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Senate

The Senate met at 10 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:

Almighty God, a very present help in trouble, remind us of all the times You have helped us in our needs. We are quick to cry out for help but often slow to remember the countless times You have intervened to strengthen us.

Thank You for the new confidence that stirs in our hearts today. We collect and then commit to You all of our personal concerns, the challenges we face in government, the troublesome people who sometimes make life difficult, and our friends and loved ones who are presently confronted with adversity.

Especially, Lord, we remember the people in Grand Forks, ND, as they face the difficulties of the flood of the Red River, and we ask for Your blessing and guidance for Senators BYRON DORGAN and KENT CONRAD as they care for their people and give leadership in this emergency.

For Your glory, dear God, resolve problems, give guidance, provide strength.

Today, we also are aware that there are some problems You will not solve until we are ready to be used by You in working out the solutions. Sometimes You wait until we are ready to be a part of the answer You want to give. Show us what You want us to do today. We will leave the results to You. "You are great, and do wondrous things; You alone are God."—Psalm 86:10. Amen.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

Mr. LOTT. I thank the Chair.

SCHEDULE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, this morning, the Senate will begin consideration of the Chemical Weapons Convention Treaty. Under the previous order, there will be 10 hours of debate to be equally divided between the chairman and the ranking member or their designees and 1 hour under the control of Senator LEAHY. Also, in accordance with the agreement, a limited number of amendments are in order to the resolution of ratification.

The Senate will recess at 12:30 p.m. until the hour of 2:15 to allow for the weekly policy meetings, and when the Senate reconvenes, we will resume consideration of the treaty. I hope that perhaps we could get an agreement to have one of the votes occur later on this afternoon. I believe there may have been some discussions on that. If not, we will have the votes on motions to strike, if any. There, I believe, were five agreed to in our unanimous-consent agreement, and, of course, we are anticipating that the final vote will occur sometime tomorrow night, I assume between 5, 6 and 8 o'clock. And, of course, as always, we will notify Senators of anticipated rollcall votes as early as possible. But there would not be one, if any, today until late in the day. There will be a number of votes throughout the day on Thursday, and I urge Senators to be prepared to answer the votes quickly so that we can get through the five motions to strike that may be offered under the agreement and to final passage at a reasonable hour tomorrow.

Also, unless there were a lot of yielding back of time, I do not anticipate that we could finish even in the early afternoon or late afternoon on Thursday. I think it clearly is going to go into the evening.

With that, Mr. President, I would be glad to yield the floor.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, will the majority leader yield?

Mr. LOTT. I will withhold yielding the floor and yield to the Senator from Delaware.

Mr. BIDEN. Before the clock starts to toll here on the 10 hours, I understand the distinguished chairman of the committee is running just a little bit late, and he asked whether or not it would be permissible to have a 10-minute quorum call; is that correct?

Mr. KYL. He is willing to go ahead if you would like.

Mr. BIDEN. I would like to just wait and give the chairman the opportunity to make his statement.

Mr. LOTT. We will put in a quorum then until the chairman is here and ready to resume the discussions. I know they are going to be very interesting.

The Senator from Delaware is not going to go through that whole book, is he?

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I say to the distinguished leader, depending on how many votes we have, I may go through only a very small portion of it.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ALLARD). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

We have a number of items that need to be read, under the previous order.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

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



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MEASURE PLACED ON THE CAL-
ENDAR—TREATY DOCUMENT 103-
21

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Foreign Relations Committee is discharged from further consideration of Treaty Document No. 103-21, the Chemical Weapons Convention, which shall be placed on the Executive Calendar.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now go into executive session and proceed to the consideration of Treaty Document No. 103-21, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Treaty Document No. 103-21, the convention on the prohibition of development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons and on their destruction.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the convention shall be advanced through its various parliamentary stages, up to and including the presentation of the resolution of ratification.

Mr. HELMS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, the distinguished Senator from Arizona has a unanimous-consent request, but I want him to withhold it until Senator BIDEN can be here and have an opportunity to object, if he desires.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Mr. Chairman, I have a couple of other previous orders I can read.

Mr. HELMS. Very well.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Committee on Foreign Relations shall be discharged of consideration of Senate Resolution 75, and this resolution be substituted for the resolution of ratification.

Under the previous order, there will be 10 hours for debate, equally divided between the chairman and ranking member or their designees, and 1 hour under the control of the Senator from Vermont, Mr. LEAHY.

Mr. HELMS. I yield to the distinguished Senator from Arizona.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent Jeanine Esperne, John Rood, and David Stephens be granted the privilege of the floor for the duration of the day.

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

The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, as the Senate begins final consideration of the Chemical Weapons Convention, the immortal words of Yogi Berra come to mind. Everybody remembers them. "It's déjà vu, all over again."

If anyone is wondering why JESSE HELMS, Senator from North Carolina,

is quoting a New York Yankee, it is because I always liked Yogi. And we have been here before, meaning the Senate. The point being that the Senate scheduled a time certain last September to take up this very same treaty. But, on the day of the scheduled vote, the White House asked to withdraw the treaty. Why? Well, because there were not 67 votes necessary to pass it.

The White House stonewalled and refused to address the key concerns raised by Senators about the treaty, concerns relating to its universality, its verifiability, and crushing effect on business because they had opposed even the most reasonable modifications proposed by this Senator and many others. That is why the treaty was withdrawn last year. So, here we go again, with most of those critical concerns remaining in the treaty: The Chemical Weapons Convention certainly is not global, it is not verifiable, and it will not work. Even its proponents admit it cannot effectively prevent the spread of chemical weaponry.

Time and time again, the administration has portrayed this agreement as one that will provide for a global ban on chemical weapons. I recently read a poll showing that 84 percent of the American people believed that this body should ratify a treaty which would "ban the production, possession, transfer and use of poison gas worldwide." That was the question asked in the poll. I quoted it verbatim. If this treaty accomplished such a ban, I would be the first Senator on this floor, along with Senator KYL, urging its approval. Had the pollster called me at home, I—if I knew nothing about the treaty, as most Americans do not—I probably would have been among the 84 percent.

In any event, more than 8 years ago, at the confirmation hearing of Jim Baker to be Secretary of State, I noted President Bush's statement that he wanted to be able to tell his grandchildren that he, "was able to ban chemical and biological weapons from the face of the Earth." Quote, unquote, George Bush. I remarked at that hearing that I, too, would like to be able to tell my grandchildren that I helped the President and the Secretary of State attain such a goal. And that statement that I made then is just as true today as it was on the day that I made it. But I cannot and will not sign off on a multilateral treaty that accomplishes none—n-o-n-e—none of the goals it purports to address.

I have, on 5 January first days of the Senate, stood right over there by the dais, raised my right hand, and pledged to support and defend our country and its Constitution. I have presided over many hearings dedicated to the careful examination of this treaty. Earlier this month, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee heard testimony by and from four former U.S. Defense Secretaries—Dick Cheney, Cap Weinberger, Jim Schlesinger, Don Rumsfeld, all four urging the Senate not—not to

ratify this dangerously defective treaty.

These distinguished Americans are by no means alone. More than 50 generals and admirals and senior officials from previous administrations have joined them in opposing this chemical weapons treaty—convention—call it what you will. And why have all these great Americans urged that the Senate reject this treaty? I will tell you why. Their case can be summarized this simply: It is not global, it is not verifiable, and it will not work. No supporter of this treaty can tell us with a straight face how this treaty will actually accomplish the goals that they have advertised so profusely for it.

The best argument they have mustered to date is, as I understand it, "Oh, yes, it is defective, but it is better than nothing," they say. Or they tell us that "It creates an international norm against the production of these weapons." But, in fact, this treaty is worse than nothing.

But, in fact, Mr. President, this treaty is worse than nothing, for this treaty gives the American people a false sense of security that something is being done in Washington, DC, to reduce the dangers of chemical weaponry when, in fact, nothing is being done with or by this treaty. If anything, this treaty puts the American people at greater risk.

That is why the administration wants to avoid at all costs a real debate on the merits of this treaty. They know that they cannot defend it. They say it is better than nothing. No, it is not. So they have resorted to a number of assertions that simply do not hold up under scrutiny. They have put forward, for example, the "America as a rogue state" argument. They have said it over and over again. "Rogue state, rogue state."

They say if we don't ratify the CWC, we will be left "in the company of pariah nations, like Iraq and North Korea," who have refused to join. And then they have hit us with, "Well, everybody's doing it. It is going to go into effect anyhow," they say, and have said over and over again, "with or without the United States, so we might as well go with the flow and sign up."

Sorry, Mr. President—and I mean the distinguished Senator who is presiding, Mr. President, and I mean the President down on Pennsylvania Avenue as well—sorry, Mr. President, the oath that I have taken five times standing right over there forbids my taking part in such sophistry.

Anyhow, since when did America start letting Belgium and Luxembourg and France and Bangladesh dictate our national security policy? The Senate should decide whether or not to approve this treaty on the basis of whether it is in the national interest of the United States and the American people, not to respond to diplomatic momentum of the moment. Frankly, I take offense at the argument that this administration is making widely and