

SENATE—Monday, September 18, 2000

The Senate met at 12:01 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Dear God, Sovereign of our beloved Nation, this is a special day. Yesterday we celebrated Citizenship Day in America; this week is Constitution Week; and today is Prisoner-of-War, Missing-in-Action Day when we remember those who paid the supreme price of patriotism. All three of these emphases blend together as we praise You for our country which You have blessed so bountifully.

Forgive us, Lord, for taking for granted the privileges of being citizens of this land. We seldom think about our freedoms of worship, speech, assembly, and freedom to vote. Today, we praise You for our representative democracy. Thank You for the privilege of serving in Government. Help the Senators and all of us who labor with them and for them to work today with a renewed sense of awe and wonder that You have chosen them and us to be part of the political process to make this good Nation great.

May a renewed spirit of patriotism sweep across our land. Help the children to learn that an important aspect of love for You is loyalty to our country. We dedicate ourselves to right wrongs and to shape political programs that assure opportunity and justice for all Americans. So today, as we pledge allegiance to our flag, may our hearts express joy. This is our home, our native land.

Gracious Lord, as a Senate family, we grieve the death of Murray Zweben, retired Parliamentarian of the Senate. Be with his family; comfort and encourage them in this difficult time. Through our Lord and Savior. 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 PRESIDENT pro tempore. The acting majority leader is recognized.

Mr. ROBERTS. I thank the Chair.

SCHEDULE

Mr. ROBERTS. Today, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 2 p.m., with Senators GRAHAM and THOMAS in control of the time. Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 4444, the China PNTR legislation. Under the order, there are 6 hours of final debate on the China trade bill with a vote scheduled to occur at 2:15 on Tuesday.

As a reminder, cloture was filed on the motion to proceed to S. 2045, the H-1B visa bill on Friday. That cloture vote has been scheduled to occur immediately following the vote on final passage of the China PNTR legislation. Therefore, the first votes of this week will be two back-to-back votes on Tuesday, at 2:15 p.m.

I thank my colleagues for their attention.

MEASURES PLACED ON CALENDAR

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I understand there are two bills at the desk due for their second reading.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the bills by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3057) to amend the Public Health Service Act, the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to protect consumers in managed care plans and other health coverage.

A bill (S. 3058) to amend the Public Health Service Act, the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to protect consumers in managed care plans and other health coverage.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I object to further proceedings on these bills at this time.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The bills will go to the calendar.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

The Senator from Iowa is recognized.

WEN HO LEE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I am here on the floor at this particular time to ask the President of the United States who "they" are, and I hope the

word "they" includes the President of the United States. I hope the President of the United States is the chief "they." I hope we don't get into a position of debating what the definition of the word "they" is. The Constitution is pretty clear—the President of the United States has all the executive power that exists in our Government.

That is the background for my visiting with you about the Wen Ho Lee case, the President's comments last week in regard to the release of Wen Ho Lee, and how the executive branch treated this Chinese American.

This is the latest instance of President Clinton failing to take responsibility and refusing to hold himself accountable for the actions of his administration.

The background of Wen Ho Lee—for those who may not have been following this over the last year—is that the Government has recently agreed to let this former nuclear scientist at Los Alamos Laboratories plead guilty to a relatively minor charge and go home with a slap on the wrist.

I think we all agree that his release is the justifiable thing to do. But it was only a short time ago that the executive branch was claiming that Wen Ho Lee was such a serious threat to American national security that he belonged in solitary confinement and in shackles with practically no ability for Mr. Lee to even contact his family. Now, after this long period of time in confinement, he gets a slap on the wrist and his freedom.

Obviously, the executive branch of Government couldn't back up its allegations with proof or this case would not have settled as it did. Despite the dire pronouncements made to the public about Wen Ho Lee, the fact is the Government didn't even have a case. It had only suspicions. Mr. Lee has, of course, paid a very high price for the suspicions of some in the executive branch.

Maybe because Lee is Asian American, there is not the outcry over the loss of civil liberties that there would be had Lee been a member of some other minority group. The same people who speak up against some minorities being mistreated because of civil liberties evidently don't seem inclined to speak up in the case of an Asian American.

Mr. Lee's treatment has caused widespread public outcry. How can this happen in America where we treasure freedom and where the rule of law has been the basis for our country's law going back to the setting up of the colonies? How could the government damage the