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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. STEVENS].

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today's prayer will be offered by our guest Chaplain, Dr. Sheila C. Gustafson, of the First Presbyterian Church in Sante Fe, NM.

PRAYER

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Eternal Spirit of God, You are in all our beginnings and all our endings, and You are with us at the beginning of this day's session of the Senate. We pray for the Senators here gathered, and for those who are about our Nation's business in other places and in other ways, that this day might offer new opportunities for creative service.

We pray for them fresh perspectives on perplexing problems, and new opportunities for cooperation. May they model for our people, and for the people of the world, a process of corporate discernment which allows inspired solutions to emerge to the challenges we face as a Nation and global community. And grant each one of them, we pray, the physical, mental, and spiritual stamina to persevere in support of truth and justice.

Author of liberty, we are grateful that we are privileged to live in a nation of abundance and freedom. We know that to whom much has been given, much is expected. Bless the Senators who work on our behalf to fulfill our country's great calling and responsibility. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The PRESIDENT pro tempore 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, this morning the Senator will conduct a period of morning business to allow Senators to speak. Following morning business, at approximately 10:30, the Senate will begin consideration of the conference report to accompany the Defense appropriations bill. Senators STEVENS and INOUE will be ready to give their remarks at that time. It is my hope that we can schedule the vote on that conference report prior to noon.

Yesterday, we completed two conference reports—the Homeland Security and the legislative appropriations reports. I thank Senators COCHRAN, CAMPBELL, and the ranking members for assisting in getting these ready for the floor for full Senate consideration.

Following the Defense appropriations conference report passage, we will consider the remaining available judicial nominations and another two or three still on the Executive Calendar that hopefully we will be able to clear. There is a standing request from the other side of the aisle that a rollcall vote be held on judicial nominations and, therefore, we will schedule those votes accordingly.

We will resume consideration of the District of Columbia appropriations bill today. Senator DEWINE has been actively engaged in working through a number of possible amendments to that bill. I hope we can make substantial progress today toward finishing that measure.

We have a number of the appropriations bills and conference reports to consider, and we will consider those as they become available. I thank Members for their cooperation in this regard.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if I could, through the Chair, ask the distin-

guished leader a question, we have a number of Jewish Members who are concerned about tomorrow. They want to be home by sundown. We have at least one Senator who would like to be home in California in time for observance of the holiday. I am wondering if the leader has made a decision about tomorrow yet because of the holiday.

Mr. FRIST. We will discuss tomorrow's schedule over the course of the morning. We will let people know. Obviously, we will take that into strong consideration in terms of scheduling votes for tomorrow. I do expect us to be voting in the morning. But in terms of specifics, we will have announcements as we go through the day.

Very shortly we will be going into morning business, but I want to make several comments.

As most people know, my colleagues and others, we have made a concerted effort to respond to the President of the United States in terms of emergency requests to support our troops and our military efforts overseas—the men and women who are fighting for freedom and democracy. Thus, over the course of this week, we have held a number of hearings at the committee level with the hopes that we would be able to end at a reasonable but as short a time as possible so as to bring that request to the floor of the Senate in order to have plenty of time to both look at amendments and to debate, discuss, and examine the specifics of that request.

We are going into a recess at the end of next week. That is what is anticipated now. As I said last week, knowing that the supplemental would be delivered last week, we immediately began to set up a 2-week period by which the Senators would have sufficient and adequate time to address this particular request. This week, we had over 30 hours of hearings at the committee level.

The distinguished President pro tempore attended most of those hearings.

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



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There have been seven separate hearings in the Senate alone in addition to the hearings that are being held in the House of Representatives.

We have had attendance at the policy lunches to be briefed on both sides of the aisle by Ambassador Bremer. The President has given two national addresses that relate to this supplemental request.

I mention this because I have said I would schedule adequate time for consideration. It requires a lot of participation over the course of this time. Probably over 70 Members are participating in those particular hearings that are being held this week.

I think it is important to have us come to the floor so we can have a full debate and debate amendments on the floor as well.

That will be the goal for next week. Again, because at the end of next week we will go on a recess for greater than a week, I believe it is important to respond to the emergency requests by the President of the United States, our Commander in Chief, in a timely way. That means this week and next week.

AMBASSADOR BREMER

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I wanted to comment on Ambassador Bremer briefly.

I asked Ambassador Paul Bremer to come back and to participate in the hearings this week. He has really gone nonstop.

I express my deep appreciation for his presence every day—both in formal meetings, informal meetings, and hearings. He is the U.S. administrator of Iraq and head of the coalition of provisional authority.

Early last summer, Ambassador Bremer, who had already retired from government service, was asked by the President of the United States, on very short notice, to move to Iraq and to lead the coalition effort to stabilize the country; indeed, he volunteered to do so.

We all listen to him, and in listening to his testimony, we all realize what a daunting task he has. Iraq has been ruled by a vicious dictator for decades, the economy has deteriorated, as we all know, to near pre-industrial levels, the population is scarred by the ravages of this dictatorship, the Saddam Hussein regime, and now we have the foreign terrorists who on a daily basis seem to be sneaking in the country, adding to the disorder and death.

Through all this, Ambassador Bremer continues to lead. He does that in spite of personally being under constant threat of attack and even constant threat of assassination in that part of the world. Like many of our fine service men and women, he has left loved ones behind and is living in what we all know are tough conditions in Iraq to serve the United States of America.

Ambassador Bremer may set a record this week for the number of committees before which he is testifying.

There are at least 6 congressional committees over 5 days, in addition to speaking informally to our policy luncheons. He is a public servant in the truest sense of the word, a great man serving our Nation.

As we debate the appropriate policies in Iraq, I want everyone to remember that he and others, military and civilian, are sacrificing for us in Iraq. I know we will have our differences. I encourage all of our colleagues to be respectful of each other as we move forward and as we recognize the great, unselfish leadership of Ambassador Bremer.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Senator from New Mexico wants to speak regarding the Chaplain. I will finish in a minute.

While the majority leader is on the floor, I say to the distinguished majority leader, the reason I stepped off the floor is I got a call from one of our Jewish Senators indicating they were speaking for a number of other Senators of that faith. They not only have to, as I indicated, be home in time for the sundown services but also have to prepare meals and things of that nature. They wanted me to let you know, if there is some way we could meet the burdensome schedule we have tonight, it would sure be good for them because they have a lot of things to do other than be home by sundown.

I also say, while the majority leader is here—I am speaking for me—I want to do everything I can—and I think I can fairly speak for the Democratic caucus—to move this very important supplemental. Senator BYRD and others are extremely concerned, for example, about having the hearing on Monday. The distinguished President pro tempore has heard from Senator BYRD himself. He would rather have that on Tuesday and rather have some other witnesses.

We want to do everything we can to be fair and responsible and move this along. However, remember, the House is not going to mark up their legislation until the week we are gone.

The leader is right, we should do everything we can to move this along, but I don't want anyone thinking that Democratic Senators who have some concern about the large amount of this number, especially the reconstruction, are in any way trying to hold this up. We want to cooperate in any way we can.

Now, speaking only for this Senator, I think it may be to the advantage of the Senate to take this over and do whatever debate we need next week but not complete it until we get back. I have complimented the distinguished majority leader on a number of occasions since the Senator has taken over the Senate. We have had very few needs to file cloture on your side. We have tried to be as cooperative as possible. For example, without entering into unanimous consent agreements we simply have told you we will finish a bill on a certain night and generally we

have been able to live up to that. We are not trying in any way to slow down or stall this most important legislation, but there is not a question of running out of money tomorrow, the next day, or the next day. I don't think it would hurt until we got back to have some final time to complete this.

That is coming from this Senator, not the caucus. I am sure the Democratic leader will be in touch early in the day. We had a number of meetings yesterday to talk about this most important subject.

For the third time today, we want it understood we on this side are going to do everything we can to support the troops. There are serious questions about the reconstruction money and how we should handle that. I don't think anyone disputes the fact they need reconstruction money. I think we need to take a close look at that.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I respect what the assistant Democratic leader has put forward. I am not making accusations of stalling or obstruction at all. I do feel it is important as we turn on our television sets every morning or read the paper and we see the importance of the security in Iraq that we address the issue which has been brought by our leaders on the ground there, the security issues and the request for the supplemental, as expeditiously as possible and not delay unnecessarily. That is why from a leadership position I want to focus this body on that security issue and spend whatever time it takes right now to address that issue.

I understand we are working in good faith as we go forward. My intention is to continue to address thoroughly, with plenty of debate, maybe an unprecedented number of hearings in a short period of time, by most significant people, and to allow adequate time for floor debate. If we can keep working together, it is my goal to dispose of this appropriately over the next 9 days before we go on recess. I am going to have a hard time leaving the Senate to go on recess and not addressing a Presidential request.

The House of Representatives is staying here. They are not going on recess. They are going to be addressing it in early October. That is why at least from a schedule standpoint I want to do it as soon as possible.

Mr. REID. If I could just say this, the other problem we have is we do not want to have to go through this twice. Under the procedures of the Senate, when we just have a Senate bill, we are limited very much because points of order will be raised on most everything we do relative to amendments. I ask the distinguished majority leader to understand we do not need to go through this twice because when the bill comes back over from the House, we do not need to go through the same amendment procedure again.

I am not sure we gain anything by trying to complete this by next week. We would be well served to see what