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Senate

The Senate met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BENJAMIN E. NELSON, a Senator from the State of Nebraska.

PRAYER

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

Almighty God, Sovereign of America, source of our unity, and strength of our lives, we praise You for the privilege of living in this land of freedom and opportunity. On this day of the State of the Union Address by President George W. Bush, we ask for Your continued blessing on him. We thank You for him, his firm faith in You, his courageous leadership in the battle against terrorism, and his commitment to seek what is best for America.

Today, we renew our loyalty to our President as Commander in Chief, our attentiveness to listen to his vision, and our thoughtful reflection on his convictions on issues. Most of all, when he stands before the joint session of Congress and the Nation, may he feel our friendship, esteem, and encouragement. Bless the First Lady, Laura Bush, Vice President CHENEY, the President's Cabinet, and all who work with him in confronting the crises of our world in this turbulent, terrorist-troubled time. Be with the Senators as they affirm their primary commitment to You, their patriotism for America, and their creative debate on the soul-sized issues before our Nation. God, bless America and both Houses of Congress on this important day. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore 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.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, January 29, 2002.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable BENJAMIN E. NELSON, a Senator from the State of Nebraska, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. NELSON thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Nevada is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, as the Presiding Officer indicated, we will be in a period of morning business until 11 o'clock this morning. At 11 a.m. the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 622, the economic stimulus bill, with the Durbin unemployment insurance amendment pending. There will be 30 minutes of debate for that amendment, and at 11:30 we will vote.

The Senate will recess from 12:30 until 2:15 today for weekly party conferences. I advise Members there are some amendments pending. The next two amendments in order will be those

from this side of the aisle. I say to anyone who has any debate they want to have in relation to these amendments or the bill itself, this afternoon would be a good time. The leader has not announced whether there will be more votes this afternoon, but there very likely could be more. As we know, this afternoon we have a number of other things going on here.

Tonight is that time of the year when we will have the President coming from 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue to give his State of the Union Address. We anticipate that with relish. We look forward to that, as well as seeing how we can help him in his battle against terrorism and working to defeat the economic crisis we have at home.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I join with the Senator from Nevada in urging people to come to the floor with amendments. I am pleased we have had the opportunity to present amendments. I think the bill initially was not adequate. We do need to do that, and we are going to have an opportunity. I urge all Members to do that. We need also, of course, to give some thought to our spending. It looks as if it will be a real issue. We will be spending out of control if we are not careful.

I yield the floor.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business not to extend beyond the hour of 11 a.m. with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

RONALD REAGAN BOYHOOD HOME NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Mr. REID. I ask consent the Senate proceed to Calender No. 307, H.R. 400.

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



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The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 400) to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to establish the Ronald Reagan Boyhood Home National Historic Site, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent the bill be read the third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements relating to this matter be printed in the RECORD.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 400) was read the third time and passed.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Utah.

HISTORY STANDARDS IN NEW JERSEY TEXTBOOKS

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, yesterday there was an article in the newspaper that caught my attention. I hope sincerely that the article was incorrect. All Members have had the experience of being quoted in the newspaper and wondering where the reporter got the information that was the basis of the story. I hope that is the case with this article.

It was reported in the State of New Jersey a new set of history standards have been adopted and that textbooks in New Jersey high schools dealing with American history will now fail to mention the names of George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, or Thomas Jefferson. Further, it said the word "war" had been removed from the textbooks and in its place we have the word "conflict," and there would be no discussion of wars.

Mr. President, I hope this is incorrect. It indicates that at least someone in New Jersey is prepared to make that State an isolated island of ignorance about American history. To think we can bring citizens into maturity in this country without their having any understanding of, indeed, no mention of, the names of George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and the other Founding Fathers is absurd.

One of the best-selling books currently in the marketplace is the history of John Adams by David McCullough. On the dust jacket of the book, McCullough says, accurately, we as Americans cannot know too much about our Founding Fathers. We must never forget them. We must always learn as much as we possibly can about them.

I would say to those who are supporting this position in New Jersey schools, how are you going to explain to your students the fact that we take the Fourth of July as a holiday in this country if you are not going to tell them anything about the Revolu-

tionary War? If you cannot even use the word "war," how are you going to explain to these students that the country honors those who founded it and who fought that war; if you can't tell them the name of the commander of the Continental Army and the forces on the American side of that war because you think that name somehow no longer matters?

How are you going to describe what happened on the Fourth of July if you cannot use the name of Thomas Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of Independence, that was proclaimed to the country on that day? How are you going to explain to high school students who decide they are going to enter public service, and take an oath of office, that they are swearing to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States when you will not have been able to describe the Constitutional Convention, the President of which was George Washington, and one of the leading figures in which was Benjamin Franklin, if you have exorcized the names of Washington and Franklin from your textbooks? What meaning does the oath of office have if you cannot explain where the Constitution came from or describe the convention that created it?

How are you going to describe some of the major problems that have existed in this country stemming from the great battle that was the Civil War, that went across five Aprils, and divided this country in a fundamental way that has taken us a century or more to heal?

No, we can't discuss that. We can talk about conflicts, but we will not discuss the leaders of that war. We will not discuss many of the problems of that war because it isn't politically correct to raise those issues anymore.

We have talked about history in this Chamber before. There have been those who have been trying to rewrite our history, trying to change it and shape it and slice it and dice it in ways that become politically correct in today's mode of conversation. You cannot do that and be accurate to the requirement of telling the truth about what really happened.

That is Orwellian. We read the novel by George Orwell, "1984," in which the hero of the novel spent all of his time at his job changing the past. He worked for the Ministry of Truth and his job was to go back and correct the record so as to rob the present society of a true understanding of the past in the name of the state, thus the adjective "Orwellian" entered our language.

What is being proposed in New Jersey is Orwellian. It is stupid and it needs to be condemned.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Minnesota.

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS EXTENSION

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, I rise today to speak on behalf of the amend-

ment offered by my very distinguished colleague, the Senator from Illinois, Mr. DURBIN, regarding unemployment benefits for Americans who are not now receiving them. The legislation offered by Senator DASCHLE has a very important provision to extend unemployment benefits by 13 weeks for the people in this country who are receiving unemployment now and whose benefits are scheduled to run out in the very near future.

We have lost, in this country, almost 2 million jobs since January of a year ago. Yet we have not done what this Congress has done in most previous recessions, certainly the last two or three recessions, which is to extend unemployment benefits. Already in Minnesota, and I am sure in other States, the unemployment benefits are running out for people who lost their jobs earlier in the year. It is just simple decency, it is simple justice, to be offering that extension now.

In fact, as you know, we have tried to do that in this body, for instance, last September, at the time we passed legislation to prevent a bankruptcy in our Nation's airlines. At that time, many of us wanted to increase the unemployment benefits duration and were then not able to do so.

This is something that is long overdue. I commend our majority leader for making that a keystone of his proposal now on economic stimulus. I was delighted to read the President purportedly will be indicating his support for extending unemployment benefits tonight. So I hope this is something we will be able to address on a bipartisan basis.

Additionally, however, reports are that over half of the Americans who are out of work, who have lost their jobs during this last year, are not receiving any unemployment benefits whatsoever. They are not eligible. Even though they were working Americans, even though they have been in the workforce, because they held only part-time jobs, because maybe they held multiple part-time jobs, they are not receiving any unemployment benefits whatsoever. That is over half of the people who are out of work in this country, including my State of Minnesota.

That is a national disgrace. That totally repudiates the kind of safety net that we say we are going to create for people who, through no fault of their own, who through no choice of their own, are thrown into economic hard times, their families into economic despair. They lose their health benefits; they lose their income; they lose their jobs. No wonder people are devastated by that kind of experience.

The amendment of Senator DURBIN very importantly would extend unemployment coverage for those 13 weeks to men and women throughout this country who have just lost their jobs but are now not receiving any unemployment benefits whatsoever. The Durbin amendment would also slightly