

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, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business not to extend beyond the hour of 10:30 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

Under the previous order, the first half of the time shall be under the control of the Republican leader or his designee. Under the previous order, the time until 10:30 shall be under the control of the Democratic leader or his designee.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. CLINTON). Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Mr. DASCHLE. Madam President, I commend the distinguished Senator from Michigan for coming to the Chamber, and I know she is prepared to talk about an issue that is of great importance to our caucus. She has shown remarkable leadership in addressing the issue of prescription drugs. I very much wish to participate in a colloquy with her on that matter in a moment.

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS LEGISLATION

Mr. DASCHLE. Madam President, I wish to address another issue. Today we are going to be completing our work on the trade adjustment assistance legislation, the trade promotion authority bill, as well as the Andean Trade Preference Act. My expectation is we will finish that work by sometime mid-afternoon.

It was then my intention to bring up the Senate version of the appropriations supplemental that has just been reported out of the Appropriations Committee. I have had a number of conversations with Senator BYRD about the need to address this matter expeditiously.

The bill includes \$14 billion for defense, as we continue to wage our war on terror; there is \$1.8 billion in contingency defense funds that are directly connected with our efforts at homeland defense; an additional \$3.3 billion, substantially more than what the House has committed for other needs in

homeland defense; plus \$5.5 billion for the recovery efforts in New York.

This is a very important bill. It was our hope, our expectation that we would be able to complete our work on this bill prior to the time we recess.

I am told now that our Republican colleagues are going to object to moving that bill. I find that especially disconcerting given the comments made a couple of weeks ago by the House majority leader, who criticized me and Senator BYRD for the inaction in what he called the Democratic-controlled Senate in its unwillingness to take up what he termed to be the war supplemental prior to the Memorial Day break. He said he is discouraged; that, in his view, this should not be an acceptable state of affairs.

The package he indicated included some critical matters relating to our efforts in carrying out the war on terror and responding to the needs of New York. He said he not only was not optimistic, but he said there was a dearth of leadership in the Senate. If there is a dearth of leadership, perhaps we can see some leadership shown on both sides in addressing that dearth.

I am prepared to offer a unanimous consent request today to take up a bill and complete it before we leave. I do not see any reason why we cannot do it. It passed unanimously out of the committee. There is no question we send exactly the wrong message if our Republican colleagues object to taking up this bill. There is a very disconcerting message that sends to New York, to those who are concerned about homeland defense, especially with the new warnings that are emanating from the Departments of Government, as well as from our effort in the war in Afghanistan.

On April 22, President Bush said:

I ask the Congress to pass the supplemental that we have submitted as quickly as possible. It's emergency funding for defense and homeland security and economic security, and we need to get it done by Memorial Day. It's time the Congress passed the supplemental.

Those are words from the President himself. I hope he will pick up the phone from wherever he is in Europe and call the leadership and tell those who are blocking this legislation that he wants it done just as badly today as when he articulated his views on this issue a few weeks ago.

There is no reason we cannot take it up. There is no reason we have to delay until after we get back. There is no reason we cannot make the most of this week. We can get this done. If it can pass out of the committee unanimously, it can pass on the floor overwhelmingly. We need to address it.

Madam President, I put my colleagues on notice that we will have a discussion about this later in the day. I was not made aware of the opposition on the part of our Republican colleagues until this morning, but I will say we will press to complete our work.

We will try to respond to the request of the President of the United States

that we get it done before Memorial Day. We will address the criticism of the House majority leader who complains of a dearth of leadership. Let's show leadership on both sides of the aisle. Let's show a commitment to the people of New York, to the people in Afghanistan, to our effort at addressing the needs of homeland defense more effectively than we would be were we to say: No, we will wait; no, somehow, it is not that important; no, we want to go home before we get this job done.

There is no reason to go home until we have gotten this job done, and we are going to press it all day long if we need to, to see if that is possible.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Mr. DASCHLE. Madam President, again I thank my colleague from Michigan. As all of my colleagues know, this is an issue on which she made a commitment to her people before she got elected. She reminds me every day of that commitment and her absolute determination to address this issue soon.

I was in Maine a couple of days ago and was reminded again of what an emotional issue it is for seniors who have no other recourse but to go to Canada to get help, who pay bills and have to decide whether it is drugs or groceries, drugs or rent, drugs or car payments, drugs or fuel.

That kind of a decision in this day and age for people vulnerable as they are economically and in so many other ways is a matter that simply cannot rest until we have addressed it.

I thank the Senator from Michigan for her willingness to keep coming to the floor and reminding us of how important it is to keep organizing and effectively pressing for action in the Senate.

I know she wishes to make her statement at this time, and so I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. I thank our Senate majority leader. If we did not have his leadership, we would not have the opportunity to be talking about specific proposals for a comprehensive Medicare prescription drug benefit or opening the doors to Canada or in other ways lowering prices for families, seniors, businesses, workers. The entire economy is affected by this issue, and we would not be in a position to do that without the leadership of Senator DASCHLE.

I thank him for that and also say that this week, as we are celebrating the leadership of another colleague, it would not be possible without Senator Jim Jeffords. I commend him. As our majority leader talked about going to Canada, Senator JEFFORDS has been at the forefront of breaking down those barriers so we could open the border.