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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. GILLMOR].

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 7, 1996.

I hereby designate the Honorable PAUL E. GILLMOR to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Reverend Charles Sineath, First United Methodist Church, Marietta, GA, offered the following prayer:

O Lord, we acknowledge You as the giver of every good and perfect gift, and the source of all our blessings. We thank You for Your goodness, and especially for the privilege of living in this good and noble land. This morning, I want to thank You for these who serve You by serving our Nation as Members of the Congress and leaders in our Nation. Grant them wisdom, courage, compassion, and patience as they fulfill their awesome responsibilities and work for the achievement of a nation and world where justice and mercy roll down like a river and righteousness and truth is like a never-failing stream. This prayer we offer with eternal gratitude and praise to Your holy name. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. 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 Georgia [Mr. COLLINS] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia 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 passed with amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 2778. An act to provide that members of the Armed Forces performing services for the peacekeeping efforts in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Macedonia shall be entitled to tax benefits in the same manner as if such services were performed in a combat zone, and for other purposes.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain fifteen 1-minutes from each side.

WELCOME TO REV. CHARLES SINEATH

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

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, in an age when for many years it seems as if our courts and many of our public institutions have been engaged in a direct and deliberate effort to eradicate religion and recognition of God from whom all our powers and sense of right and wrong derive from the face of our public Earth, from the face of our public service and our institutions, it is,

indeed, gratifying and something to me that is daily important to me to recognize that we in this House as Representatives of the people of the United States of America begin each and every day that we are in session doing their work and doing the Lord's work with a moment of prayer.

I am very happy today to have before us today to deliver the prayer for the opening of this session of the Congress this day the Reverend Charles Sineath, Methodist minister from First United Methodist Church where we have the privilege of serving, I and my family, with he and his wife, Ann, today.

It is, indeed, an honor to welcome him and his wife, Ann, to this House, the people's House of the United States of America, today.

JOBS IN AMERICA

(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, United Technologies eliminated 35 percent of their American jobs, created 15,000 jobs overseas. General Motors is building a new \$1 billion auto plant, my colleagues, in Shanghai. Blue Cross moved 2,000 jobs that paid \$10 an hour in America to Jamaica where they will pay \$1 an hour. AT&T got rid of 50,000 American workers but gave their boss, Robert Allen, a record \$16 million paycheck. But yesterday's event I think tells the whole story.

As Eleanor Roosevelt had done in the 1930's, Mrs. Clinton repeated history by sewing in a union label into a garment in New York. The big difference is, Members of Congress, Eleanor Roosevelt used a Singer sewing machine made in America. Mrs. Clinton used a sewing machine made in Japan.

Beam me up, Mr. Speaker. Nobody can even see what is happening to our country.

□ 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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CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN AND ELDERLY INCREASED PUNISHMENT ACT

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

Mr. CHRYSLER. Mr. Speaker, day after day, we see news accounts of criminals committing violent acts throughout our communities, only to walk away with little or no punishment. We only need to watch the evening news on any given night to see the havoc criminals wreak in our neighborhoods. Recently, I authored and introduced the Crimes Against Children and Elderly Increased Punishment Act, legislation that will provide for an automatic increase in the length of sentences for such criminals. This legislation amends the Violent Crime Control Act of 1994 to increase punishment for Federal crimes committed against youth ages 12 years and under and seniors ages 65 years and older.

The bill aims to send a clear signal to those who would prey upon the vulnerable in that their criminal actions will not be tolerated and will result in certain and severe punishment. Our children are the seeds of our Nation's future. Our seniors are the roots of our heritage. Increasing the penalties on those who would hurt our children and elderly will give them the protection they need and give the criminals the punishment they deserve.

THE BUDGET AND FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

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

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to speak for American families and for the failure of this Congress to come to grips with dealing with the budget and fiscal responsibility. The fact is that the answer that was brought to us by this Republican Congress is the wrong answer. Cutting Medicare, cutting Medicaid, cutting our education and health programs, and assaulting the environment is not the answer. What our families need are the tools to take care of one another.

They need the health care. They need sound education and retirement programs. They need their rights on the job so that they can receive a living wage. The fact is that families in this country are going to continue to suffer. We are going to continue to see the income disparity without some change to empower workers. This Congress has to wake up and smell the coffee in terms of where the American people are and what they want and what we need to do as a Congress, to get on and pass our necessary appropriation bills, to make the types of compromises that provide for meaningful welfare reform and provide for a sound fiscal policy for the next 7 years, not the Republican major-

ity walking away from the task because they cannot get there way on tax breaks for those that are well off.

That is what is happening in this country and in this Congress today. These issues ought to be the subject of congressional and Presidential debates. They ought to be the subject of this Congress. We ought to get to work and get the peoples, work done right and stop the Republican pea and shell game that is being presented as a budget solution.

THE 5-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF PERSIAN GULF WAR

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

Mr. COBURN. Mr. Speaker, 5 years ago this month, this country put the lives of thousands of young Americans at risk in the Persian Gulf war. The war with Iraq was fought to restore Kuwait's independence, but it was also fought to preserve and protect the energy security of this country.

Five years later, we are still dependent on foreign oil for our energy needs—in fact far more dependent than we were 5 years ago.

Last year, for the first time in our Nation's history, we imported more than 50 percent of the oil consumed in this country. Meanwhile, I have domestic producers in my home State of Oklahoma who are capping marginal wells every day—burying oil and gas that will never again be recovered. It is putting Americans out of work and it is threatening our national security.

What can this Congress do to revive our domestic oil and gas industry? The first step is to allow domestic producers to compete on a level playing field. In a few days, we will be voting on this floor on a bill to reform the regulatory process in this country. Excessive regulations have strangled domestic oil and gas producers, raising their cost of production and diminishing their chances to compete. A vote for regulatory reform is a vote for the health of our domestic oil and gas industry.

I urge this Congress to release the domestic oil and gas industry from the excessive taxes and regulations that threaten our domestic energy supply and our national security.

REPUBLICAN BUDGET CUTS

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

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, these followers of Speaker GINGRICH have threatened the health care security of millions of seniors in America with Medicare cuts. They demonstrated, as Gingrichites, such indifference to the job insecurity of American working families that now they are even being criticized within their own party.

But to top it all off, they come to this Congress today proposing to place

more hurdles in the way of our youngest Americans with reference to educational opportunities. Yes, the cuts that the propose in education are very real.

In my home town of Austin, the school district is contemplating having to cut the opportunity in half for 2,200 young Austinites with reference to their prekindergarten program, just slashing it in half solely as a result of these Federal cuts.

As one AISD official, Gloria Williams, said, if the pots gets smaller and the number of kids gets larger, we will not be able to support a full day prekindergarten program. There is no doubt we have an education deficit in this country because these followers of NEWT GINGRICH just cannot seem to learn.

AWOL CLINTON ADMINISTRATION

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

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, just allow me to point out that the liberal House Democrats just do not get it. As we have spent more and more money on public education, test scores have dropped in America, but they do not see the correlation.

Mr. Speaker, the Clinton administration is AWOL in the war on drugs. Recent surveys have shown that drug use among teenagers has skyrocketed. In fact, the age of first use of drugs has gone down to age 13 and in some cases even younger than that. That really hits home with me, because I have a 14-year-old son.

Mr. Speaker, there is a reason for this though. The Clinton administration has slashed enforcement and interdiction programs and they have appointed liberal judges. The President has appointed liberal judges who care more about criminals than basic justice.

Case in point: One judge in New York, a Clinton appointee by the name of Baer, recently released an admitted drug dealer who was caught red-handed with 75 pounds of cocaine and 4 pounds of heroin.

Mr. Speaker, the President claims he never inhaled. But our children are inhaling and it is destroying their lives. The answer to our youth drug problem is not fancy press conferences. It is a President willing to institute real drug enforcement, real drug interdiction and real punishment of drug dealers.

ON EDUCATION CUTS

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to follow up on these education cuts.

As was stated previously, today the Republican leadership is putting forth a continuing resolution that would fund education programs for the rest of this year. But the bill is the largest cut