

heard on this amendment. I am prepared to yield the floor, and I will suggest the absence of a quorum shortly, unless the Chair, obviously, wants to do something. If others want to speak, or if Senator KYL wants to come over and start his debate, I am perfectly amenable to that.

If other Members, all of a sudden, want to come and discuss the Dodd amendment, the Dodd-Lieberman amendment, there will be a period to do so before we actually get to a vote, I assume, at 4 o'clock.

With that, Madam President, I thank, again, the distinguished chairman of the committee and the ranking member and their staffs for their patience. They demonstrate great patience in these debates, and I thank them for that.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT
AGREEMENT—H.R. 3167

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that immediately following the last vote today, Thursday, May 16, the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 282, H.R. 3167, the NATO expansion bill; that it be considered under the following limitations: That there be 2½ hours for debate, with the time divided as follows: 60 minutes under the control of Senator BIDEN, or his designee; 90 minutes under the control of Senator WARNER, or his designee; further, that no amendments or motion be in order; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the bill be read the third time, and on Friday, May 17, the Senate resume consideration of the bill at 10 a.m., with the time until 10:30 a.m. equally divided and controlled between Senators BIDEN and WARNER, or their designees; and that at 10:30 a.m., the Senate vote on passage of the bill, without further intervening action or debate, notwithstanding rule XII, paragraph 4.

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

A NATIONAL COMMISSION CONCERNING THE EVENTS OF SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

Mr. TORRICELLI. Madam President, on four occasions since September 11, 2001, I have come to the Chamber to recommend to my colleagues that the Senate immediately consider the establishment of a national commission concerning the events of September 11, 2001.

My request has been based on no motivation but the belief that the Amer-

ican people deserve honest answers and that the only means of preventing another terrorist attack on the United States is a fair, honest, and dispassionate view of what happened and what didn't happen, what was known, and what should have occurred.

The historic basis of such an honest approach to the tragedy of New York and the Pentagon is overwhelming. Ten days after December 7, 1941, Franklin Delano Roosevelt recognized that he could not reassure the American people about their Government and could not unify the country for the war ahead unless he gave them an explanation about what failed at Pearl Harbor. Lyndon Johnson recognized almost immediately the same need to reassure the American people about the operations of their Government and the integrity of its officers after the assassination of President Kennedy in 1963. Ronald Reagan drew upon the same precedent establishing the Challenger Commission to assure the American people that they would receive an honest answer to prevent any recurrence in the loss of life in the *Challenger*.

What I recommend has not only had precedents, it was the rule. Democratic and Republican administrations, for a century, have seen the need to assure the American people about the operation of their Government and that indeed we were a confident enough people under the rule of law to face honestly our own failings—all based on the belief that the only means of assuring that there would not be a recurrence would be to discover the reasons for the failings of the past. On those four occasions, there have been reasons to postpone, excuses to not act, and the debate has continued.

The debate continued after it was revealed that the FBI had in its possession Zacarias Moussaoui, a Frenchman of Moroccan descent who, in August, was discovered in a flight training school. The Justice Department denied access to his computer. The debate continued after it was learned that French intelligence had warned American intelligence officials that they had knowledge of a possible terrorist plot to hijack aircraft.

The debate continued after it was learned that Philippine intelligence and law enforcement authorities had warned United States Government officials of possible targeting of American aircraft.

The debate continued after it was revealed that the FBI office in Phoenix had written a memorandum warning that large numbers of suspicious individuals were seeking pilot and security training at American flight schools. The debate continued.

The debate has to end. Revelations that the Central Intelligence Agency might have intercepted suspicious communications as early as last July indicating a possible terrorist attack on American installations or facilities and that indeed the President of the United States himself was informed of

this information should effectively end any debate.

I do not rise to cast blame or aspersions on any individuals or institutions. I believe the officials of this Government have acted honorably, and I would never believe any American institution or individual, for a moment, would not have done everything possible to defend the people of this country if sufficiently warned.

Something is wrong. The United States of America has a defense establishment of over \$330 billion a year. Public accounts estimate intelligence budgets at over \$30 billion a year. The heart of our greatest city was struck, the center of our military power was hit by 19 people, funded by \$250,000. Something is wrong.

I do not know whether there has been a failure to collect intelligence or an inability to share intelligence. I don't know whether law enforcement and intelligence agencies have failed to work together. I don't know whether they acted properly and a reasoned, rational person never could have put these pieces together. I don't know. But neither does anybody else in this Government.

It was always going to be difficult to face the families of those who lost their lives on September 11. It just became impossible. Without some dispassionate and honest review of what was known by this Government and its agencies, without an honest assessment of how agencies performed and coordinated their activities, without a dispassionate assessment of what failed, not only can we not look the victims' families in the eyes and tell them, "Your Government met its responsibility," we cannot assure this country that it will not happen again.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt didn't have a Pearl Harbor commission, Earl Warren didn't have a commission on the Kennedy assassination, and Ronald Reagan didn't have a Challenger commission to assign blame. It wasn't about partisanship. It was about assuring the American people of the future that the Government had taken actions to assure it would never happen again.

Who here would assure one of their constituents in any of our States that we have the confidence or the simple good judgment to undertake such a review?

On March 21 of this year, the Governmental Affairs Committee voted on S. 1867, introduced by Senators LIEBERMAN, MCCAIN, GRASSLEY, and myself, a bill to establish the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States. That bill is ready for consideration. What reason do we offer for not acting immediately? What is the excuse to the American people?

I trust that based on current revelations, law enforcement officials of the Justice Department, intelligence officials of the National Security Agency and the Central Intelligence Agency, and, indeed, the national leadership of