

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—ZOELLICK NOMINATION

Mr. LOTT. We have a couple of agreements we have worked out we want to get in place.

Mr. President, I ask consent that immediately following the reconvening of the Senate on Tuesday at 2:15 p.m. the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the nomination of Robert Zoellick to be the U.S. Trade Representative, and if not reported at that time, the nomination be discharged and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration, and that there be up to 2 hours of debate, equally divided, between the chairman and the ranking minority member of the Finance Committee.

I further ask consent that at 4:15 on Tuesday the Senate proceed to vote on the confirmation, and following the confirmation, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, the President be immediately notified, and the Senate resume legislative session.

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

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I appreciate the fact there is no objection. I believe this nominee will be confirmed overwhelmingly, probably even unanimously. There is a feeling by Senators on both sides of the aisle that this trade issue is very important. This is an important position. A number of Senators did want to be able to have an opportunity to speak about our trade relations and our trade agreements around the world. That is why it was not completed this afternoon. I believe it will be done in regular order on Tuesday.

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 235

Mr. LOTT. I understand S. 235 is at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 235) to provide for enhanced safety, public awareness and environmental protection in pipeline transportation, and for other purposes.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I now ask for its second reading, and I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The bill will be read the second time on the next legislative day.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I should note that the purpose in taking this action now is to get this legislation ready for consideration next week. Senator DASCHLE and I are trying to get in a position to have the Zoellick nomination on Tuesday, the U.N. dues issue on Wednesday, and the pipeline safety legislation next week. These are all issues we are all very familiar with that have broad support. I believe we can do the

three of them next week without any problem.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2001, AND TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2001

Mr. LOTT. I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until the hour of 10 a.m. on Monday, February 5, for a pro forma session only. No business will be transacted during Monday's session. The Senate would immediately adjourn until 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, February 6. I further ask consent that on Tuesday, immediately following the prayer, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate then proceed to a period of morning business until 12:30, to be divided in the following fashion: Senator DASCHLE or his designee controlling the time between 9:30 and 11 a.m.; Senator HUTCHISON of Texas or her designee controlling the time between 11 a.m. and 12:30.

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

Mr. REID. If I could ask for a modification, that Senator DORGAN control the time from 10:30 to 11 o'clock a.m. on that date.

Mr. LOTT. I have no objection to that addition to the request.

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

Mr. LOTT. I further ask consent that the Senate stand in recess between the hours of 12:30 and 2:15 in order for the weekly caucuses to meet.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. LOTT. On Tuesday, following the weekly recess, at 2:15 we will proceed to the nomination of Robert Zoellick to be USTR for up to 2 hours. Therefore, a rollcall vote will occur at 4:15 on Tuesday on that nomination, by a previous consent. On Wednesday, the Senate is expected to consider the U.N. dues bill. Therefore a vote or votes could occur, then, on Wednesday of next week relative to that legislation, and on Thursday with relation to the pipeline safety bill.

I yield the floor.

NOMINATION OF JOHN ASHCROFT TO BE ATTORNEY GENERAL—Continued

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, while my friend from Mississippi is still here, I ask unanimous consent, it is only a matter of a few minutes, that I still have the full half hour that had been reserved under the previous order.

Mr. LOTT. Are you making a request or observation?

Mr. LEAHY. I make it as a request because the time that the distinguished leader took went into that time.

Mr. LOTT. I certainly would not object to that. I do wish to speak briefly myself. I believe I would be in control of the time after that.

Mr. LEAHY. In fact, I will add to that: In doing so, that it not impinge on the time reserved for the distinguished majority leader.

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

The Senator from Vermont is recognized.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, as we get to the end of this debate, I think it is wise if we look at some of the facts of the debate and not just the rhetoric.

We debated this matter virtually nonstop from 10:30 yesterday morning until 8:10 yesterday evening. We did it without intervening business. I do not think we had as much as 5 minutes expended in quorum calls. For our side, this was certainly not a dilatory debate but a substantive one. It was not the politics of personal destruction, but the Senate exercising its constitutional responsibility to examine one of the most important nominations that this President or any President could send to the Senate.

Let's go over the facts. The Senate received the President's nomination on Monday afternoon of this week. The Judiciary Committee debated this nomination on Tuesday afternoon the following day, and voted on it that evening. We began the Senate debate yesterday morning, less than 48 hours after receiving the nomination. We are concluding it in less than 14 and one half hours of Senate debate. We are voting up or down on this nomination this afternoon.

I mention this because I have heard those who point to the nomination of the last Attorney General, Janet Reno, as some sort of model of speedy confirmation. She was nominated after an earlier nomination had hearings and was withdrawn. Her nomination was not voted upon for a month after she was nominated. By comparison, we are voting on John Ashcroft when his nomination has been before us for only less than three days. That was not a controversial nomination. Republicans, as well as Democrats, came to the floor to praise her record, but she was still not sworn in until mid-March.

A better comparison would be to find the last controversial nomination; that was that of Attorney General Meese. He was first nominated in January 1984 by President Reagan. He was finally considered by the Republican-controlled Senate in February 1985, 13 months after being nominated. Five weeks ensued between his nomination and his initial hearing.