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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate will be led in prayer by the Senate Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie.

PRAYER

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

Gracious God, whom to know is life's ultimate purpose, whom to serve is our deepest joy, and whom to trust is our only lasting peace, we commit to You the work of this Senate. You have made praise the secret of opening our minds and hearts to You, the key to unlocking the mysteries of Your will, and the source of turning difficulties into opportunities. When we praise You for even life's tight places and trying people, we are strangely liberated. You have made praise the highest form of commitment of our needs.

So we begin this week with praise to You for the blessings we could neither deserve or earn and for the problems in which You will reveal Your supernatural guidance and power.

We dedicate this week to be one in which we constantly give You praise in all things, especially the perplexities that force us to seek You and Your limitless grace. In Your Holy Name. Amen.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The able majority leader is recognized.

ALASKA POWER ADMINISTRATION ASSET SALE AND TERMINATION ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, it will be my intention momentarily to move to proceed to consideration of S. 395, the Alaska Power Administration bill. I

understand there are objections to proceeding to the bill at this time. Therefore, Members should be aware that rollcall votes are possible this morning and throughout the day.

Mr. President, I move to proceed to consideration of S. 395, Calendar 111, the Alaska Power Administration bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWN). The question is on the motion. Is there objection?

Mrs. MURRAY. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard. The Senator from Washington is recognized.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I do object to moving to this bill at this time, although I understand the underlying bill has much in it that is important. I do not want to keep us from moving toward that. Section 2 of this bill is extremely important, critical. It has been under the jurisdiction of the Banking Committee for the last several years that I know of that I have been here. It has not been debated in that committee and I believe it should go back to that committee to be looked at.

It is an extremely important section that allows the lifting of the ban on oil for Alaska exports. It has tremendous impact to the west coast, and particularly to my State of Washington, as well as Oregon and California, and is a measure that should see much more light of day, particularly in the Banking Committee, before it is debated on this floor.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KYL. 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. KYL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to proceed as in morning business.

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

VISIT TO THE SENATE BY MEMBERS OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF MEXICO

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I rise to introduce to you and to especially welcome representatives from the Mexican Senate and House of Representatives who met with us in Tucson this last weekend as the delegation of the United States-Mexico Interparliamentary Conference.

It is my honor to present these ladies and gentlemen to you. I ask unanimous consent that each of their names be printed in the proceedings of the U.S. Senate, along with a copy of the joint communique, a communique that came out of that conference.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

MEXICAN DELEGATION LIST

SENATORS

Senador Fernando Ortiz Arana, President (State of Queretaro—PRI).

Senador Jose Murat (State of Oaxaca—PRI).

Senador Guadalupe Gomez Maganda (State of Guerrero—PRI).

Senador Guillermo Hopkins Gamez (State of Sonora—PRI).

Senador Jose Luis Soberanes Reyes (State of Sinaloa—PRI).

Senador Fernando Solana Morales (State of Distrito Federal—PRI).

Senador Eloy Cantu Segovia (State of Nuevo Leon—PRI).

Senador Carlos Sales Gutierrez (State of Campeche—PRI).

Senador Gabriel Jimenez Remus (State of Jalisco—PAN).

Senador Luis Felipe Bravo Mena (State of Mexico—PAN).

Senador Jose Angel Conchello Davila (State of Distrito Federal—PAN).

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



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Senador Jose Ramon Medina Padilla (State of Zacatecas—PAN).

Senador Hector Sanchez Lopez (State of Oaxaca—PRD).

Senador Guillermo Del Rio Ortegon (State of Campeche—PRD).

REPRESENTATIVES

Diputado Augusto Gomez Villanueva, Co-President (State of Aguascalientes—PRI).

Diputado Carlos Aceves Del Olmo (State of Distrito Federal—PRI).

Diputado Samuel Palma Cesar (State of Morelos—PRI).

Diputado Marco Antonio Davila Montesinos (State of Tamaulipas—PRI).

Diputado Victor M. Rubio Y Ragazzoni (State of Distrito Federal—PRI).

Diputado Rosario Guerra Diaz (State of Distrito Federal—PRI).

Diputado Carlos Flores Vizcarra (State of Distrito Federal—PRI).

Diputado Pindaro Uriostegui Miranda (State of Guerrero—PRI).

Diputado Ricardo Garcia Cervantes (State of Baja California—PAN).

Diputado Guillermo Lujan Pena (State of Chihuahua—PAN).

Diputado Miguel Hernandez Labastida (State of Distrito Federal—PAN).

Diputado Alejandro Diaz Perez Duarte (State of Distrito Federal—PAN).

Diputado Jesus Ortega Martinez.

Diputado Pedro Ettiene Llano (PRD).

Diputado Joaquin Vela Gonzalez (State of Aguascaliente—PT).

JOINT COMMUNIQUE, 34TH MEETING OF THE MEXICO-UNITED STATES INTERPARLIAMENTARY GROUP, TUCSON, ARIZONA, MAY 13, 1995

At the conclusion of the 34th Interparliamentary Meeting between the Congresses of the United States of America and Mexico, held from May 12-15, 1995, in the city of Tucson, Arizona, the participating delegations determined by mutual accord to make known the scope of their discussions through this joint communique.

The Delegations recognized that ties between their peoples and governments are based on mutual respect and open communication, which form the foundation of good relations. The Delegations agreed to emphasize the importance of the active role that each Congress must play in strengthening a framework of understanding and joint endeavors. The discussions in Tucson were cordial, comprehensive, and candid, aimed at exchanging views on five principal subjects, expanding mutual understanding, and advancing a positive, practical agenda for improving relations across the board.

NAFTA AND HEMISPHERIC FREE TRADE

The Delegations discussed the expansion of economic relations among Canada, Mexico, and the United States under the North American Free Trade Agreement. The Delegations discussed ideas for the acceleration of tariff phase-out periods and the complete implementation of NAFTA and committed themselves to encourage the timely consideration of initiatives to expand free trade in the Americas.

ECONOMIC STABILIZATION

The Delegations discussed current economic conditions and measures established in Mexico's economic adjustment program and stressed that both countries have an interest in the complete and early recovery of the Mexican economy. In particular, the Delegations recognized that both Congresses will continue to review implementation, within their respective constitutional authorities, of the economic stabilization package being carried out under the "U.S.-Mexico Framework Agreement" and accompanying accords signed on February 21, 1995.

BORDER COOPERATION

The discussions in Tucson provided ample opportunity for the exchange of views on expanding border cooperation, including issues of tourism, customs, safe border crossing, health, and environment. The Delegations committed themselves to following through on initiatives to improve the quality of life of persons who live and work in communities along the 2,000-mile U.S.-Mexico border and to facilitate the growing commerce through regional ports. In addition, problems of port security and border crossings in violation of the law were discussed.

IMMIGRATION

The Delegations recognized the need to respect the fundamental human rights of all persons, as well as the sovereign right of all states to make autonomous decisions regarding domestic social programs and their territorial integrity, in accordance with the constitution of each country. When considering this issue, the Delegations agreed on the importance of utilizing the consultative mechanisms established in the U.S.-Mexico Binational Commission and other appropriate channels.

COMBATTING ILLEGAL DRUGS

In the strongest possible terms, the Delegations agreed that combatting illegal drugs is a priority for both countries. The Delegations acknowledged that current bilateral anti-drug cooperation is unprecedented in its scope and intensity, and that both governments must redouble their efforts and commit the necessary resources in order to strictly apply the law to criminals and to attack the drug problem more effectively in all its manifestations, including production, trafficking, and consumption. The Delegations agreed on the need to strengthen actions to fight organized crime, money-laundering, and corruption through cooperation and with absolute respect for the sovereignty of each country.

FOLLOW-UP MECHANISMS

The Delegations agreed to consider establishing special congressional working groups on bilateral issues, including a process to develop specific recommendations and follow-up actions for future interparliamentary meetings. They also agreed to consider holding a United States-Mexico-Canada Interparliamentary Meeting in the future.

CONCLUSION

The Mexican Delegation expressed its satisfaction for the atmosphere of frank, open, and candid dialogue that prevailed at the discussions in Tucson. The Mexican legislators thanked their U.S. colleagues for their hospitality and extended their best wishes to the people of the United States. The United States Delegation extended their thanks to their Mexican counterparts and best wishes to the Mexican people.

Senator FERNANDO ORTIZ ARANA,
Chairman, Mexican State Delegation.
Deputy AUGUSTO GOMEZ
VILLANUEVA,
*Chairman, Mexican Chamber
of Deputies Delegation.*
Senator JON KYL,
Chairman, U.S. Senate Delegation.
Representative JIM KOLBE,
Chairman, U.S. House Delegation.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, this conference, which was the 34th meeting of the United States and Mexican parliamentarians, covered a wide range of topics. It focused in two general areas: On the economic and political issues.

On the economic issues, matters that were discussed included the implementation of NAFTA and other hemi-

spheric free-trade issues, the issues regarding economic stabilization for the Mexican economy, border cooperation in a whole variety of different ways, problems relating to immigration and, most important, combating illegal drugs.

I might note just in that regard that the communique notes in the strongest possible terms, the delegates believe that both countries need to work even more closely together to solve this problem that is so critical to both of our countries.

We also included in the communique follow-up mechanisms that would enable us to continue our work together as parliamentarians, including the possibility that we would meet with our Canadian counterparts as well in a three-part kind of meeting.

Mr. President, the key, I think, to this meeting was a recognition that perhaps more than any other time in history, the Congresses of our two countries have changed dramatically. We are aware of the fact that for the first time in 40 years, the Republican Party now controls both Houses of the U.S. Congress, and that is creating great changes in our legislative policy.

By the same token, the Congress in Mexico is undergoing substantial change as well. In addition to the fact that you have four different parties in the Congress, the parliamentarians who met this weekend all noted that the role that the Congress is playing in Mexico is a much more active and robust role than has been true in years past. Therefore, the areas of cooperation between the two Congresses take on an even greater importance as both of our countries face the next few years and going into the next century.

So, Mr. President, it is with a great deal of pride and with a degree of humility that I appear with these members of the House and Senate of Mexico and present them to you and, again, express my very strong sense that this kind of meeting is critical to the future of our two countries which share a 2,000-mile-long border and have a very bright future together. We treat that border as an opportunity, and I think that was the keyword in the entire conference, was the opportunity that is presented by the working together of our two countries.

Mr. President, now we have the privilege of going to the White House and meeting with President Clinton. We know that that meeting will be fruitful as well. I note finally that there were seven Senators from the United States who attended that meeting, as well as both Ambassadors from the United States and Mexico. Therefore, it was a most productive conference.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chamber is honored by the visit of our colleagues and friends. You are most welcome in this Chamber. We appreciate your visit very much.

Mr. KYL. Thank you, Mr. President.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

Mrs. MURRAY. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, again, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from Minnesota is recognized.

MINNESOTA TAX FREEDOM DAY

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, yesterday, on May 14, 1995, Minnesotans marked two annual occasions: one that millions of families look forward to each year, and one that millions of Minnesota taxpayers await with a mixture of anger and frustration.

First and foremost, of course, was Mother's Day, the day we all honor our mothers for the love and support they have given us.

The second, less well-known but equally significant event was Minnesota Tax Freedom Day, the day Minnesotans quit working to pay taxes at the Federal, State, and local levels of government and begin working for themselves. Every dollar my constituents have earned so far this year has gone to pay taxes. For a total of 134 days, Minnesotans have been working for the government; 85 of these days were spent paying off Federal taxes, while the remaining 49 days were spent paying off State and local taxes.

Tax Freedom Day comes much later in the year to Minnesota than it does to the Nation at large, which means Minnesotans spend longer than most Americans working to pay off their tax bills.

For the average American taxpayer, Tax Freedom Day is on May 6, but Minnesotans must work more than a week longer for Uncle Sam and his cousins at the State and local levels.

My constituents are encumbered with the sixth highest tax rate in the country. The only States whose Tax Freedom Days come after Minnesota's are Connecticut and New York, who both mark Tax Freedom Day on May 24; Washington, DC, and New Jersey, on May 18; and Hawaii, on May 17.

For 2 years, the tax load borne by Minnesotans has remained constant, and Tax Freedom Day has fallen on the same day, May 14. But sadly, a lot has changed since President Clinton's 1993 budget package.

In 1993, Tax Freedom Day in Minnesota was May 9. In effect, the tax increases imposed in President Clinton's 1993 budget have forced Minnesotans to work an additional 5 days just to pay off those new taxes.

These 5 days could have been spent on a family vacation, but there is no

time for fun when you are working to pay off the Government's spending splurges.

The average per capita income of Minnesota is \$24,403, 36.6 percent of which goes to pay taxes.

Translated into dollar terms, the average annual tax bill for every Minnesota taxpayer this year will be \$8,926, or over one-third of their hard-earned income.

Americans face a veritable cornucopia of tax burdens in their day-to-day lives, overflowing with the income taxes and payroll taxes which represent the largest component of the average American's tax bill.

In addition to these more visible taxes, the cost of nearly all goods and services are inflated by sales and excise taxes. There are property taxes, estate and other business taxes, and let us not forget the corporate income taxes which are passed along to consumers and employees in the form of higher prices and lower wages.

The perverse thing about our current progressive income tax system is that as national income increases, the tax burden increases along with it, more than proportionally. As a result, economic contractions tend to reduce American's tax burden while economic expansions tend to increase it.

It makes no sense that taxpayers should be penalized for robust economic growth by extracting more money from their paychecks.

This is why I support tax cuts—real tax cuts—that help American families keep more of what they earn. The \$500 per child tax credit goes a long way toward that end. Middle-class families could save more, or they could spend more—they would be given the freedom to do whatever they want with their money because it belongs to them.

We may never see Tax Freedom Day coincide with New Year's Day or even Valentine's Day, but let us face it: We are about to begin debate on a new budget resolution, one that can counteract the onerous effects of Clinton's package of tax hikes 2 years ago. Let us not miss this opportunity to offer tax relief to America's families. Let us ensure that Tax Freedom Day comes a lot earlier next year than it did last year.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 395

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 12 o'clock noon the Senate turn to the consideration of calendar 101, S. 395 re-

garding the Alaska Power Administration.

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

Mr. MURKOWSKI. I thank the Chair. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. PRESSLER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

The Senator from South Dakota is recognized.

THE BUDGET

Mr. PRESSLER. Mr. President, there has been much discussion about the budget of the United States that will be brought to this floor by Senator DOMENICI and the Budget Committee soon. I believe strongly we must do something in this country or Medicare will go broke and our country will go broke. That is the alternative on one side. The alternative on the other side is to do something about it.

Those are two rather grim alternatives. Because if we continue down the road with a \$4.8 trillion debt in a \$6.9 trillion economy, our money will soon become worthless. We are already seeing signs of this: the decline in the value of the dollar, particularly the unexplained collapse of the dollar against the yen and against the German mark. So something is wrong in our economy. In fact, I predict that at some point in the next 5 or 10 years we will have a cataclysmic event, economically speaking, in our country if we do not do something now about the Federal deficit.

We also have learned that Medicare will go broke by the year 2002 unless something is done. I have been a champion of senior citizens. I would ask our senior citizens, would we rather have a Medicare system that is broke, or would we rather have one that is solvent even though we may have to make certain changes? So that is where we stand as a country, basically, with this budget coming to the floor. It is a historic turning point in our country's history. We have to make a decision as to whether or not we are going to face up to the facts.

We had a debate on this Senate floor about the balanced budget amendment recently. The Democrats pointed out that our side of the aisle had no plan. They said, what is your plan to balance the budget? We do have a plan. It is the Domenici plan that will come to this floor. It has a lot of cuts; some cuts I do not personally agree with, but I am going to support the Domenici budget plan, generally speaking, because in part it is the only game in town.

The Democrats do not have a plan. Yet, they are criticizing our plan. That is unfortunate. The Democrats have