



R. Thomas Buffenbarger
International President

Commentary

The Club

The United States Senate is the world's most exclusive club. In a nation of 300 million people, 84 men and 16 women make the most critical decisions about our future.

Our Democracy is predicated on majority rule – 50 percent plus one vote – but not in the United States Senate. There it takes 60 votes to cut off debate and get anything done.

For the last two years, *The Club* has ruled and roiled the Senate. Comprised of forty-five Senators, mostly conservative Republicans but occasionally joined by conservative Democrats, this distinct minority has threatened to filibuster key pieces of legislation.

Their threats have made a mockery of our Democracy. Now even a handful of determined Senators can block consideration of working family legislation: children's health care reform, an economic stimulus package and the Employee Free Choice Act.

But there is an insidious flip side. *The Club* can also act with alacrity.

In the recent fiasco to bailout billionaires, those conservative Senators stuck the American people with a trillion-dollar debt package. *The Club* transferred more gold than Fort Knox holds to the bankers, brokers, investors and hedge fund managers whose greed created the financial crisis in the first place.

It is time to end the power of *The Club*. On November 4th, let's remember who got the gold mine and who got the shaft.

IAM JOURNAL



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