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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:

May our words, O God, speak from our hearts and cause understanding for all, may our songs praise Your blessings to us and our Nation, and may our deeds be done in service to those we are called to serve. Whether we speak or sing or act, we pray that we will do the words of justice and mercy, trusting in Your good grace. In the busy moments of the day when so many voices need to be heard, may we remember those words of peace and hope that enlighten our minds and give comfort to our very souls. In Your name 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.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from California [Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD 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 has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 410. An act to extend the effective date of the Investment Advisers Supervision Coordination Act.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 83-420, as amended by Public Law 99-371, the Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, appoints the Senator from Arizona [Mr. MCCAIN] to the Board of Trustees of Gallaudet University.

The message also announced that pursuant to section 2761 to title 22, United States Code, the Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, and upon the recommendation of the Democratic Leader, appoints the Senator from West Virginia [Mr. BYRD] as Vice Chairman of the Senate Delegation to the British-American Interparliamentary Group during the One Hundred Fifth Congress.

The message also announced that in accordance with Public Law 81-754, as amended by Public Law 93-536 and Public Law 100-365, the Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, appoints the Senator from Vermont [Mr. JEFFORDS] to the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOLEY). The Chair will recognize ten 1-minutes on each side.

BIPARTISANSHIP

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

Mr. GINGRICH. Mr. Speaker, I simply wanted to rise to report to my colleagues and to our citizens that we had a very useful weekend retreat in Hershey on a bipartisan basis to talk about, I think, one of the most difficult and complex things that people do: How to engage in passionate and difficult differences, how to bring to this room 435 people who represent the entire country, and how to do so in a way in which disagreement does not become

disagreeable and in which the fact that people may have different dreams and different visions and sometimes different ideologies does not become so separating us and so divisive that it becomes difficult or impossible for us to do the people's business.

This House has a long and a proud history of handling great conflicts in a very civil and orderly manner. Some of the greatest debates in this country's history have taken place in this building between people of great compassion who felt deeply what they were saying, but who recognized the legitimacy of the other person feeling equally deeply what they were saying.

In addition to just the sense of handling debate, the more bipartisan our spirit can be, the more we can work together without the division of faction, as George Washington described it, the more good ideas we will have because on many topics, I would argue on most topics, the ideas are individual. They are not Democrat or Republican, liberal or conservative. They are just better, smarter, more effective ways to get the job done.

So I hope that coming out of the experience we had in Hershey, that we begin to set this House back on a track of working together, of getting things done, or recognizing we may have deep differences at times but there are other times when we have many, many things that bring us together and many common interests, and that if we work at it, together we can do a better job for all the American people.

MORE ON BIPARTISANSHIP

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

Mr. GEPHARDT. Mr. Speaker, I rise to second the thought that the Speaker just made on the floor about the bipartisan retreat that happened this weekend in Hershey. It was a historic event,

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

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the only time that I know that Members from both sides of the aisle and their families have had a chance to take a 2-day period to understand how we could better work together to solve the problems that we are all sworn to try to solve for the American people.

I think it succeeded, if for no other reason that human relationships were established that had not been established before. There has been tremendous turnover in the House. We have many, many new Members who do not know one another, and certainly older Members who do not know younger Members who have come in the last few years. I think those relationships were begun.

David McCullough, the noted historian, gave a speech on the first afternoon that we arrived in Hershey that I will never forget, and I urge all Members to get a copy of the speech and read it. He reminded us of how difficult it was in the early history of the Congress to work together, how many times altercations broke out between Members, how difficult it was to find consensus, and how negative people were about the future of the Congress and the country.

We have come a long way; we have a long way to go. Hershey is a beginning. From the Democratic side, I pledge our best efforts to carry the spirit of that meeting forward with tangible results in trying to work together better in a variety of ways. I thank all the Members who came, and I urge the House to entertain the idea of having a succeeding event for Members who could not come so that everyone can begin to show progress in this very important regard.

I think the Speaker for allowing me to speak, and I look forward to being able to work on the projects that were begun in Hershey.

THE MID-EAST SITUATION

(Mrs. KELLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, I take the floor this morning with a heavy heart over reports that violence has again claimed innocent lives in Israel. In the shadow of this tragedy, it concerns me deeply that President Clinton has reportedly agreed to United States participation in Yasser Arafat's meeting in Gaza this weekend.

Although Israeli representatives will be excluded from this meeting, Chairman Arafat has invited other diplomats worldwide to criticize recent developments in Israeli-Palestinian relations. This meeting will obviously provide a platform for one-sided presentation of very complicated issues that are the subject of ongoing negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.

Rather than encouraging counter-productive rhetoric, Mr. President, you should be protecting the traditional

United States role of Mideast peace broker. The United States participation in the Gaza meeting will jeopardize that role.

Mr. President, now is the time to stand firm on principle. I urge you not to send a United States representative to the Gaza meeting this weekend.

CHILD AND TEEN SUICIDE

(Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, child and teen suicide is a national tragedy in our country. The national suicide rate among 10 to 14-year-olds has increased by 120 percent since 1980. One in 12 high school students attempted suicide in 1995, and each year more than 270,000 teenagers attempt to end their lives. More than a desire to die, these children say their attempt was a cry for help.

This tragedy impacts all Americans. In affluent Palos Verdes a 15-year-old girl took her life by jumping off a cliff because she felt hopeless and anguished. In east Los Angeles a 15-year-old boy, devastated over his parents' separation, hung himself.

Child and teen suicide is a painful and critical tragedy which cannot be ignored. Members of Congress and indeed all Americans must work together to save our children. It is literally a matter of life and death.

ADMINISTRATION PROPOSES TOLLS ON INTERSTATES

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

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, if we needed proof that the President is really a tax-and-spend liberal just look at this headline in the Washington Times: Clinton Proposes Tolls on Interstates.

The Clinton administration has proposed that the Federal Government do away with a 40-year restriction on States charging tolls on Federal highways. The White House claims this is a modest proposal, but it appears that the bridge to the 21st century has a toll booth on it.

Mr. Speaker, the American people do not need another tax. Over half of the family income goes to taxes at all levels, and to suggest that American families need to pay more taxes for the highways that they have already paid for is too much. The President says he wants to balance the budget, but he has submitted a budget that does not balance. He says he wants tax relief, but he just announced a new tax increase.

Mr. Speaker, the President should go back to the drawing board and start with a real balanced budget, one without a tax increase on hardworking Americans.

FREEDOM FOR VIOLENT CRIMINALS IN FLORIDA

(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, against the wishes of Florida officials, the Supreme Court has allowed 500 violent criminals in Florida to go free. When they restored time off to relieve overcrowding, the court said promises were made.

Now, check this out:

Mitchell Sexton stabbed his father to death and he was released. Norm Eastman beat a 2-year-old to death. He was released. John Yearby beat a homeless man to death with a baseball bat. He was released.

Now, if that is not enough to overturn your convictions and add insult to injury, ladies and gentlemen, listen to the news: All victims will be notified of these violent offender releases.

Beam me up, Mr. Speaker. In my opinion, America has murder, rape and violence in record numbers because some of our judges are so dumb they could throw themselves at the ground and miss. Maybe, just maybe, if judges start supporting the rights of innocent victims, we would not have so much murder.

ISRAEL AND THE UNITED NATIONS

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, as we discuss our relationship with the United Nations this session, I believe one of our priorities should be to seek an end to the isolation within the United Nations of our Democratic ally Israel. Participation in the Security Council as well as all committees of the United Nations is predicated on a country's participation in a regional group. Due to the objections raised by a number of rejectionist States, Israel has been denied membership in its natural geographic group. Israel is therefore shut out of the entire committee system where the real day-to-day work of the United Nations is conducted.

One solution is to move beyond mere geography and look to the shared values of the democratic nations of western Europe. This group already spans 3 continents. Together with Congressman STEVE ROTHMAN and other colleagues, we have sent a letter to the ambassadors of the western European nations asking them to end Israel's unjust isolation by providing a legal home for their fellow democracy, the State of Israel.

REPUBLICAN BUDGET MERRY-GO- ROUND

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