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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WALSH).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
June 30, 1999.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JAMES T. WALSH to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Reverend Don Borling, Pastor, All Saints Lutheran Church, Orland Park, Illinois, offered the following prayer:

O Lord of all life, we come before You as people of peace. Our tasks are awesome. Our calling to serve is precious and, at the same time, very humbling.

Lord, help us always to walk in the shoes of those who brought us here, the factory worker and the artist, the lawyer and the school custodian, the farmer and the cook.

We are the human family, bound together by a spirit with no boundaries, and yet a spirit as real and as simple as the air we breathe every day.

Our world aches for peace. So help us be the instruments of Your healing.

May we be firm but gentle, just and forgiving, full of resolve, and yet always open to the varied dance of Your many voices.

With Your guidance, Lord, we can serve with joy, come to work each day with the goodness of the human spirit in our hearts.

Help us to see the world we serve with fresh vigor, renewed purpose, and the determination to make a difference. It is an honor to be here.

O Lord of all life, thanks for sharing this journey with us.
Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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 Pennsylvania (Mr. MASCARA) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. MASCARA 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 PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. After the first 1-minute speech concerning the guest chaplain, the Chair will recognize up to 15 one-minutes on each side.

WELCOMING REVEREND DON BORLING, PASTOR, ALL SAINTS LUTHERAN CHURCH, ORLAND PARK, ILLINOIS

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

Mr. NUSSLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise and take this opportunity to welcome to the Chamber Pastor Don Borling, his wife Jude, son Jeremy, daughter Cassie from Orland Park, Illinois, from All Saints Lutheran Church, my home church where I grew up, starting at age

14. In fact, exactly 25 years ago tomorrow, Pastor Don Borling arrived at All Saints Lutheran Church to guide all of us, to give us inspiration, to provide for us the word of God. I want to thank him today for coming and being our guest chaplain.

Mr. Speaker, we have had debate in this Chamber over the last many weeks since some of the tragedies involving young people in this country. And it comes to mind my own personal journey and, as a young teenager, the inspiration, the guidance, and the love that a pastor such as Don Borling gave to me as a young person. I do not know if that would work for everybody, but I can tell my colleagues that the inspiration that he gave me and the influence that he had on my life is something that has been as profound as any of my immediate family.

And so, as we continue to labor today to figure out ways to solve the problems that face our young people, I would just commend to my colleagues that being a mentor, being an inspiration from one person to another, making the kind of connection that we need to make with young people is something that Don has taught me; and I would commend that to my colleagues.

COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT ACT

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

Mr. MASCARA. Mr. Speaker, the House will soon consider landmark legislation amending Depression-era banking laws. This bill will bring the banking, securities, and insurance industry regulations in line with the 21st century marketplace. These changes will create greater efficiency and consumer choices.

However, one element of this industry that does not reform is the Community Reinvestment Act, known as CRA.

□ 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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CRA has provided for increased loans to distressed communities, expanded homeownership opportunities, and has helped small businesses develop and flourish.

In recent years, two-thirds of all small business loans were made under CRA. It has also provided for a sharp increase in mortgage loans to low and moderate income families.

CRA investments are good investments. Financial institutions recognize the importance of serving their communities. The Community Reinvestment Act is a good, profitable business for banks and the community. I call on my colleagues to support CRA as an important part of financial services reform.

CUBAN RAFTER INCIDENT

(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, the inscription on the Statue of Liberty refers to our great country as the Mother of Exiles, which requests "give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses * * * of your teeming shore."

However, yesterday, the U.S. Coast Guard in South Florida took actions against Cuban freedom seekers which call into question our U.S. commitment to these principles. Not only was it not in the fine tradition of this agency, but it raises grave concern over the treatment of those seeking asylum from brutal dictatorships, such as the Castro regime in Cuba.

The first symbol of liberty these refugees come into contact with is the U.S. Coast Guard. Is their first impression to be unwarranted acts of aggression which violate their human rights?

The Coast Guard has literally saved the lives of thousands of refugees, and yesterday's acts were not in line with that fine history. I have spoken to the Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard about this matter, and he has assured me that an immediate investigation of the specific actions is already underway.

I look forward to the briefing that senior officials of the Coast Guard and other agencies will provide us with today to ensure that this will never happen again.

AMERICAN WORKERS ARE GETTING PINK SLIPS

(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, yesterday General Motors closed its plant in Flint, Michigan. Another 3,600 American manufacturing jobs gone.

Meanwhile, General Motors plants all over the world remain open. Think about it. While foreign workers are building American cars, American workers are getting pink slips. Beam me up.

I do not blame General Motors. I blame our trade policy. Our trade policies are killing jobs and killing investment.

The question I have today: If our trade policy is so good, why does Japan not do it? Why does China not do it? My colleagues, think about that.

I yield back what manufacturing jobs we have left in America.

REPUBLICANS WANT TO GIVE EXTRA MONEY COLLECTED BY GOVERNMENT BACK TO TAXPAYERS

(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, under a Republican Congress, our economy is projecting huge budget surpluses over the next 10 years. And I do not mean liberal Democrat style surpluses. I mean real surpluses that do not count and include the Social Security Trust Fund.

The debate has begun already as to what to do with the extra money now being collected by the Government. The Republicans want to give it back to the people who earned it in the first place—the taxpayers. But the liberals do not see it that way. They want to spend it. As I speak, they are coming up with huge new Washington programs even before the surplus has actually come in.

So that is our choice. Congress can spend it, or we can give it back in form of tax relief to the families that earned it. Republicans want the politicians in Washington to keep their hands off working families' money. This is a battle we will be proud to wage as we go forward in the next few weeks.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS FOR SENIORS

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

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am proud this morning to talk about one of those programs that the President announced yesterday that we need to do, and we should have done it many years ago.

Studies have shown across this country in congressional districts prescription drugs on the average cost twice as much for senior citizens as they do for other most favored customers. It affects people like in my district 85-year-old constituent who relies on Social Security as her primary source of income and she has medical conditions that require her to spend \$260 a month on prescription medication. She has already sold her car, sold her furniture to pay for these prescription drugs; and yet she cannot continue to afford it for \$3,000 a year.

The President yesterday announced a program that will not help as much as

maybe I would like to, but it goes further than what we have today. With the budget as good as it is, maybe we ought to pay something back to those senior citizens who have built this country into what it is and not make them spend \$3,000 a year of their Social Security money for prescription medication.

In her case, it would actually almost cut her prescription cost in half, the President's program would do. And so, that is what we need to do.

Sure, I would like to have tax cuts. But let us take care of those folks who have built this country and made it what it is today.

REPUBLICANS WANT TO KNOW WHAT FICA MAN IS DOING WITH ALL THE MONEY

(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, what does the FICA man do with the FICA taxes taken out of a worker's paycheck?

Most workers assume, as I used to, that the taxes collected from the worker's paycheck for Social Security and Medicare were actually spent on Social Security and Medicare. Well, it turns out that is not exactly the case.

The FICA man has been engaging in some very funny business with our seniors' Social Security and Medicare money, and more and more seniors are learning the harsh truth about the way our Government is running the Social Security Trust Fund.

The FICA man collects the money and uses it to fund all kinds of things, things which have nothing to do with Social Security or Medicare. Republicans want to know what the FICA man is doing with all that money. We want to put an end to the practice of raiding the Social Security Trust Fund anytime Washington feels like it.

"But wait," my Democrat colleagues will say, "Social Security was designed to operate like that."

Exactly. And that is what we want to change.

FEDERAL RESERVE DECIDING HOW HIGH, HOW MUCH, HOW OFTEN TO RAISE INTEREST RATES

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, at this very moment, the Federal Reserve is ensconced in their marble palace downtown meeting in secret, eating a catered breakfast off of fine china, all paid for by the taxpayer.

They are deciding how high, how much, how often to raise interest rates to combat inflation that does not exist.

They are about to raise the rates on credit cards for tens of millions of Americans, auto loans for tens of millions of Americans, mortgages for tens of millions of Americans?