

Georgetown Law School, I was offered a job by the Lieutenant Governor of Illinois, Paul Simon. He asked if I would join his staff in Springfield, IL, in the State capital and if I would serve as his senate parliamentarian. I jumped at the chance. I was in desperate need of a job with a wife, a baby, and another one on the way.

Deep in debt, I skipped my commencement exercise to get out and on the payroll in Springfield of the Illinois State Senate. The first day I walked in on the job at the Lieutenant Governor's office they handed me the senate rule book. It was the first time I had ever seen it. They parked me in a chair next to the presiding officer of the Illinois Senate, the Lieutenant Governor, and said: Now you are here to give advice.

I spent every waking moment reading that rule book and trying to understand what it meant. There wasn't a course like that in law school or anything that gave me guidance as to what I was to do. I made a lot of stupid mistakes, and I learned along the way what it meant to be a senate parliamentarian.

It was a humbling experience, in many respects, to learn this new body of law, how it applied to the everyday business of the Illinois State Senate. It was equally humbling to be in a position where your voice was never heard but your rulings were repeated by so many.

I recall that many years later—14 years later—I was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. After serving 12 of those 14 years in the office of the Illinois State Senate Parliamentarian, I cannot describe to you the heady feeling I had when I went on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives, they handed me the gavel, and I actually presided over the U.S. House. After 14 years of silence as the Illinois State Senate Parliamentarian, I was speaking before one of the greatest legislative bodies in the world. So I have some appreciation for the role of a parliamentarian, and particularly for the contribution of people such as Alan Frumin. In some respects, it is a thankless job, because you are bound to make some people upset. As the majority leader mentioned, we respect Alan's impartiality as Parliamentarian, but many times we go back to our office and are critical of it at the same time. We hope he will rule in our favor instead of the other way.

Alan has been faithful to precedent, to the rules of the Senate, and that is all we can ask of a person who serves in his position. He has to tolerate the titanic egos that occupy this Chamber. I used to say that the majority leader is the captain of a small boat full of titanic egos. That is the nature of this institution. Alan has been called on more often than most to deal with the peculiarities of even my colleagues and myself.

I wish him the best after more than 35 years of service to the Congress,

both in the House and the Senate. I am glad he is going to continue at least on the research side to establish a body precedent that will guide the Senate and the Congress in the years to come.

Alan, thank you so much for all the service you have given to the Senate, to the Congress, and to the United States.

To Elizabeth MacDonough, congratulations. It is great you will be coming into this new role. It is precedent-setting in and of itself that you will be the first woman to serve as the U.S. Senate Parliamentarian. We all respect very much your professionalism and look forward to working with you—even when you give us disappointing rulings.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I listened to the comments made by the Republican leader about how he believed President Obama is trying to change the topic and not talk about the economy and, rather, talk about ethical standards in the U.S. Congress. I have to say this is an issue that resonates with me personally because, as I mentioned earlier, I have been honored to have been brought up in public service by two outstanding individuals, former U.S. Senators Paul Simon and, before him, Paul Douglas. Both of these men had integrity as a hallmark. Even as people in Illinois disagreed from time to time with their positions on issues, they never questioned their honesty. That is my background, my training, and I have tried to continue in that tradition.

I accepted the standard, which was first initiated by Senator Paul Douglas and carried on by Senator Paul Simon, of making a complete income and asset disclosure every single year. I think if I look back now, I can trace it back to my earliest campaign, certainly back to my time in the office of the Lieutenant Governor. Almost every year I made that disclosure. There was some embarrassment in the early years, because my wife and I were broke and we showed a negative net worth because of student loans. We suffered some chiding and embarrassment over that. Over the years, even my wife got to where she didn't pay much attention on April 15 when I released all this information.

What we are considering on the floor is a tough issue. It is this: When you earn something as a Congressman or Senator, what should you do to take care that you don't capitalize on that, that you don't turn that into part of a personal decision that might enrich you? It is a legitimate issue, and I support the legislation that is on the floor, though I think it will be challenging to implement.

We should never capitalize on insider information, private information given to us in our public capacity, to enrich ourselves, period, no questions asked. What we have before us now is an opportunity to call for more timely dis-

closure of those transactions that Members of Congress—in this case Senators—engage in that might or could have some relationship to information they learned in their official capacity.

I quickly add that this is a challenge because, honestly, in our work in the Senate we are exposed to a spectrum of information on virtually every topic. People sit and talk to us, those in an official capacity and also unofficially, about the future of the European Community, what will happen there, and if the European economy goes down or up, what impact will it have on the United States. We learn these things in meetings; we think about them as we vote on measures on the floor. Obviously, they are being discussed widely in the public realm as well. So drawing those lines in a careful, responsible way is going to be a challenge for us.

But disclosure is still the best antidote to the misuse of this public information. I don't think it is wrong for the President to challenge us or for the Republican leader to challenge the executive branch at the same level. That is fair. You know I am friendly to the President. I am a member of his party and was a personal friend to him before he was elected, and I still am today. He should accept the challenge from the Senator from Kentucky to look at the standards within the executive branch to see if they meet at least the minimum standards set by this legislation. We should look at it, as well, in terms of our responsibilities as Senators.

I take exception to the comments made by the Republican leader when it comes to the state of the economy and the role of the executive. The Senator from Kentucky said there has been change in the national debt, since the President was elected, by an increase of 4 percent. I am sure that is close to true if not true in detail. But look at the circumstances. When President Clinton left office and turned the keys over to President George W. Bush, the national debt was \$5 trillion, and the next year's budget would have been the third in a row in surplus by \$120 billion—not a bad welcome gift from the outgoing President, William Jefferson Clinton.

Now fast forward 8 years as President Bush left office and handed the keys to President Obama—quite a different world. Instead of a national debt of \$5 trillion, 8 years later, it was \$11 trillion, more than double under President George W. Bush, a fiscal conservative by his own self-description. Look at what he left for President Obama in his first budget, in the first year: a \$1.2 trillion deficit. Not a surplus, but a deficit 10 times as large as the surplus left by President Clinton. That is what President Obama inherited.

He said in the State of the Union Address that we had lost 3 million jobs in the 6 months preceding his being sworn in and another 3 million before his stimulus bill was passed and implemented. Six million jobs were gone;

750,000 people lost their jobs the month President Obama was sworn into office.

Now Senator MCCONNELL comes to the floor and says that is President Obama's fault. I don't think that is a fair characterization. I think the President would accept responsibility not only for his time in office but for the decisions he has made. But to saddle him with the legacy of the previous President and his economic policies is fundamentally unfair.

The Senator from Kentucky says, don't forget, it was on President Obama's watch that a rating agency downgraded the credit rating of the United States. True. If you read the downgrade, it is not about the state of the economy, it was about the state of politics in Washington. We were downgraded by Standard & Poor's because they believed that we were incapable, as a divided government, to make important decisions for this Nation.

How did they reach that conclusion? Perhaps it was because of this divided government, with the tea party dominance in the House of Representatives, that led us into a position in 2011 where we faced two government shutdowns and one shutdown of the economy in the same year. This weakened economy, suffering from recession, still had to worry about whether the fights between the House and the Senate would lead to even more economic peril. That is why we were downgraded. Don't blame the President for that. We can blame ourselves—at least partially—for the downgrade. Let me say that too.

We know there is uncertainty about the future. People are waiting for certainty when it comes to the value of real estate, the future of jobs, and business. I understand that. But things are moving in the right direction. Last week, we learned that our economy grew at a rate of 2.8 percent in the last 3 months of 2011—the strongest quarter of the year—and it shows that the chances of double-dip recession are receding.

In 2011, the unemployment rate fell from 9 to 8.5. The private sector added more jobs in 2011 than in any year since 2005. The American manufacturing sector was growing for the first time since the late 1990s.

The Republicans don't want to credit this President as they should. There are 3 million new private sector jobs. The weakness in our unemployment figures reflects the loss of public sector jobs. Federal, State, and local employment has gone down as the revenues of government have decreased.

But this recovery is still fragile. Those who come to the floor, as many have, and argue for austerity and budget deficit concentration aren't wrong, but their timing is wrong. This is the moment when we need to strengthen this economy and move it forward. I was on the Bowles-Simpson commission. Understand that their deficit reduction did not begin until the first of 2013. We wanted to create enough time

in that commission for the economy to recover and come out of this recession.

Those who argue that we should abandon that now would sink us even more deeply into a recession instead of on the road to recovery. We need to continue to act, to find that which will strengthen our economy—investment in education and training for our workers, investment in research, whether it is at the National Institutes of Health or other agencies of government, so that we can move forward with innovation and create jobs in areas such as green and clean energy.

Third is the development of our infrastructure. It is indefensible that Congress has been unable to pass a highway bill, an infrastructure bill to rebuild America. The trip I took to China last year was a stark reminder that China is determined to lead the world in the 21st century. They are building in China an infrastructure to do it, while we nurse one that has been falling apart for decades.

Can't Republicans and Democrats agree even in a Presidential election year that we need a solid infrastructure bill that will rebuild America and create good-paying jobs right here in America? It is time for us to have a balanced plan and to work together to achieve it.

The President is not trying to avoid the topic. He addressed it in his State of the Union Address. It is up to the Congress to follow.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Massachusetts.

TRIBUTE TO KEVIN HAGAN WHITE

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, last Friday Kevin Hagan White, a four-term mayor of Boston, passed away.

In the city of Boston, in the shadows of Faneuil Hall, there is a statue of Mayor White that stands 10 feet tall, larger than life. There could not be a more fitting tribute to a mayor and a man who was himself a huge figure in the history of Boston and a mayor who helped to give our city the extraordinary skyline and the extraordinary spirit it has today.

He was a mayor who, more importantly, through four terms led the city of Boston through a remarkable transition, from times of division to a time of new international and singular identity for the city. He led the transition of a great city. But this good man and ground-breaking mayor was, frankly, much more than a transitional leader himself. He was a transformative figure in a city that, when it comes to history-making mayors, does not use the word "transformative" lightly.

Mayor White's passing gives Boston and its people a chance to reflect on how one leader, one politician could help to reshape a major city in America—to some degree reflecting his own persona, bright and energetic. Kevin White was elected to city hall in 1967, a time when big city mayors in Amer-

ica were political forces even as the days of the all-powerful political machines were beginning to dwindle. In Chicago, there was Richard Daley; in New York, John Lindsay; in Los Angeles, Sam Yorty, among some of the big city mayors of our Nation. But in Boston, Kevin represented a new generation of urban leaders. He was only 38 years old and was filled with optimism and energy and clear ideas of what he wanted Boston to be—summarized, perhaps, in the notion of being a world-class city.

He attracted brilliant, idealistic young people to help him achieve his goal, brilliant young people such as BARNEY FRANK, Micho Spring, Ann Lewis, Paul Grogan, Fred Salvucci, George Regan, Robert Kiley, Bo Holland, Cecily Nuzzo Foster, Dennis Austin, and Clarence "Jeep" Jones, all of whom saw in him a reason to dedicate themselves to public service.

When Kevin White moved into city hall, some people assumed they were getting a business-as-usual mayor—Irish and Catholic, typical and traditional. But the times were changing. The political and social climate of Boston in the late 1960s was hardly traditional, and Kevin White was anything but your typical politician.

He glided effortlessly between the old world and the new. No one had ever seen a Boston politician go to Rhode Island to get the Rolling Stones released into their personal custody after they were arrested, and then the next night, when they appeared at a concert in Boston, stand up and announce to a cheering crowd, "The Stones have been busted, but I sprung them." Kevin did just that in 1972, which happened to be right after 18-year-olds got the right to vote.

Kevin White opened Boston's political system to African Americans, women, Jews, and gay Americans alike. He spearheaded rent control. He decentralized the city government by forming little city halls in the neighborhoods. He made jobs for young people a priority. He organized outdoor summer activities known as "Summerthing." He refused to let Interstate 95 run right through the city in order to protect low-income homes and boost public transportation. But perhaps most importantly, he sparked a downtown renaissance that began with Quincy Market, now one of the city's top tourist attractions, and it became the heartbeat of the new Boston that is his legacy.

Mr. President, Kevin White came to city hall with an ambitious plan to build a new Boston brick by brick if he had to, and that is pretty much what he did. When Kevin White took office, Boston was in many ways still stuck in the 1920s—virtually no new buildings in decades, a steady decline in population and jobs, flophouses in the Back Bay, Quincy Market, a ramshackle warehouse of butchers and cheese dealers. But Kevin and his new team at city hall hit Boston like a bolt of lightning,