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Senate

The Senate met at 10:30 a.m., and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Gracious Father, our hearts are filled with gratitude. We are thankful that You have chosen to be our God and chosen us to know You. Your love embraces us and gives us security, Your joy uplifts us and gives us resiliency, Your peace floods our hearts and gives us serenity, Your Spirit fills us and gives us strength. You have blessed us with the privilege of prayer so that we could receive Your wisdom and guidance. With never-failing faithfulness You hear and answer our prayers as we seek first Your will and the courage to do it. During the intensely busy past few weeks, You have been with the Senators through long days and late evenings. You have honored their commitment to hard work. Thank You for the magnitude of legislation that has been accomplished. Grant the Senators and all who work with them the perspective of taking victories and defeats in stride. Our best efforts are incomplete so we press on; our steps in each day are only part of the long journey of progress, so we do not lose heart.

We commit this day to You and ask that You will grant us a second wind of renewed energy and vision for the challenges ahead of us today. In the name of our Lord. Amen.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Our able majority leader, Senator LOTT, is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, this is the day we can accomplish an awful lot for

the American people in passing conference reports which are completed and ready to go to the President for his signature. Truly monumental accomplishments can be achieved today—or tomorrow. We have a lot of work to do, but it is work that we can finish, I think, in a responsible and agreeable way.

For the information of all Senators, there are a number of important matters that are available for consideration that I hope the Senate will be able to proceed to and complete action on today. I understand at this time that the D.C. appropriations conference report, the military construction appropriations conference report, the Department of Defense authorization conference report, the legislative appropriations conference report and the health care reform conference report are available for Senate action. I hope all my colleagues will cooperate in allowing the Senate to do its business and complete action on these measures prior to recess.

It is also still my intention to consider the Veterans' Administration, Housing and Urban Development appropriations matter this week. We need to get that bill completed so we can get into conference. Our veterans and people who seek the American dream of home ownership are dependent, in many instances, on this very important legislation. This is a bill I believe we can get completed, get it into conference, and then move it on to the President early in September.

I will, once again, remind my colleagues there is a lot of work to be done and not a lot of time to accomplish it if we want to get out sometime today or tomorrow to go be with our constituents in our respective States. Therefore, Members can expect a full day and evening with rollcall votes throughout that time. Also, it may be necessary for the Senate to convene to-

morrow, if we are unable to complete action on these important matters.

Mr. President, if I could continue, I am prepared now to ask consent to approve the nomination of Ann Montgomery to be a district judge for Minnesota. I would like to do that. I am also, though, then going to move to approve the Commodities Futures—CFTC nominees. I believe there is a Republican nominee and a Democratic nominee. That has been held up for weeks and weeks and weeks. After a lot of effort and serious consideration we have cleared that. We are ready to go with that.

We need desperately to have the Chief of Naval Operations in place. It has been a very slow but very careful consideration of the next admiral to be the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Johnson. His nomination is ready to be moved, along with a long list of other military personnel that deserve the opportunity to have their nominations completed. I would like to do that.

We have a number of other very non-controversial actions that we can take, including the naming of Federal buildings and a list—I mentioned some of them last night that we can get approved. So I am prepared to get started with that. I hope that would break through the logjam and get things started in the right direction.

I am prepared also to begin discussing the D.C. appropriations conference report, the military construction appropriations report, the legislative appropriations conference report, and also to begin discussion on the all-important health insurance reform package. Is it perfect? No. Is it everything we want? I know it is not. But it is a major, major step forward for the women and men and children of this country—the guarantee of available and affordable health care. Could we leave this building tonight, not having done that?

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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After a lot of fuss and carrying on yesterday and complaining and grouching, the House voted 417 to 2 for genuine, responsible, affordable health care reform that will make it available to people, with choice of the medical savings account. Senator KENNEDY, Senator KASSEBAUM, Congressman HASTERT, Congressman ARCHER, have worked heroically to bring this to conclusion. Can we not begin debate and come to conclusion on this important legislation now? Why not?

Who among us here today, for whatever reason, wants to stop funding for the District of Columbia, as desperately as it is struggling to survive and stand on its feet? And we are going to walk off and leave this conference report uncompleted? I do not believe that will happen.

Are we going to walk away from safe drinking water? Safe drinking water?

Mr. FORD. It's not here yet.

Mr. LOTT. I am a little worried that that bill would not be completed. I live in the District of Columbia. I worry about the water.

It is not here yet. The distinguished minority whip makes that point. It will be here today.

I am just racking them up, as to what we can do today. I urge my colleagues to come on over and let us get started. Let us not wait until the Sun goes down. Let us show them the Senate does not have to be nocturnal. While it may look dark here, it is light outside. We can bring some sunshine to this institution by doing these very important pieces of legislation.

I am prepared to go to the first nomination, but I see at least two or three Senators who appear to be wishing to make some comments. I would be glad to yield the floor.

Why do I not yield the floor and then, if Senators would like to comment, then I will move these nominations when they are prepared to do that.

I yield the floor.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I am prepared.

Mrs. HUTCHISON addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Texas.

THE STALKING BILL

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I would like to just get a little clearer idea of where we are. I feel like there has been a mixture of issues here.

I did object to Judge Montgomery's going forward, because I wanted to finish looking at this. There are a number of people who have been concerned about the nominations that had gone through and want to look at the overall record. I am not prepared—I will object until I know a clear field and have a better idea of where we are going. But I am not saying that I will keep the objection on Judge Montgomery.

But in the rhetoric that has been flying around on the floor I think the stalking bill has been brought up. I did not put them together. But in his

statement the night before last, when I objected, the distinguished leader of the Democratic Party said that I should be grateful to him for his help on the stalking bill and, therefore, not use my right to object to a judge. And I was just very concerned about that, because I have worked on this stalking bill since Memorial Day. I have tried to pass a bill that would protect the stalking victims of this country since Memorial Day. I have been held up by a Senator, whose sincerity I do not doubt, but, nevertheless, he knows that the amendment that he wanted to put on had some problems. He knew that it might cause a problem.

I suggested that if he would just put his amendment on another bill, mine then could go forward to the President and we could have the protection for the stalking victims of this country today, because the President, I believe, will sign it very quickly.

All the indications are it passed unanimously in the House. We wanted it to be passed unanimously in the Senate without amendment so it could go straight to the President. We wanted that on Memorial Day. But nevertheless, the minority leader says I should be very pleased he helped me pass my bill, and my bill is dying in the House right now because of the amendment that he forced me to take in order to move on another issue.

So I don't doubt anyone's sincerity here, but I do want to have a clear picture of when we are going to take up the stalking bill. I said I would be happy to work with the Senator, whose amendment is causing the problem, to do it on another issue. But since they have been joined—not my me—I do think that it is fair for us to take a little time and let me see what the clear picture is on the stalking bill, and then I think we can—I am sorry that they were joined. I didn't join them. But now that they are, I would like to have a clear picture. I don't want rhetoric to continue to get out of control here, but I would like an answer.

So, Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LOTT. 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. LOTT. Mr. President, I was talking when I should have been listening. If I can ask the Senator from Texas, I heard you at the beginning of your remarks indicate that you were perhaps not prepared to allow this consent to go forward at this time. I am sure you heard some of the discussion last night. I was one of the ones who mentioned it in some way had been attached to the stalking bill, and the minority leader had talked about how he had tried to be helpful to the Senator.

I am very much committed to the stalking bill which the Senator from

Texas has been working diligently on for months now. I was here the night it was all cleared right up to the last minute, and all of a sudden something happened and it was objected to.

There is not a Senator who thinks we should not pass the stalking bill. If you really care about women and children and how they are treated across State lines, being harassed and stalked, this bill should be done. But it was held up for quite some time by a Senator that had an amendment he wanted to offer.

There was a lot of cooperation from the Senator from Texas, the Senator from New Jersey, the Senator from Idaho, Senator CRAIG. It was worked out. It was sent to the House. It looks like it may not get through the House now. The understanding was if it got tangled up, we would bring it back freestanding without the amendment.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. If the Senator will yield.

Mr. LOTT. I yield.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. It is important to know the arrangement that was given, because I have not mentioned that because I did not want to jeopardize the ability of the amendment to stay on the bill in the House. I have been in good faith. I supported the amendment. I have tried to get House support for the amendment. But I did not mention that we had an agreement with the minority leader, with the majority leader, with myself, with the Senator from New Jersey, that, in fact, if it got bogged down that they would let us pass it clean in the Senate. It has gotten bogged down.

Now I want to have an assurance that everyone's word is going to be kept here, and then I will certainly get out of this picture. But it has now become clouded, not of my making, but it has been. That is why I was trying to have the opportunity to see what the commitment will be to see if we cannot have help for the stalking victims starting right now.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, if I could respond to that, I want to assure the Senator from Texas, I am absolutely committed to working with her on this very important legislation. I am committed to doing whatever is necessary to get it through with amendment, without amendment, clean, and I commit right here today, after you have had a chance to see what will happen in the other body—I am talking frankly about what is involved here because I don't think we have time to deal in nuances. We need to get right upfront as to what is happening and what we can do to solve it.

We will bring that bill back up by unanimous consent. We will move it, if we have to. We will do it when the Senator from Texas is satisfied that it is not going to move in the House, and it may.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. If the Senator will yield.

Mr. LOTT. I will be glad to yield.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. It was attempted to be brought up last night in the