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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 and was called to order by the Honorable JON TESTER, a Senator from the State of Montana.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Everlasting Father, enable us to love You with all our hearts, souls, minds, and strength. Give us humility so we can see Your divine image in the people around us and serve You by serving them. Let this love expressed in service transform our Senate, Nation, and world.

Lord, bless our Senators. Make them kind in thought, gentle in speech, generous in actions. Lift their lives from the battle zone of combative words to a caring community of integrity, respect, and civility. Teach them that it is better to give than to receive, that it is better to serve than to be served. Lead them to a humility that speaks great things for others.

We pray in Your precious Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JON TESTER 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 MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this morning the Senate will conduct morning business, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two sides, with the majority controlling the first half hour.

We are working hard to come up with an agreement on how we can dispose of the Biden and Kyl amendments. We were very close to being there several times yesterday, but we are still not there. Once we reach an agreement, Members will be notified of when the votes will occur.

The Senate has received, it is my understanding, the children's health legislation. We are going to begin the process of getting to a point where this matter will be considered and disposed of in the Senate and sent to the President.

Other matters which need to be considered this week are a continuing resolution and debt limit. I have been in contact with my distinguished colleague, the senior Senator from Kentucky, to see how we are going to work our way through this. Members will be apprised of schedule issues throughout the day.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

MOVING FORWARD

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, let me just say I will be working with the majority leader to accomplish the goals he just laid out. I think there is broad bipartisan support for going forward as he suggested.

BURMA

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, there is disheartening news coming out of Burma this morning. Last night, following yet another day of massive peaceful protests demanding political reform in Burma, the repressive Burmese regime imposed a nighttime curfew and banned all public gatherings of more than five people. Despite this bra-

zen effort to muzzle freedom of expression, reports indicate that thousands of Buddhist monks and other protestors courageously defied the prohibition on public assembly and marched again in Rangoon. In response, reports indicate that the security forces of the State Peace and Development Council responded with typical brutality, beating and arresting scores of these brave protestors. It was reported that one person was shot to death and five received gunshot injuries.

Back in 1988, the regime responded to similar peaceful protests by massacring thousands of its own citizens. But the Burmese regime should know that things have changed in the intervening years. Modern technology has permitted photographs of those heroic protestors to be transmitted via the Internet around the entire world. Whereas before the news could be easily muzzled by the junta, today that is no longer the case. The world is watching, and any brutal steps taken in Rangoon are instantly made known in places such as New York, New Delhi, and Beijing. These moving images of heroism have certainly reached us here in Washington, DC.

As I have said before to the regime in Burma, we are watching you. To the people of Burma, we stand with you.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, would the Republican leader yield for a question?

I want to ask a question based on the Senator's statement. First, I commend the Republican leader for his statement on the situation in Burma. It is my understanding now that we anticipate this military junta is likely to engage in repressive tactics against the Buddhist monks and the people of this country. I thank the leader for his statements because I think they validate our mutual concern that first an

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



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election, which came up with a good result, finally be implemented so the people of Burma have a representative government and that those political dissidents—most notably, Nobel Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi—be released from house arrest. She has suffered enough.

I thank the Senator for bringing this up to the floor. I want him to know his sentiments are felt on both sides of the aisle.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if I may just add, my friend from Illinois is absolutely correct. This is a regime which I have been following for a long time, having introduced the first Burma sanctions bill some 4 to 5 years ago.

He is absolutely right. They engaged in this kind of activity back in 1988, killed a significant number of Burmese citizens simply seeking to have an opportunity to express themselves, which they subsequently did in the 1990 election, which Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League for Democracy won overwhelmingly, overwhelmingly, after which she was placed under house arrest and has been there virtually the entire time since then, since 1990. She was under house arrest while her husband passed away in London.

This is a pariah regime. Had they had nuclear weapons, I think the rest of the world would have been a lot more interested in this regime, as we have been, for example, in North Korea and in Iran. But they are now revealing their true colors once again. Technology is much better today than it was back in 1988. They will not be able to engage in these kinds of abuses with no one noticing.

I commend my friend from Illinois for making clear that all of us here in the Senate, regardless of party affiliation, condemn this behavior and look forward to the day when the election of 1990 is finally honored.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business for 60 minutes, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the second half.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, against all odds, the long-suffering people of Burma have risen against one of the world's most repressive regimes. What began a month ago as modest, im-

promptu protests has now mushroomed into a nationwide peaceful democratic groundswell. Tens of thousands of students have joined Buddhist monks in the streets, marching and chanting in unison against Burma's brutal military rulers. I met with some of those rulers a number of years ago when I went to Burma. I also had a chance to meet with Aung San Suu Kyi in her home where she has been under house arrest.

It is an extraordinary division that is growing and growing in Burma, where the military junta, unbelievably unpopular, nevertheless clings to power through the force of the military which it controls. The riches of the country are exclusively being diverted to their spoils, while Burma remains now and increasingly becomes poorer and poorer.

The Burmese people need to know that the courage they are demonstrating today and what they are fighting for is being watched by people all over the world, that we admire what they are attempting to achieve, and that we stand in awe of their commitment, of their courage. Their actions follow in the venerable footsteps of Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Lech Walesa, and all of those heroes who understand that nonviolent resistance is humanity's greatest weapon against tyranny and injustice. We, with all of the tools available to us, need to make certain the people of Burma understand that their courage is breaking through and that this moment is one we share with them.

What is happening today in the streets of Rangoon is, however, as tenuous as it is unexpected. Just this morning, we learned that warning shots were fired and tensions are escalating. I do not know how many people realize it, but the Government of Burma, the junta, moved to its own sort of private capital and has created this almost surreal exiled government where they feel safe, as if living in a bunker within the isolation of Burma itself. Just this morning, we also learned that the cabal of generals that is pillaging Burma under the guise of governing it could easily meet these nonviolent protests with a bloodbath, just as they did in 1988. So it is important that none of us allow the scrutiny on Burma to be diminished. This could conceivably become another Tiananmen Square moment, if it does.

No one should doubt the Burmese junta's potential for brutality and large-scale violence. Since taking power, they have killed tens of thousands of Burmese, and they have razed more villages than have been destroyed in Darfur. Over half a million people have been internally displaced, and an additional 1 million refugees have fled the country. The tyrannical thugs who run the country are engaged in the systematic use of forced labor, human trafficking, forcible recruitment of child soldiers, torture and rape—an appalling laundry list of human rights violations. Yet, despite such grave dan-

ger, the people of Burma have stood strong in the face of this extraordinary evil. They demand Democratic reforms and basic human rights, and they have done so with dignity, and they have done so peacefully.

The United States and the rest of the free world must find more ways to make it clear that we stand with the people of Burma. The President's decision yesterday to target the top general for financial sanctions is a step in the right direction, but it will not solve the problem, and it is not enough.

The massive prodemocracy demonstrations in Burma represent the best opportunity for genuine political change in nearly years. Burma's Saffron Revolution is also an excellent chance for America to finally show greater diplomatic leadership on the world stage.

The United States needs to lead the international community in pressuring the military junta to release all political prisoners, starting with the venerable Nobel Prize laureate and opposition leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, and take steps down the path from there to more thorough political change.

This week's gathering of world leaders at the United Nations General Assembly is ready made. It is a forum waiting to be utilized properly. My hope is that the United Nations will take the necessary steps to make even more clear the world's condemnation but, more importantly, to create real pressure, and that includes pressure from places such as China, which has been playing a clearly duplicitous game because of their deep investments, their proximity, and other occasional similarities in the way in which they have dealt with democracy uprisings. From the halls of the United Nations to the headquarters of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the message to the Burmese military needs to be clear: The world is united behind the people marching in your streets. Do not meet peaceful protest with still more butchering. We are prepared, all of us—and we must make this clear—to act in concert against you unless you immediately embark on serious negotiations toward sharing power with the people of Burma.

Showing diplomatic leadership on Burma also requires that we demand better from those countries that have propped up this brutal regime and are thus the best equipped to help pressure it. India and, in particular, China can make a significant difference in this outcome. The President and the United Nations must engage in strenuous diplomacy with Beijing, which carries the most sway with Burma's generals, and urge the Chinese to press for reform. China has in its grasp a momentous opportunity to demonstrate leadership commensurate with its growing power and status. Beijing can host the 2008 Olympics as an enabler of cruelty and repression or it can do so as a responsible stakeholder in the world community. The Olympics will not