

have their viewpoint and they should be heard. When it gets to the point where people just adamantly block everything, then surely this Senate and this Congress has become something that our forefathers never envisioned. . . . But this is not what our forefathers envisioned. They envisioned a legislative body that, yes, would debate and discuss and amend, but would do something and get something through. We now have a situation where the minority side will not permit that to happen. 140 Congressional RECORD S-13262.

There was this from Senator LAUTENBURG, who also voted against cloture on S. 908:

In my view, Mr. President, the answer is simple: the Republican leadership simply did not want the Congress, as an institution, to demonstrate that it can do the business of the people. . . . In the past, I have encountered steady opposition by Republican Senators who stalled for months any serious consideration of the bill and asked for extremist changes that would destroy its reforms. . . . And unfortunately, in the Senate where the rules and filibusters give the minority the ability to paralyze, we can see very clearly the handwriting on the wall if we ask for a vote on [the bill]. 140 Congressional RECORD S-14221.

From Senator BOXER, another opponent of cloture on S. 908, we heard:

Madam President, I am very disappointed that a large majority of my Republican colleagues have decided that, outside of routine business, they really do not want to continue the work of this Congress. They want to stall and run the legislative clock down. They would rather talk on and on, even all through the night if that is necessary, to kill legislation that I believe is important to the American people. Madam President, the filibuster has a new best friend: The Republican Party. They embrace the filibuster. They love the filibuster. . . .

[W]e Democrats underst[and] that you [have] to get things done no matter which party [is] in control. We [do] not stop legislation. . . .

We did not come here to filibuster, we came here to work. We have a can-do spirit in this country . . . not a no-can-do yak-yak-yak through the night, stop the progress attitude. . . . We are supposed to do the work for the people; the operative word is "work." 140 Congressional RECORD S-13400.

Finally, Mr. President, we heard this from Senator BIDEN, another opponent of cloture on S. 908:

I also find it fascinating to listen and hear about what gridlock is. Let us talk about what gridlock is—my definition of gridlock. My definition of gridlock is when you have a clear majority of the elected representatives of the American people who work in the U.S. Congress—Democrat and Republican, House and Senate—when a clear, undisputed majority want to do something and a minority repeatedly comes along and says we are not going to even let you vote on whether or not we are going to do that—that seems to me to be gridlock, or obstruction. . . . Now, that is gridlock. I am not taking issue with anybody's views on the floor. I am not taking issue with their views, if they believe them as a matter of principle and that is the only reason. There are a lot of crazy ideas that are reflected in the American public and the American psyche and the U.S. Senate. I have been the father of some of those crazy ideas. So, I respect that. . . . But the American people do not understand, nor should they have to understand, the technicalities—such as with the legal system and the complex-

ities of the operation of the fifth amendment and the fourth amendment and the second amendment and the first amendment. They look at it and say, "Wait a minute now, this is right and this is wrong. Why are we doing this?"

One of the things the American people, I think, also understand and view the same way is their Government. We all in this body know any Senator is within his rights to engage in a filibuster, to use the parliamentary rules to his or her advantage to keep a majority from prevailing—and there is an underlying, solid rationale for that having been put in the Senate rules. Notwithstanding that, I think the American people have had to wonder a little bit: Why is it that when repeatedly, time after time after time, an overwhelming majority of Members of both Houses of the U.S. Congress say they want to do something, our Republican friends stand up and say no. The party of no.

Maybe the Senator is correct, that the American people do not like the [bill]. I did not like it. So maybe I am with the American people. But I did not think the alternative was if I did not like that, we were not going to cooperate and not going to deal with the . . . problem in America. I thought that is what we were supposed to do. We disagree, we negotiate, we debate, we compromise and we act, when there is a majority that wishes to do that.

The truth, Madam President, is that the record is inescapable on what has happened to this Congress and this Senate because of filibusters, obstructionism, and gridlock. And I know that some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have raised this issue in caucuses and are nervous about the potential of this strategy because that is what it is—a conscious . . . strategy to benefit their party at the expense of the people. It is a strategy to forsake America just to impact the elections so that one political party can win; not so that America can win. . . . 140 Congressional RECORD S-14627.

Apparently my Democrat colleagues have very short and selective memories. The Senator from Iowa took us to task for offering countless nongermane amendments in an effort to slow bills down. Perhaps he would like to enquire of the senior Senator from Massachusetts why he took to the floor last week to offer an amendment on the minimum wage to S. 908—hardly a foreign policy issue. The Senator from California castigated us for preferring to talk on and on, into the night if necessary, to kill important legislation. Perhaps she would ask her colleagues why after two days of floor consideration on S. 908 we were unable to produce anything more than several pages of Democrat rhetoric in the Congressional RECORD. The Senator from Delaware noted a conscious plan on our part to block all major legislation in order to benefit our party. Well, Mr. President, I wonder if that Senator would not agree that his party's stalling to death of S. 908, the Defense Authorization bill, Regulatory Reform—among others—demonstrates a similarly conscious plan? The Senator from Delaware noted that in the entire 103rd Congress, there were 72 cloture motions filed and 41 recorded cloture votes, which he characterized as "a proud, record-breaking amount of obstructionism." Well, in just the first 7 months of this Congress—7 month, Mr.

President—we have had 32 cloture motions and 16 recorded cloture votes. I wonder what synonym for "obstructionism" the Senator from Delaware would choose to describe that tragic record.

Mr. President, Chairman HELMS has promised to bring the bill back to the floor in the near future. I hope that our Democrat friends will take that opportunity to prove me wrong, call an end to their unconstructive blockade, and get down to doing the business the American people sent us here to do.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Thomas, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. LUGAR, from the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry:

Jill L. Long, of Indiana, to be Under Secretary of Agriculture for Rural Economic and Community Development.

Jill L. Long, of Indiana, to be Member of the Board of Directors of the Commodity Credit Corporation.

(The above nominations were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed, subject to the nominees' commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second time by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. BURNS, and Mr. INHOFE):

S. 1130. A bill to provide for the establishment of uniform accounting systems, standards, and reporting systems in the Federal Government, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. ROCKEFELLER (for himself and Mr. AKAKA):

S. 1131. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the provision of financial assistance in order to ensure that financially needy veterans receive legal assistance in connection with proceedings before the United States Court of Veterans Appeals; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.