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Senate

The Senate met at 1 p.m., and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

*Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him and He shall bring it to pass. * * * Rest in the Lord, wait patiently for him * * *—Psalm 37:5, 7.*

Let us pray.

Lord, as we begin this new week, we take these four vital verbs of the psalmist as our strategy for living in the pressure of the busy days ahead. Before the problems pile up and the demands of the day hit us, we deliberately stop to commit our way to You, to trust in You, to rest in You, and wait patiently for You. Nothing is more important than being in an honest, open, receptive relationship with You. Everything we need to be competent leaders comes in fellowship with You. We are stunned by the fact that You know and care about us. We are amazed and humbled that You have chosen us to bless this Nation through our leadership. In response we want to be spiritually fit for the rigorous responsibilities. So, we turn over to Your control our personal lives, our relationships, and all the duties that You have entrusted to us. We trust You to guide us. We seek the source of our security and strength in You. We will not run ahead of You or lag behind but will walk with You in Your timing and pacing toward Your goals. You always are on time and in time for our needs. May the serenity and peace that we feel in this time of prayer sustain us throughout this day. We thank You in advance for a great day filled with incredible surprises of sheer joy. In Your all-powerful name. Amen.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The able majority leader, Senator LOTT, is recognized.

Mr. LOTT. Good morning, Mr. President.

SCHEDULE

Mr. LOTT. Today there will be a period of morning business until the hour of 2 p.m. with Senators permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each. At the hour of 2, the Senate will begin consideration of S. 1219, the campaign finance reform bill. There will be no rollcall votes during today's session of the Senate, and under the consent agreement reached last week, a vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the bill, S. 1219, will occur at 2:15 tomorrow.

Senators are reminded that in accordance with rule XXII, first-degree amendments may be filed until 2 p.m. today and second-degree amendments may be filed until 12:30 on Tuesday.

This week the Senate will also resume consideration of the Department of Defense authorization bill. I hope the Senate will complete action on this bill as early as possible this week.

Also, we are continuing our efforts to reach some agreement with regard to the consideration of the small-business tax measure and the minimum wage legislation. I wish to emphasize that we hope to get an agreement on that and complete action on the DOD authorization bill and move to the DOD appropriations bill.

In order to achieve that, it is going to take a lot of cooperation from all the Members, all the Senators, between the two leaders, and those who have amendments to offer. So I emphasize once again that we have to move forward on the DOD authorization bill. The chairman will be working on that. Senator THURMOND, from South Caro-

lina, and Senator NUNN, the ranking member, are intent on moving this legislation forward.

I have tried to be considerate of the Senate and the Members' desires to have an opportunity to have supper with their families, have reasonable hours, but from what I saw last week and what I experienced, I do not know if we can continue that. We are going to make progress on DOD authorization on Tuesday and Wednesday. If it means staying late, we are going to do that.

Again, I want to be sympathetic and cooperative with Members on their schedule demands and their desire to be with their families, but if they do not respond in kind, then I, like previous leaders, have no option but to force the Senate to stay late to do its work.

Senators should expect a busy week this week with votes throughout the day every day, including Friday, and there will be, as I said, rollcall votes maybe into the evening in order to get the work done as necessary.

I am pleased that we have been able to reach the unanimous-consent agreement with regard to the consideration of campaign finance reform legislation. I think it is legislation that deserves an opportunity to be debated. We will have that opportunity this afternoon and in the morning, and then we will go to a cloture vote at 2:15.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ASHCROFT). Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business not to extend beyond the hour of 2 p.m., with the time equally divided between the two leaders.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I observe the absence of a quorum.

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



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The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, parliamentary inquiry. Is time allotted for speeches this morning?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We are in morning business until 2 o'clock, the time to be equally divided between the leaders.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, first I ask unanimous consent that Dr. Randy Hyer, a fellow in my office, have floor privileges for the purpose of the introduction of a bill this morning.

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

(The remarks of Mr. DOMENICI pertaining to the introduction of S. 1898 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. ROCKEFELLER addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to take such time as I will require for a statement. It should not last more than 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right. We are operating under an order that will carry us to other matters at 2 o'clock.

THE SENATE'S UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I thought this would be a good time to remind my colleagues of the unfinished business that is still waiting to get done.

As we head toward the Fourth of July and another recess, we also need to remember that the days to take action in Congress are running out. It is not only late June, we also have very few days of legislative session left.

Will this be the Congress remembered only for what it did not get done? Will this be the Congress that spent all of its time and millions of taxpayers' dollars only on camera-filled hearing rooms to learn about the White House Travel Office and to turn every pebble over on Whitewater?

Instead, this should be a Congress capable of doing something about the day-to-day struggles of hard-working Americans. But to produce, we need some basic steps taken. The calendar needs to be pulled out, votes scheduled, final agreements reached, and work completed.

I think of three actions that will help millions of Americans, including West Virginians.

No. 1, it is time to wrap up the Kennedy-Kassebaum health insurance bill. Members from the other side of the aisle are determined to include something called medical savings accounts. I might add that I hear absolutely no clamor for MSA's from constituents, beyond employers that are thinking about using this device as a substitute for the health insurance they now subsidize for employees.

But the key point is that the heart of Kennedy-Kassebaum involves changes that will make sure insurance is there for people when they really need it. When they need coverage for the very illness or condition that is now labeled a pre-existing condition. When they need coverage, but have to change jobs and now find their insurance canceled.

These are the changes that affect millions of Americans, and many, many West Virginians. This is the work we need to get done before this session of Congress runs out.

No. 2, this Congress still has the time to enact welfare reform. This is an area begging for reason and common sense. No one is going to get exactly their way on something as complicated and contentious as changing the welfare system. But it is not hard to figure out what Americans expect from us. They want to know that welfare is not a haven for avoiding work, responsibility, and the rules that most hard-working citizens play by.

The Democratic leader has just laid out another detailed plan, known as Work First Two, that reflects exactly what we need to do on welfare reform. It is a tough, no-nonsense plan to require adults to work or prepare for work. It does not make a point of punishing innocent children, who have done nothing wrong.

It is time to move away from politics, rigid positions, and posturing on welfare reform. The President has proven he will not sign a bill just because of its label. We should not waste any more time on legislation that belongs to one faction or simply rubber-stamps what some Governors have asked for. We need to work out our differences, and produce the bill that will turn welfare into a last-resort—for the sake of poor families and the hard-working taxpayers who want reform.

Finally, I find it shameful that this Congress has still not been able to enact an increase in the minimum wage. And I want to elaborate some on this subject, because it is so important to the people of my State.

A few weeks ago, the Washington Post ran an article telling us that the CEOs of major companies got a 23-percent raise in their compensation in 1995. According to the consulting firm of Pearl Myers & Partners, the average salary of a CEO was \$991,300 with the remaining in stock options and bonuses. Twenty years ago, the top CEO earned about 40 times as much as the typical worker. Today, that same CEO earns 190 times as much.

We know from study after study, town meeting after town meeting back

home, that wages for most other Americans are stagnant and that most workers have every reason to feel insecure about their income, their jobs, and their health insurance. The people who work 8 hours every day, making products and providing needed services, deserve a living wage. They should not be left behind. The gap between the rich and the poor continues to polarize the country into the haves and have-nots, and that is downright un-American.

As others have already said, whatever economic tide that is rising seems to be lifting a lot of yachts, and not much that carries the rest of Americans. Working families today are making less than they did 20 years ago. Look at what has happened to a single worker over those 20 years. He or she has watched the collapse of communism, voted in four Presidential elections, seen computers become a part of every day life, and watched the stock market rise over 5,000 points. For the worker relying on the minimum wage, his or her most recent paycheck is worth less than the first one in purchasing power.

And some wonder why hard-working American families feel left out of the American dream? The stagnation of wages over the past 20 years is obvious to parents struggling to pay their bills.

Mr. President, I ask my colleagues who still do not support a minimum wage increase to listen to this: When adjusted for inflation, the current Federal minimum wage of \$4.25 an hour is worth 27 percent less to workers and their families than that amount in 1979. Measured in 1979 dollars, the minimum wage is only worth \$3.10 an hour. A minimum wage worker earns \$8,840 a year. This is not a living wage, in fact, it is barely a sustainable wage. Even with an expanded earned income tax credit, earning \$4.25 an hour does not lift a family out of poverty.

No matter what the opponents say, minimum wage earners are not a collection of teen-age burger-flippers. Sixty-nine percent of all minimum wage earners are adults over the age of 21. Women make up 60 percent of all minimum wage workers and are usually a single parent trying to keep their families together. These workers are playing by the rules, paying rent, utility bills, health care premiums, food and clothing for their families. They are working long and hard hours, and they do not want to slip into welfare and dependency.

They deserve our admiration, our respect, and they deserve a raise.

In my home State of West Virginia, over 100,000 workers would get a raise if we pass the Democratic amendment to raise minimum wage to \$5.15. Almost 24 percent of West Virginia's work force would benefit from an increase in the minimum wage—about one out of four workers.

Let me share the story of just one woman in West Virginia. When her husband was injured in the mines and denied disability coverage, she went to