the Very Reverend Matthew William Searfoorce, who is with us this morning, for a truly wonderful and inspiring opening prayer.

Reverend Searfoorce comes to us from the great State of Connecticut, where he has served for the past 33 years in the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church there. He is currently rector at the Holy Virgin Mary Orthodox Church.

I had the opportunity to meet him through a very close personal friend of mine, Ed O'Lear, and his wonderful mother, whom I have known for the past, I guess, 34 years. It has been a tremendous friendship between me and the O'Lear family, including Ed's dad, who passed away, and his mom and Ed.

Ed has, in effect, become a member of our family and us a member of his family. So it is through that friendship that I have had the opportunity to meet the Very Reverend Searfoorce, whose prayer we very much appreciate today.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor and look forward to a good day and will likely be back over the course of the day as we talk about further scheduling.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

COMPLETING THE INTELLIGENCE REFORM LEGISLATION

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, as we have now done several days in a row, both the majority leader and I have felt the need to impress upon our colleagues the urgency of completing our work on this bill. It is important that we maximize the next 2 days. I think my advice to the majority leader will be that we have votes on Friday unless we can specifically enumerate at least 10 amendments that can be offered and debated and considered tomorrow.

There is absolutely no reason this body, with 100 Senators, if we are serious about completing our work, cannot find the time and the effort to use tomorrow to its fullest. So I am very hopeful Senators will come to us throughout the day to volunteer their willingness to come to the floor tomorrow to offer these amendments. If that does not happen, then our only other recourse will, of course, be to have votes tomorrow and force our colleagues to use the day that otherwise will be lost.

So please let either our managers know or leadership know your intent regarding these amendments. As the majority leader noted, you have until 4 o'clock this afternoon to file your amendments. As we noted yesterday, because of the backlog of legislative counsel, we appreciate the logistical challenge this may require, but we are going to be understanding and flexible with regard to your ability to refine your amendment at that time when it is considered. We have done that before. It is important we accommodate Senators' needs to do that again this time. So I ask, on behalf of leadership in particular, that we have the cooperation of all Senators.

We had a reasonably good day yesterday, but a lot more needs to be done. We have about 300 amendments pending. Senators are going to have to be more realistic about their expectations with regard to offering amendments. It is my hope that over the course of the next several days we can find a more realistic appreciation of how many amendments there really are and what kind of time will need to be allocated to consider those amendments in the coming days.

FARM SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, before we left for the August recess, I came to the Senate floor to express my serious concerns about this administration's policies towards rural America.

On several critical issues, including disaster aid, renewable fuels, and market concentration, the decisions the President has made have been right for a very few large corporations, but wrong for the large majority of rural Americans.

And now it appears the administration will once again stand against farmers and ranchers by opposing the bipartisan disaster aid approved by the Senate 2 weeks ago. I am hopeful that given the extent of disaster all across the nation and the large bipartisan support for this aid, the administration will withdraw its opposition and agree that farmers and ranchers who are impacted by natural disasters should not be treated differently than others who are victims of hurricanes, tornadoes or floods.

Unfortunately, the pattern of neglect for rural residents has continued as the administration has made yet another decision that diminishes the importance of family farmers and ranchers.

As part of the ongoing negotiations being held by the World Trade Organization, the Bush administration has agreed to a 20-percent cut in the allowable level of farm support and safety net programs for American producers of corn, soybeans, wheat, and other crops.

Remarkably, the administration made this concession without receiving any assurances from our trading partners that American producers will get increased access to foreign markets in return. In other words, the administration has agreed to unilaterally disarm our nation's farmers.

For the owners of large corporate agribusinesses, this deal may mean increased profits. But for thousands of family farmers and ranchers, this decision deepens their insecurity, and could lead to devastating consequences the next time we enter a period of low prices.

The last time we confronted an extended period of low prices, in 1999 and 2000, our domestic support and safety net programs played a key role in helping our rural communities weather the storm.

But if the deal that the Bush administration cut had been in effect then, the consequences could have been even more devastating. We could have fallen billions of dollars short of what was necessary to provide an adequate safety net for our Nation's farmers and ranchers.

In my home State of South Dakota alone, we could have fallen short by tens of millions of dollars, cuts that could have had a crippling impact on my State's No. 1 industry, and the overall health of our rural economy.

One of the specific programs put at risk by the Bush administration's proposed cuts is the new countercyclical farm program.

Many States, including South Dakota, were pleased with this program, which pays producers when prices are low but allows no payments when prices are high. It uses a formula that updates bases and yields to the greatest extent possible, and that was a big improvement for many States. But this important countercyclical program could now be in jeopardy because of the administration's framework agreement.

For producers in South Dakota who have seen years of drought and have now suffered a large production loss due to an early frost, the President's trade negotiators have once again called into question whether this administration is willing to back up its rhetorical support of farmers, ranchers, and rural Americans with the policies that will actually make a difference for our rural economy.

South Dakotans understand the benefits of free trade, but they also understand that free trade must be fair if we are going to avoid a destructive race to the bottom. And right now, the situation confronting American producers is anything but fair.

The average worldwide tariff facing American producers is now 62 percent, while the average U.S. tariff on imported goods is only 12 percent.

With the playing field already so slanted, it is inexplicable to me that we would do anything to further tip the scales against American producers. But that is exactly what the Bush administration has done by agreeing to cut domestic farm support without getting anything concrete in return.

Even worse, the President's top agricultural negotiator has already indicated that the administration may agree to further reductions, and he has actually told the media that the cuts to domestic support programs could be as high as 50 percent.

This is no way to conduct negotiations on behalf of America's farmers and ranchers. We should be demanding mutual concessions from our trading partners, not giving up vital safety-net