

would be wise to abandon their impractical request to repeal it. It has been the law for 4 years.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

#### CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I want to start this morning with a point that is obvious to me but I think bears repeating: Nobody wants the shutdown. Democrats say they do not want it; Republicans certainly don't want it. We all can agree on at least that. The question at this point is: How do we resolve the issues that truly divide us—that really divide us. The point I have been making all week is simply this: The only thing keeping the government from opening back up is the Democrats' refusal to apply a very simple principle of fairness when it comes to ObamaCare: Let's treat everybody the same. Let's treat everybody the same. Basically, all the House is asking for at this point—they wanted a lot more, but all they are asking for at this point—is a level playing field when it comes to ObamaCare. That is about the only thing standing in the way of the government's opening back up, and it is a pretty reasonable request. If Washington Democrats can't agree to that, then can they at least join us in making sure that veterans programs are funded; that the Honor Flight veterans can visit the World War II Memorial, and that the National Institutes of Health can continue its research? Can we at least agree on that? That is just the right thing to do.

Those issues respond directly to the concerns a number of our Democratic colleagues have raised and it is the same thing this Congress voted to do a couple of days ago with the brave men and women of our military. I hope my friends across the aisle will reflect on the efforts of Republicans in the House and allow the Senate to quickly vote on all the bills the House sent us last night so we can get the government reopened as soon as possible.

That said, yesterday's meeting at the White House, frankly, wasn't particularly encouraging. The President basically called us all down there to tell us he is not interested in negotiating. It was essentially a negotiation about not negotiating. Now we hear he is off campaigning today in Rockville rather than sitting down to get this thing solved, which is certainly disappointing.

But here is the good news. A solution isn't that far from reach. As I said, nobody wants a shutdown, so that is a good start. And it is hard to argue with what Republicans are asking for, especially after the embarrassing—embarrassing—rollout of the ObamaCare exchanges on Tuesday. I mean, one of the

folks the President had standing behind him at the White House tried to log on and sign up for ObamaCare, and after a couple of unsuccessful attempts, the Post reports she gave up—literally gave up. And here is the quote she gave afterwards: It is not so great.

Not so great? Some Americans might call that an understatement. You would think the administration would be begging for a delay after stories like that. So this should be easy. Congress gets treated the same way as everybody else on the ObamaCare exchanges and individuals get the same break the President already handed out to employers, the same break the President has already unilaterally given to employers. It is time for Democrats to start acting responsibly. It is time to work with us and find our way out of this mess.

#### 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 be in a period of morning business for debate only until 2 p.m., with the first hour equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with Republicans controlling the first 30 minutes and the majority controlling the second 30 minutes, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Republican whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to engage in a colloquy with the Republican leader, the Senator from Missouri, the Senator from Georgia, if he wishes to join, and the Senator from South Dakota during the 30 minutes allocated to our side.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Mr. REID. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I came to the floor—and I am happy to do that—but I was told there would be a unanimous consent request. If that is not the case, Senators can go ahead and do their colloquy, and when they want to do that I will come back.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, for the information of the majority leader, and anyone else who is interested, there will be some unanimous consent requests. We will frontload those so the majority leader doesn't have to stay on the floor more than maybe about 10 minutes, if that suits his schedule.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Republican leader.

#### UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— H.J. RES. 72

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, many of us were stunned this week to

see the administration blocking the World War II Memorial. It was a reminder to all of us how much we owe the "greatest generation." Last week the Senate unanimously agreed to ensure our troops are paid during the shutdown, and the President correctly signed it into law immediately.

Today the House will pass a bill to ensure our veterans—in fact, they have done that—continue to get the services and benefits they so richly deserve. If Democrats are unwilling to fund other parts of the government, at the very least they can agree to support our veterans.

As the Senator from Texas and the majority leader were just discussing, I have the first of these unanimous consent requests to propound.

I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate receives H.J. Res. 72, making continuing appropriations for veterans' benefits for fiscal year 2014, the measure be read three times and passed, and the motion to reconsider be made and laid upon the table.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Mr. REID. Reserving the right to object, Mr. President, my friend notes that no one wants to shut down the government. Obviously, he didn't listen to my statement. We have people who have been saying for days now—Republicans saying—they are glad the government has shut down; they have been waiting for this for years. I have quoted the Congresswoman from Minnesota who said that. Congressman MARLIN STUTZMAN of Indiana tells us where the tea party is when he said: "We're not going to be disrespected. We have to get something out of this. And I don't know what that even is."

So Republicans are throwing one crazy idea or another at the wall in the hope one will stick. They throw out one idea, then come up with another one. And then, I repeat, they hope something will stick on that wall, and they do not even know which wall they are throwing it on.

The latest plan came from the junior Senator from Texas, which is to cherry-pick parts of the government he likes. House Republican Leader CANTOR admitted this strategy. According to the New York Times, this is what he said when asked: What about those cancer patients who need some help; what about the disadvantaged kids who want to return to their Head Start classes?

That's coming as well. We are going to take every issue that has come up and put it on the floor.

He is following Senator CRUZ's idea specifically. Senator CRUZ is now joint Speaker. He lectures the House on occasion, as he does people over here.

We support veterans and parks and NIH and all these different elements of government that are closed, but we also are not going to choose between veterans, cancer research, disease control, highway safety, or the FBI, and we are not going to give a blank check