

has hurtful cuts in education, environment, Medicare and Medicaid, and for its attack on working people and cozy tax breaks to the wealthiest and its raid on workers' pensions.

Send it to the President. Our founders envisioned that when there is a split in values, there will be a veto. Then there will be a veto override. And, if that fails, we will sit down and we will solve the problems before us.

Our values are clashing. In many ways, it is important for America to understand that. This is not about some small matters. This is about the heart and soul of America. Do we invest in our students? Do we care about our seniors? Do we care about our children? Do we value them? Do we want to balance the budget, but do it in a way that is humane and compassionate and fair and just? Or do we want to slash and burn and use those savings to give the wealthiest among us thousands of dollars every year?

I hope the answer to that is no. I think the answer to that is no. And when the President stands tall and vetoes this bill, we will move the debate forward. But that is a battle we do not have to have on the short-term legislation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator has expired.

Mrs. BOXER. I ask for 30 additional seconds.

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

Mrs. BOXER. In closing, strip these short-term bills of extraneous material and let us govern.

I yield the floor.

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

Mr. KERRY. Will the Senator withhold?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

The Senator will withhold.

#### CUBAN LIBERTY AND DEMOCRATIC SOLIDARITY (LIBERTAD) ACT OF 1995

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair will lay before the Senate the message on H.R. 927, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

*Resolved*, That the House disagree to the amendment of the Senator to the bill (H.R. 927) entitled "An Act to seek international sanctions against the Castro government in Cuba, to plan for support of a transition government leading to a democratically elected government in Cuba, and for other purposes", and ask a conference with the Senate on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon.

The Senate continued with the consideration of the message from the House.

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I ask the distinguished acting majority leader for his attention.

I ask unanimous consent the pending resolution be temporarily set aside.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. LOTT. Would we add to that that the Senator speak as in morning business?

Mr. KERRY. I beg your pardon?

Mr. LOTT. Add to the unanimous consent the Senator speak as in morning business.

Mr. KERRY. I do not need to have that additional part of the request. I think it would be sufficient simply to set it aside, and I would be happy to go back in a quorum call.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I think we are going to be able to work this out here momentarily. But we are not prepared at this moment to set the issue aside.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that it be set aside temporarily for purposes of speaking as in morning business.

I ask the distinguished Senator from Mississippi how long he thinks it might be before we make a decision.

Mr. LOTT. Just momentarily.

Mr. KERRY. In that case, I ask unanimous consent to proceed for such time as necessary, until the Senator has an answer, as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### THE DEBT CEILING

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I congratulate the Senator from California on her comments with respect to the budget. I would like to just say a few words.

About a month ago, I came to the floor of the Senate and suggested that, as every Senator here knew, we were headed towards this inevitable moment that we are now in. I think a lot of us felt then that the American people would have been much better served if we had been able to come together on all sides of the aisle, as well as on the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue, in order to try to work out the differences between us.

But all of us understand there is a different dynamic that is working here. And that dynamic, I feel, is underscored by those things that had been attached to the debt ceiling and to the continuing resolution.

Most Americans are sitting at home today sort of scratching their heads. They are saying to themselves, what in God's name is going on in Washington yet again? We thought that in 1994 we voted for a "change." Yet, here is

Washington caught up in this paroxysm of business as usual. For the average Americans who thought they voted to get rid of gridlock in 1994, here they are with a kind of gridlock revisiting them. And a lot of people are probably saying a pox on both of your houses, all of you.

Undoubtedly, tomorrow, a lot of people are going to be confused as they see this definition of nonessential employees. All of a sudden the Government is going to shut down for a little while and nonessential employees are going to be sent home. I would not blame most Americans for sitting at home and saying, "What is this? They are nonessential employees. The Government is going to function adequately for a few days—what are we doing with these people who are nonessential employees every other day of the year?" So a whole lot of further confusion sets in by virtue of this absolutely predictable moment.

Why is this happening? As the Senator from California pointed out, it is happening because our friends on the other side of the aisle have had a responsibility to pass 13 appropriations bills. Last year, under the Democratic leadership, we passed those bills. We sent them to the President on time. Now only five of those bills have been passed, so we need to have what is called a continuing resolution, a temporary spending measure, because they have not done their work.

Instead of just coming before the Senate and saying, give us a clean, temporary spending measure—what "clean" means is just pass a temporary spending measure; give us 2 more weeks to do our work. That is essentially what it means. We have not done our homework. So you go to the teacher and say, "I need another 2 weeks."

But, instead of just getting another 2 weeks to do the homework, they have brought back other conditions and attached conditions to the temporary extension that they simply could not get passed any other way.

They have had a regulatory relief bill here which the Senator from Kansas has introduced, which the Senate refuses to pass. The Senate refuses to pass it because it wants to attack things like letting citizens know, in their communities, what kind of toxic chemicals are released in their communities.

It is just a voluntary knowledge issue. Should Americans know that a chemical company in the town in which our good citizens live is emitting X, Y, or Z toxics into the sky? It is a very simple issue. It is totally voluntary. Once people have learned that they are emitting this, it does not forbid the emissions. It does not punish anybody. It just lets people know what they are breathing. Our friends want to do away with that. We have not allowed them to do away with that because we think it is important for Americans to know what they are