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Senate

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

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal and living God, our Master and Friend, in the noisy confusion of life, help us to keep our minds on You. Lord, we place ourselves in Your hands as we begin this day. Your plans are better than what we can devise, so lead us with Your providence.

We thank You for this great land and for our many freedoms. Empower our Senators to be faithful in their duties, working with a spirit of unity. May they remember that all things work together for good for those who love You.

Give each of us, Lord, grace to feel the sorrows and trials of others and to bear patiently with human frailties. Give us also confidence in the eternal victory of truth and goodness.

Lord, protect our military.

We pray this in Your glorious name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The PRESIDENT pro tempore 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, today there will be a period of morning business until 10 a.m. Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of the Foreign Operations

appropriations measure. Under the order from last night, Senator DORGAN will be recognized to offer an amendment relating to 9/11 in which there will be 40 minutes of debate. The procedural vote with respect to the Dorgan amendment is therefore expected at approximately 10:45 this morning.

Following that vote, we will begin consideration of the Healthy Forests bill. Senator COCHRAN had hoped, and we tried on several occasions, to reach an understanding that the bill will be open for relevant amendments. We were unable to reach a formal agreement for that, but I do hope we will debate amendments that are related to Healthy Forests and the Healthy Forests initiative. We all recognize the tragedy and the suffering and misery that surrounds the wildfires currently raging in California. I do think it would be unfortunate and irresponsible in many ways for this to be delayed or not to stay on the issues related to the underlying bill. We will have votes throughout today as we make progress on that bill. There is a clear urgency to finish that bill this week.

We will be looking also to execute the order with respect to the climate change bill. That agreement from July 31 allowed for 6 hours of debate. I will be working with principals on both sides of this bill in an effort to begin that debate during today's session.

There are a number of other issues that we are currently working on, including the Internet tax, which has an expiration date surrounding the issue this Friday night. We continue to talk to the interested parties to bring that to some conclusion before Friday. We have the issue of gun liability. We are discussing on both sides of the aisle as to when we might address that—not this week but possibly the following week.

On nominations, a cloture motion had been filed on the nomination of Charles Pickering to be a United States circuit judge for the Fifth Cir-

cuit. That vote will occur on Thursday. Again, we will be working in good faith to finish these measures. I thank everyone for their attention and cooperation in these matters. We do want to finish in a timely fashion and be able to leave for the recess period. There is a lot to accomplish. I think we are on track to do just that.

Mrs. BOXER. Will the leader yield for a quick question about the schedule?

I thank you for your comments about the tragedy in California. I was wondering whether it would be possible, when we take up the Healthy Forests bill, to complete work on that without interruption simply because it would send a signal of hope in terms of how we are going to deal with the communities close to forests. It is a very important piece of legislation.

Would that be possible? Could I get the Senator's commitment on that?

Mr. FRIST. We will certainly consider that and work very hard.

As my colleagues know, we are adjusting the schedule and interrupting the appropriations bills quite appropriately to address this issue, which reflects the joint priority in responding in large part to the immediacy of that response to the fires that are underway.

As I mentioned, the main obligation on both sides of the aisle is to address the issue of the climate change bill and the agreement from July 31. My intention is to stay on Healthy Forests and work aggressively. But we have to ask for cooperation on both sides of the aisle.

I would like to finish Healthy Forests as soon as possible, absolutely finish it this week. It will take focus to stay on that bill and on relevant amendments as we have been requesting.

Mrs. BOXER. If I could make—

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Will the Senator address the Chair, please.

Mrs. BOXER. Through the Chair, I would like to address another question to the leader.

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



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Thank you very much, Mr. President.

I just wanted to say that as far as I am concerned we will work with you to ask Senators on our side if we could have time agreements on amendments on Healthy Forests. We need to give a message of hope to people that their communities will have more help than they had in the past.

I thank you very much for your expressions here in the hope we can work together and get through that bill and move on to the global warming bill which, of course, is very important in its own right.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority leader is recognized.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I will comment briefly on the schedule. I think that the majority leader has set exactly the right tone. We have to recognize the days for this session are numbered. We have a lot of work to do. I agree with his prioritization in terms of his urgency in bringing up the forest health bill, given our circumstances now in California, particularly.

Senator REID and I have had conversations with Members of our caucus and have expressed our strong desire to keep amendments to the forest health bill relevant. Now, "relevant" is loosely interpreted, but it is important they stay relevant. We can give the assurances to the majority leader that we will maintain relevancy in that loosely structured definition in order to complete the work on the bill. I am hopeful, as he is, if we cannot complete it today, or certainly completing it by tomorrow, recognizing that we may move to the climate bill tonight.

I also think it is critical we keep our emphasis on the appropriations process. We have a lot of work there to do and, frankly, I must say, through no fault of the majority leader, we are in a real dilemma right now with completion of the work on the foreign operations bill. We made such progress yesterday and everyone worked to try to bring it to closure. We have an AIDS amendment that deserves a vote. With that vote we could go to final passage. There is no reason we cannot complete our work on that and move to Agriculture appropriations and all the remaining bills that are to be considered.

I hope all Senators will recognize, given the plethora of work we have to do, we cannot afford to delay indefinitely appropriations amendments. We will work on this side to try to expedite consideration of these bills. But it has to be a cooperative effort on both sides. Right now that is not the case.

So I thank the majority leader for outlining the schedule. We will work with him to see if we can complete our work on time.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, just one final response.

As I think our colleagues can see, we are working together in trying to move the schedule forward. I, too, am committed to the appropriations process. On foreign operations, I think we ought to work over the next hour and see if we can resolve the differences on the outstanding amendments. Indeed, my objective is to complete that bill as soon as possible.

I will say, if we get to where we are really locked up, because Healthy Forests is important, the other issues are important, we are going to have to have some flexibility. But again, I think we ought to start working right now to resolve the outstanding amendments on foreign operations and try to finish it by midday today.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Does the leader desire that we have 30 minutes of morning business now?

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, let's continue with the 30 minutes of morning business.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business for up to 30 minutes. The first 15 minutes is under the control of the Senator from Texas, Mrs. HUTCHISON, or her designee, and the second 15 minutes is under the control of the Democratic leader or his designee.

The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I claim the time that has been set aside for the Senator from Texas.

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I begin by thanking the Chaplain for his prayers for our brave fighting men and women in Iraq, as well as in Afghanistan, as well as for the first responders and law enforcement personnel who are putting their lives on the line every day for us. In California, we pray for those who are fighting the fires. Certainly our hearts and sympathies go out to them.

I also note, Mr. President, as you well know, that we are working hard to complete the Iraqi supplemental, which will provide the support that our troops need to be safe in Iraq, as well as the reconstruction money, which I hope we can pass quickly so we can bring the troops home.

Having said that, let me share with you an experience I had this weekend. It came as a great surprise to hear on the news this weekend that newspapers were reporting that the Intelligence Committee was preparing a report saying that the distinguished chairman of the Intelligence Committee was trying to do something with a report that was

uncalled for and that would whitewash the administration, and purporting to outline material in that report.

That caught me by surprise, No. 1, because I am on the Intelligence Committee. As reported by Chairman ROBERTS, we have not completed a report. We have not started a report. We have worked very diligently with our staff to interview a hundred witnesses from the intelligence agencies. They have reviewed tens and perhaps thousands of documents, and they are continuing to do so. As Chairman ROBERTS said, there will be information sought from the Director of the CIA, Director George Tenet. So whatever was leaked was not based on fact.

The second thing that bothered me is that what was supposedly a work in the classified confines of the Intelligence Committee had been somehow shared with the press. Now, that is a problem. The President has come down very strongly in saying that he absolutely abhors leakage of classified, sensitive material, as he should. We all should. He said he will not tolerate it in the administration, in the White House, or even in Congress. But it appears to me that somehow in the Intelligence Committee it is leaking like a sieve, and people are saying things that are not true.

So I would caution those who are listening, when you hear about something that is going on in the Intelligence Committee, perhaps you ought to take it with a great big grain of salt.

Chairman ROBERTS and Vice Chairman ROCKEFELLER are conducting these hearings, and all Members of this body can come to Hart 219 and have access to the material if they want to find out what we are working on. But what you hear being discussed is not necessarily relevant to anything that is going on.

What is relevant, and what many people have cited—and I am afraid they have not read—is the work of Dr. David Kay, the Interim Progress Report of the Iraqi Survey Group, the ISG. This is a declassified report from this distinguished person who is heading the intelligence gathering in Iraq. He has been cited as saying: Well, we have found no weapons of mass destruction; therefore, there must not be any.

Well, I would say, by that same reasoning, we have not found Saddam Hussein; so by that reasoning, maybe Saddam Hussein did not exist. But we have seen in the tragedies that have occurred in recent days and weeks in the Sunni Triangle and in Iraq and elsewhere that the protégés, the adherents to Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden, continue to carry on their war of terrorism. They are attacking our troops. They are attacking Iraqi civilians. They have attacked the U.N. They have attacked the Red Cross. They are very dangerous, and we know that the battle on terrorism goes on. That is why we have to complete work on the Iraqi supplemental appropriations.