

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Reverend James David FORD, D.D., offered the following prayer:

Remind us always, O gracious God, of those deeds we can do to be Your people and celebrate the good works of life in our world, our Nation, and our communities. May we not only be involved with our own personal needs so that we neglect our concern for the other people that You have created, all the people that You have created, and for whom You share Your love and blessings. May we not only look to our own private relationship with You but the shared blessings and opportunities that You have given to us. May Your good benediction, O God, that is new every morning and with us all the day long, be with us this day and every day, we pray. 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.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

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

Mr. MILLER of California. 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. Pursuant to clause 5 of rule I, further proceedings on this matter are postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered is withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. HUTCHINSON 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

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to fifteen 1-minutes on each side.

H.R. 1270, NUCLEAR WASTE POLICY ACT OF 1997

(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 American people have been well served by the 105th Congress. This Republican Congress has created a balanced budget, given tax relief to millions of Americans, and allowed small businesses and companies to create thousands of new jobs. All this was done because the American people wanted it and, Mr. Speaker, they deserved it.

However, before adjournment Congress may consider a bill that the American people do not want, a bill that does not reflect their consolidated voice or best interests. That bill I am referring to is H.R. 1270, the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1997.

Residents in cities like New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, Dallas and many others certainly do not want to put their children and loved ones at severe risk because their elected officials voted to ship toxic nuclear waste through their neighborhoods and communities.

Fellow colleagues, one mishap is all it would take to ravage one of these cities or even your community. Let us not mar the monumental accomplishments of this Congress by voting on a truly dangerous and ill-conceived bill. Vote "no" on H.R. 1270.

KIKI DE LA GARZA U.S. BORDER STATION

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

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, today we will be considering under suspension of the rules a measure to name the U.S. border station located in Pharr, TX, after my esteemed predecessor, the Honorable Kika de la Garza.

This is indeed a fitting tribute for an individual whom many of us here in this Chamber have had the pleasure and privilege of working with. He is a man who has dedicated his life to public service, who has been an international ambassador for American agriculture, and who is known throughout all of Texas and the Nation simply as "Kika."

This is a man who has made an illustrious institution all the more distinguished by his countenance, his acumen, and his devotion to doing what it takes to get the job done. No one deserves this honor more, and I want to take this opportunity to say from my heart, "Congratulations, Kika, for your decades of outstanding work on behalf of the citizens of the 15th District in Texas."

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY, A CONCEPT AMERICANS CAN AGREE ON

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

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, recently in my Sunday newspaper, I saw a fascinating article in the USA Week-

end section that was entitled "What Americans Agree On." USA Weekend took a poll over the July 4th holiday and found out that 95 percent of Americans agree that freedom must be tempered with personal responsibility. Ninety-five percent, Mr. Speaker.

Now leaving aside the poll numbers, it is common sense that personal responsibility is vital to the American conception of freedom. But what if children come from homes in which blaming others for our shortcomings is a way of life? How will such children learn the basic American value of freedom in the context of personal responsibility?

The answer is education. The problem is that too many schools are failing to teach what nearly all Americans agree on that is fundamental to our freedom. Personal responsibility, a concept shared by all Americans, is where education reformers should talk more about when thinking about educating our Nation's children.

IRS AUDITS PAULA JONES

(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, just days after Paula Jones rejected a settlement and her lawyers deserted her, the IRS has slammed Paula Jones with an audit. Now, if that does not seem strange, check this out: Paula Jones has no income. Paula's husband makes \$37,000. They do not own a home. They rent. They have two children and only own one car.

Now tell me, Mr. Speaker, how many families of such meager means get audited? The IRS says, "Wait a minute. The IRS did not target Paula Jones." The IRS says, "We have nothing to do with the White House, and the IRS never has political targets."

Beam me up, Mr. Speaker. Let us tell it like it is. The IRS did not just target Paula Jones. The IRS is nuking Paula Jones because of the sensitive politics involved. I say Congress should target the IRS and straighten those bunch of henchmen out.

WHAT DOES CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM MEAN?

(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, Thomas Jefferson said, "To compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves is sinful and tyrannical." And the Supreme Court agreed in what is called the Beck agreement. They did not call it sinful or tyrannical. They called it illegal.

What is it? It is the involuntary spending of union workers' hard-earned money, their union dues, for opinions in which they disbelieve. The workers

have to fund political contributions and candidates they do not support. The administration, by Executive order, refuses to enforce the Beck decision.

So when we hear the term "campaign reform," it means making the Beck decision law; it means removing this injustice that Thomas Jefferson called sinful and tyrannical, it means freeing up the workers of this country.

CONSIDER CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM THIS YEAR

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

Mr. SNYDER. Mr. Speaker, on June 11, 1995, the President and Speaker of the House, in a very famous photo of shaking hands, committed themselves to campaign finance reform. It has been over 2 years later. We have had 85 bills filed. There have been no hearings on campaign finance reform. There have been no bills passed.

The President will support campaign finance reform, Mr. Speaker. This House and the House leadership needs to step forward and let this body consider campaign finance reform this year. My own preference is the freshmen bipartisan bill, the Hutchinson-Allen bill. There are other good bills out there, but they will get nowhere without hearings and without being brought to the floor of this House. We need to do our job this year on campaign finance reform.

FOLLOW MINNESOTA'S LEAD IN EDUCATION

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

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my Governor, Arne Carlson, of Minnesota. Back in Minnesota we are very proud of our schools and we are very proud of our students. Many people listen to Garrison Keiler when he talks about Lake Wobegone, and sometimes we talk about the Lake Wobegone syndrome.

In fact, we do believe our women are strong, our men are good looking, and our children are above average. And there is reason to believe that. If we look at the numbers, Minnesota students rank second in graduation rate. On the ACT test, we once again ranked in second place in all of the United States in 1996. But that is the good news.

The bad news is, in some of the tests that we have been giving our students in the last several years on basic skills, Minnesota students are not doing as well as they should. In reading, for example, we asked students to read a few newspaper articles, then answer some questions, and only 59 percent of the students passed that test.

That is why Governor Carlson, together with the legislature, began a

process this year of real reform of our schools, and that was built around choices and giving parents more empowerment. It is tax credits. It is empowering parents with more deductibility for educational expenses.

We in Washington ought to do the same. In fact, they say back in Minnesota, either lead, follow, or get out of the way. In terms of education reform, we ought to follow the lead of Governor Carlson and other brave Governors who are empowering parents to get better education for their kids.

NATIONAL STUDENT TESTING IS NOT THE ANSWER

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

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, the latest great idea from the administration to improve education is national testing. After all, who could be against a proposal that will make it easier to see how your school is doing and make it easier to compare your children against the performance of students nationwide?

I guess my first reaction is that we do not need a national test to discover that a school with fourth graders who do not read has a big problem. We do not need a national test to figure out that something is terribly wrong when kids graduate from high school feeling just wonderful about themselves but are unable to write a coherent paragraph.

The bottom line is, we do not need a national test to determine that our schools are failing us and failing the communities which support them. It is as if the other side actually believes that the same schools that do not enforce standards now will suddenly do so if Washington comes up with a new test.

If academic rigor is absent in our schools now, call it a hunch, but I am guessing that rigor will be absent in our schools after the latest national test is created.

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SCHOOL CHOICE

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

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, my question is, Would a plan to make it easier for parents to save for their children's college education be a good thing or a bad thing? What if their children took that money and used it to go to a private university like Harvard? Would that be a threat to public universities like the University of Michigan or the University of Virginia? Or would that make schools like the University of Michigan and the University of Virginia try even harder to compete for students that might otherwise go to Harvard?

If allowing parents to send their kids to Harvard is not a threat to public universities, why would making it a little easier for parents to send their kids to private schools be a threat to public schools at the elementary and secondary level? Could it be that many parents would vote with their feet and take their kids out of bad public schools and put them in private schools? That would force bad schools to clean up their act or shut down, which is exactly the point.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

(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, another week has gone by in Washington, and still the Republican leadership has not scheduled a vote on campaign finance reform. Delay has always been the strategy of those who are opposed to curbing the influence of special interest money. We cannot accept delay any longer.

My colleagues and I are demanding that Speaker GINGRICH schedule a vote to ban soft money, the huge unregulated contributions to both political parties that have corrupted our political process in Congress. But the Speaker's response is there is not time, or the Speaker's response is what we need is more money in our election system. That is wrong.

Tomorrow afternoon the Republicans hope to leave work early in the day to travel to New York City to hold a massive fund raiser. Apparently there is enough time in the congressional schedule to leave early and fly to New York on private jets to raise money, but there is not enough time to schedule a vote on campaign finance reform and to ban soft money. This is unacceptable, Mr. Speaker, to me, to my colleagues, and to the majority of the American people.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE IN CURRENT LAW

(Mrs. CHENOWETH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CHENOWETH. Mr. Speaker, most children have tried the tactic we are now seeing from the other side regarding the White House scandals and campaign finance reform. If you catch a child with his hands in the cookie jar, sometimes he tries to change the subject on that which they are doing, and if they cannot successfully change the subject, then they get angry.

Most parents see right through what their child is trying to do to escape punishment for disobeying their parents. Fortunately, thank goodness, most Americans are able to see through the hypocrisy of Democrats who claim to want to ban soft money, the very same people who have raised illegal fund raising from foreign sources to an art form.