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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable HARRY REID, a Senator from the State of Nevada.

PRAYER

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

The psalmist expresses our deepest longing this morning, "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer."—Psalm 19:14. Let us pray.

Gracious God, You have shown us that the meditation of our hearts and the reflection of our inner being often affect our spoken words. It's true of our prayers: muddled thinking about You results in halting prayers. The connection of the meditation of our hearts and the words of our mouths is manifested in our human relationships: what we think about others affects what we say to them. Also, our prayerful meditation about issues and the application of our beliefs and values impact how we express our convictions and how we cast our votes. Often, what we think speaks so loudly in our attitudes that others can't hear what we say.

So, Lord, we pray that the meditation of our hearts will reflect Your justice and mercy and what we say will articulate Your truth and righteousness. You are our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable HARRY REID 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, June 19, 2002.

To the Senate:

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

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. REID 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 for up to 10 minutes each.

Under the previous order, the first half of the time shall be under the control of the majority leader or his designee.

Under the previous order, the time until 11 a.m.—that is, from 10:30 to 11—shall be under the control of the Republican leader or his designee.

Who seeks recognition?

The Senator from Illinois is recognized.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, it is my understanding the first hour, if I am not mistaken—

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The first half-hour is under the control of the Democrats.

Mr. DURBIN. I know the Senator from New Jersey is going to seek recognition.

I see the Senator from Pennsylvania is in the Chamber. I do not know if he is seeking recognition this morning. I would certainly like to accommodate him if he is going to make a request for a reasonable period of time.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Illinois. I would very much appreciate an opportunity to speak for 5 minutes, if I might, at some early point.

Mr. DURBIN. I am happy to extend that courtesy to my colleague from Pennsylvania.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the order, the 5 minutes of the Republican time will be used at this time; is that it?

Mr. DURBIN. That is correct.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, first, I thank the Senator from Illinois for according me this courtesy.

PROPOSED RULE FOR THE REPUBLICAN CONFERENCE

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I have sought recognition to discuss, briefly, a proposed rule for the Republican conference on the issue of seniority for members, chairmanships, and also for ranking members.

Effective January 1, 1997, the Republican caucus adopted a rule which provided that there would be a 6-year limit on committee chairmanships and ranking members; chairmanships, of course, if in the majority, ranking members if in the minority.

There has since arisen a controversy as to whether that meant 6 years as chairman and an additional 6 years as ranking member or whether that meant 6 years total for chairman and ranking member.

Having participated in the conference which produced the rule, I think it is fair to say that the intent was to have a total 6-year limitation,

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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chairman and ranking member combined.

Certainly, there is no doubt that in establishing a 6-year limit for every leadership position in the Republican caucus, except for the position of Republican leader—majority leader or minority leader, depending on control of the Senate—aside from Senator LOTT's position, it is plain that all the other leadership positions were limited to a total of 6 years, without distinction as to whether it was a majority or minority position.

The chairman of the conference, Senator SANTORUM, came out with an interpretation that the rule did mean total years whether it was chairman or ranking member; not 6 and 6, but a total of 6 years.

Yesterday, I circulated a proposed rule which would make it conclusive that a Republican Senator shall be limited to 6 years in the aggregate for service as chairman and ranking member of a committee. For example, if the Senator served 4½ years as chairman and 1½ years as ranking, that would constitute the requisite 6-year limit.

There has been some consideration as to whether being ranking is really a position of significance. I would submit from my experience in this body that it conclusively is not as good as being chairman, but it is the lead Republican on the committee.

For example, on Intelligence, the chairman and the ranking member, or vice chairman, have access to the confidential briefings. On the Judiciary Committee, the chairman and the ranking member have access to the confidential briefings by the Attorney General when something arises where notification is important, or by the FBI Director or by the INS Director or any one of the Federal agencies subject to oversight by the Judiciary Committee.

At the committee hearings, it is the chairman and the ranking member who are accorded the right, the privilege, of making opening statements. There is a considerable difference on staff, and the ranking member does have a say, to a significant extent, on the organization and direction of the committee. So I think, as a practical matter, being ranking is very significant.

Some of my colleagues have raised the concern that if they served as ranking for a year, for example, they would then not be able to serve as chairman for 6 years—if we Republicans retook the majority—but for only 5 years.

So my rule has a subsection which provides that if a person who has seniority to be ranking member elects not to be ranking member, that person may do so; and then that would not count against the 6 years as chairman if and when the Republicans again control of the Senate.

So for those who think the position of ranking member is not of significance, or choose not to undertake that position, or prefer not to have that po-

sition, which would then be a limitation on their service as chairman, that member can opt not to serve as ranking member.

When this rule was proposed, I had grave doubts about it, frankly, having been here for a considerable period of time, and approaching the situation where I would have the seniority. But as the rule was put into effect, obviously, I have observed it.

As a part of the rule, I could no longer serve as chairman of the Judiciary Committee. But it seems to me the Republican caucus ought to go back to where we—Madam President, I ask unanimous consent for an additional 1 minute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. CLINTON). Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered. An additional 1 minute is granted.

Mr. SPECTER. In conclusion—the two most popular words of any speech—I think it is a fair assessment that what was intended was 6 years in total. That was the interpretation, to repeat, which the chairman of the Republican Conference, Senator SANTORUM, had made by an official interpretation.

The rule I am proposing, which will be voted on next Tuesday—I had each member of the Republican caucus served with notice, both having it delivered to their offices yesterday and having a copy served on each one of the desks here so there is a double service of notice—would provide for a 6-year maximum limitation, having provided the leeway for a Member not to serve as ranking, if he chose to follow that course, so as to have the full 6 years as chairman, if and when the Republicans are the majority party.

I, again, thank my colleagues. I thank the Senator from New Jersey for his patience, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr. CORZINE. Madam President, I appreciate this opportunity to, once again, speak on a topic I believe needs to be debated fully in front of the American public and before this fall's elections. That topic is Social Security and the proposals circulating with regard to privatization of Social Security and the reduction in guaranteed benefits for future generations.

Yesterday two of our Nation's top experts on Social Security issued a thoughtful and detailed new study on the recommendations of the Bush Social Security Commission to privatize Social Security. The report was prepared by Dr. Peter Orszag of the Brookings Institution and Dr. Peter Diamond of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who is the incoming president of the American Economic Association—two credible, thoughtful researchers who bring objectivity to their work in this area.

The report by Drs. Orszag and Diamond objectively confirmed what I and

many Democrats in the House and Senate have been trying to say on a regular basis on the floor for some time: The Bush Social Security Commission has developed privatization plans that would force deep cuts in guaranteed benefits. Those cuts for many current workers could exceed 25 percent and for some future retirees up to 45 percent.

These cuts would apply to everyone, even those who choose not to risk their benefits in privatized accounts. Cuts would be even deeper for those who do invest in privatized accounts. In fact, actual cuts are likely to be deeper than current estimates, as the Commission's plans depend on substantial infusions of revenues from the General Treasury.

Given the current state of our Federal budgetary policies, it is pretty hard to expect that we will put \$2.5 to \$3 trillion into the Social Security fund from the general revenues over the next 40 years or so, with the major demands we have on our general revenues.

Remember, what we actually will be doing is spending Social Security trust fund moneys for those general purposes, as opposed to infusing money into the Social Security trust fund.

This year we will run roughly a \$300 billion deficit, if you include expenditures out of the Social Security trust fund, taking every penny of that to spend on other things, some quite responsible with regard to national security and homeland security. The fact is, we are using Social Security funds for everything but Social Security.

With respect to the basic elements of the Orszag and Diamond report, they spell out in great detail all of the cuts in guaranteed benefits. I urge my colleagues to take a look at it. This is not just political rhetoric. This is about the facts of what this Commission's report is proposing. It is noteworthy. In fact, it is newsworthy.

The New York Times today—and I will include the article for the RECORD—gives a good summary of the report and relates the fact that guaranteed benefits are going to be cut if we follow the propositions included in that report.

First, the Orszag and Diamond report provides a lot of detail about how these deep benefit cuts will come about. It finds that, even if you add income that can be derived from the privatized accounts, many seniors would be substantially worse off under the Bush Commission plans than under current law.

Let me repeat that, because this is one of the arguments I hear coming back all the time when we talk about Social Security. Even if you add the income that can be derived from privatized accounts, many seniors would be substantially worse off under the Bush Commission plans than the current system.

Take, for example, a two-earner couple who claims benefits at age 65 in 2075. Their guaranteed benefits would be reduced by 46 percent. Since the