

I repeat, Mr. Ahsan is pro-Western, prodemocracy, somebody who has labored his life long to promote democracy and the spread of political freedoms in his country.

The family has not been in contact for more than 3 days. You can imagine how worried they are. We have even been told there was a move to arrest his wife and that she was not home at the time the security forces came to detain her.

I hope the Pakistani Government realizes how this looks to those of us who have been friends of this Government, who have respected the alliance between our countries, to have somebody like Mr. Ahsan arrested.

I repeat, he is the chief counsel to the Chief Justice of the Pakistani Supreme Court. He is head of the Pakistani Supreme Court Bar Association, is a longtime leader of the Parliament, somebody who has been retained as counsel by leading figures in Pakistan for many years when they encountered legal challenges.

I very much hope the Pakistani Government is listening. I have spoken to the State Department yesterday. We will have further conversations today. I am going to be asking the Ambassador from Pakistan to come and see me to discuss this matter.

I take this very seriously. When somebody of Mr. Ahsan's remarkable record and stature is detained in Pakistan—somebody who is pro-Western, prodemocracy, upholds all the values America stands for—that is a serious matter.

Mr. President, I hope the Pakistani Government is listening. I hope the State Department is listening. I hope my colleagues are listening. At our caucus today, I will circulate a letter and ask other colleagues to sign the letter to President Musharraf asking for Mr. Ahsan's immediate release.

If Pakistan is to have a future—and all of us pray that it will—it is critically important people of Mr. Ahsan's stature and standing are part of that future.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

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

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, how much time is left in morning business?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Eight minutes.

Mr. REID. OK. Whose time is it?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. It is the majority's.

Mr. REID. OK. I do not see any takers.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASEY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if there is any morning business time left on the Democratic side, I yield it back.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

The majority leader is recognized.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST— H.R. 2419

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that amendments to H.R. 2419 be relevant to the bill or to the substitute amendment.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I hope beyond all hope that we can have a farm bill that will be related to the substance rather than the procedure. It is a good bill. The committee has worked very hard on it. People have some problems with parts of the bill. But if we had a vote on the bill right now, we would get 70 votes. We are not going to be able to do that. People are going to come out here—and I suggest they are going to have to write new speeches. This has happened so many times, all you have to do is go to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and read what has gone on before. It doesn't matter whether it is a Democrat or a Republican who is majority leader, the same thing always happens when we are trying to get out of here.

This time we are trying to finish the work period before Thanksgiving. There are things we have to do. I say to my friends, do people really want an open process on this bill? Do we want to debate the war in Iraq on this bill? Do we want to debate amendments relating to labor issues throughout this country? I have been told those are some of the amendments that are going to be offered on my side. I have no idea what amendments the Republicans will offer, but I have kind of a good idea. I have seen the rule XIVs in the last few weeks and the very mischievous amendments that have nothing to do with the farm bill—political amendments.

We are late in this year of Congress. We have just a few weeks left, and every majority leader does what I have done. I didn't invent this. As I said earlier this morning, I learned a lot from my Republican counterparts—from Senator LOTT, when he was majority

leader, and from Senator DOLE. They did the same thing. I have to acknowledge that Senator Mitchell did it and Senator Daschle did it because it is the only way we can get the business of the country done.

We have had an open amendment process this year—not always but generally speaking. Once we got to the bills—and that has been tough—I have had to file cloture on motions to proceed, which has been a big waste of time. But we have been able to work our way through many different things we have done.

I think we have accomplished a great deal, Mr. President. We have done the minimum wage; the balanced budget, pay as you go; the CR; the work on U.S. Attorneys; the excellent work we did on higher education, health care for vets, and Active-Duty servicemembers; disaster relief, wildfire relief, SCHIP—a lot of good things.

So I hope everyone will understand HARRY REID hasn't invented what is taking place on the Senate floor. I am just copying what others have done. Why? Out of necessity. I have told everybody this farm bill is a pretty good bill. It is not everything I want, but one of the interesting things about American farm policy is we don't import 65 to 70 percent of our food as we do oil. Oil, we have been told, is soon going to go up to \$4 per gallon.

Food, Mr. President, we pay too much for food. But we pay far less, on a proportionate basis, than any other country in the world. Why? One reason is the farm policy in this country. Could the farm policy be better? Sure. That is why we are having a bipartisan effort to change the underlying bill. Democrats and Republicans think it could be better.

Mr. President, we should move forward on this farm bill and finish it. We only do it every 5 years. If there are amendments that deal with this, I have said—and that was my consent just asked—if there are relevant amendments dealing with farm policy, move to change it, debate it, and vote on it. That is all I am asking. But I don't want to debate the estate tax repeal. The American people don't deserve that at this time. I don't want to debate another SCHIP bill that a number of Republicans believe is the right way to go for children's health because they are in such desperate shape for the vetoes the President has done. I have mentioned just a few things.

Mr. President, we are doing the right thing. I hope people will go to work on the farm bill. Both Democrats and Republicans have worked for months on a farm bill to get here. Do you think it was easy for Chairman HARKIN to get a bill out of committee? No; it was difficult. How many meetings did he hold—private meetings—with this group or that group of Senators? I have no idea, but there were scores of them. We are at a point where we are today so that we have a farm bill that received overwhelming support in the