



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 110th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 154

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, JULY 31, 2008

No. 129

Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable MARK L. PRYOR, a Senator from the State of Arkansas.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Loving God, our mighty rock and fortress, we have no secrets from You. You know us far better than we know ourselves. Help the Members of this body to humble themselves before You and find in Your love a very present help in times of trouble. Touch every person in the Senate with grace and love and healing. Forgive and restore wherever there is need in heart and office and home. Help us to see that it is our weakness that qualifies us for Your strength.

Lord, we commit this day to live and work for You, inviting the indwelling power of Your spirit to control our minds and give us discernment. We pray in the Name of Him who never fails to supply our needs. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable MARK L. PRYOR 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, July 31, 2008.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable MARK L. PRYOR, a Senator from the State of Arkansas, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. PRYOR 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, following leader remarks, if any, there will be a period of morning business until 10:30, for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each. The majority will control the first half, the Republicans the second half. Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 3001, the Department of Defense authorization bill. The time from 10:30 until 12:30 will be controlled in alternating 30-minute blocks of time between the majority and Republican sides, with the Republicans controlling the first 30 minutes. We hope to be able, later today, to turn to the Consumer Product Safety Commission conference report and the higher education conference report. We assume there could be votes throughout the day.

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 until 10:30 a.m., with the time equally divided and con-

trolled between the two leaders or their designees, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the majority controlling the first half of the time and the Republicans controlling the second half.

The Senator from Wisconsin.

SOMALIA

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I rise to express my deep concern about the continued crisis in Somalia and my dismay at the failure of the United States and also the international community to give this situation the attention and resources it deserves.

Time and again, I have called for a comprehensive, coordinated U.S. strategy to bring security and stability to Somalia. Yet despite Somalia's continued collapse, the administration has clung to a clumsy set of tactics that have done little to quell the relentless violence or to enhance our own national security.

According to the U.N. High Commissioner on Refugees and the U.N.'s Under Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs, the crisis in Somalia has become the world's worst humanitarian crisis. Yes, let me repeat that: the world's worst humanitarian crisis. Ongoing violence, a poor harvest, drought, rising food prices, and skyrocketing inflation have created a perfect storm. Over 2.6 million or 35 percent of Somalis are currently in need of aid, with that number likely to increase to 3.5 million or nearly 50 percent of the population by the end of the year. Simultaneously, the fighting has forced an estimated 1 million Somalis from their homes into overcrowded and squalid camps both within the country and in northern Kenya and Ethiopia.

In the midst of this disaster, those individuals working courageously to provide aid to the battered population have themselves become targets. I have been deeply troubled by the recent

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



Printed on recycled paper.

S7805

killings of aid workers, including the head of the U.N. Development Program in Mogadishu and three Somali elders who were shot while they were distributing food to displaced communities. According to the New York Times, at least 20 aid workers have been killed and 17 kidnapped since January. This is unacceptable. The international community, with the U.S. leading the way, must make clear that attacks on humanitarian workers will not be tolerated. Moreover, we must make sure that aid agencies, including the World Food Program, have sufficient resources to respond to the escalating needs on the ground.

Humanitarian assistance, however, only stops the bleeding temporarily. Transforming the underlying causes of Somalia's instability requires a political solution leading to a national government that is both representative and reconciliatory. As I said shortly after it was brokered last month, the Djibouti agreement—between the Transitional Federal Government and a moderate faction of the opposition group for the Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia, ARS—was a positive step forward. I applaud the U.N. Representative of the Secretary General for taking a lead role and the U.S. Special Envoy for Somalia, Ambassador John Yates, for ensuring the U.S. was actively involved—but now it is time to get down to business.

I am concerned by the slow progress of implementation. Rather than moving quickly to shore up that agreement and injecting the necessary diplomatic resources, the international community has remained in a wait-and-see posture. This has allowed al-Shabaab and other spoilers to undermine the legitimacy of the agreement and divide the opposition party, rather than the other way around.

I have repeatedly called on the administration to develop a long-term comprehensive regional strategy toward Somalia backed by sufficient resources and political commitment. Our current approach is clearly not working. Relying on reactive and short-term tactics has limited our ability to change the security dynamics on the ground and in the wider region. An effective strategy begins with refocusing on the bigger picture and committing to our long-term goals, namely, helping Somalis to build robust democratic institutions that can provide security and undercut violent extremism—which poses a direct threat to the U.S.

It is not too late to salvage the opportunity presented by the Djibouti agreement. To do so, the United States and our international partners must move quickly with a coordinated diplomatic push to bring more Somalis into the process as well as put forth the necessary resources for implementation. An inclusive and vigorous political process can marginalize the appeal of al-Shabaab and other violent extremists, but only if we act now. Simultaneously, there must be a more

active effort to hold accountable all those who perpetrate violence and violate human rights. This includes strengthening the existing arms embargo and pressuring regional actors who undermine a sustainable political solution. It won't be easy, but it is critical to begin laying the groundwork for long-term peace and security.

The need to bring stability to Somalia is imperative not only to avert humanitarian catastrophe, but also for our national security. Next week, on August 7, we will commemorate the 10-year anniversary of the terrorist attacks on the U.S. Embassies in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam, which left 224 people dead, including 12 U.S. citizens and dozens of other Embassy employees. That was a tragic day in American history. While some of those responsible have been brought to justice, there is still work to be done to ensure that the remaining suspects are held to account for their involvement in these heinous acts and that victims receive fair and just compensation.

Meanwhile, Somalia remains a safe haven for terrorists, as we know from the recent designation of the al-Shabaab and periodic Defense Department strikes against terrorist targets. But neither these strikes, nor other ad hoc or fragmented actions, can substitute for a sustained, comprehensive strategy. We must act aggressively against terrorists who pose a threat to our country, but it will take more than just military options alone to solve Somalia's problems. Instead of helping to build a society committed to the development of legitimate democratic institutions, we are effectively allowing Somalia to serve as a recruitment tool for insurgents and extremists as they further isolate various groups from the current political process. This is what the State Department itself said this past April about safe havens in places like Somalia:

Defeating the terrorist enemy requires a comprehensive effort executed locally, nationally, regionally, and globally. Working with partner nations, we must eliminate terrorist leadership, but incarcerating or killing terrorists will not achieve an end to terrorism. We must simultaneously eliminate terrorist safe havens, tailoring regional strategies to disaggregate terrorist networks and break terrorist financial, travel, communications, and intelligence links. Finally, and most challenging, we must address the underlying conditions that terrorists exploit at the national and local levels to induce alienated or aggrieved populations to become sympathizers, supporters, and ultimately members of terrorist networks. We can marginalize violent extremists by addressing people's needs and grievances, by giving people a stake in their own political future, and by providing alternatives to what terrorists offer.

The problem is not so much that the administration doesn't recognize what needs to be done, but that it doesn't have the will or the commitment to do it. Basically, our bark is bigger than our bite. Ten years after those attacks in Kenya and Tanzania, it appears we have missed the larger lesson of that

tragic day, and our front-line diplomats continue to pay the price as they scramble to respond to the problems of weak states caught up in a vicious and turbulent cycle of collapse. They aren't the only ones paying the price, however, as those failed states breed insecurity and conditions favorable for terrorism. Ten years on, the United States still does not have a long-term strategy to bring peace and stability to the Horn of Africa. We have tremendous diplomatic, military, intelligence, and foreign assistance resources at our disposal, but they are ineffective in the absence of a coordinated and balanced strategy that incorporates both the short- and long-term goals. This is no more evident than in Somalia.

It is not too late to chart a new path and prevent future suffering, but we must act decisively. As we remember those who lost their lives 10 years ago, many doing diplomatic work in some of the most demanding postings in the world, let us commit to honor their legacy by ensuring that our country is no longer vulnerable to the terrorists who attacked us a decade ago.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SPECIALIST JASON E. AMES

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, my home State of Kentucky is mourning the loss of a brave young soldier. On August 31, 2005, SPC Jason E. Ames was killed while serving his country in Mosul, Iraq. Hailing from Cerulean, KY, Specialist Ames was 21 years old.

For his valor in uniform, Specialist Ames received several medals, decorations, and awards, including the Army Commendation Medal, the Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, and the Combat Infantryman Badge.

Jason was taken from his loved ones much too soon. But those closest to him know he packed his 21 years with all he could. "Jason was always a happy-go-lucky person," says his mom Susan Foust. "Whatever he encountered . . . he did it with a lot of life and a lot of laughter."

Born in Illinois to a military family, Jason moved around a lot as a kid and saw many parts of the world. Wherever he went, he made his own fun.

Susan recalls:

Jason loved to play Army as a child and played it often with kids in the neighborhood. He made a suit out of camouflage netting, sticks, and leaves. Using the military acronym for Battle Dress Uniform—

She says—

he would also wear his mother's BDUs.

Susan also says: