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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TOM UDALL, a Senator from the State of New Mexico.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Most holy and gracious God, who turns the shadow of night into morning, thank You for the gift of this new day. As we work for You and country, let the light of Your countenance shine upon our lawmakers, calming their troubled thoughts and guiding their feet in the way of peace. Lord, give them the ability to see the small things that need their attention and the courage to see the things that are not and ask "Why not"? Turn their minds and hands to the tasks that bring glory to Your Name, and may their words and thoughts be acceptable to You. May the knowledge of Your blessings to our Nation awaken in them a deeper commitment to You.

We pray in Your wonderful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable TOM UDALL 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, March 25, 2009.

To the Senate:

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

appoint the Honorable TOM UDALL, a Senator from the State of New Mexico, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. UDALL 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 leaders' remarks, we are going to have morning business for up to 1 hour. The first 30 minutes will be controlled by the Democrats and the Republicans will control the second 30 minutes. During that time, Senators will be allowed to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

Following morning business, we will proceed to, once again, take up the National Service Reauthorization Act, H.R. 1388. At noon, we are going to vote on the confirmation of David Kris to be Assistant Attorney General. We have a special Democratic caucus from 12:30 to 2 p.m. today. The President will be at that caucus. After the caucus, the Senate will resume consideration of the national service legislation. Rollcall votes are expected to occur throughout the afternoon. We are not going to be in recess from 12:30 to 2 p.m.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we will be in recess from 12:30 until 2 p.m. I said

that we would not be, but there is already an order to that effect. I wanted to explain that.

RECOGNITION OF THE REPUBLICAN LEADER

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

AMBASSADOR RYAN CROCKER

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, it is appropriate for us to honor, from time to time, outstanding public servants whose work on behalf of the American people might otherwise be overlooked.

Next week, Ambassador Ryan Crocker will return home to Washington State after a remarkable career promoting America's interests abroad. In a career spanning nearly 40 years, Ambassador Crocker has represented the United States in some of the most challenging environments. So it is fitting that we pause to honor him for a job well done.

A graduate of Whitman College in Washington, Ryan Crocker joined the Foreign Service in 1971, beginning a career that would take him to diplomatic posts in Iran, Qatar, Egypt, Lebanon, and Iraq. Ambassador Crocker served as Ambassador to Syria, Kuwait, Lebanon, Pakistan, and, most recently, Iraq. Clearly, he has not shied away from a challenge. And he has excelled at every one.

Earlier in his career, Ambassador Crocker served in Lebanon during the Israeli invasion of 1982 and the bombing of the U.S. Marine barracks in 1983—experiences from which he would later draw important lessons while serving in Iraq, particularly in 2007, when Shia militias and Sunni insurgents fed sectarian tensions and tribal feuds.

Ambassador Crocker's career spanned the entire Middle East and recent U.S. history. But he will undoubtedly be remembered most for his service in Iraq.

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



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Success in Iraq was never ensured, but it was made far more likely by the presence of Ryan Crocker. As Ambassador from March 2007 to February 2009, he was instrumental in carrying out the diplomatic tasks required to implement the counterinsurgency strategy, and to successfully defend that strategy before a skeptical Congress. He also carried out the negotiation that produced the Status of Forces Agreement, and he helped Iraqis through provincial elections. In all this, Ambassador Crocker forged a strong partnership with GEN David Petraeus that protected our Nation's interests in Iraq at a moment of peril.

Ryan Crocker has served his Nation with honor, and our country owes him a debt. He is a diplomat's diplomat, the best of the best, and a tribute to the State Department that he has served. He is also a very fine man, and I wish him well in retirement and the best of luck in the future. Ambassador Crocker may be leaving the stage, but his service to our Nation will not be forgotten.

I yield the floor.

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

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, what is the order?

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to a period of morning business for up to 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the second half.

The Senator from California is recognized.

THE BUDGET

Mrs. BOXER. I came to the floor to talk about the budget debate. I think it is very important that we let the American people know where we are on the budget and what this debate is really all about.

We have a new President and we have a new budget, thank goodness. We have a budget that reflects the hopes and dreams of the American people. We have a budget that is going to cut the deficit in half by the time this President's term is over. We have a budget that is absolutely open in terms of the way it spends our money and the way it saves our money.

It is important that we take a look at the type of economy this young

President inherited: Record deficits. Record deficits that President George W. Bush's own party supported. It is very important that we remember that when George W. Bush got the key to the Oval Office, we had surpluses. Then we saw a 50-percent increase in spending. We saw a debt that was about to be put away go up in major proportions. We are seeing the playing out of the worst recession since the Great Depression, a financial market in crisis, and a housing market in crisis because of the deregulation that was the centerpiece of George W. Bush's and the Republicans' leadership.

We are paying the price of those years today. We have a young President who came into office and said: Be patient, we are going to change the way we do business in this country. And we are going to do that. We started with the stimulus bill that got not one Republican vote on the House side, although some of my Republican friends over there are running around my State taking credit for the bill they voted against. We had three Republicans over here, whom I praise mightily for having the courage to do the right thing and get this economy back on track.

We have seen the loss of 3.3 million jobs in the last 6 months. The President is dealing with two ongoing wars that, by the way, were never paid for in the budget. They were taken off the budget. He now puts them in the budget so that the American people can see the truth. President Bush put them in emergency spending even though we knew he needed to fund them.

What we have in the President's budget is a refreshing change of reality, honesty, integrity, and investments that have to be made. What are we getting from our Republican friends? We are getting just what we got when the Clinton budget passed without one Republican vote. I want to take us back to that because I think it is very interesting, intriguing, and enlightening to see what our Republican friends said about the last Democratic President's budget. You would have thought the sky was falling. You would have thought the universe would never survive. I have some of the quotes they made about the Clinton budgets.

If people will remember, Al Gore, as Vice President, had to come over here and cast the tie-breaking vote on that budget. Here is what happened as a result of that budget; we will talk about that first. As a result of the Clinton budget, we saw 23 million new jobs created in this country—not millions of jobs lost but 23 million jobs created. What happened to the deficit under the Clinton budget? It went down, down, down, and we wound up with a surplus. We voted for the Clinton budget, the first Democratic budget in a while, and what happened? Twenty-three million new jobs were created and the budget was in balance.

As a matter of fact, George W. Bush, when he took the keys to the Oval Of-

fice, had a surplus. What happened with the Republican rule? Deficits as far as the eye can see. These are the facts. This isn't rhetoric—debt of \$10 trillion, \$11 trillion.

Let's look at what the Republicans said about the Clinton budget that we know, because time has passed, history has shown, created 23 million jobs, stopped the deficits, turned them into surpluses, and got the debt going on the way down. What did our Republican friends say then?

Wayne Allard said then as a Representative:

In summary, the plan has a fatal flaw—it does not reduce the deficit.

Wrong. Wrong. Wayne Allard continued:

So we are still going to pile up some more debt, but most of all, we are going to cost jobs in this country.

That is what Republican Wayne Allard said about the Clinton budget—. . . we are still going to pile up some more debt, but most of all, we are going to cost jobs. . . . Wrong—23 million jobs created.

Senator Pete Domenici said of the Clinton budget that created 23 million jobs and turned the deficit into a surplus:

It's just a mockery.

Our friend, Senator ORRIN HATCH, a leader of the Republicans, still here and going strong, I am happy to say, he is my friend—he said:

Make no mistake, these higher rates will cost jobs.

Talking about the Clinton budget and the taxes in it.

Make no mistake, these higher rates will cost jobs.

Wrong—23 million jobs created.

How about Senator Phil Gramm, one of the leaders of the Republicans in the Senate at the time of the Clinton budget that created 23 million jobs, took the deficit, turned it into surplus, what did he say?

I want to predict here tonight that if we adopt this bill, the American economy is going to get weaker and not stronger, the deficit 4 years from today will be higher than it is today and not lower. . . . When all is said and done, people will pay more taxes, the economy will create fewer jobs, Government will spend more money, and the American people will be worse off.

Wrong. Phil Gramm was wrong. Oh, Phil Gramm, he is the one who said this recession was in our minds.

Here is another quote of Phil Gramm—remember, he was a leader of the Republicans then—talking about the Clinton budget that created 23 million jobs and cut our deficit and turned it into a surplus:

. . . [T]his program is going to make the economy weaker. . . . Hundreds of thousands of people are going to lose their jobs as a result of this program.

Guess what he also said:

I believe that hundreds of thousands of people are going to lose their jobs as a result of this program. I believe that Bill Clinton will be one of those people.

Bill Clinton got reelected and the economy created 23 million jobs, the