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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

PRAYER

The Reverend Dr. Robert F. Browning, pastor of First Baptist Church, Somerset, KY, offered the following prayer:

Father, You have been so good to us and we thank You for many blessings today. Thank You for trusting us to make decisions. Help us to be wise. Thank You for giving us responsibility. Help us to be industrious. Thank You for allowing us to be leaders in this great country. Help us to follow You as we lead Your people. Thank You for giving us families along our journey. Help us to be faithful to them. Thank You, most of all, for Your abiding presence, gracious love, strengthening arm, and forgiving Spirit. May we be humble recipients and bold ambassadors. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. 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. Will the gentleman from Texas, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON, come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will recognize 15 Members on each side for 1-minute.

REQUEST FOR LIMITATION OF TIME FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2126, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1996

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent on the defense bill today that we have a limitation of 5 hours on the bill and all amendments thereto.

The SPEAKER. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

Mr. SANDERS. Yes, Mr. Speaker, I object. We are talking about \$244 billion. I think we need more debate than 5 hours.

Mr. MURTHA. How about 6 hours?

The SPEAKER. Objection is heard.

Mr. SANDERS. I think it is something that should be discussed perhaps in a little while when people get together. I do not have an objection to a time limit. But I cannot agree to a certain time limit now.

The SPEAKER. The Chair seeks to accommodate Members, and this has been an interesting colloquy. The Chair thinks if the gentlemen can get together, the Chair will be glad to recognize someone at an appropriate moment.

WELCOME TO REV. DR. ROBERT F. BROWNING

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

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Speaker, the Reverend Bob Browning, who offered today's opening prayer as the guest House Chaplain, is my hometown pastor, friend, and personal counselor.

He is the pastor of the First Baptist Church in Somerset, KY, a church of some 2,000 members.

Although a young man, Brother Browning has packed into his years an impressive career in service to God and his people.

He just last year finished two 1-year terms as president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, a sure sign of the esteem felt for Brother Browning by his peers and religious leaders throughout Kentucky.

But, no wonder to us, his home church members, we have watched his leadership abilities grow and develop since he came to us in 1982 following pastorships at three other Kentucky churches and receiving his doctorate degree at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

In addition to various responsibilities with the State association, he has been called upon by the entire community. He serves on everything from the YMCA board to the county solid waste advisory committee. He is a trustee at Cumberland College. He has worked as a volunteer in Africa, Brazil, and Russia.

Brother Bob and his wife Jackie are the parents of three wonderful children: Jason, Amy, and Joshua. Jason is a marine, based in California.

Brother Bob is a wonderful preacher. But his greatest gift is his ability to counsel, one on one. I can personally testify to the warm and caring love he imparts to those who are so fortunate to be in his care. He has been of enormous importance to me and my family in recent months, especially.

Welcome Brother Browning to the people's House, your House.

LET US CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE B-2

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

□ 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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minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, today the House will take up the Defense appropriations bill, and one of the most important amendments will be on the B-2 bomber. Ever since 1980, when Secretary Harold Brown announced that we would build a stealth bomber, I have felt that this was the most important technological breakthrough in modern military history.

In the Gulf war, the F-117, a stealth attack aircraft, was able to penetrate the most difficult targets and knock out surface-to-air missiles and radars without losing pilots and doing it in a matter of hours. Other airplanes that were not stealthy were unable to penetrate without a large number of support aircraft.

The B-2 gives us a plane that can carry eight times as much as the F-117 and five times as far. In a world where we are going to have a smaller U.S. military, having worldwide reach, being able to stop mobile divisions coming from North Korea, say, into South Korea or into the gulf, is a revolutionary capability. Let us continue to support the B-2.

HOW TO PROTECT OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE

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

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, a lot has changed over the last 9 months of the Republican controlled Congress.

As Members of Congress went home for their August recess, they listened to their constituents. Their constituents continued to ring the bell that was heard loudly last November by voters around this country when they decided to change the makeup of the U.S. Congress. They said that they wanted a smaller, less costly, less intrusive government, and they reiterated their demands over August.

As we look to the fall with a lot of confusion, a lot of activity, let me make it perfectly clear that Republicans in Congress are going to balance the budget over the next 7 years to save the future for our children; that we are going to strengthen, preserve, and protect Medicare for our senior citizens; that we are going to reform welfare, where we reward work and take away the incentives for illegitimacy today; and, last, our fourth objective is to reduce the tax load on middle-income Americans and provide incentives to have a strong, healthy economy so that we ensure that we actually balance the budget over the next 7 years.

This is what we must do to protect our children's future.

THE B-2 BOMBER IS COST-EFFECTIVE

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission

to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in strong support of continuing the B-2 program. The B-2 bomber protects our sons and daughters and grandsons and granddaughters, the women and men of the military looking out for this Nation.

When we send our people to battle, we want to send them with the best equipment we have available and we want to send them in as small a number as possible to save lives. This is what the B-2 will do. The B-2 can replace many of the fighter planes in a very stealth way. It will cost more per individual plane, but when we compare the fact that it can replace 70 some planes on each mission, it is worth it. It is cost effective.

Mr. Speaker, at least seven former Secretaries of Defense have noted the B-2 bomber is the most cost-effective means of rapidly projecting force over great distances.

KEEP THE B-2 BOMBER

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

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, today we will hold an important vote on the future of our Nation's bomber force.

With this in mind, I would like to outline excerpts from a recent report by the Congressional Research Service on the B-2 bomber. This is a neutral organization that does not advocate or oppose defense programs. Members opposed to modernizing our bomber fleet will discuss what they view as alternatives to the B-2. Listen to what the report says about these alternatives:

Alternative No. 1.—Tactical aircraft. Tactical aircraft are manpower intensive and require large numbers of tanker aircraft and nearby, properly equipped military bases or carriers from which to operate.

Alternative No. 2.—Cruise missiles. Cruise missiles are expensive—up to 70 times more costly than bomber-delivered direct-attack weapons—and offer comparatively little firepower.

Alternative No. 3.—Theater ballistic missiles—Theater-based ballistic missiles have very limited range and are also more costly than bomber-delivered direct-attack weapons. Of course, the fourth alternative is to do nothing and fly 1950's-era B-52's until they are 70 years old, which has been suggested by officials within our Defense Department. Last month, we witnessed a potential consequence of this mentality when an engine dropped from a B-52 in flight during a routine exercise.

We should not let this happen to the men and women of our Armed Forces. Vote no on the Obey-Dellums-Kasich amendment.

CUTTING MEDICARE TO PAY FOR TAX BREAKS

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

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, 9 months ago the American public gave to the Republicans the opportunity to control this House of Representatives and the Senate. At that time the Republicans announced that they wanted to give very wealthy income taxpayers a huge tax break. How are they going to pay for it under the budget rules?

They are going to cut 270 billion dollars' worth of benefits out of the Medicare Program, \$270 billion. They are going to take away from all the senior citizens the right to choose their doctor. They are going to charge them more. These burdens will fall not only on the senior citizens but on their families, who will feel compelled to have to dig down in their pockets to take care of these people. This is unfair.

But the most unfair thing about all of this, Mr. Speaker, is this: In 2 weeks, we will be voting on the Committee on Ways and Means on this program, and this is the only copy of it that we have, this blank piece of paper. This stealth attack is unconscionable.

SCARE TACTICS REGARDING MEDICARE

(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, I listened with great interest to my good friend from Florida who precedes me here in the well, and, Mr. Speaker, we see yet another example of Medi-Scare. You see, if you do not want to solve a problem, you try to scare the H-E-double-hockey-sticks out of the American people. Scare them into an action; scare them into senseless fear.

But the fact remains this: Medicare goes bankrupt in 7 years if we do nothing. To the seniors who age into the program in 7 years, I ask, what do you do when there is no program there? For the seniors who are living under the program now, I ask, what happens when it goes bankrupt?

We are willing to work with our friends in the new minority to come up with a plan to save this vital program. We want to enlarge options; we want to have this program viable. But the one thing we do not need is more fear tactics. The one thing we need is constructive consistent work together to solve this vital problem confronting this Nation.

MEDICARE CUTS

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, the Republican plan to cut \$270 billion from