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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m., and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

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

Gracious God, whose presence and power are revealed to the heart that longs for Your guidance, to the mind that humbly seeks Your truth, and to those who are united in oneness to serve You in a great cause, we ask that this time of prayer be an authentic experience of communion with You that issues forth into an authentic unity of purpose to glorify You in all that we do today.

We seek to receive Your presence continually, to think of You consistently, and to trust You constantly. We urgently need divine wisdom for our leadership of this Nation. We have discovered that this only comes in a reliant relationship with You. Prayer enlarges our minds and hearts until they are able to be channels for the flow of Your spirit. You are Yourself the answer to our prayers.

As we move through this day, may we see each problem, perplexity, or person as an opportunity to practice Your presence and accept Your perspective and patience. We do not want to forget You, Lord, but when we do, interrupt our thoughts and bring us back to an awareness that You are waiting to bless us and to equip us to lead with vision and courage. Thus, may our work be our worship this day. In the name of our Lord and Savior. Amen.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

Mr. LOTT. I thank the Chair.

SCHEDULE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, yesterday I witnessed what I think was probably the best day of legislating on both sides of the aisle and on both sides of the Capitol that I have seen in many, many years. Beginning here in the Senate, we did complete action on the nuclear waste disposal legislation. It took a lot of effort, a lot of cooperation, and I think everybody deserves a lot of credit for the way it was handled.

Also, I want to commend the chairman of the Transportation Appropriations Committee and his ranking member. I think they put in an Olympic performance. Even though the hurdles were movable at times, they continued to persist and were able to complete the transportation appropriations bill, and we appreciate the chairman's efforts on that; also on a whole variety of conferences. Conferences were literally meeting all over the Capitol yesterday, on MilCon appropriations, on health insurance reform, small business relief package, minimum wage, on safe drinking water, on the terrorism task force. Everybody was working hard, and I really was very impressed with the effort that everybody put into the day yesterday. I hope we can replicate that again today.

This morning the Senate will immediately turn to the consideration of the reconciliation bill conference report regarding welfare reform. That conference report will be considered under the statutory debate time limitation of 10 hours equally divided. I hope it will not take the full 10 hours. I know a lot of Senators want to be heard, and certainly they have that right in this time limit. But I hope maybe we can yield back some of that time so that we can take up conference reports. We have a couple of them that we will probably have to vote on. The D.C. appropriations conference report and military

construction conference report will probably both have to be voted on.

This conference report is not amendable. Therefore, a vote on the adoption of the report will occur on the expiration or yielding back of debate time. Following disposition of the reconciliation bill conference report, the Senate may be asked to turn to consideration of other available conference reports or appropriations bills.

After we have votes on the conference reports, it is my intention at this time to go to the HUD-VA appropriations bill. The chairman, the Senator from Missouri, Mr. BOND, and the ranking member, Ms. MIKULSKI, have been very patient and understanding; their bill has slipped so we could move other, supposedly less controversial bills, but I hope we can take up the HUD-VA appropriations bill late this afternoon or even tonight. Therefore, rollcall votes can be expected throughout today's session and probably into the night.

I yield the floor, Mr. President.

Mr. FORD addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. FORD. Mr. President, let me say to the majority leader on behalf of the Democratic leader that we intend to cooperate with him as much as we can, but I might say to the majority leader, as he understood, the Democratic leader was quite upset last night when one of the judges had an objection. That level of cooperation kind of broke open last night.

So I just want to advise the majority leader that we will be attempting to continue to help him through the day, but it received a bump last evening.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I understand that, and I understand that we will be in very close touch with the distinguished assistant minority leader, the whip, to make sure that when votes do occur today they are in coordination with the Democratic leader's

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



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schedule, because we know he has some other things with which he is concerned.

We understand about the bumps in the road, but it is kind of like the hurdles on the Transportation appropriations bill the Senator from New Jersey helped work through. You just keep moving forward. You deal with them, and you find a way to handle these problems, and we will keep working with Senators to see that we can do that.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND WORK OPPORTUNITY RECONCILIATION ACT OF 1996—CONFERENCE REPORT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now proceed to the consideration of the conference report to accompanying H.R. 3734, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 3734) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 201(a)(1) of the current resolution on the budget for fiscal year 1997 having met, after full and free conference, have agreed to recommend and do recommend to their respective Houses this report, signed by a majority of the conferees.

(The conference report is printed in the House proceedings of the RECORD of July 30, 1996.)

Mr. DOMENICI addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, as I understand it, there are 10 hours equally divided. I hope we do not use 10 hours, and I will not take very long. I will yield rather quickly to the chairman of the Finance Committee. If he would permit me to give just a quick oversight, I will yield on our side. But I do wish to announce there are a number of Senators who want to speak. I hope we do not have any lag time between speakers. The Senators who have asked to speak are HATCH, GRAMM, SPECTER, HUTCHISON, SIMPSON, COATS, and GORTON. Some have indicated they want to speak as much as 10 to 20 minutes. I am clearly going to have plenty of time to accommodate them. I hope they will be watching here so that we do not have big periods of time when we are in a quorum call.

Mr. President, we come to the end of a long journey today to reform our Federal-State welfare programs. We take this final step today to send to the President of the United States for his announced signature the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996.

As vice chairman of the welfare reconciliation conference, I wish to first thank the people who did the bulk of the work to bring this conference to a quick conclusion. On our side, I thank in particular Senator ROTH, the chairman of the Finance Committee, who sits here. Without his diligent work and that of his excellent staff, we would not be here. I also thank, Senator LUGAR, who chairs the Agriculture Committee. For some it is not quite understood why a welfare bill can include agriculture issues. Of all of the nutrition programs that are a part of this package, most of them come within the jurisdiction of the Agriculture Committee, from food stamps on down. Obviously Senator LUGAR and his very dedicated staff must be given very high praise on our side of the aisle for their work.

These two distinguished chairmen and their staffs, from what I understood, worked tirelessly this last week. I was with them some of the time. I know of no other budget reconciliation conference in our history that was completed as quickly as this—less than 1 week.

Now, obviously, the House and Senate have passed bills that were somewhat similar—we have been at this a number of times. In fact, we have heretofore sent to the President two bills that passed both the House and Senate and he vetoed them. So, completing the conference report in 1 week seemed to us to be an achievable goal. And, indeed, they have exceeded our expectation and finished in slightly less than a week.

I believe part of the reason why this conference was completed so quickly is because the work on this issue has been in progress since the beginning of the 104th Congress, which began almost a year and a half ago. Welfare reform was one of the top legislative agenda items of this Congress. The former Republican leader, Senator Bob Dole, our candidate for President, made welfare reform a centerpiece of our broader effort to reform the Federal Government and return power back to the States and communities. For that, I want to indicate my great praise for our candidate for President, and our former leader. He had a lot to do with us being here today.

In addition, the national Governors, both Republicans and Democrats, have worked over the last year, both with the Congress and the administration, to help us make as informed judgments as we can.

This legislation truly represents and reflects the beginning of an open partnership with the States. This openness will be critical to its long-term success. We finally have decided what we should have decided a long time ago, that the States should not be our junior partners: who we tell how to do everything, do not listen to, and do not let make any innovative changes or do anything different from State to State. For too long we have assumed that one

shoe fits all and that the States better do as we say because we are paying some or most of the bill.

We have decided that the States and Governors and legislatures out there in America are as concerned about the poor as we are. They are concerned about their well-being and as concerned, if not more so, about the status of welfare in their States—a program that was built upon and built upon over the past 60 years, but never contained any elements which were truly an incentive to go to work, or to improve your own personal responsibility and take better care of yourselves, and thus of your children. It had become as if people were locked in poverty, kind of waiting around for the next minimal cash benefit check and whatever else went with it. The rewards were not great. The money was not very much. But of those who got on it, many of them stayed on it forever because there were no tools to help them get their educations and look for jobs. There were not job placement approaches.

All of that will change when this bill becomes law. The essence of the new welfare will be more like workfare. Welfare offices will turn into work placement offices, into job training offices, into places where people can go to find out how to improve their skills and what help they can have while they are doing that, such as enhanced child care. We put a great deal of resources in here, because we want many of the people who are single heads of households, who have a couple of children, to be able to become trained and educated. So we have provided about \$14 billion over the next 6 years in this bill, in order to help parents who want to go find jobs with those things that they need to take care of their children in the interim.

The spirit of bipartisanship is here today also. The President's statement yesterday indicates he would sign this legislation, after having vetoed two previous attempts at welfare reform.

Our Senators may describe what we have done differently, but from my standpoint I describe it in five simple ways:

First, we want to encourage and make people work. We believe work is the best thing to make people feel more self-esteem. It builds personal responsibility—which is precisely the opposite of the ethic we have built into the welfare program heretofore. Able-bodied persons who seek assistance should seek work and employment, and only after failing to find employment should they turn to the taxpayer for assistance.

Second, simple as it sounds, we ask parents to take care of their children. We stress personal responsibility and create incentives for families to stay together. We reestablish one simple rule, parents should take care of their children first. Accordingly, we track down and punish deadbeat fathers and mothers. Third, we change the culture of welfare. This is a culture that has