

Saturdays and Sundays and Mondays we have to be in session continuously.

Secretary Geithner described how the 80 million checks cut by the Treasury every day—that is 80 million checks every day—would likely simply stop coming. The Federal Government would, in effect, go dark.

Paychecks for troops in Afghanistan and Iraq and bases around the world could stop. FAA towers could shut down. So could the FBI and the CIA. Border crossings could close. Safety inspections of the food Americans eat and the cargo that enters our ports could halt. Literally every function of government could cease—Social Security checks, payments to our veterans. We have heard that before. There would be no discussion of which operations and personnel are essential. All the payments would very likely stop.

Some have said we could prioritize which bills to pay. Even if that would not irreparably damage the Nation's credit and our reputation in the global economy and the global community—which it would—it is also a complete fiction. Our government will not even be able to cover the bills due on August 3. It will simply run out of money. Because we will be in default and our credit rating trashed, we will be able to borrow the money not again to keep running even if we wanted to.

That is the picture Secretary Geithner painted. Like I said, it is grim.

Many of my Republican colleagues understand this fact. They know what is at stake. It is not blanket for sure, but the irresponsible Republicans who say default would not be an unmitigated disaster for this country either do not know what they are talking about or are twisting the truth for political gain.

Americans have gotten the message. Seventy-one percent of the American people disapprove of the way Republicans have used this crisis to force an ideological agenda. That is in the press today. Even a majority of Republicans disapprove of their unreasonable refusal to compromise, which puts our entire Nation at risk.

Those who say this crisis would be a blip on the radar are wrong. Default would be a plague that could haunt and would haunt our Nation for years to come. Our credit rating would take years to rebuild. The country would never, ever be the same.

Some will say this is an exaggeration, but it is not. This is what Treasury Secretary Geithner told us. That is what business leaders, economists, rating agencies, and bankers have all told us. If this country defaults on its obligations, they say—Secretary Geithner for certain says—it will be “much worse than the Great Depression.” It would make the massive financial crisis of 2008 look mild. “It will make what we just went through look like a quaint little crisis,” Secretary Geithner said. I repeat: “It will make what we just went through look like a quaint little crisis.”

That “quaint little crisis” led to the loss of almost 5 million American jobs. It caused our banking system to nearly collapse. More than \$34 trillion—Mr. President, that is not million, it is not billion, it is trillion—more than \$34 trillion in wealth was destroyed in less than 2 years. The ripples were felt throughout this Nation and around the world.

The average American family lost \$100,000 on its home and stock portfolio alone, and 400,000 families were plunged into poverty.

That crisis was minor, again, Geithner said, compared to the potential fallout from a U.S. default. No one should guess from what I have said that Secretary Geithner thinks what has taken place because of the Wall Street collapse is minor. But it is minor compared to what he believes would happen if we defaulted on our debt.

The leading business and economic voices of our time have said it again and again: The risks of default are unthinkable. It would be a catastrophe.

Secretary Geithner also said we are running out of time to avoid this iceberg. This huge iceberg is in the ocean, and our ship of state is headed toward it. The rating agencies have already placed our AAA credit rating under review and could downgrade us at any time.

This is what Secretary Geithner said. Again, I quote:

The eyes of the country are on us. The eyes of the world are on us, and we need to make sure we stand together and send a definitive signal that we're going to take the steps necessary to avoid default.

So, Mr. President, I ask what it will take to get my Republican colleagues to wake up to the fact that they are playing a game of political chicken with the entire global economy. They must wake up soon.

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#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

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#### BUDGET NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, let me echo the initial remarks of the majority leader with regard to the decision, which in this particular instance I think we would agree is a mutual decision, that we need to stay in every day until we resolve this crisis confronting our country. So I concur with what the majority leader has said. We will stay in every day, Monday through Sunday, and get this problem fixed for our country.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if I could interrupt my friend and through the Chair say this: I would hope the Republican leader noted the tone and content of my statement where I did not lump all Republicans in one big bundle.

Pardon the interruption.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I thank my friend, the majority leader.

This is a pivotal week for America. Two years of reckless spending and debt have brought us to the point of crisis, and this week Americans will see how their elected representatives decide to resolve it.

On the one side are those who believe that failing to rein in spending now would be calamitous, and that a government which borrows 42 cents for every dollar it spends needs to sober up. Washington needs strong medicine to heal its spending addiction now, not a false promise to do it later.

On the other side are those who want to pretend the status quo is acceptable, that everything will be fine if we freeze current spending habits in place, raise job-killing taxes on small businesses, and do nothing about the long-term fiscal imbalance that imperils our economy.

Republicans have tried to persuade the President of the need for a course correction, but weeks of negotiations have shown that his commitment to big government is simply too great to lead to the kind of long-term reforms we need to put us on a path to balance and economic growth.

So we have decided to bring our case to the American people. That is why this week Republicans in the House and in the Senate will push for legislation that would cut government spending now, cap it in the future, and which only raises the debt limit if it is accompanied by a constitutional amendment to balance the Federal budget.

The cut, cap, and balance plan is the kind of strong medicine Washington needs and the American people want, and Republicans in both Houses of Congress will be pushing it aggressively this week.

I heard one of my Democratic colleagues say yesterday that the votes simply do not exist to pass any bill in the Senate that balances the budget. My question is, Why in the world not? If you cannot vote for a bill that says you will live within your means, then you have given up and you agree that the unsustainable path is the only one we have, and that is really completely unacceptable.

Every single Republican in the Senate supports a balanced budget amendment. All we need is for 20 Democrats to join us. By my count, at least 23 of them have led their constituents to believe they would actually fight for it.

So my message to Senate Democrats this week is this: I would suggest you think long and hard about whether you will vote for the cut, cap, and balance legislation the House is taking up tomorrow. Not only is this legislation just the kind of thing Washington needs right now, it may be the only option we have if you want to see the debt limit raised at all.

The White House has called for a balanced approach in this debate. Well, a bill that actually balances our books is coming to the Senate floor this very

week. I strongly urge my Democratic friends to join us in supporting it. Some have said they think this bill goes too far. With all due respect, I think most Americans believe Congress and the White House have gone too far in creating the fiscal mess we are in right now.

It is time for real action. It is time to show the American people where we stand. It is time to balance our books.

#### CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION BUREAU

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, earlier today, the President announced his nominee to run the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

I remind him that Senate Republicans still are not interested in approving anyone to the position until the President agrees to make this massive new government bureaucracy more accountable and transparent to the American people.

Back on May 5 of this year, 44 Republican Senators signed a letter to the President stating:

We will not support the consideration of any nominee, regardless of party affiliation, to be the CFPB director until the structure of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is reformed.

We have been very clear about what these reforms would need to look like. Republicans have voiced our serious concerns over the creation of the CFPB because it represents a government-driven solution to a problem government helped create.

We have no doubt that without proper oversight the CFPB will only multiply the kinds of countless burdensome regulations that are holding our economy back right now and that it will have countless unintended consequences for individuals and small businesses that constrict credit, stymie growth, and destroy jobs. That is why everyone from florists to community bankers opposed its creation in the first place. That is why we will insist on serious reforms to bring accountability and transparency to the agency before we consider any nominee to run it.

It took the President a year to nominate someone to this position. I hope he will not wait that long to address our concerns and bring the CFPB the accountability and transparency it currently lacks.

I yield the floor.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 3:30 p.m., with Senators

permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### BUDGET NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I rise to speak about the budget and the debt ceiling, following the Senate's failure to invoke cloture on a measure expressing that shared sacrifices from all Americans—including the wealthiest—are necessary to reduce the budget deficit.

As the Senate Budget Committee chair has proposed, we must reach an agreement that strikes a balance between raising revenues and cutting spending, in which all Americans contribute to the solution.

Congress faces an important task. Americans are following this debate because they have a stake in its outcome.

If we do not raise the debt ceiling, it will force the government to choose which of its many obligations it will meet.

As President Obama pointed out last week, we cannot guarantee that veterans and Social Security recipients will receive the checks we owe them on August 3 if we fail to reach a compromise. If we fail, we will damage our credit rating and worldwide confidence in our financial system.

To avoid such a situation, I call on all of my colleagues to negotiate in good faith so that the creditworthiness of the United States is not compromised. I hope we can reach an agreement that will bring down the debt without placing most of the burden on the vulnerable among us—the sick, the poor, the long-term unemployed, and the elderly.

While we must reduce spending, we cannot forget to continue investing in our Nation's future. I came of age during the Great Depression and served in World War II, along with my colleagues Senator INOUE and Senator LAUTENBERG.

We were the beneficiaries of one of the Federal Government's greatest investments: the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, more commonly known as the G.I. Bill of Rights. This visionary Federal legislation enabled returning World War II veterans—many who, like myself, came from families of modest means and may never have otherwise attended college.

The G.I. Bill not only changed the lives of its beneficiaries, it changed the United States by laying the groundwork for the emergence of our middle

class, which remains the backbone of our country.

Many other valuable investments made in the years that followed, such as the Interstate Highway System and Federal funding for research programs at the Nation's leading universities, propelled America into one of history's greatest periods of economic expansion, social advancement, and technological innovation.

None of these investments simply happened. They were made by past Congresses and Presidents from both parties. These legacies have proven repeatedly that dedicated social and economic investments are effective drivers of recovery, growth, and future success. As we move forward and make difficult but necessary choices to cut spending, we must strengthen those programs that are restoring our economic health.

Reaching an agreement on the debt ceiling and deficit reduction will undoubtedly require all of us to make difficult compromises on spending and revenues. As debate on these issues continues, I urge each of my colleagues to remember the obligation that we have to preserve the Nation's creditworthiness—and to defend our veterans and those depending on Social Security and other safety net programs from harm—as we continue to make needed investments for recovery.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### BUDGET NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I wanted to speak for a moment here about the status of discussions that Members of Congress have been having with the President and others regarding the debt ceiling, the extending of the debt ceiling, and how we can solve the problem that confronts our country.

Obviously, in 10 minutes, I will be brief and hit some of the highlights. But the first question I was asked on a program I was involved in was: Well, why wouldn't Republicans be supportive of raising taxes? So I want to answer that. There are three answers to that question. The first is, if you go to the doctor and he is going to treat you for what is wrong with you, he needs to figure out what is wrong and then treat that condition rather than something totally different. So the reason we are not going to want to raise taxes here is because it has nothing to do with the problem we have.

I meant to have this chart blown up, but I wasn't able to do it in time, but this shows how much money we are