

the heart-wrenching results of the terrible September 11 attack and a weak economy.

These images that our Nation has not seen, but that everyone here knows all too well, are the faces of hundreds of New Yorkers who have found themselves without a job. These are the workers whose jobs were literally destroyed, jobs when the Twin Towers collapsed: The janitors, the doormen, the waiters and waitresses, the secretaries, and messengers.

Or, the workers who did not work in lower Manhattan, but who have felt the ripple effect of the so-called frozen zone primarily the hotel workers and small businesses owners.

In New York State, we have 71 percent more workers on Unemployment Insurance than we did one year ago. In New York City, we are experiencing unemployment rates that we haven't seen in years. In December, the unemployment rate continued to spike up to 7.4 percent—2.4 percent above the national average for the same period. New York City is expected to lose 150,000 jobs in the aftermath of September 11 and we are not expected to rebound until 2004.

What is happening to our unemployed who are waiting for the economy to rebound? Well, let me tell you—in the last quarter alone, over 65,000 unemployed workers exhausted their UI benefits.

Over the past two weeks, I have received hundreds of calls and pleas from my constituents in New York—some are being evicted from their homes, others are uncertain how they will continue to put food on their tables, and all are desperate to go back to work.

Senator DASCHLE has put forward a proposal to extend unemployment for an additional 13 weeks. This proposal is not only the right thing to do for our thousands of workers who are without a job, but it is the right thing to do for the economy. In fact, some experts argue that extending unemployment insurance is more likely than any other policy to stimulate the economy.

We may not agree on a comprehensive package to stimulate the economy, but I think we all agree that we must do the right thing for the workers of this country by extending unemployment insurance.

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

The amendment (No. 2819) was agreed to.

The bill (H.R. 622), as amended, was passed.

Mr. DASCHLE. Madam President, I hope the House will take the matter up immediately, perhaps as early as this afternoon, and get it to the President. As has been noted, the President has indicated already he supports the extension. I think it is now up to the House to do their part so that these people will be a little more confident they can be given some assistance now. Too many of them have already run out of benefits to which they are entitled. We have to act now.

For those who have lamented the fact we could not reach a compromise, 56 Senators went on record today looking for that compromise. We only fell four short. There were a couple of absentees. So there is no doubt that there is a growing percentage, an overwhelming majority, in my view, who want to move forward. I would have only hoped some of those who lamented this could have supported cloture so we could have had the ticket to conference. We were denied that. But I have said on the floor before, and I will say it again, I am open to any overtures, any suggestions, on how we might do it, that will allow the 60 votes required to move forward. Anytime I can be assured that a 60-vote margin can be achieved, we will bring this bill back up. It is unfortunate we could not do more than this, but I am very pleased and grateful to colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their willingness to support this.

AMENDMENT NO. 2820

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the title amendment with respect to H.R. 622 be considered and agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

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

The amendment is as follows:

Amend the title as to read:

"A bill to provide for temporary unemployment compensation."

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DASCHLE. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now enter into a period of morning business for 35 minutes.

Ms. LANDRIEU. I reserve the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. There is another matter we want to try to take care of at this point. I don't know if this is the proper time.

Mr. DASCHLE. If I might say to my colleague, this is not the appropriate time, but we will certainly work with the Senator and find a time, perhaps before the end of the day today, where we can take up the legislation. We need to run a hotline to ensure that we can get a unanimous consent agreement to take the bill up. We will certainly do that and come back to the floor as soon as we have the assurances on both sides of the aisle that this bill can be agreed to.

Ms. LANDRIEU. I remove my objection.

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

The Senator from Oklahoma.

SENATE PROCEDURE

Mr. NICKLES. Madam President, I thank the majority leader and also appreciate his willingness to modify the

unemployment compensation amendment to make it basically universal for all States for 13 weeks. I think that is fair, appropriate, and supported by all Senators. I am glad we were able to pass it. I encourage my colleagues in the House to pass it as well.

Also, our colleague and friend, Senator LANDRIEU from Louisiana, has suggested improvements to be made on the adoption credit. Senator BUNNING also has an amendment dealing with adoption and deductibility. We will work with both colleagues to see if we cannot come up with a package in the not too distant future that I hope all of our colleagues will pass and likewise I hope the House will favorably review.

I make one additional comment. I am disappointed we have not been successful at making the bridge in partisan warfare to pass the stimulus package to help create jobs. I urge our colleagues not to be quite so fast in the future with cloture votes. I didn't like cloture votes when this side offered them, and I don't like them when the other side offers them. It denies the Senators the opportunity to offer amendments. We had several amendments on this side that we could not offer because of cloture. If cloture were invoked, they would not have the ability to offer a permanent R&D amendment, which I believe has a majority vote; we could not offer making the death tax repeal permanent, which I believe has a majority vote; we could not offer an amendment that Senator DOMENICI was pushing for, a payroll tax holiday, which many people on both sides of the aisle say has merit.

I hope in the future, when we are talking about the farm bill—and I believe we will go to the farm bill soon—I urge the majority leader not to move forward with cloture. Consider amendments. No one I know wants to filibuster the farm bill, no one was filibustering the stimulus package, but we had several provisions in the stimulus package to try to make it truly stimulative and create jobs. When we get to the farm bill, I hope the first thing we look at is not a cloture vote. Some Members want an amendment to have payment limitations so some farmers are not making millions—corporate farmers are not making millions out of the farm bill. We find out they are under present law. So there is an amendment to have payment limitations. Those amendments would fall if cloture were invoked.

I urge our colleagues to offer amendments, be timely, be considerate of others, have good debate, find out where the votes are, and, hopefully, not go through the idea of a cloture vote, and if we don't get cloture we pull the bill down. That is a recipe for getting nothing done. That is how the stimulus bill did not pass. We cannot get 60 votes; we will pull the bill down. I wish that were not the result.

I suggested we maybe take up the stimulus bill and consider X number of amendments on each side and pass the

bill. That was not the way the majority leader went on this bill. That is fine. That was his decision. I think it is regrettable. I think we could have done some things to increase employment, increase jobs.

I hope when we take up the agriculture bill, it will not be under cloture, it will be with both sides offering constructive amendments to improve a bill that is in desperate need of improvement.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. I ask unanimous consent to be recognized for morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We are in morning business.

UNEMPLOYMENT EXTENSION

Mr. REED. Madam President, I commend Senator DASCHLE, the majority leader, for his leadership on this very important measure to extend unemployment benefits. I am pleased this has received the unanimous support of this entire Senate. It is an outstanding issue that needs to be addressed today. There are millions of Americans who are exhausting benefits as we speak. Looking forward, the prospect is that more and more Americans will exhaust their benefits. The benefit extension is just simple justice for these Americans and will also provide real stimulus for our economy.

The reality is, if you have been laid off from work and you are depending upon unemployment checks, you are not typically putting that check under your mattress. You are going out and buying food, buying clothes for your children, paying your rent, doing those things that will put resources directly and immediately into the economy. That is the whole point of any stimulus proposal, to put resources directly and immediately into the economy.

That is why I have to take exception to the comments of some of our colleagues who talk about the fact that we have not done anything to stimulate the economy, to help secure the jobs of those who are still working.

Frankly, we can tell a lot about people from what they support and what they reject. If Members support the permanency of the estate tax, they should know that is not at all stimulative. It occurs 10 years from now, long after we have worked through this economic cycle one way or the other. It provides no immediate stimulus. It provides no immediate incentive for behavior because the estate tax comes with death—not a conscious decision by most people. So it has no stimulative effect. That is what they are proposing to help the Americans who are working today. It will not help people today. It will help a very few, and 10 years from now.

Now, they reject proposals such as Senator DASCHLE's proposal to provide a rebate for working Americans who did not pay income tax. It was quite

disturbing to me that the insinuation was that these people are not part of our economy; they did not pay income taxes, why should they get any rebates?

What those Members misperceive and misunderstand is the huge contributions that these millions of poor, working Americans make, in a range of endeavors, that immensely help our economy. They work very hard and, at the same time, payroll taxes are some of the most regressive taxes that Americans pay. As a result, these individuals should get some relief. Again, most likely those resources would go directly and immediately back into the economy.

So the arguments by the other side—their claims that nothing has been done to help Americans who are working today—are not consistent with the proposals they make and the proposals to which they object.

If you look in the President's budget, you'll find another indication of the insensitivity, I would say, to the issue of Americans struggling to keep their jobs and struggling to find jobs—a significant reduction in job training funds. These moneys are necessary to put people back into the workplace, to give individuals the skills they need to enhance their jobs or even keep their jobs in a tough, competitive climate.

So the rhetoric about doing nothing to stimulate the economy is just that. Senator DASCHLE made proposals that would stimulate this economy without long-run detrimental effects to our fiscal discipline.

That stimulus package, that I would argue is the only real stimulus package, was rejected by the other side. So we are left to do something that is absolutely necessary, necessary both on the grounds of providing justice for Americans and also on the grounds of providing some limited stimulus for our economy.

There are nearly 5 million workers who are out of the job market but want to work. Many have left the job market because they have been discouraged, which factors into the slightly lower unemployment rate last month. The unemployment rate went down not because there are more jobs. In fact, we lost jobs. The unemployment rate went down as people left the labor force, many discouraged by the lack of employment opportunities. For those people and for others, these unemployment benefits are important.

In January, more than 2.5 million people had been unemployed for 15 weeks or longer, and nearly half of those people had been unemployed for more than 6 months. We have in the past responded to that dilemma, that crisis, by extending unemployment benefits. I am pleased today this body has taken action to do that.

Even if the economy begins to recover, this problem will stay with us. At the end of the recessions of the last several decades, unemployment, particularly long-term unemployment,

continued to linger. On average, long-term unemployment rates grew for 9 months after the official end of the recession. So even if today—and I think we are unsure of this—even if today we are seeing some change in economic conditions, we will still see continued unemployment problems and we will still have to respond to it.

Indeed, this effort should be bipartisan because, not only in this Senate but throughout the country, I believe most people recognize the right thing to do and the smart thing to do is to give unemployed individuals a chance to get benefits until they get the opportunity to work again. Alan Greenspan, the Chairman of the Federal Reserve, has pointed it out. His words:

I have always been in favor of extending unemployment benefits during periods of rising unemployment. Clearly you cannot argue that somebody who runs past the 26-week level is slow for not looking for a job or not actively seeking to get re-employed. There are just no jobs out there.

Those are Chairman Greenspan's words. We have to respond to that, recognize that, and I am pleased that the majority leader today took that action and received the support of this Senate.

About a week ago Senator COLLINS and I wrote to Senator DASCHLE and to Senator LOTT and urged them to move on this measure if we could not find a compromise on the stimulus package. Again, I am pleased today this measure is moving forward. It does make sense. It is good policy with respect to people who need help. It is good for the economy. These resources will go back immediately and directly into our economy, helping to spur, we hope, consumer demand and help us out of this recession.

I commend the majority leader. I am pleased we are able at least to accomplish this today. I hope we can return to the stimulus debate again, but a debate about real stimulus proposals, not a debate about the warmed over tax proposals of last spring, the second phase of the tax cuts, the second phase of those tax cuts that contributed and will contribute more to the deficit in the years ahead.

Instead of those warmed over proposals, let's look at things that will help Americans and the American economy directly, immediately, in this quarter, not 10 years from now. Let's do those things.

I hope when we return to this debate we will be conscious of trying to stimulate the economy and not simply trying to rehash old tax proposals.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. BENNETT. I understand my friend from Michigan has a comment he wishes to make. I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to yield to him for 2 minutes, and then I retain my right to the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from Michigan.