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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. BURTON of Indiana].

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
June 16, 1995.

I hereby designate the Honorable DAN BURTON 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:

With hearts of gratitude and praise, O gracious God, we offer our thanks for Your Word that points us in the right way, that accompanies us in the valley of the shadow, that never abandons us though we forget or despise, that inspires and encourages us no matter what the concern, that forgives us and pardons us of all guilt, that reminds us that in all the moments of life we are never alone, for Your Word of faith and hope and love is with us always. 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 American Samoa [Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA 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 had passed a concurrent resolution of the following title, in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. Con. Res. 17. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the exhibition of the RAH-66 Comanche helicopter.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will accept five 1-minutes from each side.

IN DEFENSE OF DEFENSE

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

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, I think it is fair to say that the defense budget has not been a high priority for Mr. Clinton. I think it is important, however, for us to remember that the greatest portion of the defense dollars that are spent are not spent on SDI nor on the B-2 bomber.

We spend the biggest share of our defense dollars on people, the young enlisted personnel who catapult the F-14's off carriers, control military satellites, man Patriot missile batteries, and land on beaches from Normandy to Somalia. These men and women who travel in harm's way for our sake are the ones who are hurt by inadequate defense spending.

We have begun yesterday and again today the process of rebuilding our national defenses. Because of our fiscal crisis, it won't be as much as some of us would like but it is a down payment. Remember, most defense goes to the men and women who protect us every day. That is what you will find in today's military construction appropriation bill.

Mr. Speaker, history has proven to us that when we see the daylight of peace on the horizon, we tend to disarm and bask in the sunshine. We need to remember that the darkness of war can be only a few hours away.

DO NOT BALANCE THE BUDGET ON THE BACKS OF OUR CHILDREN AND SENIOR CITIZENS

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

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, we are all in agreement, Democrats and Republicans; we must put the financial affairs of our country back in order. Our huge national debt, the legacy of the Reagan and Bush administrations, must be eliminated.

The question, Mr. Speaker, is how to cut and what to cut. The Republicans in Congress want to cut school lunches for our children, cut our student's college loans and cut Medicare for our senior citizens. This is how the Republicans propose to balance the budget.

Students will have to pay thousands more to attend college and our parents and grandparents will have to spend an extra \$1,000 per year for their health care.

At the same time the Republicans propose giving a tax break to the wealthiest people in America, the super rich, the top 1 percent. This approach, is wrong, just plain wrong.

Mr. Speaker, when are the Republicans in this House going to realize

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

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that the American people want to get the financial affairs of this country in order, but not on the backs of our children and senior citizens and not while giving tax breaks to the richest people in America.

GET ON THE REFORM BANDWAGON

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

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, in New Hampshire this past weekend, President Clinton agreed with Speaker GINGRICH that Medicare is in trouble. In his own words, he said, "We cannot leave the system the way it is. There have to be some changes."

Mr. Speaker, it is nice to see the President of the United States recognizes a problem that affects millions of senior citizens in our country. However, I can't help thinking how nice it would be now to actually see Democrats produce some solutions to these problems.

Unfortunately, the Democrats around here have no ideas on how to fix the current Medicare crisis. Instead, they stand up day after day to whine and moan and complain about Republican actions on Medicare.

It would be nice to see the Democrats divert some of their energy into helping us develop solutions to preserve and protect Medicare. Join the President, join the Republicans. Let's preserve and protect a very good Medicare system. Stop whining, stop complaining, get on the reform bandwagon.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH A "CORRECTIONS CALENDAR IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES"

Mr. SOLOMON, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 104-144) on the resolution (H. Res. 168) amending clause 4 of rule XIII of the rules of the House to abolish the Consent Calendar and to establish in its place a Corrections Calendar, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

MEDICARE

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

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, for the last 30 years or so, most of the laws made by Congress assumed that Government was more efficient and more wise than any other institution in the country.

For instance, Medicare was implemented in the 1960's and was designed to provide health care, primarily to the elderly, based on the idea that Government could best distribute health care resources.

Since the creation, Medicare spending has increased dramatically. In fact,

Medicare part B has increased 5,400 percent since the creation of the program. Medicare is in such bad shape that even members of the President's own Cabinet admit that Medicare will be bankrupt in 7 years.

Mr. Speaker, buried deep in the philosophy of programs like Medicare is the assumption that Government has all the answers. It does not. It is time for the American people, both Republicans and Democrats, to work together to save Medicare. It is not too late to preserve and protect it before it goes broke.

WHERE'S THE BEEF?

(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, for years Washington politicians have been asking, Where's the beef? I can honestly answer this morning, we found the beef. It is grazing on the beltway, 12 errant bovines on the beltway, running around recklessly, grazing at will, and some people say they are just restless, it is the breeding season.

I say, Mr. Speaker, they are looking for the budget. The President has one, the House has one, the Senate has one. The truth is the American people know there is a lot of bovine flatulence down here, and the American people want to know where the cash cow really is.

I say let's develop a budget that creates some jobs. Where's the beef politically? Sad to say, it is on the beltway.

IMPROVING CHILD-PROOF MEDICINE CAPS

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

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, yesterday was a rare example of how Government can work with industry—instead of against them—on regulations that will improve safety. I am referring to the decision by the Consumer Product Safety Commission on child-proof medicine caps.

New Jersey is home to 15 major pharmaceutical companies with over 83 facilities statewide. The industry employs over 56,000 New Jerseyans and contributes close to \$10 billion to our State's economy.

Child-proof caps have become so hard to remove—especially for our elderly—that adults leave the bottles open or switch the drugs to pill boxes, where kids can easily get into them. The result was that more children were ingesting dangerous substances.

In February, during a VA-HUD appropriations hearing, I asked that the commission work with industry to fix this problem. Yesterday's ruling does just that.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the commission and industry for working together. This is a win-win result and I am glad that I was able to play a part.

This rule should improve child safety and make older Americans' lives easier—what could be better?

FIXING A BROKEN MEDICARE SYSTEM

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

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, it is part of American conventional wisdom that if it ain't broke, then don't fix it, but Medicare is broke because it is going broke. The Medicare board of trustees said in March in their 1995 annual report on Medicare, that the program is severely out of financial balance and is expected to be exhausted in 2001.

It is broke because it is going broke. We have a responsibility to fix it. That is what this debate is all about. If you look at the numbers that we are talking about, the way that we fix it is in terms of numbers. We increase the spending from \$4,800 per recipient per year to \$6,400 per recipient per year. In other words, we go from about \$400 a month per person to about \$550 a month per person. But the real challenge is working out the details of how that is done.

I am confident that we can do that. I am confident that based on where the private sector has gone to squeeze out money in the medical system, that we can do it. But what we need is the help of the Democrats, we need the help of the President, we need the help of the public. We need our own people, and we need to all work together to come up with a solution that will in fact fix this system.

IN SUPPORT OF THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

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

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the budget that our President introduced this week. It is a thoughtful, fiscally responsible, and compassionate approach to the most difficult challenge that faces this governing body.

The President has included those items that are least justifiable in terms of the Federal role. It goes after the corporate tax subsidies, the most egregious ones. It follows up on the down payment we made on balancing the budget in 1993, the Omnibus Budget and Reconciliation Act, by keeping the spending caps on domestic discretionary programs.

Most importantly, it reforms the health care system. It has the insurance reforms that we have reached consensus on, that need to be made. It does not take money from the recipients of our programs in the way that most of the Medicare cuts that are included in the Republican budget do.

But what it does is to go after the providers, the providers that, in fact, have been taking most of the increase