



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 161

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 2015

No. 73

Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Holy One, we desire to do Your will. May we acknowledge You as the source of all that is worthy. Thank You for Your gracious righteousness that is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Lord, help us to find rest and contentment in You.

Remind our lawmakers not to seek security apart from You. May they not forget that righteousness exalts a nation and that You are our shelter and shield. Equip them with everything good for doing Your will. Give them steadfast hearts, which no unworthy affection may drag downward. Teach them to serve You as You deserve.

And, Lord, sustain those who are dealing with the trauma of the Amtrak train derailment in Philadelphia.

We pray in Your mighty Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PAUL). The majority leader is recognized.

AMTRAK TRAIN DERAILMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, many of us awoke to terrible news this morning. We are still awaiting more in-

formation about what happened outside of Philadelphia, but we know this tragedy will touch the lives of many.

The Senate sends its condolences to the victims, those who were injured, and their families and loved ones. We also reaffirm our gratitude to our Nation's first responders.

TRADE LEGISLATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, it was really quite something to watch President Obama's party vote to filibuster his top domestic legislative priority yesterday. That is what we saw right here in the Senate. It left pretty much everyone scratching their heads.

The Democratic leader made clear yesterday that he was not interested in debating the "merits of the bill." In other words, he told us that this filibuster is for political reasons only.

It makes sense, considering that this filibuster is all about appeasing a facts-optional crowd on the left that hasn't been able to marshal much of a serious, fact-based argument to support its opposition to more American exports and more American trade jobs.

You don't have to take my word for it. It is President Obama who said the far left's arguments don't "stand the test of fact and scrutiny." It is President Obama who says the far left is just "making stuff up." And it is President Obama who warns the far left about "ignoring realities."

In other words, hardly anyone believes there is a serious policy leg for these folks to stand on—not that there is a viable process excuse for this filibuster, either.

A senior Senator in the Democrat leadership essentially rebutted the latest process argument yesterday. He said: "[N]o one disputed in committee that we'd get a vote separately"—separately—"on the customs bill" because it contained a provision, he said, that would bring down TPA.

What we can infer from this is that the demand to merge four separate

trade bills—including the Customs bill—into one trade bill isn't a strategy designed to pass better trade legislation but a poison pill designed to kill it. So we certainly won't be doing that, because our goal here should be to score a serious policy win for the American people and not claim a symbolic scalp for the extreme left.

That is why Republicans have chosen to work closely with President Obama to advance a serious trade and economic growth agenda. It is not a natural position for us, I assure you, or for the President to be in politically, but we agree that strengthening the middle class by knocking down unfair trade restrictions is a good idea. Since we agree on the policy, I think we have a duty to the American people to cooperate responsibly to pursue it. And that is just what we have done. Not a single Republican—not one—voted yesterday against at least opening the debate on this 21st century American trade agenda.

Now, all that is needed to move forward is for our Democratic friends who tell the public they support trade to withdraw support for a filibuster they know is wrong on the merits.

Yes, I understand it may be uncomfortable for our Democratic colleagues to cross loud factions in their party, but Republicans proved yesterday that it is possible to put good policy over easy politics.

So Democrats have to choose. Will they allow themselves to keep being led around by the most extreme elements of their party, even when it runs counter to the needs of their constituents, or will they take a stand and lead? The American people are counting on them to make the right choice.

When they do, they will find the same willing partners who have always been here. They will find we are ready to continue working across the aisle in good faith to move forward.

Recall that we have only gotten as far as we have already because of a significant bipartisan compromise on

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper.

S2815

Chairman HATCH's part. He worked very closely with Senator WYDEN to hammer out a trade package that garnered an astonishing 20 votes in the Finance Committee, with just 6 Senators opposed—just 6. That huge level of bipartisan support really surprised everybody. We have seen some unfortunate partisan rear-guard action since then that is designed to sink these American trade jobs. But we can rise above it. That is why Republicans remain committed to carrying forward the kind of bipartisan momentum we saw over in the Finance Committee, just as we have been all along on other issues. We are happy to work with any Senator in a serious way. The door is open.

I have made clear that there would be an open amendment process. I have made clear that Senators would receive fair consideration once we proceed to debating this bill. The bipartisan path forward I offered yesterday morning is still on the table. I remain committed to the significant concession my party already made about processing TPA and TAA. I don't like TAA. I think it is a program very hard to defend. But I understand that if we are going to get TPA, our friends on the other side need TAA. If Chairman HATCH and Senator WYDEN can agree to other policies, we can consider those, too. What we won't be doing is pursuing poison-pill strategies such as the one I mentioned already.

Let's also agree that no Senator is in a position to guarantee that some bill can clear both Houses of Congress, receive a signature from the President, secure the blessings of the Supreme Court, and whatever else our friends might demand. This wouldn't be much of a democracy if Senators could actually make such an impossible guarantee.

So look, we want to have a serious discussion. We want to actually get a good policy outcome. That has always been our goal. I hope more will now join us to allow debate on the trade discussion our constituents deserve.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

AMTRAK TRAIN DERAILMENT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I join with the majority leader in extending my thoughts to the terrible situation in Pennsylvania. That accident occurred last night at 9 p.m. We now have six reported dead and many, many more injured. There were about 300 people on that train. I join him in commending the first responders for the work they did and are doing as we speak.

TRADE LEGISLATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we have heard the expressions "red herring"

and "loss leader," all these terms that try to focus attention someplace where it shouldn't be focused. That is basically what the Republican leader has done this morning.

He, of course, misconstrued what I said on the floor yesterday. I said that I am not here to debate the intricacies of this trade bill. Some can do that better than I. I have no qualms about saying that about myself. It is a very specialized area. But I do understand that the debate was not taking place because we were not on the bill. I said that I understand the procedure around here—and I do.

The procedure is pretty simple. It is a fact that virtually all legislation that passes the Senate needs major bipartisan support. This year is an example. Nearly every bill passed by the Senate has enjoyed the support of over 90 percent of Senate Democrats. It is just a reality that the 114th Congress will take Democratic votes to get things done.

Many Democrats don't support fast-track. I don't. The vast majority of Democrats don't. But without following all of the loss leaders, the red herrings the Republican leader threw out, the Finance Committee reported out four bills, and it is only logical we consider all four of them.

I have said, and I say it again, it is only logical we take the Republican leader's words for what they are. He said: Let's get on the bill, and then we will start the amendment process.

Well, we can't start the amendment process very well if we are not having an opportunity to amend and change the bills that aren't there. They would just be thrown to the winds. That is, Customs is very important and enforcement and, of course, the situation dealing with African trade.

We put a reasonable alternative on the table for Senate Republicans to accept. All the Republican leader needs to do is say yes, and we can open debate on these trade bills.

ANTI-SEMITISM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, last week there were celebrations all around the world celebrating the 70th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day.

Here in our Nation's capital, we celebrated the day that Europe was officially liberated. Just outside of the Capitol, dozens of World War II aircraft flew up and down the Mall honoring and celebrating the end of the war that engulfed Europe—over the Lincoln Memorial, the National World War II Memorial, the Washington Monument, over the Capitol, and points in between.

I grew up in a little town and I was a little boy, but I can still remember the war ending. I don't really remember what I remember, but I knew it was something that was important to everybody there. It was a big deal in Searchlight, as it was everywhere in America. The war was at an end. Amer-

icans were thankful that the war was over. They were thankful that their fathers, sons, brothers, and—yes, Mr. President—World War II daughters were able to come home. They had fought valiantly on battlefields across the world, and they would be coming home—as I mentioned, the women, the WAVES, the WACs, and SPARS—all these women, thousands and thousands who participated in the war, for that manner.

Across America we were all happy that freedom and democracy had prevailed over a regime that was fueled by hatred.

I heard on the radio this morning a brief account of Winston Churchill. That was many years ago, 70 years ago today giving a speech. He had only been Prime Minister 3 days, and he gave one of his most famous speeches, about all he had to offer. They were engulfed in this war. They were doing it alone. It was a stunning speech that history will always remember. But after that war was over, we were happy. England was happy. Freedom and democracy had prevailed over a regime that was fueled by hatred.

As I got older and could understand a little more, I first became really focused on World War II. I am sorry to say I did not do it until I was in college, but I remember it as if it were 5 minutes ago, looking at those pictures in the book "The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich" by William Shirer. Those pictures I will never ever forget. I can see them now in my mind's eye. In that book, there were pictures of the liberation of the concentration camps.

I learned how the world learned of the enormity of the Holocaust, the genocide of 6 million Jews. The world saw the incredible extent to which the Nazis had taken their hatred of the Jews. It is hard to comprehend, but nothing—nothing—could adequately describe how horrible the situation was. Sadly, though, as I look around the world today, there are still glimpses of that same hate that we as a human race had hoped to extinguish those seven decades ago.

It is not always on the front pages of the press or on the television sets, but it is still there. Hate wears many masks: violence, intimidation, segregation, vile rhetoric, and, of course, disenfranchisement. Anti-Semitism is that and more. Though it assumes different identities, in the end, it is still hate. It pains me to say there seems to be a resurgence of anti-Semitism across the world. I look at Israel and I see the vicious attacks carried out against innocent Jews there: the slaughter of Jewish worshipers in a Jerusalem synagogue last November; Hamas's campaign of terror, indiscriminately targeting innocent Israelis with their thousands and thousands of rockets.

I look at Europe and see the heinous acts being perpetuated there against Jews. For example, in the Netherlands, the home of a prominent rabbi was attacked twice in one week. In Paris,