendations on what our Government should do to enhance our national security.

The second section contains 13 suggestions for how our Government—executive branch as well as Congress—should be reconfigured to increase our prospects for achieving our national security objectives.

Senator FRIST and I intend to work together with our colleagues in a bipartisan manner to examine all of the Commission's proposals. We both agree change is long overdue, and we cannot afford to let another opportunity to make these changes slip by.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, the threat of terrorism will be with us for a long time. We need to fix the problems and correct the shortcomings cited by the Commission so that we can make America safer.

That is why Senator DASCHLE and I intend to ask the Government Affairs Committee, in close consultation with other committees with a stake in these changes, to carefully evaluate the Commission's proposals regarding reorganization of the executive branch and determine how best to implement them. It is our hope that the Government Affairs Committee shall begin conducting hearings on these issues as soon as possible.

It is also our expectation that the other committees with an interest in this legislation will conduct their own hearings. It is also our hope that the Government Affairs Committee, working closely with the other interested committees, will carefully evaluate each of the Commission's proposals and factor in their views before coming forward with a legislative package. No committee shall lose its rights to review parts of the legislation under its jurisdiction. It is our hope this package will be assembled and presented to the Senate no later than October 1.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, Senator FRIST and I have also agreed to set up a working group that examines how best to implement the 9/11 Commission's recommendations that deal with reform of the Senate, such as improving intelligence oversight.

Over the coming days we will meet to discuss how best to organize and focus this group.

Our intent would be for this group to similarly present a plan of action by October 1 on how to implement the recommendations made by the Commission that deal with the Congress.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, in closing, the Democratic leader and I agree that the Commission has come forward with important recommendations that deserve urgent consideration by this body. We are hopeful that the process we outlined above will give them the bipartisan attention they deserve and the American people expect.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

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

SUDAN

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, we are about to take up a number of matters that are in a position to be passed by unanimous consent. One of those includes a concurrent resolution, S. Con. Res. 133, on Sudan. It is a clear statement from the Senate that what is occurring in Sudan is genocide. Many of us have felt the need to express ourselves on this important matter prior to the time we leave for recess.

I thank the distinguished majority leader and a number of colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

It is an important statement to be made. The administration needs to hear it, the international community needs to hear it, and certainly the Sudanese Government, which tolerates if not assists in genocide, needs to hear it.

I note, also, this concurrent resolution would not have been possible without the tireless effort of the Congressional Black Caucus. I especially want to note the efforts of Congressman DON PAYNE, Congressman JOHN CONYERS, and Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE. Their tireless efforts for human rights ought to be recognized tonight. I congratulate them and I thank them for their work. I am very proud to be associated with that effort and with this resolution tonight.

I yield the floor and 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. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

MY HERO 6TH GRADE ESSAY CONTEST

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I take a moment to honor Rebecca Sadler, who is this year's winner of my annual 6th Grade Essay Contest. Rebecca is from Brentwood, TN, and attends Woodland Middle School.