

We don't know what is going to happen. Events are moving so quickly.

I say to my distinguished friend, the majority leader, we believe it is more important to go to this Defense bill. I listened to every word of the statement of the distinguished majority leader about the Secretary of Defense. We have had other speeches on the floor today about how important it is that we continue supporting our troops. We believe that.

Last night, the House passed, on a bipartisan basis, a very important Defense authorization bill, by an overwhelming margin. We need to do the same.

I also say that we are willing to go to class action when we finish the Defense bill, which will probably be, I respectfully submit to my friend, Tuesday anyway because I don't think you are going to get cloture on this motion to proceed. I have spoken to my people who are advocates of class action reform—the junior Senator from Delaware, Mr. CARPER, and the Senator from New York, Mr. SCHUMER. They believe in class action reform a lot, but they are not going to vote for cloture.

We believe we should finish the Defense bill and then go to class action. I ask my friend, the distinguished majority leader, to modify his request to provide that the Senate proceed to the consideration of the class action legislation upon disposition of the Defense authorization bill. I make that request.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I object to the modification.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. REID. I object to the request of the majority leader.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, let me briefly say I have had the opportunity to talk to the manager of the bill, and we feel very strongly that it is critical that we address this bill. The best way to do it is to allow the managers to work together over the recess and see if they can come back with amendments that are identified so we have some kind of certainty as to how we are going to bring this to closure.

In the meantime, while those discussions are underway, we will hopefully be able to proceed with class action.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I move to proceed to the consideration of S. 2062, and I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 430, S. 2062.

Bill Frist, Orrin Hatch, Charles Grassley, John Sununu, Lamar Alexander, Pete Domenici, Norm Coleman, Jim Talent,

Larry Craig, Mitch McConnell, Trent Lott, John Cornyn, Judd Gregg, Richard G. Lugar, Mike Crapo, Saxby Chambliss, Jon Kyl, Peter Fitzgerald.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, could the majority leader schedule that for 5:30? It is so difficult for people on the west coast—and I am one of them—coming back that day. We don't arrive, if the plane is on time, until about 4 o'clock.

Mr. FRIST. We are happy to make it 5:30, June 1. We modify the unanimous consent request to be 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 1.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— S. 2400

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the adoption of the motion to proceed, the pending Department of Defense authorization bill not be placed back on the calendar, and that it remain the pending business.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate immediately proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations on today's Executive Calendar: Calendar Nos. 582, 583, 584, 618, 621, 663, 666, 668, 670, 671, 675, and 684.

I further ask unanimous consent that the nominations be confirmed en bloc, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then return to legislative session.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I want the record to reflect that we have cleared a significant number of people today, and we have basically filled the diplomatic corps, ambassadorial vacancies, except for one, and that is in Nepal.

I was on the Senate floor about 10 days ago when we cleared another batch of ambassadors. We had the same problem then that we have now. We have not cleared the only vacant ambassadorial spot open, and that is Nepal. There is an objection by the majority. The ambassadorial appointments are all done except for Nepal. It is not our fault. It is the fault of the majority.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

The nominations considered and confirmed en bloc are as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Linda Morrison Combs, of North Carolina, to be an Assistant Secretary of Transportation.

Francis Mulvey, of Maryland, to be a Member of the Surface Transportation Board for a term expiring December 31, 2007.

W. Douglas Buttrey, of Tennessee, to be a Member of the Surface Transportation Board for a term expiring December 31, 2008.

CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION

Thomas Hill Moore, of Florida, to be a Commissioner of the Consumer Product Safety Commission for a term of seven years from October 27, 2003. (Reappointment)

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Deborah Hersman, of Virginia, to be a Member of the National Transportation Safety Board for a term expiring December 31, 2008, vice John Goglia, term expired.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Miles T. Bivins, of Texas, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Sweden.

John J. Danilovich, of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Federative Republic of Brazil.

Earle I. Mack, of New York, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Finland.

Jack Dyer Crouch II, of Missouri, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Romania.

Jendayi Elizabeth Frazer, of Virginia, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of South Africa.

Mitchell B. Reiss, of Virginia, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as Special Envoy for Northern Ireland.

Victor Henderson Ashe, of Tennessee, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Poland.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, indeed, we just confirmed about 12 of the 96 pending nominations on the Executive Calendar, and I do thank my colleagues for allowing us to proceed on this list. These ambassadorial appointments and other nominations are all very important. It reflects a lot of work on both sides of the aisle to make this progress. We appreciate the cooperation of those to date. Again, that is 12 of 96 nominations on the Executive Calendar that I mentioned earlier this morning.

Mr. President, thus, I now ask consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of the following nominations, en bloc: Calendar Nos. 429, 594, 595, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 617, 622, 623, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 641, 642, 643, 654, 655, 656, 658, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 694, 695, and 696.

Mr. REID. Reserving the right to object, Mr. President.

Mr. FRIST. I further ask unanimous consent that the nominations be confirmed en bloc, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then return to legislative session.

Mr. REID. Reserving the right to object, the reason I got a little out of sorts there, I thought I was in Nevada listening to a bingo game being called. I apologize.