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Senate

The Senate met at 11 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable CONRAD R. BURNS, a Senator from the State of Montana.

PRAYER

The guest Chaplain, Monsignor Robert J. Fuhrman, offered the following prayer:

Lord God of life and love, Creator of heaven and Earth, morning has again filled the sky and we ask for Your grace. The men and women of this Senate and every American face a world of uncertain promises and fragile peace. Strengthen, bless, and guide our Senators with Your warm light. Then threats and fear will cease to make us weak, for we can do all things in You. Give the Senate wisdom, Lord, the intended at Your throne. With wisdom they will be courageous in leadership, proud servants of a free people. Perfect in them the art of willing service, Lord. Show them and all of us the way. Help us to know what is right and to protect that which is good in this wonderful Nation and this beautiful world. Bless us, protect us from all evil, and give us Your peace. Amen.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I rise today to welcome the Reverend Monsignor Robert J. Fuhrman to the Senate. Monsignor Fuhrman hails from Saddle River, NJ, and we are very happy that he is joining us today as the Senate's guest Chaplain. Monsignor Fuhrman was ordained to the priesthood in 1981. He received his bachelor's degree from Seton Hall University in 1977 and he currently serves as pastor at St. Gabriel the Archangel Church in Saddle River. He is also currently on the board of directors of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, which is a mission support agency of the Catholic Church. In this capacity he has daily contact with missionaries providing important services in developing countries around the world.

I am always excited when we can welcome someone from New Jersey to the

Senate Chamber and I am honored to welcome Monsignor Robert J. Fuhrman to lead us in our morning prayer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The PRESIDING OFFICER led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, February 13, 2003.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable CONRAD R. BURNS, a Senator from the State of Montana, to perform the duties of the Chair.

TED STEVENS,
President pro tempore.

Mr. BURNS thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. The Senate will resume consideration of the nomination of Miguel Estrada to be a circuit judge for the DC Circuit. This is now the sixth day of debate on this judicial nominee. I thank Chairman HATCH, chairman of the Judiciary Committee, for leading

the debate on Miguel Estrada last night. I believe Senator HATCH laid out very clearly the qualifications of this nominee, as well as the traditional practice and process of our judicial confirmations.

I thank all Members on this side of the aisle for their questions last night. I believe those questions and answers provide a great insight and clear away much of the rhetoric surrounding this well-qualified nominee.

Again last night I attempted to reach an agreement as to when we might have an up-or-down vote on the Estrada nomination. All of my proposals were rejected. I hope out of a sense of fairness my Democratic colleagues would rethink their objection and allow the time certain for an up-or-down vote on Miguel Estrada.

With respect to the omnibus appropriations conference report, the House filed the report late, very late, last night. The House is expected to act on that conference report later today. Therefore, it is my intention the Senate will be able to complete action on that measure on Friday.

I will be working with the Democratic leader in an effort to reach a time agreement on that conference report. Rollcall votes are, therefore, possible during today's and tomorrow's session.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The distinguished minority leader from South Dakota.

Mr. DASCHLE. I ask the distinguished majority leader if it is his intention to bring the bill up tomorrow? There have been questions about the schedule tomorrow. You did indicate it was more likely it would come up tomorrow rather than tonight?

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, in response, it may well be tonight, in which case we could consider moving ahead tonight. It depends on when the House finishes their business and delivers it to us. A number of Senators have asked. Looking realistically, it is likely to be tomorrow. But if we receive it

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



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