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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable ROBERT P. CASEY, Jr., a Senator from the State of Pennsylvania.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Lord, it has been said that without a vision for our life, we live without purpose. Help us to find in You a vision and a purpose for ethical living.

Move in the lives of our Senators today, giving them the vision and resilience to perform their work for Your glory. Keep them from putting partisanship ahead of country, and help them to resist the temptation to compromise Your plan. Strengthen them to be open to Your spirit and to receive guidance from You today. Make them faithful to their calling and resolute about fulfilling their God-given responsibility to serve others. Give them wisdom to prepare their minds for action, to be self-controlled, and to trust Your power to keep our Nation strong. Lord, may they persevere so that when they have done Your will, they will receive what You have promised.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable ROBERT P. CASEY, Jr., 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 bill clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 15, 2007.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable ROBERT P. CASEY, Jr., a Senator from the State of Pennsylvania, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 90 minutes, with each side controlling 45 minutes. The first 30 minutes will be under Republican control and the next 30 minutes under majority control. The next 30 minutes will be equally divided, so whoever is recognized will be able to speak for up to 10 minutes.

Yesterday, the Senate voted to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed on S.J. Res. 9. Since that time, the Republican leader and I have been discussing a proposed agreement that would allow votes on various proposals. Late yesterday, we received a proposal from Senator WARNER, and I understand Senator BEN NELSON was involved. We have it here now. It has been rewritten during the night, and we will see if we can include it in some agreement we have. If we can do that, we will go ahead with whatever we can work out to vote on today.

I would say—and the distinguished Republican leader knows this—we are going to do everything we can to put the votes over until a specific time so that people aren't coming back and

forth. That is principally for the Budget Committee, which is meeting as we speak to try to finish that bill as quickly as possible so we can work on it next week.

I know Members were counting on the previous announcement of no votes this Friday. We are going to do everything we can to make sure we have no votes, but until we get an agreement on this Iraq issue and on the U.S. attorneys, we will have to have everyone wait until—we should be able to have something even before morning business is closed. If we can work on it prior to morning business closing, we will come, the Republican leader and I, and announce that agreement. We hope we are close.

Again, I thank everyone for their patience, especially the Republican leader. We have tried to be fair to everyone, and sometimes that is difficult to do, as people have so many different opinions as to how we should proceed. I will keep the Members apprised of the schedule based on the outcome of our negotiations.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

PROGRESS ON IRAQ RESOLUTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, we were making great progress toward getting an agreement yesterday afternoon, and then Senator WARNER at the last minute had a proposal he would like us to consider, and that slowed us down a little bit. But we are now reviewing that, and I share the optimism of the majority leader that we may be able to reach a unanimous consent agreement in the very near future that would allow us to wrap up this matter sometime today.

I yield the floor.

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



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