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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. EWING).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 15, 1999.

I hereby appoint the Honorable THOMAS W. EWING to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

PRAYER

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

O God, our help in ages past and our hope for years to come, we pray for a unity of spirit in our nation and for respect and honor between every person. We rejoice in the diversity of our experiences even as we celebrate the common creation that we share by Your mighty hand. As we see each other with our own perspective, may we also see each other with a respect and dignity that is worthy of the blessings that You have given us. Guide us and be with us this day and every day. 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.

PITTS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. PITTS 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. The Chair will entertain 15 1-minutes on each side.

URGING MEMBERS TO SUPPORT AMERICA'S MILITARY BY VOTING YES ON THE DOD AUTHORIZATION BILL

(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, our military forces have been facing 13 consecutive years of defense cuts. Now we are at a critical point where personnel and readiness levels are literally bleeding our defense capabilities dry. Retention and readiness are two critical issues facing our military forces today, and we must provide the necessary incentives for our troops to retain their skills to get the job done.

Furthermore, Congress must support increased health benefits and pay increases for our Nation's military men and women. We must also fully fund their equipment modernization and training so our troops can maintain a peak level of performance.

Before this Congress or this administration even so much as debates yet another deployment of our Armed Forces, we must without question provide the necessary funding for our brave men and women to perform the jobs we have asked them to do.

Today this body has an important opportunity to address the critical issues

of underfunded quality of life readiness and modernization requirements in our military. I urge my colleagues to tell the military men and women in their districts that they support them by voting yes on the DOD authorization bill today.

FEAR AND INTIMIDATION HAVE NO PLACE IN AMERICAN 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, last year under oath the IRS admitted in testimony "We use fear and intimidation to make Americans pay their taxes." That is right, fear.

It is not just the IRS. Take Waco. Waco is about a group of Americans, good, bad, or indifferent, who defied the government. They stood up to the government and the government crushed them. The government crushed them, to send a message.

What was that message, Mr. Speaker? They had better fear the government. Beam me up, Mr. Speaker. Fear is an ugly four-letter word. It has no place in American government. I yield back all the fear and intimidation of our government agencies.

TIME TO END THE MARRIAGE TAX PENALTY

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

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I have often asked from the well of this House a pretty basic question. That is, is it right, is it fair under our tax code, that 21 million married working couples with two incomes, a husband and wife who are both in the work force, pay higher taxes under our Tax Code just

□ 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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because they are married? Is it right, is it fair, that a married working couple pays more in taxes than an identical couple with an identical income who live together outside of marriage?

It is wrong that our Tax Code punishes society's most basic institution. I want to produce Shad and Michelle Hallihan from Joliet, Illinois, two public schoolteachers. They suffer the marriage tax penalty. Michelle and Shad are just one of the 21 million married working couples who suffer the marriage tax penalty.

This House, the Senate, this Congress, this Republican Congress, has worked to eliminate the marriage tax penalty. In fact, we passed as part of the Financial Freedom Act legislation which essentially wipes out the marriage tax penalty for the majority of those who suffer.

The question is, will the President join with us in signing into law our effort to eliminate the marriage tax penalty?

REPUBLICANS ARE REWRITING THE CALENDAR TO CREATE THE APPEARANCE OF NEW MONEY

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

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, the national Census mandated by the United States Constitution and conducted every 10 years since 1790 has been newly discovered by our Republican friends and declared an emergency for spending purposes, to avoid spending limitations.

Now the Republicans have found a new gimmick. They are actually rewriting the calendar. The old 12-month calendar to which America had become so accustomed is just not good enough for the current leadership. In order to create the appearance of new money, they have found a 13th month to include in the Federal fiscal calendar. Perhaps they will call it Bucks-tober, or maybe Big Bucks-tober.

I believe there is perhaps no silliness in which this leadership will not engage. One truth, however, remains most constant. To whom do the Republicans turn to fund their folly? The same folks they always turn to, those who do not have a fleet of lobbyists here in Washington, or a political action committee; in this case, the working poor.

They propose to gain \$7 billion by postponing refunds to recipients of the Federal earned income tax credit, typically working families with children who earn about \$20,000 a year. Working folks end up paying a high price for Republican irresponsibility.

REPUBLICANS HAVE THE BEST AGENDA

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, Republicans have the BEST agenda, BEST. B stands for bolster our national security, E for excellence in education, S for strengthen social security and Medicare, and T for tax relief. Republicans have the BEST agenda.

By contrast, one could conclude that Democrats have the WORST agenda, WORST. W stands for wasteful Washington spending, O for outrageous over-regulation, R for raising taxes, S for socializing medicine, and T for trashing our defense.

Alas, Democrats indeed have the WORST agenda. I invite all fair-minded listeners to judge for themselves. The choices are clear. I urge all Members to vote for the BEST agenda.

TO REPUBLICANS, TAX RELIEF IS A FREEDOM ISSUE

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

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, a lot of people do not think there is much difference between Democrats and Republicans. But when it comes to taxes, it is hard to argue that point of view with a straight face. Republicans want to cut taxes. We do not say the government should deny some people tax relief and offer tax relief to others. If you are a taxpayer, we think you should get some tax relief.

Liberal Democrats want the government to pick and choose which taxpayers should benefit from tax relief. They will do everything possible to ensure that those who pay the most taxes and who are carrying most of the load do not receive any tax relief.

To us, tax relief is a freedom issue. We think that fundamentally the people who earn the money in the first place are the best judge on how to spend it, and certainly better than Washington, who is eager to spend it for them.

Americans are overtaxed. Which Americans? American taxpayers. We think it is time they receive some tax relief.

AMERICA'S VULNERABILITY TO MISSILE ATTACK

(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, there now appears to be bipartisan support for perhaps the most important defense position that the Republican party has had for the last 10 years.

America is vulnerable to a ballistic missile attack. If North Korea or Communist China or Iraq were to fire a missile at the United States, we would have no ability right now to shoot it down. It is going to land and a lot of people are going to die. We do not have a national missile defense system now, and the reason is because of the exist-

ence of a treaty with a country that no longer exists.

The ABM treaty, signed with the Soviet Union, a country that began violating the treaty even before the ink on the paper is dry, is standing in the way of a rational policy to protect America from a missile attack. Our current policy of relying on the ABM treaty to keep America safe from the Osama bin Ladens and the Saddam Husseins of the world is dangerous, foolish, and naive. Does anyone really think that Osama bin Laden or Saddam Hussein is going to refrain from developing these types of weapons because we have a treaty with the Soviet Union?

It is time to get to work and at long last have a policy to protect this country from missile attack.

AN IRRESPONSIBLE REPUBLICAN BUDGET

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

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, the Republican leadership budget is an irresponsible plan. It jeopardizes our economic health. It undermines our values as a people and as a Nation. It fails to extend the life of social security by a single day. It does not use one penny to strengthen Medicare. It does not continue to pay down the debt, which is so critical to our economic well-being. It does not invest in working middle class families through health care and education, but it spends nearly \$1 trillion on budget-busting tax breaks that benefit mostly the wealthy.

It is out of step with the values of the American people. Tax cuts should go to people who need it most, working middle class families in this country. This Republican leadership scheme gives 60 percent of the benefit to the top 5 percent of Americans. Instead of investing in education and crime-fighting and national defense, this tax cut puts those very important things in jeopardy for American families.

There are no values in this plan, when we put the wealthy before the pressing needs of the middle class. We need to do more for the people we represent.

THE BUDGET SURPLUS BELONGS TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, NOT TO WASHINGTON BUREAUCRATS

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

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO) has offered another textbook example of the politics of envy, because it comes down to this question, who do you trust more? My friend, the gentlewoman from Connecticut, places her trust in Washington bureaucrats. She believes Uncle