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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

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

O gracious God, may the Sun of the morning remind us of the bright hope of Your creation; may the fresh winds of the day suggest Your spirit that moves about us and around us encouraging and enlightening; may the smell of flowers testify to the fragrance of Your love to us; and may the busy world in which we live and work remind us of the responsibilities and the obligations of our service to the Nation. May all the wonder of Your creation, O God, testify to Your many gifts to us and the marvel and miracle of each new day. 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 Mississippi [Mr. WICKER] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WICKER 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

This morning the Chair will recognize fifteen 1-minute speeches on either side of the aisle as agreed to by the leadership.

IN HONOR OF FORMER CONGRESSMAN JAMIE WHITTEN

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

Mr. WICKER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, America laid to rest one of our finest statesmen. Jamie Whitten, a dear friend and colleague to many Members of this House, was remembered in funeral services in Charleston, MS.

Congressman Jamie Whitten served a record 53 years and 2 months in this body, rising to become the long-time dean of the House, and chairman of the Appropriations Committee. However, he never forgot his roots in rural America, serving ably as the chairman of the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee and becoming what many referred to as the permanent Secretary of Agriculture.

I knew Jamie Whitten for 28 years, since I served as his page in 1967. Mr. Whitten quietly earned the reputation for always being a gentleman during an era when many public figures gained attention by being flamboyant and divisive. Winston Churchill said that singleness of purpose and simplicity of conduct are powerful attributes of public servants. These were the qualities of Mr. Whitten.

Mr. Whitten was never concerned with seeking the recognition he deserved. Perhaps there will be no monuments erected in his name, but today, across America, there are many quiet legacies he leaves behind.

As one Mississippi newspaper stated yesterday,

Jamie Whitten started his public service career when some Mississippians still had eye-witness memories of the Civil War and only dreamed of one day having electricity in their homes. Today, farms across America are the breadbasket for the world and schoolchildren in rural America can routinely com-

municate from their homes via computers with people halfway around the world.

These are the silent monuments to a man who dedicated his life to this House and to this country. For that, his beloved State of Mississippi and his country will be forever grateful.

AMERICA NEEDS A THIRD POLITICAL PARTY

(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, the United States trade deficit last quarter reached another record, \$44 billion. In addition, America ran an investment deficit of \$3 billion. Some progress.

While everybody in Washington is talking about this big train wreck, the budget, let us tell it the way it is. The Titanic, that trade deficit, is what is killing American jobs. And the sad fact is, folks, from Japan to Mexico there is no difference between a Democrat and a Republican.

Mr. Speaker, is it any wonder that a majority of the American people do not identify with either of the two major political parties? When it comes to trade, there is not a reasonable program in America on either side of the aisle. America needs an alternative, a third political party. Maybe that is only way we will address some of these issues.

SAVE AND STRENGTHEN MEDICARE

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

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, the President's appointed trustees have warned that Medicare will go bankrupt by 2002. If we do nothing, seniors' out-of-pocket costs will

□ 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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rise and Medicare will be bankrupt in just 7 years.

Mr. Speaker, if we raise payroll taxes, as we have done 23 times in 27 years, we will force our children and grandchildren to pay more now for seniors' health care and Medicare will still go bankrupt before our children and grandchildren can retire and gain any benefits.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot wait. The problem will not go away. The only solution is to introduce choice for seniors and competition among health care providers. Choice and competition always do two things in our free enterprise system: They lower costs and improve quality.

Medicare is far too important to turn it into Medi-scare. Republicans are asking Democrats, please, join us to save and strengthen Medicare.

WAKE UP AMERICA

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, again I say to my colleagues and to the American people: Wake up America.

Mr. Speaker, last week President Chirac of France pushed his nuclear button and exploded 1 of 8 nuclear bombs last week that had more power than was exploded in the atom bomb in Hiroshima, Japan, 50 years ago. Later detonations are expected to follow, each with up to 10 times greater destructiveness than the Hiroshima bomb.

Maybe 10 years from now, when that island atoll in the Pacific, the Mururoa Atoll, starts sinking and nuclear contamination enters the marine food chain causing secondary fish poisoning, maybe then one day the millions of Americans living in Hawaii and the Pacific Coast States will say, "Why did no one tell us about this?"

Mr. Speaker, France has already exploded 164 nuclear bombs in this atoll. What madness. Wake up America. We may also end up the victims of French callousness by poisoning our Pacific environment.

PRESIDENT CLINTON WEIGHS IN ON FUNDAMENTAL REFORMS

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

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the President convened a meeting of the bipartisan congressional leadership at the White House and he urged the Congress to get on with the task of balancing the Federal budget, reforming the welfare system, cutting taxes, particularly on middle-class families, and controlling Medicare costs.

Mr. Speaker, it is good to hear the President weigh in in this debate. Yet I predict that the response that he will get from the Congress and his party is

a stony silence. How ironic that it is going to take the new Republican majority to help this President, who as a candidate promised to end welfare as we know it and cut taxes, make good on those promises.

THE REPUBLICAN COVERT PLAN FOR MEDICARE

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

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, "silence," we have just heard. Silence is what we have gotten when it comes to the covert Republican plan to hike the costs of Medicare for all of America's seniors.

Mr. Speaker, for months Speaker GINGRICH and cohorts have been going around behind closed doors saying to themselves, America's seniors are getting off cheap. They are just not paying enough for health care. They have got a plan, and it has been whispered in the corridors of this Capitol, to increase deductibles and increase the monthly premiums for America's seniors; to increase the costs that they have to pay if they want to stay out of the nursing home or get home health care; to increase the cost of a lab test that a doctor might have, because they think America's seniors are not paying enough for Medicare.

There are many words to describe it. Covert, secret, mysterious, concealed, hugger-muggered, veiled, tricky, latent, shrouded, suppressed, cloaked. But the best one is "wrong." It is just wrong to do this to America's seniors.

REPUBLICANS HAILED FOR THEIR EFFORTS ON MEDICARE

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

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, I hope the gentleman from Texas [Mr. DOGGETT], my colleague and good friend, the previous speaker, had a chance to read the Washington Post editorial yesterday on the Medicare or Medi-scare debate.

The liberal paper of record applauds Republicans because we have "forcefully taken the right position on the basic issue of controlling costs" and it chides the Democrats, like my good friend from Texas, for not playing a "constructive part in the Medicare debate."

Boy, they could not have gotten it better and more right on point. It says, "The Democrats denounce the Republicans for proposing to gut the programs, but they have no serious counterproposal; not the Democrats in Congress and not the President either."

It continues, "They," the Democrats, "risk squandering for political reasons a chance to tame these programs that everyone agrees need to be tamed. What if they chose to help instead of

using the issue to score political points?"

That is the liberal Washington Post speaking. How about it, my Democrat colleagues. How about it my friend from Texas. Why not put an end to this partisan posturing and join us in an effort to save Medicare from bankruptcy.

SECRET MEDICARE PLAN

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

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is refreshing to hear the Republican majority quote the Washington Post. I am more concerned about the Houston Chronicle than I am the Washington Post.

Republican Medicare cuts in growth \$270 billion to pay for a \$245 billion tax cut over the same 7 years. The new Republican majority will double the monthly premium for Medicare recipients and eliminate their choice of doctors under their plan.

It is a secret plan, because we do not know about it. It has been secret for the 8 months we have been here, almost 9. They want to cram that plan down our throats this coming week.

Mr. Speaker, let us have at least 30 days of public hearings. Let us listen to what our constituents want us to hear about their plan and let us make sure that we do not take away from seniors their choice of doctors and providers, because I know that is what that secret Republican plan will do.

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CONTINUING THE UNIQUE TREND

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

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Mr. Speaker, this fall we are going to continue a unique trend that began with the Contract With America. We, politicians, are going to keep our promises.

Before we go home, Republicans are going to insist on the following: A balanced budget that restores fiscal sanity to our country; a plan that saves Medicare for future generations; welfare reform, emphasizing work, family, and personal responsibility; and tax relief, so families can finance their dreams not the Government.

Mr. Speaker, this is not just the Republican agenda. It is the agenda of the American people. The people have demanded real change. This fall, we intend to deliver.

LET US WORK TOGETHER TO SAVE MEDICARE

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