SENNATE—Tuesday, July 27, 1999

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

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Dear God, we echo the Psalmist’s prayer as we begin this day: “Be merciful to us and bless us, and cause Your face to shine upon us, that Your way may be known on earth.”—Psalm 67:1–2.

Father, You have already answered so much of this prayer. You have been merciful in the abundance of Your blessings and Your unmerited grace. You have forgiven us when we have failed, and You have given us new beginnings. Most of all, we praise You for Your smiling face that gives us confidence and courage. We are moved by the reminder that in Scripture the term “Your face” is synonymous with Your presence. We praise You, Lord, for Your desire to be with us and to share in the struggle for progress. You give strength and power when we seek Your will and desire to do Your desires. We humble ourselves as we begin this day. We want nothing to block Your blessing. We relinquish any self-serving spirit or agenda that would diminish our ability to be blessed or to be a blessing to our beloved Nation. Give us clear minds to receive Your guidance and courageous voices to speak Your truth. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable Chuck Hagel, a Senator from the State of Nebraska, 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 ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Hagel). The distinguished acting majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, today the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 30 o’clock. Following morning business, the Senate will begin consideration of any available appropriations bills. Amendments are expected to be offered, and therefore Senators can expect votes throughout the day’s sessions.

For the information of all Senators, the Senate is expected to begin consideration of the reconciliation bill during Wednesday’s session of the Senate. That legislation is limited to 20 hours of debate, and therefore it is hoped the Senate can complete action on that bill Thursday.

I thank my colleagues for their attention.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, are we in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business for not to exceed 30 minutes with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 5 minutes each, with the time equally divided in the usual form.

The Senator from Colorado is recognized.

(The remarks of Mr. CAMPBELL pertaining to the introduction of S. 1438 are located in today’s RECORD under “Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.”)

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded. I ask to be recognized in morning business.

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

The Senator from Illinois is recognized for up to 5 minutes.

TAX CUTS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, during the course of this week, we will debate in this Chamber one of the most important issues in terms of the future of our economy.

Most of us can remember it was not that many years ago that the Federal budget was swimming in red ink. My Republican colleagues when it comes to fiscal issues because we believe if there is to be a surplus, it should be dedicated first to making certain Social Security is strong for decades to come; second, to make certain Medicare receives an infusion of capital so we don’t see an increase in premiums or a reduction in services; and third and most important, buy down the national debt.