

SENATE—Thursday, September 7, 2000

The Senate met at 9:32 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, the Very Reverend Nathan Baxter, Dean, Washington National Cathedral, Washington, DC.

We are very pleased to have you with us.

PRAYER

The guest Chaplain, the Very Reverend Nathan Baxter, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray: Almighty, holy, and gracious God, we know You by many names, but we are joined together in this moment of prayer because we know You as the author of liberty. We thank You for the gift of democracy. Although it is sometimes cumbersome, it is truly inspired, and we thank You. Most of all, gracious God, we thank You for the Members of our United States Senate and their staffs who devote themselves to the hard and essential work of Government. Momentous for the people of this Nation are the decisions before them in this session. We ask You to give them courage to act rightly when partisan passions beckon; give them patience and discerning answers when truth is not clear; and give them faith to trust You as more than their judge but their loving Father. Now help us, Lord, as citizens of this Nation, to hold our leaders, their staffs, their work, and their families prayerfully in our hearts that they may be sustained and protected. And finally, ever keep before them and us the guiding light of Your divine vision of one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable PAT ROBERTS, a Senator from the State of Kansas, 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. ROBERTS). The distinguished Senator from Missouri is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, today the Senate will have 10 minutes for final

remarks on the Daschle motion regarding the Missouri River, with a vote to occur at approximately 9:40 a.m. Immediately following that vote, there will be a vote on the motion to proceed to H.R. 4444, the China PNTR legislation.

Following these votes, the Senate is expected to begin consideration of the China trade legislation with amendments in order. The Senate will also continue debate on the energy and water appropriations bill during this evening's session. It is hoped that action on this important spending bill can be completed as early as tonight. Therefore, Senators may expect votes throughout the day and into the evening.

I thank my colleagues for their attention.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2001

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume consideration of H.R. 4733, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4733) making appropriations for energy and water development for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Domenici amendment No. 4032, to strike certain environment related provisions.

Schumer/Collins amendment No. 4033, to establish a Presidential Energy Commission to explore long- and short-term responses to domestic energy shortages in supply and severe spikes in energy prices.

Daschle (for Baucus) amendment No. 4081, to strike certain provisions relating to revision of the Missouri River Master Water Control Manual.

AMENDMENT NO. 4081

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume consideration of the Daschle amendment No. 4081 on which there shall be 10 minutes of debate equally divided.

The distinguished Democratic leader is recognized.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I may use part of my leader time if my comments go over the 5 minutes. I ask that that be recognized should it be required.

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

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, we are about to vote on an amendment that is

critical not only for an important region of our country, the upper Midwest, but really the whole country. How we decide the process by which we make critical decisions about the ecological and environmental balance that must be taken into account as we consider all of the challenges we face with regard to proper management is really what is at stake here.

The Missouri River is one of the most important rivers of the country, but this could apply to the Mississippi River and to any one of a number of rivers throughout the country. Ultimately, it will be applied. You could say this is a very important precedent. A process has been created, enacted by this Congress, that allows very careful consideration of all the different factors that must be applied as we make decisions with regard to management of a river, of wetlands, of anything else.

Basically what this amendment does is simply say, let that process go forward, without making any conclusion about what ultimately that process will lead to. If we ultimately decide that whatever process produced is wrong, we, as a Congress, have the opportunity to stop it. Why would we stop it midway? Why would we say today that we don't want that process to continue; we don't want it to reach its inevitable end with a product that we could look at for comment? That is the first point: a process is in place. The legislation currently within the energy and water bill stops that in its tracks.

I don't have it in front of me, but the report language makes it very clear. Senator BOND and others may argue that, no, this process can continue, but the effect of this amendment stops it in its tracks. We will not have an opportunity to carefully consider all of the recommendations given the language that is currently incorporated in the bill. We must not stop a process that allows us a result upon which we will then pass judgment.

The Missouri River is a very critical river. It is a multifaceted river that requires balance. The current management plan was written when the Presiding Officer and I, Senator BOND, and others were, at best, in our teens, if not in our early years of life. It was written in the 1950s and adopted in about 1960. It has been the plan for 40 years.

What the Corps of Engineers is now saying, what Fish and Wildlife is now saying is that after 40 years, prior to the time the dams were constructed, it is time to renew that manual; let's find another; let's take another look at it