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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. LATOURETTE].

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
July 23, 1997.

I hereby designate the Honorable STEVEN C. LATOURETTE 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:

As we pray to You, O God, to reveal the high purposes of life, we also remind ourselves that You have given to us the responsibility to use our minds and hearts and hands to accomplish those high purposes. You have commanded that we follow the road to peace, so may we use our minds to discover those roads; You have told us to feed the hungry, so may we use our hands to till the soil and plant the crops; You have told us to be compassionate to all people, so may our hearts compel us to help heal the broken and strengthen our communities. We thank You, O God, for giving us the heavenly vision and we pray that we will realize that vision in our daily lives. This is our earnest prayer. 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 Colorado, Mr. BOB SCHAFFER, come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado 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 Ms. McDevitt, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate had passed with amendments in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 2016. An act making appropriations for military construction, family housing, and base realignment and closure for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate insists upon its amendments to the bill (H.R. 2016) "An act making appropriations for military construction, family housing, and base realignment and closure for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998, and for other purposes", requests a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints Mr. BURNS, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. FAIRCLOTH, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. STEVENS, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. REID, Mr. INOUE, and Mr. BYRD, to be the conferees on the part of the Senate.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

PRESENTATION OF FREEDOM WORKS AWARD TO THE INDIANAPOLIS LEGAL AID SOCIETY

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

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I am excited today to present the Freedom Works Award to the Indianapolis Legal Aid Society for their fine work in providing legal representation to the poor of central Indiana. I established the Freedom Works Award to celebrate freedom by recognizing individuals and groups who take personal and private initiative instead of promoting reliance on the Government. Today I am honoring the Indianapolis Legal Aid Society which is the largest organization in Indiana devoted solely to the nonideological, nonpartisan provision of legal assistance to people who cannot afford to hire a lawyer.

Mr. Speaker, the Society employs four full-time and three part-time lawyers who, with a small group of volunteer lawyers, personally assisted more than 7,000 clients in 1996. In fact, last year the Society received inquiries from more than 15,000 people seeking legal assistance in such matters as family law, custody disputes, and landlord-tenant rights.

Despite operating on a limited budget and not receiving raises for 4 years, the Society's committed staff continues to assist the poor in central Indiana in a compassionate and efficient manner, providing hope for citizens who have nowhere else to turn. This group reminds us of the thousands of lawyers across the Nation who provide free legal assistance to low-income Americans through their own generosity. In fact, pro bono attorneys contribute over five times the number of hours worked annually by the staff attorneys in the Legal Service Corp's network, and Mr. Speaker, this fine

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

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group has achieved this success without receiving a single penny of government funding. Instead they have relied on the generosity of private groups and individuals who are committed to the principle of equal justice under the law for all citizens.

Mr. Speaker, access to the legal system by all our citizens is a cornerstone of American democracy. The Indianapolis Legal Aid Society is setting an example for us by recognizing the need and taking private initiative to address it effectively and efficiently. I am very proud today to honor them for their fine achievements.

INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR CLAUSE WILL MOVE OUR ECON- OMY IN THE WRONG DIRECTION

(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, Federal Government policy has a major impact in the way that employers treat their workers. It is important that Federal policy encourage workers to take the high-skill, high-wage road. For the good of our Nation, employers need to invest in the training benefits and long-term productivity of their workers.

But, Mr. Speaker, the independent contractor provision would move our economy in the wrong direction. It would encourage employers to abandon their commitment to their workers by moving them off the payroll. It would strip them of their health care and pension benefits. Employers who abandon their workers would obtain a competitive advantage over socially responsible companies. This is very unfair to the companies that respect their workers and invest in their skills and benefits.

That is why business organizations such as the Information Technology Association of America oppose the independent contractor clause. With its 11,000 member companies the ITAA says the independent contractor provision will harm legitimate businesses and result in the growth of businesses with no employee benefits.

Mr. Speaker, that is the wrong direction for America. The independent contractor clause needs to be deleted from the final budget bill.

LIBERALS ARE UNWILLING TO GIVE THE MIDDLE CLASS A BREAK

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

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, the liberals are simply unwilling to give the middle class a break. They are playing the class warfare card again. They seem to do it all the time; it is happening again. Thanks to the wonders of something called the family economic income, middle-class families are de-

fined as rich, and then of course the government should have the right to take away half of what one earns because the politicians should be allowed to spend that money instead of us.

Mr. Speaker, I think we ought to let the American people keep the money in their own pockets, decide how they want to spend it, not the politicians up here in Washington, and all of this is in the interest of fairness, so to speak. But if the family economic income argument is not working, then the liberals turn to their other rhetorical shenanigans. They want to turn a tax cut into a program, and get this:

They want to give a check to people who are not paying any income taxes.

This tax cut is supposed to be a cut for people who actually pay taxes. It is supposed to help particularly the middle class.

The American people in this country are overtaxed, particularly the middle class. Let us give them a break, and let us do it now.

REPUBLICAN SHIP OF STATE SPINNING OUT OF CONTROL

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

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, I read some alarming news lately about a ship spinning wildly out of control. Power was mysteriously cut but nobody could say who pulled the plug. The ship's commander was suffering from nervous palpitations. Rumors spread that he could not fulfill his duties or that his whole crew might have to abandon ship.

People said, "They've been up there too long, it's time to bring them down."

Were these the reports of the Russian spaceship *Mir* floating high above? No, it was the Republican "ship of state" right here on Capitol Hill spinning out of control, losing power, a nervous captain at the helm. Like the cosmonauts in outer space, the Republicans are far removed from people here on the ground.

How else can we explain the GOP tax bill, a bill with tax cuts for the wealthiest but nothing, zero, for parents working full time to stay above the poverty level? There is only one explanation for tax cuts that are upside down. They must have been written in the weightless atmosphere of outer space.

In the last Congress, the Republicans had a Contract With America. Today they have lost contact with Earth.

REPUBLICAN TAXPAYER RELIEF ACT FOSTERS THE AMERICAN DREAM

(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, every parent wants to leave their children

better off than they were. But as our Government makes it more and more difficult for people to leave the product of their hard work to their loved ones, this American dream is becoming almost impossible.

As hard-working men and women reach retirement, they are forced to sell their farms or small businesses because they cannot afford the death tax. Our Taxpayer Relief Act fosters the American dream by lowering this tax and other tax burdens on the shoulders of working men and women.

Clearly the best thing we can do for future generations is to help strengthen our economy, and we can do this by giving every homeowner, every inventor, every farmer and small businessman incentives to invest in America's neighborhoods and workplaces.

The Republican Taxpayer Relief Act is good for American families, and I urge my colleagues and the liberal Democrats on the other side to stop the distortions, stop the rhetoric, and start supporting real tax relief for the American people.

TAX FAIRNESS FOR WORKING AMERICANS

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

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, the Democrats have made it clear that they want to offer tax relief to working families. The President has made it clear that he wants to offer tax relief to working families. The American people have made it clear that they know the Republican tax plan favors the wealthy.

Now the chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means tell us that he will not offer a \$500-per-child tax credit to all working families, but he wants huge tax breaks for the wealthy.

Mr. Speaker, the Republicans just do not get it. When they signed the Contract With America, they promised a \$500-per-child tax credit to working families. Now they are breaking their promise to millions of working Americans. Police officers, nurses, teachers, firefighters, they pay taxes.

Mr. Speaker, the American people need to know are the Republicans going to make good on the contract they signed or is this just another case of promises made, promises broken?

REPUBLICAN AGENDA IS THE ANSWER TO AMERICANS' YEARNINGS FOR FREEDOM FROM GOVERNMENT

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

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, if we look across the sweep of history, we will notice that the human struggle has been a continuous struggle for greater freedom. From the Magna Carta to the Constitution of the United States, the