



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE **105th** CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 143

WASHINGTON, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 31, 1997

No. 150

House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
October 31, 1997.

I hereby designate the Honorable JOHN SHIMKUS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

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

Your spirit, O God, that is new every morning and with us until our last day, comes to us as a gentle wind blowing away all our faults and shortcomings and giving us a new beginning and new hope. In spite of all the sadness and disappointments that enter our lives, Your grace is sufficient for our needs and Your love is a balm unto our souls. May Your blessing, gracious God, that refreshes and makes us whole, be with us now and evermore, we pray. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). 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 Ohio [Mr. BROWN] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio 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 Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate had passed without amendment a concurrent resolution of the House of the following title:

H. Con. Res. 167. Concurrent resolution to correct a technical error in the enrollment of H.R. 2160.

The message also announced that the Senate agrees to the report of the committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2160) "An Act making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998, and for other purposes."

The message also 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. 672. An act to make technical amendments to certain provisions of title 17, United States Code.

The message also announced that the Senate had passed bills of the following titles, in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1024. An act to make chapter 12 of title 11 of the United States Code permanent, and for other purposes; and

S. 1149. An act to amend title 11, United States Code, to provide for increased education funding, and for other purposes.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will now entertain five 1-minutes from each side.

OPPOSE PRESIDENT'S PLAN ON NATIONAL TESTING

(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, today is Halloween, so let me begin with the first liberal horror story of the day. Our education liberals have come up with another expensive solution for our failing public school system. That is right. They want to use more of your taxpayer dollars to design and implement a national testing plan.

While all parents, including all of us, want to monitor the progress of our children in school, we do not want Washington bureaucrats creating more redtape through a national testing plan. Let us tackle our national education problems by sending the resources and dollars where they will do some good, to the local school districts, down into classrooms, where teachers and parents can apply those resources to teaching children, not lining the pockets of Washington bureaucrats. It is easy as all that.

I urge my colleagues to oppose the President's plan on national testing. This body should concentrate on increasing parental choice and involvement, not national testing.

FEDERAL INVESTIGATION INTO UNION PACIFIC

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

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, the lead story on the radio last evening was the



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fact that there will be a Federal investigation into the Union Pacific because of its merger and the fact that the employees of Union Pacific are under such stress and fatigue because of the downsizing.

Let me point out that, as a result of testimony and actually visiting with young people in uniform of all services, there are stretches and strains and fatigue. The veterans of America understand this. The military retirees of America understand this. The parents of the young people understand this.

So let us not forget those young people today who are in uniform defending America's interest regardless of whether they be here in the continental United States or ashore somewhere else, the stresses and strains under which they exist. Let us give them a word of encouragement, a word of thanks. Because they are a national treasure.

WHAT A-PLUS ACCOUNTS ARE REALLY ABOUT

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

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, it is against the House rules to question the motives of other Members. But in the last several days, we heard our Democratic colleagues saying that the reason we want to pass A-Plus accounts is to harm public education. Does anybody really believe that?

Eighty-eight percent of America's schoolchildren attend public schools. I went to public schools my entire life. Two of my children graduated from public schools. I believe in public schools. What A-Plus accounts are really about is giving the same kinds of choices to poor families, like those here in Washington DC, that wealthier families have all across America. What is wrong with giving American families, American schoolchildren choices? That is what this is all about. It is about who decides.

Some of our Democratic friends wanted to have bigger bureaucracies here in Washington. They want more of the decisions made in Washington. But look at the Washington schools themselves. We are spending over \$10,000 per student per year on the schools here in Washington, and they are arguably among the worst schools in the country.

What we want to do is allow those parents, whether in Washington, DC, or Baltimore or Minneapolis, to have the same kinds of choices that the wealthy people have.

AMERICANS DO NOT TRUST FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

(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, poll after poll suggests a growing problem in America. Many Americans do not

trust the Federal Government. Pollsters keep trying to figure it out. I believe it is not all that complicated.

In my opinion, the American people in growing numbers do not trust the Federal Government because many Americans believe that the Federal Government does not always tell the truth. The pollsters can constipate all they want over this issue. This is no brain surgery. It is very simple. No truth, no trust. Trust and truth are inseparable.

I yield back Waco, Ruby Ridge, Pan Am 103, and Camelot.

"PORKER OF THE WEEK" AWARD

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

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, those redesigned \$50 bills are hot off the Bureau of Printing and Engraving presses. But what are we going to do with the more than \$217 million in printing errors? That is right, many bills were rejected by the Federal Reserve because the fine concentric lines surrounding the portrait of Ulysses S. Grant were broken. This may seem like a minor flaw to some, but it is a major problem because the Treasury spent \$15 million on an international education campaign touting the lines as a special feature added to thwart counterfeiters.

Most likely the only option for the Treasury Department is to destroy the flawed notes and start over. This will cost the taxpayers at least \$16.3 million, \$8.7 million for the misprinted bills, \$360,000 to destroy them, and \$7.2 million to reprint them.

If that is not bad enough, the Bureau of Printing and Engraving most recently purchased \$50 million in printing equipment that it did not install in its Washington facility because they would have to have major renovation at that facility.

The Bureau of Printing and Engraving gets my "Porker of the Week" award.

STILL NO DEBATE ON CAMPAIGN FINANCE SYSTEM

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

Mr. LUTHER. Mr. Speaker, here we are today, with only a week or two left before the scheduled planned adjournment of the House, and still no debate has occurred on cleaning up our campaign finance system in this country.

One of the big arguments used around here to have business as usual and to do nothing is that people do not care, it is not being demanded by the American people. Well, let us get it straight. The American people hired us to come to Washington to figure out what is wrong with the system and to fix it. Nearly everyone knows that the campaign finance system is broken and needs to be repaired, that it needs to be cleaned up.

So let us do our job. Let us do the job we were hired to do by the American people. Let us debate this issue. Let us pass a tough, comprehensive campaign finance reform bill. Mr. Speaker, we must not adjourn this Congress until we have done our job.

PARENTS NEED MORE CHOICE IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

Mr. ROGAN. Mr. Speaker, the next time those opponents of parental choice in education on the other side argue that the Federal Government should be running our public schools instead of giving parents more local control, I hope that they will consider these recently released facts.

Last year, new rigorous exams were given to 130,000 elementary school children. The performance results were dismal. Only 39 percent of 8th graders and 33 percent of 4th graders had any kind of basic understanding in reading and writing. New reports also show that 75 percent of American college students are struggling with high school-level math. One textbook expert said, "There is no question that every time we adopt a textbook, the reading level of the book is lower than the last."

Yesterday, the Washington Times did an editorial that hit the nail directly on the head. They said that, "Phonics is out, whole language is in, spelling primers and spelling bees are passe, invented spelling is the vogue. Self-esteem reigns supreme. The education establishment, the bureaucrats, and the unions still reject rigorous teaching of a rigorous curriculum in favor of the feel-good fuzziness that got us into this mess in the first place."

Mr. Speaker, we will never correct this deficiency until parents, and not Washington bureaucrats, have the say in the education of our precious children.

SENATOR BOB DOLE SHOULD EXPLAIN HIS INVOLVEMENT WITH CHILE

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, Legal Times this week reports how Bob Dole has gone to great lengths to avoid having to register as a lobbyist or file as a foreign agent. The fact is Senator Dole is clearly working on behalf of Chilean interests against United States salmon farmers in a trade dispute. He has visited salmon farmers in Chile, met with the President in Chile, and met with the Foreign Minister of Chile. At the same time, he is taking sides in the fast-track debate, writing op-ed pieces for the New York Times and speaking outside on the issue.

Legal Times illustrates how former Senator Dole is taking great care not