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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Madam President, it is my understanding that the Senator from Virginia, Mr. WEBB, wishes to speak as in morning business for a period of time of up to—how long? It does not matter. I would like to know.

Mr. WEBB. I would estimate 10 minutes, Mr. Leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the statement by the Senator from Virginia is completed—I ask the Senator from Virginia, would you rather complete your statement now? You are here ready to go; is that right?

Mr. WEBB. That is correct.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senator completes his statement—whenever that might be in the next 10 or so minutes, but that be today—the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.J. Res. 44, which was received from the House. I further ask consent that there be 30 minutes of debate equally divided between the two leaders or their designees and that following the use or yielding back of time, the joint resolution be read a third time and the Senate proceed to a vote on passage, without any intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, just briefly reserving the right to object, I was unclear if the majority leader was trying to get the Senator from Virginia up right now. I have a very brief statement related to the joint resolution we are proceeding to.

Mr. REID. Madam President, what I would suggest is—and I am sure my friend from Virginia would have no objection—the Senator from Kentucky, the Republican leader, would make his statement, and it would be made as if during the half hour's time. Would that be OK?

Mr. MCCONNELL. Yes.

Mr. REID. So you would make that now. I know you have things going on in your office.

Is that OK with the Senator from Virginia?

Mr. WEBB. It is certainly OK with me. Thank you.

Mr. REID. So I modify my request to let the Senator from Kentucky speak for however long he desires for up to 30 minutes on the Burma resolution; following that, we go to Senator WEBB. I ask unanimous consent that my consent request be approved.

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, parliamentary inquiry: Are we now on H.J. Res. 44?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. My understanding of the consent is that the Senator would speak against the half hour that was allotted on the resolution. Then we would go back to morning business briefly for a statement from Senator WEBB. And then we would return for the rest of the half hour of debate on the resolution the Senate will consider.

APPROVING THE RENEWAL OF IMPORT RESTRICTIONS CONTAINED IN THE BURMESE FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY ACT OF 2003

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask the clerk to report the resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the joint resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 44) approving the renewal of import restrictions contained in the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The minority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, this legislation continues the sanctions already in place against Burma's illegitimate Peace and Development Council. If enacted, these sanctions will continue to show the SPDC that the United States stands squarely with the long-suffering people of Burma and against its brutal regime.

Just last month, the International Committee of the Red Cross condemned the actions of the Burmese regime—a rare vocal stance for an organization that has historically worked to bring about change behind the scenes. The ICRC's statement, according to international observers, is the harshest it has issued since the Rwandan genocide more than 12 years ago.

Burma's sham reforms are not fooling the Red Cross and they should not be fooling anyone else. The SPDC recently resumed its so-called constitutional convention, a convention in which most delegates were selected by the regime itself and in which delegates are not allowed to offer draft changes without permission. Criticism of the draft constitution is prohibited by law. One notable provision in the draft forbids the spouse of a foreign national from sitting in Parliament, an addition clearly aimed at National League for Democracy leader and Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi, whose British husband died in 1999.

The SPDC calls the convention a ''roadmap'' to democracy. But on the SPDC's map, the destination is not freedom, it is tyranny.

Until the NLD and Burma's ethnic minorities are fully included in the governing process, until this process reflects true democratic principles, this convention should be shunned—shunned—by the international community. A sham constitutional process is a step backwards, not forward.

With that said, there are some encouraging signs. International pressure on the Burmese regime has begun to increase. Members of the Association of Southeast Asia Nations have expressed concern about the SPDC's behavior, and much like the ICRC's condemnation, recent statements of ASEAN members represent a departure from traditional practice. Clearly, there is growing international impatience with the Burmese regime.

I am proud to say that the United States has long been at the vanguard of the movement to democratize Burma. Others, such as ASEAN, are following our lead. They are beginning to recognize the moral imperative to help the people of this beleaguered nation.

I am also proud of the continued unified stance taken by the Senate over the years with respect to Burma. On Monday, the Senate Finance Committee voted out this bill unanimously. The legislation has 60 cosponsors and once again enjoys broad bipartisan support.

I am pleased to be joined again by my good friend and cosponsor, the senior Senator from California, Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I also thank Rich Harper of her staff for all the hard work he has put forward to make this legislation possible. On the Republican side, my good friend Senator MCCAIN continues to use his respected voice to support the Burmese people.

It is time for the Senate, once again, to go on record and show that we stand with the people of Burma. As we do, we can be confident of their gratitude.

In a recent book on the plight of the Burmese people by author Emma Larkin, a Burmese man urges outside nations to keep the pressure on. ''Change has to come from outside,'' he says. ''The world must pinch Burma harder. . . . Give any money to these generals and it is like watching a poisonous plant grow.''

Let's show that we stand for freedom and against oppression, for real democratic progress and against hollow promises of reform, against the poisonous plant that is the SPDC.

I urge my Senate colleagues to support adoption of this joint resolution.

Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays for when we ultimately get back to the resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WEBB. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

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

Mr. WEBB. Madam President, I wish to address two issues this afternoon. Before I do, I say to the Republican leader that I will gladly support his