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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. WICKER].

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
December 20, 1995.

I hereby designate the Honorable ROGER F. WICKER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Rev. James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

May Your word, O God, that brought the Earth into being and sustains us along life's way not only comfort us, but examine and correct us in our vision, our motivations, and our purposes. We know that we are accountable to You for our lives and responsible to each other for our deeds so we pray that we will see Your mighty purposes for justice among us. Sustain us, strengthen us, judge us, forgive us, and minister to us in the depths of our hearts. This is our earnest prayer. 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.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Mississippi [Mr. MONT-

GOMERY] come forward and lead the membership in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. MONTGOMERY 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. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate agrees to the report of the committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 1530), "An Act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 1996 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe personnel strengths for such fiscal year for the Armed Forces, and for other purposes."

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain fifteen 1-minutes per side.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON TODAY

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with today.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

DEMOCRATS AND PRESIDENT DUCK RESPONSIBILITY

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, there are two arguments the Democrats and the President use to justify their not signing a 7-year balanced budget agreement.

One is the Medicare scare. Right now the difference between what the President and we are proposing is .7 percent a year or \$11 billion. So how can Americans believe the President when he said, "I simply cannot sign a budget that devastates Medicare to the elderly." Come on, Mr. President, we are in agreement on Medicare so stop the scare.

The other sound bite for Democrats and the President is tax cuts. The American people have suffered through at least 19 different major tax increases since 1981 without one single tax cut. There is no reason why they should have to wait another 7 to 10 years for tax relief.

Our tax cuts were paid for on April 5, 1995, before the debate began on saving Medicare. And they have nothing to do with saving Medicare. In fact we have a lock box in the Medicare legislation to keep all savings there.

The President and the Democrats have fabricated the Medicare-scare and tax cut connection because it is useful politically. "It allows them to attack and to duck responsibility, both at the same time." Those are not my words. That is from the Washington Post editorial on September 25, 1995.

Come on, Mr. President, sign the agreement and let us stop ducking responsibility.

GET VETERANS' CHECKS OUT ON TIME

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

Mr. MONTGOMERY. Mr. Speaker, first we must be sure that the 3 million

□ 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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veterans' checks get out on time. The deadline is tomorrow. Really, let us not let these veterans down. Let us get these checks out on time.

OUR TROOPS IN BOSNIA

Mr. Speaker, like most Americans, I have watched our American forces move into Bosnia on the ground and in the air. Mr. Speaker, even though I am not happy with the mission, I am very impressed with the way our Armed Forces are handling themselves. With temperatures below freezing, fog, snow and ice, our military is operating as well-trained unit in Bosnia.

Next time that our soldiers and Air Force personnel are wearing their uniforms and equipment the way they are and the way they were trained, look at them; I am not one that has seen any Americans walking around without his or her helmet being on, and as you look, they are carrying their individual weapons, plus they are doing an outstanding job with our great airplanes in landing in the fog, ice, and snow.

Mr. Speaker, we must remember that all of our personnel in Bosnia are from the all-volunteer system. They are the finest military force in the world, and it shows. Just look at them tonight on television.

WHAT REALLY WENT ON LAST NIGHT?

(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, the United States, the President, and Washington, DC, better understand what went on last night. The Speaker, the majority leader, and the President negotiated for 2½ hours.

We were under the impression that the President was absolutely adamant about making a deal and bringing a balanced budget now. Within 15 to 30 minutes, the vice president walked out and contradicted what the Speaker understood to be the beginning of a deal. This is *deja vu* all over again. This is exactly what happened on November 20 that we have been manipulated for now going on 30 days.

The President obviously is not interested in balancing the budget. This administration cannot be trusted. They can not keep their word. They cannot keep their promises.

And so make no mistake about it, there will be no CR until the administration proves that they can be trusted.

MAJORITY PARTY SHOULD GOVERN

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, there goes the Republican leadership again, saying they want to keep the Government shut down because they do not

get their way, and that is the problem here. The Republican majority has an obligation to keep this Government going. They are the only ones that can bring up a continuing resolution. They refuse to do so, because they do not get their way.

The President has stood strong, and he has said, "I will negotiate, I will sit down with you, but I will not negotiate away Medicare, I will not negotiate away Medicaid, the environment, and education." He is being fair. He is being strong.

But this Republican leadership, and there you heard it said very clearly, they want to keep the Government shut down and they want to hold this Government hostage. That is not what the majority party is supposed to do. They are supposed to govern. They are supposed to care about the Government and all the Government agencies and all the things that people need in order to continue functioning in this country. It is not fair. They are the problem.

THE BASIC PREMISE OF STRENGTH

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

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, once again I listened with great interest to my friend from New Jersey set down his parameters for what a majority party should do and offer us an interesting definition of strength. I respectfully beg to differ.

The most stirring example of strength is to keep your promise to the American people. The most stirring example of responsibility is to save this country and this Government from fiscal disaster for generations yet unborn. The most stirring example of true responsibility is to provide for our seniors by making sure that their health care is still here in 7 years, to make plans for the next generation and not just the next election.

The sad fact is that the liberals on this side of the aisle and the liberals at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue do not seem to understand that basic premise of strength.

Once again, the new majority says to our friends on the other side, join with us and govern, but let us play by the rules.

WE MUST BALANCE PRIORITIES

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

Mr. KLINK. Mr. Speaker, we have got some disagreements and, indeed, sometimes the rhetoric gets a little heated around here from both sides.

Let me explain, we are not just talking dollars and cents as some of our colleagues on the other side who spoke earlier. We are not talking about the fact we are a few billion dollars apart.

We are talking about balancing priorities as well as balancing the budget. There are a lot of us on our side of the aisle that say, look, if we are going to force adult children of the elderly who are in nursing homes to pick up the cost of that nursing home care because we have changed Medicaid, we have made a medigap program, we have not guaranteed that all of these senior citizens are even going to have a nursing home, we have not guaranteed the standard of care, we have not guaranteed that spouses are not going to be impoverished.

Let me tell you something, in the committee, 100 percent of the Republicans on the other side voted against each one of those amendments protecting adult children, protecting spouses from impoverishment, protecting people so that they have at least some standard of care.

I understand, in the conference report, that may have begun to change. It has not changed enough. We must protect those care standards.

WORDS FROM A PROMINENT AMERICAN POLITICIAN

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

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to quote from a prominent American politician:

We have to cut the deficit, because the more we spend paying off the debt, the less tax dollars we have to invest in jobs and education and the future of this country. The more money we take out of the pool available savings, the harder it is for people in the private sector to borrow money at affordable interest rates for a college loan or for their children, for a home mortgage or to start a new business. That is why we have got to reduce the debt, because it is crowding out other activities we ought to be engaged in and the American people ought to be engaged in. We cut the deficit so that our children will be able to buy a home, so that our companies can invest in the future, retaining their workers, so our government can make the kinds of investments we need to be strong and smarter and safer.

These are not the words of NEWT GINGRICH, but the words of Bill Clinton on February 2, 1993, in his budget address. He said it. We agree with it. Let us do it. Let us do it now.

AMERICA, TAKE A LOOK AT THE LOSS OF JOBS

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

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk about budget deficits. Polaroid has announced they are laying off 1,300 Americans, 1,300 more Americans losing their livable-wage jobs.

But Polaroid said, "Don't worry." They are going to join forces with the Federal Government and provide retraining. What are we retraining American workers to do? How many more