

State of the Union supper tonight at 6:30 p.m. in S-211.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 2557

Mr. REID. Mr. President, S. 2557 is at the desk and due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2557) to extend the Protect America Act of 2007 until July 1, 2009.

Mr. REID. I object to any further proceedings with respect to this bill at this time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard. The bill will be placed on the calendar.

REMEMBERING GORDON B. HINCKLEY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I would say very briefly that someone I have gotten to know over the last number of years died last night at 7 o'clock—the leader of the Mormon Church, a man who has been instrumental in the tremendous growth of the church. During his period of time, the church has grown by millions of new people coming into the church. He has been a phenomenal builder, building scores of new temples around the world. As we speak, there is one new church building being built every day, being dedicated every day. That is a lot of construction. I was told last week that the largest single builder of buildings in the United States next to the Federal Government is the LDS Church, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, of which this good man was the leader.

He is someone who has done some very unique things. He started what is called the Perpetual Education Fund. About half the members of the church are located outside of the United States. Millions of members of the church are located in Mexico, Central and South America. He started what is, as I have indicated, called the Perpetual Education Fund, which is a voluntary contribution made from members of the church to help these people who are coming into the church be educated. As a result, tens of thousands of people are now educated and are now church and community leaders around the world.

There is so much more that could be said about this good man who was kind and gentle and epitomized everything that is good in mankind, and certainly on a personal basis I will miss him greatly.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I am not aware of any problems with regard to the nominee for Secretary of Agriculture, and we are running a hot-line on this side. I anticipate that it will be cleared shortly, and that will be a confirmation we hopefully can get out of the way at some point this afternoon.

WORKING OR BLAMING

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, tonight, in keeping with an old custom, the President will speak to Congress and the Nation about the state of the Union. Every President since George Washington has given these periodic updates because the Constitution requires them to do so.

While the Constitution makes no similar demands on congressional leaders, there is no doubt that this year the American people are demanding something from us. They are looking for proof that Republicans and Democrats can come together to get a few things done on their behalf.

Just 1 week into the session, and we are faced with a crucial test, two issues of vital significance to every American citizen: Will we reauthorize a terror-fighting tool that we know has made us safer, and will we put money back into the taxpayers' hands quickly enough for it to have a positive effect on the Nation's economy? It is not an exaggeration to say that the choices we make on these issues will show the public whether we are serious about protecting them from harm and serious about protecting their wallets. So the question is this: Will we find a way to work together or will we find a way to get out of it and then blame the other side?

We got off to a good start. Last Thursday, millions of Americans were absolutely stunned to turn on their television sets and see the Democratic Speaker of the House and the House Republican leader standing together on a stage behind the Treasury Secretary from the Bush administration and nodding in agreement about an economic growth package they had all worked out among themselves. It was the kind of scene many people have wondered if they would ever see again.

For the first time in years, the parties have come together in good faith and responded swiftly to a pressing national concern. They sensed that the Nation was impatient for action, and so they gave up a lot of what they wanted in order to find common ground. House Republicans made major sacrifices. So did House Democrats. Now the Nation's attention turns to us, to the Senate, to see if we are capable of the same. Here is our moment to show that we are.

A number of Senators have expressed a desire to add to this package tens of billions of dollars in spending on contentious programs. But we don't have

the time for ideological debates. In order for this plan to work, Congress needs to act and to act at once.

This is not the package, frankly, that I would have put together. In my view, the best way to stimulate the economy would be to lower marginal rates. But neither is it the package my good friend, the majority leader, would have put together. I gather from his public statements he would prefer there be more spending on Government programs. The Speaker and the House Republican leader would also have built a package differently if they had written it on their own, but they put their differences aside because they know we will all get nothing if we are not willing to make some serious sacrifices.

The editorial writers at the Washington Post urged us Friday not to let the perfect be the enemy of the good. Low- and middle-income taxpayers certainly agree. They are tapping their fingers wondering if we can do it.

Americans are also wondering if we can agree on something as fundamental as our national security, and for good reason. We saw some worrisome signs last week that some of our friends were looking for a way out of what would be and could be a good bipartisan achievement on reauthorizing a terrorist surveillance program.

They should remember that 3 years ago, following the lead of the 9/11 Commission, Congress came together to create the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, approving the bill that established it by a vote of 89 to 2. The Director of National Intelligence was supposed to be the person who would connect the dots, who would make sure intelligence gaps were closed, who could look across the entire intelligence landscape and tell us about our vulnerabilities before terrorists discovered them on their own.

Last year, he did just that. The Director of National Intelligence came to Capitol Hill and asked us to either fix the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act that allowed us to monitor foreign terrorists overseas or risk weakening this vital intelligence-gathering tool.

Our friends across the aisle put off action for months before finally passing a temporary revision right up against the August recess. Then they delayed again last fall, pushing us up against the expiration of the temporary extension. Now they are delaying again.

There is only one version of a long-term extension that agrees with the recommendations of the Director of National Intelligence, and that is the pending Rockefeller-Bond substitute bill. This bill was carefully crafted on a strong bipartisan basis and reported out of the Intelligence Committee on a vote of 13 to 2. It is the only version the Director of National Intelligence has approved. It is the only version the President would sign. Therefore, it is the only one that has any chance of becoming law before the current extension expires on Friday of this week.

The time to act has long since passed. We need to approve Rockefeller-Bond, and we need to do it this week.

Some of our friends on the other side say they will not vote for cloture on Rockefeller/Bond because they could not amend it. No one should be deceived by this complaint. The amendments they want would transform it into a replica of the partisan bill that was reported out of the Judiciary Committee last fall. In other words, allowing amendments would guarantee failure.

Some of our friends on the other side say they want a 1-month extension. Never mind that we have had 10 months to act already. No one should be deceived by this complaint either. The real reason for the 1-month extension, of course, is to give Members who vote in favor of it the political cover they need to vote against Rockefeller/Bond. This is another clever way to make the bill fail.

Some of our friends on the other side say we are wrong to insist that phone carriers who may have cooperated with the Government in tracking terrorists be immune from lawsuits. The implication is that this is some kind of a favor for big business. But this advice is coming from the intelligence community, not politicians, because they know that we could never expect these companies—or any others—to cooperate in the future as long as the threat of a lawsuit looms.

Finally, some of our friends accuse us of being scaremongers for urging passage now. But the terrorist threat has not diminished since 9/11. It hasn't expired. The Director of National Intelligence assures us it hasn't. The memory of 9/11 tells us it has not. Attacks in Madrid and London and Bali tell us it has not. And the terrorists themselves tell us it has not. The threat is real. And we cannot let success in preventing another one keep us from staying on offense with all the tools and resources we have. The bottom line is this: by voting for cloture on Rockefeller/Bond, Members will guarantee that this important antiterror tool does not expire. And those who vote against it are voting either to delay its reauthorization or to weaken, not strengthen, our terror-fighting tools.

Fixing FISA is within our grasp. Will we come together and embrace the compromise approach that protects us, and doesn't force companies to make a false choice between the good of the firm or the good of the country or will we go the partisan route? It would be a worrisome sign indeed if the first bill Democrats filibuster this year deals with national security. We must resist the mistakes of last year, and act.

Last week, we saw the kind of tough compromise that's necessary when lawmakers are more concerned about making a difference than making a political point. Now it is our turn. The second session is young. But the choices we make this week will define

us. And in my view, it is a welcome opportunity.

Here in the second week of the session we have a chance to show Americans that we can work together on their behalf, to solve problems; to protect their security and protect their wallets. This is a defining moment for the 110th Congress. Let's put the mistakes of last year behind us. Let's show that the U.S. Senate can get the job done.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period of morning business until 3 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Utah is recognized.

DEATH OF GORDON B. HINCKLEY,

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, as the majority leader noted, last night Gordon B. Hinckley, the oldest serving president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the history, passed away. He was 97 years old. Many might think that in lasting until 97 he passed away as a wasted, worn-out man. That is not true. President Hinckley was energetic and enthusiastic and fully engaged within just a day or two of his passing. With my senior colleague Senator HATCH, I have had meetings with him and the other leaders of the church and was always amazed at how well connected he was. He read the papers. He watched the television. He knew what was going on in the world outside the church every bit as much as we did. His memory was phenomenal. There are many people who were 20 to 30 years his junior who could not remember current items of news as well as he could.

So it is appropriate we take a moment or two to comment on the stewardship and contribution of this great man at the time of his passing. We do not mourn for him. He has joined his wife, his parents, and those others who have gone before him who may have a little sense of "Gordon, what took you so long?" But he stayed at his job and he fulfilled his stewardship in an impressive manner. The mourning we have on this occasion is mourning for ourselves, for the loss we have sustained in seeing this great and good man go on.

I have made mention of his energy. I should also mention his enthusiasm. He had a great zest for life. He was always looking forward to the next activ-

ity and the next opportunity. Along with his energy and enthusiasm, he was a man of humility and humor. You were never quite sure when he stood at the pulpit to speak if he was going to say something that would put you at ease and make you laugh, because that happened much more often than it did with some others who were a little more serious in their message. His messages were always serious, but they always had that touch of humor.

The last message we heard from him, speaking to the entire world in general, and to the church specifically, was his sermon of last October. I am sure he did not know that would be his final sermon to the members of the church. But it started out again with a touch of Hinckley humor. He noted, as he stood to speak, that singers will sing the same song over and over again, as people ask them to perform; orchestras will play the same symphony over and over again; but speakers are always expected to say something new. He said that bothered him a little, as he was going to repeat a sermon he had given before. After we smiled at his early comments, we heard a lecture on anger. He talked about the toxic effects of anger and how we should do our very best, both in our personal lives and in our professional lives, and, if I may, here in the Senate in national dialog, to do away with the sense of anger.

I have just returned from the annual session in Davos, Switzerland, where I heard a lot of people who could benefit from that sermon, as there was a lot of anger people had toward other governments and other government officials.

I will not in any way attempt to capsize what President Hinckley had to say about anger, except to demonstrate that this was his benediction prior to his death to the members of his church, telling them not to be angry with their families, not to be angry in their communities, and not to be angry with the world.

A former Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, Paul, spoke in his letter to the Corinthians about the three most important attributes of a Christian: faith, hope, and charity. Gordon B. Hinckley spoke of these same attributes and lived them in his life. But he put them, if you will, in modern terms: optimism, confidence, and love. A sermon telling us not to be angry with our fellow men is a fitting capstone to the stewardship of this man. It is a modern way of saying Paul's term "charity" or the pure love of Christ. We shall miss him.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Utah, Mr. HATCH, is recognized.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may speak for about 5 minutes on Gordon B. Hinckley.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I associate myself with the remarks of my colleague from Utah, Senator BENNETT.