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House of Representatives

The House met at 11 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. SHAW].

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

December 7, 1995.

I hereby designate the Honorable E. CLAY SHAW, JR., to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

Bishop Dwight Pate, Church Point Ministries, Baton Rouge, LA, offered the following prayer:

God the Father and Creator of mankind, on this seventh day of December, nineteen hundred and ninety-fifth year of our Lord, we come with thanksgiving in our heart, and a mouth full of praise for You allowing us another day to carry out Your appointments on this Earth.

We acknowledge here in this great House that every good and perfect gift comes from the Father of light. Grant unto us knowledge and wisdom to judge ourselves. Grant unto us the understanding to govern our daily affairs.

Touch our hearts to be true laborers together for the cause of uniting the Nation. Because where there is unity there is strength. Let Your counsel of freedom flow like rivers of anointed oil for where Your spirit is there is always liberty. Amen, amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Chair's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5, rule I, further proceedings on this question are postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. LINDER] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. LINDER 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.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Lundegran, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate had passed with an amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 660. An act to amend the Fair Housing Act to modify the exemption from certain familial status discrimination prohibitions granted to housing for older persons.

The message also announced that the Senate agrees to the amendment of the House to the bill (S. 790) "An Act to provide for the modification or elimi-

nation of Federal reporting requirements" with an amendment.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 99-83, the Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, appoints Rabbi Chaskel Besser, of New York, E. William Crotty, of Florida, and Ned Bandler, of New York, to the Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The Chair will entertain twenty 1-minute speeches on each side.

WELCOME TO BISHOP DWIGHT PATE

(Mr. FIELDS of Louisiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FIELDS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to introduce to the House and to the American people a man who has had a great impact on many lives through his good work, his teaching, and his message of good will.

Bishop Dwight Pate is from my home of Baton Rouge, LA, where he leads Church Point Ministries, a large church of over 4,000 members, as well as an academy where teaching prepares and inspires many people who have lost their way to live meaningful and good lives. Homeless people, those addicted to drugs, and all who have lost their way in our society can find the path to healing through Bishop Pate's ministry. Bishop Pate's hard work has built an institution that is invaluable to his community, and his teaching has healed and inspired. His ministry brings his community together for worship and dedication to make their lives better.

His work is the work that helps make America great. I want to thank Bishop

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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Pate for his great service and welcome him to the U.S. Congress.

IT IS TIME TO DEBATE THE REAL ISSUES AND STOP ENGAGING IN POLEMICS

(Mr. WALKER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, for much of this year this House has reverberated with speeches condemning fellow Members of Congress and other fellow figures. Many of those speeches have bordered on hate. Some people on my side of the aisle have used language against the President that has been inappropriate. On the minority side of the aisle, the speeches against the Speaker have been filled with venom.

The fact is that we are going to have political differences over issues and policies. We should debate vigorously those matters. But in the citadel of democracy there should be much more civility than we have seen this year.

Those of you who wanted the Committee on Ethics to report on the Speaker, they have. Can we now stop the personal vilification? Can the leadership on both sides of the aisle begin policing our own ranks to stop Members from using the House floor to vilify each other or express personal hatreds?

Many of us, myself included, have engaged in polemics on this floor. If what I have said in the past has been offensive to someone, then I intend to lower my voice and stick to debating the real issues, like balancing the budget. I would hope that others will do the same. It is time to stop anything that can be interpreted as meanness, venom, or hate.

WE CANNOT HAVE A DOUBLE STANDARD

(Mr. JOHNSTON of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JOHNSTON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise in somewhat response to the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. WALKER] and I agree with the hate and venom, but I want to point out that the gentleman from Florida [Mr. PETERSON] and I had a privileged resolution on this floor that had no hate or venom. It was rather innocuous, merely calling for a report from the Committee on Ethics.

That was voted down twice, without debate, on a motion to table. I am here really to point out to you the double standard, and I have a news release from the Speaker of the House in 1988 calling for a special counsel, in which he states that the outside counsel shall have full authority to investigate and present evidence and arguments before the Committee on Ethics concerning the questions arising out of the activities of House Speaker Jim Wright.

He goes on to say that the special counsel should have the right of sub-

poena and also states the committee shall not countermand or interfere with the outside counsel's ability to take steps necessary to conduct a full and fair investigation.

We cannot have a double standard, and that is all we ask for, Mr. Speaker.

WE SHOULD WORK TOGETHER TO SOLVE THE NATION'S PROBLEMS

(Mr. BOEHNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, for more than 13 months there has been an orchestrated campaign to demonize the Speaker. I think that this campaign that has gone on to try to destroy him is unfortunate. Of the 65 specific allegations that were made in the complaints to the Committee on Ethics about the Speaker, all were technically dismissed or fully dismissed except one.

Of that one, there has been a special investigator brought in to work with the subcommittee to look at that one narrow little charge, which a former IRS commissioner has already suggested to both the Speaker and others is no violation whatsoever.

Mr. Speaker, I think all of us have an obligation to ourselves and an obligation to this institution to be honest and to be forthright and to make sure that the integrity of the institution is maintained. The politicization of the Committee on Ethics over this last year I think is unfortunate, because these issues have been resolved by five Democrats and five Republicans working together, and together we can all continue to work to solve the Nation's problems.

BRING BIPARTISANSHIP BACK TO DELIBERATIONS

(Mr. FAZIO of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, I spent 8 years on the Committee on Ethics and part of that time during the investigation of former Speaker Wright. I have not chosen to speak on the issue of the Speaker and his involvement with that committee until this very moment.

It seems to me that if we want to restore comity to the institution, to bring bipartisanship back to our deliberations, to take some of the poison out of the atmosphere, this issue needs to be resolved and fully resolved within the confines of that committee.

I have tremendous respect for the individuals who serve all of the institution by putting time in, together, day after day, in that room. But until the issue is resolved, because of the nature of the speakership, by an outside counsel, we will not be able to get beyond this very difficult point that we seem to be hung up on today, and have been, frankly, for most of this year.

I applaud the committee for finally taking the step of moving to instill more confidence in their deliberations. I do believe, however, that they must give the outside counsel the latitude to put to rest all the issues that have been raised. To do something other than that is to do different than we did when Speaker Wright was in the committee's deliberations, and would be, I think, unfortunately a truncated approach to getting this Congress beyond the cult of personality and back to work.

ETHICS PROCESS BEING ABUSED FOR POLITICAL GAIN

(Mr. DELAY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, to compare the Wright investigation to the Gingrich investigation is like comparing a gnat to a hippopotamus.

Last night, the Ethics Committee unanimously dismissed 64 of 65 allegations against Speaker NEWT GINGRICH. Both Republicans and Democrats concluded that most of these charges were unwarranted, unnecessary, and not worthy of further investigation.

The 65th charge is narrowly focused on a technical tax law that requires an outside expert to investigate. And even this charge has been found to be baseless by a former commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service.

Let there be no mistake. This effort to destroy NEWT GINGRICH is not about finding the truth. It was not about discovering the facts behind his book deal. Those allegations were dismissed.

It was not about his college lectures. Those allegations were dismissed.

This is an effort to change the subject, as Republicans try to change the country for the better. At great expense and great fanfare, liberal Democrats have abused the ethics process for political gain.

PUTTING CREDIBILITY BACK INTO HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

(Mr. PETERSON of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PETERSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, finally. Fourteen months we have waited patiently. We asked that we have a report. We asked the Committee on Ethics to do what it was supposed to do, to rule on the ethical conduct of its Members. That is its obligation.

We finally have them acting, and I applaud their action. And I applaud today some of the Members stepping forward and saying "Hey, this is a new day. Let's go forward with some bipartisanship." Let us stop the rancor on this floor. Let us put credibility back into this institution. But let us not forget that the Speaker is not immune to review from his ethical behavior.