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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. NEY].

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,

June 5, 1997.

I hereby designate the Honorable ROBERT W. NEY to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Reverend Steve Kummernuss, Zion Lutheran Church, Doylestown, OH, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty God, You have given us this good land as our heritage. Make us always remember Your generosity and constantly do Your will. Bless our land with honest industry, truthful education, and an honorable way of life. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion; from pride and arrogance, and from every evil course of action. Make us who came from many nations with many different languages a united people. Defend our liberties and give those whom we have entrusted with the authority of government the spirit of wisdom, that there might be justice and peace in our land.

Bless those who hold office in our Government that they may do their work in a spirit of wisdom, kindness, and justice. Help them use their authority to serve faithfully and to promote the general welfare, through Your Son, 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 Nevada [Mr. GIBBONS] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GIBBONS 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 PRO TEMPORE

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

WELCOME TO REVEREND KUMMERNUSS

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

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Speaker, we are pleased to welcome today Reverend Kummernuss from the Zion Lutheran Church in the 16th District of Ohio, who gave the invocation, a very thoughtful one, I thought. And this is a little bit special because Reverend Kummernuss' son, Matthew, is one of our outstanding pages this session.

We are pleased that we could have Reverend Kummernuss here today to join in our opening and also to give him an opportunity to see where his son has spent his past several months. If we have any errands that we need run, just summon him. Since Reverend Kummernuss has the privileges of the floor today, he also has the privilege of asking Matt to do his errands.

We are happy that Reverend Kummernuss joined us for today's invocation.

BOY SCOUTS AND GIRL SCOUTS

(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, a California court ruled that the Boy Scouts do not have to accept girls. Scouts honor. Check this out, 13-year-old Katrina Yah sued, her attorney said the Boy Scouts of America is a business, therefore under California law, she should be allowed in. Beam me up, Mr. Speaker. What is next?

Boys suing the Girl Scouts. Sons suing the Daughters of the American Revolution. Grandpas suing the Brownies. Teenagers suing the AARP? Think about it. I believe that there is really nothing wrong in America with boys being boys and girls being girls. Think about it. Yield back the Cub Scouts.

SHORTFALLS IN DEFENSE FUNDING

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

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, the Committee on National Security will meet soon to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 1998 for military activities of the Department of Defense. When voting on the defense authorization bill in the coming weeks, we must consider our Reserve component forces and the shortfalls in their funding. What will happen to our Reserve component readiness, compatibility and equipment interoperability with the Active Force if we continue to shortchange these forces?

We must remember that as the American defense budget continues to dwindle, we will be relying more on these

□ 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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dedicated men and women who choose to serve in the Guard and Reserve.

If we continue to ask these troops to do more with less, more operations and contingencies with less equipment, less training and fewer troops, we will see significant problems with recruiting, retaining the same caliber people that we choose to serve in this All Volunteer Force. Our Armed Forces, Mr. Speaker, are more than just Active Forces. They are a total force component comprised of Active, Reserve and Guard members.

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE

(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, today I rise to call on my colleagues to join me in support of educational standards of excellence for our Nation's students and parents and communities. As a former State superintendent of schools in North Carolina, I have seen firsthand how much progress can be achieved when we aim high in education and give our children and teachers the tools they need to get the job done. I call on this House to go on record in favor of this commonsense approach to improving education in America.

Last week I participated in an educational town hall meeting with the Vice President in my home area. The voice I heard from North Carolina students and citizens came through loud and clear. An America needs educational standards of excellence.

Mr. Speaker, I have drafted legislation in support of voluntary standards of educational excellence. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this important legislation.

BE FAIR TO OUR NATION'S POLICE AND FIREFIGHTERS

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

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, today I will be introducing a bill that is aimed at benefiting our Nation's police officers and firefighters. My bill will rescind the dollar limitation on police and firefighter benefit laws allowing these employees to collect the money that they have rightfully earned by contributing to their benefit fund, to their pension fund.

Currently, under section 415 of the Tax Code, police officers and firefighters are not eligible to collect the funds that they have earned and instead are required to retire with benefits generally based on the percentage of their highest 3-year salary average. Regrettably the average in most instances does not exceed 65 or 75 percent. Thus many officers living along the east coast or in large metropolitan

and surrounding suburban areas throughout our Nation are forced to work past their general retirement age in order to afford the high cost of living in these areas.

This bill will not initiate a tax revenue loss. In fact, under my bill, we would gain Federal revenues due to the disbursement of previously uncollected funds to retirees.

I invite my colleagues to support this measure. Let us be fair to those who day in and day out place their lives on the line for our protection.

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS BILL

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

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, it is time to stop the political games. The Republican leadership's failure to pass a clean supplemental appropriations bill is denying our troops in the field the resources they need to carry out their mission. The supplemental appropriations bill provides \$2 billion to pay for our operation in Bosnia. If we do not enact this bill swiftly, their readiness will suffer.

I am holding letters from Secretary of Defense Cohen, and the Chiefs of Staff of the Army and Air Force, which describe the effects on the military of the Republicans' failure to pass a clean bill. Training is curtailed. Maintenance is delayed. Rotations are canceled. Inventories are drained. Our soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen need a clean supplemental appropriations bill.

Mr. Speaker, there is a time for partisan politics and there is a time to put it aside. But when Americans are hit by a natural disaster, we must act together and act quickly. When American troops need our help, we must do our job and do it today.

Let us support our troops in Bosnia and our people at home. Pass a clean supplemental.

VOTE "NO" ON CAMPBELL-GREENWOOD

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, today two diametrically opposed resolutions will be on the floor, in the next order of business dealing with population control. The Campbell-Greenwood substitute, which is a substitute to a bill or amendment that I am offering along with the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. OBERSTAR], the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HYDE], and the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. BARCIA], promotes abortion on demand overseas and not family planning.

The Campbell-Greenwood amendment does not add any pro-life conditions to current law. Rather, it blurs the distinction between abortion and

family planning in U.S.-supported programs overseas. It allows U.S. dollars to go to the U.N. Population Fund, the UNFPA, even though that organization continues to support China's brutally enforced one-child-per-couple policy, and to nongovernmental organizations that are engaged in a crusade for abortion on demand around the world.

My amendment does not reduce family planning by even one penny. It conditions those funds to those organizations that are all about family planning and not about abortion promotion. I urge a "no" vote on the Campbell-Greenwood, a "yes" vote on the Smith-Barcia-Hyde-Oberstar.

IN OPPOSITION TO REPUBLICAN AMENDMENTS TO DISASTER RELIEF BILL

(Ms. VELÁZQUEZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, there are people in the Midwest who are suffering. Their homes have been destroyed by floods and they need our help. The Democrats in Congress have an emergency spending bill that will help them put their shattered lives back together.

We want to help these victims but the Republicans will not let us.

Instead, the Republicans are attaching language to a flood relief bill that would stop an accurate count of minorities in the census. The Republicans are so afraid of an accurate count of minorities that they are willing to let flood victims suffer.

Mr. Speaker, the Republicans do not mind playing politics with the American people. They already shut down the Federal Government twice. Now they are fiddling while the Midwest drowns.

THE NEED TO FUND FEDERAL JUDGESHIPS IN MIDDLE FLORIDA

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I want to make my colleagues aware of a crisis existing in the middle district of Florida. The current Federal case load is one of the worst in the country. The population continues to increase. If no additional judgeships are approved, by 2005 there will be only one-third of the State's Federal judges assigned to two-thirds of the State's population.

As case loads increase, current judges cannot simply shoulder the additional burden. By failing to create additional positions, we are producing a backlog of cases, increasing legal costs for citizens and undermining the Federal courts.

Lately much attention has been focused on getting tough on crime. We must remember the only path from indictment to incarceration is through the judiciary. It must receive adequate