

SENATE—Wednesday, April 25, 2001

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable GEORGE ALLEN, a Senator from the State of Virginia.

PRAYER

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

Today, continuing Jewish Heritage Week, our prayer is taken from the Jewish Book of Service, Daily Prayers. Let us pray.

We gratefully acknowledge that You are the Eternal One, our God, and the God of our fathers evermore; the Rock of our life and the Shield of our salvation. You are He who exists to all ages. We will therefore render thanks unto You and declare Your praise for our lives, which are delivered into Your hand and for our souls, which are confided in Your care; for Your goodness, which is displayed to us daily; for Your wonders, and Your bounty, which are at all times given unto us. You are the most gracious, for Your mercies never fail. Evermore do we hope in You, O Lord our God. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable GEORGE ALLEN 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. THURMOND).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, April, 25, 2001.

To the Senate:

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

STROM THURMOND,
President pro tempore.

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

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order there

will now be a period for the transaction of morning business not to extend beyond the hour of 11 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

Under the previous order, the time until 10:15 a.m. shall be under the control of the Senator from Illinois, Mr. DURBIN, or his designee.

The Senator from Nevada.

BROWNFIELDS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today is a very joyous occasion in the Reid family. At 6:30 this morning, approximately, eastern time—3:30 Reno, NV, time—my tenth grandchild was born. Everyone is doing well. The little baby is 18 inches long—kind of short, really—and weighs 6 pounds 12 ounces. We are very happy for this little boy. He is the third son that my son has had.

I rise today thinking of my new grandson, and I want to discuss Earth Day and what having a good, clean environment means to my grandchildren. I am very concerned, having seen, even in my lifetime, the Earth change—and many times not for the better.

Earth Day is a time for reflecting on the progress of the last century and acting to protect our environment for generations and centuries to come. It is good that at least 1 day a year we focus on the Earth. We take it for granted. In the last 30 years, the country has taken major steps to achieve clean water, clean air, safe drinking water, hazardous waste cleanup, and reducing pollution across the board.

Take just one thing, clean water. Why do we have a Clean Water Act? We have a Clean Water Act because, for instance, in Ohio the Cuyahoga River kept catching fire. Mr. Nixon was President of the United States at that time. In a bipartisan effort to do something about the polluted waterways in America, Congress joined with the President to pass a Clean Water Act to prevent rivers catching fire.

We have made progress. We still have a lot of polluted water, but at the time that President Nixon recognized the need to do something, probably about 80 percent of our waterways were polluted. Now these many years later probably only about 30 percent of our waterways are polluted. If you fish the rivers and lakes around the United States, now you can actually eat the fish you catch. That is progress. But we have a lot more to do.

We need to clean up that extra 20 percent or 30 percent of the waterways that are polluted. We need to make sure we have safe drinking water so

someone can pick up a glass of water and drink it and know they are not going to get sick.

It is not that way around much of our country. And when we travel overseas, we usually take lots of water with us because in many parts of the world we cannot drink the water because it is polluted. In the United States, we are finding much more polluted water. There is lots of polluted water.

In my State of Nevada, we have naturally occurring arsenic in the water and we know that arsenic causes cancer. We need to do something about that.

Even though we have a long way to go, we should be justifiably proud of the progress we have made. We cannot afford to rest on past successes because millions of people are still breathing unhealthy air, drinking unsafe water, and are unable to swim or fish in many of our Nation's waterways.

As I have said before, there is still much that needs to be done. As the new century dawns, we face even more complex environmental and public health problems. These problems include persistent toxics. We have a new phenomenon and that is, because of our development of nuclear power and nuclear weapons, now we have areas that are polluted with things nuclear. On the Colorado River, we have 13,000 tons of uranium tailings. We need to clean those up because, of course, the Colorado River is a very important waterway in the western part of the United States. We have not provided money to do that. We need to do that. But that is a new threat to our environment.

We have new problems in addition to nuclear issues. We have global warming. We have the dangers of invasive species. For example, in the State of Nevada, we have very little water. It is arid. It is a desert. You could count the rivers in Nevada on the fingers of one hand. Some of those rivers are being very seriously threatened as a result of something called salt cedar or tamarisk, a plant brought in from Iran 100 years ago to stabilize the banks of streams, and it has just taken over everything. They are, frankly, very ugly. They use huge amounts of water. You cannot get rid of them. You can't burn them; you can't poison them; you can't snag them and pull them out. The only thing we found that might work is an insect that eats them, and we are working on that. The Department of Agriculture is working on a program to see if we can get rid of them that way. But these invasive species are all over America and we need to work on their eradication.