

Senate, the policies of the New Freedom led to the creation of the Federal Reserve, the Federal Trade Commission, the Clayton Antitrust Act, the eight-hour workday, child labor laws and workers' compensation. Wilson was also able to appoint the first Jew to the Supreme Court, Louis D. Brandeis.

Even when the president became besieged with troubles, both personal and political—the death of his first wife; the outbreak of World War I; an increasingly Republican legislative branch; agonizing depression until he married a widow named Edith Bolling Galt—Wilson hammered away at his progressive program. In 1916, he won re-election because, as his campaign slogan put it, “He kept us out of war!” A month after his second inauguration, he appeared yet again before Congress, this time, however, to convince the nation that “the world must be made safe for democracy.” This credo became the foundation for the next century of American foreign policy: an obligation to assist all peoples in pursuit of freedom and self-determination.

Suddenly, the United States needed to transform itself from an isolationist nation into a war machine, and Wilson persuaded Congress that dozens of crucial issues (including repressive espionage and sedition acts) required that politics be “adjourned.” Wilson returned again and again to the President's Room, eventually convincing Congress to pass the 19th Amendment: if women could keep the home fires burning amid wartime privation, the president argued, they should be entitled to vote. The journalist Frank I. Cobb called Wilson's control of Congress “the most impressive triumph of mind over matter known to American politics.”

In the 1918 Congressional election—held days before the armistice—Wilson largely abstained from politics, but he did issue a written plea for a Democratic majority. Those who had followed his earlier advice and adjourned politics felt he was pulling a fast one. Republicans captured both houses. With the war over, Wilson left for Paris to broker a peace treaty, one he hoped would include the formation of a League of Nations, where countries could settle disputes peaceably and preemptively. The treaty required Senate approval, and Wilson, who had been away from Washington for more than six months, returned to discover that Republicans had actively, sometimes secretly, built opposition to it—without even knowing what the treaty stipulated.

Recognizing insurmountable resistance on Capitol Hill, even after hosting an unprecedented working meeting of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee at the White House, Wilson attempted an end run around the Senate: he took his case directly to the people. During a 29-city tour, he slowly captured public support. But then he collapsed on a train between Pueblo, Colo., and Wichita, Kan., and had to be rushed back to the White House. Days later he suffered a stroke, which his wife, his physician and a handful of co-conspirators concealed from the world, leaving Mrs. Wilson to decide, in her words, “what was important and what was not.”

In March 1920, having recovered enough to wage a final battle against the Republicans, Wilson could have garnered support for a League of Nations by surrendering minor concessions. But he refused. The treaty failed the Senate by seven votes, and in 1921, the president hobbled out of the White House as the lamest duck in American history, with his ideals intact but his grandest ambition in tatters.

Two months ago, our current president, facing financial cliffs and sequestration and toting an ambitious agenda filled with such incendiary issues as immigration reform and

gun control, spoke of the need to break “the habit of negotiating through crisis.” Wilson knew how to sidestep that problem. He understood that conversation often holds the power to convert, that sustained dialogue is the best means of finding common ground.

Today, President Obama and Congress agree that the national debt poses lethal threats to future generations, and so they should declare war on that enemy and adjourn politics, at least until it has been subdued. The two sides should convene in the President's Room, at the table beneath the frescoes named “Legislation” and “Executive Authority,” each prepared to leave something on it. And then they should return the next day, and maybe the day after that. Perhaps the senior senator from Kentucky could offer a bottle of his state's smoothest bourbon, and the president could provide the branch water. All sides should remember Wilson and the single factor that determines the country's glorious successes or crushing failures: cooperation.

March forth!

Mr. ALEXANDER. I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican whip.

TEXAS INDEPENDENCE DAY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I rise to commemorate a very special day in history—a day that inspires pride and gratitude in the hearts of the people of the great State of Texas. I rise today to commemorate Texas Independence Day, which was actually this last Saturday, March 2.

I will read a letter that was written 177 years ago from behind the walls of an old Spanish mission known as the Alamo—a letter written by a young lieutenant colonel in the Texas Army, William Barret Travis. In doing so I carry on a tradition that was started by the late John Tower, who represented Texas in this body for more than two decades. This tradition was later carried on by his successor, Senator Phil Gramm, and then by our recently retired colleague, Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison. It is a tremendous honor that this privilege has now fallen to me.

On February 23, 1846, with his position under siege and outnumbered by nearly 10 to 1 by the forces of Mexican dictator Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, Travis penned the following letter, “To the People of Texas and All Americans in the World:”

Fellow citizens & compatriots—

I am besieged by a thousand or more of the Mexicans under Santa Anna.

I have sustained a continual Bombardment and cannonade for 24 hours and have not lost a man.

The enemy has demanded a surrender at discretion. Otherwise, the garrison are to be put to the sword, if the fort is taken.

I have answered the demand with a cannon shot, and our flag still waves proudly from the walls.

I shall never surrender or retreat.

Then, I call on you in the name of Liberty, of patriotism and everything dear to the American character, to come to our aid, with all dispatch.

The enemy is receiving reinforcements daily and will no doubt increase to three or four thousand in four or five days.

If this call is neglected, I am determined to sustain myself as long as possible and die like a soldier who never forgets what is due to his own honor and that of his country.

Victory or Death.

Signed:

William Barret Travis.

As we all know, in the battle that ensued, 189 defenders of the Alamo lost their lives. But they did not die in vain. The Battle of the Alamo bought the precious time for the Texas Revolutionaries, allowing Sam Houston to maneuver his army into position for a decisive victory at the Battle of San Jacinto. With this victory, Texas became a sovereign and independent republic. For 9 years, the Republic of Texas thrived as an independent nation. Then, in 1845, it agreed to join the United States as the 28th State.

Many of the Texas patriots who fought in the revolution went on to serve in the U.S. Congress. I am honored to hold the seat once occupied by Sam Houston. More broadly, I am honored to have the opportunity to serve 26 million Texans because of the sacrifices made by these brave men 177 years ago.

May we always remember their sacrifices and their courage. And may God continue to bless Texas and these United States.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHATZ). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

IMMIGRATION

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, last week, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement—also known as ICE—initiated a precipitous action to reduce the population of the illegal immigrants detained by the U.S. Government for, they said, “budgetary reasons.”

Let me quote ICE spokesperson Gillian Christensen, who stated, “As fiscal uncertainty remains over the continuing resolution and the possible sequestration, ICE has reviewed its detained population to ensure detention levels stay within ICE's current budget.” So the result was a release of a significant number of detained illegal immigrants and blaming it on the sequester's imminent budget cuts last week, when it appears ICE mismanaged its resources.

That is unacceptable. This was an unnecessary action. It has the potential to put communities at risk. It is ineffective, inefficient, and irresponsible government.

Let's be clear about something else that ICE points to as a reason for this action, “fiscal uncertainty.” Fiscal uncertainty is what has defined our economy over the past 4 years because this government cannot get its act together. This government has failed to

define for the American people, whether it is business men or women or whether it is homeowners, or anyone else in this country who is looking to Washington to get its act together, what the future will look like. Then decisions can be made as to how to adapt to necessary changes or modifications given our dismal fiscal situation, plunging into debt at record rates, borrowing 40 cents of every dollar. It is unsustainable. But instead of providing a clear path forward on how we will address this, we continue to lurch from cliff to cliff, fiscal calamity to fiscal calamity. It is freezing everything in place. The economy is suffering for it, and more than the economy, Americans are suffering for it. The 23 million Americans who are either unemployed or underemployed are suffering greatly.

Sadly, this uncertainty and the budget constraints we face should not catch any department or agency by surprise. This is not good government, but it is the Washington way under this administration and the current Democrat-led Senate. The Department of Homeland Security and ICE have known since September 28, 2012 exactly what level of resources were available for ICE under the current continuing resolution.

For those who do not understand the jargon that comes out of this place, "continuing resolution" means a stop-gap measure that Congress put in place last September in order to fund this government at the current levels. That expires March 27. We likely will do it again for the second 6 months of the year, instead of putting a budget together, instead of putting together something that would give the American people certainty as to how much money we are going to spend, and what effect it would have on the economy.

Anyway, ICE has known their spending level since September 28, as has every agency. So they had plenty of notice. Why then would ICE release detained illegal immigrants a week before the sequestration even took place? Why did they not take proper steps necessary during the 6 months time they had to evaluate this and manage their resources in a way that would not require that someone make the decision to release hundreds if not thousands of illegal immigrants?

In an effort to sort out the facts, I have requested Secretary Napolitano provide in writing more information and answer several questions regarding the release of those individuals from detention. Question No. 1: What triggered the ICE instruction to the field to reduce the detainee population by this date?

Secondly, what is the total number of detainees released between February 22, 2013, and February 25—a 3-day period of time? How many were released? These numbers have been all over the lot, from the low hundreds to well into the thousands. We need to know how many illegal immigrants were released

in the United States and under what conditions that decision was made.

We need to know how many of these detainees were released solely due to so-called "budgetary" reasons. How many of the released detainees were designated as criminals? If additional funding can be found first within ICE or DHS for custody operations, will these released individuals be returned to detention, and how will they be rounded up and how will they be found?

We know that not all law enforcement authorities were notified of this in Arizona. It is unlikely to think that we know where all of those individuals are at this time. I do not think they are going to come back and voluntarily line up and say: Oh, I am back; I knew I should not have been released.

Have instructions been given to field offices to reduce the intake and arrest of illegal aliens into detention?

Furthermore, I want to know if the Secretary agrees with the decision to release these individuals. If not, what is being done to modify this action so it does not take place in the future?

I am also concerned that the administration has not taken accountability for this action. Secretary Napolitano distanced herself from the press by saying, "Detainee populations and how that is managed back and forth is really handled by career officials in the field." Well, that may be the case, but that is not an appropriate response.

Is anyone in this current government willing to take responsibility and say, the buck stops here? I am assigned to this position and therefore I take responsibility for what happens underneath my position? This constantly, "well, we didn't know about that," or "that is somebody else's obligation," or "really, do you expect us to be on top of that"—yes. That is why you are CEO for a company. That is why you get paid more than anybody else. That is why you were selected as Secretary of a department or the head of an agency, to take responsibility for what happens underneath you.

I was also struck by the Secretary's comments at an event hosted by Politico yesterday where she talked about the challenges DHS faces because there is not the opportunity to shift money around.

I agree with that. Republicans agree with that.

On this floor, just last Thursday, Republicans put forward a proposal to allow agencies to do just that after weeks and months of moaning and groaning by this administration and by its various agency heads about how this sequestration has made the situation much worse. It is stupid. It is a terrible way to do things. I agree, by the way.

However, we need to be able to have the flexibility to move the money from less efficient—or not needed at this time—to the essentials. We wouldn't need to put out statements such as: Arrive at the airport 4 hours early because we need to cut the TSA agents at

the same level as the least function of this particular government.

We put that proposal before us. The President, who has been begging for this, simply said: No, we are not going to do it. It was a quick change of mind. I think it destroyed his political narrative. This proposal was before this Senate body last week to give those agencies the flexibility to take from one pot that wasn't needed as much—or take from areas that are efficient—and put it toward traffic controllers, transportation security officials, FDA, Department of Agriculture meat inspectors, wherever the priorities lie. To complain about not having flexibility when your own President rejected the proposal given by Republicans to allow that to happen, it just boggles my mind.

As I have said many times before over the past 2 years when the various department heads come before the Appropriations Committee: Do you have an alternative plan? Do you have a plan in the event the money doesn't continue to flow in from the taxpayer at a rate which allows you every year to increase, increase, increase, your spending? We are running out of money. Wouldn't it be wise to look at how you could run your department more effectively and efficiently as States have had to do, cities had to do, businesses had to do, families had to do? They need to make those decisions about separating the essential from the "would like to do but can't afford to do it right now." We need to eliminate the items and programs that never should have been funded in the first place or the programs that used to work, but are not a high priority any longer. Manage your department in a way that you can become more effective, do more with less.

To date, all the answers that have come back are, no, this is what the administration wants. This is what we are going to do. We are going to ask for an increase next year, and we are going to tell the American people we need to raise their taxes in order to pay for it or we are going to continue to borrow and go deeper and deeper into debt. It is a terrible way to run any organization, whether it is a Little League organization, a business or even the Federal Government of the United States. No agency can assert with any credibility that it cannot perform its stated mission if it is asked to join the rest of Americans in reducing its budget and making modest cuts. The irony is that the more Congress and the President delay action on a bold long-term fiscal plan with credible spending reforms, the more all other programs, agencies, and departments will need to cut back and do more with less.

We are simply pushing the problem down the road for another day. Each time we push it down the road with short-term fixes or no fixes at all and don't address the real problems, we are making it ever harder and will be forced to do it in a more Draconian way.

If the Cabinet Secretaries want more flexibility with their budgets, I urge them to encourage the President to lead and reform the main problem and to address the main drivers of our spending, which is the runaway mandatory spending that is eating everybody's lunch. Whether you are for paving more roads, fixing more bridges, funding more medical research or whether you want more money to go into education or any other function of government, if you can't address the big donkey or elephant in the room, which is the mandatory runaway spending, there is not going to be enough funds for any other priorities. We have all known that year after year after year.

Without leadership from the top this cannot happen. It has been tried many times, sometimes with bipartisan efforts, all shot down because we don't have leadership from the White House and from the President of the United States. He is the chief CEO of this country and he needs to manage resources in a more effective way.

Only when we do that will we be able to avoid these constant budget showdowns and short-term stopgap measures which don't solve the problem.

I yield the floor, and I 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. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Morning business is closed.

AUTHORIZING EXPENDITURES BY COMMITTEES

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 64, which the clerk will report by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 64) authorizing expenditures by committees of the Senate for the period March 1, 2013, through September 30, 2013.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, first, I wish to thank Senator PAUL, who is going to be offering his amendment in a few minutes, for allowing me to go first. I would like to spend a few minutes speaking in opposition to the Paul amendment.

I wish to talk about the Senate National Security Working Group, which will be the subject of the Paul amendment. This group, along with its predecessor organization, the Senate Arms Control Observer Group, has served a useful role in helping the Senate to fulfill its unique constitutional duty to consider treaties and to provide its advice and consent to their ratification.

The Senate National Security Working Group is a key component of the Senate's ability to provide advice on treaties before those treaties are finalized because the working group begins meeting with the administration early in the process of negotiation. This was the case for the Senate consideration of the New START treaty a few years ago. The National Security Working Group convened a series of briefings and meetings with the administration starting at the very beginning of the negotiation process, and through the group the Senate has many opportunities to learn of the progress and details of negotiations and to provide our advice and views to the administration throughout the process.

Let me first assure my colleagues that throughout the entire New START negotiation process, the members of the National Security Working Group asked a great number of questions, received answers at a number of meetings, stayed abreast of the negotiation details, and provided advice to the administration. It is a vital process that not only allows Senators to engage the administration early in the negotiation process, but it also gives the administration an opportunity to respond to Senators' concerns and questions and to guide the process in such a manner as to avoid problems during Senate consideration of the treaty ratification process. That was, in fact, the principal original purpose of the Arms Control Observer Group, which ensured early Senate engagement during the negotiation process. This process helps to ensure that there is a core of Senators who are informed on treaty matters before the Senate takes up ratification, and through those Senators the entire Senate can have a role.

I also want to mention briefly to my colleagues that the National Security Working Group is perhaps unique among Senate institutions in that it is, by design, purely bipartisan. It is actually composed of an equal number of Senators from each side of the aisle. Its decisions and actions are not controlled by the majority party; they are arrived at entirely through bipartisan agreement—something we could use more of around here. The bipartisan nature of the group, which is central to its function and its crucial role in helping the Senate fulfill its constitutional treaty role, is something we should support and continue.

We expect there are going to be some additional preliminary negotiations and discussions about those negotiations this year. It is very important that this National Security Working Group continues to have the ability to pave the way for negotiations that can be fruitful.

As I yield the floor, I again thank Senator PAUL for his courtesy in allowing me to go first.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, as some of you may have heard, we are a bit short

of money. We are borrowing \$50,000 every second. We borrow over \$4 billion every day. In a year's time we borrow over \$1 trillion. There are ramifications to that. Some economists now say that the burden of our debt is costing us 1 million jobs a year. What I am asking is, in the midst of this sequester when people say we have no money to cut, to take this small item.

Why would I want to cut this small group? There are a couple of reasons. It is called the National Security Working Group—about \$2.8 million, which is not much money in terms of Washington. But why would I want to cut it?

The first reason would be that there are no records of them meeting. We heard about the START treaty. It was in 2009 when they were last meeting. There are no public records that this group, which spends \$700,000 a year, has met in the last 3 years. There are no public records of who works for the committee. There are no public records of their salaries. Every one of my staff's name and salary is printed in the public record—not for this group.

Now, they say we need this group to negotiate treaties. Well, we have a group; it is called the Foreign Relations Committee. I am on the Foreign Relations Committee, and that is where we discuss treaties—or at least we are supposed to. The Foreign Relations Committee has dozens of employees, and millions of dollars are spent on our committee. It goes through the regular process. Our staff's salaries are approved, the names are in the public record, and if you object, you know where to look for the information. To fund a group that has no records and no records of them meeting and doesn't tell you where they are paying the salaries I don't think makes any sense.

Our job is to look at the money as if it were ours, as if it were yours, and pay attention to detail.

Will this balance the budget? No. Is it a place we should start? Yes. Absolutely. What I would call for is looking and saving where we can. In my office, I have a \$3.5 million budget. I saved \$600,000 last year, and I turned it back in to the Treasury. That doesn't balance the budget, but we have to start somewhere. This is another \$700,000. If I win this one vote, I could save \$700,000—or at least save us from borrowing another \$700,000. If all of your elected officials were up here doing the same, we would be much closer to a resolution. I turned in \$600,000 to the Treasury—18 percent of my budget—and I didn't lay off anybody because we are careful about the way we spend. We spend as if it were our own money. If all of our public officials were doing that, imagine what we could do.

I have another bill that will never see the light of day up here because they don't want to fix anything. This bill would give bonuses to civil servants—Federal employees—who find savings. Right now we do the opposite. If your budget is \$12 million and you work somewhere in the bureaucracy of government, you want to spend it at the