

They cannot even do little things such as get the electricity back on. I have talked to Mr. Noriega in our administration. I have talked to Secretary Colin Powell. Both are very sympathetic to what is going on in Haiti and the needs of the Haitian Government. Secretary Powell has assured me the administration is trying to reprogram money and to get additional money for Haiti. Everyone agrees and understands the urgent need for this money.

I simply say to the administration, this money is desperately needed now. The new Haitian Government is struggling. They need to show the people of Haiti some immediate victories. If the people of Haiti are to have some confidence in this new Government, if they are to believe in this new Government, if they are to have confidence in the new Government, they have to see something tangible and they have to see it fairly quickly.

I hope our administration will be able to reprogram some money, will be able to set some money aside and get that money to Haiti so this new Government will be able to show the people of Haiti some good faith, be able to show them some victories, and the people of Haiti will be able to see there is, in fact, some hope.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. How much time do I have on this side in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There are 8 minutes remaining.

THE PRICE OF OBSTRUCTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I believe many in the press world and too many outside the beltway are observing the gridlock in the Senate and probably just dismissing it as "politics as usual."

The truth is, it is not politics as usual. It is politics at its worst. The result is Americans are getting the worst, the very worst from the Senate, when they deserve the best.

With gridlock jamming our Nation's highways, we get gridlock on the highway bill right here in the Senate. With our Nation's energy supply uncertain, the fate of the Energy bill in the Senate is equally uncertain. With a work-based welfare system doing wonders across America, we see no work allowed on welfare reform in the Senate. As backlogged as courtrooms are with lawsuits, so, too, is the Senate backlogged with sensible tort reform. As emergency room patients wait for a doctor's care, so, too, do emergency room doctors wait for medical lawsuit reform from the Senate.

Gridlock, uncertainty, inaction, backlog, and delay; that is all the Senate is serving up these days. Gridlock, uncertainty, inaction, backlog, and delay is all that is on the menu in the Senate these days.

There is a price for obstruction. It is real. It is painful and it is rising. Let me give a few examples.

For decades, now, congestion has been rising. According to the committee report on the highway bill, the extra time needed for a rush-hour commute has tripled over the past two decades. The resulting congestion costs every man, woman, and child in the United States \$520 a year. About a billion gallons of gasoline are wasted every 2 months on U.S. roads.

Yet this highway bill we have could create hundreds of thousands of jobs in the next few years. This highway bill is being prevented from being written, right here in the Senate. This highway bill, which would prevent almost half a million accidents, save almost 2,000 lives over the next two decades, this bill is stalled on an open road to nowhere.

Why? Because of Democratic obstruction. The House version and Senate version of the bill are blocked by Democrats from going to conference to resolve our differences. It is the way we legislate in the Congress.

With gas prices rising this year, with wide-scale electrical blackouts last year, and with Middle East tensions every year, the Energy bill is again stalled, going well into its third year of delay. But a bill that will, according to the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, create 650,000 new jobs, that will boost the economy and secure our energy supplies, is blocked by Democratic filibusters.

Do we have to have another blackout before we are permitted to act? Do we have to have total shutdown of our freeways before the highway bill will be freed?

The price of obstruction is real. It is rising. And there appears to be little relief in sight in our roads, at our pumps, in our courtrooms, our emergency rooms, and our employment offices across America, all due to obstruction by Democrats.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. REID. Madam President, how much time is left on the majority side in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On the majority side there are 2 minutes 49 seconds remaining.

Mr. REID. Will the Chair notify me when that time has expired?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. Madam President, is the time for the Democrats to begin now?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Thirty seconds remain on the majority side.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Madam President, when time comes for the Democrats, I ask

unanimous consent that Senator KOHL be recognized for 5 minutes, Senator FEINGOLD be recognized for 8 minutes, Senator KENNEDY for 5 minutes, Senator LEAHY for 5 minutes, and Senator CORZINE for 5 minutes. I further ask that the time remaining on this side, which I understand would be 17 minutes—is that right?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

Mr. REID. I will yield myself such time as I may consume. If I get up to 15 minutes, I would ask the Chair to advise me.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired on the majority side.

Mr. REID. I thank the Chair.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Democrats' time be allocated as I have indicated.

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

The Senator from Nevada.

HOLDING UP THE FSC BILL

Mr. REID. Madam President, I want everyone to listen. I know the best defense is good offense. That was learned long before I used those words. But that is what we have going on here today. We now have and have worked all week on a bill that is extremely important to this country. We refer to it as FSC. It is a tax bill that deals with corporate America.

As we speak, corporate America is being assessed penalties as a result of trade sanctions that have been placed on them by the World Trade Organization. We are trying to work our way out of that, and we are very close to being able to pass a bill. But the majority, as they do all the time, will not let us finish the bill.

Do you know what is holding up the FSC bill? Because the slow walk started last night. Four amendments. Four amendments: One by Senator FEINGOLD, which basically says we should buy American products. He wants 5 minutes. Senator CANTWELL wants to extend unemployment benefits, 30 minutes; Senator FRANK LAUTENBERG wants corporations that have foreign subsidiaries not to do business with terrorist countries. It does not sound too outlandish to me. Senator CORZINE wants to impose 301 actions, which basically is called super 301, which simply says the President has to enforce our trade laws.

Those are the four amendments, taking a total of an hour and 35 minutes, the majority will not let us go forward with on this bill. That is it, an hour and 35 minutes. Tough votes by some. I don't know why it would be hard to vote "buy America" or extend unemployment benefits or say foreign subsidiaries should not do business with terrorist organizations or countries, and enforce our trade laws. That is what they are.

But now we will hear the speeches: The Democrats are not allowing us to go forward with this most important—

they call it the JOBS bill; I will call it the JOBS bill. It is a way of kind of diverting our attention away from the real jobs problem, but it is a jobs bill. I acknowledge that. But that is what we are faced with here.

The same good defense is being used offensively here because my dear friend, the Senator from Missouri, has come to the floor and said: The Democrats won't let us do our highway bill.

I have here—and I am not going to bring out all three charts, but they are here—oh, I am sorry, we couldn't get them on three—there are four charts of the 390-plus organizations that are saying: We agree with the Democrats. We should not go to conference. They want \$318 billion in funding.

Now, why don't the Democrats want to vote on this? Are we being partisan? Maybe we have memories. Maybe we can reflect back on what happened to the Energy bill. We went to conference with the Energy bill. We not only were not allowed to go to the conference, we did not know where the conference meetings were held.

Medicare. We also remember that. We at least knew where the meetings were held because the Republicans told us: You can have two people. We asked others to come to the meeting. They closed the meetings. That is not what a conference is all about.

Yes, we do have memories. And through all this: Oh, they won't let us do a highway bill. They are filibustering.

If a conference were appointed 5 minutes from now, what would happen is what we want to happen. If a conference were appointed 5 minutes from now, we would have the staffs of the Senate—majority and minority—meet to decide what actually should be done. It would be easy because it is a bipartisan bill. Then we would go over and meet with our counterparts in the House, and the staffs would meet.

This is a big bill. It would take weeks, at least 2 solid weeks, with 20-hour-a-day, 6-day weeks, to get us to that point. They will not let us do that. The majority will not allow the staffs to meet on this bill. For people to say the only way to do a bill is to have this conference is foolishness—foolishness. We have passed lots of bills, in fact, scores of bills without going to conference. We have something we call a preconference, and it is just as I described would happen following the appointment of conferees.

So we understand, if we were working with an administration like this that is so unreasonable, so impossible to deal with, and I were in the majority, and I had a President like they were dealing with, I would probably come out and do the same thing. It is all they can do. They are desperate. But we have the necessity of coming up with legislation that is truly legislation that is good for the country, not necessarily good for the President's reelection.

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR OUR ACTIONS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I want to read the first two paragraphs of an editorial that appeared in the New York Times today, written by Thomas Friedman.

We are in danger of losing something much more important than just the war in Iraq. We are in danger of losing America as an instrument of moral authority and inspiration in the world. I have never known a time in my life when America and its president were more hated around the world than today. I was just in Japan, and even young Japanese dislike us. It's no wonder that so many Americans are obsessed with the finale of the sitcom "Friends" right now. They're the only friends we have, and even they're leaving.

This administration needs to undertake a total overhaul of its Iraq policy; otherwise, it is courting a total disaster for us all.

I have been married for more than four decades, and there have been a lot of things that I think have made our marriage a success. I married a girl I met in high school. The main thing that has been good for our marriage is the ability for both of us to say "I'm sorry."

Relations in other aspects of our lives are based on the same principles of relationship that couples have. For example, the foundations of nations, of countries are formed by relationships between people.

When I got home last night, my wife said words to me to the effect: I watched all the news today. Why couldn't the President say he was sorry?

I had no answer for that. I flipped on the television set. The first two people I saw on TV interviewing others asked the same question: Why couldn't the President say he was sorry. Why couldn't the President say he was sorry, not only for himself but for all Americans? This is expected in America.

I guess he couldn't say he was sorry for the same reason that in his last press conference he couldn't say he had made a mistake. I add this to the list of mistakes that are paramount, No. 1, when he claimed on the aircraft carrier, with his flight suit that he borrowed from somebody, that major combat was over, and had the banner "mission accomplished." The mission was not accomplished. He should have acknowledged that as a mistake. Then just a few days later, when someone said there are problems going on in Iraq, he said: "Bring it on." Well, we have almost 800 dead men and women. I think that was a mistake.

It was a mistake yesterday when he had the time and the ability to say he was sorry. I don't have the position and power of the President of the United States; I know that. But I have the ability to say that all America is sorry for what went on in the prisoner of war camps in Iraq. What went on in those prison camps does not represent America or its valiant military men and women.

We have so many reasons to be proud of what our Armed Forces have done for this country, not just over the last couple of years but since our founding. We are reminded of that heroic service as we look out on The Mall. We are going to dedicate in a couple of weeks a memorial to the 16 million men and women who served in World War II. On Memorial Day, during that dedication, we will not only remember the 16 million who served but the nearly 800 who have lost their lives in Iraq.

One of the hallmarks of our military in this great democracy is that our military is controlled not by soldiers, sailors, and airmen, but by civilians. We maintain this critical feature of our system with checks and balances by having a Commander in Chief who is a civilian. The Secretary of Defense and his deputies are civilians, so these remarks are directed to the civilian leadership of our military.

Harry Truman was a war President. He had a sign on his desk that said, "The buck stops here." He knew that in any administration there would be mistakes, and he accepted responsibility for mistakes that occurred on his watch.

President Truman knew it was important to admit mistakes and take responsibility so the mistakes would not be repeated. He knew if we didn't admit mistakes, we couldn't learn from them.

The current administration has made some mistakes, and I have outlined some of them. We know in the first gulf war 90 percent of the war costs were paid for by other countries, and our allies provided about 200,000 troops. But in this war we are bearing 90 percent of the cost and taking 90 percent of the casualties. They said Iraqi oil revenues would pay to rebuild the country, but we keep appropriating more money and are being asked to come up with \$25 billion more.

Vice President CHENEY predicted that our soldiers would be greeted as heroes, bouquets would be thrown. Bombs are being thrown instead. We are now hearing that the administration received warnings about the treatment of prisoners months ago, but those warnings were not taken seriously.

Last week, when Secretary Rumsfeld was in the Capitol in 407, the room where we hear classified information, we weren't told that "60 Minutes" that very night would have a story about mistreatment of prisoners, with pictures of naked men, Iraqi prisoners, to humiliate them. Now it has humiliated America. We should have been warned about that. They knew or should have known that they were about to become public and that they would affect the course of events in the ongoing war on terror. After the civilian leadership has claimed for months that it needed no more money, we are now asked for \$25 billion.

This is not to cast stones but to cast responsibility. Mistakes always have consequences. In war, the consequences are a matter of life or death. We talk in