

reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 160) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:32 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. BALDWIN).

AGRICULTURE REFORM, FOOD, AND JOBS ACT OF 2013—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

Mr. FLAKE. Madam President, the Senate, I am learning, is an institution bound by tradition and precedent. One of the time-honored and worthwhile traditions in this body is that new Senators, for at least the first few months of their service, are to be essentially seen and not heard until they deliver their maiden speeches on the Senate floor. This, Madam President, I am doing today.

As an aside, and in the same vein of new Senators traditionally not being heard but seen, I may have been well advised for the first few months of my service to avoid the throngs of reporters who congregate outside this Chamber, but it is too late for that. Politicians, after all, can only heed so much advice.

For the past 12 years it was my privilege to serve in the House of Representatives, a body that has its own traditions and precedents. At its core the House is governed by the concept of majority rule—one party can have a majority of only one or two and, by virtue of the rules, can still maintain control of that body. During my time in the House, I had the experience of being both in the majority and in the minority. All things equal, I have preferred the former, but I understood the power wielded by being in the majority is fleeting. That is as it should be.

The Senate, on the other hand, is a body governed by consensus. The party holding the gavel is on a short leash. Bringing even the most noncontroversial resolutions to the Senate floor requires the agreement, or at least the acquiescence, of the minority party. Over the past decades, both parties have chafed under this arrangement. Both parties have at times considered changing the rules that would in some way make the Senate more like the House. Both parties have wisely reconsidered. The House has rules appropriate for the House. The rules of the

Senate, however frustrating to the party that happens to wield the gavel, are appropriate for the Senate.

I come to this point with great appreciation for those Arizona Senators who have preceded me. The 48th State in the Union, Arizona celebrated its centennial just last year. Prior to my swearing in this year, Arizona had sent just 10 Senators to this body. These Arizonans who came before me left more of an impression than simply carving their names in these desks. Few in this body have matched the longevity of Carl Hayden. Few have had the lasting impact of Barry Goldwater, who helped launch the conservative movement.

I consider it a high honor to follow in the footsteps of Senator Jon Kyl, whose steady principled leadership shaped Arizona for the better and made our Nation stronger and more secure. My constituents now call the same telephone number I once answered as an intern for Senator Dennis DeConcini. He taught me a great deal about constituent service.

Now I have the incredible honor to serve here with Senator JOHN MCCAIN who, as a prisoner of war, taught us all the meaning of sacrifice. Since that time he has served Arizona, the country, and the Senate nobly and honorably. Fortunately for all of us his service to this institution continues. It is my great privilege to serve with him.

The challenges America faces today are legion and growing. Abroad, cells of terrorists bent on our destruction continue to incubate. Some receive aid and comfort from countries with long-held grievances and irreconcilable enmity toward the United States. Other terrorists take advantage of failed states and lawless regions to hatch their plans.

But it is not just individual terrorists or terror cells we have to worry about. Countries unbound by the norms and conventions of traditional nation-states now threaten peace. Today our concern is primarily focused on Iran and North Korea, but myriad other countries are but one election or coup removed from boiling over into regional and international instability.

Here at home our fiscal situation is dire. We continue to spend considerably more than we take in. Worse yet, we have no serious plan to remedy the problem in any structural way. We seem to endlessly lurch from cliff to crisis and back again with fiscal high-wire acts that erode the confidence of markets and invite the disdain of our constituents.

It is understandable that with 2-year election cycles the House of Representatives begins to focus on the next election as soon as one election is finished. In the House difficult issues are often avoided or perpetually shelved until the next election. But in the Senate we have 6-year terms. Senators, therefore, should come with an added dose of courage to take up the thorny and vexing issues on which the other Chamber takes a pass. It is our responsibility to

lead, and if there was ever a time for this body, this Chamber—the United States Senate—to lead, this is it.

I am a proud and unapologetic conservative and a Republican, and I hope my votes will consistently reflect that philosophy. So I am not suggesting we hold hands and agree on every issue or even most issues. There are profound and meaningful differences between the parties. But I want to spend more time exercising my franchise while debating the legislation itself and less time on deciding whether such legislation should be debated on the Senate floor.

There is a time and a place for using supermajority rules to block legislation and/or nominees from coming to the Senate floor; there is a time and a place for partisanship but not every time and not every place.

This country yearns for a functioning Senate, a Senate that recognizes the gravity of our fiscal situation and its responsibility to propose and adopt measures to solve it for the long term. This country yearns for a Senate that exercises its prerogative as part of the first branch of government to rein in executive branch excesses in both domestic and foreign affairs.

Domestically, the parade of missteps and abuses at the IRS and other Federal agencies stand as exhibit A of the need for more robust legislative direction and oversight. Recent Presidents, both Republican and Democratic, have exercised authority in the foreign arena far beyond that contemplated for a Commander in Chief, often obligating future Congresses to financial commitments far beyond security arrangements. A better functioning Senate, less distracted by games of shirts and skins, would not countenance such theft of its authority.

Now is not the time for this institution to retreat into irrelevance, where the sum of our influence is to sign off on another continuing resolution to fund the government for another 6 months; where success is measured by how well our tracks are covered when the debt ceiling is raised; where prioritizing spending cuts are avoided by invoking another sequester. No, we have been there, done that. It is time now for the Senate to lead.

There are encouraging signs we may be moving in this direction. Earlier this year a budget was passed by this Chamber. It wasn't a budget I preferred, but I was given ample opportunity to offer and debate amendments to that legislation, as were my Republican colleagues. We came up short, but at least the Senate got back to regular order.

In the coming weeks this body will consider an immigration bill. Immigration reform has been and remains a complex and vexing issue, with Members holding strong and discordant views on many of its facets. Still, a bill having had a thorough vetting in committee will now be allowed to come to the Senate floor to be debated, amended, and, hopefully, improved upon. This is the way it should work.