

been much praiseworthy in the way Congress has responded to the recession that started last March and intensified after the attacks of 9-11.

Last fall, and even this month, there were short term actions we could have taken that would have had immediate and beneficial economic and humanitarian results. We could have extended unemployment benefits, as we have in every recession, and as I still hope we will. We could have offered an immediate tax rebate to those lower income workers who did not receive a full rebate from the first tax cut. We could have used the Medicaid payment formula to send financially strapped states struggling to provide health care for their residents an immediate infusion of cash. We could have offered a temporary acceleration of depreciation to encourage reluctant businesses to invest now in the recovering economy.

We agreed on basic principles: help now, and do no harm in the long run. We agreed on the need. But we could not agree to put aside our partisan agendas long enough to do what we all agreed was right. Instead of talking about what we could do to help workers unemployed now, factories lying idle now, we debated tax cuts passed last spring and pushed tax breaks that wouldn't even take effect for 10 years. We should have focused on workers, investment, consumer confidence. Instead we fought over estate taxes and tried to lay the blame for our inaction.

As the recession winds down and the war on terrorism continues, I sincerely hope Congress will be able to rise above the partisan bickering that doomed the stimulus package. We will have many opportunities this year to act in a bipartisan manner to make this Nation stronger, safer, and better. We will also have many opportunities to wrap the flag around our pet proposals and fight for political advantage. We should commit today to learn from the mistakes that have killed the stimulus package—not to repeat them.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Am I right the time on this side has expired?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. GRASSLEY. How much time is on the leader's time?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Ten minutes of leader time.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I have been informed Senator COLLINS is on her way over and would like a couple of minutes. So I will yield myself 8 minutes and then yield the remaining time to Senator COLLINS.

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

Mr. GRASSLEY. So at the end of 8 minutes, please notify me.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair will do so.

#### CENTRIST/WHITE HOUSE COMPROMISE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, the distinguished majority leader an-

nounced yesterday he is going to kill this bill if he does not prevail on the first cloture vote. Of course, we know if he did get cloture, many good amendments that have been offered to try to improve Senator DASCHLE's skeletal bill will fall. We will not be able to vote on them. All we have asked for all along on this side, and even some Members on that side, is a vote on the bipartisan centrist-White House bill that I have offered as an amendment, along with Senator SNOWE.

In fact, that bill is a product of the work of people such as Senator SNOWE and Senator COLLINS, and Democrats on this side of the aisle such as Senators NELSON, MILLER, and BREAU. There is a long list of amendments. I do not think I will go through the long list of amendments that we will not have a chance to vote on, but I am going to highlight a couple because I think Senator NICKLES did a good job of highlighting those most important amendments.

Let me take a look at a couple that will be killed if Senator DASCHLE's cloture motion is invoked. My friend, the majority whip, who is with us, Senator REID, offered, along with Senator KYL, so it is bipartisan, an amendment that is designed to help the travel industry. We were told during the debate that this tax credit was very important. If it is that important, we ought to have a chance to vote on it.

Guess what. If the Democratic leadership prevails on the first cloture motion, Senator REID's amendment falls. I guess I can only assume that since this amendment is so important for Nevada and other States where there is a lot of tourism, the majority leader would oppose cloture. Surely he would not vote to kill his own amendment. That is what I would think. I am afraid I am probably being optimistic or maybe naive.

Other Democrats have offered amendments, too. For those Senators, a vote for cloture is a vote to kill their own very important amendment. So I hope these Democratic Senators are not telling their constituents they are for something and then turning around and voting to kill it by supporting this cloture vote.

Let us take a look at Senator ALLARD's amendment, one that is so important to have the United States competitive, particularly in manufacturing and information technology, the R&D tax credit. If cloture is invoked, that amendment is dead as well. We had 70 Senators vote for that amendment on a previous tax bill, as an example. So make no mistake about it, if the distinguished leader's cloture motion is supported, every one of these amendments will be killed, as well as the ones Senator NICKLES brought to our attention.

If the distinguished leader prevails on his cloture motion, then we end up with another conference with the House and that could take weeks or months to resolve. The best we can

hope for is delay. That means delay for the unemployed, delay for the stimulus, not helping those who are dislocated because of September 11.

By contrast, the Democratic leadership will not let us vote on the only plan that has majority support in the Senate. They are filibustering the only bipartisan stimulus plan and preventing unemployment benefits from reaching the workers who need them. That is what the second cloture vote is all about. The second cloture vote guarantees an up-or-down vote on the White House-centrist stimulus plan. A vote for that plan is a vote for a bill that the President will sign. He said he would sign it.

If cloture is voted for, Senators are saying with their vote they want to send a bill to the President that he will sign in a New York minute. That means these things will happen and happen fast. Unemployed workers get checks. For the first time, unemployed workers get health care assistance. Payroll-tax payers get a rebate. Income-tax payers get a little more tax relief in their paycheck. Businesses, large and small, get stimulative accelerated depreciation, which is going to mean more jobs. So we have two cloture votes coming up very shortly.

The first cloture vote is an effort by the majority to block further amendments to the bill, which will effectively kill the bill. I urge my colleagues to oppose that cloture vote. The second cloture vote is an effort by our side to force a vote on the bipartisan centrist amendment that the majority leader has been furiously blocking to this point. But we cannot get to this vote unless the majority leader fails his first vote.

Therefore, Mr. President, these votes come down to a choice between action now or endless delay. If we want action now, Senators should vote for cloture on the White House-centrist agreement. If Members want delay, vote for cloture on the Daschle amendment.

How much leadership time remains?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Four minutes.

Mr. REID. How much time remains on the majority side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Six minutes.

#### A CLASSIC FILIBUSTER

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I will speak briefly about comments made by the Senator from Oklahoma. He is my dear friend, he is my counterpart, but I don't know how he kept a straight face, saying: We are not filibustering this bill. I am sure he went to his office and started laughing. This is a classic filibuster taking place on this bill—for weeks and weeks and weeks.

Of course, amendments have been offered that we like. I heard Senator ALLARD talking about tax credits. We like tax credits. In fact, it is a shame we did not extend those. I ask unanimous consent the vote occur after we have used