

SENATE—Thursday, August 5, 1999

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

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today's prayer will be offered by our guest Chaplain, Rev. Michael Coleman, Park United Methodist Church, Hannibal, MO.

We are pleased to have you with us.

PRAYER

The guest Chaplain, Rev. Michael Coleman, offered the following prayer: Almighty God, Your justice has shown us that the righteous observance of Your sacred law is necessary for an abiding and purposeful life. Your mercy has taught us that none stand before You in this life free of the influence of sin upon our natures. So today we call ourselves in humble obedience to this Chamber, for this session along with its purpose of caring for the welfare of Your people.

We stand here today, as a government of leaders—as well as a land of various peoples—united under Your Word. May we be inspired by Your words from II Chronicles 7:14: "If my people which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

Divine Creator, we humbly request these things, in the spirit of all that is holy, and in the power of Your creative influence. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JOHN ASHCROFT, a Senator from the State of Missouri, 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 PRESIDENT pro tempore. The able Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, on behalf of the Senate leader, I shall address the Senate momentarily about the calendar of events for the day, but I see my distinguished colleague from Missouri, Mr. ASHCROFT, who had the great foresight and wisdom to invite the Reverend Coleman as our guest Chaplain.

GUEST CHAPLAIN MICHAEL COLEMAN

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Virginia. I

thank in particular Rev. Mike Coleman, of Hannibal, MO, for coming to this Chamber today to call us to our highest and best. He prayed about justice and he prayed about mercy, he prayed about the components of attitude and spirit that will help us achieve that which the people have sent us to do. The real opportunity we have is to live at the maximums of our existence rather than to perform at the minimums. When we invite the presence of the Almighty as we begin these proceedings, we equip ourselves to point toward the maximums instead of to dwell on the minimums.

So as we approach this day, I thank Rev. Mike Coleman for coming from Hannibal, MO, hometown of Mark Twain. I think it was Mark Twain, the philosopher, who said there is nothing quite so embarrassing as a good example. Well, I do not think the Reverend is embarrassing to us, but he does set a good example as he calls us to our highest and best, and it is the prayer of all of us together with him that today we would serve the people with compassion and dignity and with justice and mercy.

I thank the Chair and I thank the Senator from Virginia for allowing me to make these remarks.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I thank my colleague. It is a great pleasure for those of us who join in the opening of the Senate to have the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. I have been here 21 years, and at long last this essential and I think necessary practice, which is celebrated all over America every day, particularly in the schools, and so forth, is now observed in the Senate.

The words of our guest Chaplain today were very stirring because this could be one of the final days in our Senate life before we go on a recess, which will enable us to join our families and spend some time with our constituents and others.

I thank the Senator.

Mr. BIDEN. Will the Senator yield for a brief comment?

Mr. WARNER. Yes.

Mr. BIDEN. I would like to welcome the guest Chaplain as well and say, in light of Mark Twain's reputation, Rev. Coleman could have helped him a great deal in his attitude with a little enlightenment in spiritual matters.

I think Hannibal could have used the Reverend back in the time of Mark Twain. It might have been a little bit different. I love Mark Twain, but he was a little wry. And I just want everyone to know I recognize the irony of the guest Chaplain being from Hannibal, MO, the home of Mark Twain.

Mr. ASHCROFT. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. BIDEN. I would be delighted.

Mr. ASHCROFT. It might have been that Mark Twain got that education after he moved out East. He did end up more in the territory of the east coast, but his roots were solid and good, nourished by the right values.

Mr. BIDEN. I have no question about that.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, if I may just add a little to that colloquy, it is my recollection that Mark Twain had some fairly pithy remarks on the Congress of the United States from time to time. Perhaps we should include some of those in the RECORD. My mother came from St. Louis, MO, so I feel that I am particularly blessed by the presence of this Chaplain today.

SCHEDULE

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, by previous order, the Senate will begin 30 minutes of debate on the Holbrooke nomination; that is, the Honorable Richard Holbrooke, to be Ambassador to the United Nations, with a vote to occur at approximately 10 o'clock today. Following disposition of the Holbrooke nomination, the Senate will resume consideration of the Interior appropriations bill with amendments expected to be offered and debated. In addition, when the Senate receives the tax reconciliation conference report from the House of Representatives, it is expected that the Senate will begin consideration of that legislation. Therefore, Senators should expect votes during the day and into the evening during today's session of the Senate.

I thank my colleagues for their attention.

That is from the distinguished majority leader, Mr. LOTT.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HAGEL). Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

EXECUTIVE SESSION**EXECUTIVE CALENDAR**

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will go into executive session to consider en bloc Executive Calendar Nos. 135 and 140, which the clerk will report.