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Senate

The Senate met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, thank You for the many mercies You extend to us each day. Lord, we are grateful for our law enforcement agents and first responders and pray that we may emulate their patriotism and self-sacrifice. May we go beyond applause in expressing our gratitude but make decisions that will ensure their timely and fair compensation.

Today, give our lawmakers the vision and the willingness to see and do Your will. Remove from them that stubborn pride which imagines itself to be above and beyond criticism. Forgive them for the blunders they have committed, infusing them with the courage to admit and correct mistakes. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for debate only until 2 p.m. with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

DECORUM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following the suggestion in the prayer of Admiral Black, I want to take a few minutes to talk about Senate decorum, Senate procedure. This is constructive criticism for the entire Senate and self-criticism for me.

I think we have all here in the Senate kind of lost the aura of Robert Byrd, who was such a stickler for Senate procedure. I think we have all let things get away from us a little bit. The Senate is a very special place with very particular rules. These rules help to keep debate among Senators civil, even when we are discussing matters in which Senators completely disagree.

One of those rules concerns how we address each other here in the Senate. The practice we observe is that when Senators speak, they address themselves only to the Presiding Officer, through the Chair to the Senator from Missouri, or whatever the case might be.

When Senators refer to other Senators—this is something we all have to listen to—whether those other Senators are in the Chamber or not, Senators must address and refer to each other in the third person and through the Chair. Thus, Senators should refer to the Senator from Vermont or the Senator from Illinois or the Senator from Nevada or the chairman of the Appropriations Committee or the President pro tempore or the manager of the bill.

Senators should avoid using other Senators' first names. Senators should avoid addressing other Senators directly as "you." These rules are a little unusual, but they have been in place here for a couple of centuries. As people would generally talk directly to other people if they are in the same room with each other, they are a little unusual, because that is how we address one another.

But the Senate rules preserve distance—a little distance, not a lot of

distance, but distance. So Senators are more likely to debate ideas and less likely to talk about personalities. I think all of us—that is why I said I am directing a little self-criticism here. I think we all have to understand that these rules create a little bit of distance so Senators are more likely to debate ideas and less likely talk about personalities. If we do that, we maintain more civil decorum as a result. So I bring this matter to the attention of Senators, because we have fallen out of this habit. It has gotten worse the last month or so. I will work harder. I hope my Senators will work their best to maintain these habits of civility and decorum going forward.

The Parliamentarians and Presiding Officers have all been directed to make sure we do a better job of following the basic rules of the Senate.

TRIBUTE TO CAPITOL POLICE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, every day Members of Congress come to work at the U.S. Capitol. I said some of this yesterday afternoon, but because of the melee, the death and destruction outside the Capitol, the sound system did not work, so I want to make sure that people understand a few things about how I feel about the Capitol Police force.

Members of Congress come to work here, and we come with 16,000 staff people. We are here with millions of tourists every year. These good men and women, most of whom are in uniform, but not all of them are, are here to keep us, members of our staff, and the public safe from harm.

Yesterday's events were a sobering reminder of that fact. I spoke yesterday afternoon, shortly after the incident, to Brian Carter, a 23-year veteran of the Capitol Police force who was hurt during yesterday's incident. I talked to police officers whom I came in contact with over the last 16 hours

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



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or so. I said: Do you know Brian? Almost everyone knows him. Almost everyone said the same exact thing: What a fine man.

As I spoke to him yesterday—he is expected to make a recovery—I wished him and his family the best during this difficult time for him and for all of us. I wish a speedy recovery to the Secret Service agent who was also injured yesterday.

But I thought the most memorable thing we had in our short telephone conversation was, he said: My job is to keep you safe. He was not referring to me, even though he and I were on the phone. He meant his job was to make sure everyone is safe. That was something I will always remember.

These brave men and women put their lives on the line every day, Capitol Police, other law enforcement agencies who work here in the Capitol. Why do they do that? Because that is their job.

So my thanks go out to every Capitol Police officer. We owe them a debt of gratitude.

CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. REID. I want to remind everyone listening that yesterday and today, the Capitol remains closed to most business. The Federal Government remains closed. In the newspaper today, it lists all of the layoffs. Today it has a graph of those in the administration area—not the legislative or judicial but in the administration. We have tens of thousands of public servants who are not furloughed, but they are working, including law enforcement officials, without pay. A number of people yesterday were out there risking their lives without pay. There are hundreds of thousands more, such as intelligence officers, to keep the Nation safe, who have been forced to leave their jobs, forgo their paychecks altogether.

Because of these furloughs, the Capitol Police, the FBI, and other Federal law enforcement agencies face additional risk, as they are asked to do their jobs with limited manpower and without the support they can typically depend on.

Congress owes it to them and to every American family to get past our differences, work through our disagreements, and work toward reopening the Federal Government. It is hard to comprehend what is going on. This is all because of President Obama's signature legislative issue that we were so fortunate to pass, to allow all Americans to have health care, as is the case in every industrialized nation in the world except our Nation.

We have as many as 45 million or 50 million people with no health insurance. I would hope my Republican colleagues understand the bill is 4 years old, it has been declared constitutional by the Supreme Court, it is in effect. Millions of people have gone on line this week to find out what they can do to have health insurance.

Mr. LEAHY. Would the leader yield for a question?

Mr. REID. Of course.

(Ms. HIRONO assumed the Chair.)

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, the leader has noted a number of times that a small group in the House of Representatives has held up and closed the government because they want to do away with what they call ObamaCare, the Affordable Care Act. So my question to the Senator is, in all of these discussions they have had, the 40 times they voted, have they ever once come up with an alternative piece of legislation that would provide for your children, if they are in college, to be on your health care policy, or if you have a member of your family with a pre-existing condition such as diabetes or has gone through cancer, have they come up with any alternative or is it just: We want nothing?

Mr. REID. Madam President, to my friend, the most senior Member of the Senate, in today's newspapers and in commentary on television and radio, even Republicans, prominent Republicans, former chairs—I have in my mind, which I read today, two former chairs of the National Republican Party—said: We have got to be for something, not just against everything.

That is the problem we have. They are against everything. Against everything. As the distinguished Senator from Vermont said, what are they for? We know what they are against, but what are they for?

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I thank the distinguished leader, because I know in my State of Vermont, people are happy, if they have children going to college, that they can keep them on their health insurance. Or if they have a spouse who had breast cancer, for example, they can still get health care, or whatever—diabetes and so on.

I think the distinguished leader has answered, no, they want to do away with all of this, and nothing in return. That is a nihilistic approach that makes no sense.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for debate only until 2 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The President pro tempore is recognized.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, several people have spoken. I was touched so much by the Chaplain's prayer and by the words of the leader about our Capitol Police. The leader, in his young days as a student, served as one of the Capitol Police.

Because I am President pro tempore, I do have a security detail. But long before I had that, I made it a point to go—every time I would see a police officer on this campus, I would say: You keep us all safe. Keep yourself safe. We worry about you.

I am wearing this pin applauding them today. I think we have to know, tourists who come here, Members, staff—everybody is kept safe by these brave men and women. I asked those who are assigned to me to join me in my office for a silent prayer yesterday for the safety and the recovery of the officer injured, but also for the safety of all of those police officers.

They rush in. They rush in when there is trouble. They do not say: Oh, gosh, I am not getting paid. Or, gee whiz, I am supposed to go off duty in a minute. They rush in, no questions asked. They are extraordinarily well trained, one of the best trained police departments anywhere in the country. I think we owe them a debt of gratitude.

We have also heard a lot over the last few days here on this floor about the costly impacts of this needless government shutdown. It is needless. Of course, the solution to reopening the government is an easy one: the Senate has passed a resolution which would reopen the government while we work on a meaningful compromise to address our budget and our national debt. Because of a small radical group of tea party activists in the House of Representatives, they will not even vote on it.

The House of Representatives has decided on a different approach. The irony of their parochial, bit-by-bit funding proposal is not lost on the hundreds of Vermonters who were given furlough notices on Tuesday, or the veterans in Vermont and across the country who fear the long-term impacts of a government shutdown.

They are holding the government hostage, and with it the millions of Americans impacted by this shutdown. They wish to pick and choose little popular things and say: Here, we are for that. They don't want to stand and vote yes or no on actual appropriations, because if they do that they have to take a position. It is easier to vote maybe. If they vote maybe, they can go home and say: Oh, we are for medical research. We are for the veterans.

No, they are not. They voted to shut it down. We had a Member of the House of Representatives on television posturing to a group of veterans saying isn't it terrible the administration is closing off the veterans' memorial. One of the veterans caught them and said: No, it is not the administration that is closing it, it is you. It is you people, the small group of the House of Representatives that has closed it down.

Why don't they bring the Senate-passed resolution to the House floor for a vote? This vote would end the shutdown. Instead, a handful of extreme ideologues in the House are deciding—