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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. DELAY].

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 18, 1997.

I hereby designate the Honorable TOM DELAY to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 21, 1997, 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 Alabama [Mr. HILLIARD] for 5 minutes.

ALEXIS HERMAN WILL BE A GREAT SECRETARY

Mr. HILLIARD. Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to stand before this House this day on behalf of my good friend and native Alabamian, Ms. Alexis Herman. At the present time her confirmation is before the U.S. Senate as Secretary of Labor. Alexis is the daughter of a single parent. She has labored her entire life working to help people stay employed and off welfare.

As President Clinton's assistant, she was a leader in making sure that

women, Hispanics, African-Americans were equally involved in our Nation's agenda. She is a mover. She is a shaker. She has the credentials, the desires, the integrity, the purpose, the intellect, the capability, the personality and the grace to be Secretary of Labor. And in that respect, Mr. Speaker, I recommend her confirmation.

She appears as an American with qualifications of an all-American combination. Her background is a modern-day equivalent of being born in a log cabin, and her career successes mirror that of a Wall Street broker. That is an all-American combination.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from the District of Columbia [Ms. NORTON].

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Alabama for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, to live the life of a nun these days is not good enough if you want to serve your country. That is what Alexis Herman, the President's nominee to be Secretary of Labor, wanted to be. It is our good fortune that she decided to serve her country in this way.

To live a righteous life is not good enough. That is what Alexis Herman has done. Moreover, Mr. Speaker, Alexis Herman has lived a life which groomed her for this agency. When she was a younger woman, she served in a number of capacities in the Labor Department, in the Women's Bureau, and as assistant to Ray Marshall, who was then Secretary.

The Senate has been on a fishing expedition for 3 months now. It has come up empty. I find very few people in this life whose integrity I would personally vouch for. Alexis Herman is one of those people. I have seen this nominee up close. It is difficult to think of any American who would serve her country better as Secretary of Labor. I hope that the other body will soon recognize this and will in fact vote her to be the

Secretary of Labor of the United States of America.

I thank the gentleman for yielding to me, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. HILLIARD. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California [Ms. WOOLSEY].

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, today is the first day of the confirmation hearings for Alexis Herman, a real American success story. I commend the President for choosing this outstanding woman for Secretary of Labor. Ms. Herman has devoted her life to public service. Ms. Herman has been involved in job placement programs throughout her career. Some of her accomplishments include leadership of the black women's employment program of Atlanta and director of the Women's Bureau at the Department of Labor during the Carter administration.

More recently, Mr. Speaker, Alexis Herman worked closely with former Commerce Secretary, the late Ron Brown. She made the White House Office of Public Liaison a dynamic part of the President's office. Throughout Alexis Herman's career, she has made equal opportunity for women and minorities a top priority.

I urge the other body to confirm Alexis Herman without delay. She is a great woman and a great role model for all of us.

Mr. HILLIARD. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands [Ms. CHRISTIAN-GREEN].

Ms. CHRISTIAN-GREEN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Alabama [Mr. HILLIARD] for organizing this special order and affording me this time to say a few words in recognition and support of Alexis Herman, President Clinton's nominee for Secretary of Labor.

At this time, when America is challenged to meet the needs of the unemployed and underemployed and to bring training and job opportunities, not only to these, but to the millions who

□ 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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will no longer be eligible for welfare benefits, there is none more suitable to lead this agency.

Ms. Herman's background in job training and placement and her pioneering efforts to bring women and minorities into the workplace coupled with her sensitivity, her competence, and her private sector and White House experience makes her eminently qualified.

I have had the pleasure and good fortune to work with Alexis Herman at the Democratic National Committee, the New York convention, and in her position as public liaison at the White House.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to speak in support of this outstanding individual, who in the President's own words, were his "eyes and ears working to connect the American people."

I urge the Senate to move expeditiously and confirm Alexis Herman as Secretary of Labor.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair wishes to inform Members that they should not urge action by the Senate in the confirmation process during debate.

THOUGHTS ON CONGRESSIONAL RETREAT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. COMBEST] is recognized during morning hour debates for 1 minute.

Mr. COMBEST. Mr. Speaker, there will be several facilitators from the bipartisan Hershey retreat who will be taking the floor today to talk about the positive things that happened from that meeting.

Rather than me telling Members what I thought about it, I thought I would read to them some very quick quotes from Members who were there:

"Pleasantly surprised";
 "Substantive";
 "Very diverse group";
 "Heard things we didn't think we would hear, in a positive sense";
 "People were eager to get into it";
 "Some people began hesitant but were comfortable once we got started";
 "People wanted to come up with ideas that were realistic, that we could accomplish";
 "Very good responses from spouses as well as Members";
 "Ought to continue the bipartisan caucuses";
 "Some of the greatest responses were from some who were the most skeptical";
 "Spouses had great things to say";
 "Good to have practical ideas, not so lofty as changing the spin of the earth".

Mr. Speaker, one of the quotes that I think meant the most to me was among these, "It almost leads you to believe we could change the House if we put our minds to it."

Mr. Speaker, it almost does lead you to believe that we could change the House if we put our minds to it.

SUPPORT FOR APPOINTMENT OF ALEXIS HERMAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentlewoman from California [Ms. WATERS] is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment first to join with my colleagues in a word of praise for Alexis Herman. As an African American woman, I am so very proud that she has been nominated.

Despite the growth that we have had in this country of tolerance and the work that has been done to get rid of racism and discrimination and to try and open up opportunities for all, it still has been rather slow in coming. And it is not often, as a matter of fact, it is extremely rare, that an African-American woman would have the opportunity to serve as secretary of an administration. Alexis Herman has done everything that your parents, your community would have you do to get recognized as a person who is capable and competent so the President has nominated her.

This woman served at the Department of Labor, where she headed the Women's Bureau. That is when I first met her. That was a number of years ago. And not only have I been impressed with her competence and her ability, she has been of assistance to so many people, to so many women. And of course her time and her service in the White House itself has exemplary.

So I am hopeful that everything will go well. I am extremely proud and I am hopeful that within a short period of time, we will be able to say Madam Secretary, Alexis Herman.

ON THE CIA

For the rest of my time, Mr. Speaker, I would like to continue because I have a statement that I would like to make about a very important matter.

I think this week we have the Members of our Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence here in the House examining the CIA. They are probably taking a look at a number of the activities of the CIA and starting to talk about its budget. We have been hearing a lot about the CIA, certainly about cases where our own employees in the CIA decided to become spies for other nations.

But beyond that, we have learned a lot about who the CIA deals with, and there are many people who will excuse who they deal with because they will tell you because of their covert operations they have to deal with the worst of them.

We have seen some efforts in recent days to do some scrubbing in the CIA. That simply means that they are going to try and disassociate with some of the terrorists, the drug traffickers, and

the murderers that they have been working with for a number of years. They say that they are going to get rid of their relationships with them, and that is called scrubbing.

But I am very concerned about the CIA. It is a \$30 billion budget. That is a lot of money when you are talking about balancing the budget. It is a \$30 billion budget. And none of us knows what it is spent for. We just kind of give it over to the CIA. Then all these stories start to float back.

I have been involved for over 6 months now as a result of the revelations of the San Jose Mercury News about the CIA's involvement in drug trafficking in south central Los Angeles in the 1980's.

We identified Mr. Danilo Blandon and Mr. Norwin Meneses, two of the principals in the drug trafficking, one of whom, Danilo Blandon, has testified under oath that he was an operative for the CIA. You know this story. They sold drugs; they fueled the explosion of crack cocaine.

It spread out across the United States, and part of those proceeds were used to fund the Contras, because they were the supporters of Somoza down in Nicaragua when the Contras were fighting against the Sandinistas under the so-called banner of the freedom fighters. They were looking for money all over the world. And the CIA had created the Contras, the so-called resistance movement, and they had to fund the army of the Contras known as the FDN. So in looking for this money, it certainly appears that they turned their backs and they allowed the selling of cocaine in huge amounts that got cooked into crack cocaine that exploded in this Nation.

We have the investigations going on now. The inspector general of the CIA, the inspector general of the Justice Department, intelligence committees of both Houses, all are supposedly involved in these operations looking at them and investigating.

But beyond that, we find other information about the CIA in Venezuela.

MATTERS INVOLVING THE NBA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. COBLE] is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, some weeks ago, after a Chicago Bulls star Dennis Rodman inexcusably kicked a cameraman during a National Basketball Association game, one of my constituents asked me if there was anything we in the Congress could do in response to Rodman's behavior.

The NBA will ignore the incident and it will be business as usual, my constituents declared. You in the Congress address the matter, he continued.

It is difficult to legislate character, I told him.

His words regarding the NBA's response were prophetic. The incident