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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.

O God of infinite goodness, confirm Your past mercies to us by empowering us to be faithful to Your commands.

Help our lawmakers this day to use their understanding, affections, health, time, and talents to do what You desire. May they strive to please You with faithful service. Lord, rule their hearts without a rival, guiding their thoughts, words, and works. Take possession of their hearts and order their steps by the power of Your loving providence.

We pray in Your sacred 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. INOUE).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, November 17, 2010.

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.

DANIEL K. INOUE,
President pro tempore.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico 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

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the cloture motion on the motion to proceed to S. 3815, the Natural Gas and Electric Vehicles Act, be withdrawn and that at 11 a.m. the Senate then resume the motion to proceed to S. 3772 and immediately vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed; further, that the Senate recess from 12:30 to 4 p.m. today and that if cloture is invoked this morning, then postcloture time continue to run during any recess or adjournment of the Senate today.

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have spoken to Senator HATCH and Senator MENENDEZ, who are the main sponsors of this legislation. It is extremely important legislation. We are going to continue to work to get this done. This is a bipartisan bill. There is some dispute as to what the pay-fors should be, but it is something we should be able to work out, and hopefully we can do it before the end of this year. Whether we can do that depends a lot on the schedule, but it is one of the most important things we can do. It is job creating, great for the environment, and great for the security of this Nation.

Following any leader remarks, the Senate will turn to a period of morning business until 11 a.m. this morning, with the time until 11 equally divided and controlled between the two leaders

or their designees. At 11 a.m., the Senate will proceed to vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to S. 3772, the Paycheck Fairness Act. If cloture is not invoked, the Senate will immediately proceed to vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to S. 510, the FDA Food Safety and Modernization Act. As a result of the order that was just entered, the Senate will recess from 12:30 until 4 p.m. today.

FOOD SAFETY ACT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am not going to give a long speech on food safety. I will say, however, how important it is.

I read a column today where someone kind of minimized the importance of this and why should the Senate be working on this issue. I would invite them to meet a number of people in Nevada who had near-death experiences as a result of eating tainted food. That is what this legislation is all about. It is something we should have done before. It is a real shame that we have not been able to. I hope we can get this done before we leave here this year. I cannot get out of my mind the little girl who was so sick from eating spinach that was tainted. She has been hurt so badly for the rest of her life. She was held back in school. Her body is not what it should be. Her growth has been stunted. So anyone who minimizes the importance of this legislation does not understand how sick these people get and how often they die as a result of food poisonings.

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

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



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will now be a period of morning business until 11 a.m., with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the Senator from Iowa, Mr. HARKIN, controlling 15 minutes; the Senator from Connecticut, Mr. DODD, controlling 15 minutes; and the Senator from Maryland, Ms. MIKULSKI, controlling 5 minutes of the majority's time.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum and ask unanimous consent that the time be equally divided.

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

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. VOINOVICH. 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.

RUSSIA AND THE NEW START TREATY

Mr. VOINOVICH. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the challenges America faces in our relationship with Russia and their implications on the Senate's consideration of the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, known as START.

A number of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle have spoken about the treaty's impact on global nuclear non-proliferation. I would like to use my remarks today to highlight my concerns about the treaty in the broader context of: one, the Obama administration's "Reset Policy" towards Russia; and two, the new START treaty's impact on our allies in Eastern Europe and the Baltic states. I believe these concerns must be addressed by the administration before I can determine my support for the treaty.

Over the last decade I have been an ardent champion of NATO and have worked diligently to increase membership in the alliance. I have also been active in improving our public diplomacy in Eastern Europe through our expansion of the Visa Waiver Program at the request of our friends and allies in Central and Eastern Europe. That legislation which the President signed on Visa Waiver was supported by both our State Department and by our Department of Homeland Security.

In my remaining time in the Senate, I will continue to work to strengthen the Visa Waiver Program which has improved our image in the world and strengthened our borders through shared best practices and enhanced intelligence sharing with our partners and allies abroad.

My passion for foreign relations stems in large part from my upbringing as the grandson of Southeast European immigrants. As an undergraduate at Ohio University, my first research paper examined how the United States

sold out Central and Eastern Europe and the former Yugoslavia to the Soviets at the Yalta and Tehran conferences in 1943 and 1945. These states would become the "Captive Nations" suffering under the specter of Soviet domination, brutality, and oppression for nearly 50 years.

As a public official in Ohio, I remained a strong supporter of the Captive Nations. During my tenure as mayor of Cleveland, I joined my brothers and sisters in the Eastern European Diaspora to celebrate the independence days of the Captive Nations at City Hall. We flew their flags, sang their songs, and prayed that one day the people in those countries would know freedom.

We saw the Berlin Wall fall and the Iron Curtain torn in half thanks large in part to the leadership of Pope John Paul II, President Reagan, and President George H.W. Bush. But even with the end of the Cold War, I remain deeply concerned that darker forces in Russia are reemerging as a threat to democracy, human rights, and religious freedom, not just for the Russian people but for the citizens of the newly freed Captive Nations.

This concern in 1998 during my tenure as Governor of Ohio and Chair of the National Governor's Association prompted me to pursue an all-50 State resolution supporting NATO membership for the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland.

When I think about the importance of NATO and our commitment to the Captive Nations, I am inspired by President George W. Bush's speech on NATO expansion in Warsaw on June 15, 2001. President Bush stated: "We should not calculate how little we can get away with, but how much we can do to advance the cause of freedom." There was concern at that time because of the debate with Russia that we would back off and not support further expansion of NATO.

I worked diligently from my first day as a member of the Senate in 1999 to extend NATO membership to my brothers and sisters in the former Captive Nations. I knew NATO membership would provide these fledgling democracies safe harbor from the possible threat of new Russian expansionism. But I also knew the process of NATO expansion would enhance much more than security in Europe.

As I noted in a speech on the Senate floor on May 21, 2002, "While NATO is a collective security organization, formed to defend freedom and democracy in Europe, we cannot forget that common values form the foundation of the alliance." In other words, the foundation of the Alliance is based on common values.

Democracy, the rule of law, minority rights, these are among the values that form the hallmark of the NATO alliance.

One of my proudest moments as a Senator was when I joined President Bush, Secretary of State Colin Powell,

Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff GEN Richard Myers at the NATO Summit in Prague on November 21, 2002, when NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson officially announced the decision to invite Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia to become part of the Alliance. This was truly one of the most thrilling days of my tenure as a Senator.

Later that day, my wife Janet and I were happy to attend a dinner in honor of Czech President Vaclav Havel at the Prague Castle. Following that dinner, at 1:30 a.m. Prague time, I placed a call to Cleveland to talk with my brothers and sisters at home with ties to these NATO aspirant countries. They had gathered in the Lithuanian Hall at Our Lady of Perpetual Help to celebrate that day's historic events, and this was truly a capstone to years of effort.

It is because of my long history and work with the Captive Nations that I continue to worry about the uncertainties of our future relationship with Russia. I have traveled to 19 countries during my 21 trips to the region as a Senator. Presidents, prime ministers, and foreign ministers in Eastern Europe have told me time and time again it is comforting for them to know their relationship with NATO and the United States serves as a vital hedge against the threat of a future potentially expansionist Russia.

Yet now there is much talk from this administration about resetting the U.S. bilateral relationship with Russia. Moscow seeks to regain its global stature and be respected as a peer in the international community. I do not blame them.

President Obama's May 2010 National Security Strategy states: "We seek to build a stable, substantive, multidimensional relationship with Russia, based on mutual interests. The United States has an interest in a strong, peaceful, and prosperous Russia that respects international norms." I agree with the administration. There is nothing inherently wrong with this approach.

There are indeed key areas where the United States and Russia share common cause and concern:

1. Russia is a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council and will continue to be essential towards any effective multilateral pressure on Iran to give up its nuclear program.

2. Russia continues to have leverage on the North Korean regime and has stated a nuclear-free Korean peninsula is in the interest of both our nations.

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- No. 3, we are partners in the International Space Station, relying on the Russians. Until the August 2008 invasion of Georgia, our government and U.S. industry were working hard on a nuclear cooperation agreement with