

them. I am not saying let's take action against them for precipitous reasons or reasons that are not well thought out. I am saying we must respond to these continued reports from the Rumsfeld Commission, from the Cox Commission, from our biennial intelligence assessments, from these reports from our own envoys coming back saying the Chinese are basically telling us to get lost. We know what they are doing, and they are apparently not even denying it anymore. And we are going to approve PNTR without even taking up this issue?

We are trying to get a vote on this bill. So far we have been unable to do so. I ask my colleagues to seriously consider what kind of signal we are going to be sending. We talk a lot about signals around here. I ask what kind of signal we are going to be sending to the Chinese Government, to our allies, to the rest of the world, if we are not willing to take steps to defend ourselves? A great country that is unwilling to defend itself will not be a great country forever.

I yield the floor.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mr. GORTON. Madam President, in less than 10 minutes, under the previous order, the Senate will move on to another subject. We have completed opening statements on the Interior appropriations bill. The two Senators from Minnesota have offered an amendment, and we have had notice of several others.

This is simply to announce to my colleagues that sometime tomorrow—I hope relatively early tomorrow—we trust we will be in a position to make a unanimous consent request stating that there is a deadline for the filing of amendments. I do believe we will be able to begin to discuss actual amendments fairly promptly tomorrow morning, but as the majority leader said, in the evenings from now on, we will move to the Defense authorization bill. So Members who wish their amendments to be considered should notify both managers as promptly as possible, should file those amendments as promptly as possible, and should begin to arrange with the managers for times relatively convenient to all concerned to bring them up.

The majority leader would like to finish this bill tomorrow. I must say that I join him fervently in that wish, a wish that is not, however, a prediction. Nonetheless, a great deal remains to be done this week. The more promptly Members can come to the floor with their amendments and see whether or not we can deal with them informally or whether they will require a vote the better off all Members of the Senate will be. It is doubtful we will get anything more accomplished be-

tween now and 3:30, however. So at this point I will suggest the absence of a quorum and will ask that it be called off at 3:30 so we can move to the next matter of business. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. DASCHLE. Madam President, I will use my leader time to make a couple of comments.

SENATE AGENDA

Mr. DASCHLE. Madam President, I welcome everyone back from our week away for the Fourth of July recess. I did not have an opportunity to talk this morning with the majority leader, and I understand he was able to come to the floor and indicate there is a lot of work to be done, and I share his view about the extent to which work should be done.

I hope we can work as productively this coming work period as we worked in the last work period. We had an arrangement that I think worked very well following an unfortunate confrontation prior to the time we went away for the Memorial Day recess. The cooperation and partnership that was demonstrated over this last work period is one that I hope we can model again.

I say that because I am concerned about the precarious way with which we are starting this week. Senator LOTT has filed a cloture motion on the motion to proceed to the estate tax, and then it is my understanding his intention is to file a cloture motion on the bill itself. I remind my colleagues that is exactly what got us into the position we were in prior to the Memorial Day recess. I hope we can work through that.

I have offered Senator LOTT a limit on the number of amendments to the estate tax bill and a time limit on the amendment. I am very disappointed that we are not able to do what we have been able to do on so many bills, and that is reach some sort of accommodation for both sides. We still have some time this week, and I am hopeful that will happen.

Let me also say that I am increasingly not only concerned but alarmed that we have yet to schedule a date certain for the consideration of permanent normal trade relations with China. I had a clear understanding we would take up the bill this month. Yet I am told now that at a Republican staff meeting today there was a good deal of discussion about the need to move it to September.

I inform my colleagues that we will ask unanimous consent to take up PNTR. If that fails, at some point this

week, we will actually make a motion to proceed to PNTR by a time certain this month. We cannot fail to act on that issue any longer. We must act. So we will make that motion to proceed to PNTR if the majority leader chooses not to make the motion for whatever reason.

I will also say that, as he has indicated, there is a good deal of business left undone that, for whatever reason, has been blocked by some of our colleagues on the other side. We will want to address those issues as well.

We will offer a motion to proceed to the Patients' Bill of Rights. We will certainly want to do that, as well as prescription drugs, minimum wage, and a number of issues relating to common sense gun legislation, such as closing the so-called gun show loophole and dealing with the incremental approaches to gun safety that the Senate supported as part of the juvenile justice bill.

I will say, we will also want to move to proceed to the H-1B legislation that passed in the House overwhelmingly. We want to be able to offer amendments. We would like to take it up. It should happen this week; if not this week, next week. But we ought to take up H-1B as well.

You could call this week the "Trillion Dollar Week," the Trillion Dollar Week because our Republican colleagues are choosing to ignore all of the legislation I have just noted, given the limited time we have, and instead commit this country to \$1 trillion in two tax cuts relating, first, to the marriage penalty, which we are told by CBO would cost a little over \$250 billion over a 10-year period of time; and the estate tax repeal, which, over a fully implemented 10-year period, costs \$750 billion.

That is \$1 trillion dealing with just two issues: the estate tax and the marriage penalty. It does not even go to the array of other tax-related questions that some of our Republican colleagues have addressed in the past. We could be up into \$3 or \$4 trillion worth of tax cuts if all of the tax proposals made by our Republican colleagues were enacted. But we may want to call this the "Trillion Dollar Week" if our Republican colleagues have their way: \$750 billion on the estate tax; \$250 billion on the marriage tax penalty—and, I will say, \$1 trillion, with very limited debate, with no real opportunity to offer amendments, with no real suggestion about whether or not we ought to have at least the right to offer alternatives to spending that much money.

The Democrats believe very strongly in the need to ensure that small businesses and farms are protected and that the ability is provided to transfer small businesses and farms. But we can do that for a lot less than \$750 billion. We believe very strongly in the importance of the elimination of the marriage tax penalty. But we do not have to spend \$250 billion to deal with it.

In fact, the regular order right now is the marriage tax penalty. We have offered a limit on amendments, a limit on time on those 10 amendments. We could take it up and deal with it this week—or could have last week, last month, the month before. Instead, what our Republicans colleagues are doing—and, I might add, all the time calling for our cooperation—is saying: No, we are not going to do that. We are not going to give you relevant amendments on the marriage penalty. We are going to go to the first reconciliation bill so you can't have amendments. We are going to take up the bill that way. But we still want your cooperation.

Now we are told that we will have an opportunity to vote on cloture because we are given the same mandate, the same ultimatum, when it comes to amendments on estate taxes.

So let me end where I started. I really do hope that we can have as productive a time this coming month as we had last month. I thought it was a good month. But I must say, this is a precarious beginning with this Trillion Dollar Week. It is a precarious beginning when, with all of the people's business the majority leader referred to, we are not actually going to deal with the people's business. We are going to deal with 2 percent of the population affected by the estate tax, and we are going to deal with a marriage penalty bill that goes way beyond repealing the marriage penalty, that actually gives a bonus to some taxpayers, all the time denying Democratic Senators the right to offer amendments on other directions that we might take.

So I look forward to talking and working with the majority leader, and I look forward to a good and rigorous debate about all of the issues having to do with the people's business.

Mr. REID. Would the Senator yield for a question before he yields the floor?

Mr. DASCHLE. I would be happy to yield to the assistant Democratic leader.

Mr. REID. I have listened to the Democratic leader outline what we have not been able to do. I fully support, as does the entire Democratic caucus, what the Senator is trying to accomplish. The one thing the Democratic leader did not mention, though, I say to my leader—there has been a tremendous furor from the Republican side about how they want to help the high-tech community, but the one thing that has not been accomplished is a simple little bill to change the Export Administration Act so our high-tech industry can compete with the rest of the world.

As we speak, we are losing our business position in the world in selling computers. We lead the world in building and selling high-tech computers. That is being taken from us as a result of four or five people on the Republican side who are holding up this most important legislation.

I say to my leader, I hope this is something on which we can also move

forward. We would be willing to debate it for 30 minutes, for an hour. There is all this talk about helping the high-tech industry. In my opinion, the most important thing we could do is to get some attention focused on what has not been done regarding the high-tech industry. H-1B visas, of course, that is important.

On the airplane ride back from Las Vegas, I had the good fortune to read a book the Democratic leader has already read and told me how much he has enjoyed called "The New New Thing." That book indicates how important it is that we have the people to do the work of this scientific nature. We need to change the H-1B. We agree there. But we also need to change our ability to have more exports to improve our balance of trade.

I close by saying, 44 Senators are willing to come in early in the morning, to stay late at night, to give up our weekends, to do whatever is necessary these next 3 weeks to move this legislation the Democratic leader has outlined.

Mr. DASCHLE. The assistant Democratic leader has made a very important point. The list I referred to certainly is not all inclusive. He listed one important omission; that is the export administration bill. In fact, I do not know of anyone who has put more time in trying to get that bill scheduled than the assistant Democratic leader. I thank him publicly for his willingness to try to find a way with which to bring this legislation up.

He is absolutely right. As we consider our huge deficit in our balance of payments, it is the only real black eye we have in an otherwise extraordinary economic record. As we consider that, I cannot think of anything more important than ensuring we stay competitive in the international marketplace today. There is no better way to do that than to address export enhancement legislation, as the assistant Democratic leader has noted.

I also say to the assistant Democratic leader, today, again, the president of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Tom Donohue, has called upon the Senate to act. He has called upon the Senate to act on PNTR immediately. I am sure he would also call upon the Senate to act on the export administration bill.

But there is a growing crescendo of people out there concerned that this is a Senate which has done little, which has blocked the people's business, not enacted it. Prescription drugs, the Patients' Bill of Rights, the minimum wage, effective gun legislation, China PNTR, and H-1B—all of those ought to be done. All of those ought to be done this month. We will have very little time left when we get back after the August recess. So we have to make every day count. We want to work with the majority to make that happen.

With that, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF MADELYN R. CREEDON, OF INDIANA, TO BE DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR FOR DEFENSE PROGRAMS, NATIONAL NUCLEAR SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

Mr. KYL. Madam President, on behalf of the leader, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to executive session for the consideration of Calendar No. 473, the nomination of Madelyn Creedon to be Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs, under the terms of the consent agreement reached June 14.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Madelyn R. Creedon, of Indiana, to be Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs, National Nuclear Security Administration.

Mr. KYL. Madam President, it is my intention in a moment to ask unanimous consent to speak on a different subject. Perhaps Senator LEVIN would like to comment briefly. I know he has a more lengthy statement he would like to make at a later time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan is recognized.

Mr. LEVIN. I thank my good friend from Arizona. I can withhold my statement. It is not that long, but I will be here in any event. I am happy to yield to Senator KYL for his statement on this or any other matter.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

THE DEATH TAX ELIMINATION ACT

Mr. KYL. Madam President, tomorrow the Senate is expected to vote on a motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to the consideration of the House-passed Death Tax Elimination Act, H.R. 8. I want to take a few minutes today to explain a key element of that legislation, one that wasn't discussed much during the House debate but which I think is critical to Senators understanding actually how the legislation works.

The bill which passed the House on June 9 by a vote of 279-136—incidentally, 65 House Democrats joined Republicans in very bipartisan support for the bill—ultimately repeals the Federal estate tax. But the change in policy is really more substantial than just that. The details are very important because they offer a way for both