

been much praiseworthy in the way Congress has responded to the recession that started last March and intensified after the attacks of 9-11.

Last fall, and even this month, there were short term actions we could have taken that would have had immediate and beneficial economic and humanitarian results. We could have extended unemployment benefits, as we have in every recession, and as I still hope we will. We could have offered an immediate tax rebate to those lower income workers who did not receive a full rebate from the first tax cut. We could have used the Medicaid payment formula to send financially strapped states struggling to provide health care for their residents an immediate infusion of cash. We could have offered a temporary acceleration of depreciation to encourage reluctant businesses to invest now in the recovering economy.

We agreed on basic principles: help now, and do no harm in the long run. We agreed on the need. But we could not agree to put aside our partisan agendas long enough to do what we all agreed was right. Instead of talking about what we could do to help workers unemployed now, factories lying idle now, we debated tax cuts passed last spring and pushed tax breaks that wouldn't even take effect for 10 years. We should have focused on workers, investment, consumer confidence. Instead we fought over estate taxes and tried to lay the blame for our inaction.

As the recession winds down and the war on terrorism continues, I sincerely hope Congress will be able to rise above the partisan bickering that doomed the stimulus package. We will have many opportunities this year to act in a bipartisan manner to make this Nation stronger, safer, and better. We will also have many opportunities to wrap the flag around our pet proposals and fight for political advantage. We should commit today to learn from the mistakes that have killed the stimulus package—not to repeat them.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Am I right the time on this side has expired?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. GRASSLEY. How much time is on the leader's time?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Ten minutes of leader time.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I have been informed Senator COLLINS is on her way over and would like a couple of minutes. So I will yield myself 8 minutes and then yield the remaining time to Senator COLLINS.

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

Mr. GRASSLEY. So at the end of 8 minutes, please notify me.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair will do so.

#### CENTRIST/WHITE HOUSE COMPROMISE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, the distinguished majority leader an-

nounced yesterday he is going to kill this bill if he does not prevail on the first cloture vote. Of course, we know if he did get cloture, many good amendments that have been offered to try to improve Senator DASCHLE's skeletal bill will fall. We will not be able to vote on them. All we have asked for all along on this side, and even some Members on that side, is a vote on the bipartisan centrist-White House bill that I have offered as an amendment, along with Senator SNOWE.

In fact, that bill is a product of the work of people such as Senator SNOWE and Senator COLLINS, and Democrats on this side of the aisle such as Senators NELSON, MILLER, and BREAUX. There is a long list of amendments. I do not think I will go through the long list of amendments that we will not have a chance to vote on, but I am going to highlight a couple because I think Senator NICKLES did a good job of highlighting those most important amendments.

Let me take a look at a couple that will be killed if Senator DASCHLE's cloture motion is invoked. My friend, the majority whip, who is with us, Senator REID, offered, along with Senator KYL, so it is bipartisan, an amendment that is designed to help the travel industry. We were told during the debate that this tax credit was very important. If it is that important, we ought to have a chance to vote on it.

Guess what. If the Democratic leadership prevails on the first cloture motion, Senator REID's amendment falls. I guess I can only assume that since this amendment is so important for Nevada and other States where there is a lot of tourism, the majority leader would oppose cloture. Surely he would not vote to kill his own amendment. That is what I would think. I am afraid I am probably being optimistic or maybe naive.

Other Democrats have offered amendments, too. For those Senators, a vote for cloture is a vote to kill their own very important amendment. So I hope these Democratic Senators are not telling their constituents they are for something and then turning around and voting to kill it by supporting this cloture vote.

Let us take a look at Senator ALLARD's amendment, one that is so important to have the United States competitive, particularly in manufacturing and information technology, the R&D tax credit. If cloture is invoked, that amendment is dead as well. We had 70 Senators vote for that amendment on a previous tax bill, as an example. So make no mistake about it, if the distinguished leader's cloture motion is supported, every one of these amendments will be killed, as well as the ones Senator NICKLES brought to our attention.

If the distinguished leader prevails on his cloture motion, then we end up with another conference with the House and that could take weeks or months to resolve. The best we can

hope for is delay. That means delay for the unemployed, delay for the stimulus, not helping those who are dislocated because of September 11.

By contrast, the Democratic leadership will not let us vote on the only plan that has majority support in the Senate. They are filibustering the only bipartisan stimulus plan and preventing unemployment benefits from reaching the workers who need them. That is what the second cloture vote is all about. The second cloture vote guarantees an up-or-down vote on the White House-centrist stimulus plan. A vote for that plan is a vote for a bill that the President will sign. He said he would sign it.

If cloture is voted for, Senators are saying with their vote they want to send a bill to the President that he will sign in a New York minute. That means these things will happen and happen fast. Unemployed workers get checks. For the first time, unemployed workers get health care assistance. Payroll-tax payers get a rebate. Income-tax payers get a little more tax relief in their paycheck. Businesses, large and small, get stimulative accelerated depreciation, which is going to mean more jobs. So we have two cloture votes coming up very shortly.

The first cloture vote is an effort by the majority to block further amendments to the bill, which will effectively kill the bill. I urge my colleagues to oppose that cloture vote. The second cloture vote is an effort by our side to force a vote on the bipartisan centrist amendment that the majority leader has been furiously blocking to this point. But we cannot get to this vote unless the majority leader fails his first vote.

Therefore, Mr. President, these votes come down to a choice between action now or endless delay. If we want action now, Senators should vote for cloture on the White House-centrist agreement. If Members want delay, vote for cloture on the Daschle amendment.

How much leadership time remains?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Four minutes.

Mr. REID. How much time remains on the majority side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Six minutes.

#### A CLASSIC FILIBUSTER

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I will speak briefly about comments made by the Senator from Oklahoma. He is my dear friend, he is my counterpart, but I don't know how he kept a straight face, saying: We are not filibustering this bill. I am sure he went to his office and started laughing. This is a classic filibuster taking place on this bill—for weeks and weeks and weeks.

Of course, amendments have been offered that we like. I heard Senator ALLARD talking about tax credits. We like tax credits. In fact, it is a shame we did not extend those. I ask unanimous consent the vote occur after we have used

our time and the 4 minutes leadership time, so that the time of the vote will be changed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is the parliamentary situation.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there are a lot of amendments that we offered and the minority offered that are good amendments. Being realistic, we spent all day yesterday talking about the estate tax, making the repeal permanent, which does not take place for 10 years. That is not very stimulative. We have been told by the President and others that to have stimulative efforts, it must be short term and do nothing to exacerbate the deficit. That simply does not apply in this instance.

With all due respect to my friend, the minority whip, this is a filibuster by the Republicans. Everyone knows it is. Members can say it isn't as many times as they want, but it is still a filibuster.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I yield myself 15 seconds.

Let me say why the Senator from Nevada is wrong. Yesterday at about this time, morning business was imposed. We could have discussed the amendments and voted in the morning, and then when we came back at 2:15 after caucuses, there were opportunities to vote. It was announced there would be no more votes. If we are filibustering, how come the other side would not let us have time to vote on our amendments yesterday? Why piddle around the whole day?

I yield 3 minutes to the Senator from Maine.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

#### EXTENSION OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I praise Senator GRASSLEY for his heroic efforts in trying to bring together a bipartisan group to come up with a package that would help our economy recover. I am disappointed the Senate majority leader has announced his intention to abandon work on the economic recovery package.

In light of that reality, however, it is absolutely imperative that the Senate move today to extend to unemployed workers an additional 13 weeks of benefits. This has been needed for a long time, and it is something I have been working on for the past 4 months.

In October of last year, I introduced a bipartisan bill for a 13-week extension. I was joined by Senators LANDRIEU, GORDON SMITH, CLELAND, and VOINOVICH. We introduced this bill because we thought it was important to quickly pass a measure of additional security for the 7 million unemployed workers across our Nation. Since that time, unemployment rolls have swelled by 900,000 and over 1.2 million Americans have exhausted their unemployment compensation benefits without being able to find new jobs.

Last week, Senator JACK REED of Rhode Island and I wrote to the Senate

leaders to ask them to call up legislation extending unemployment benefits as soon as possible. I am pleased that the assistant leader has indicated his intention to do just that.

Unfortunately, we saw the handwriting on the wall, spelling the demise of the broader economic recovery legislation which I believe is still very much needed.

Regular unemployment benefits end after 26 weeks in most States. When times are good and businesses are hiring, that is an adequate period of time for most unemployed workers to either find new jobs or to be rehired to their old jobs. In fact, that usually happens long before the 26 weeks have expired. However, when times are tough—and they are tough now—finding work is much more difficult and many unemployed workers exhaust their 26 weeks of regular unemployment compensation.

Congress needs to do what it has traditionally done whenever our country has been plunged into a recession. That is to temporarily extend the safety net by providing 13 additional weeks of unemployment compensation. This package would do just that for up to an additional 13 weeks for workers who lost their jobs after the economic downturn began in March and who have exhausted their benefits prior to being rehired or finding new employment.

More than 10,000 unemployed workers in my home State of Maine exhausted their unemployment benefits last year without being able to find a new job. They work hard. They want to work. They want new employment. And they have been looking very diligently. However, the economy is such that they simply have been unable to find new work. An unemployment extension would provide immediate relief to hundreds of thousands of Americans, including the 10,000 Mainers who have exhausted their unemployment benefits and have yet to find work.

Over the course of the coming year, approximately 3 million Americans who are out of work and looking for a job would be assisted. This proposal would provide approximately \$60 million in assistance to unemployed workers in Maine alone. These are our neighbors; these are families who have been hurt most by the economic downturn.

Let us, therefore, today pass this much needed legislation to extend benefits to millions of unemployed workers. Even if we have failed in coming up with a compromise on the broader package, we can at least do that, and do it today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired. The majority leader.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, could the Chair inform the Members of the time remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There are 4 minutes remaining under the majority's control.

#### ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND ASSISTANCE FOR AMERICAN WORKERS ACT OF 2002

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I will use my leader time in addition to the remaining Democratic time for my closing comments.

Mr. President, the other day I came to the floor to talk briefly about our current circumstances. I will recount one last time for the record in case there is any question about how it is we got to this point this morning. I will again briefly recount the events over the course of the last several months. There were bipartisan Finance Committee discussions as early as last September about an economic stimulus package. There was a hope that we could come together, Republicans and Democrats, on an economic stimulus package as we did on airport security, on counterterrorism, on the assistance provided to New York and to the Defense Department in the wake of the tragedy of September 11.

We reached out to experts who could give us guidance on what the principles ought to be for an economic stimulus package. We had a number of conversations with Alan Greenspan and Bob Rubin, both, early in the months of September and October.

The bipartisan Budget Committee, I think on a unanimous basis, issued some principles on October 4. Those principles were: If you are going to have a stimulus package, make sure it is truly stimulative. If you are going to have a stimulus package, make sure it is temporary. If you are going to have a stimulus package, make sure it is immediate. If you are going to have a stimulus package, make sure you take into account cost. All of those principles were ones enunciated by the economists and agreed to, in large measure on a bipartisan basis, by the Budget Committee.

That was the lead up to the discussions we had. The House Republicans broke off those bipartisan talks. What they said is that they wanted to use the regular order, move through the committee and present the Senate a bill. The Republicans blocked the Finance Committee bill on a point of order in December, even though they could have amended it. They could have said: Look, we don't like this but we will offer something else. We do not like this but we will amend this bill and have up-or-down votes on amendments.

The Republicans refused to negotiate for a 3-week period of time, as they did mostly throughout the fall. There were no negotiations in large measure because Republicans delayed. First, they didn't like virtually the shape of the table. Then they didn't like who was in the room. They came up with reason after reason why we could not sit down and talk: delay, inaction, and ultimately a conflict that could not be resolved.

In negotiations, the Republicans insisted on a couple of issues: repeal of