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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. KOLBE].

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,

April 17, 1997.

I hereby designate the Honorable JIM KOLBE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

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

We know, gracious God, that Your blessings can flood our hearts and give us vision for the new day if we are open to Your good grace and hear Your words of forgiveness and promise. With all the distractions of everyday life and with all the tasks before us, may Your eternal presence and Your reconciling spirit guide, guard, and gird us along life's way so that Your blessings touch us in the depths of our hearts and lead us in the way of truth. In Your name we pray. 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.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

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

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. 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 pro tempore. Pursuant to the provisions of clause 5 of rule I, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. ROEMER] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. ROEMER 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 had passed without amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 1003. An act to clarify Federal law with respect to restricting the use of Federal funds in support of assisted suicide.

The message also announced that the Senate had passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 914. An act to make certain technical corrections in the Higher Education Act of 1965 relating to graduation data disclosures.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain ten 1-minutes on each side.

ETHICS ASSESSMENT

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

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, for months the political opponents of Speaker GINGRICH have been on a singular mission to destroy him. That mission has failed.

Today, the Speaker has assured us of his intent to pay the full amount of his ethics assessment out of his own pocket. This is the responsible thing to do, and I support his decision and thank him for his sacrifice.

We can finally put an end to the sad display of bitter partisan attacks that we saw from the other side. They wanted to destroy the Speaker because they have no new ideas. They wanted to destroy him because they have nothing substantial to contribute to mainstream political dialog.

The American people want lower taxes and less Government. And they respect leaders who take responsibility when things go wrong, unlike what we see at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue.

I applaud the Speaker. I respect the Speaker. I thank the Speaker.

DEVELOPING FERTILE MINDS

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

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Speaker, just a month ago on the front page of Time magazine, we have a cover story talking about our children in this country and new, brandnew research coming out how a child's brain develops fertile minds. We find that researchers across our great country are saying that the best time to learn a new language, to learn new things in our educational progress as people, might be between 0 and 5. That is what our researchers and

□ 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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our parents and our educators are telling us.

At the White House today the President and the First Lady are convening a session on what we do and how we help our families get this information out there even more. But here in the House of Representatives, yesterday in our Committee on Appropriations, the Republicans proposed to slash WIC programs, which are for education and nutrition and development for our children and our families. What better contrast between the White House and our House of Representatives.

Let us invest in our children.

DOING THE RIGHT THING

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

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, today, Speaker GINGRICH is doing the right thing. The reimbursement that he is paying is not a fine. The committee itself makes it clear that the reimbursement of legal expenses are for costs only. The Committee on Standards of Official Conduct imposed no restrictions on how the reimbursement could be paid. Speaker GINGRICH could have used campaign funds to reimburse the committee. Others have done this, the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. GEPHARDT], the gentleman from Texas [Mr. FROST], former Congressman Rose.

Speaker GINGRICH could have used the NEWT GINGRICH trust fund approved by the committee for the stated purpose of paying the reimbursement. Instead, the Speaker chose to do the right thing by reimbursing the taxpayers and taking full responsibility with borrowed money under his own name. I commend Speaker GINGRICH for the effort that he is putting forward.

PUT EDUCATION FIRST

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

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call on the people's House to put education first on our Nation's agenda.

As a former two-term State superintendent in North Carolina, I know firsthand what can happen and what a difference a strong educational system can make in the lives of our people. My State has proven that bold, visionary leadership can make a difference tangibly in the lives of young people when we do the right thing.

Mr. Speaker, when students, parents, teachers, and communities get involved, strong improvement is the result of what happens. Several weeks ago, the rigorous NAEP scores came out, and in our State, North Carolina, students came out near the top in this country.

Mr. Speaker, as the first member of my family to graduate from college, I learned long ago the value of edu-

cational excellence. As a Congressman, I know how important education is to my constituents and to this Nation. We must provide safe healthy schools and we must do it now.

NEW DAY IN CONGRESS

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

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, today represents a new day in this Congress. The Speaker has accepted full responsibility for the reimbursement that is owed to the American people. It is now the duty of this Congress to move forward with our agenda, an agenda that the American people have asked us to implement.

That agenda signals a desire to put the country on a new path, a path of greater freedom, more personal responsibility and less interference from Washington. This represents a change in direction, Mr. Speaker. Most Americans agree that the country has been moving in a direction of bigger Government, higher taxes and a decay in the American spirit of unlimited possibilities.

I want to renew that spirit. It is a spirit that attracts over 1 million immigrants to our shores every year. It is a spirit that animates freedom lovers from Tiananmen Square to Moscow. It is a spirit that tells all American children that they can dream their dreams and grow up to be whatever they wish to be and soar to whatever heights their talents and efforts take them. Mr. Speaker, now let us move forward with that renewed spirit. I thank you for your leadership.

SPECIAL INTEREST MONEY IN THE PEOPLE'S HOUSE

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

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, when will it ever end? When will it ever end with respect to special interest money and public policy in the people's House. Later today we will learn that Speaker GINGRICH will pay his fine for lying to Congress by borrowing it from Bob Dole, Bob Dole who was recently hired by big tobacco to get a settlement in the Congress of the United States for all of the people that tobacco has injured because of addiction and the cancer causing agent. We now have the chief lobbyists for big tobacco financing the payoff of the Speaker's fine for lying to the Congress.

Is there nothing that we cannot do without special interest money? Is there nothing that we cannot do that is on the level? Do we now have to bring in big tobacco to rescue the ethics of the Speaker of the House of Representatives?

This is a very sad day for the House of Representatives when the tobacco

industry is paying the legal fines of Members of Congress.

DO THE RIGHT THING

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

Mr. PAXON. Mr. Speaker, the American people have just witnessed a good example of how difficult it is in the environment of the House of Representatives on some days to do the right thing.

The Speaker is going to come to this floor very shortly and do the right thing, set the highest possible standard. He was not required to repay this reimbursement, not a fine, reimbursement for expenses, out of his own funds, but he is going to do so today to move this institution forward on the important agenda of the American people.

Now we just have a Member of this House come forward who decides he is going to continue this battle in the days ahead. That is a mistake. The gentleman who was just at the well is the man who said, NEWT GINGRICH has command and control of the Republicans and we are going to take him out.

Well, they did not take him out and the bitterness is showing today. Mr. GINGRICH, our Speaker, is stepping forward once again to set a high standard of personal responsibility, to pay this reimbursement out of his personal resources. I believe that every Member of this House should step forward and commend the Speaker for his action.

NO PRICE ON HONESTY

(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, it has been said that no price can be placed on honesty, not \$3, not \$300,000.

After 3 months of carefully calculating every angle, of exploring fully the political calculus of every other alternative, the Speaker has reluctantly decided to do what law violators do in America every day: pay the fine for an offense on which a guilty plea was entered and a conviction found.

This decision, though belated, should be accepted by this House on both sides of the aisle, accepted but not applauded, not applauded any more than we would applaud the decision of a major polluter who had injured the public health and welfare through its pollution and then paid a fine for the conviction.

For pollution is what has occurred here, lies and deception that threaten the very fabric of our democracy. Nor does this payment remove other offenses that are still pending, some over 18 months. There is nothing noble about the payment of the fine. There is