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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

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

We hear the discordant voices of our land and of our world and we can become perplexed and we wonder if there is any harmony or unity that binds people together. Yet, O gracious God, we know that You have created all people in Your image and are the ruler over all time and space. As we hear the differing voices and the varying clamor and clatter from so many places, remind us that every person from every land from every tradition can speak Your truth, the truth that can set all people free. Bless us, O gracious God, this day and every day, we pray. 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.

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

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

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. LAHOOD. 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. Pursuant to the provisions of clause 1, rule I, the Chair will postpone the vote until later in the day.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Colorado [Mr. SKAGGS] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. SKAGGS 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 entertain fifteen 1-minutes on each side.

TRIBUTE TO MARCIA SMITH

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

Mr. BEREUTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute and commendation to an exceptional public servant and a member of the congressional staff. After nearly exactly 10 years on my staff, my scheduler and personal secretary, Marcia Smith, will be leaving today. She has been prototypically an exceptional congressional employee, and I wanted to bring that fact to the attention of the House. Her performance here, her skill, the way she has met people from across the world who have come through my office, has been absolutely an outstanding reflection upon this institution, on this Member, and on my constituents in Nebraska.

I thank her for her tremendous service in what is undoubtedly one of the most hectic jobs for all of us, the scheduler-secretary. Her performance here has been exceptional, and I will miss her greatly in my work and life. We wish her well and great success and joy in her new career and life in Chicago. Good luck to you, Marcia.

CHANGE BURDEN OF PROOF IN TAX CASES

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

Mr. TRAFICANT. "With liberty and justice for all." All except taxpayers. The Internal Revenue Service and scorekeeper said if Congress changes the burden of proof in a tax case to treat a taxpayer under the Bill of Rights like any other citizen, innocent until proven guilty, it would cost the Government too much. So as a result, it is not going to happen again.

Let me say this to Members of the Congress: If the Congress themselves scored the Constitution, we would repeal for money purposes the Bill of Rights.

Shame, Congress. Hide your face. It is time to change the burden of proof in a tax case. This Congress must address that issue, or the American people should get in our face.

SAVING MEDICARE

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

Mr. CHABOT. Madam Speaker, Republicans in the House this week celebrated the 1-year anniversary of the Contract With America. That contract was and is a promise to the American people to reform the way things are done around here and we delivered. Now we are making a promise to preserve and strengthen Medicare. We intend to deliver again.

The shameless demagoguery that our liberal Democrat colleagues are engaging in will not stop us. The false TV ads put out by special interest groups will not stop us. The deliberate deception of the American people by a liberal minority with no solutions of its own will not stop us. We will deliver.

□ 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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Mr. Speaker, for too long our Nation was plagued by a liberal majority party that was satisfied with sacrificing the future of our children to sustain its power. Our new majority has already begun to change the priorities of Congress. The Republicans will not let this generation or our future generations down. We promise to save Medicare. We will deliver.

REPRESSING POLITICAL EXPRESSION IN AMERICA

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

Mr. SKAGGS. Madam Speaker, the effort by the proponents of the so-called McIntosh amendment to abuse and repress political expression in this country keeps on causing abuses of its own. First, abusing the regular legislative process and sticking this ill-advised bill into an appropriations measure. Then abusing committee authority by subjecting witnesses at yesterday's hearing to an inquisition about their protected first amendment activities. And now an abuse of decency and truth, putting out a sleazy forgery concocted by Committee on Government Reform and Oversight staff to deceive and mislead.

Yesterday, at the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight hearing on this crazy measure, this document, forged by committee staff to look like the stationery of an organization called as a witness, but containing false and misleading information, was put out. How low will the backers of this awful idea stoop to achieve their illicit purposes?

To add insult to this injury, the chairman has the temerity to claim this forgery was not intended to deceive. Madam Speaker, forgeries, by definition, are intended to deceive.

BIPARTISAN COOPERATION NEEDED TO SAVE MEDICARE

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

Mr. EWING. Madam Speaker, Democrats claim that the Republican majority is trying to ram through Medicare reform. This is not true. Since April, this Congress has conducted 36 hearings on saving Medicare, and our Members have met with thousands of constituents at hundreds of town meetings across the country. The Washington Post says there is a legitimate debate to be had about what ought to be the future of Medicare. But that is not what the Democrats are engaged in. They are engaged in demagoguery and class warfare, and it is wrong.

I challenge the Democrats to come up with an alternative plan and be part of the solution. Madam Speaker, it is time for the Democrats to take their head out of the sand and dispel the be-

lief that the new Democratic Party image is the ostrich.

SUPPORT INTEGRATING GUAM AND NORTHERN MARIANAS INTO NORTH AMERICAN NUMBERING PLAN

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

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in a letter to the Federal Communications Commission in support of integrating Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands into the North American numbering plan and the domestic rate system.

A Canadian telecommunications company has objected to the Guam request. The Canadians noted the significant possibility that due to their proximity to Asia, these islands could become telecommunications gateways to billions of potential Asian customers. In other words, the Canadians stand to lose business if the American Pacific territories are integrated into the domestic rate plan.

What are the Canadians afraid of? Believe it or not, they are afraid of competition from American carriers on Guam. Since most of the telecommunications traffic from Asia is currently routed through Vancouver, removing this FCC regulation would mean that American carriers operating on Guam could compete in the Asian market. It's a win for American companies and for the American economy and for competition.

You would think that the way Canada is reacting to this that Guam is challenging the Canadians for the Stanley Cup.

I ask my colleagues to join me in cosigning a letter to the FCC in support of the petition to remove this regulation and in support of increasing American competitiveness in Asia.

STOP SCARING MEDICARE RECIPIENTS

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

Mr. TIAHRT. Madam Speaker, Medicare is going broke by 2002, according to the President's board of trustees. If there is no balanced budget, if the budget was already balanced, and if no reduction in taxes were going to occur, Medicare is still going broke by 2002, according to the President's board of trustees.

Last night I spoke with my mother, Marcy Tiaht, who this month, September 17, turned 68. My father is 76. I want them to have the best, especially when it comes to Medicare. And after talking to them, I realized that some of the liberal opponents to Medicare were trying to scare them.

I wondered, now, who would want to scare my parents and your parents and your grandparents? Would it be a spoiled child, or a mean-spirited person, or someone with very, very selfish interests? I do not know. But I do know that there is no shame on the floor of the House, and there is no credibility to those who would scare my parents and your parents and your grandparents to serve their selfish motives.

A STEP BACKWARD IN MEDICAL CARE

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

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Madam Speaker, today in Washington with me is a constituent of mine, Frank DiPalo, Jr. Frank DiPalo will be testifying later this afternoon about the impact of the cuts on Medicare and Medicaid.

Frank remembers the days when his parents could not retire because they could not afford to. Frank DiPalo remembers the days when senior citizens were drugged in nursing homes because they did not have adequate staff to maintain those nursing homes. What the Republicans are calling for is lifting the standards in these nursing homes that keep them home with dignity.

Frank is going to speak out about what it is like for senior citizens with regard to out-of-pocket expenses for pharmaceutical drugs and the like, and Frank is going to say it is unjust for the Republicans to give a \$245 billion tax cut, over 52 percent of which is going to go to families earning \$100,000 or more, all while 85 percent of Medicare recipients get less than \$25,000 and spend more than a quarter of that income on their health care expenses.

LIMITING GOVERNMENT AND LOWERING TAXES

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

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, as the gentleman just spoke, if Frank depends on the Democrats and the liberals for the next 7 years, he will return to those days of yesteryear.

Madam Speaker, Republicans are not backing down from our commitment to balance the budget, cut taxes, save Medicare, and reform welfare. Unlike our liberal friends across the aisle, we will not abandon Medicare to bankruptcy. We are going to make Medicare better and provide more choices. We will also provide tax relief for working families. Taxes are just too high and families need the extra money and to determine how they will spend their own money.

I, for one, will not apologize for advocating tax cuts. Besides, the President and his liberal friends, against the will