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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

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

On this day we are aware of all Your gifts to us, O gracious God, those gifts that brighten our days, that warm our hearts, and strengthen our spirits. We are especially conscious of the gift of friendship and those relationships that help bind us one to the other and give us a sense of unity in a common bond. With all the distractions that pull us from a noble vision of life, we are enthused that there are people who inspire and encourage us, whose loving concern lifts us up and helps point us in the way. For the gift of friendship that provides harmony and support in our lives, we offer this prayer of thanksgiving and praise. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. 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. Will the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. TRAFICANT] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. TRAFICANT 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.

CONGRATULATIONS TO CONGRESSMAN AND MRS. CHET EDWARDS ON BIRTH OF SECOND SON

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

Mr. GREEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate our colleague and our friend, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. EDWARDS], and his wife Lea Ann, and their son John Thomas on the birth of their second son, Garrison Alexander. Garrison Alexander was born at 10:32 on Sunday, July 6 at Hillcrest Baptist Hospital in Waco, TX. He weighed 6 pounds and 1 ounce.

Garrison Alexander is named in honor of his two grandmothers, Shirley Garrison Edwards and Patricia Alexander Wood. His 1½-year-old brother that all of us know as J.T. is named in honor of his two grandfathers, Rev. John A. Wood and Thomas Edwards.

I have had the pleasure of working with the gentleman from Texas [Mr. EDWARDS] on many issues that affect Texas and our Nation, and he represents his constituents with the highest degree of integrity. He is a devoted family man, and he will be a terrific father to Garrison, just like he has been to J.T. Both Edwards boys are very lucky to have such a loving family with CHET and Lea Ann.

I am also privileged to have the opportunity to play this small part with the Edwards family. We all wish heartfelt congratulations to the proud parents and hope the rest of Congress joins me in welcoming Garrison Alexander into this world. I want to thank CHET and Lea Ann as we celebrate bringing another Texan in to serve our Nation.

GIVING CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

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

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, it is time to give credit where credit is due. In today's Washington Post on the front page there is an article announcing that the budget could be balanced ahead of schedule. The budget could be balanced as early as next year. How

can we explain this good news? Let us recall a little history.

In 1993, the President submitted a budget with huge deficits as far as the eye can see. In 1994, the President submitted a budget with huge deficits as far as the eye can see. In 1995, the President submitted three budgets with huge deficits as far as the eye can see.

But in 1995 a big change came to Washington. Republicans came to town promising to balance the budget and they were serious. They insisted that the President join us in an effort to balance the budget, and the President finally agreed. Our determination and seriousness is now paying off. We are perhaps only 1 year away from a balanced budget. That is a victory that all Americans should celebrate.

CLEVELAND SHINES AS HOST OF ALL-STAR GAME

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate my city, Cleveland, OH, for its outstanding debut as America's All-Star city last night when the American League beat the National League 3 to 1 at Cleveland's Jacobs Field.

The All-Star victory was brought about through a dramatic two-run home run by Cleveland Indian Sandy Alomar, who was named the game's most valuable player. The midsummer night's classic showed Cleveland at its best, an All-Star city, a still-shining new Jacobs Field, the most enthusiastic fans anywhere, a first-rate, first-place team, the most valuable players.

When Sandy Alomar hit a home run to win the All-Star Game, he showed that Cleveland hits a home run every time it steps up to the plate nationally. Baseball, what a sport. The All-Star Game, what a game. Cleveland, what a city.

□ 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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TAX CUTS ON GILLIGAN'S ISLAND

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

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, the debate we are hearing these days about tax cuts for people who pay no taxes is worthy of a scene from Gilligan's Island. One can just imagine Gilligan complaining to the Skipper and asking him why he is not getting a tax cut.

At this point the Skipper would have already taken off his cap and smacked Gilligan over the head and cried with exasperation, "Gilligan, don't be ridiculous!"

Then the Skipper, in his usual condescending way, would try to explain to his slow "Little Buddy" that it is impossible to cut taxes for someone who pays no taxes.

Gilligan would not need the Professor to explain to him the metaphysical impossibility of such a preposterous proposition, even though Gilligan lived in a fantasy land. All he would need is a good rap on the chest, a little common sense, and the advice, "Gilligan, don't be ridiculous!"

□ 1015

LET US START CARING ABOUT AMERICAN KIDS

(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, Mexico's top narcotics organization has threatened to kidnap and murder American officials. The FBI said the Arellanno-Felix organization, in an effort to protect their drug shipments on our borders, will come in America and will kill.

Unbelievable here. America is overrun with heroin and cocaine, we have got kids dying in Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, and who cares, Congress? Who really cares?

And there is now a group of people trying to take the Traficant language out of the defense bill that authorizes, but not mandates, the use of the troops on our borders.

Are they nuts? Are they inhaling or what? Wake up, Congress. What has to happen? Will one of these narcotics organizations have to kidnap our drug czar?

America has no program, none, zero, and our borders are wide open.

Let us start caring for American kids.

CONSERVATIVE MAJORITY TO DELIVER TAX CUTS FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, it was good to be back home in the Sixth District of Arizona last week, being out-

side of the beltway and all of the speculation and all the imagined conversation, and to talk to honest to goodness Americans and Arizonans, people who are pleased at long last, Mr. Speaker, that this conservative majority will deliver on promises that should have been realized a long time ago: tax cuts for the American people, the first tax cuts in over a decade and a half.

Mr. Speaker, the people of the Sixth District viewed with alarm, concern and outright curiosity the claims by some about the notion of giving income tax cuts to people who do not pay income taxes. They said it in Show Low, Arizona, they said it in Eagar and Overgaard: How do we give an income tax cut to someone who does not pay income taxes? How indeed, Mr. Speaker?

The good news is, over 70 percent of our tax cuts go to middle income families, working Americans. We realize the value of work, we realize the value of individual initiative, and Mr. Speaker, we realize the value of having hard-working Americans keep more of their own money in their pockets and send less of it here to Washington.

URGING SUPPORT FOR RESTRICTIONS ON GUN TRAFFICKERS

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

Mr. BLAGOJEVICH. Mr. Speaker, now that the U.S. Supreme Court has struck down the background check provision of the Brady law, it is imperative that we have Federal legislation so that States with strong gun laws cannot be undermined by those with weak gun laws.

Take my home State of Illinois, for example. Illinois has tough gun laws, including background checks. Other States, unfortunately, are not as tough on guns.

One of Chicago's major highways, Interstate 55, runs through four States with gun laws a recent study described as very weak. I-55 is otherwise known as the iron pipeline. These States are irresistible to Chicago's street gangs and drug dealers who need firearms to protect their turf. It brings a whole new meaning to the phrase, "Have gun, will travel."

We can take steps to shut the valve on the iron pipeline and on other interstate highways that have become virtual firearm freeways. Join me in supporting the bill of the gentleman from New York [Mr. SCHUMER] that would give out mandatory 3-year prison sentences to convicted gun smugglers and limit people to one handgun purchase per month.

ANY EXCUSE IS A GOOD EXCUSE

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

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, any excuse is a good excuse if someone does not want to do something. The liberals do not want to vote for tax relief, so any excuse will do. The most frequent excuse is that tax relief will only go to the rich.

In today's Washington Post in the James K. Glassman column it says the Democratic Policy Committee recently sent an outraged fax to radio talk show hosts around the country. Under the current GOP proposal, this is a quote, "The top 1 percent of Americans would receive more benefits than the combined bottom 60 percent in tax cuts."

The IRS reports that the top 1 percent of Americans paid 29 percent of the Nation's income tax bill, and the bottom 60 percent paid just 9 percent. So to be fair, the top 1 percent should get triple the cuts as the bottom 60 percent.

But that is not the plan. The plan is targeted tax relief for the middle class. That is what we passed in this House.

But any excuse is a good excuse if someone does not want to vote for tax relief.

TRIBUTE TO CHARLES KURALT

(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 pay tribute to a North Carolina hero who made us all proud to be Americans. Yesterday Charles Kuralt was laid to rest in Chapel Hill, NC. His award winning-broadcast career celebrated not the lifestyle of the rich and famous, but regular ordinary Americans off the beaten path. He inspired us not with stories of glitzy stars or flashy celebrities, but the common men and women whose everyday lives and work made this country great.

It was North Carolina's values that sent Charles Kuralt on the road to discovery, and it was our good fortune that he took us along for the ride.

Born in Wilmington, raised in Charlotte and educated in Chapel Hill, Charles Kuralt lived and breathed North Carolina even as he reported to us from around the country and across the world. He took North Carolina values with him wherever he went, and his road was our road.

Yesterday under a scorching sky of Tarheel blue this North Carolina hero made his final trip.

Rest in peace, Charles Kuralt.

WHO REALLY BENEFITS FROM A CAPITAL GAINS TAX CUT?

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

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, who owns stock and who will benefit from the capital gains tax relief that the Republicans are attempting to provide? Well, it is time