

SENATE—Tuesday, February 12, 2008

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JON TESTER, a Senator from the State of Montana.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

God of the universe, Creator of the human family, enlarge our minds and open the doors to our hearts that we may think Your thoughts and pattern our affections after Yours.

Guide the Members of this legislative body. Make them good managers of the different talents you have given them. May they use these gifts for the good of others. Lord, increase their respect for one another that they will seek first to understand rather than to be understood. Open their eyes to new horizons of truth that they have not known before. When they have to stand alone, when loyalty makes them unpopular, give them the courage to faithfully do Your will.

We pray in the Name of Him who is the truth. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JON TESTER 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, February 12, 2008.

To the Senate:

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

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following the remarks that I will make and perhaps the Republican leader will make, we are going to resume consideration of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act and will immediately proceed to a series of rollcall votes in relation to the remaining amendments and cloture on the bill. The managers are working on a couple of amendments to see if they can be accepted by voice vote. But there could be as many as nine rollcall votes. If we have not completed voting on these items prior to the caucus time, we will resume votes after the recess.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE SURVEILLANCE ACT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, today the Senate will finish the bipartisan Rockefeller-Bond bill. This bill is the product of months of painstaking negotiations between Senate Republicans and Democrats and benefitted from the participation of intelligence experts in the executive branch.

The overwhelming bipartisan vote in the Intelligence Committee reflected the care, concern, and good faith that went into crafting the bill. The final vote was not 15 to 0, but it was 13 to 2, which around here is pretty close.

The Rockefeller-Bond bill contained the two main ingredients that are needed to sign this bill into law. It will allow intelligence professionals to do their jobs, and it will not allow trial lawyers to sue the telecommunications companies that may have participated and, according to the intelligence, acted in good faith to help protect our country.

A bill that does not satisfy these two requirements will not become law, nor should it. And, in fact, Mr. President, I know the Senator from Missouri, our ranking member, is going to make the point that all of these amendments need to be defeated if, in fact, we are going to get a signature on this bill. It will be the only way in the end to protect our country.

Last week was a great example of what we can accomplish when we work with each other instead of against each other. We were able to pass an economic growth package on an over-

whelming bipartisan basis which the President will sign tomorrow.

We have another chance this week to put up a bipartisan win by passing the Rockefeller-Bond bill, a bill that is critical to protecting the homeland from attack and protecting our forces fighting overseas.

I am confident that with the help of friends on the other side of the aisle, we can work through the pending amendments, send it over to the House, and then send it on to the President for his signature this week.

THE ABRAHAM LINCOLN BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, today on February 12, America celebrates the birthday of the greatest leader our country has ever produced. And my home State of Kentucky has a front-row seat in the celebration.

Abraham Lincoln was born February 12, 1809, in a log cabin 3 miles south of Hodgenville, KY. The one-room cabin measured 16 by 18 feet, had a dirt floor, and no glass in the windows.

The future President was born with no advantages in life except for a strong curiosity and a sterling character. By the end of his life, this man of humble background had united our country by demonstrating leadership during America's time of greatest crisis, and he showed our country the true value of the Declaration of Independence by asserting that there must be no exceptions to the ideal that all men are created equal.

Two centuries later, America looks back with gratitude at our 16th President by celebrating the Lincoln Bicentennial. The Commonwealth of Kentucky can take special pride in the fact that Lincoln was one of our own, and the Lincoln Bicentennial's opening ceremonies will take place in Hodgenville. So begins a 2-year event celebrating the great emancipator's life and legacy. All across the country, from the State capital in Springfield, IL, where Lincoln served as a legislator, to here in Washington, DC, where Lincoln served as a wartime Commander in Chief, Americans will celebrate this important figure in our national story.

This time will be exciting for teachers, students, and any adult who loves American history. I know Kentucky's friendly neighbors to the north in Illinois often claim Lincoln as their own. Their license plates even say so. But Lincoln was born and spent his formative years in Kentucky, which surely must have shaped the man he became,