

SENATE—Wednesday, May 5, 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:

Almighty God, a very present Help in trouble, You do not send natural catastrophes but help us to endure them. Our minds and hearts are focused on the tragic deaths and the destruction left in the aftermath of the series of tornadoes that wracked the Oklahoma City area and sections of Kansas, leaving more than 45 people dead and homes and neighborhoods razed. Especially we pray for the families who lost loved ones and had their homes destroyed. Care for them with Your sustaining comfort and strength. Bless the police, emergency workers, doctors, and medical personnel who are seeking to help those who are suffering. Strengthen Senators DON NICKLES and JIM INHOFE of Oklahoma and SAM BROWNBACK and PAT ROBERTS of Kansas as they give leadership in this emergency.

We commit to You the work of the Senate today. Guide the Senators in all that they do and say, discuss, and decide. As crises at home and abroad mount, grant them clear minds, steady hearts and wills to seek and to know You and do Your will. Through our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The able acting majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, this morning the Senate will immediately begin a rollcall vote on the Byrd resolution, S. Res. 94, commending Rev. Jesse Jackson for his role in the return of our POWs. Following the vote, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 11 a.m., with Senators COVERDELL and DORGAN in control of that time. At 11 a.m. the Senate will resume consideration of the Sarbanes substitute amendment to S. 900, the financial modernization bill, with a vote on the Gramm motion to table occurring at approximately 12 noon. Additional amendments are expected and therefore Senators can expect votes throughout today's session of the Senate.

I thank my colleagues for their attention.

I yield the floor.

Mr. BYRD addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The able Senator from West Virginia is recognized.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may proceed for 2 minutes.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRAYERS FOR THE PEOPLE OF OKLAHOMA AND KANSAS

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I thank the Chaplain for his prayer. This is a nation which, in the words of Benjamin Franklin, believes in the scriptures and particularly that scripture to which Franklin called the attention of the other framers of the Constitution in Philadelphia in 1787:

Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.

We, the colleagues of the Senators from Oklahoma and Kansas, share their concern about the people who have lost lives, loved ones, and property. Our hearts go out to their constituencies and to them as well as they serve their people every day.

COMMENDING THE REVEREND JESSE JACKSON

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, let me read the resolving clause of the resolution on which we are about to vote.

(1) The Senate commends the Reverend Jesse Jackson for his successful efforts in securing the release of Sergeant Ramirez, Sergeant Stone, and Specialist Gonzales and for his leadership and actions arising from his deep faith in God; and

(2) The Senate joins the families of Sergeant Ramirez, Sergeant Stone, and Specialist Gonzales in expressing relief and joy of their safe release.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, Two days ago, when that military transport plane touched down at Andrews Air Force Base and we saw our three American soldiers safe again at last, I said, instinctively, "thank you."

"Thank you, God, and thank you, Jesse Jackson, for bringing Steven Gonzales, Andrew Ramirez and Christopher Stone safely home from their captivity in Serbia." Millions of people all across our country, I suspect, said much the same thing. I am pleased today to repeat those words here, in the United States Senate, and to support this resolution honoring Reverend Jackson and the others in his delega-

tion who played such a critical role in securing the release of our service men.

"When I was in prison, you visited me." That was one of the ways Jesus said we could recognize those who do his work. In daring to visit our soldiers in prison in Serbia, Reverend Jackson and the delegation of religious leaders who accompanied him surely were following Jesus's teachings as they understood them. Our nation owes them a debt of gratitude.

Some have questioned the wisdom of the delegation's trip. There has been speculation about what effect their going to Serbia could have on political or military tactics. Frankly, I don't want to get into that debate. This was not a political or military mission. It was a humanitarian mission.

Much praise rightly goes to Reverend Jackson, who organized the trip. I also want to acknowledge another member of the delegation: Congressman ROD BLAGOJEVICH, a second-term Congressman from Chicago's North Side, and the only Serbian-American in the House of Representatives.

There are moments in history where a person emerges who seems almost to have been born to fulfill a critical role. On this mission, ROD BLAGOJEVICH was that person. Not only is he a man of significant political and moral courage, he is also the son of Yugoslav immigrants. His father spent four years in a Nazi POW camp during World War II. He learned to speak Serbo-Croatian as a child, and still speaks it.

I remember when I first was elected to the House. I sought out several of my political heroes to ask them "How can a young Congressman make a difference—a real difference—in people's lives?" ROD BLAGOJEVICH has found an answer to that question. Steven Gonzales, Andrew Ramirez and Christopher Stone are united today with their families, in large measure because of the courage he, and Reverend Jackson, and the other religious leaders in their delegation displayed in going to Serbia.

Today's Washington Post contains an interesting account of their mission, from the time it was first conceived by Reverend Jackson through their triumphant return home. I ask unanimous consent that a copy of that article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows: