

He is hurt; lost his leg above his knee. He had scars that you could see on the one where he has a whole leg. He showed me the scars on that. He said it causes him more trouble than the one that is missing.

No matter what position we take on the war in Iraq, we should all agree on providing for these veterans and those who wore the uniform before them. That is a solemn responsibility we have now. This act we are trying to get on the Senate floor now helps fulfill the responsibility we have as Senators.

Every Senator has a right to oppose this legislation or try to change it. In my time as majority leader, I have tried to work with the Republican leader to reach consensus on legislation on which minority Members have objections. I have made repeated efforts to try to do so on the Veterans Benefits Enhancement Act. I am told my Republican counterparts—if the Republican side of the aisle doesn't like this, let's legislate it and take parts of it out. Unfortunately, the Republican leader has not responded positively. As a result, I was forced Thursday night to file cloture on the motion to proceed simply so we could start debating this legislation.

I would have preferred not to have had to file cloture. I wish we could just move forward on it, as we have wanted to do 65 other times. But when legislation to honor and care for our veterans languishes for 9 months because Republicans are unwilling to work with us or just simply legislate, I have no other choice. As dedicated Government watchers and C-SPAN watchers know, this is far from the first time the Republican minority has rejected our good-faith efforts on reaching compromise. Time and time again they have chosen obstruction over negotiation.

It seems to me what the Republicans want is a graveyard of no progress. We are going to continue to fight. We are going to do everything we can to get this legislation passed. We believe there should be progress; filing cloture as we have had to do is going to help us get progress. It is going to be slow, but we are going to continue doing it.

It seems in times like this our Republican friends would rather we accomplish nothing. Maybe they see political advantage in slow-walking. But the American people are left to suffer for their actions.

Some may not like provisions in the Veterans Benefits Enhancement Act. Let them move to change them. Some say: If it weren't for the Filipino veterans, we would allow you to move to this bill. Filipino veterans—they fought alongside U.S. troops during World War II. I do not think the valor of these Filipino troops should be questioned. These troops may have been born on foreign soil, but they served shoulder to shoulder under one flag, our flag, the American flag. It is our moral obligation to recognize the reward they are due. It is long past time we do so.

It is time for our Republican colleagues to choose. Will they stand in lockstep with an obstinate few, intent on dragging their heels on the care and support our veterans need? I hope not. We need just nine Republicans to join with us.

As you know, Mr. President, there are 51 of us. We need 9 of them to get to 60. I hope there are surely nine Republicans willing to stand on the side of our veterans, our troops. Tomorrow we will have a chance to pass the Veterans Benefits Extension Act. I extend my hand once more to the Republican leader and all my colleagues in the minority. If they would end their needless obstruction, we could get on this legislation today. We would deliver an important victory to the men and women who have served us—and will serve us today—with courage, valor, and distinction.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST—
S. 579

Mr. REID. I know there are some of my Republican friends on the floor, so I am going to ask unanimous consent now on the request I made, the Breast Cancer and Environmental Research Act.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 628, S. 579, the Breast Cancer Environmental Research Act, the committee-reported substitute be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read three times, passed, the motion to reconsider be laid on the table, and any statements be printed at the appropriate place in the RECORD as if read, with no intervening action or debate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection? The Senator from Arizona is recognized.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, on behalf of Senator COBURN, there is objection.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

Mr. REID. I now ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to consideration of the same legislation, S. 579, the Breast Cancer and Environmental Research Act, at a time to be determined by the majority leader, following consultation with the Republican leader, and the bill be considered under the following limitations: that other than the committee-reported substitute, the only first-degree amendments be four amendments, two for each leader; these amendments be relevant to the provisions of the underlying bill and substitute, there be a time limit of 1 hour for general debate on the bill, and 1 hour on each amendment with all time equally divided and controlled between the leaders or their designees; that upon the disposition of all amendments, the use or yielding back of time, the substitute, as amended, if amended, be agreed to, and the bill, as amended, be read a third time with no further intervening action or debate, and the Senate proceed to vote on passage of the bill as amended, if amended.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, on behalf of Senator COBURN, there is an objection.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from North Carolina is recognized.

VETERANS BENEFITS
ENHANCEMENT ACT

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I would like to ask the majority leader before he leaves the floor—I know he has a very busy schedule—the majority leader alluded to a bill on which we will take up a cloture motion tomorrow. I want the majority leader to know before he leaves the floor that the only thing that is contentious in the veterans bill that he has referred to is a new special pension that has been created in this bill of \$300 to Filipino veterans who live in the Philippines, who have no service-connected injuries. If that were stripped from the bill, then this bill is one that I believe we could pass by unanimous consent on the Senate floor.

In the absence of that—

Mr. REID. Will the Senator yield for a question?

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

Mr. REID. I say to my friend, the distinguished Senator from North Carolina, I understand. I mentioned that in my prepared remarks, that people have a problem with that. But I say to my friend, we should go on the bill. If people don't like that, offer an amendment, and we will debate that, vote on it, and go about our way. I think that would be such a good way to do this.

Some of us feel very strongly about these Filipino veterans, as you know. I have mentioned this before. They fought valiantly. All you need to do to prove that is to see what happened in the Tom Hanks movie.

I would also say to my friend that we need to do something about this. The average age of one of these Filipinos is about 84 years now. It is not as if we are breaking the bank to help these people who fought side by side with us. I understand the concern of my friend, but I suggest, let's move to the bill, offer an amendment, it can be the first amendment. We will have you offer the first amendment, or whoever wants to.