

## SENATE—Wednesday, May 23, 2001

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JEFF SESSIONS, a Senator from the State of Alabama.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's prayer will be offered by our guest Chaplain, His Holiness Catholicos Karekin the Second, Catholicos of All Armenians, Holy Etchmiadzin, Republic of Armenia.

### PRAYER

The guest Chaplain, Catholicos Karekin the Second, offered the following prayer:

Almighty God and Lord, we come together from different places, cultures, and traditions on a unique day You have created. We rejoice and are glad in it. Help us walk together in Your light.

Thank You for our diversity and the richness this brings when we share our lives. Help us understand each other through our differences and recognize what we have in common. Thank You for democracy, which gives such dignity to each person and reflects Your sense of human worth. Please nurture our democracies—America, which has grown strong over two centuries, and Armenia, a new democracy with strong hopes. In this year, when we recognize the 1700th anniversary of Armenia's conversion to Christianity, may we grow stronger in faith and remember the importance of being true to the vision You give.

We join the prayer of St. Nersess the Graceful and ask You for wisdom so we may always think, speak, and do what is good in Your sight, and to save us from evil thoughts, words, and deeds. Please give us wisdom in our decisions and dealings with each other, staff, constituents, and those seeking our help. Thank You for placing us in positions of influence. Help us make the Nation and our world better.

Holy Father, I ask You to bless the Senators, the American Government and people, and Armenian people and nation. I pray for the unity of churches and peoples and ask You to bless the clergy of this Nation. We know that You alone are God. To You be glory, power, and honor, now and always and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JEFF SESSIONS 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 assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,  
Washington, DC, May 21, 2001.

To the Senate:

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

STROM THURMOND,  
President pro tempore.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. SARBANES. I ask unanimous consent to proceed as in morning business for 3 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

### GUEST CHAPLAIN KAREKIN II

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, I know I speak for all of my colleagues in thanking His Holiness, Catholicos Karekin the Second, the Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, for leading the Senate in prayer this morning. His prayer, I must say, was inspiring. I hope all of us took to heart particularly his admonition that we should show wisdom in our dealings with one another.

His Holiness is the world leader of the Armenian Church, which traces its roots to the first century preaching of Jesus' Apostles, Saint Thaddeus and Saint Bartholomew. The Armenian Church is among the Orthodox churches, which, along with the Catholic and Protestant Churches, constitutes one of three branches of Christianity.

The Catholicos was elected democratically by an assembly of clergy and lay delegates from around the world in October 1999. He is the 132nd in a continuous line of catholicos. He sits in Armenia and administers the Armenian Church from the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin and has authority over Dioceses on five continents.

In the United States, there are well over 1 million Armenian Americans who live in all parts of our country. They have made very important contributions to all aspects of American life.

His Holiness is well known not only for his spiritual leadership but his charitable works to help the needy, his educational programs, and his management skills. He is also recognized in the international religious community, where he sought to draw churches closer together. He has met with John Paul II and will be meeting in September with Pope John Paul II when he comes to visit Armenia.

The Catholicos is visiting the United States to celebrate the 1700th anniversary of the conversion of Armenia to Christianity. He is meeting with U.S. religious leaders and the Armenian-American communities. The theme of his visit is "Walking Together in the Light of the Lord."

Mr. President, we are pleased and honored that he is here with us today.

### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

### RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

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

### SCHEDULE

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, today the Senate will resume voting—and voting—on amendments to the reconciliation and tax relief bill, and consecutive votes will occur throughout the morning. It is hoped—hope springs eternal—that final passage on the tax relief and reconciliation bill will occur during today's session. If passage occurs as expected, the Senate will resume consideration of the education bill. There will be additional votes all throughout the day, and Senators are encouraged to stay in the Senate Chamber after the final votes on the tax bill. I thank my colleagues for their consideration and cooperation.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, before we hear from our friend, I wish to indicate to the Senate that we have six amendments lined up. We are confident that the two leaders can work something out during the day. We hope maybe there can be some end to the debate on this bill, but that will be up to the two leaders. We have shared the first amendment with the majority. We have five others we will give to them briefly.

We are hopeful things will move along well today, and especially, if we