

keep our military's best interests in mind, particularly one that has a history of trying to sell weapons of military technology to unfriendly countries.

Mr. President, I ask for 2 additional minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator is recognized.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I have not received answers to those questions either. This is a critically important matter. What happens if France or Russia—which, by the way, is pushing to increase its stake in EADS—want to slow down our military capacity because they do not like our policies? Do we want another country to have that kind of control for decades to come—especially given the concerns the Defense Secretary has now raised about decisionmaking and leadership at the Air Force? I think we have to push for an explanation before we move forward on this contract.

I have detailed this morning three very serious concerns about Airbus and EADS. The facts are clear. When it comes to international trade, EADS doesn't play fair. It has repeatedly lied about its impact on our economy and it has more than once given us reason to worry about how hard it will work to protect our security interests.

The bidding process for the tanker contract was so flawed that Boeing filed its first ever protest of a defense contract decision with the GAO, and we are waiting for that decision. But we need to remember the GAO can only look at whether the Air Force followed the procurement laws and regulations. It cannot answer whether the Air Force should have awarded that contract in the first place. We, Congress, have to ask those questions.

I have raised those questions in hearings, in letters to Pentagon officials, and in face-to-face meetings, yet no one at the Air Force or the Pentagon or the White House has begun to justify why we should award a \$35 billion contract to supply the linchpin of our military strength to a company that another branch of our Government has accused of illegal business practices, one that distorts its records, and does not have our national security interests at heart.

As I said at the beginning of my remarks, the Defense Secretary has raised serious questions about the leadership and oversight at the Air Force. Given those concerns, we here in the Senate and the Congress must examine this contract carefully, demand the Air Force explain its decision, and consider whether it is in our Nation's best interests to move forward on this contract. We owe it to our taxpayers. We owe it to our servicemembers. I hope with new leadership and oversight at Air Force, we will get those answers.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Arkansas is recognized.

GAS PRICES

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I wish to follow up on something the two leaders were talking about a few minutes ago, and that is gas prices are a very serious issue in this country, certainly in my State. Everywhere I go in Arkansas, people ask me about it. I encourage all of our colleagues, Democrats and Republicans, House and Senate, let's all work together and try to do something. Certainly it is going to take a Herculean effort to get President Bush to change his policy on gas prices, but I hope we could all work together, find some consensus, and move forward on some meaningful legislation to try to bring relief to people today on gas prices.

HONORING COACH JOHN MCDONNELL

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to talk about a great Arkansan, a fellow—I am holding his picture up here—whom most Americans do not recognize. Pretty much everybody in Arkansas knows him. He is a household name in our State.

It is with great pleasure I rise today to honor the career of a great Arkansan, a track and field icon, known not just in Arkansas but around the world. Following the NCAA Outdoor Track and Field Championships this week, Coach John McDonnell will retire after 36 years at The University of Arkansas.

Walking past the trophy cases lining Bud Walton Arena at the University of Arkansas, you will note the Razorback track team has been a winner over and over again under the leadership of Coach John McDonnell. He has accumulated more National Championships than any other coach in the history of college athletics. But his commitment to track and the UofA goes beyond the finish line. His athletes will tell you that Coach McDonnell motivated them and set high standards on and off the track. He taught them about integrity, character and teamwork—traits they continue to apply in their career and lives today.

Dr. B. Alan Sugg, president of the University of Arkansas system, said it best when he described Coach McDonnell as “a world-class coach because he is a world-class leader.”

He started his track career at Southwestern Louisiana, now Louisiana-Lafayette, where he was a six-time All-American in cross country and track. He also was the 1966-67 AAU 3,000-meter champion, and he won the mile at the 1966 British Selection Games.

He began helping other athletes achieve their own success as a coach for 2 years at New Providence, NJ and at Lafayette, LA before embarking on a dedicated and determined career coaching the Razorbacks. He accepted the job at Arkansas over a similar offer from Oklahoma, he says, because the terrain of northwest Arkansas reminded him of his home in Ireland.

I am going to hold up a sign here. When you drive into Fayetteville, you see this sign. It says, “Welcome to Fayetteville, Track Capital of the World; 42 NCAA Track and Field Championships.” You will notice this “42” is like a little flip chart because we won so many times, I think after maybe 25 or so, the highway department said we can't keep replacing this sign every time he wins a title, so now all they do is change that number out. Let me tell you, it changes frequently.

His record of wins as a coach is remarkable. He has won 42 NCAA National Championships since 1984: 11 in cross country, 19 indoor track championships, and 12 outdoor track championships. This includes 12 consecutive NCAA indoor track championships from 1984-1995. During this streak he won the triple crown five times including three in a row from 1991-1994.

He has been relentless in his pursuit of conference championships as well, winning 84 conference championships since 1974 including 38 in the old Southwest Conference and 46 in the Southeastern Conference. Did I mention 20 conference triple crowns since 1982, including 8 straight between 1987-1995?

Alberto Salazar, a Nike executive and world-class marathoner said “John McDonnell has been the most successful and the best coach in the United States from the 1980s on.” He goes on to say, “his teams have continued to get better and better . . . he has set the standard for all other coaches to follow.”

While being a winning coach he also focused on development of his student-athletes, coaching 185 track All-Americans who combined have earned 652 All-America honors. He has coached 23 Olympians, spanning three decades and six different Olympic Games. Mike Conley won a gold medal in Barcelona and a silver medal in Los Angeles, Matt Hemingway earned silver in Athens, and Calvin Davis a bronze in Atlanta.

Seven-time NCAA champion and Olympian Alistair Cragg said:

I am his creation . . . I came in here out of shape and had quit running. He's got that hand on your shoulder that you know you can't mess up, but if you do that you're not going to mess up on your own. You can go into any race or competition with a lot of confidence. When he says you're ready, you're ready. It's a reassurance.

Moreover, Coach McDonnell produced 55 individual national champions. His athletes hold 22 records, including Daniel Lincoln who holds the Outdoor American record for the 3,000M Steeplechase and Tyson Gay who holds the 200M record at the Outdoor World Championships.

Coach McDonnell will continue to inspire student-athletes and coaches alike. A physical legacy has been established by the new state of the art “John McDonnell Field”—a new 10,000 seat outdoor venue which opened in 2006 at the University of Arkansas. Accompanying that is the Randal Tyson