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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable SHERROD BROWN, a Senator from the State of Ohio.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

O God, our rock, fortress, and deliverer, we trust You to strengthen us today.

Empower our Senators with humility to listen, wisdom to understand, courage to attempt, and power to obey. May they devote themselves to the honorable, the noble, and the good. Keep them from self-indulgence, mental lethargy, and negative expectations as You guide their hearts and minds in the knowledge of Your love. Purify their ambitions so that they may set their hearts only on that which pleases You. May they find even in problems opportunities to discover Your power.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable SHERROD BROWN 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 assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, May 1, 2007.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable SHERROD BROWN, a

Senator from the State of Ohio, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

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

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I now ask unanimous consent that when the Senate resumes S. 1082 this morning, it be for debate only until 12:30 p.m., with no amendments in order during that time, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

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 up to 60 minutes, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, with the first half of the time under the control of the Republicans and the second half of the time under the control of the majority.

The Senator from Utah is recognized.

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for up to 15 minutes.

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

PERFORMANCE OF THE MEDIA

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, my theme today has to do with our friends in the media, or the fourth estate as they like to call themselves. There are two items I wish to call to the attention of the Senate and anyone else who might be listening with respect to the performance of the media. The first one is highlighted in an editorial that appeared this morning in the Wall Street Journal entitled "Frist's Vindication."

All of us in this Chamber know Senator FRIST. We know him as a man of integrity, intelligence, and grace. He presided over the Senate as the majority leader for 4 years. He has a long history as a humanitarian, as a scientist, as a skilled doctor who pioneered procedures in the process of heart and lung transplants.

We also know him as the target of media attack for insider trading, and we know groups that are self-anointed as watchdogs of the public consciousness that picked that up and kept the drumbeat alive. Our friends in the media also kept the drumbeat alive saying, over and over again, Dr. Frist was a hypocrite, Dr. Frist engaged in insider trading, Dr. Frist used his position to enrich himself while he was here in the Senate.

Well, the Securities and Exchange Commission was sufficiently aroused by those attacks that they entered into an investigation of Dr. Frist's activities with respect to his stock. That investigation is now closed. I did not realize the investigation was closed because there has been no hue and cry whatsoever in the media. There has been no mention that came to my attention in the media, until I picked up this morning's Wall Street Journal and saw this editorial.

I would like to quote from it. Under the title "Frist's Vindication" and the subhead "So much for that 'insider trading' smear," here is what it says:

When insider-trading allegations against former Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist

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



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surfaced back in 2005, they were splashed on the pages of major newspapers from coast to coast. Now that Dr. Frist has been vindicated, the silence is instructive. Is anybody out there?

It goes on to describe the allegations against Dr. Frist. I shall not repeat them. Basically, it says he used his position in the Senate to get insider information and started selling his stock in HCA in advance of a drop in the stock that occurred because of earnings reports.

The editorial says:

Thanks in part to his meticulous email archives, Dr. Frist was able to show that he had begun the process of selling his HCA stock in April of 2005, months before he was alleged to have received the inside whispers.

It goes on to discuss the groups that attacked him. Again quoting:

For years he was harassed by such liberal lobbies as Public Citizen, and Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, which alleged conflicts of interest. These groups objected even to those stocks he held in the blind trust he had created to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest. Yet when he sold those stocks, with a possible eye on higher office, he was pilloried for doing what the ethicists had asked him to do all along.

The editorial indicates that while this absolution is a relief to Dr. Frist, "it's impossible to undo the damage to his political career. Despite flimsy evidence, the media storm cast a shadow over his office, derailing any thought of a Presidential bid this year. The Nashville heart surgeon chose instead to 'take a sabbatical from public life.'"

A great deal was made out of this. The editorial quotes American University professor James Thurber as saying that Dr. Frist "came in like Jimmy Stewart and was leaving like Martha Stewart." That is a great line. That gets headlines. The press loves things of that kind.

Now that it is clear he behaved in an absolutely ethical way—documented everything he did, turned over all of his e-mails—and has been completely cleared, after 18 months of careful examination by the Securities and Exchange Commission, we hear nothing in the press, we hear nothing in the way of an apology from Public Citizen or Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington. Maybe ethics does not apply to them when it comes to apologizing for smears against legitimate and responsible public servants. Maybe we will now hear that Dr. Thurber has something else to say besides his quick quip about Dr. Frist being the same as Martha Stewart as she went to jail. But I doubt we will hear any of that. I doubt the press will even notice. I doubt there will be a sidebar anywhere.

I am grateful to the Wall Street Journal for pointing this out to us, and I appreciate the opportunity on the floor of the Senate to speak on behalf of a man whom I consider a friend, I think whom all of us consider a responsible Senator, a devoted leader. He deserves better at the hands of the press

and those self-appointed leaders of ethics who are quick to criticize but slow to apologize.

Now, Mr. President, the next issue I would like to raise with respect to the media has to do with the hysteria over America's trade deficit with China. I have some charts I would like to put up to show some historical evidence with respect to this issue.

Let's talk about China and the trade deficit and the rise of China. This chart has two lines on it, one in red, which is American exports to China, and one in blue, which is American imports from China.

Let's go back to 1975, before people were all excited about China and how China was destroying us in the age of globalization, how China's cheap labor was taking all of our jobs, and we were flooded with Chinese imports. We notice on the chart there was a gap between American exports to China and American imports from China. No one felt that gap was ready to threaten and destroy the American economy. No one got excited about it. All right.

You go to 1990, and you find that neither line has moved up very much, but the gap remains virtually the same. Now, the Chinese economy started to take off and we started to buy things from them, and at the same time we started to sell things to them. Both lines started moving up. We saw, yes, imports from China were going up, but exports to China were going up. By 2002, 2003, both were up significantly over where they had been in 1975. But the gap remained roughly the same. All right.

Interestingly enough, as we get toward 2005 and so on, there are moments when the gap disappears, when our sales to China were greater than our imports from China. Why would that be? It would be because the improving Chinese economy now has enough money to buy American goods. They want to buy our airplanes. Boeing does well in China. The last time I was in China, I met with the manager of General Motors in China. General Motors was having a very bad year in the United States, but they were having a good year in China. They were making money in China. They were selling Buicks and other automobiles in China.

The red line started to move up, and, as I say, at one point they actually crossed the blue line. OK, the blue line opened up again, not as great as the gap back in 1975, but it began to open up. Once again, we saw the gap closed. Sales to China reached the same level as purchases from China. And then it opened up again. It appears if we want to project from this period on into the future that the pattern of our importing slightly more from China than we sell to China is likely to continue.

I doubt this historic demonstration of facts comports with the way the media is talking about China. They are telling us China is going to overtake us. They are telling us China is going to destroy us. They are telling us

China is the nation of the future. We have heard in the media statements about the 20th century being the American century; the 21st century is going to be the Chinese century.

Well, let me put up another chart that I think will demonstrate that might be a little bit premature.

Let's look at the size of the two economies. The size of the economy is measured in gross domestic product. The gross domestic product of the United States in 2000 was \$9.8 trillion. The gross domestic product in China in 2000 was \$1.2 trillion. This is the beginning of the Chinese century? The Chinese are starting off pretty far behind in this race if they are going to turn the 21st century into the Chinese century. They are at \$1.2 trillion and we are at \$9.8 trillion. We have sprinted into what the media is calling the Chinese century now for the first 6 years.

Where are we? These statistics are for the first 5 years, the first 5 percent. In that period of time, our annual GDP growth has been 3.2 percent. The Chinese has been 10 percent. Those are the numbers that say they are going to overtake us. Ten percent is clearly better than 3 percent.

I would make this one footnote with respect to the 10 percent. I am a little suspect of these numbers because the Chinese released their annual figures on December 31 of the same year. We don't know our annual figures for months afterwards. Then, when more data comes in, we revise them upward or downward, based on additional information. Somehow they know on New Year's Eve exactly how they have done during the year. If they were a corporation required to report to the SEC, there would be some investigations about the possibility of "cooking the books." I think they make the determination of where they want the number to be and then report it thusly, either too high or too low for whatever their political purposes might be.

So all right, let's take these numbers at their face value. These numbers mean from 2000 to 2005 the Chinese GDP grew from \$1.2 trillion to \$2.2 trillion, a \$1 trillion increase. That is not a slouchy thing to do. That is clearly a tremendously impressive performance—almost doubling a \$1 trillion increase. How about the United States. We are just limping along at 3 percent, 3.2 percent, but we went from \$9.8 trillion to \$12.4 trillion.

In other words, they went up \$1 trillion, and we went up \$3 trillion. How is that possible if they are growing another 10 percent, and we are only growing at 3 percent? It is because they are starting from a very low base. Those who say the 21st century will be the Chinese century and the Americans are through need to pay attention to what the real numbers are.

If we are going to have a game and we start out the game with one team having almost 10 times as many points as the other, and then add on to that on a percentage basis rather than an

absolute basis, we see in terms of the gap between the size of the American GDP and the Chinese GDP the gap is actually widening rather than shrinking. Yes, they can have a higher rate of growth, but their higher rate of growth is on a much lower base. Our growth on a higher base is unprecedented in world history.

My message today is we need to hold the media accountable as well as all of the others. We have had two examples I have highlighted this morning where the media has misled us: the first with respect to one of our respected and beloved colleagues, Dr. Frist, where he was smeared and then when he was vindicated, that fact was ignored. The second has to do with telling us where the world is going. For whatever reasons, there are those who are constantly panicked about China and its impact on the United States who need to pay attention to the reality of the numbers.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

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

IRAQ

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, today is an important yet a sad day for our Nation because it represents the 85th day that our fighting men and women in uniform have been waiting for emergency aid from the Congress. Yet they have been left waiting because of political gamesmanship and political theater in Washington, DC. The latest is reported in the Congressional Quarterly today, an article I have here in my hand—actually the date is April 30, 2007, 10:45 p.m., entitled: “President’s Veto Dependent on House Speaker’s Signature.” The report is that Congresswoman PELOSI wanted time to personally read the emergency supplemental bill and to sign it before sending it to Pennsylvania Avenue. I would have thought that Congresswoman PELOSI and Members of Congress would have read legislation before they voted on it, not afterwards.

Also, in today’s edition of The Hill, there is a story that says:

Congressional leaders today will put an exclamation point on their political showdown with President Bush on Iraq spending, staging a signing event to send their Iraq supplemental bill to the White House.

I don’t think this is Congress’s finest hour, and I think it is an embarrassment that when our troops are waiting on an emergency spending bill to provide them essential equipment, we are staging signing ceremonies and going through political kabuki theater just to demonstrate on the part of some their disagreement on the present strategy in Baghdad and in Iraq. I think it is inappropriate and irresponsible.

I know one of our colleagues here has talked about, for example, the MRAP vehicles, the so-called Mine Resistant Ambush Prevented V-shaped hull vehi-

cles that are awaiting \$3.1 billion in spending in this appropriations bill to get those to the Marines and Army in Iraq, something that has proven, in the hands of the Marines, to be very resistant to the improvised explosive devices. They save lives. That is one example, one concrete example of funding for equipment that is being held up because Congress continues to dither and play political games now 85 days after the President has requested this funding for our troops. The bill that will—after this so-called signing ceremony and after this reading of the bill after it has passed rather than before it was passed exercise—be sent to the President and he will veto it is simply unacceptable. Why? For two reasons.

First of all, because it imposes arbitrary timelines on our generals in Iraq, including GEN David Petraeus, who was confirmed unanimously by the Senate, who was here last week to explain the progress that is being made in places such as Al Anbar Province, west of Iraq, which has been controlled by al-Qaida for some time now, and we are finally starting to see some real, concrete improvements being made there. We are seeing the local sheiks offering troops to supplement Iraqi police officers and the Iraqi Army to fight al-Qaida—the same organization that killed 3,000 Americans on September 11—right in Iraq. That is good news.

We are beginning to see some real security measures going forward. So why we would have Congress tie the hands of General Petraeus and these successful efforts in Al Anbar Province, west of Baghdad, controlled by al-Qaida, and why Congress would want to tie the hands of our military leaders at a time when we are seeing some real improvement there is, frankly, beyond me. Why would we simply give up when we are beginning to see some light at the end of the tunnel?

Then, of course, there is the second matter of providing porkbarrel spending in order to secure the votes of some Members of the House for this bill that they would not support on the merits. It is completely demeaning to our troops and the nobility of their sacrifice, not to mention the sacrifice of the military families who wait anxiously hoping their loved one will return from the fight only to be told that Congress is causing unnecessary delays in this spending—85 days now—putting arbitrary timelines on the troops, making it harder for them to succeed, denying them the equipment necessary for their very safety, while Congress engages in more porkbarrel spending in order to secure a political consensus for this ill-considered piece of legislation.

The bill, on its way to the President after this kabuki theater, substitutes congressional mandates for the considered judgments of our military leaders. This bill assumes and forces the failure of a new strategy, which is only half-way implemented. The new Baghdad

security plan to back up Iraqi forces in Baghdad to implement the clear hold-and-build strategy that GEN David Petraeus is the architect of as part of our counterinsurgency measures is only halfway deployed. Only half of the troops that are a part of this so-called surge are on the ground. While we are seeing some progress, we are also seeing some increased violence and, unfortunately, deaths as a result of meeting the enemy in places where previously they were safe and secure because we could not even go into places such as Sadar City, which was controlled by Moqtada al-Sadr, the radical Shiite cleric who has since left to go to Tehran. He has left the country because he is afraid of the American and Iraqi military forces joining together. He has instructed the Shiite militias, one of the major causes of death squads and violence and ethnic cleansing in Iraq, to lay down their arms. What is there not to like about that kind of progress? Yet Congress, thousands of miles away in the safety and comfort of the Senate Chamber and our offices, is undermining the good efforts that are going forward in Iraq.

While no one believes success is assured, we know, in the words of General Petraeus:

The mission is hard, but it is not hopeless.

The only thing that would make it hopeless is if Congress continues to undermine General Petraeus and our troops who are in harm’s way. It boggles my mind that we have that sort of mindset in Washington, DC because of some rabid, antiwar, left-leaning groups that insist we ought to simply tuck our tail and run. They haven’t come up with an adequate explanation as to what they think would happen if we were to leave precipitously, as some of them suggest.

I happen to believe that notwithstanding the fact that Darfur, where 400,000 people at last count have died as a result of terrible violence there, would pale compared to the ethnic cleansing and the violence that would follow if America were to betray our Iraqi allies and would leave precipitously. It would also create a regional conflict where Sunni majority nations would come in and try to stave off the Shiites from Iran for helping them and trying to prevent them from killing the Sunni minority there.

The Democratic leadership has not helped the situation in Iraq with their recent pronouncements either. Democratic leadership in recent floor statements has suggested that if the President vetoes this bill, then he will be the one endangering the troops. They further stated they hope the President would realize that with his pen in hand he can honor soldiers, honor his country, and bring an end to this war.

To that I say baloney. That is sheer fantasy that by cutting and running, by neglecting our allies in Iraq, by neglecting the improvements we have been able to make, by recruiting tribal sheiks to help us in fighting al-Qaida,