

start takes you far off course over time.

Over the last week, we have seen some conspicuous signs of bipartisan cooperation, including tonight, when the majority chose the road of cooperation to fix a gap in our national intelligence before we left for the August recess. Americans are grateful to the majority for joining us on this critical issue. Under the leadership of my friend the majority leader, Congress has acted on the sound principle that cooperation is a better recipe for success than confrontation and political theater. All of us should be glad about that.

We have seen that we can accomplish good things by working together and cooperating on legislation that Americans support. Politics certainly has its place, but it doesn't steer this ship, at least it shouldn't. There is simply too much to be done, and we have seen the results when it does.

So I would not offer a grade for this Congress. Others have already done that. But I will say that at the beginning of this session, I staked my party to a pledge: When faced with an urgent issue, we would act. When faced with a problem, we would seek solutions, not mere political advantage. That pledge still stands. We have seen what we can do. We have actually seen it tonight. And we have reason to hope we will see it still.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

IRAQ

Mr. REID. Mr. President, last week the Iraqi people celebrated a very rare triumph, they won a soccer game. But their celebration had nothing to do with decreased violence, improved distribution of water, electricity or other basic necessities or, of course, political reconciliation. It was a soccer game. Iraqis were celebrating their victory in the Asian Cup soccer championship, as well they should. But even during this rare moment of joy, political realities could not be ignored. After his game-winning shot, team captain Younis Mahmoud told reporters he would not be returning to his home country, and he hoped that the American forces would leave Iraq quickly.

The setting, a great victory for the Iraqi soccer team. Their hero, their captain, says: I am not going home. I am not returning to Iraq, and I want the Americans out.

His words reflect the overwhelming sentiment of the Iraqi people whose hopes he carried on his shoulders. A recent poll showed that 70 percent of Iraqis think American forces make them less safe.

President Bush said 2 weeks ago, the war in Iraq has invited guests, and we would leave if asked. They are asking, we are not going.

Yesterday was a day without water in Baghdad. It was 115 degrees. There was no water because there was insufficient electric generation for water filtration and distribution of water. This was the sixth day in a row with virtually no water in the capital city, this huge metropolitan area, no water. People are drinking water when they can, but it is contaminated, and they are getting sick. Four dead American soldiers yesterday.

Meanwhile new evidence emerges by the day. Prime Minister al-Maliki is utterly failing to achieve the political reconciliation the country so desperately needs. Even worse, there is no evidence he is even trying.

Next month the administration will deliver a progress report on Iraq to us, the Congress of the United States. We, of course, will take that report seriously, but it has been clear for some time that this war and President Bush's troop escalation is a tragic failure. General Petraeus, whom we hear so much about, has said time and time again, the war cannot be won militarily. Many of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle have said for months that September would be the turning point, that in September, if meaningful progress has not been made, they will finally work with us to reach a responsible end to the war.

When we come back in September, the eyes of the world will be on those Republicans who made September their month to draw a line in the sand. I hope they would back their words up with action. Democrats have done everything we can do. All Democrats, we have done everything we can do. We need some help from the Republicans to change the course of that intractable civil war, costing the American people about \$350 to \$360 million every day. We need to finally take a stand together, Democrats and Republicans, to deliver a responsible end to the war that the American people demand and deserve and turn our military focus to the grave and growing threats we face throughout the world that have been ignored by this administration for far too long.

LEGISLATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, my friend, the distinguished Republican leader, came to the floor, talked about a number of things tonight. I wish to approach things in a little different direction. I wish to talk about what we have accomplished in these short 7 months. We have worked hard. We have worked long, hard hours, something that hasn't been done for a long time in this body. Let's talk about the bills we have sent to the President of the United States that we have passed.

Minimum wage. We hear a lot about minimum wage, but minimum wage is

not for kids flipping hamburgers at McDonald's. Sixty percent of the people who draw the minimum wage are women. For over half those women, that is the only money they get for themselves and their families.

I am glad we passed the minimum wage. After 10 years, we have given this legislation the attention it deserves. It is an issue that deals with women. It does. But also it is an issue that deals with people of color. The majority of the people who draw the minimum wage are people of color. We did the right thing. It is important legislation, and it is now the law.

A short time ago, we finished a vote on terrorism. On 9/11, it was an act of terror that killed over 3,000 Americans. President Bush went to Ground Zero on a number of occasions, but it was thought we should take a look at what really happened on 9/11. What could we do to better prepare for similar attacks? What went wrong? Why weren't we prepared?

So we asked—we Democrats asked—for months and months—that went well into more than 2 years—why don't we have an investigation to find out what went wrong? This was fought by the President. Finally, after an outcry from the survivors of the 9/11 victims and people all over this country, we were able to get a bipartisan commission to study 9/11. Even though the President opposed it, we finally were able to get this done.

They recommended we do certain things to make us safer. They made their recommendations, sent them to the White House, sent them to Congress, and we begged the President to implement these recommendations. They were not implemented. The 9/11 Commissioners came back and graded the President on how he had done—Fs and Ds on everything.

This Congress, in these short 7 months, has passed legislation that implements the 9/11 Commission recommendations. There was a signing ceremony today at the White House. That is now the law. It is going to make our country much safer. The problem is, it is 3 years behind schedule.

We, as Democrats, recognize we had elections last November. There was tremendous turnover. People never believed Democrats would take control of the Senate. There was some talk they would take over the House. The Senate was never thought to be a body that we would take over. We did.

Why did we take over the Senate? We have nine new Democratic Senators, one of whom is presiding over the Senate tonight. Those nine Democratic Senators campaigned on a number of issues. But the one issue they campaigned on all over this country is to do something about the culture of corruption in Washington.

Why were the nine new Democrats concerned? For the first time in 131 years, someone working in the White House was indicted. Scooter Libby has

now been convicted and pardoned by the President. Mr. Safavian was appointed by the President to take care of Government contracts. He was a dishonest man. He had sweetheart deals with other people, including Jack Abramoff. He was led away from his office in handcuffs and is now in prison.

In the House of Representatives—controlled by the Republicans—the former majority leader of the House of Representatives was convicted three times of ethics violations. They changed the rules for him. He was indicted twice in Texas for crimes. Those are still going forward. A number of Members of the House of Representatives are now in jail; House staff in jail.

The K Street Project. What was the K Street Project? What it was: If you were a lobbyist downtown, you had to do what DeLay and the boys in the House wanted you to do or you could not get a job down there. They had to approve who was hired on K Street. That is what we call the “lobbyist fiefdom.”

So there was a reason the nine new Democratic Senators wanted us to move forward quickly on ethics and lobbying reform. S. 1, the first bill we did—the most important bill is listed No. 1—was ethics and lobbying reform; and we passed it. It has been passed. It is the most sweeping ethics and lobbying reform in the history of our country.

I have said publicly, I say again in front of one of the nine new Democratic Senators, thank you for bringing to Washington a new culture. Yesterday, when that passed, we are in that new culture now.

We have sent to the President benchmarks to measure progress in Iraq. We sent to the President and funded mine-resistant combat vehicles. We sent to the President legislation giving the National Guard the equipment they need. The President went to the gulf—Katrina—and looked at it 22 times, I am told. But he would not give them any money. We forced the President to take what we wanted to give him in the supplemental appropriations bill—\$7 billion. And we got that to the gulf victims.

We got disaster relief for small businesses and farms—3 years overdue. Wildfires are burning in the West as we speak. In Nevada, last week, we had 20 fires burning at the same time. We have one fire we share with the State of Idaho that is approaching a million acres burning. We got wildfire relief.

We were able to pass a law preserving the U.S. attorneys’ independence. Why did we do it? Well, they were firing U.S. attorneys. The Presiding Officer was a U.S. attorney. There is an old saying in the law: What are you trying to do, make a Federal case out of it? Why did we say that? Because U.S. attorneys make cases you cannot beat most of the time.

But these U.S. attorneys, under this administration—under this corrupt administration—had to do what this ad-

ministration wanted them to do or they had to go look for a new job. We do not know the full extent of what U.S. attorneys did because of political pressure from Karl Rove and others at the White House. I do not know if we will ever know. We know some of it.

What else have we passed? A pay raise for our troops, making college education more affordable. We passed in our reconciliation bill the most significant change in college education since the GI Bill of Rights. We passed CAFE standards, raising the fuel efficiency of vehicles for the first time in 25 years.

We passed, recently—first of all, in the supplemental appropriations bill, we funded SCHIP, the Children’s Health Insurance Program, until the 1st of October. And here, yesterday, we passed health insurance for children. The Wounded Warriors legislation passed; a balanced budget with pay as you go. What does that mean? We passed a budget. The Republicans, for 3 years they had a majority of 55 to 45, and they could not pass a budget. We did it with a majority of 1—50 to 49. It is balanced, it is pay as you go. The Republicans, in the past, ran up these astronomical debts for our country, and did it with red ink.

We do not do that. We gave middle-class tax cuts, extended the child tax cut, gave tax relief for small businesses, funded women’s health. We expanded eligibility for Head Start.

We had 94 hearings addressing the conduct of the war, and it is so important we have done that. As a result, we were able to take a look at the scandals that took place at Walter Reed, where our veterans were being neglected. We have things in progress we have passed and are waiting for conference reports to come back.

We are going to try—we tried to pass it tonight. There was an objection to reauthorizing the FDA, Food and Drug Administration, WRDA, Water Resources Development Act. We passed the competitive legislation that some say is some of the most important legislation passed in this body in decades, making this country more competitive educationally and in the business world.

The President has vetoed important legislation—stem cell research. Giving hope to millions of Americans has been vetoed by the President. The President vetoed timelines for bringing our troops home from Iraq.

And then, of course, we had a number of things blocked by obstructionism of the Republicans—lower priced prescription drugs. We were prevented from being able to vote because we could not get 60 votes, with the obstructionism of the Republicans on the ability of Medicare to negotiate for lower priced drugs. Insurance companies can do it, HMOs can do it but not Medicare. That is wrong, and we have been blocked from doing that.

We were even stopped from doing an Intelligence authorization bill. It is

hard to comprehend, but that is true. This country is at war with the terrorists, but they have prevented us from doing an Intelligence authorization bill; there are a number of agencies in this country that handle our intelligence, our spying, and they stopped us from updating what they need to be able to do.

They twice filibustered antisurge legislation in Iraq, forced 45 cloture votes.

So, Mr. President, we have had a very productive 7 months. I hope we can come back and do more. I have been very happy with the last month or so. It appears bipartisanship is breaking out all over. I hope that can continue. As I said yesterday, when we do something good, there is a lot of credit to go around. When we do not do anything, there is a lot of blame to go around.

THANKING STAFF

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I extend my appreciation to our valiant staff. I wish them a very pleasant August. They worked so hard, along with us. We could not do our work without them. Everyone in this body here tonight—from our pages to our Parliamentarians to all the clerks, court reporters, police officers—I appreciate all the work they do.

FDA

Mr. REID. Mr. President, one thing I failed to mention with FDA, we got a letter from the administration saying: Go to conference on FDA. We tried. It was blocked by three Republicans. They should not have written the letter to me. They should have written it to them.

TRIBUTE TO HAZEL GETTY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to join all our Senate colleagues and the Sergeant-at-Arms in honoring a valued, longtime Senate employee, Hazel Getty. Hazel will retire on August 3 from the Senate after 28 years of faithful and successful service.

For a staff member, Hazel has the unusual distinction of having served everyone in the Senate—Members, officers, staff, the Capitol Police and the Architect of the Capitol, and all their constituencies from her office in the Sergeant-at-Arms Printing, Graphics and Direct Mail, PG&DM, branch. In her role as manager of that department, Hazel has supported the people and processes which yield the many excellent printed products we rely on to inform, persuade and delight. Franked mail, floor charts, posters, the beautiful “Welcome to Washington” books we give to visitors, photocopying, and flag packaging are a few major services provided by Hazel’s department, and there are many more. The extremely high quality of PG&DM products testifies to Hazel’s devotion to excellence, to the Senate, and to the employees who work with her.