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Senate

(Legislative day of Wednesday, September 17, 2008)

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, a Senator from the State of Maryland.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Gracious, loving God, let Your light, Your wisdom, Your righteousness, and Your love fill our minds and hearts today. Lord, You have promised Your wisdom for all who need it. This week, more than ever, Your Senators need Your wisdom. Illuminate their minds with more than human insight. Lord, close the doors You don't want them to enter and open the gates that will lead them to the path of Your way. Remind them of their weakness and fallibility as You give them the grace to listen to those with whom they disagree. Bring from the crucible of conflicting views truth and justice that will bless our land.

We pray in the Name of Him who gave His life for all. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN 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, September 24, 2008.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, a Senator from the State of Maryland, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. CARDIN 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 of the leaders, the Senate will proceed to morning business. We are going to go to morning business for an hour. I alert Members that we may be in morning business for longer than that time. We will come back at a later time. The first 30 minutes will be controlled by the majority, and the Republicans will control the last 30 minutes. Following that time, we will continue to have Senators limited to 10 minutes each. If that is not the order, I ask that be the case.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. That is the case.

Mr. REID. The legislation we have this week is the Department of Defense authorization. We have a continuing resolution. We have the stimulus. We have the economic recovery program. And, of course, the most important thing on everyone's mind is what we do about the bailout of the financial institutions.

I think we made progress yesterday. Certainly, it appears there were a lot of questions asked. The Secretary of the

Treasury and the Chairman of the Fed will be over in the House around 2 o'clock this afternoon. Democrats are holding a caucus at 4:30 p.m. to talk about this issue. The Secretary is coming to that caucus at 5 o'clock.

I hope we can make more progress. We have not only the Jewish holidays coming up next week, but a very important event is this Friday. I was told and heard on the radio this morning that as much as 85 percent of the American people will watch the debate this Friday. That is a stunning number. It will be the most widely viewed Presidential debate in history. I assume, if we are still in session, we can take a brief recess for an hour and a half and work through it. I am sure there is not one of the 100 Senators who will want to miss that debate.

I will be back later to talk about the so-called Coburn package. I am not going to do it now.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SPECIALIST SERGIO S. ABAD

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, this morning I pay tribute to a fallen soldier from my home State. SPC Sergio Abad was tragically killed in Wanat, Afghanistan, from wounds suffered by small-arms fire and rocket-propelled grenades fired by the enemy on July 13, 2008. Army records listed Morganfield, KY, as Specialist Abad's home, and he was 21 years old.

For his valor on the battlefield, Specialist Abad received several medals, awards, and declarations, including the National Defense Service Medal, the Army Good Conduct Medal, the Army

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



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