

the majority party just does not want to have the discussion, does not want to have the debate, does not want to vote—apparently doesn't want to vote. I just think that is not the way the Senate should operate, and it makes it very difficult to do good for people.

Mr. HARKIN. I say to my friend, it seems to me what we are facing is that the majority party, in charge of the Senate, in charge of the House, they want to replace the tough votes we have to take around here, that we should be taking around here—they want to replace the tough votes with slick 30-second TV ads to try to get through this election. That is breaking down, I think, the people's respect for the Senate.

How can you have respect for an institution when we don't get anything done around here? When we say the only time we want to take up the tough issues is after the election, when there will be people here voting on these issues who may have been defeated or maybe not running again, what kind of responsibility, I ask the Senator from Minnesota, is that? We are shirking our responsibility. I hear more and more people saying they are getting dismayed with how the Congress is operating. People ought to be dismayed with the way this place is running right now. We are shirking our responsibilities around here in this regard.

As I said, I have been on this Appropriations Committee for 15 years. I have been in the Senate for 15 years. I say to my friend from Minnesota, this is the most do-nothing Congress, the most do-nothing Senate I have seen in 15 years. It is really sad.

The Senator talked about visiting schools. I spent all my summer going around visiting elderly people in the State of Iowa and getting story after story about their costs of prescription drugs.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Yes.

Mr. HARKIN. It is not something they need help with 10 years from now. They need it now. That is why we need to bring that legislation out here and vote on prescription drugs, helping those people out. But we are precluded from doing so. I am hopeful perhaps—maybe we ought to start, I say to my friend from Minnesota, maybe we ought to start asking unanimous consent to bring some of these bills out here. Let's bring them up. Let's see if the majority party will object to bringing up the bills on prescription drugs, on the juvenile justice bill, on minimum wage, Patients' Bill of Rights, Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Let's spend the next 9 days or whatever we have working on some of this legislation.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I say to my colleague from Iowa, that may very well be what we do. I hope this suggestion of a possible lame duck session is an idea that will last about 1 hour and that will be the end of it. And I hope our discussion on the floor will

be part of putting an end to it. But I am pleased to join with my colleague. I am pleased to start asking unanimous consent to bring up this legislation.

Mr. HARKIN. We ought to think about some way. Thinking about "lame duck," I don't know where that term ever came from. I have to look it up. I am sure there is some history around here about what a lame duck session means, where that name came from. But it seems to me that a lame duck is a sick duck by definition. We don't need a sick duck around here doing the people's business. We don't need a lame duck session around here to be taking these tough votes. We ought to be standing up and doing it right now, not waiting for a sick duck to do it.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I thank my colleague. I think we will be back on the floor and we may very well be trying our level best to put these issues back on the floor. I will be proud to do it with my colleague from Iowa.

Mr. HARKIN. I thank my friend from Minnesota.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

JUDICIARY COMMITTEE ACTIONS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I understand another disturbing event has happened this morning. I am informed that the Senate Judiciary Committee has met this morning and has refused to report out any more judges—refused to do so; just stopped. Again, this flies in the face of what our responsibilities are supposed to be around here. If someone doesn't like a person, or they don't think they are qualified—I should not say "doesn't like"—if they don't think they are qualified to assume a judgeship, let them vote against that person. But that doesn't give them a reason to hold someone up in committee.

I am speaking specifically of my Iowa constituent, Bonnie Campbell, former attorney general with the State of Iowa who is now pending in the Judiciary Committee for a vacancy on the Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Will the Senator yield for just a second? I just want to make sure, I just want to ask the Senator, Bonnie Campbell has directed all of the work against violence against women; is that correct? My wife Sheila works closely with her. She has done phenomenal work, has just a great reputation; am I correct?

Mr. HARKIN. Exactly; the Senator is exactly correct. Bonnie Campbell has, for the last 4 years, directed the Office

of Violence Against Women in the Department of Justice. I can't find one person on either side of the aisle who says she hasn't done a superb job.

She has received accolades from all over this country about guiding and directing that office. She is widely supported by the American Bar Association, by people on both sides of the aisle, the party in her home State of Iowa who know the kind of outstanding person she is, how bright she is, how capable she is, what a great job she did as attorney general in the State of Iowa, and now in the Violence Against Women Office in the Department of Justice.

People on both sides of the aisle support her nomination, and yet the Senate Judiciary Committee refuses to report her out of committee. She has had her hearing. That has all been taken care of. All the paperwork is done. She has answered all the questions.

I say to the Judiciary Committee: Report her nomination out. If for some reason you think she is unqualified—I cannot imagine why—then you can cast your vote, but at least let's bring the nominee to the floor.

There are 22 vacancies on the appeals court. That is nearly half the emergency vacancies in the Federal court system. With the growing number of vacancies in the Federal courts, these positions should be filled as soon as possible with qualified people. Yet the Judiciary Committee refuses to move.

Ms. Campbell received a hearing this summer. She would serve this position on the Eighth Circuit with honor, fairness, and distinction. She has the solid support from me and my Iowa colleague, Senator GRASSLEY. Her nomination should be sent to the Senate floor.

Bonnie Campbell has had a long history in law, starting in 1984 with her private practice in Des Moines where she worked on cases involving medical malpractice, employment discrimination, personal injury, real estate, family law—a broadly based legal practice. She was then elected attorney general of Iowa in 1990, the first woman to hold that office in our State. She managed an office of 200 people, including 120 attorneys, again, handling a wide variety of criminal and civil matters for State agencies and officers. As attorney general, she gained high marks from all ends of the political spectrum as someone who was committed to enforcing the law, reducing crime, and protecting our consumers.

In 1995, she was appointed director of the Violence Against Women Office in the Department of Justice. In that position, she has played a critical role in the implementation of the violence against women provisions of the 1994 Crime Act. Again, she has won the respect from a wide range of interests with different points of views on this issue. She has been and is today responsible for the overall coordination and agenda of the Department of Justice efforts to combat violence against women.

I have known Bonnie Campbell for many years. She is a person of unquestioned integrity, keen intellect, and outstanding judgment. She has a great sense of fairness and evenhandedness. These qualities and her significant experience make her an ideal candidate for this circuit court position. Her nomination has been strongly supported by many of her colleagues, including the present Iowa attorney general, the president of the Iowa State Police Association and, of course, the American Bar Association.

Finally, we need a judicial system that reflects the diversity of this Nation. We need more women and people of color on the bench. Only 20 percent of all federal judge positions in the country are filled by women, according to the Justice Department.

We have a backlog of judicial vacancies. It is only fair to move them, and we ought to move all of them out, especially Bonnie Campbell. She has had her hearing. Her nomination is sitting in the Judiciary Committee. If the reports I just heard are correct, the Judiciary Committee is stonewalling, refusing to move her name out to the floor of the Senate.

As I said earlier, this is another indication of how the leadership in this Senate is shirking its responsibilities to the people of this country—to put it off, delay, stonewall, don't do anything—when we have a crying need to fill these vacancies.

I am very dismayed. I had talked with the majority leader and the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Senator HATCH, and others about this. And, Senator GRASSLEY and I had remained hopeful that her name would be reported out so the Senate could act on it, but it seems we have been led astray, that it is the intention of the chairman of the Judiciary Committee to lock up this nomination and not report out Bonnie Campbell.

The women of this country ought to know that. The women of this country ought to know that a uniquely qualified, eminently qualified individual to take a vacant position on the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals is being denied by the Judiciary Committee her right to have a vote. Is that what the Judiciary Committee is telling the women of this country—that they need to take a back seat, that they will not act on these judicial nominees if you are a woman, qualified as Bonnie Campbell is?

I am very upset about this. I had in good faith been reluctant to exercise my rights as a Senator to in any way inhibit or do anything that would stop the flow of legislation or anything on the Senate floor because I had, I guess mistakenly, been of the opinion, or at least advised, if we just waited a due length of time, Bonnie Campbell's name would be reported out. Again, I think I was obviously mistaken, that my faith—my good faith—was not responded to in kind.

This is not right. It is not right to treat a person like this. It is not right

to block someone who has had their hearing and is widely supported on both sides of the aisle. It might be a different story if there were a lot of controversy about Bonnie Campbell, but there is none. As I said, Senator GRASSLEY, a conservative Republican, is openly supporting her. Republicans in my State have been supportive of her getting on the Eighth Circuit.

This is, I think, a black mark on the operations of the Senate, another indication of how the leadership of this Senate refuses to do the people's business, to let things come out on the floor so we can vote up or down. Bonnie Campbell is being denied her right, I believe, as a citizen of this country to have her nomination acted upon by the full Senate, and it is a bad mark on the Senate.

I am hopeful the Judiciary Committee will reconsider its action—rather, its inaction. The Judiciary Committee can meet tomorrow, they can meet Monday, they can meet any day the chairman wants them to meet and report out this nominee. I was under the impression that was going to happen today, but obviously I had the wrong impression of what the Senate Judiciary Committee was going to do.

I urge the chairman to convene the Judiciary Committee and report Bonnie Campbell's name out before this session is over.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 5 minutes before those who have time reserved come to the floor.

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

REFORMS VERSUS ROADBLOCKS

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I have been in some meetings this morning. Of course, we do not have any more committee hearings going on because the other side has objected to that. I haven't listened to everything, but I heard enough to hear my friends on the other side of the aisle complaining about not moving forward.

So I just believe it is really important to talk a little bit about the whole idea of what has been going on here now for several months, where we have been seeking to make some reforms and seeking to move forward, moving a number of bills, and finding nothing but roadblocks from the other side of the aisle. It is almost hilarious to hear that kind of conversation when the facts are that we have had nothing but roadblocks coming from the other side of the aisle. And it is too bad.

We are down to where we don't have a great deal of time, and the notion that we continue to bring up the same topics, over and over and over again, simply because these folks want to make it an issue as opposed to a solution, frankly, gets pretty redundant and tiresome.

Let me just mention a few of the things specifically that have been troublesome.

S. 2045, amending the Immigration and Nationality Act with respect to H-1B nonimmigrant aliens: Senator LOTT offered, on the 15th of September, a UC for both sides to bring the bill to the floor; objected to by Democrats.

S. 2497, the McCain-Lieberman bill dealing with the entertainment industry's marketing of inappropriate R-rated videos: In response to the FTC report, Senator SANTORUM offered a UC to bring it to the floor. The other side objected.

Four district judges in Illinois and Arizona: Asked to be brought to the floor; the minority leader objected.

S. 2507, the intelligence authorization: We tried to bring that to the floor and get a UC; no response from the minority leader.

H.R. 1776, the housing construction bill, with 32 cosponsors, including a dozen Democrats: The leader requested UC to go to conference; objected to by that side of the aisle.

H.R. 3615, the Rural Local Broadcast Signal Act, a satellite bill so we can have local-to-local broadcasting in rural areas: The leader asked for a UC to go to conference; objected to by the Democrats on that side of the aisle.

The Social Security and Medicare Safe Deposit Act, which the President and the other side of the aisle, along with Vice President GORE, claim they support: The leader asked for a UC September 7 to call it up. It was the sixth time in the 106th Congress that the Democrats have blocked the lockbox from coming up.

It takes a lot of nerve to get up and talk about not moving forward when these are the kinds of things that have actually taken place.

S. 2, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act: We spent 2 weeks of floor time this spring and summer—2 weeks—debating and voting on amendments. The other side of the aisle has blocked two UCs—including 20 additional amendments—which have kept us from finishing this measure.

It is really almost laughable to talk about that. What we need to do is to move forward. What we need to do is get these bills out, have our disagreements, vote on them, and get the job done that we are here to do. We tried to do that yesterday; we couldn't get it done.

Let me share with you another batch of information. So far in the 106th Congress well over half the votes cast on amendments are initiatives from the other side of the aisle; that is, 231 out of 403 rollcall votes. Many of these votes are repetitive votes on their favorite agenda items which are out