

SENATE—Wednesday, October 24, 2001

The Senate met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BEN NELSON, a Senator from the State of Nebraska.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's prayer will be offered by our guest Chaplain, Imam Yusuf Saleem.

PRAYER

The guest Chaplain, Imam Yusuf Saleem, Resident Imam of Masjid Muhammad and National Educational Director for the Muslim American Society, offered the following prayer:

With God's name, the Merciful Benefactor, the Merciful Redeemer. We seek Your guidance, Your mercy, and Your forgiveness, that this body of servants to God and this country will be blessed with hindsight, insight, and foresight as only You can provide. Supply this elected assembly, entrusted by our Nation's citizens to ultimately trust the Creator of us all. As defined by humans, these are delicate times, but still we know it is Your times. So let truth, excellence, justice, and service lead the intellect and souls of our Senate. Yes, God bless America. Yes, God has blessed America. Yes, God is still blessing America, a land of diversity in every imaginable way. For in the Holy Qur'an Guidance to humanity, it states: "God has honored all of the children of Adam," and in America's Declaration of Independence, "all men are created equal." So with resources—material, spiritual, and mental—we thank You, God, for engineering the tradition of this land to witness that life and liberty must be secured by submitting our wills to Your plan.

Finally, we see the objective of life to nourish a world, a nation, a city, a neighborhood, a home, where the soul is at peace. The soul is not female or male, not rich or poor, nor African-American or Caucasian. As You have created us, aid us—really help us to struggle and realize, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven," as stated in Your guidance to humans in the Bible.

Help us use all our resources to preserve, maintain, and promote inherent freedom, not to be denied by the destiny of God until the world, Nation, city, neighborhood, and home cry out; one voice, one interest that life is sacred. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable BEN NELSON 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.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, October 24, 2001.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable BEN NELSON, a Senator from the State of Nebraska, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Nevada is recognized.

WELCOMING IMAM YUSUF SALEEM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, before we move to the bill, I want to take a minute and express the appreciation of the entire Senate, especially that of Majority Leader DASCHLE, for the groundbreaking prayer today. Imam Saleem appeared at our weekly prayer breakfast this morning at 8 o'clock.

Now for the first time in the history of this country, at least to my knowledge—I have been here awhile—we have had a Muslim offer our invocation. I not only was impressed with the content of the prayer but the manner in which it was delivered.

We should all feel so good about today. Dr. Ogilvie, who is present today, is to be commended for inviting one of his colleagues to be the guest Chaplain and allowing him to take his place. No one can take his place, but certainly he adequately represented him; that is for sure.

We are effusive in our praise for Dr. Ogilvie always but especially today for his insight into having Imam Saleem, the Resident Imam of Masjid Muhammad and also the National Educational Director for the Muslim American Society, with us. We are so grateful that he is here. We hope he returns and again blesses us with his prayer.

We have over 6 million of his faith in America. We have thousands of Muslims in Nevada. I hope some of them had the pleasure of watching today.

For those who didn't, I will broadcast it every chance I get to make sure they do know he was here today.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I know there are several Senators who wish to speak. I will quickly yield the floor.

While the Imam is still here, I join Senator REID in welcoming him to the Senate Chamber. Of course, I thank Dr. Ogilvie for making him available as a visiting Chaplain. It provides an example of the nature of the United States where we do not subscribe to one religion but have the advantage of many religions; the fact that our country has been stronger and better for that, that we make the Nation available to all religions and respect all religions and an individual's right to practice the religion they choose.

We were honored this morning by having the Imam here at the opening of our session. He demonstrated to our Nation that we are a diverse nation, diverse in our heritage. We are all either children or grandchildren or great grandchildren of immigrants, certainly in my family, my mother and my wife, first-generation Americans, speaking in a different language than English until they learned English. But we are also so different in all our religions. Look across the Senate floor. There are a number of different religions represented right here. We have Mormons, Protestants, Jews, and Catholics. It is a wonderful example of the diversity of this Nation. So I was pleased to hear Senator REID's comments. I associate myself with them. I thank the Imam for opening our session.

Mr. REID. Is the Senator from Vermont aware that this is the first time in the history of our country that a Muslim has offered the invocation for the Senate?

Mr. LEAHY. I was not aware of that. I certainly hope it will not be the last. I hope this will happen often. I also know that the visiting Chaplain honors us, but I also hope he knows the Senate honors him. My wife's brother is a Catholic priest. One of his great moments in his priesthood was when he opened the Senate session. He reminded us of that often. This is something we should do often, and I applaud the Chaplain in using his prerogative to make this opportunity available to so many others.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I join with my colleagues in welcoming the opening prayer this morning and say how much all of us appreciate this very important expression and how we value the message that was given to all of us