

SENATE—Wednesday, October 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:

Gracious Father, it is through an experience of Your grace that joy surges in us this morning. For life and strength, for work and friends, for every gift Your goodness sends, we praise You, loving God. May this be a day dedicated to gladness. Chase from our hearts all gloomy thoughts. Make us glad with the sheer delight of being alive. We are uplifted by Zephaniah's assurance that in spite of everything that we do or fail to do, You sing over us with gladness—Zephaniah 3:17. And that motivates us to accept the Psalmist's admonition as our motto today: "Serve the Lord with gladness."—Psalm 100:2.

May the Senators and all of us who work with them grasp the opportunities and meet the challenges this day holds with divinely inspired gladness. You are our God, the Sovereign of this Nation, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable WAYNE ALLARD, a Senator from the State of Colorado, 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 acting majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, this morning the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 10:30 a.m. By previous consent, the Senate will then begin consideration of H.R. 434, the African trade bill. It is the hope of the majority leader that the Senate can complete action on the bill prior to the close of business on Friday. Therefore, Senators are encouraged to work with the bill managers if they intend to offer amendments. The Senate may also consider any legislative or executive items cleared for action during today's session of the Senate.

I thank my colleagues for their attention.

I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ALLARD). Without objection, it is so ordered.

REPUBLICAN CONGRESSIONAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE ADS

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I rise this morning to respond to a series of ads that are being run in my State by the National Republican Congressional Campaign Committee. These ads are false. They are what can only be charitably termed misleading, and they diminish the credibility of the National Republican Congressional Campaign Committee.

That is not just my conclusion, Mr. President. That is the conclusion of the major newspaper of my State, the Fargo Forum, which has written an editorial in which it says:

Politics is often a down and dirty business, but the National Republican Congressional Campaign Committee's early TV ads 13 months before the election, and even before State Republicans have an endorsed congressional candidate, are a new low in the campaign gutter. They're false on every level. Decent North Dakota Republicans should tell the national group to clean up its act.

Well, amen to that because the National Republican Congressional Campaign Committee ought to be ashamed of the ads they are running in North Dakota. They are claiming that Democrats are raiding the Social Security trust fund here in Washington. They must have forgotten they are in control in the House of Representatives and they are in control in the Senate. It is not Democrats who are determining the spending priorities in the House of Representatives. The Republicans are in control. They are deciding the budget outcome in the House of Representatives. If ever there was a case of the pot calling the kettle black, this is it because we know that the majority party themselves are, in fact, raiding Social Security.

That is not just the conclusion of the senior Senator from North Dakota. That is the conclusion of the Washington Post which had a major news story with the headline "GOP Spending Bills Tap Social Security Surplus." It is the Republican Party's plan that is tapping the Social Security surplus.

For them to then run ads claiming the Democrats are doing it is just a giant diversionary tactic. They are trying to avoid responsibility for what they are doing. It is not only the Wash-

ington Post that has made this point. We also have the Congressional Budget Office. The Congressional Budget Office, which they control, has sent a letter which says very clearly that the Republican spending plans have tapped Social Security for \$18 billion. In other words, they are raiding the Social Security accounts for \$18 billion. That is their plan, that is their responsibility, and to avoid accountability apparently they have decided, or their campaign consultants have decided, that the best defense is an offensive attack.

So in my State of North Dakota, 13 months before the election, they are running ads that the major newspaper in my State says are "a new low in the campaign gutter. They are false on every level." And, indeed, they are. They are false on every level. The people of America who are being subjected to these ads ought to know exactly what is going on and who is doing what with respect to the budget of the United States.

One of the things I find most ironic is that the National Republican Congressional Campaign Committee which is sponsoring these ads are the very same folks who sponsored a constitutional amendment a number of years ago that had as its base that they would raid the Social Security trust fund in order to balance the budget. These folks who trumpeted this constitutional amendment to balance the budget had as a definition of a balanced budget the raiding of the Social Security trust fund.

Now they have the chutzpah to come before the American people and run ads saying the Democrats are raiding the Social Security trust fund surplus. And the Democrats are not in control. We don't control the U.S. House of Representatives. We don't control the Senate.

Again, the major newspaper in my State has called these ads false on every level.

Maybe it is helpful to review the record of who has done what with respect to budget policy.

I am on the Budget Committee. I am on the Finance Committee. I am known in the Budget Committee as the "deficit hawk."

I have been involved in every effort to get our fiscal house in order. I believe deeply in the need for fiscal discipline. That is primarily why I ran for the Senate. I saw back when I ran in 1986 that things were running amuck; that the deficits were growing; that we were getting deeper in debt, and this country was in real trouble. I believed then and I believe now that it is