

of Senate control four times by five different majority leaders.

One cannot be an effective Parliamentarian without being fairminded and judicious, but Alan Frumin also brings to the job a willingness to hear both sides of an argument and consider every side of the issue. He has patience. I have never heard him raise his voice. I never saw him to be agitated. He is always calm and cool. What a wonderful example he is for all of us.

The truth is, Senate Parliamentarians aren't simply appointed, they grow into the job. So I am pleased that the talented Elizabeth MacDonough, who has worked for Alan for a decade, will succeed him. Elizabeth will be the sixth person to hold the job of Parliamentarian since it was created in 1935, and the first woman. She steps into very large shoes.

I will miss Alan's experience and guidance greatly, but I wish him all of the best in his retirement. But he is really not going to retire; he is going to continue to edit Riddick's Senate Procedure, the official book of Senate procedure, and no one is more qualified than Alan to do this.

Congratulations, Alan. Thank you very much for your service.

RECOGNITION OF THE REPUBLICAN LEADER

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, let me also add some words about Alan Frumin. For those who are not aware of what the Parliamentarian does around here, he is sort of like an umpire in a ball game calling balls and strikes. It should not surprise anyone to hear that we have not always agreed on those calls. But it is not an easy job to be an umpire for 100 Senators. It is not easy to keep up with 200 years of precedents. And to Alan's credit, he never hesitates to admit when he thought he got something wrong.

Alan has a deep love for the Senate and the people who make it work. From the elevator operators and the cooks to the most senior Senators, he keeps up relationships with all of them. He cares a lot about this institution, and he has the service to show for it.

As the majority leader indicated, Alan has been here since 1974—longer than all but just a handful of us. So he has really seen it all. We will miss his devotion and his intellect. We are glad he has been able to spend more time with his wife Jill and his daughter Allie. I know they love to travel. Hopefully they will be able to do more of that.

Thank you, Alan, for four decades of service to this institution we all love and admire, and good luck in everything that lies ahead.

STOCK ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, last night the Senate voted to proceed to

the STOCK Act—a bill, incidentally, that was coauthored by two Republicans. I am glad the majority leader is going to allow amendments for a change. Up until a few years ago, the Senate has been known as a forum for open-ended debate. The minority party may not have always gotten its way, but at least it knew it would always be heard. It is something we have not done nearly enough of in these past few years. I hope it does not prove to be a false promise. I expect Senators on both sides of the aisle will have a number of amendments to this legislation.

But one thing that stands out is the fact that the President is calling on Congress to live up to a standard he is not requiring of his own employees. So I think we can expect at least one amendment that calls on executive branch employees to live up to the same standards they would set for others. If the goal is for everyone to play by the same rules, that should not mean just some of us, and it certainly should not leave out those in the executive branch who, after all, have access to the most privileged information of all.

So the goal in the course of this floor debate will be to make sure the executive branch—those most likely to take advantage of insider information—is fully and adequately covered by this regulation.

But let's be clear. President Obama is not interested in this bill because it would address the Nation's most pressing challenges. Of course it will not. He is interested in it because it allows him to change the subject. The more folks are talking about Congress, the less they are talking about the President's own dismal economic record. Frankly, for a President who has presided over a 43-percent increase in the national debt in just 3 years and the stain of the first ever downgrade of America's credit rating, I can certainly understand why he would want to change the subject. I can see why he would rather be talking about Congress or the Super Bowl or the weather or anything other than his own failed economic policies. But the problems we face are too grave and too urgent, and every day the President spends time trying to change the topic instead of changing the direction of the economy is another day he is failing the American people who elected him.

Now, the President can pretend he just showed up. He can try to convince people, as he tried to do this weekend, that the economy is moving in the right direction, but he is not fooling anybody. Americans know we are living in an economy that has been weighted down and held back by legislation he passed with the help of a big Democratic majority in each House of Congress. Americans know we are living in the Obama economy now—we are living in the Obama economy right now—and they are tired of a President who spends his time blaming others for an economy he put in place. They want the President to lead.

I have yet to see a survey in the past year that shows Americans agreeing with the President on the direction of the country or the economy. The ones I have seen all say the opposite. Wide bipartisan majorities believe the country is on the wrong track.

For small business owners, the people we are counting on to create jobs in this country, the numbers are even starker. According to a recent survey conducted by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 85 percent—85 percent—of small business owners say the economy is on the wrong track. Eighty-four percent of them say the size of the national debt makes them unsure about the future of their businesses. Eighty-six percent worry that regulations, restrictions, and taxes will hurt their ability to do business. Just about three-quarters of them say the President's health care bill will make it harder for them to hire. In other words, it is a huge drag on job creation.

If I were the President, I would probably rather be talking about Congress too. I understand why he would rather be talking about what Congress may or may not do rather than what he has already done. He would rather be talking about what Congress may or may not do rather than what he has already done. But he has a job to do. He was elected to do something about the problems we face, not blame others for our problems. He was elected to take responsibility for his own actions, not pretend they somehow never happened.

Today the Congressional Budget Office will release an annual report on the Nation's finances. We do not know all the particulars, but I can tell you this: It will not paint a very rosy picture. Our fiscal problems are serious, and every day that the President refuses to address them, they become harder to solve.

So my message to the White House this morning is simple: It is time to lead.

I yield the floor.

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 until 11:30 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the final half.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Illinois.

RETIREMENT OF ALAN FRUMIN

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, many years ago when I graduated from

Georgetown Law School, I was offered a job by the Lieutenant Governor of Illinois, Paul Simon. He asked if I would join his staff in Springfield, IL, in the State capital and if I would serve as his senate parliamentarian. I jumped at the chance. I was in desperate need of a job with a wife, a baby, and another one on the way.

Deep in debt, I skipped my commencement exercise to get out and on the payroll in Springfield of the Illinois State Senate. The first day I walked in on the job at the Lieutenant Governor's office they handed me the senate rule book. It was the first time I had ever seen it. They parked me in a chair next to the presiding officer of the Illinois Senate, the Lieutenant Governor, and said: Now you are here to give advice.

I spent every waking moment reading that rule book and trying to understand what it meant. There wasn't a course like that in law school or anything that gave me guidance as to what I was to do. I made a lot of stupid mistakes, and I learned along the way what it meant to be a senate parliamentarian.

It was a humbling experience, in many respects, to learn this new body of law, how it applied to the everyday business of the Illinois State Senate. It was equally humbling to be in a position where your voice was never heard but your rulings were repeated by so many.

I recall that many years later—14 years later—I was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. After serving 12 of those 14 years in the office of the Illinois State Senate Parliamentarian, I cannot describe to you the heady feeling I had when I went on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives, they handed me the gavel, and I actually presided over the U.S. House. After 14 years of silence as the Illinois State Senate Parliamentarian, I was speaking before one of the greatest legislative bodies in the world. So I have some appreciation for the role of a parliamentarian, and particularly for the contribution of people such as Alan Frumin. In some respects, it is a thankless job, because you are bound to make some people upset. As the majority leader mentioned, we respect Alan's impartiality as Parliamentarian, but many times we go back to our office and are critical of it at the same time. We hope he will rule in our favor instead of the other way.

Alan has been faithful to precedent, to the rules of the Senate, and that is all we can ask of a person who serves in his position. He has to tolerate the titanic egos that occupy this Chamber. I used to say that the majority leader is the captain of a small boat full of titanic egos. That is the nature of this institution. Alan has been called on more often than most to deal with the peculiarities of even my colleagues and myself.

I wish him the best after more than 35 years of service to the Congress,

both in the House and the Senate. I am glad he is going to continue at least on the research side to establish a body precedent that will guide the Senate and the Congress in the years to come.

Alan, thank you so much for all the service you have given to the Senate, to the Congress, and to the United States.

To Elizabeth MacDonough, congratulations. It is great you will be coming into this new role. It is precedent-setting in and of itself that you will be the first woman to serve as the U.S. Senate Parliamentarian. We all respect very much your professionalism and look forward to working with you—even when you give us disappointing rulings.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I listened to the comments made by the Republican leader about how he believed President Obama is trying to change the topic and not talk about the economy and, rather, talk about ethical standards in the U.S. Congress. I have to say this is an issue that resonates with me personally because, as I mentioned earlier, I have been honored to have been brought up in public service by two outstanding individuals, former U.S. Senators Paul Simon and, before him, Paul Douglas. Both of these men had integrity as a hallmark. Even as people in Illinois disagreed from time to time with their positions on issues, they never questioned their honesty. That is my background, my training, and I have tried to continue in that tradition.

I accepted the standard, which was first initiated by Senator Paul Douglas and carried on by Senator Paul Simon, of making a complete income and asset disclosure every single year. I think if I look back now, I can trace it back to my earliest campaign, certainly back to my time in the office of the Lieutenant Governor. Almost every year I made that disclosure. There was some embarrassment in the early years, because my wife and I were broke and we showed a negative net worth because of student loans. We suffered some chiding and embarrassment over that. Over the years, even my wife got to where she didn't pay much attention on April 15 when I released all this information.

What we are considering on the floor is a tough issue. It is this: When you earn something as a Congressman or Senator, what should you do to take care that you don't capitalize on that, that you don't turn that into part of a personal decision that might enrich you? It is a legitimate issue, and I support the legislation that is on the floor, though I think it will be challenging to implement.

We should never capitalize on insider information, private information given to us in our public capacity, to enrich ourselves, period, no questions asked. What we have before us now is an opportunity to call for more timely dis-

closure of those transactions that Members of Congress—in this case Senators—engage in that might or could have some relationship to information they learned in their official capacity.

I quickly add that this is a challenge because, honestly, in our work in the Senate we are exposed to a spectrum of information on virtually every topic. People sit and talk to us, those in an official capacity and also unofficially, about the future of the European Community, what will happen there, and if the European economy goes down or up, what impact will it have on the United States. We learn these things in meetings; we think about them as we vote on measures on the floor. Obviously, they are being discussed widely in the public realm as well. So drawing those lines in a careful, responsible way is going to be a challenge for us.

But disclosure is still the best antidote to the misuse of this public information. I don't think it is wrong for the President to challenge us or for the Republican leader to challenge the executive branch at the same level. That is fair. You know I am friendly to the President. I am a member of his party and was a personal friend to him before he was elected, and I still am today. He should accept the challenge from the Senator from Kentucky to look at the standards within the executive branch to see if they meet at least the minimum standards set by this legislation. We should look at it, as well, in terms of our responsibilities as Senators.

I take exception to the comments made by the Republican leader when it comes to the state of the economy and the role of the executive. The Senator from Kentucky said there has been change in the national debt, since the President was elected, by an increase of 4 percent. I am sure that is close to true if not true in detail. But look at the circumstances. When President Clinton left office and turned the keys over to President George W. Bush, the national debt was \$5 trillion, and the next year's budget would have been the third in a row in surplus by \$120 billion—not a bad welcome gift from the outgoing President, William Jefferson Clinton.

Now fast forward 8 years as President Bush left office and handed the keys to President Obama—quite a different world. Instead of a national debt of \$5 trillion, 8 years later, it was \$11 trillion, more than double under President George W. Bush, a fiscal conservative by his own self-description. Look at what he left for President Obama in his first budget, in the first year: a \$1.2 trillion deficit. Not a surplus, but a deficit 10 times as large as the surplus left by President Clinton. That is what President Obama inherited.

He said in the State of the Union Address that we had lost 3 million jobs in the 6 months preceding his being sworn in and another 3 million before his stimulus bill was passed and implemented. Six million jobs were gone;