

SENATE—Tuesday, March 16, 1999

The Senate met at 10:30 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:

God of grace and God of judgment, we present our lives for Your review and Your regeneration. In the bright light of Your truth, we see ourselves as we really are and ask for the power to become all that You meant us to be. We pray that we will be distinguished for our integrity. Help us nurture that quality of undivided wholeness and unimpaired completeness. Strengthen our desire to have congruity between beliefs and behavior, consistency between what we know is honest and what we do. Particularly, we ask You to refortify the Senators' determination to have You guide their convictions and then give them the courage to vote these convictions. May their lives and their leadership reclaim the admiration of the American people for political leaders and the political process. Through our Lord and Savior. Amen.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The distinguished majority leader, Senator LOTT of Mississippi, is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, this morning the Senate will begin consideration of a resolution commending Senator KERREY on the 30th anniversary of his receiving the Congressional Medal of Honor. I had the pleasure of talking to Senator KERREY late last night, as a matter of fact, as he typically was working aggressively on matters of great interest to our country. I think it is appropriate that we have this resolution before us. Under the previous order, there will be 1 hour for consideration of the resolution, with the time equally divided between Senators HAGEL and EDWARDS or their designees.

At 11:30 a.m., the Senate will resume consideration of S. 257, the national missile defense bill, with a Cochran amendment pending regarding clarification of funding. Under a previous consent agreement, there will be 1 hour for debate on the amendment, equally divided between Senators COCHRAN and LEVIN or their designees.

At the conclusion of that debate time, the Senate will recess until 2:15 p.m. to allow the weekly party cau-

ses to meet. Upon reconvening at 2:15, the Senate will immediately proceed to a vote on or in relation to the Cochran amendment. And further votes are expected throughout Tuesday's session as the Senate continues consideration of the missile defense bill.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 609

Mr. LOTT. I understand there is a bill at the desk due for its second reading, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNETT). The clerk will report the bill.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 609) to amend the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1994 to prevent the abuse of inhalants through programs under that Act, and for other purposes.

Mr. LOTT. I object to further consideration of the bill at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard. The bill will be placed on the Calendar.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, with regard to the missile defense bill, it seems to me good progress is being made. And the fact that we did not have to have a vote on a motion to proceed or on cloture on a motion to proceed was a very positive development.

I hope the Cochran amendment can be adopted and perhaps other action taken today, but if we could actually get to final passage of this bill tonight, that would be very positive, because we do have two other issues we would like to be able to consider in some form this week. One of them is the matter of Kosovo, how the Senate wishes to express itself on that issue and how ground troops would be introduced, if at all. And then also we have the emergency supplemental appropriations bill pending. Next week, the entirety of the week will have to be spent on the budget resolution in order to complete action on that before the Easter recess. So the sooner we can finish the missile defense bill, the better it will be in addressing these other issues in a timely fashion.

Mr. President, I know that Senators HAGEL and REID and EDWARDS are in the Chamber and wish to speak on the resolution commemorating this Congressional Medal of Honor given to Senator KERREY, but I would like to take just 5 minutes or so to talk about the missile defense bill.

NATIONAL MISSILE DEFENSE ACT

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I rise in support and am a proud sponsor of S. 257, the National Missile Defense Act of 1999. If enacted, it would make the policy of the United States to deploy, as soon as is technologically possible, an effective national missile defense system capable of defending the territory of the United States against limited ballistic missile attack, whether accidental, unauthorized, or deliberate.

As I go around the country and I talk about this issue, people are surprised, stunned, to hear that we do not have this missile defense capability right now. They think that if there happened to be a rogue missile launched, accidentally or even intended, we would be able to just knock that out, no problem. When they find out we do not have that technology in place now, they are greatly alarmed.

So I commend the principal sponsors of this bipartisan legislation, Senator COCHRAN of Mississippi and Senator INOUE of Hawaii, for their diligent efforts to ensure that all 50 States—indeed, all Americans—enjoy protection against missile attack.

My colleagues are aware that similar legislation has been brought before the Senate before—twice last year—and twice we failed, just one vote short of cutting off a filibuster. I am glad it appears we may not have a filibuster this time, that we can deal with the substance of this bill and we can vote on amendments and hopefully get to final passage, because it is clear there is bipartisan support and the realization that we need to move forward.

I know there are those who are concerned that it could be misinterpreted what we are trying to do here and what are the ramifications with regard to the ABM Treaty, the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. My answer to that is that we should make it clear what our intentions are. This is a defensive mechanism; this is to go forward and develop the technology, and when we have that technology, then we should move to deploy it. But we would have time to explain to one and all—whether it is Russia, members of the Russian Duma or the federation in Russia, their leadership, or members of the Israeli Knesset—what our intentions are.

To make sure that is done, I have been discussing with the President and with Senator DASCHLE, and with others on both sides of the aisle, the idea that we should set up a working group, patterned after the example of the arms control observer group that served us quite well during the 1980s and early 1990s when we were dealing with the