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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable MARK R. WARNER, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Virginia.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Our Father in heaven, because of the abundance of Your mercies, we receive this gift of another day. We don't pray for tomorrow and its needs, but we do intercede for this day which now bathes us in its returning light. Give wisdom and courage to our Senators, as You set Your seal upon their lips. Lord, restrain them from speaking words that needlessly hurt or discourage some pilgrim by their side. As lovers and servants of this land of freedom, make them worthy of the past and equal to the present. Mold them to Your purposes. Fashion them with Your powerful hands. Shape them on the anvil of these days of destiny into instruments fit for Your use.

Lord, we also pause and pray for the families of Capitol Police Officer Jacob Joseph Chestnut and Detective John Michael Gibson, who bravely gave their last full measure of devotion defending the Capitol 11 years ago today.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable MARK R. WARNER 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 bill clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, July 24, 2009.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable MARK R. WARNER, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Virginia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

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

MOMENT OF SILENCE TO HONOR OFFICER CHESTNUT AND DETECTIVE GIBSON

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will observe a moment of silence in honor of Officer Jacob J. Chestnut and Detective John M. Gibson of the United States Capitol Police who fell in the line of duty defending this Capitol on this day in 1998.

(Moment of silence.)

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there are a select few men and women who come to work every day with one primary job: to protect those of us who are fortunate enough to call the U.S. Capitol Building our office and all who come here from all corners of the country to see for themselves the heart of our democracy.

Special Agent John Gibson and Officer Jacob Chestnut were two such men. Every day for almost two decades they kept us safe. Eleven years ago today, as the Chaplain announced in his prayer, they gave their lives while protecting us. On this day in 1998, a madman came through an entrance on the east side of the building in midafternoon and shot Officer Chestnut at pointblank range. Officer Chestnut died instantly. Agent Gibson confronted the man, shooting him and stopping him. Gibson was himself hit, and he died later that day.

I can clearly remember both these brave men, both of whom were in their 18th year of service as Capitol policemen when they were killed.

I can remember when my wife became ill at a congressional retreat we had in Virginia. It was Agent Gibson who ran to her side. I can remember how he was so focused and had run so far from the Capitol Police headquarters to our room, he was sweating profusely, and how he treated her with kindness and care. Agent Gibson, who was from Massachusetts, would, every morning, race to the back of the sports section when baseball season was on to find the box score for his beloved Boston Red Sox. He was a generous neighbor and loving father to his daughter and two sons.

Officer Chestnut, whom everyone called J.J., was a father of five who loved his job and loved his country. He had served in the Air Force for 20 years. He fought in Vietnam. At the time of the shooting, he was just weeks away from retiring.

Gibson and Chestnut lay in honor in the Capitol Rotunda, just steps from where they were murdered, a distinction Congress has conferred upon only a handful of Americans, including Abraham Lincoln, John Kennedy, and our unknown soldiers. Jacob Chestnut was the first African American to ever be so honored in the Capitol Rotunda.

On this solemn anniversary, we pause to appreciate not just the bravery of two men who saved so many others but each and every Capitol police officer who does his or her job so valiantly every single day of the year.

On behalf of the entire Senate, everyone who works and visits here, I extend my appreciation.

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

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, when we stand in this Capitol dedicated to freedom, we must remember freedom's costs. So I rise to speak

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



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