

before this body is inadequate and incomplete. Until it is adequate and complete, we are going to hang in for the same rule that applied during the 107th Congress.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. REID. I will change the subject. Mr. President, I just received a news flash from my office—not a pleasant one. K-Mart is going to close three Nevada stores, including one on Rainbow Boulevard in Las Vegas, one in Reno, and one in Carson City.

I agree with my friend from Arizona; we should be talking about the economy. That is one thing he failed to mention, but I think we should be talking about that as an important issue. The economy is in trouble. We talked about that earlier today.

I was struck by the New York Times today which had an article written by Edmond Andrews: "O'Neill Expresses Doubts About the Tax Cut." Who is O'Neill? This is Paul H. O'Neill, who was Secretary of the Treasury in this administration until he decided he did not like what was happening with the tax policies of this country. And for lack of a better word, he was dumped, unceremoniously expelled from the administration.

Now, he is a gentleman, and he is determined not to be too blatant in his criticism of the White House. But in the process of not being too critical, let me emphasize a few things that he said. The President's plan for stock dividends is something I would not have done. O'Neill has also talked about his discomfort with the sweeping tax cuts. He talked about these before his departure. And, of course, reading between the lines, I am sure that is one of the reasons for his departure.

He told a group of executives at a public meeting in the United States Chamber of Commerce he would select, carefully, tax breaks that might help the segments of the industry having the most trouble.

Mr. O'Neill said during his confirmation hearing in 2001 that he was skeptical about the wisdom of big tax cuts.

He said he was bitter about what was going on here in Washington. And I quote:

It's all about sound bites, deluding the people, pandering to the lowest common denominator. Real leadership requires you to stick your neck out and have a point of view.

As has been discussed here on the floor, the proposal to stimulate the economy that has been propounded by this administration is, using the words of some, bizarre, crazy. So I think it is important the President reexamine this proposal that would give huge amounts of money to rich people like him, like the Vice President, like Michael Eisner, the head of Disney. I was told here on the floor yesterday that he will get \$2.6 million extra money each year. That is not going to stimulate the economy. But I guess if I had my druthers, it would be I would not be

spending so much time here on the floor and we would be getting to the business that should be before the Senate; that is, doing the appropriations bills, the 11 that were undone, bringing some of the nominations the President has told us last Wednesday at the White House he would like to have quickly.

I wish I were not here doing the things I have done in the last couple of days and we had gone about the business of the Senate. We cannot do that until this organizing resolution passes. I hope we can do that. Then we can talk about the things the Senate should be doing, rather than doing the work some refer to as kind of inside politics, inside the beltway.

Mr. President, is my friend from Kansas going to speak soon?

Mr. ROBERTS. I am ready to proceed.

MAKING MAJORITY PARTY APPOINTMENTS—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I rise today with some degree of reluctance, I might say, to discuss the apparent disagreement and the difference of opinion within the Select Committee on Intelligence with regard to staffing. This is the kind of disagreement that is obviously taking place in many of the committees in the Senate. We have heard a lot about this. We probably heard too much about it, to the point this whole business is now at the leadership level and is holding up the appointment of committee chairmen, not to mention the business of the Senate. This is not only regrettable but, as this drags on, I think this really represents the kind of sandbox silliness—that is my term—that prompts folks outside the beltway to wonder if this body is the Senate or a partisan romper room.

Given the importance of our Select Committee on Intelligence and our obligations and our responsibilities during this time of vital national security threat—and I am talking about the war on terrorism, I am talking about Iraq, I am talking about North Korea, not to mention any number of other national security threats by state and nonstate terrorists—and given the committee's 26 years of history of bipartisanship—that means no majority, no minority, no Republican, no Democrat approach or viewpoint—we should not be having this dispute. The Select Committee on Intelligence is very different from any other committee in the Senate. In fact, it is a committee that serves the entire Senate; it is your committee, my colleagues, and the leadership, and given its importance at this particular time in our history this committee, above all others, should be spared this kind of public spat.

Senator ROCKEFELLER, our very distinguished vice-chairman-to-be, myself, the incoming chairman—I hope, I hope we can get past this—our leader-

ship and the entire Senate should not be party or bystanders to what has been going on in the Senate for the last week or so. It is untoward. That is the nice way of saying it. In Dodge City, KS, we would say we should not be part of this hell-for-leather ride down a partisan trail of obstructionism like a herd of cattle milling about in confusion and delay in a box canyon. That is about what it looks like in my hometown.

But here we are, and the leadership tells me the Intelligence Committee, the Senate's select committee, the committee that really belongs to us all, is at loggerheads. I don't know that because I have not been part of the negotiations. But the leadership tells me this is now a separate issue.

In saying this, I don't question the intent of the distinguished Senator from West Virginia. I want to point out he is a good man. He is a good Senator. He is a personal friend. I look forward to working with Vice Chairman ROCKEFELLER. We have already discussed mutual goals, possible long-term structural reform within the intelligence community, not to mention the regular business of the committee with regard to our oversight responsibilities—and they are pressing responsibilities. We should be meeting this week.

The truth of it is we simply have a different—an apparent difference of opinion on how the Intelligence Committee should be organized. So here I am on the floor of the Senate, making one of those "I had not intended to make a speech" speeches.

The larger issue is whether or not the duly elected majority will be able to run the Senate. We should not be laying down organizational demands, demands for more space—this space, that space; different rules on how this body will consider the confirmation of judges. The next thing you know, it is going to be majority and minority restrooms. That is about where we have come to.

But I believe the issue involving the organization of the Select Committee on Intelligence is important because of what is at stake, and what is at stake is our national security. The difference, as I understand it—and as I say again, this has been at the leadership level for about a week now, and I think it can be summarized quite easily. We should preserve the committee's 26-year history of bipartisanship. We should preserve our Intelligence Committee staff as a single unified staff that works for the committee as a whole under the supervision of the chairman and the vice chairman. Let me repeat that, the chairman and the vice chairman.

The minority—or I guess we should call them the temporary majority, I hope it is temporary—apparently wishes to divide the committee staff for the first time in history into a majority/minority or partisan camps. To the contrary, we should preserve the committee's 26-year history of non-partisanship by keeping to a minimum