

Louis, MO, to look at some of their research. A lot of the research NIH does has been done in our State; one-third of the research for the human genome project was done in our State.

Then, on Tuesday evening, for the fifth year in a row, I was at the fund-raising event for the Children's Inn at the National Institutes of Health, where families and children can stay while they are there for treatment. This is a private sector event. In spite of everything else that was going on, it was a great event where lots of money was raised for those kids.

I said at that event that somebody told me years ago that if everybody in your family is well, you have lots of problems. If somebody in your family is sick, you have one problem. The Children's Inn is one of the places where people help families deal with the one problem they have.

But as virtually every Member of this Senate at one time or another has said, the work of the NIH is important. It is important that it continue. The House yesterday passed a House joint resolution that would continue that work.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.J. Res. 73, making continuing appropriations for the National Institutes of Health for the fiscal year 2014; that the measure be read three times and passed; and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I am going to make a counteroffer to the Senator from Missouri which is even better. It is going to open the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control, and all of the medical research at the Department of Defense. We are going to make sure all of the medical research and medical services of the Federal Government in every agency at every level are open for business immediately, and the Senator from Missouri, by agreeing to this modification, will go way beyond the National Institutes of Health. He is going to be opening all of these medical services.

Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that the request be modified as follows: that an amendment which is at the desk be agreed to; that the joint resolution, as amended, then be read a third time and passed; and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

This amendment is the text that passed the Senate, is a clean continuing resolution for the entire government, including the National Institutes of Health, and is something that is already over in the House and reportedly has the support of a majority of the Members of the House of Representatives. This is an opportunity for the Senator from Missouri to finally break down this government shutdown

and put all the medical services of the Federal Government back in business immediately.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection to the modified request?

Mr. BLUNT. Reserving the right to object, I would remind my good friend from Illinois that there was a time when in the Senate we dealt with all of these issues individually—as we should have last year and didn't. There were no appropriations bills on the floor.

A continuing resolution is not the best way to do the business of the country, and I would object.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

Is there objection to the original request?

Mr. DURBIN. I object.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— H.R. 3230

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I yield to the Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, the men and women who serve our Nation in the Guard and Reserve shouldn't be impacted by a partial government shutdown.

Recently, the House and Senate unanimously passed the pay our military first act, which was signed into law by the President this past Monday. That bill ensures that Active-Duty military and those who support them stay on the job regardless of the dysfunction in Washington. Congress was right and passed the legislation, and President Obama was right to immediately sign it into law.

Today, the House of Representatives is going to pass H.R. 3230, the Pay Our Guard and Reserve Act. This bill provides funding to pay Guard and Reserve troops who are not currently on Active Duty. Although these men and women currently don't have Active-Duty status, they have regularly scheduled training requirements. They stand ready to serve in overseas conflicts and to respond to domestic disasters if called upon by their country.

These men and women proudly serve this country, and they should not be impacted by spending disagreements in Washington. Today the Senate has a chance to give these individuals and their families greater certainty by passing H.R. 3220, as soon as it is received from the House.

I am sorry to hear that the majority and the President have already indicated they are going to oppose this and that the President has threatened to veto this legislation. I can't imagine that we would not do for our Guard and Reserve troops what we have already done for our Active-Duty troops. I think that is a big mistake.

So I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate receives H.R. 3230, making continuing appropriations during a government shutdown to provide

pay allowances to members of the Reserve components of the Armed Forces; that the measure be read three times and passed; and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I would ask the Senator from Illinois and the chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense to respond.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I am going to offer to the Senator from South Dakota an even better deal. Not only will we help the reservists, not only will we open the Veterans' Administration, but out of the two million federal workers, 800,000 have been furloughed. There are over a half a million veterans in the federal workforce and a fourth of them are disabled. Now I am going to give the Senator from South Dakota an opportunity to put them all back to work immediately, including paying the reservists and everything he suggested.

I ask unanimous consent that the request of the Senator from South Dakota be modified as follows: that the amendment which is at the desk be agreed to; that the bill as amended then be read a third time and passed; and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

This amendment is the text that passed the Senate. It is a clean continuing resolution for the entire government and will put thousands of disabled veterans back to work. It is something already in the House and reportedly has the support of a majority of the Members of the House of Representatives.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection to the modified request?

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, as the Senator from Illinois has already pointed out, that has already passed in the Senate. What he is suggesting is already in the House, not being acted on.

What the Senate can act on is legislation that is being sent from the House that would ensure that our National Guard and Reserve troops are treated the same way as our Active troops are treated. I think that is only fair and only fitting. These are people who not only respond to domestic disasters but are also involved in conflicts overseas on a regular basis.

So I would object.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The objection is heard to the modification requested.

Is there objection to the original request?

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, on behalf of the one-half million veteran Federal employees, one-fourth of whom are disabled, I object.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

The Republican whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, may I inquire how much time is remaining in our allocated time?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Thirteen minutes.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I grew up in an Air Force family. My dad served in World War II in the Army Air Corps, and as I have mentioned on this floor many times, he continued to serve for 31 years in the U.S. Air Force.

As fate would have it, he was transferred to Tachikawa Air Force Base in Japan right after my junior year in high school. So I graduated from high school in Japan, and I became acquainted with this 17th century stylized form of drama and dancing called kabuki.

The thing about kabuki is that the audience oohs and aahs as the actors demonstrate their great skill at carrying out this stylized form of drama and dance. What we have seen on this government shutdown, contrived as it is, is a form of kabuki. We know exactly what is happening.

The Senate, under the majority leader, has turned down at least four—and now here today four more—proposals from the House of Representatives to try to mitigate some of the hardship as a result of their determination to protect the special congressional carve-out from ObamaCare—which was tabled the other day at the instance of the majority leader—as well as to deny average Americans the same opportunity the President has unilaterally given to employers to delay the implementation of ObamaCare for 1 year when it comes to the individual mandate.

That is what the majority has objected to. That is what the majority leader in a party-line vote has tabled, and that is the only reason we are engaged in a government shutdown—because of their refusal to accept those reasonable conditions from the House of Representatives.

So this is kabuki as we in America understand it. We all understand the dance. We understand this is a form of drama. But the problem is the American people are suffering either hardship or great inconvenience as a result of the unwillingness of the President of the United States to negotiate and the hard-line “my way or the highway” position of the majority party.

I ask my colleagues who are on the floor—both of whom served with great distinction in the House of Representatives—whether they believe the House has acted in good faith, whether they have tried to resolve this impasse by sending over to the Senate reasonable pieces of legislation which, if accepted by the majority, could break this impasse and reopen the Federal Government.

I ask the Senator from Missouri to respond first.

Mr. BLUNT. Let me say to my friend from Texas that until the leadership in the Senate changed to the current leadership 7 years ago, we always did appropriations by debating and advancing individual things.

The idea that we don't want to debate anything if we don't debate every-

thing makes no sense. It is not the way the government should run.

I think the House is not only well intended but that their goal is a worthy goal. The House of Representatives, led by Republicans beginning in 1995, doubled NIH funding in 10 years. My good friend from South Dakota and I were there for the majority of that 10-year doubling of NIH funding.

Last year in the Appropriations Committee markup I voted for a bill that would add \$1 billion extra to NIH funding. It was defeated in the committee. This year I voted for a bill that would add almost \$1.5 billion of additional NIH funding.

This makes a difference in the lives of people. Dr. Francis Collins, the Director of NIH, has estimated that each week there is a shutdown his agency's research hospital would have to turn away an estimated 200 patients. He estimated 30 of those patients would be children.

I know they took the children and individuals who were coming Monday and Tuesday but are now beginning to notify people: If you were scheduled to come, we have 4,000 people working and 14,000 people not working. We can't accept you right now.

I think this is the right thing to do. It is an easy thing to do, if we would just stand and do it.

If we do not oppose NIH—and I do not believe there is a Senator who does—why don't we continue their funding and do it right now?

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I heard the assistant leader on the Democratic side, the majority side, yesterday make what I thought was a very impassioned speech on behalf of access to research that is provided by the NIH for children who are suffering from cancer. I ask the Senator from Missouri, would the bill the House has passed and the Senator asked consent the Senate consider address the very same sort of cancer research for children the assistant majority leader was arguing for yesterday?

Mr. BLUNT. I was impressed by the comments of my friend from Illinois yesterday about NIH funding. I am for NIH funding. I have never failed to vote for NIH funding. Frankly, I have never failed to vote for an amendment that would increase NIH funding, as far as I know. I have seen it increase dramatically.

Opening the doors of that research facility is the right thing to do. We could do it today. I cannot imagine the President would not sign a bill that let three-quarters of that workforce go back to work and let the 200 people who will be turned away in the next 7 days be told instead: Come on, be part of this process. We are waiting for you. We are here. We are doing the kinds of things your family critically needs us to do.

Mr. CORNYN. I ask the Senator from South Dakota, I know South Dakota has a lot of uniformed military. The Senator has already addressed a piece

of legislation that has passed the House and come over here. Is it the Senator's impression that the House is trying to address some of the hardships—inconvenience in some cases, hardships in others—that are caused by the government shutdown? In his experience, are they being reasonable in demonstrating good faith in trying to break this impasse?

Mr. THUNE. I say to the distinguished whip, the Senator from Texas, he is exactly correct. The House of Representatives has moved several pieces of legislation—and will this morning—that address some of what we think are the real needs out there in the midst of a very unnecessary government shutdown. Some of those have been mentioned here on the floor this morning. I would point out two in addition: taking care of our Guard and Reserve troops as we have our Active-Duty troops—it is really important. All of us have Guard units with families that have been impacted. The House of Representatives has given us an opportunity to do that.

The other thing I would mention, I spoke yesterday about President Obama's refusal to open the World War II Memorial for veterans on their Honor Flight. He rejected their appeal to visit the memorial dedicated to their service, an opportunity to honor their brothers in arms, many of whom died in that great war. I am pleased that the veterans—not ones to be defeated—breached the barricades and took their memorial.

I have had the opportunity—my father is a World War II Navy fighter pilot—to be able to show him some of these memorials we have, monuments here in Washington, DC, particularly the one that was erected in honor of his generation.

They should not be denied the honor of visiting these monuments to their service.

When we are thinking about that generation of Americans, we had Senator MCCONNELL put forward an opportunity today to address the needs of our veterans. We found out that even though the veterans budget is advance-funded by a year, there are certain elements of that budget that are going to run out of money. We want to make sure those of the great generation that served our country, defended our country around the world, have access to the programs and the benefits that have been assured and promised to them.

I think it is unconscionable, unacceptable that we not agree to allow those services to continue to be funded. I am very disappointed to see our colleagues on the Democratic side resist and object to that motion here this morning. If anything, if any group of people in this country deserves to have the respect and also the promises honored, the promises we made to them, it is those American veterans.

If we look at the last shutdown in 1995 and 1996, President Bill Clinton

came to the table and supported legislation to protect veterans programs. I hope we could get some cooperation from our colleagues on the other side to do that today, I say to my colleague from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. May I ask how much time remains?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Three minutes.

Mr. CORNYN. I thank the Senators from South Dakota and from Missouri for making very important points. I know the leaders—bicameral leadership of the House and the Senate—were called to the White House last night, at which time Senator MCCONNELL, the distinguished Republican leader, reported here on the floor, the President announced he was not going to negotiate. Bizarre. Why would the President call the Republican and the Democratic leadership to the White House to say: I am not going to negotiate. Is it for a photo opportunity? Is it to give sort of some false impression that he is actually rolling up his sleeves and is engaged in the business of government to which he was elected?

I hope the President reconsiders leaving town while the government is shut down, in the words of the majority leader, and leaving for a trip to Asia while, as our distinguished Democratic colleagues just pointed out, many federal employees are furloughed during this government shutdown. My hope would be that the President would cancel his trip and that he would stay here in Washington, as we are, trying to solve this problem and break this impasse.

These proposals we have made here today, many of which have been voted on by the House of Representatives in a bipartisan fashion, are designed to do exactly that—to break this impasse. Yet what is the response of the White House to some earlier proposals? They sent out a Statement of Administration Policy saying: If it is passed, I would veto it. That is President Barack Obama. How is that rolling up your sleeves and being engaged in the job you got elected to? He earned it. He was elected twice as President of the United States. But it is not leadership to convene a meeting of Republican and Democratic leadership at the White House and say: I am not going to negotiate. And by the way, I am leaving town on Saturday. Good luck.

That leads me to conclude that the President and his party are actually enjoying this shutdown because they see this as partisan political gain. They read the public opinion polls, just as we do, but I do not think the American people should be fooled and they are not being fooled. House Republicans and Republicans in the Senate have made many reasonable proposals, only to be given the Heisman, and the President is not negotiating and the government remains shut down.

The President needs to stay here, demonstrate leadership, continue to meet with leaders on both sides of the

Capitol, and we can break through this impasse, get the money for children's cancer research, get the money for the troops, and open the World War II Memorial to the Honor Flights coming from Texas and around the country. We can do this. They call it self-government for a reason. We all ought to be working together toward that end.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican time has expired.

IRAQI SPECIAL IMMIGRANT VISA PROGRAM

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, having received from the House H.R. 3233, which is identical to S. 1566, the bill is considered read three times and passed. The motion to reconsider is considered made and laid on the table.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The assistant majority leader.

CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, there are two sides to every story. Before he leaves the floor, I would like to say to my friend from Texas—and he is my friend—I was at the World War II Memorial yesterday with an Honor Flight from Illinois. There were no barricades stopping them from going to the memorial, so the characterization on the floor that the veterans were stopped is not true, it is not accurate. I hope the record will reflect that.

The reason there is any question about access relates to the shutdown of the U.S. Federal Government, the shutdown of this government. We have passed a continuing resolution, which is a spending bill, to allow the government to function for 6 weeks. We passed it here in the Senate. The House Speaker, Mr. BOEHNER, refuses to call it for a vote.

There is a majority, Democratic and Republican, ready to vote for it, ready to reopen the government, no questions asked about the NIH, about the barricades at the World War II Memorial which were there originally. All these questions will be resolved. Three times this morning the Republicans have objected to bringing that measure up for another vote in the Senate. That worries me.

Let me say one other thing about the Affordable Care Act, the insurance exchanges. This morning—I am sorry he has left the floor—this morning, this is what the Republican leader, Mr. MCCONNELL, said about the insurance exchanges:

Embarrassing, embarrassing rollout over ObamaCare exchanges on Tuesday. I mean, one of the folks the President had standing behind him at the White House tried to log on and sign on to ObamaCare, and after a couple of unsuccessful attempts, the Post reports, she gave up.

I have good news for the Senator from Kentucky. When you look across the United States of America at the exchanges that have been opened, he

should hold as a matter of pride the fact that the Commonwealth of Kentucky is one of the most successful insurance exchanges in America. Listen to the report we just received this morning from the secretary of the Governor's Cabinet for Health, Audrey Haynes, in Kentucky. The Kentucky insurance exchange, which the Republicans want to close down, has had 117,000 unique visitors, 109,000 prescreenings to determine qualifications for health insurance, and 13,000 Kentuckians—already, in 2 days—already 13,000 have applied for health coverage and 8,000 are now complete.

This is great news. They are leading the country. Kentucky should be so proud. Mr. President, 122 small businesses have begun applications, 3,500 new families have been enrolled, and there have been 15,000 calls to the call center.

Apologize that we have not been able to process these as quickly in any State, but the overwhelming positive public response across America to what they call ObamaCare is an indication of pent-up demand in Kentucky, Illinois, and every State for people to finally get access to health insurance.

I see others are on the floor to speak. I want to say to my friends on the other side of the aisle, please reopen this government. We can sit down and negotiate—we should—about important issues, the issues the Senator from Washington addressed in the budget. Let's address all these issues. Let's do it in a bipartisan, thoughtful, adult manner. Telling 800,000 Federal employees to go home is really unfair to them. It is unfair to this Nation. It doesn't speak well of us.

The last point I will make is this. I left the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing this morning. Wendy Sherman is Assistant Secretary of State. She is widely respected. We were talking about the threat of Iran as a nuclear power. She said to us—and she said it with some regret—that the government shutdown is hurting our efforts to stop the development of nuclear weapons in Iran. How? Ninety percent of the employees at the Department of Treasury office responsible for monitoring Iran so that the sanctions are there and tough and bring them to the bargaining table—90 percent of those Federal employees have been furloughed at the Department of Treasury because the government shut down; and 72 percent—almost three-fourths—of all the men and women at our intelligence agencies in a civilian capacity have been laid off as well because of the government shutdown. These are men and women charged with watching the enemy every minute of every day so we never have another 9/11. This is one of the aspects of the government shutdown that literally jeopardize the security of the United States of America.

For goodness' sake, let's put this government back in business before the end of this day.