

an embarrassing record for the majority leader, and I think it is an embarrassing record for the Democrats—who control the Senate—to tolerate.

I think it is important for Americans to pay close attention to not just what Senators say when they go home, but actually what happens and what they do and what they stand for and what they vote on. So I would say the next time Democrats go home and tell their constituents they are introducing legislation to solve a problem, the constituents ought to ask, when? When is the vote? That is what I want to know. When is the vote? When is the vote, Mr. President? When is the vote, Senate Democrats? When is the vote, Majority Leader REID? When is the vote?

As usual, when the question is asked, silence. That is all we get in return.

So I actually believe we have a majority of Senators, Republicans and Democrats, who would actually vote to pass my amendment. This amendment I have to this bill on the floor—a majority of Senators, Republicans and Democrats, bipartisan, would vote to pass this amendment to stop the EPA's extreme takeover of waters across America. But under Senator REID's command-and-control style of leadership, I don't think we will ever know. I don't think we will have that vote, and I think Senator REID will block it.

So I would say that if my colleagues agree with the editorial board of the Washington Post, "Clear rules for clean water"—today's Washington Post editorial—then they should be able to stand and be counted. Democrats should demand it. In the recent history of the United States, if that history is any indication, as we can see by this embarrassing vote calendar, I am not at all confident that this body will ever be given the opportunity to stand and be counted, and the reason is because Majority Leader REID won't allow Republicans or Democrats to vote on my amendment or hardly anyone else's amendment.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor, and I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Republicans control the time from 2 p.m. until 3 p.m. and the majority leader control the time from 3 p.m. until 4 p.m. today.

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

AFGHANISTAN

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I have just returned from Afghanistan, where

I met with the two Presidential candidates, Dr. Ashraf Ghani and Dr. Abdullah. Both Dr. Ghani and Dr. Abdullah are impressive men who have committed to reformist agendas and campaigned throughout the country. Afghanistan is fortunate to have two such capable Presidential candidates.

In the course of my meetings with the two candidates last Sunday and indeed during many meetings over the years, each has told me that he appreciates the support the United States has provided to their country, and each will sign a bilateral security agreement with the United States as soon as possible after the next President is inaugurated.

This is a particularly sensitive time for Afghanistan, which has not had a peaceful transition of power in the 50 years since Zahir Shah was overthrown in a coup. More than 7 million ballots were cast in the first round of the Presidential election back in April, and more than 8 million ballots were recorded in the runoff election last month. All agree there was an impressive turnout in a country where the Taliban has repeatedly threatened violence against those who vote.

There have been dramatic improvements in Afghanistan over the last decade in the number of schools and universities, in the number of students and teachers—particularly female students and female teachers—in Afghan life expectancy, in average income, and in many other areas. The Afghan Army and the Afghan National Police, who have taken over security responsibility from U.S. and coalition forces, have shown great capability by successfully securing two rounds of elections and repelling a concerted Taliban attack in the Helmand region of the country.

If the ongoing dispute about the outcome of the Afghan Presidential election is not resolved in a fair and credible manner, however, these achievements would be at risk. The Taliban does not have the ability to defeat the Afghan Army or to take over Afghan cities and population centers. However, if a disputed election were to lead to infighting or to the establishment of parallel governments, the army could be severely weakened and divided, providing new opportunities for the Taliban.

The United States and our coalition allies would be much less likely to provide the continued military and economic assistance that Afghanistan needs if that country's leaders cannot pull together and resolve their disputes through the existing election process.

The State Department stated on Monday:

The continued support of the United States for Afghanistan requires that Afghanistan remains united and that the result of this election is deemed credible.

Both candidates told me personally on Sunday that they believe a comprehensive audit of the election results is necessary and appropriate and that they will abide by the results of such

an audit. They also stated that they understand the outcome of the election will not be final and will not be credible until such an audit has been completed.

The two campaign teams have been working with the United Nations and other international elections experts over the last few days to develop an appropriate audit scope to recommend to the elections commission. I had hoped that an agreement on this review could be announced at the same time that a preliminary vote count was released on Monday. While that did not happen, the head of the Independent Election Commission said the following:

The announcement [of] preliminary results does not mean the winner has been announced. The investigation of votes could have impacts on the final results.

The two campaigns have already agreed on audit triggers that will result in the review of nearly half of the ballots cast, but they have not yet reached full agreement on the measures to be taken. I hope they will be able to do so in the very near future. But this is the bottom line: Whether or not they are able to reach agreement in full, the Electoral Complaints Commission, working with the Independent Election Commission, has a responsibility to decide how many ballots to audit, and they have that responsibility on their own initiative. The Independent Election Commission must then announce a winner.

The path to resolution of the matter is not unclear. On the contrary, the Afghan Constitution and election law are very clear. There is no uncertainty about this path. The Independent Election Commission and the Electoral Complaints Commission have the responsibility to proceed on their own to determine how many ballots need to be audited and to conduct an audit with or without the agreement of the candidates. Indeed, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan has already called on the election commissions to do just that.

I said to the two candidates on Sunday that the Afghan people and the Afghan security forces have shown great bravery in standing up for their country and that it is now time for the country's leaders to do the same. It would be truly unfortunate if the great progress made in Afghanistan at the expense of so much Afghan, American, and coalition blood and treasure were to be jeopardized by political infighting and the failure of political leadership.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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