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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

The Reverend Father Allen P. Novotny, S.J., President, Gonzaga College High School, Washington, D.C., offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, You made us to Your own image and set us over all creation. Once You chose a people and gave them a destiny and, when You brought them out of bondage to freedom, they carried with them the promise that all men and women would be blessed and all men and women could be free.

It happened to our forbearers, who came to this land as if out of the desert into a place of promise and hope. It happens to us still in our time, as You guide to perfection the work of creation by our labor.

May the women and men of this House bring this spirit to all their efforts to establishing true justice and guide our Nation to its destiny. May their work today and every day further this mission. 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. MCNULTY. 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 the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

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

Mr. MCNULTY. 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 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. VITTER 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 bill and a concurrent resolution of the House of the following titles:

H.R. 609. An act to amend the Export Apple and Pear Act to limit the applicability of the Act to apples.

H. Con. Res. 102. Concurrent resolution celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and recognizing the humanitarian safeguards these treaties provide in times of armed conflict.

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. 434. An act to authorize a new trade and investment policy for sub-Saharan Africa.

The message also announced that the Senate insists upon its amendments to the bill (H.R. 434) "An Act to authorize a new trade and investment policy for sub-Saharan Africa," requests a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints Mr. ROTH, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. LOTT, Mr. HELMS, Mr. MOYNIHAN, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. BIDEN to be the conferees on the part of the Senate.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed bills of the following

titles in which concurrence of the House is requested.

S. 185. An act to establish a Chief Agricultural Negotiator in the Office of the United States Trade Representative.

S. 580. An act to amend title IX of the Public Health Service Act to revise and extend the Agency for Healthcare Policy and Research.

S. 688. An act to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to reauthorize the Overseas Private Investment Corporation.

S. 1232. An act to provide for the correction of retirement coverage errors under chapters 83 and 84 of title 5, United States Code.

MAKING IN ORDER AT ANY TIME MOTION TO AGREE TO CONFERENCE ASKED BY THE SENATE ON H.R. 3194, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2000

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that it may be in order at any time for the chairman of the Committee on Appropriations or his designee to move that the House take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 3194) making appropriations for the government of the District of Columbia and other activities chargeable in whole or in part against the revenues of said District for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes, with a Senate amendment, thereto, disagree to the Senate amendment and agree to the conference asked by the Senate.

The SPEAKER. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

MAKING IN ORDER AT ANY TIME CONSIDERATION OF H.J. RES. 75, FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS, FISCAL YEAR 2000

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that it may be in order at any time, without the intervention

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of any point of order, to consider in the House the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 75) making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2000, and for other purposes, that the joint resolution be debatable for 1 hour, equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations, and that the previous question otherwise be considered as ordered to passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. OSE). There will be 15 1-minutes on each side.

IT IS TIME THE LIBERAL DEMOCRATS SUPPORT FLEXIBILITY FOR LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS

(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, there is a Latin phrase that applies to those liberal Democrats who constantly believe that Washington always knows best: via ovicepum dura est. For the engineers, "The way of the egghead is hard."

Mr. Speaker, it is time our liberal colleagues support the education opportunities that grant our local school districts the flexibility to decide how to spend their Federal education funding.

We are all aware of the Administration's plan to hire 100,000 new teachers, and we can all agree that hiring more qualified teachers should be a priority. But what about books? What about computers? What about the basic things, like pencils and papers? What right do Washington bureaucrats have to deny school districts the option of using these funds for these necessities?

Mr. Speaker, we can do more to improve the education of our children by giving local school districts the flexibility and tools needed to make those improvements. Let us give our children the best education opportunity we can. Let us cut the Federal purse strings.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back all the egg-headed, cookie-cutter, liberal funding theories which cannot possibly meet the diverse needs and educational needs of our children.

REPUBLICANS HAVE KILLED CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM AND CONTINUE TO BLOCK AN INCREASE IN THE MINIMUM WAGE

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

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, Americans have enjoyed an unprecedented growth in our economy over 8 years. We have the lowest unemployment rate in decades, but 12 million workers, 10 percent of all American workers, work at the minimum wage. The majority of them are adults, a majority are women.

Most of those women are trying to bring up children at that minimum wage with less than \$10,000 a year. They have not seen any benefit from the economic boom. They deserve a wage increase, and they can only get that wage increase by increasing the minimum wage by this Congress.

Eighty percent of Americans favor doing that. Even two-thirds of all Republicans favor doing that. We have a bill that would raise the minimum wage by \$1 over the next 2 years. It should pass. It could pass in a day, but the Republican leadership is going to hold that bill hostage unless it is possible to give \$70 billion per year of tax cuts to the handful of Americans who make more than \$300,000 a year. That tax reduction goes to the wealthiest 1 percent of Americans.

Why is this? Members guessed it, the handful of Americans who make more than \$300,000 a year make the vast majority of contributions to political campaigns.

The Republican leadership of this Congress, the House and Senate, have killed campaign finance reform again this year.

AFRICA TRADE BILL: AN HISTORIC OPPORTUNITY

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

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, it is encouraging to see the African Growth and Opportunity Act passed yesterday, overwhelmingly passed, and it has now passed both chambers of Congress.

We need to get to work, Mr. Speaker, on putting together a Senate-House conference committee on this bill so we can get it to the President for signature. This legislation is a first step in helping Africa help itself by bringing the continent into a positive trading partnership with the United States.

As the chairman of the Subcommittee on Africa, as well as an original cosponsor of the bill in the House, I can say that passage of this historic bill is good for Africa and it is good for America.

In addition to bringing Africa into a trading partnership with us, it will help open African markets to American goods. America today has only 5 percent of Africa's market. France and other European nations dominate the continent's trade. With this bill, the U.S. will be able to pry some of the African markets away from Europe. This will lead to tens of thousands of new jobs for Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I again urge quick formation of a House and Senate con-

ference committee on this bill so we can get it to the President for signature.

IT IS TIME CONGRESS WRITES THE LAWS, NOT NEW YORK JUDGES

(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, judges in New York have ruled that Mayor Giuliani shall give \$7.2 million to the Brooklyn Museum of Art, even though their exhibit is offensive. I will say it is offensive, a portrait of the Virgin Mary splattered with elephant dung.

If that is not bad enough, now taxpayers have to subsidize it. Unbelievable, Mr. Speaker. In the name of art and freedom of expression, these stumbling, bumbling, fumbling judges in New York have institutionalized perversion.

The museum may have the right to show it, but by God, the taxpayers should not be compelled to fund it. It is time that Congress starts writing laws, not these judges. I yield back the stupidity, absolute stupidity and perversion, of the decision of these judges in New York.

ASKING THE PRESIDENT TO DO THE RIGHT THING

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

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, as usual, the gentleman from Ohio is absolutely right.

I address my comments to another topic, however. In the coming days, the President is going to have to do some critical things and make some critical decisions. He can choose to support a Republican program that balances the budget and saves social security, or he can succumb to the pressure of the liberal Democrat leadership here in the House and bust the budget and loot the social security trust fund once again.

To the average hard-working American taxpayer, this should not really be a dilemma, but this is Washington, and silly things happen here. When liberals get together to discuss spending issues, it is awfully hard to keep their hands off of the taxpayers' money.

The President talks about his legacy. He can assure his place in history if he stands up to his free-spending friends and says no to budget-busting and no to more increases and raids on the social security trust fund.

Let us hope that just this once, the President does the right thing.

REPUBLICANS HAVE ALREADY SPENT \$17 BILLION OF SOCIAL SECURITY SURPLUS

(Mr. BERRY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1