

Frankly, I think we could use a good bit more of that around here, recognizing the worth of people on both sides, because I have found that colleagues on both sides of the aisle in this Chamber are some of the finest people I have ever known. Just because we have differences and we debate vigorously does not diminish the value nor the humanity of anyone on either side. Maybe that is a word that needs to go out from this Chamber more; that people who serve here are worthy, and they are good people.

In fact, I think my constituents sometimes are surprised when I tell them that I find, on both sides of the aisle, the people that I serve with are some of the finest people I have ever known, the people who are in the U.S. Senate.

THE LEADERSHIP OF SENATOR CHAFEE AND SENATOR BREAUX

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I would like for just a moment to single out two of my colleagues who, I think, are showing real leadership at a time of gridlock in Washington. I want to single out Senator CHAFEE, the Senator from Rhode Island, and Senator BREAUX, the Senator from Louisiana, who have led our bipartisan effort to put together a budget plan that would merge the differences, that would find common ground, that would break the gridlock, and that demonstrates that the two sides can work together here to achieve a result that is important for the country.

Mr. President, earlier today we were able to hold a news conference and indicate that last night we reached agreement between 19 Senators—10 Republicans and 9 Democrats—on the outlines of a plan to balance the budget on a unified basis over 7 years using CBO scoring, and that we were able to do it in a way that is fair and balanced.

Mr. President, I must say I have been very proud to participate in this effort because we did it without raised voices, we did it without hurling brick bats across the barricades, we did it by sitting together, by reasoning together, and by working together to achieve a result that is important to the country.

I think the leadership of Senator CHAFEE and Senator BREAUX should serve as an example to others who are negotiating on this budget matter because I think our group has blazed the trail showing others how we could achieve a result that will get the Government back to working and break the gridlock.

Mr. President, every day in this town there is a news conference that puts a spotlight on the differences between the two parties. This was the first news conference in many days in this city in which we were not talking about differences but we were talking about the ability of people of good will on both sides to get together, to reason together, and to achieve a breakthrough.

Mr. President, we just had an opportunity to make a presentation on that plan to the negotiators from both sides. I was pleased by the reaction.

I am just hopeful now that in the hours ahead cooler heads will prevail and that both sides will understand that to achieve an agreement neither side can get precisely what it wants but that we can have a principled compromise and one that advances the interests of this Nation.

Mr. President, I want to end as I began by saluting the leadership of Senator CHAFEE and Senator BREAUX. It takes courage to compromise.

Mr. President, as in the words of the "Liberty Song" by John Dickenson, "By uniting we stand, by dividing we fall."

This is an example of Senators working together to unite, of Senators reasoning together to unite, and I hope our colleagues will begin to focus on the need for uniting. That is what has made America strong—pulling together, working together, and uniting in order to achieve a result.

I thank the Chair. I yield the floor.

Several Senators addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada has the floor.

Mr. MOYNIHAN. Mr. President, will the Senator allow me 30 seconds on the subject of BOB DOLE?

Mr. REID. I am happy to yield without losing my right to the floor.

SENATOR BOB DOLE

Mr. MOYNIHAN. With great precision and with equal interest, Mr. President, it has been a quarter of a century since I first knew BOB DOLE and worked with him. He would find it interesting that we began working in an effort with a Republican President to establish a guaranteed income as a way of getting us out of our welfare problems. We are still in them. We will be in them much of the evening.

But in 25 years I have not known a man I have respected more. I have not worked with anyone with greater consequence. He is an ornament to this institution and to this Nation. We are proud of him.

I thank the Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

THE BALANCED BUDGET

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we have heard some talk on the floor today about we should have a balanced budget within 7 years. I would certainly acknowledge that. But I think the thing we should be concerned about today is getting Government back to work.

There have been statements made by the Republican leadership that those 250,000 Federal employees who are on furlough will be paid. Well, if they are going to be paid, it seems logical to me that the taxpayers would be getting a

much better deal if they were doing something for their pay, like maybe doing their job.

I would suggest that just sheer logic tells me that, if the Republican leadership said that the furloughed employees are going to be paid their wages for not working, that we should go the next step and allow them to work so that the taxpayers are getting their money's worth. This way they are getting a real bad deal. The taxpayers are told that the parks are going to be closed. There are various Federal agencies where 250,000 people work and are not going to be operable but the people are going to be paid anyway. If I were a taxpayer, I would say that does not sound like a real good deal for me.

So I say for the third time here in the last few minutes, if the Republican leadership has said they will pay the furloughed workers, it seems to me logical that we should get them all back to work.

Mr. DORGAN. Will the Senator yield on that point?

Mr. REID. I am happy to yield for a question.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I would like to ask the Senator a question about that because I feel much as he does—that somehow, sometime today, or immediately, if possible, we ought to have the Federal workers come back to work and end the shutdown and still continue to negotiate on a balanced budget agreement.

It does not make any sense to see a circumstance where Federal workers—some 300,000—will not be allowed to come to work but will still be paid for work they did not do. And the bill is going to be paid by the American taxpayer.

I ask the Senator from Nevada, is not this a period several days before Christmas where it is for most a magic time, a time of family, reflection, lights, music, worship, and now we have a circumstance where we have 1 million checks that have been written sitting in a warehouse here in Washington, DC, that are supposed to go out to the veterans and are supposed to be in their mailboxes on January 1 for veterans and survivors? Unless a continuing resolution is passed immediately, that is not going to happen. We have 4 million children whose AFDC payments for their daily needs relates to the question of whether the continuing resolution will be passed so the money and the resources will be available for them.

You can imagine what will happen if on January 2 or 3 a veteran's survivor expecting a check needing to pay the rent or to buy food or to provide for their children's needs discovers the check is not there because of this shutdown. That is why I hope somehow this evening all of this gets unlocked and we can pass a CR. Does the Senator from Nevada see any reason that it provides any leverage for anyone to continue to have a Government shutdown in which people are sent home,