

I did not hear a lot of what the majority leader has indicated is his position with regard to the chemical weapons treaty. He knows of the great concern on our side of the aisle about achieving a process that will allow us consideration of that treaty no later than the 19th of April so that, by the 29th of April, that treaty can be ratified and that we can be full-fledged members of the Chemical Weapons Convention. If we miss that small window, from April 7 to April 19, we will have lost the opportunity, that 125 other countries have already taken, that we have sought for decades to have an international agreement on chemical weapons. Our failure to become part of the convention will put us in the company of Iraq, Iran, Libya, and countries that in every way, shape, and form and by any definition are rogue states today. Do we want to be in that position?

I would think there would be an unequivocal, unanimous verdict that, no, we do not want to be in the company of Libya, Iraq, and Iran. But we are in a position which, in a very short period of time, will force us into that company if we do nothing. That is why my Democratic colleagues feel so strongly about this issue and believe that there are very few other issues out there more important, and if we do not turn up the pressure and find ways in which to assert our determination to get this convention considered, we will have lost an opportunity, not only for the Senate, for the country, but perhaps for the convention itself. This is why it is so critical.

Having said all of that, and I could say a lot more but in the interests of time, let me say I believe the majority leader is doing as much as he can at this point to bring us to a set of circumstances that will allow us consideration in due time. I believe there is a great deal of difference within the Republican caucus on this issue. I understand that. There are many issues that divide the Democratic caucus. So it is not out of the ordinary to be divided on an issue of this importance and controversy. But I do believe that the majority leader has given me adequate reason to be confident that we will take this treaty up in a time that will accommodate ratification on the Senate floor prior to the 19th of April.

So, given all of his cooperation and his willingness to work with us, I think the most important thing for us to do today is to pass this compromise to allow us to work with Mexico to deal with the drug issue in a meaningful way without slapping them in the face. So I hope, as the Senator from California has so articulately pointed out just a moment ago, that we recognize how important this opportunity is for all of us, that we seize the moment, that we get an agreement, and we move forward.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREE- MENT—HOUSE JOINT RESOLU- TION 58

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now turn to the consideration of Calendar No. 29, House Joint Resolution 58, regarding the certification of the President with respect to Mexico, that there be no time restraints for debate on the resolution and an amendment. Further, I ask unanimous consent that there be only one amendment in order to be offered by Senators COVERDELL and FEINSTEIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. BINGAMAN. Madam President, without objecting, I would like to ask a question of the majority leader before proceeding or determining whether to object.

As the majority leader and the Democratic leader both know, I have been very concerned that we get some agreements or understanding about how the Chemical Weapons Convention is to be handled in April. We have a deadline coming at us. I think the convention, as I understand it, goes into effect on the 29th of April. We have to, if the United States is to participate, if the judgment of the Senate is we should participate in that, we would have to make that judgment several days before that. At least that is what I have been informed.

I am just concerned that time is running out. We seem to be taking one legislative or executive matter up after another here without really having an understanding about how we are going to dispose of this Chemical Weapons Convention.

I wondered if the majority leader could assure me about how this is going to be brought to the Senate and dealt with in the coming month?

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, if the Senator from New Mexico will yield. First, I would like to just briefly clarify what we have in this consent request. It is to bring up this certification issue and to allow an amendment that would put in place the agreement that was entered into last night by a bipartisan group of Senators and the administration.

So this just basically sets up a process to begin the debate and get a vote on the agreement with regard to certification, with the understanding it does set out some markers as to what we think should be done, and it does require the President to report by September 1 as to the progress that is being made there. But it does not have a subsequent date where a vote could occur. This is going to be the vote on

certification, or decertification, depending on your point of view. So I want to clarify what I was asking for there.

With regard to the inquiry of the Senator from New Mexico, first of all, let me assure him I understand there is concern about the April 29 date and the need for some action before that date by a number of Senators.

There is disagreement on how essential it is we act before the 29th. As a matter of fact, whenever the United States should ratify such a treaty, certainly we would be sort of the big kid on the block and we would be involved in the process. But there are arguments on the other side of it, and I certainly understand that.

I acknowledged to the Senator from Michigan, I believe it was yesterday or the day before, that I also understand that in order to get a treaty completed and the subsequent actions that go along with it, enacting or enabling legislation—

Mr. DASCHLE. Reform.

Mr. LOTT. Reform legislation—it takes some time after the actual vote.

So it is my intent for this issue to come up when we come back after the Easter recess.

There is a statute or bill that has been introduced that we hope to get up and get a vote on. Very serious. I think good efforts are underway to deal with the parallel issues of U.N. reform. The administration is working with a bipartisan group of House and Senate Members. I think everybody is beginning to understand, themselves, and we may be able to get some reforms and some process on how we deal with what is the number we may be indebted to the United Nations for and how that ever would be addressed.

We are also working with the chairman of the committee, Senator HELMS, and Senator BIDEN, the ranking member, on this reorganization of the State Department issue. The new Secretary of State has indicated some encouraging things there, and I believe there is going to be good faith by all to try to address this issue.

There are some legitimate concerns about the treaty—the verification question, search and seizure questions, how it affects different things in America. On some of those, the administration this year came back and said, "You're right. We have some concerns about this issue."

So a number of them have been worked out. An equal number are within the range of being worked out. Again, Senator BIDEN has been working with Senator HELMS to address some of those concerns.

There are some we just will not be able to get worked out. I mean, we will have to have votes on amendments on the floor or there will probably be a substitute. But my intention is to continue to work with all involved, including the chairman and ranking member, to get this issue to the floor in April. That is why I had our list of items. It is not my intent to stonewall or delay this.

I understand that every time we go out or every time a bill comes up, the Senator from New Mexico will be up here raising questions and maybe even objections. We have other things we need to do that are equally or more important. So it is not my intention at all to allow this thing to go on indefinitely.

But you do understand, as the majority leader, you work with the chairman, you help the chairman, and the chairman helps you, and you work with the ranking member. This is a place of great comity, and we want to keep that. I am trying to honor that as a majority leader who is, you know, sort of learning as I go along, making a few mistakes here and there, but getting some things done on the way, too. So I think you know from what we have been able to do over the last 8 months, I work steadily at these things, and at some point we are going to get to vote on this. I do not mean to say in the great wild blue wonder. We are working very aggressively, and I believe we are going to get a process to get it dealt with in April.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Madam President, let me just respond by saying I appreciate the statements by the majority leader. I have observed the majority leader here for several months, and I have great confidence that when he expects and intends for a particular matter to come to the Senate floor and be dealt with, that that will actually occur, and I am encouraged by his statements to that affect. On that basis, I will not object to this particular unanimous-consent request.

I will plan to renew my concern once we return from this recess if it is not clear at that time that we have all parties in agreement as to the timing to bring that convention to the floor. I think timing is essential.

I have no problem with amendments and changes. I am not trying to dictate the end result on what the Senate does, but I think it is very important that we vote on it in a timely fashion. I take the statement by the majority leader to be a statement that he intends and expects that we will work assiduously to bring that about. I thank the majority leader.

I do not object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection to the request?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, I thank the Democratic leader and the Senators on both sides for the work that has been done on this. I believe now we will have a good discussion about what is or is not going on with regard to the drug battle that we are fighting, with the American Government and the Mexican Government being involved.

Madam President, I believe we are able now to get a time agreement, which I think would be very helpful to all Senators to know that we are going to proceed and there will be a time specified so we can have a vote by 4 o'clock, hopefully. I discussed this with

the Democratic leader and other Senators. I believe we have a reasonable agreement here.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now turn to the consideration of Calendar No. 29, House Joint Resolution 58, regarding the certification of the President with respect to Mexico and there be 4 hours 45 minutes total for debate on the resolution and an amendment, to be divided as follows: Senator COVERDELL in control of 1 hour, Senator FEINSTEIN in control of 1 hour, 1 hour under the control of the majority leader and 1 hour under the control of the Democratic leader, Senator GRASSLEY in control of 30 minutes, and Senator TORRICELLI in control of 15 minutes.

I further ask unanimous consent that there be one amendment in order to be offered by Senators COVERDELL and FEINSTEIN. I further ask unanimous consent that no other amendments or motions be in order, and following the conclusion or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to a vote on the amendment, to be followed by third reading and final passage of House Joint Resolution 58 without further action or debate.

Mr. DASCHLE. Reserving the right to object, I ask unanimous consent that in addition to this request, which I fully support, that the request be amended to accommodate a need by the senior Senator from West Virginia, Senator BYRD, to speak for 30 minutes on another matter. I ask unanimous consent that following the vote, the Senator from West Virginia be recognized for 30 minutes.

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, I amend my unanimous-consent request to include that additional 30 minutes for the Senator from West Virginia after the vote.

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

Mr. LOTT. Again, Madam President, I thank Senator DASCHLE for his cooperation.

PROVIDING FOR THE CONDITIONAL ADJOURNMENT OR RECESS OF THE TWO HOUSES

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, I send an adjournment resolution to the desk calling for adjournment of the Congress for the Easter holiday.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 14) providing for a conditional adjournment or recess of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the concurrent resolution.

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 14) was agreed to as follows:

S. CON. RES. 14

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That when the Senate recesses or adjourns at the close of busi-

ness on Thursday, March 20, 1997, Friday, March 21, 1997, or Saturday, March 22, 1997, pursuant to a motion made by the Majority Leader or his designee in accordance with the resolution, it stand recessed or adjourned until noon on Monday, April 7, 1997, or until such time on that day as may be specified by the Majority Leader or his designee in the motion to recess or adjourn, or until noon on the second day after Members are notified to reassemble pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first; and that when the House adjourns on the legislative day of Thursday, March 20, 1997, Friday, March 21, 1997, or Saturday, March 22, 1997, it stand adjourned until 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 8, 1997, or until noon on the second day after Members are notified to reassemble pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first.

SEC. 2. The Majority Leader of the Senate and the Speaker of the House, acting jointly after consultation with the Minority Leader of the Senate and the Minority Leader of the House, shall notify the Members of the Senate and House, respectively, to reassemble whenever, in their opinion, the public interest shall warrant it.

DISAPPROVAL OF THE CERTIFICATION OF THE PRESIDENT REGARDING MEXICO

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The joint resolution (H.J. Res. 58) disapproving the certification of the President under section 490(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 regarding foreign assistance for Mexico during fiscal year 1997.

The Senate proceeded to consider the joint resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. Madam President, first, let me thank the majority leader, the minority leader, and all of those Senators who have been engaged this morning in our efforts to move House Joint Resolution 58. Needless to say, I am very pleased that we have been able to come to this unanimous consent to consider this resolution of paramount importance as it relates to the drug cartels and the impact they are having on our country, on Mexico, and in all countries within our hemisphere.

Madam President, I will read from a statement by Thomas A. Constantine, Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration, which was given before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on March 12, 1997. I am giving this statement as a prelude to my remarks to frame the scope of the issue to which this resolution confronts.

Many phrases have been used to describe the complex and sophisticated international drug trafficking groups operating out of Colombia and Mexico, and frankly, the somewhat respectable titles of "cartel" or "federation" mask the true identity of these vicious, destructive entities. The Cali organization, and the four largest drug trafficking organizations in Mexico—operating out of Juarez, Tijuana, Sonora and the Gulf region—are simply organized crime groups whose leaders are not in Brooklyn or Queens, but are safely ensconced on foreign soil. They are not legitimate businessmen as the