



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 104th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 142

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1996

No. 120

Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m., and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, You have created us to praise You. Forgive our pride that takes the place of praise in our hearts. So often, we want to be adequate in our own strength, to be loved by You because of our self-generated goodness and to be admired by people because of our superior performance. Pride pollutes everything; it stunts our spiritual growth, creates tension in our relationships, and makes us people difficult for You to bless. Most of all, our pride separates us from You, Dear Father. Life becomes bland, truth becomes relative, and values become vitiated. We lose that inner confidence of convictions rooted in the Bible and Your revealed truth. Now in this quiet moment, we praise You that You break the bubble of the illusion that with our own cleverness and cunning we can solve life's problems. You give us back our sense of humor so that we can laugh at ourselves for thinking that we can make it on our own. We humble ourselves before You and ask to be filled with Your Spirit. Now, with our minds and hearts firmly planted on the Rock of Ages, we greet the ambiguities of this day with the absolutes of Your truth and guidance. In the name of our Savior and Lord. Amen.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The able majority leader, Senator LOTT, is recognized.

Mr. LOTT. I thank the Chair.

SCHEDULE

Mr. LOTT. For the information of all Senators, this morning the Senate will begin 30 minutes of debate on two of the appropriations conference reports. At approximately 10 a.m., following the debate, the Senate will proceed to two consecutive rollcall votes, the first vote being on the adoption of the military construction appropriations conference report, to be followed by a vote on the D.C. appropriations conference report. After those votes, the Senate will resume consideration of the VA-HUD appropriations bill.

Last night, we were able to reach an agreement on a limitation of amendments to that legislation, and I hope that any Senator with an amendment on the list will offer the amendment early today so that we can complete action on this very important appropriations bill. Rollcall votes should be expected throughout the day and into the evening, if necessary.

I do point out that there were 38 amendments on the list that was worked out last night. I presume a number of them are place holders or would be offered depending on whether other amendments are offered. I hope we will not go through that exercise too long today and we can get on with the very serious amendments and vote on them so that we can move on to other appropriations bills.

I want to emphasize beginning today that I want to work in good faith with the Democratic leadership and with all of our colleagues to complete this appropriations bill and the remaining four. But in order to do that, it is going to take real cooperation. We have a limited number of days, and already I am getting the sneaking suspicion that there is a slow rolling process already being planned by the delay, by the lack of real progress yesterday, by the number of amendments. And if that is going to be the way things are handled, it is going to leave me with no option

other than to take serious actions, including forcing votes, which can be done, night sessions, even having to go into the weekend, or pulling down important bills.

Veterans and Housing and Urban Development, I do not think my colleagues on the other side of the aisle want to be held responsible for blocking or delaying unnecessarily consideration of a bill that funds the veterans programs and the HUD programs. So let us start off on a positive note. I think we struggled through that a little bit yesterday, but we are working together at this point.

We are going to continue to work to see if we can get an agreement on an Iraq resolution. There is a meeting at 10 o'clock on that. I hope we can go forward in a positive way and get our work done.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. INHOFE). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1997—CONFERENCE REPORT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will turn to the consideration of the conference report accompanying H.R. 3517, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendments of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 3517) making appropriations for military construction, family housing, and base realignment and closure for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1997, and for other purposes, having met, after full and free conference, have agreed to

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



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