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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

Father Steve Planning, Order of the Society of Jesus, Alexandria, Virginia, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty and Eternal God, we give You thanks and praise today for the many blessings which You have bestowed upon our country. You have given us the gifts of freedom and democracy so that we might build a Nation based on the highest human principles. We humbly ask Your blessing upon us as we do the work for which we were elected. Help us to create a Nation in which justice, prosperity and peace form a part of every citizen's life. Give us the gift of wisdom so that we might make decisions which benefit all people, especially those most in need.

We ask this in Your name who lives and reigns forever and ever. 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 Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. CUMMINGS 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.

WELCOMING REV. STEPHEN W. PLANNING, S.J.

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

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to welcome Father Stephen Planning and to thank him for delivering our opening prayer this morning.

Father Planning is a member of the Society of Jesus and was ordained to the priesthood this past Saturday, June 12.

He and his family are longtime residents of northern Virginia, where he began his Catholic education. Following his novitiate experience at Wernersville, Pennsylvania, Father Planning taught high school in Nigeria and ministered in a nearby leprosy village. Upon returning to the United States, he received a master's degree in philosophy from Fordham University and spiritually advised indigent AIDS patients at a nearby Bronx hospital.

Father Planning also has ministered and taught English in Santiago, Chile, studied at the Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley, California, where he completed a master's of divinity degree, and served in a local parish, and spent this year in Chicago, Illinois, where he finished a master's degree in education at Loyola University and worked at Christo Rey Jesuit High School, where he now will return to serve as assistant principal.

Our colleagues would be interested to know that this inner city high school has a unique corporate intern program which requires students to attend classes 4 days a week and hold down an 8-hour-per-week job with a corporate sponsor to help pay their tuition. Christo Rey's pioneering concept this past year saw 89 percent of its seniors graduate, 73 percent enroll in college.

Mr. Speaker, I know my colleagues join me in congratulating Father Planning on his ordination and wish him continued success wherever he is led in the future to serve the cause of Jesus Christ.

LOOPOLES LEAD TO NOTHING BUT BULLET HOLES

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

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, low fat, light on substance and without additives. These are the phrases that should describe a good diet. Unfortunately, these terms are better applied to the mockery of a proposal that the Republicans of this Congress have sent forward as gun safety provisions to this House floor.

Shame on us for allowing precious time to pass, lives to be lost, funerals to be held and tears to be shed before deciding to come to grips with a problem that has plagued us for years. Shame on us for allowing special interest groups to wield artificial power and influence over us when we direct the power flow of our country. Shame on us for repeatedly appeasing special interest groups at the cost and sacrifice of our youth. Shame on us.

Under the proposed legislation in the Juvenile Justice Act of 1999 it is conceivable that a visitor to the Nation's Capital traveling from building to building is subject to face more security than a criminal trying to buy a firearm at a gun show. The Senate has realized the pressing nature of this situation and has acted. It is now our turn.

Mr. Speaker, our loopholes lead to nothing but bullet holes, and, my colleagues, I strongly urge swift passage of gun safety provisions.

HE WHO SACRIFICES LIBERTY FOR SAFETY WILL HAVE NEITHER LIBERTY NOR SAFETY

(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, today we take up the Consequence For Juvenile

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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Offenders Act. It is my hope that all of us here in America will realize that more laws will not mean more safety. We seem so willing to give up our freedom for just a feeling of a little more safety. The truth is we will not be more safe until we deal with the real problem, the root problem, the human heart.

Two young men in Colorado broke more than 23 laws by brutally murdering 13 students, one teacher, and then took their own lives. One more law, a dozen more laws, would not have stopped them. They needed a change of heart.

Ben Franklin said he who sacrifices liberty for safety will have neither liberty nor safety.

As parents, as neighbors, let us not give up our personal freedoms. Instead let us deal with the real problem. Listen to the children, be a good neighbor, get involved in the community, and together let us make a better America.

GOP STANDS FOR "GUNS OVER PEOPLE"

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

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Many Republicans who fiercely fight any common sense gun safety measures will try to amend the juvenile crime bill to encourage schools to place the Ten Commandments in their classrooms. That makes sense. After all, it is free publicity for the gun lobby, a good way to reach young people, kids. My colleagues have seen the poster, now see the movie starring Charlton Heston, President of the National Rifle Association.

Now I have read the Ten Commandments, I did not merely watch the Hollywood version, and I seem to recall that they teach us thou shall not kill, and yet assault weapons which the NRA fought to keep on our streets kill. Saturday night specials, the small cheap guns favored by criminals, kill. Weapons purchased unchecked today at gun shows or in the future bought in the parking lots of gun shows, thanks to a loophole wider than the part in the Red Sea, kill.

The man who played Moses and his supporting cast here in Congress should go back and read their script: Thou shall not kill.

Once again it is clear what the letters GOP stand for: Guns over people.

TURNING OUR PUBLIC LANDS INTO A MUSEUM?

(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, here we go again. The Clinton administration is planning to ban the public use on over 5 million acres of public land in six States. 'Why?', my colleagues ask? Well, it seems to appease the liberal extremists, the environmentalists and

specific special environmental interests before the 2000 presidential elections.

Why would this administration deny all Americans, young and old, the right to recreate on their public lands? Why would they want to stop recreation, hunting, fishing, horseback riding and biking? Is there a goal to turn our public lands into a museum?

The President wants to use his authority under the Antiquities Act to stop and prohibit every type of recreational use except walking and, get this, meditating, on these 5 million acres. The Clinton administration claims to know what is best for our public lands, but it's plain to see that they know nothing about management, about multiple use, about the right of my constituents to use their public lands for recreational purposes. The administration should be ashamed for using our Nation's environmental laws as political tools and, not to mention, a means to preserve the assets across this country.

GUNS PREVENT MORE CRIME THAN ANYTHING ELSE

(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, I voted for the Brady bill. I voted to ban certain semiautomatic weapons. I honestly tried to help. But enough is enough. Guns are a two-edge sword, dangerous for sure, but guns prevent more crime than anything else in America, and no one is saying it.

Mr. Speaker, armed robbers just do not fear the welcome wagon, and all the policemen in the world, and I used to be one, may never get there in time.

I say be careful, Congress. Certainly guns are a symptom of great problems in America. But guns are not the root causation of all these problems in America.

GUN CONTROL DEBATE DRIVEN BY POLITICS

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

Mr. EWING. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I talked about this same issue, and I talked about politics, politics, politics, and, yes, I believe that politics are driving the agenda on this debate. We are going to hear vitriolic attacks from the Democratic side of the aisle when we ought to be settling down to discuss what we can do to improve our laws, to improve the regulations, and, yes, to improve the enforcement of the laws on the books.

Mr. Speaker, it does no good to pass another law if we are not going to do anything about it. Over 6000 incidents since 1996 through 1998 reported of juveniles with possession of firearms at school; only 17 were prosecuted.

Mr. Speaker, I have to refer to the language of our Vice President when he distorts the facts and says one can walk into a gun shop and a pawn shop anywhere in America and buy a handgun if they are 18.

Not so. Let us tone it down. Let us work together.

STOP IMPORT OF HIGH CAPACITY GUN CLIPS

(Ms. DEGETTE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks and include therein extraneous material.)

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, in 1997 Officer Bruce Vanderjagt in Denver was gunned down by a gun using a semi-automatic weapon clip that held far more than 10 rounds of ammunition. People were shocked. We thought we banned these clips in 1995 when we passed the Crime Control Act, but unfortunately these clips, which have the only purpose as killing a human being, are widely available and legally available in gun shops throughout this country because of a loophole in that act. That loophole allows the unrestricted import of these high capacity magazines from countries like China, Russia and Eastern Europe.

The Senate had the wisdom to pass legislation stopping this loophole and banning these clips that have the only purpose as killing humans. I urge in the next few days that the House do the same and enact this sensible piece of legislation which will stop these clips that only kill human beings.

SERGEANT BOB BRYANT AND LUC COUTURE EXEMPLIFY NEW HAMPSHIRE'S COMMUNITY SPIRIT

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

Mr. BASS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the New Hampshire Fish and Game Sergeant Bob Bryant and Luc Couture of the New Hampshire Department of Transportation and more than 550 friends and neighbors who searched the woods of Berlin, New Hampshire, through the early morning hours on May 25 to find 3-year-old Cameron Patry. Sergeant Bryant and Mr. Couture found the young boy after he had been lost for more than 20 cold and rainy hours in the dense woods. These 2 State of New Hampshire employees, along with hundreds of volunteers who helped with the search, best exemplify our community's spirit, camaraderie, compassion in New Hampshire and all of America. Although cold, wet and tired, young Cameron was found in good shape and returned to his worried parents.

To Sergeant Bryant, Mr. Couture and all those who gave their time, prayers and comfort to the Patry family I would like to express my sincere appreciation, as does the grateful State of New Hampshire and Congress.