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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable EDWARD J. MARKEY, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, our rock, our fortress, and our deliverer, You know when we sit and when we rise. Before a word is on our tongue, You know it completely. Guide us and our lawmakers with Your spirit's wisdom, keeping us from paths that lead to ruin. May we seek the wages of righteousness that will bring us life. Make the mouths of our Senators fountains of life that will bring peace and stability to our world. Give us all a reverence for You that will enable us to serve Your purposes for our lives in this generation.

We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer 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. LEAHY).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, September 10, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable EDWARD J. MARKEY, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. MARKEY 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 my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S.J. Res 19 postcloture. That is the legislation of the constitutional amendment to allow us to set the campaign spending limits and not have the battle with the billionaires trying to buy America. At 2 p.m. all postcloture time will be considered expired and the Senate will proceed to vote on the motion to proceed. I expect this vote to be done by voice.

Shortly after 2 p.m. we expect a roll-call vote relative to the paycheck fairness bill. That legislation deals with, for example, my daughter doing the exact same work as her male counterpart. She should make the same amount of money. That is what this legislation is all about. We tried to move forward on it once before and we were blocked by the Republicans. We will see what happens again today. It seems fair that my daughter should make the same amount of money for doing the same work as her male counterpart.

SUPPORTING OUR COMMANDER IN CHIEF

Mr. REID. Mr. President, yesterday I had the opportunity and good fortune to be invited to the White House with Speaker BOEHNER, Leader PELOSI, and Leader MCCONNELL. We spent more than an hour with the President and Vice President talking about what is going on in the world.

We do know what is going on in the world separate and apart from that meeting at the White House. There is a murderous, vile terrorist group that is taking over parts of Iraq and is trying to move into other parts of the world in the Middle East. Their brutality is unprecedented, especially unprecedented in that they want to advertise how vile they are. They are so vicious, going after everyone—civilians, women, children—trying to eliminate anyone who they think disagrees with them. They have targeted minorities, they have targeted Jews, Christians, and anyone whom they disagree with—religious minorities. We saw that. We had thousands and thousands of ancient religious minorities trapped on a mountain by these vicious, vile people.

Of course, they are after any American. The two innocent journalists who were out just covering the news were beheaded and they advertised the beheadings. The Islamic State or ISIS—whatever we want to call them—will be stopped. They must be stopped and they need to be destroyed and they will be destroyed.

President Obama has taken decisive action during the month of August to protect Americans and help prevent a humanitarian catastrophe. Yesterday the President described his initiative to take on this terrorist group as we move forward, and I support him. President Obama has made it clear it is going to take decisive action to destroy the Islamic State through the use of air strikes and drones. This is a smart, strategic, and effective approach and I support it.

But there are people in Congress who are taking advice from Dick Cheney. He was here yesterday. I think they better be very careful of the advice they take from Dick Cheney. Dick Cheney is more responsible than anyone else for the worst foreign policy decision in the history of the country, the invasion of Iraq. Almost 6,000 dead Americans and tens of thousands

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



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wounded, thousands and thousands grievously wounded. Our fighting men and women did a yeoman's job. They made us proud. But was that war necessary? In hindsight, it appears to me it wasn't. Not only have we lost thousands of American lives, it has destabilized the whole Middle East and hundreds of thousands—hundreds of thousands—hundreds of thousands—hundreds of thousands of Iraqis have been killed. They are now gone.

But there are some pushing hard in Congress to authorize use of military force right now—right now. Dick Cheney was here yesterday. I guess that is whom they are following. But wouldn't it be a good idea for us to stand back a little bit and see what the President of the United States has to say tonight? He is addressing the Nation. Let's allow him to speak to our country, to our fellow citizens, and lay out his plan.

It is absolutely critical that the American people and Congress hear directly from the President of the United States.

In the Senate we are going to have an all-Senators briefing tomorrow afternoon. The administration will come to one of our classified rooms in the Capitol complex and lay out to us in detail what is going on that is not in the news. So every Member of this body will have a chance to get as much information as possible. The President speaks tonight. Tomorrow afternoon there is a briefing.

It is clear—the President has said so publicly, his administration has said so publicly, and the officials who work directly with the White House—he is doing his utmost. He just returned from Europe and much of the time that was spent there in the NATO conference was about what they are going to do to go after this evil in the Middle East, this ISIS group. He is doing his utmost to build a robust international coalition including the Sunni Arab States.

For this mission to be successful, of course, Sunni Arab countries must play a role and they will do that. That is being worked on as we speak.

It is clear to me that we need to train and equip Syrian rebels and other groups in the Middle East that need some help. It is called title 10 authority. The rebels have tried to get it from us and they should get it. That is our way of building an international coalition. Congress should do that. The Republicans are worried about money. There is money to do that. The chairman of the Armed Services Committee is on the floor and he can certainly vouch for that. It would give authority for the President to help equip these rebels.

Going it alone is not going to work. We must have the support of the international community if we are to rid the world of ISIS. We know France—I at least believe that—has stepped forward, I believe Great Britain has stepped forward, I understand Poland is

part of the coalition that has stepped forward, and there are many other countries the President met with in Europe just a few days ago. We need to build a coalition, and that is what he is doing, rather than declaring war today. Title 10 authority is something we need.

I repeat. Going it alone will not suffice. I also believe that as Commander in Chief the President has the authority he needs now to act against ISIS. I believe the vast majority of the Members of Congress agree with that. Now it is critical we support our Commander in Chief as he takes this decisive action. I am amazed—amazed—that some Members of Congress want to rush to war, because that is what they are talking about is a war. How did that work out for us last time? Not so well. The Bush-Cheney strategy of rushing into conflict didn't work then and it will not work now. Let's be cautious and let's be deliberate.

I repeat. Former Vice President Cheney was here yesterday giving the Republicans a pep talk. He gave them advice on foreign policy. Please—please—taking advice from Dick Cheney on foreign policy, that is a terrifying prospect. We should be learning from our past mistakes, not repeating them.

Air strikes and strategic use of drones and of course covert action are the most effective ways to take out ISIS without committing American troops, placing troops in harm's way. So I support President Obama's decision not to send in ground troops. That is not an option for the American people. I can guarantee everyone that within the sound of my voice.

But now that the Republicans are taking advice from Dick Cheney on foreign policy, I am concerned they once again will rush to commit U.S. troops to a ground war in the Middle East when we could accomplish the mission in a more strategic way.

I say to Democrats and Republicans, let's destroy these despicable terrorists, but let's do it the right way this time. The President knows and the American people know we have to take decisive action. The President knows how to destroy terrorists and their organization. Osama bin Laden is proof of that.

Let's give the President of the United States the time to do this the right way. Troops are out there defending us as we speak. They are not Democrats. They are not Republicans. They are not Independents. They are fighting for us to protect Americans. We need committed, decisive action to stop ISIS.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

MIDDLE EAST STRATEGY

Mr. McCONNELL. Last month I got to spend a lot of time with the people

of Kentucky, and since there has been no shortage of issues to keep people up at night over the past few months, I got a lot of straight talk on a lot of topics. I heard a lot about the crisis at the border, about lost health care plans, the chronic shortage of good jobs, stagnant wages, even Ebola, the spread of which is a threat that must be taken seriously.

Yet one issue that kept coming up is America's role in the world and the growing sense that some in Washington are more or less content to let others shape our destiny for us. For many that concern was crystallized when they witnessed the barbaric execution of an American citizen by an ISIL terrorist and the halting reaction to it by a President who has yet to find his footing when it comes to dealing with this group that clearly has the will, the means, and the sanctuary it needs to do more.

Last week the White House announced that the President plans to explain the nature of the threat ISIL poses in a speech to the American people tonight. Well, after spending a month talking with folks in Kentucky, it is pretty clear—to me, at least—that the American people fully appreciate the nature of this threat. After the beheadings of two American citizens, they don't want an explanation of what is happening, they want a plan. They want some Presidential leadership.

I hope the President lays out a credible plan to defeat ISIL. I hope he outlines the steps he intends to take beyond simply the defense of Baghdad, Erbil, Sinjar, and Amerli, and what legal authorities and resources he thinks are required to execute a successful campaign against ISIL. But the fact is the rise of ISIL is not an isolated failure. The spread of ISIL occurred in a particular context, and if we hope to defeat this threat, we need to come to terms with that now.

So before speaking with a little more specificity about ISIL and the ongoing threat of global terrorism, I would like to briefly restate my concerns about the consequences of the President's foreign policy, as I warned a few months ago, because ISIL's military advance across Syria and Iraq carries a much larger lesson—a lesson that should prompt the President to reconsider and revise his overall national security policy and better prepare the country and our military to confront the threats that will survive his time in office.

First, it is important to note a few of the consistent objectives that have always characterized this President's national security policy: drawing down our conventional and nuclear forces, withdrawing from Iraq and Afghanistan, and placing a greater reliance upon international organizations and diplomacy.

As I have noted on other occasions, I have serious differences with the President over this approach. In my view, we have a duty as a superpower without imperialistic aims to help maintain international order and balance of