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Senate

The Senate met at 9:45 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

O Lord and Ruler, Your name is wonderful and Your glory can be seen in the heavens.

We thank You for this deliberative process of lawmaking with its challenges and opportunities. As our Senators debate the issue of marriage, give them wisdom and courage. Let them be fully persuaded in their minds about the course that will best bless America. Deliver them from a reluctance to respect honest differences, as they remember their ultimate accountability to You.

Bless them with divine insights as they grapple with the complexities that require hard choices. Make it their ultimate goal to serve You by doing what is best for our Nation.

We pray this in Your strong 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.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business, with the first half of the time under the control of the minority lead-

er or his designee and the second half of the time under the control of the majority leader or his designee.

RECOGNITION OF THE ASSISTANT MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the acting Democratic leader.

SENATE SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the majority leader will be coming at a later time. I simply wanted to say that we renew our request on this issue which people feel so strongly about relating to marriage, that we move forward and vote on Resolution 40 that is now before the Senate. We have indicated, through our leader, Senator DASCHLE, and again yesterday, that we would be willing to move to that resolution posthaste. We would be willing to cooperate with the majority, have whatever debate time they wanted on the resolution itself. But we on this side are disappointed. Yesterday morning we were told the majority had another constitutional amendment they wanted to vote on relating to marriage, making it two. Then later in the day, we were told they still had a third one, which is certainly a recipe for having no vote on anything.

If there is no vote on the substance of this marriage amendment, it will lie at the feet of the majority. They have the ability to have an up-or-down vote on this resolution as soon as they want it. It is not good for the process to have an open season on amendments. What would happen is we would move to the marriage amendment and then, by simple majorities, one could attach whatever one wanted to it. The majority realizes we would never have an up-or-down vote on a marriage amendment because it would be filled with all kinds of other things.

This reminds me of the same thing that took place last week on something

some Members also felt very strongly about—class action. On that, there was a sufficient number of Democrats, I am told, who would have been able to move forward with this legislation. But instead of moving forward on it, the majority again decided they didn't want to. They wouldn't allow a limited number of amendments. Therefore, we did nothing.

We have wasted 2 weeks. This will be the second week. I am told that when we finish the marriage amendment, which will be very shortly, if the procedures are as indicated—the majority leader filed cloture last night and we would move to the matter Wednesday to vote on it—the majority has indicated they want to move to the Australian free-trade agreement.

Now, I know Australia has been a good ally of this country, but, for Heaven's sake, we have so many more important things to do and we are going to take valuable Senate time away from the appropriations bills, one of which is on the floor, the one relating to homeland security.

The Presiding Officer has indicated that, with certain limitations, he would be willing to move forward on that bill. While we may not accept those limitations, we would certainly be willing to work with the chairman of the Appropriations Committee to move forward on that legislation.

We had a briefing last week on homeland security. We are having another one tomorrow dealing with the emergency evacuation of this Capitol complex. There are things we need to do rather than have another free-trade agreement.

I hope the majority will see the light and allow us to vote on the marriage amendment tomorrow, or whenever they choose, if they want more time to debate it. I think it would be good for the people of this country if they knew how people stood on the constitutional amendment before this body.

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



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