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Senate

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

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, Your words are pure. When hate seems to triumph, surround us with Your protection and favor. Have mercy upon our Nation and world.

Lord, the wicked are often exalted as they blaspheme and destroy. May our lawmakers not permit inaction to derail liberty.

How long will the enemies of freedom prevail? Awake us all, and use us for Your glory, for we trust in Your mercy.

We pray in Your great Name. 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.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for 1 minute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA AGREEMENT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, agriculture and the family farmers of America depend upon exports for prosperity. Passing the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement is then critical to provide farmers and ranchers with the certainty they need to make long-term business decisions.

Over \$10 billion worth of agricultural products are exported each year to our

neighbors, and that supports more than 86,000 jobs. Modernizing and improving our trade relationships with Canada and Mexico is a bipartisan no-brainer.

Former Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack and I discussed the USMCA in Des Moines last month at a local dairy processing plant. Secretary Vilsack and I agree we must pass the USMCA to help our farmers.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, the Senate is in the midst of confirming several more of the President's well-qualified nominees to important Federal posts. After we complete today's vote on Ambassador Kelly Craft, whom we confirmed a month ago to serve as Ambassador to the United Nations, we will turn to several more public servants whom the President has asked to serve at the Departments of State, Treasury, Health and Human Services, and Veterans Affairs, among others.

Meanwhile, the Appropriations Committee is working to produce government funding legislation. With a good-faith, bipartisan, bicameral approach, we will be able to build on the agreement the President signed into law last month and ensure adequate funding for the American people's priorities. As always, I know my colleagues and I are grateful to Chairman SHELBY and Ranking Member LEAHY for their work. I hope we are able to consider significant bipartisan funding legislation here on the floor this month before turning to a temporary continuing resolution while work continues.

400TH ANNIVERSARY OF SLAVERY

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, now on an entirely different matter, today Congress observes the 400th anniversary of a reprehensible moment in the history of our land. In August 1619, an English ship landed at the tip of Virginia's Lower Peninsula. On board were 20-some Africans whom the crew had captured from a Portuguese slave ship. These men and women were sold to the Colonies, and with that, England's American Colonies had taken their first step into the already massive transatlantic slave trade. The shameful history of slavery in what would become our Nation had begun.

In many ways, slavery is the original sin of the United States of America. This systematic racial exploitation wove its way into the Colonies' economies and societies. Almost two centuries later, the disgusting practice was a stumbling block in our founding debates. It ultimately was allowed to continue for the sake of union.

Some of our Founders participated personally even as they argued the philosophical case for equality under God and under law. Thomas Jefferson owned slaves while he wrote the Declaration of Independence—and the shameful inconsistency was not lost on him. Jefferson wrote: "Indeed, I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just: that his justice cannot sleep forever."

Indeed, justice did not sleep forever. The last century and a half has seen the moral truths on which this Nation is founded slowly overcome one racist evil after another. After an unthinkably bloody Civil War, slavery in America was no more. Almost a century later—much too late—the failures of Reconstruction and the cruelty of Jim Crow began giving way to the heroism of the civil rights movement.

Change has come too slow. The process has been incredibly imperfect. But every American should take pride in the undeniable progress we have made

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



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