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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today's opening prayer will be offered by our guest Chaplain, National Chaplain Daniel DePozo, the American Legion, Henderson, NV.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Most Heavenly Father, whose love is given freely, we thank You, Lord. May all of our lawmakers who make decisions be guided in Your Name. May they have the wisdom and the courage and, most importantly, the courage of love and heart. We ask You, Lord, for those who are serving now, to give to them the help that is needed.

This great Nation of ours is entrusted to You, O Lord. Your blessings on the men and women who are protecting us as a great Nation, who are also under Your care, we ask You to bless them as well.

We ask this all in Your Name. 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.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORENO). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant executive clerk read the nomination of Daniel Driscoll, of North Carolina, to be Secretary of the Army.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

NOMINATION OF JAMIESON GREER

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, soon, we will be voting on the nomination of Jamieson Greer of Maryland to be U.S. Trade Representative.

I will be supporting that nomination. I voted for his nomination to get out of the Finance Committee because I believe we need a clear change from the last 4 years, when there was never any attempt to do anything to reduce trade barriers.

Unlike his predecessor, I am confident that Mr. Greer will pursue an aggressive trade strategy that includes opening access to new markets through new trade deals. I also believe that Mr. Greer will work to level the playing field for U.S. farmers to compete with Brazil fairly and to deal with China head on. As my colleagues know, I am a free and fair trader, and though I would not like to see extreme tariffs, I am hopeful that Mr. Greer and President Trump will bring us to freer and more fair trade.

We often think of Europe, Brazil, Japan, South Korea, and China as being big problems for us when it comes to trade. I would like to remind my colleagues that there are about 190 other countries on this globe that we can seek agreements with, and taking time to seek those agreements would be good.

Along this line, Senator BOOZMAN, chairman of the Ag Committee, and I,

a member of the Finance Committee, which has jurisdiction over trade, sent letters to members of the Finance Committee, the Agriculture Committee, and the Ways and Means Committee of the House of Representatives. We asked our colleagues to listen to somebody who has had some experience in dealing with some of these smaller nations with bilateral trade agreements. That person is a person by the name of Al Johnson.

During the George W. Bush Presidency, he negotiated trade agreements with about a dozen countries that added up to about six or seven different agreements—all bilateral. I think, this is the way President Trump prefers—bilateral negotiations rather than multilateral negotiations. He was very successful, and that success can be measured by the fact that he has shown in his studies that, with these dozen countries with which we negotiated bilateral free-trade agreements during the George W. Bush administration, we increased our trade with those nations by about 600 percent.

So I hope my colleagues will give Al Johnson a chance to talk to them. I know he has already visited with some Members of the U.S. Senate, and he is very vigorously promoting the idea that we ought to have bilateral negotiations—and with a lot of countries that we never think about—that could be beneficial to American exports.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The majority leader is recognized.

NOMINATION OF JAMIESON GREER

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, yesterday evening, we invoked cloture on the

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



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