

SENATE—Friday, December 7, 2001

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

PRAYER

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

Lord God, today on Pearl Harbor Day we look back on that day of infamy through the focused lens of September 11. We gratefully remember the men and women who paid the supreme sacrifice for our freedom in World War II. With equal admiration, we honor the memory of those who lost their lives seeking to save others in the aftermath of the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon now just 87 days ago. These have been taxing days of war, anthrax anxiety, office closings, disruption and displacement, escalated security, and the stress of red-alert living. And yet, through it all, we have been drawn closer to You and to each other. Once again, You have helped our beloved Nation rise to greatness. Continue to give us strength and courage to finish this treacherous war against the insidious, collusive forces of terrorism. Dear God, bless America! Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable MARK DAYTON 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 legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, December 7, 2001.

To the Senate:

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

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. DAYTON thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Nevada.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this morning the Senate will consider the District of Columbia Appropriations Act. There will be 10 minutes of debate prior to a rollcall vote on the adoption of the conference report. There are three more to go. Following disposition of the conference report, the Senate will resume consideration of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act. There is no question there will be rollcall votes throughout the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2001—CONFERENCE REPORT

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will now proceed to the consideration of the conference report accompanying H.R. 2944, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2944) making appropriations for the government of the District of Columbia and other activities chargeable in whole or in part against the revenues of said District for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, and for other purposes, having met, after full and free conference, have agreed to recommend and do recommend to their respective Houses this report, signed by a majority of the conferees.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate will proceed to the consideration of the conference report.

(The conference report is printed in the House proceedings of the RECORD of December 5, 2001, at page H8914.)

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be 10 minutes debate on the conference report with the time to be equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking member of the subcommittee.

The Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, I am pleased to present this conference committee report on behalf of myself and my most able ranking member, the Senator from Ohio. We have worked closely together over the last several months. We are proud to present a conference report that truly is a bipartisan, bicameral compromise on the District of

Columbia, which is a very important center, a very important capital, a very important symbol for our Nation, home to almost 500,000 people who live here, but a center where millions of people work and where even more millions visit and, in some ways, call home because it is the Capital of our Nation.

I am pleased to present this conference committee report. I will briefly highlight a couple of the most significant provisions of this conference agreement.

The first is that this bill reflects for the first time in 5 years a budget that is no longer under the control of the control board. That control board did an excellent job under tremendous leadership, and I commend them for their great work over these 5 years, working with us in Congress and with the Mayor and the city council to reshape and reform the District's finances, which for the time are in pretty good shape. There are no deficits at this present moment. But as my colleagues know, there are some challenges ahead and the trends would cause us to be very alert on that score.

This is the first budget we are presenting with the control board behind us. I urge the authorizing committees of both Houses to quickly reconvene next year to pass legislation that will create a more sound transitional framework for the postcontrol period. I pledge this morning my full and complete support towards that effort, and this conference committee report somewhat lays a foundation for that effort. I look forward to working to that good conclusion.

In addition, I am very proud that this bill has as one of its hallmarks a reform of the child welfare system. Senator DeWine will probably give more detail about this matter because he has been one of the leading sponsors of this legislation and this effort. I know he will go into greater detail.

Suffice it to say, the District's foster care system and child welfare system was broken. It was in shambles. It was a disgrace; it was a national tragedy. We all have challenges in our respective States in this regard, and no State is perfect. Many States have a long way to go. But the District's system had unraveled.

This bill gives the courts the reorganizational mandate that is necessary and the financial support and resources, as well as some new tough guidelines and standards that, hopefully, will protect children, save their lives, restore dignity to families, and promote adoption when necessary to