The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable Paul Wellstone, a Senator from the State of Minnesota.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore, The Senator from Nevada.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Senate going to resume consideration of the Department of Defense authorization bill. There will be 15 minutes of closing debate on the Bunning base closure amendment. The debate will be evenly divided between the proponents and the opponents of that matter. This debate will be followed by a vote on a motion to table the amendment.

There are going to be additional roll calls during the vote. After this vote takes place, there will be a unanimous-consent request offered to again try to get a finite list of amendments. It is still in the hands of the majority leader that we can complete this legislation by tomorrow. It would be great if we could do it tonight, but certainly by tomorrow we should be able to do that.

In addition to this very important legislation, before we finish tomorrow at 2 o’clock, we really need to take up the continuing resolution. We have a lot to do today. The Senate will be in recess from 12:30 until 2:15 for our party conferences.

There are a lot of very important hearings going on today. The Attorney General is here at 10 o’clock. The Secretary of State is here later in the day. The people are going to have to work with us so we can have votes on these important amendments that are coming up on this legislation, some of which have already been filed.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2002

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume consideration of S. 1438, which the clerk will report. The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1438) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2002 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe personnel strengths for such fiscal year for the Armed Services, and for other purposes.

Pending: Bunning amendment No. 1622, to strike title XXIX, relating to defense base closure and realignment.

Inhofe amendment No. 1594, to authorize the President to waive a limitation on performance of depot-level maintenance by non-Federal Government personnel.

Inhofe amendment No. 1595, to revise requirements relating to closure of Vieques Naval Training Range.

AMENDMENT NO. 1622

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will be 15 minutes of debate remaining on the Bunning amendment numbered 1622.

The Senator from Michigan, Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I note that the Senator from Arizona is here. I assume, since we oppose the Bunning amendment, that he, along with the two managers, will be controlling the time.

I yield myself 1 minute at this point to put into the RECORD a letter that I, along with Senator WARNER, received from Gen. Shelton, who is the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. These are his words:

reiterate how critically important it is that Congress authorize another round of base closures and realignments.

We previously put in the RECORD a letter from the Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, strongly supporting one additional round of base-closing authority to begin in the year 2003 and giving the reasons for that need.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the letter I received this morning from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Gen. Shelton.

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


Hon. Carl Levin, Chairman, Senate Armed Services Committee, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: As the full Senate deliberates the FY 2002 Defense Authorization Bill I would like to reiterate how critically important it is that Congress authorize another round of base closures and realignments.

Last Thursday the President outlined a sustained campaign to combat international terrorism. The efficient and effective use of the resources devoted to this effort will be the responsibility of the Services and the Combatant Commanders. The authority to eliminate excess infrastructure will be an important tool our forces will need to become more efficient and serve as better custodians of the taxpayers’ money. As I mentioned before, there is an estimated 23 percent under-utilization of our facilities. We cannot afford the cost associated with carrying this excess infrastructure. The Department of Defense must have the ability to restructure its installations to meet our current national security needs.

Now you share my concerns that additional base closures are necessary. The Department is committed to accomplishing the