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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska].

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 10, 1996.

I hereby designate the Honorable BILL BARRETT to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. McDEVITT, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate had passed without amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 4018. An act to make technical corrections in the Federal Oil and Gas Royalty Management Act of 1982.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1324. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to revise and extend the solid-organ procurement and transplantation programs, and the bone marrow donor program, and for other purposes.

MORNING BUSINESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of May 12, 1995, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member except the majority and minority leader limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. COBLE] for 5 minutes.

CLEARING UP MISUNDERSTANDINGS

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, oftentimes a speaker's messages are inaccurately interpreted. This may result because of the speaker's ineptitude and/or the inability of the listener to properly interpret the message.

My final two speeches prior to the break for our August district work period were misunderstood by some. My first speech came in response to my Democrat friends who accuse the Republicans of opposing passage of the minimum wage increase. I then admonished my Democrat colleagues for having bashed the Republicans and reminded them that it was they, the Democrats, who, during the 103d Congress, controlled the House, they who controlled the Senate, they who controlled the White House. I reminded them as well, Mr. Speaker, that during their control of the past Congress I did not recall their having uttered one peep about the minimum wage.

I was then accused of hypocrisy, since I was bashing them while at the same time lecturing them for having bashed us. But it was not the bashing of which I was critical, but rather the unjustified bashing.

My second speech came in response to the proposal to approve the extension of increased COLA's, cost of living allowances, to the Vice President, to Members of Congress, to members of the Federal judiciary, and the Executive Schedule Levels 1 through 5, highly salaried appointees and/or bureaucrats. I opposed this proposal and explained that I represent constituents in my district who earn \$25,000, \$30,000, \$35,000 per year. I then explained, furthermore, it would be an obvious slap across their faces to those who are

barely hanging on by rewarding the Vice President, Members of Congress, Federal judges, and Executive Schedule Levels 1 through 5 a generous increase in COLA's.

I subsequently was accused by colleagues of opposing Federal judges and Members of Congress. My message was again misunderstood, Mr. Speaker. I am not averse to rewarding people whose work is exemplary. I am opposed, however, to extending increased COLA's to the aforesaid group, on the one hand, while on the other hand we are desperately trying to convince the President of the significant importance of balancing our budget. The two are simply not consistent.

So to sum up, and hopefully to illustrate with convincing clarity, I am, A, not opposed to bashing or vigorously debating issues on this floor. I am indeed opposed to bashing when it is not justified by the surrounding circumstances. The rule of equity rewards only those who come to the court with clean hands.

And B, I have great respect for most Members of Congress, and for most Federal judges, five or six of whom I call good personal friends. I have respect as well for the Vice President, and as far as members of the Executive Schedule Levels 1 through 5, Mr. Speaker, I can neither condemn nor praise them because I am familiar with only a small, limited number. But I will continue to oppose the rewarding of increased COLA's to this group until we can somehow manage to live within our means. It is my belief that those who are earning \$25,000, \$30,000, \$35,000 per year can relate to this type of reasoning, and, for that matter, so should we all.

□ 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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