

SENATE—Wednesday, December 12, 2001

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON, a Senator from the State of New York.

PRAYER

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

Almighty God, we praise You for Your faithfulness. Now in this sacred season, we join with Jews all over the world as they light their menorahs and remember Your faithfulness in keeping the eternal light burning in the temple. We gather with Christians around a manger scene and praise You for Your faithfulness in sending the Light of the World to dispel darkness. Your indefatigable love is incredible. You never give up on us. You persistently pursue us, offering us the way of peace to replace our perplexity. You offer Your good will to replace our grim wilfulness. In spite of everything humankind does to break Your heart, You are here, once again sending Your angel to tell us of Your good will, Your pleasure in us just as we are, and for all we were intended to be. Change all of our grim "bah humbug" attitudes to humble adoration.

Help us to be as kind to others as You have been to us, to express the same respect and tolerance for the struggles of others as You have expressed to us by turning our struggles into stepping stones, to understand us as we wish to be understood. Help us to shine with Your peace and good will. In the name of the Light of the World. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON 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, December 12, 2001.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable HILLARY RODHAM

CLINTON, a Senator from the State of New York, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mrs. CLINTON thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The acting majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Madam President, this morning we are going to be on the farm bill. There is going to be 50 minutes of debate equally divided and there will be a vote at approximately 10:20 this morning.

The majority leader has asked me to announce that he wants to work into the evening tonight to make significant progress on this bill. It is Wednesday. For those who want to leave Friday or this weekend, it is very clear to everyone we have to make progress on this bill. So I hope everyone will understand there will be no windows. We will have to work right through the evening, working as late as possible, as long as the managers think we are making progress on the bill.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION, AND RURAL ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2001.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume consideration of S. 1731, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1731) to strengthen the safety net for agricultural producers, to enhance resource conservation and rural development, to provide for farm credit, agricultural research, nutrition, and related programs, to ensure consumers abundant food and fiber, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Daschle (for Harkin) Amendment No. 2471, in the nature of a substitute.

Lugar/Domenici Amendment No. 2473 (to Amendment No. 2471), of a perfecting nature.

AMENDMENT NO. 2473

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be 50 minutes of debate equal-

ly divided and controlled on the Lugar amendment, No. 2473.

The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. LUGAR. Madam President, I yield to myself the time I may require. Being mindful there are others who may wish to speak on my amendment but seeing none for the moment, let me review the amendment for the benefit of Senators who, perhaps, followed the debate yesterday.

I have offered an amendment which, in essence, changes substantially the ways in which farm families are supported in the United States of America. I have moved to a concept of a safety net in which, essentially, each farm family—regardless of the State, regardless of what products or farm animals or timber or what have you which comes from that farm—has equal standing. I think that amendment ought to be appealing to most States.

As I cited yesterday, just 6 States of the 50 receive about half of the payments under the current system. That would be concentrated further in the bill that now lies before us. That concentration really occurs regardless of State, although many States receive very few benefits at all. If, in fact, 6 States receive about half, the 44 divide the rest and, as I cited yesterday, many States have fewer than 10 percent of their farm families who participate in these payments at all.

I make that point again because I suspect it is not apparent to many Senators, to many people in the public as a whole, who believe we are talking today about the totality of agriculture in our country, farm families of all sizes. Much is said about small farm families, those who are in stress, in danger of losing their farms.

Without being disrespectful of anyone's views on these subjects, I pointed out these small family farms are not likely to gain much sustenance from the subsidies that are being suggested presently. Let me cite, without getting into anyone else's backyard, the situation in the State of Indiana.

The current program targets 16 percent of the payments in Indiana to 1 percent of the farms—1,007 farms. In fact, it becomes equally apparent at the top 2 percent, which gets 26 percent, a quarter of all the farms. By the time you get to the top 10 percent, which now includes 10,000 farms out of roughly 100,000 that received payments from 1996 to 2000, the top 10 percent receive 66 percent of all of the money.

Any way you look at it, the reasons for this are perfectly clear. Essentially, the payments are made on the basis of acreage and yield. Those farmers who