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Senate

(Legislative day of Friday, September 22, 2000)

The Senate met at 5 p.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

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

Dear God, the very time of the day of this opening of the Senate puts an exclamation point to our prayer for Your help in the negotiations between the Congress and the President. As nature abhors a vacuum, You deplore deadlocks that debilitate progress. We know that when we seek Your problem-solving power, there are no unresolvable differences. Nothing is impossible with You. And yet You have ordained that we must ask for Your intervention. Then mysteriously You work in the minds and hearts of all in-

volved to discover solutions and compromises that will bring resolution to the conflicts of wills as well as differences about what is best for our Nation.

We humbly confess our need for You, Lord. Times like these put intensity and intentionality into our motto, "In God We Trust." We do trust in You, Lord. Give all involved in this present conflict the desire to set aside political advantages. You have promised that if we pray with complete trust, You will accomplish what seems to be humanly impossible. Thank You for hearing our prayer. You are our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JEFF SESSIONS, a Senator from the State of Alabama, 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Senator SESSIONS is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. SESSIONS. On behalf of the majority leader, I note that today the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 7 p.m., with Senators DOMENICI and REID in control of the time. A vote on a continuing resolution

NOTICE—OCTOBER 23, 2000

A final issue of the Congressional Record for the 106th Congress, 2d Session, will be published on November 29, 2000, in order to permit Members to revise and extend their remarks.

All material for insertion must be signed by the Member and delivered to the respective offices of the Official Reporters of Debates (Room HT-60 or S-123 of the Capitol), Monday through Friday, between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. through November 28. The final issue will be dated November 29, 2000, and will be delivered on Friday, December 1, 2000.

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By order of the Joint Committee on Printing.

WILLIAM M. THOMAS, *Chairman*.

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



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that funds the Government until tomorrow morning will occur at 7 p.m. Senators should be aware that votes on continuing resolutions are expected each day. Senators should also be aware that multiple votes could occur each day starting tomorrow. Negotiations are ongoing, and it is still hoped that agreements can be made to wrap up the 106th Congress prior to the elections.

I thank my colleagues for their attention.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if I could ask a question of the acting majority leader.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. I thank the Chair. I am wondering if the Senator from Alabama would check with the majority leader to give us some idea of when he is planning to come in tomorrow; he is planning multiple votes. Numerous people have been calling and asking about that today.

Mr. SESSIONS. What I understand is this, that the majority leader has made this proposal to the Democratic leader which has not been accepted as of yet; that he would ask unanimous consent we stand in recess when we complete our business today until 5 p.m. Tuesday, and that the time between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. be a period for morning business with the time equally divided, and that at 7 p.m. the Senate proceed to consider the 1-day continuing resolution and a vote occur immediately on the resolution when it is received from the House without amendments, debate, or motions in order. That will be the proposal at this point, as I understand it. But I am sure the majority leader would be open to improvements.

Mr. REID. Well, I say to my friend, I guess the good news is that ultimately there will have to be an end to the 106th Congress because the calendar is going to run out eventually. I hope we will see fit to maybe wrap up the work we have.

As you know, there has been tremendous work on Labor-HHS during the past 24 hours. Early this morning we thought we had an agreement worked out. As you know, my counterpart in the House on the Republican side, I understand, threw what we refer to as a monkey wrench into the proposed workout of the Labor-HHS bill which now, it is my understanding, is in further negotiations.

Time is really working very fast against us. As you know, we have sent a number of bills to the President. He is going to have to make a decision on those bills, whether he is going to veto them or sign them.

I know the majority leader is aware of all the problems that this Congress faces, but I hope that we exert any influence any of us have to try to work out this Labor-HHS bill. I think if that were worked out, we could probably resolve the other issues, or at least I hope so. There are a few other issues such as assisted suicide and immigra-

tion that would still be outstanding, but hopefully we could resolve those if we got this big final spending bill done.

Mr. SESSIONS. I am sure the majority leader would work toward that end. I know it has been his goal since this Congress began to move the appropriations bills to not find us at this point. Frankly, I am sympathetic with the fact that he has tried to do that and has been frustrated time and again. I think some people wanted us to end up in this very position, and they got their wish. And as far as I am concerned, we can stay here until January 1 or December 31 to do our business. Wiser people will decide that.

Mr. REID. You don't mind if we take at least a day or two for Thanksgiving and Christmas, do you?

Mr. SESSIONS. I do prefer to take off Christmas. But we have a high duty to do our work and do it right.

I thank the Senator for his comments, and I note that he desires, and I do, that we reach an accord.

I yield the floor and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SESSIONS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, it is my understanding that we are in a period of morning business and that the time used by the Senator from Alabama and the Senator from Nevada will be deducted from the 2 hours that are evenly divided for morning business, that the Democrats have the first half and the Republicans have the second half. Is that accurate?

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

SOCIAL SECURITY SCHEME

Mr. REID. Mr. President, what I would like to do for a few minutes is talk about the Governor of Texas and his plan regarding Social Security. I will not go into a lot of detail other than to say that the actuaries that are cited show that his plan is impossible because he is promising the same trillion dollars to two different groups, and in effect, the plan, just in a few short years, would bankrupt the country and we would have staggering deficits again.

So that those within the sound of my voice do not think that these statements that I am making are coming from the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee or the Democratic National Committee, let me read a number of quotes.

First of all, from Ron Gebhardtsbauer, who is Senior Pension

Fellow at the American Academy of Actuaries, who said:

"I don't see any way they pay off the public debt." And given Bush's large package of tax cuts, "in 2015 the budget will go negative. There won't be a surplus anymore."

Paul Krugman, economist and columnist for the New York Times stated on October 29:

George W. Bush's proposal, admittedly, does not count on the stupidity of markets. Instead, he trusts the people: voters are not supposed to notice that the same pool of money is promised to two different groups of people.

Secretary of Treasury Lawrence Summers, who, by the way, is not only Secretary of Treasury and a brilliant academic but is also a fiduciary with the Social Security trust fund and has an obligation in that regard also, here is what he says:

Now, there is of course, a Social Security surplus of approximately \$2 trillion over the next 10 years. That surplus is currently earmarked to pay the guaranteed benefits for the baby boom generation when it retires. If that surplus is diverted to new accounts, then the resources will not be there to pay the guaranteed benefits when the baby boom generation retires.

Robert Ball, former Commissioner of the Social Security Administration, said on October 27, just a few days ago:

I've looked over Governor Bush's plan. He takes one trillion dollars out of Social Security for savings accounts. But Social Security is counting on that money to pay benefits. His plan simply doesn't add up and would undermine Social Security.

Henry J. Aaron and Alan Blinder, Century Foundation Study of Governor Bush's Social Security proposal, Washington Post, August 24:

In a recent report, we showed that Social Security retirement benefits would have to be cut as much as 54 percent to restore balance under a Bush-style privatization plan.

In an editorial in the New York Times yesterday:

The governor's scheme would siphon money out of Social Security at the very moment when both seniors and younger taxpayers want to see long-term fixes to ensure its solvency.

Mr. President, the fact is that Governor Bush's plan ruins Social Security and ruins our economy. That is not a very good duo, as far as I am concerned, when you take into consideration that Social Security is the most successful social program in the history of the world.

We need to make sure that we do what we can to strengthen the program. Governor Bush's program weakens the program.

MEANINGFUL LEGISLATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I find myself in amazement when I hear the Republican's spin that the Democrats played partisan politics in this Congress.

The truth is, we have repeatedly asked for the Republican leadership to work with us so we could have meaningful legislative accomplishments for