

alike recognize that the United States needs to reinvigorate its engagement in the world, particularly through rebuilding alliances and using diplomacy more effectively. The omnibus puts our money where our mouths are. The alternative would have been to retract, and to invite others to fill the vacuum. That might save money in the short term, but it would have cost us dearly in the future.

#### BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I am glad Republican Senators abandoned their efforts to filibuster the nomination of the Deputy Attorney General. It was only after the majority leader filed for cloture that the Republican caucus came to the conclusion that such a maneuver was futile. I thank the majority leader for scheduling the debate and votes for the President's nominees to serve as Deputy Attorney General and Associate Attorney General. They have now been confirmed by the Senate.

The Republican minority, nonetheless, insisted on 7 hours of debate on the Deputy Attorney General nomination this week before allowing the vote. That was longer than the debate they demanded on the nomination of the Attorney General of the United States. I spoke yesterday to open the debate, as did the ranking Republican on the Senate Judiciary Committee, Senator SPECTER, who also supported the nomination. We both spoke, again, today to close the debate.

I followed the debate, and have responded by way of additional statements to correct the record on the Deputy Attorney General nominee.

Now I would like us to take a step back and see what has occurred. Yesterday, the Republican minority insisted on 5 hours of debate on the Ogden nomination. In fact, the Republican opposition devoted less than 1 hour to comment about the Ogden nomination. The rest of their time they consumed with criticism of the President's budget and policy initiatives to help the country recover from the economic crisis. I am not saying that the budget discussion is unimportant. I may not agree with their criticism, but the budget is certainly a topic about which Senators may wish to make statements. My point is that after delaying debate on the President's nomination for the No. 2 official at the Justice Department for 2 weeks, and demanding extended debate, they failed to use the time to discuss the nomination. Instead, they talked about unrelated issues.

In fact, they were so uninterested in debating the nomination that by the time Senator INHOFE came to the floor, all Republican time had been used on other discussions. As a courtesy, we made available time from the Democratic side that should have been used by supporters of the nomination. We accommodated the Senator from Oklahoma so that he could speak against the nomination.

Today, an additional 2 hours was demanded by the Republican majority to debate the Ogden nomination further before they would allow a vote. Of course, those Republicans who opposed the nomination used not 1 minute of time to debate it today—not 1 minute.

Indeed, of the time that the Republican minority insisted was necessary before the Senate could vote on the Ogden nomination, more than an hour was wasted in quorum calls with no speakers at all yesterday and approximately 1 hour was spent by opposition speakers—not 7 hours, not 3 hours, barely 1 hour. The Ogden debate could easily have been handled with the opposition taking an hour or an hour and one-half to speak.

I wish instead of this campaign to delay and obstruct the President, the minority would work with us on the consideration of matters of critical importance to the American people. I will note just one current example. This morning, the New York Times had a front-page story about financial frauds. Last week, the Senate Judiciary Committee reported an antifraud matter to the Senate. The Leahy-Grassley Fraud Enforcement and Recovery Act, S.386, needs to be considered without delay. It is an important initiative to confront the fraud that has contributed to the economic and financial crisis we face, and to protect against the diversion of the Federal efforts to recover from this downturn.

As the New York Times story demonstrates, improving our efforts to hold those accountable for the mortgage and financial frauds that have contributed to the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression is most timely. We need to do better, and our bipartisan bill, which has the support of the U.S. Department of Justice, can make a difference. In addition to Senator GRASSLEY, I thank Senator KAUFMAN, Senator KLOBUCHAR, Senator SCHUMER, and Senator SHELBY for working with us and for their interest in this important measure.

Our legislation is designed to reinvigorate our capacity to investigate and prosecute the kinds of frauds that have undermined our economy and hurt so many hard-working Americans. It provides the resources and tools needed for law enforcement to aggressively enforce and prosecute fraud in connection with bailout and recovery efforts. It authorizes \$245 million a year over the next couple of years for fraud prosecutors and investigators. With this funding, the FBI can double the number of mortgage fraud taskforces nationwide, and target the hardest hit areas. It includes resources for our U.S. Attorneys' Offices, as well as the Secret Service, the HUD Inspector General's Office and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service. It includes important improvements to our fraud and money laundering statutes to strengthen prosecutors' ability to confront fraud in mortgage lending practices, to protect TARP funds, and to uncover fraudulent

schemes involving commodities futures, options and derivatives as well as making sure the Government can recover the ill-gotten proceeds from crime.

Our bipartisan measure was favorably reported on a voice vote by the Judiciary Committee on March 5. I have been trying to get a time agreement to consider the measure ever since. The Senate should consider and pass it without delay. We can help make a difference for all Americans. Instead of wasting our time in quorum calls when no one is speaking, or demanding multiple hours of debates on nominations that can be discussed in much less time before being confirmed, let us work on matters that will help get us out of the economic ditch that we have inherited from the policies of the last administration, and let us begin to work together on behalf of the American people.

#### EL SALVADOR ELECTION

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, this Sunday the people of El Salvador will go to the polls to elect a new President. As one Senator who has followed developments in that country and observed with concern the steady rise in violent crime, including organized crime and drug trafficking, I hope that whoever wins the election makes reforming the police and justice system a priority.

United States assistance to El Salvador is a small fraction of what it was during the 1980s, but in 2006 El Salvador signed a 5-year compact with the Millennium Challenge Corporation. The compact totals \$461 million, and focuses on road construction, economic and social development in the area of the country bordering Honduras that bore the brunt of the worst consequences of the civil war.

I had hoped that a portion of the MCC compact would be used to strengthen El Salvador's dysfunctional judicial system, both to help reduce violent crime and attract foreign investment, but unfortunately that was not the decision of the Salvadoran Government or the Bush administration at the time. Nevertheless, the MCC compact does seek to improve the lives of some of El Salvador's poorest communities and I support it.

Recently, I have been concerned with reports that some Salvadorans involved in the election campaign may have asserted that if the opposition party candidate wins the election the United States will stop funding the MCC compact. Such an assertion, presumably to intimidate voters, would be completely false.

We take no position on the Salvadoran election. It is entirely for the people of El Salvador to decide who their next President will be. The MCC compact will continue regardless of who wins on Sunday, as long as the policies of the new Government, of whichever party, are consistent with