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## House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mrs. EMERSON].

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,  
July 29, 1997.

I hereby designate the Honorable JO ANN EMERSON 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 25 minutes, and each Member except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip limited to not to exceed 5 minutes, but in no event shall continue beyond 9:50 a.m.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. GUTKNECHT] for 5 minutes.

### WHAT A DIFFERENCE 4 YEARS MAKES

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Madam Speaker, what a difference 4 years has made. If we look back just 4 years ago, this Congress, under the leadership of the other team, was debating the largest tax increase in American history. They were attempting to dismantle the greatest health care system the world has ever known. Welfare reform was being ignored, and the Medicare trust fund was

moving toward bankruptcy and was being ignored as well. The Congressional Budget Office was predicting \$200 billion deficits for as far as the eye could see. What a difference 4 years has made.

Now, we have actually reformed the welfare system, and as a net result, there are 1.3 million American families who were on the welfare rolls who are now on payrolls. I have often said that the real benefit of the welfare reform system that we passed in this Congress 2 years ago was not that it will save money, but it will save people, it will save families, and it will save children from one more generation of dependency and despair.

What a difference 4 years has made. We now have agricultural reform so that farmers are starting to farm for the market rather than for the Government. What a difference 4 years has made as it relates to taxes and spending. As I say, 4 years ago the Congressional Budget Office was telling us that we would have \$200 billion deficits for as far as the eye could see, and today, I am happy to report, as a result of some tough negotiations and work with this President, we are on the verge of passing the first balanced budget since I was in high school.

That is great news for the American people; it is great news for our future. We are reducing the rate of growth in Federal spending by half. Some of us would say that Federal spending will still be going up too much under this balanced budget agreement, but the good news is, we are balancing the budget, we are keeping our promises, and we are doing what the American people have asked the Congress to do for so long.

What a difference 4 years has made. As I said earlier, 4 years ago they were debating the largest tax increase in American history. Now we are going to debate a significant amount of tax relief for working families, and they will

begin to notice that next year. Everyone who has an income of less than \$110,000 and has children is going to get tax relief, the per child tax credit. It will only be \$400 next year, but then it goes to \$500. That is real money for real families that will make a real difference in their lives, and it is about allowing them to keep more of what they earn so that they can spend and save it as they see fit.

There is real tax relief for small business people and farmers as well. As a matter of fact, perhaps the biggest benefactors of the program that was agreed to last night by the White House and congressional leaders will be small business people and farmers. And I represent an awful lot of farmers back in my district in southeastern Minnesota. For example, they will see real capital gains tax relief, over a 30-percent cut over the next 5 years. Small business people and farmers understand what capital gains are all about, because so many of them live poor and die rich.

Speaking of death, as a matter of fact, this is one other area where I am very happy with the agreement that was reached between the White House and the Congress. The exemption on death taxes will be increased immediately for small business people and farmers, from \$600,000 to \$1,300,000 per person, so that a couple, that husband and wife who are working the family farm, it is going to mean that they can pass that farm along to their kids, and that is great news for the American people as well.

One of the other things that I have worked on for many years that is good news in this tax package that has been agreed to is that we will finally have 100 percent deductibility for health care expenses for small business people and farmers. That is great news. In fact, that may be one of the most important health care reforms this Congress has passed in a long time.

□ 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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But as we look at all of the things that are in this tax package, I think it is good news for the American people, and I think we will have set the stage for long-term economic growth.

As we look at some of the other elements that are in this package, if parents have kids that are going to college, and I speak now as a baby boomer, and I have one in college, and one just finished high school and will be going to vocational school next year, and I have one in high school. When we look at educational expenses particularly baby boomer families are having right now, there is over 31 billion dollars' worth of tax relief for those families. That is great news. We are going to make it easier for those families to send those kids on to higher education.

So as we look at this package, there are lots of things in there that I think all sides can take credit for. We are going to expand the availability of health care for kids. The Kid Care Program, \$24 billion will be committed to that program over the next 5 years. We want to say to all children that they ought to have the right to get the health care that they deserve.

So this is good news for the American people. It is good news for American families, and it demonstrates what a difference 4 years has made.

#### PRESIDENT ALIYEV'S HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES SHOULD NOT BE IGNORED

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

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, today the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan arrives in Washington, and during his official visit to our Nation's capital, the President of this former Soviet republic will be honored at the White House and will brief Members on Capitol Hill.

Madam Speaker, as an article in this Sunday's Washington Post noted, "The visiting head of state who will have lunch with President Clinton this week and stay at Blair House as an honored guest has an unusual background: A former general in the KGB security forces who was dismissed from the Politburo for alleged corruption a decade ago." As the article goes on to point out, Azerbaijan, this former Soviet republic on the Caspian Sea has been "propelled into the forefront of U.S. interests by oil and geography."

That is what this is really all about, oil interests. While our State Department has cited serious abuses of human rights in Mr. Aliyev's regime, it is clear that human rights are a secondary interest. His country's territory happens to be sitting on some of the world's major oil reserves. U.S. oil companies are interested in exploiting this resource, so apparently we just look the other way about Mr. Aliyev's

unsavory regime, wine and dine him in Washington, and let him stay as an honored guest at Blair House at the American taxpayers' expense.

On the eve of Mr. Aliyev's visit, I want to inform our colleagues about the type of leader this man is. President Aliyev has a long record of human rights violations dating back to his four decades as an official of the Soviet KGB. During the 1960's, he orchestrated the depopulation of Armenians from their homes in Nakhichevan. As the Communist Party leader of Azerbaijan during the 1970's, he violently suppressed all nationalists and democratic dissent. His ardent support for the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan earned him a seat on the Soviet Politburo under Leonid Brezhnev, where he served until removed by Mikhail Gorbachev in 1987 for having engaged in widespread corruption. Since his return to power through a military coup in 1993, President Aliyev has suppressed democracy and committed widespread violations of human rights, which have been documented by the State Department.

Madam Speaker, as I mentioned, I believe that the effort to try to sanitize Mr. Aliyev's regime has everything to do with oil interests. I have nothing against the extraction of Caspian Sea oil reserves, but the question that we must confront this week is, what price do we pay to curry favor with the Azerbaijani Government? Must we court this most undemocratic leader on his terms? And what price do we pay for being so generous to President Aliyev?

The result of this policy of appeasement, Madam Speaker and my colleagues, is the continued oppression of the people of Azerbaijan and the continued threats to the people of Mr. Aliyev's neighbors, Armenia and Nagorno Karabagh.

I would hope that this visit would offer an opportunity for our President and our administration to express American concerns about the lack of democracy and basic rights and freedom in Azerbaijan. I would especially hope the message could be sent to President Aliyev in no uncertain terms that Azerbaijan should immediately lift its blockades of Armenia and Nagorno Karabagh.

Finally, I would hope that President Clinton would stress to President Aliyev American support for a freely negotiated settlement of the Nagorno Karabagh conflict that recognizes the self-determination within secure borders of the people of Nagorno Karabagh.

I am circulating a letter along with my colleague, the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. PORTER] to President Clinton expressing our concerns about the visit of President Aliyev, and I hope that we can make something positive come out of this visit by President Aliyev.

Also this evening, Madam Speaker, I will be participating in a demonstration across from the Willard Hotel here in Washington to protest Mr. Aliyev's

visit. The demonstration is being organized by the Armenian National Committee of America with the support of the Armenian Assembly of America and the entire Armenian community. There will be other demonstrations coinciding with President Aliyev's visit. I urge Members to support and participate in these demonstrations.

Although President Aliyev is probably not familiar with the right to free assembly and free expression, he should know that this is how we do things in a democracy. He must not mistake the red carpet treatment he is getting in official Washington as a signal of approval by the American people for his policies of aggression toward his neighbors and oppression of his own people.

Unfortunately, Madam Speaker, I am afraid that the direction in which United States policy is headed in the Caucasus region does not bode well for the outcome that we seek. The United States is in a unique position to be able to bring about a fair settlement of the Nagorno Karabagh situation and to help promote the long-term security and economic development of the region, but that is not the way things are going. The United States, along with France and Russia, is the cochair of the Minsk Group, and I believe that we should maintain our neutrality while exerting strong leadership to bring the parties together.

I am working with my colleagues to bring an official from the administration, the State Department, to come up to the Hill to bring us up to date on the status of negotiations in Nagorno, and for us to impress upon them the importance we attach to protecting the self-determination of the people of Karabagh.

Madam Speaker, Azerbaijan has some pretty powerful allies in its corner, including former top administration officials from both parties. We have to fight to make sure that the concerns of the people of Nagorno Karabagh are met here in the Congress and here in Washington.

I am working with my colleagues to bring an official from the administration, the State Department, to come up to the Hill to bring us up to date on the status of negotiations and for us to impress upon them the importance we attach to protecting the self-determination of the people of Karabagh.

You know, Mr. Speaker, Azerbaijan has some pretty powerful allies in its corner, including former top administration officials from both parties. This was documented in a recent front-page story in the Washington Post. This effort, this big-money influence, is being driven by oil money—the Caspian Sea basin off Azerbaijan has some of the richest oil reserves in the world, and many U.S. oil companies are interested in getting into this region.

But, Mr. Speaker, the big problem that many of us have is that the oil companies, and the former top U.S. Government officials working for those interests, are essentially lobbying for U.S. foreign policy to ignore the unacceptable behavior of Azerbaijan in order to curry favor with the regime and gain access to the oil reserves.