

Senator PAUL.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business with the Senator from Kentucky, Mr. PAUL, recognized for 20 minutes.

AMERICA'S FISCAL CRISIS

Mr. PAUL. Madam President, I am honored by the privilege of serving in the Senate. I am both honored and humbled by the responsibility of defending our Constitution and our individual freedoms. I will sit at Henry Clay's desk. There is likely no legislator from Kentucky more famous than Henry Clay. He was the Speaker of the House; he was a leader in the Senate. He ran for President four times and nearly bested James Polk.

Henry Clay was called the "Great Compromiser." During my orientation, one of my colleagues came up to me and asked: Will you be a great compromiser? I have thought long and hard about that. Is compromise the noble position? Is compromise a sign of enlightenment? Will compromise allow us to avoid the looming debt crisis?

Henry Clay's life is at best a mixed message. His compromises were over slavery. One could argue that he rose above sectional strife to keep the Union together, to preserve the Union. But one could also argue that he was morally wrong and that his decisions on slavery, to extend slavery, were decisions that actually may have even ultimately invited the war that came, that his compromises meant that during the 50 years of his legislative career he not only accepted slavery but he accepted the slave trade.

In the name of compromise, Henry Clay was by most accounts not a cruel master, but he was a master nonetheless of 48 slaves, most of which they did not free during his lifetime, and some of which were only freed belatedly 28 years after his death.

He supported the fugitive slave law throughout his career. He compromised on the extension of slavery. When he was the Speaker of the House, there was a vote on extending slavery into Arkansas. The vote was 88 to 88. He came down, extraordinarily, from the Speaker's chair to vote in favor of extending slavery into Arkansas.

Before we eulogize Henry Clay, we should acknowledge and appreciate the contrast with contemporaries who refused to compromise. William Lloyd Garrison toiled at a small abolitionist press for 30 years, refusing to compromise with Clay, with Clay's desire

to send the slaves back to Africa. Garrison was beaten, chased by mobs, and imprisoned for his principled stand.

Frederick Douglass traveled the country at the time. He was a free Black man, but he traveled at great personal risk throughout the countryside. He proved, ultimately, that he was the living, breathing example that intellect and leadership could come from a recently freed slave.

Cassius Clay was a cousin of Henry Clay, and an abolitionist. In the Heidler's biography of Henry Clay they describe Cassius Clay as follows: A venomous pen was his first weapon, and a Bowie knife his second weapon. He was so effective with the first weapon that he was wise to have a second weapon handy.

Cassius parted ways with his cousin Henry Clay, although they worked together on some things, and Henry Clay got him out of a few difficult times with the law. But they parted ways when Cassius Clay published a letter where Henry Clay seemed to be more in favor of emancipation than he was publicly. They never spoke again after that. Henry Clay disavowed the letter and condemned Cassius Clay.

Cassius Clay was an unapologetic abolitionist. He was an agitator. He made people mad, particularly slave owners and slave traders. One night in Foxtown, he was ambushed by Squire Turner and his boys. They were slave traders. They came at him with cudgels and knives. They ambushed him from behind and stabbed him in the back repeatedly. As he fell to the ground, Tom Turner held his pistol to the head of Cassius Clay and fired. The gun misfired. He fired again and it misfired. He fired a third time, and as it misfired for a third time, Cassius Clay was able to reach into his belt and pull his Bowie knife and gutted one of the Turner boys, killing him.

Cassius Clay refused to compromise. Cassius Clay was a hero, but he was permanently estranged from Henry Clay. Henry Clay made no room for true believers. Henry made no room for the abolitionists. Who are our heroes? Are we fascinated and enthralled by the Great Compromiser or by Cassius Clay?

Henry Clay came within 38,000 votes of winning the Presidency. He almost beat James Polk. He lost one State. If he had won that one State, he would have been President. The State was New York, and he lost it because a small fledgling party, the Liberty Party, a precursor to the Republican Party, an abolitionist party, refused to vote for Henry Clay because of his muddled views on slavery. One could argue that Clay's compromises ultimately cost him the Presidency.

Those activists who did not compromise—Garrison, Wendell Phillips, Frederick Douglass, Cassius Clay—are heroes because they said slavery is wrong and they would not compromise.

Today we have no issues, no moral issues, that have equivalency with the

issue of slavery. Yet we do face a fiscal nightmare, potentially a debt crisis in our country. Is the answer to compromise? Should we compromise by raising taxes and cutting spending, as the debt commission proposes? Is that the compromise that will save us from financial ruin? Several facts argue against that particular compromise.

Government now spends more money than it ever has before. Raising taxes seems to only encourage more spending. Government now spends one in four GDP dollars. Twenty-five percent of our economy is government spending.

Any compromise must shrink the government sector and expand the private sector. Any compromise should be where we cut Federal spending, not where we raise taxes. The problem we face is not a revenue problem, it is a spending problem. It is spending that is now swollen to nearly a fourth of our economy. The annual deficit is nearly \$2 trillion.

Entitlements and interest will consume the entire debt, the entire budget, if we do nothing. Within a decade, there will be no money left for defense, no money left for infrastructure, no money left for anything other than the entitlements and interest if we do not tackle this problem.

Many ask, will the Tea Party compromise? Can the Tea Party work with others to find a solution? The answer is, of course there must be dialog and ultimately compromise. But the compromise must occur on where we cut spending.

Even across the aisle, we have Democrats who are now saying, you know what, it is a problem. We should not raise taxes in a recession. So we are finding some agreement. The compromise we as conservatives must acknowledge is that we can cut some money from the military. The other side, the liberals, also must compromise that they can cut some money from domestic spending. Freezing domestic spending, though, at 2010 levels, as the President proposed in his State of the Union, does almost nothing. In fact, it freezes inflated spending levels, and will do nothing to avoid a crisis.

There is a certain inevitability to this debate, as the debt bomb looms and grows perilously large. As long as I sit at Henry Clay's desk, I will remember his lifelong desire to forge agreement. But I will also keep close to my heart the principled stand of his cousin Cassius Clay, who refused to forsake the life of any human simply to find agreement.

Madam President, I yield back the remainder of my time.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I congratulate Senator PAUL on his maiden speech in the Senate, and applaud him for taking the opportunity to underscore the seriousness of the fiscal situation we are in.

Solving the Nation's fiscal problems will indeed require principled leadership, and I am confident Senator PAUL

will play an important role in guiding us toward real solutions.

Senator PAUL is a lawmaker to watch. He brings a keen intellect and rare passion to the job. He will be an important voice in this body in the many debates to come.

I look forward to working with him on behalf of Kentuckians and all Americans.

Mr. DEMINT. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

FAA AIR TRANSPORTATION MODERNIZATION AND SAFETY IMPROVEMENT ACT

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 223, which the clerk will report by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 223) to modernize the air traffic control system, improve the safety, reliability, and availability of transportation by air in the United States, provide for modernization of the air traffic control system, reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Stabenow amendment No. 9, to repeal the expansion of information reporting requirements for payments of \$600 or more to corporations.

McConnell amendment No. 13, to repeal the job-killing health care law and health care-related provisions in the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Madam President, this is, in fact, the aviation bill. As everybody knows, that is what we are doing; we are doing the aviation bill. We are talking about health care, but secretly we are doing the aviation bill. So I thought it would be interesting to talk about the aviation bill, to sort of bring people's minds back to that very important subject. It is interesting, because we want transparency, no filling up of the tree, everybody could offer all of the amendments they want. We immediately got amendments to repeal health care and other kinds of things but nothing about aviation. So as manager of that bill, I am going to talk about aviation. I do not guarantee it will be a scintillating speech, but it is going to be about aviation, because that is the bill we are on.

I rise to speak about—which I did a little bit yesterday—the modernization

of the Nation's air traffic control system. It is kind of important to New York and New Jersey.

I cannot emphasize enough to all of my colleagues the importance of this issue to the United States. It is an issue I care deeply about, one Senator HUTCHISON cares deeply about, one I am completely committed to getting done. We have to. It is a *sine qua non*. It will make air traffic safer, more efficient, provide numerous economic and environmental benefits.

I touched on air traffic modernization in my opening statement yesterday. But I want to spend a short time, knowing that my colleague Senator HUTCHISON is here and wants to talk, on the air traffic modernization. It just has to be discussed in a tiny bit greater detail so people understand how important it is.

There will be some technical stuff in here, and I apologize for that, but people have to understand this. I know this subject is very technical. It is very confusing. It has lots of acronyms, unmemorable acronyms, but the technology will change aviation in truly amazing ways, and it is of overwhelming importance to the country.

Every time I get in my car, I find it implausible that so many automobiles navigate using more sophisticated global positioning systems than aircraft. Well, that is amusing, except it is horrifying, actually. It is horrifying. We can do it in Detroit with automobiles that sell for \$15,000, \$25,000, but we cannot do it on a multimillion-dollar aircraft because we have not decided to do it aggressively in our legislation. So we have to upgrade our system now or we are going to face absolutely enormous consequences.

I continue to believe that the modernization of our Nation's antiquated air traffic control system has to be one of the Nation's highest priorities. We have fallen behind, as is now—it is actually kind of interesting. It has become a mantra: We have fallen behind Mongolia. People like to talk about that. I am the original author of that startling fact—this tiny little nation ahead of us. But it does not make any difference. Everybody should steal the line because it makes the point: They have it. They are building it from scratch. We do not. So if we recognize the benefits of using the most advanced technology and if they do, perhaps it is something we might think about.

The United States, of course, has a much larger and more complex airspace system than Mongolia or any other country in the world, but this is precisely the problem: that we are so big and we are so complicated; there are 36,000 flights in a day. There are airplanes during the day, all day long, all over the country, at different altitudes, coming in, avoiding weather, avoiding each other, facing delays or not. Our aviation system actually moves 30,000 flights a day—I would say 36,000, but it says 30,000—and nearly 800 million people per year—a lot tougher

than Mongolia. But we face gridlock if we do not make significant progress on modernization and make it very soon. The FAA's most recent forecasts estimate demand for air travel will be about 1 billion people within the next decade. That is a 40-percent increase. That is horrific.

Senator ISAKSON has just come on the floor. His airport in Atlanta is one of the most complicated and busy in the entire world. He needs, as do we all, an air traffic control system which is digitalized, which makes communication between air traffic controllers and pilots much more accurate so they can see terrain, they can see mountains, they can see weather, all in streamingly live exactitude.

The economic downturn of the past several years has actually, in a quirky way, bought us some time to reform our system. We have declined to use it, but this will quickly change as the economy rebounds. Our present air traffic control system is stretched to its limits already. Anyone who flies on a regular basis has experienced the system's congestion and delay problems. We talked about that yesterday. We will talk more. This system will not meet the projected growth of the next decade.

So we have this choice. An industry that employs 11 million people and several more in indirect jobs, that traffics 800 million people around the country to all kinds of places large and small, very complicated—runway problems, gateway problems, all kinds of problems—if we do not have this up to speed, we are a nation in trouble and people will start dying.

The Next Generation Air Transportation System, NextGen, will create significantly more capacity by allowing aircraft to move more efficiently and take more direct routes. I talked about that yesterday. It is so important. Planes now, because of the sort of radar ground-based system, wind their way to their destination, avoiding planes, avoiding weather, and how quickly can they see it, how accurately can they see it, are they aware of the altitude of other planes above them and below them? Probably not very accurate. So they don't take direct routes. So these improvements, if they do take direct routes, will save our economy billions annually.

The technology will also allow the FAA to safely allow the closer spacing of aircraft. More aircraft can land and do so more safely because of the reality of the digitalization of everything is so clear to the pilot and to the air traffic controller. They are in sync for the first time with a highly sophisticated system. And the Northeast corridor probably will be the greatest beneficiary of all of that. It will be.

Greater operational efficiency will also create substantial environmental benefits. Drastic reductions in fuel consumption—taking more of a straight line from one place to another rather than going all over the place—saves a