

Consider this advice from an editorial that appeared in Bloomberg last month:

Tactics aside, it would be far better to win this fight fairly. The pact is not a treaty: A future President and Congress might overturn it, arguing that it was sealed without proper consideration. And history often looks with disgust at causes built on fear, especially if they go awry.

This is an important moment for the Democratic Party, but more importantly it is an important moment for our country. Let's stand up for the people we represent. Let's allow them to vote on what is one of the most consequential foreign policy issues of our age.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH IRAN

Mr. REID. Mr. President, my friend the Republican leader, among other things, said he wanted an intellectual argument. The outline he just gave has nothing to do with intellectual credibility.

The agreement that was finalized last week dealt with one subject and one subject only: whether Iran should have a nuclear weapon, and that answer was resoundingly no. That is what it was all about. All the other rhetoric my Republican friend talked about is not in keeping with what the agreement is all about. He tried to make the agreement that was finalized into something it isn't. I would suggest in the future, realistically, the Republican leader should be factual on what the agreement is between Iran and China, Russia, Great Britain, Germany, France, and the United States because what he just outlined has nothing to do with what the actual facts are.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. REID. Mr. President, it comes as no surprise to anyone watching the Senate that the Republican leader and I disagree on many things, but I was very glad to hear the Republican leader say last week that he believes any government funding bill must be clean and that using the appropriations process as a vehicle to attack women's health is, as he said, "an exercise in futility."

I am sure not everyone on his side of the aisle agrees with him, but there is no doubt it is the right thing to do. I agree that any budget deal must be clean; that is, no riders—nothing with Planned Parenthood, nothing with repealing what the Environmental Protection Agency has done, no repealing what the Dodd-Frank bill put into effect to stop us from having another Wall Street meltdown, no riders dealing with immigration—just a clean continuing resolution for a short period of time to allow us to do a more

full and more complete deal in the very near future.

I agree any budget bill must be clean. I say that again. I am glad to see the Republican leader coming around to that. Democrats will not support a continuing resolution that has all these riders on it and especially a Planned Parenthood rider that was talked about so much in the House.

I read in the paper today that there are 32 Republicans in the House who have signed a letter to the Speaker saying they are not going to vote for anything unless it defunds Planned Parenthood. That is a nonstarter and the Republican leader rightly has acknowledged that. I am glad the Republican leader wants a clean continuing resolution instead of one that attacks women's health.

I am disappointed by his refusal at this stage to negotiate with the White House or any Democrats in the House or in the Senate dealing with the budget. We have a looming government shutdown. It is right before our eyes. The Republican leader has already wasted far too much time dithering and doing nothing on that. We know from experience 2 years ago that the Republicans actually did shut down the government for almost 3 weeks. For months, we have overheard them calling for bipartisan budget negotiations. We have 9 session days left before the government shuts down. Now is the time to sit down—Democrats, Republicans, getting the White House involved—and negotiate a bipartisan funding measure for the rest of the year, but by the look of this week's schedule, the Republican leader doesn't seem to be in any hurry to avoid a shutdown. That is truly unfortunate.

The Republican leader has not scheduled any budget votes today. Instead, the Senate will waste precious time on another failed vote. And then what comes next? What is the Republican leader's plan for the rest of the week? Political show votes on abortion that have nothing to do with keeping the Federal Government open. There is no reason why we can't pass a bipartisan funding measure as soon as possible—this week, even. But that depends on the Republican leader's willingness to sit down and negotiate, and sooner rather than later. Then, Congress can move on to our next budget priority: reversing sequestration and its harmful cuts.

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today, September 15, marks the beginning of Hispanic Heritage Month, a celebration that dates back to 1968.

This month also includes the anniversary of independence for many Latin American countries. Hispanic Heritage Month is an opportunity for us as a nation to recognize, celebrate, and honor the history, culture, and contributions of America's Latino community.

We see those contributions in all facets of our society, from the battlefields to the boardrooms and from the classrooms to the halls of government. Every segment of American life has been enriched by Latinos and their proud culture. Without the contributions made by generations of Latinos, Nevada and the United States would not be what we are today.

In Nevada, Hispanic influence and history is everywhere. Consider the name of my State and the name of our most famous city. "Nevada" means snow covered. "Las Vegas" means the meadows. Las Vegas, one of the most famous cities in the world, has a Hispanic name. Today, more than one-quarter of Nevada's population is Hispanic.

Nationally, Latino Americans number nearly 60 million and are expected to make up to 60 percent of the population growth in coming decades. America's future depends on a strong and prosperous Hispanic population.

That is why Democrats have fought hard for policies to protect Hispanic families and strengthen Hispanic communities. We passed the Affordable Care Act, which allows millions of Latinos to have access to affordable health care. Because of the Affordable Care Act, 4.2 million previously uninsured Latinos now have health insurance. An estimated 8.8 million Latinos are newly covered for expanded preventive services, with no cost-sharing, including mammograms, colonoscopy screenings, and immunization vaccines under the Affordable Care Act.

Democrats also passed the bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform bill out of the Senate a couple years ago. That legislation, which House Republicans refused to consider, even though it would have passed overwhelmingly—all Democrats would have voted for it and enough Republicans would have voted for it to be an overwhelming victory—but it didn't happen. The Republicans refused to consider something that protected families, reduced the deficit, and strengthened our national security.

We also supported President Obama's Executive actions, which, as we speak, are protecting immigrant families from the threat of deportation and taking criminals off the streets. Meanwhile, Republicans are doing everything in their power to undermine Hispanic families. A person need only watch 5 minutes of a Republican Presidential debate to see how Republicans really feel about America's Latino communities. Republicans are clamoring to amend the Constitution to repeal birthright citizenship. Republicans want to roll back President Obama's Executive actions that are keeping families together and preventing DREAMers from being deported.

Republicans are constantly attacking the Affordable Care Act, which has covered 4.2 million previously uninsured Latinos with health insurance. Republicans refuse to boost the minimum

wage, blocking millions of Latino families from earning a livable wage.

These are the priorities of the Republican Party—a Republican Party that has abandoned Latino families. We as Democrats will do everything in our power to stop the Republican attack on these families. Democrats will continue to fight for Latino families to help them tackle the challenges they face every day.

Today, as we celebrate the first day of Hispanic Heritage Month, we honor the many incredible contributions Latino Americans make every day to our Nation. We also recommit ourselves to protecting Hispanic families and communities from the likes of Donald Trump and the Republican Party and treating them with dignity and respect because a prosperous America needs a strong and thriving Hispanic community.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

HIRE MORE HEROES ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.J. Res. 61, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 61) amending the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration from being taken into account for purposes of determining the employers to which the employer mandate applies under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Pending:

McConnell amendment No. 2640, of a perfecting nature.

McConnell amendment No. 2641 (to amendment No. 2640), to change the enactment date.

McConnell amendment No. 2642 (to amendment No. 2641), of a perfecting nature.

McConnell amendment No. 2643 (to the language proposed to be stricken by amendment No. 2640), to change the enactment date.

McConnell amendment No. 2644 (to amendment No. 2643), of a perfecting nature.

McConnell motion to commit the joint resolution to the Committee on Foreign Relations, with instructions, McConnell amendment No. 2645, to change the enactment date.

McConnell amendment No. 2646 (to (the instructions) amendment No. 2645), of a perfecting nature.

McConnell amendment No. 2647 (to amendment No. 2646), of a perfecting nature.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 6 p.m. will be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum and ask unanimous consent that the time be charged equally.

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

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORKER. 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. CORKER. Mr. President, as you know, today we are going to have a number of speakers coming down to talk about the deal that has been negotiated between the P5+1 countries—China, Russia, Great Britain, Germany, France, and the United States—and Iran. What is before us today is something called a resolution of disapproval. I know the procedures we deal with sometimes here on the Senate floor can be very confusing to the public. We are going through a process where we are trying to seek cloture. Cloture is a vote where people decide whether they are going to end debate on a topic and move toward the final vote, to cast their vote on the substance of what is before us.

We had a similar type of vote before we left on Thursday. We had 58 Senators—a bipartisan majority—who wanted to move to a final vote. As a matter of fact, we had Senators from both sides of the aisle on the floor for some time debating the issue. It was one of the most sober, respectful debates we have had since I have been in the Senate. But a minority of the Senators voted not to end the debate. In other words, that is what the general public believes is a filibuster. And it kept us from being able to move to a final vote.

Because there has been some confusion, what I thought I would do is lay out what exactly is happening here and how we got to this process.

Under our form of government, when the President enters into an international agreement, he decides as to whether that is going to be a treaty, which, as we know, requires a two-thirds approval by the Senate, or whether it is something called a congressional-executive agreement, which is a little bit lower threshold, or whether it is just a pure executive agreement, in other words, the President himself has the ability, if he so decides, to enter into an executive agreement. One of the problems with an executive agreement is that it doesn't live beyond that President's term.

When you invoke an executive agreement, what you are really doing is bypassing the buy-in of Congress. As a matter of fact, last week on the floor, I thought Senator FLAKE made one of the most salient points that have been made; that is, since the President and his team decided to cut out Congress and to attempt to do an executive agreement, they made no attempt whatsoever to get the buy-in of Congress. That is why we have ended up in the situation we are in.

When I realized that the President, through this process, was going to enter into this agreement solely by himself—an executive agreement, which he has the ability to do—but

that he was also going to use something called a national security waiver to do so—again, this gets a little complicated, and foreign policy can sometimes be complicated. Congress, on four different occasions, passed overwhelmingly in this body and overwhelmingly in the House of Representatives something that puts sanctions in place on Iran to try to bring them to the negotiating table. We did it four times.

I have to say that in almost every instance, the administration pushed back against us putting sanctions in place. They said, "Oh, the other countries won't be with us, and this will create problems." What happened as a result of us saying "No, we are going to sanction Iran; we are going to do what we can to bring them to the table to end their nuclear program" was that the other countries fell in line. They put in place similar sanctions to the ones Congress put in place.

When we passed those four sets of sanctions, we gave the President something that is common, and that is called a national security waiver, where, if a crisis came up, he had the ability to waive those sanctions if he thought it was in our country's national interest.

So when he decided to enter into an executive agreement around these negotiations with Iran and bypass Congress, what he also decided he was going to do is to use his national security waiver to waive the sanctions Congress put in place.

Some of us on this side of the aisle realized that was very problematic, that because we brought Congress to the table and because we put the sanctions in place, we thought it was inappropriate for the President to use the national security waiver.

By the way, we realize now that he was going to put a national security waiver in place for 8½ years and come to Congress 8½ years down the road to waive those sanctions permanently. That would have been long after the essence of this deal was done and over.

So we were able to work with the other side of the aisle and pass a bill that has put us in the position we are in today, and that is allowing Congress to weigh in before those congressionally mandated sanctions are waived. Of course, if those sanctions are not waived, then, in essence, the Iranian deal cannot go forward under the terms that have been laid out.

A lot of people have said: Well, Congress gave away authority. They enabled the President to do this without entering into a treaty.

That is totally untrue. The President has the ability to decide to enter into an international arrangement through an executive arrangement, as he has done, if he so chooses. Now, again, the problem with that is, it doesn't stand the test of time because the next President can come in and alter that.

As a matter of fact, this is the first time I can remember that Congress has