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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

O Lord, our guardian and our refuge, in times of war it is difficult to pray. When living under the threat of attack, anxieties and fear can steal Your abiding presence.

At such times, there is so much to pray about. To lift up to You all the names of the victims of war is in itself a heavy task. To remember them in prayer keeps our love alive and unveils our mourning until we see them in Your eternal presence. Your spirit of prayer moves us to strengthen our compassion for all those orphaned and widowed by war. We pray for all who serve in the Armed Forces, those servants of security and defenders of freedom around the world. We pray for their safety and their families.

At such times, all leaders in our government, especially these Members of Congress, are in need of Your supreme guidance, Lord. May leaders of all nations be with them as they search for the ways to secure peace, to protect homelands and reconstruct those places torn apart by war's violence.

Lord, in moments like now when it is difficult to pray, perhaps it is because we cannot see Your face, for You are the author of life and love, now and forever. 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 Kansas (Mr. TIAHRT) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. TIAHRT 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.

CONGRATULATING JENNIE WEISS BLOCK FOR HER NEW BOOK EXPLORING THEOLOGY AND THE DISABILITY MOVEMENT

(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, it is estimated that there are 43 million Americans with one or more physical or mental disabilities. And while Congress attempts to empower them through legislation such as the Americans with Disabilities Act, it is often other facets of our communities, like churches and synagogues, that provide them with the support they need to achieve economic self-sufficiency, independent living, and, most importantly, inclusion and integration into all aspects of society.

My constituent, Jennie Weiss Block, a Barry University Ph.D. candidate in theology, is the author of a new book, "Copious Hosting," which explores theology and the disability movement. I proudly congratulate my constituent and dear friend, Jennie Weiss Block, for her insightful views into the lives of the disabled as portrayed in her book "Copious Hosting" and for her dedication to enabling them to make significant contributions to our society.

Felicitades, Jennie.

WE MUST BRING OUR CHILDREN HOME

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

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, every day for a year I spoke out on international child abduction. Today I will focus on one case, that of Ludwig Koons, who is being illegally kept in Rome, Italy. Until Ludwig is returned to the United States, I will speak with outrage at the injustice that is being done to this family, an example of what thousands of American parents and their children face every day.

Ludwig Koons was born in New York and was abducted from the family residence to Rome by his mother, Ilona Staller. Mr. Koons was awarded custody in the United States, but the Italian courts have refused to accept any American jurisdiction. The father has been deemed the fit parent by the courts, and U.S. and Italian psychologists have stated that Ludwig is in grave danger and must be returned to Mr. Koons. Yet he remains captive in Italy, being held by the Italian Government and by his mother, a porn star living in a pornographic compound.

Mr. Speaker, every day Members of this body and administration speak out on family values. I can think of no better way to demonstrate our commitment to family values than to return Ludwig Koons to his father now. Mr. Speaker, we must bring our children home.

VICTIMS OF TERRORISM

(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, before terrorism literally hit home on September 11, two fellow Kansans, two fellow Americans, had already been held hostage by Muslim terrorists for over 3 months. On May 27, 2001, Martin and Gracia Burnham were snatched out of bed in a Philippine vacation resort and taken hostage by Muslim terrorists, the Abu Sayaff group, which has al

□ 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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Qaeda ties and a brutal disregard for human life. A third American, Guillermo Sobero of California, was also taken hostage and subsequently beheaded in June by the terrorists.

Martin and Gracia are all that remains of the group of 21 hostages taken in May. It has been 8 long months for them and their family, especially their three young children, Jeff, Mindy and Zach. The Burnhams have lost considerable weight and have suffered from malaria, artillery wounds, eye infections and numerous sores and cuts.

I ask my fellow Members of Congress and my fellow Americans to pray for the safe and swift release of Martin and Gracia Burnham from this endless nightmare.

CALLING FOR A FREEZE ON FURTHER TAX CUTS

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, there will be a unique opportunity today to do more than pass a birthday resolution for President Reagan. Students of history will remember that massive tax cuts passed in the first year of President Ronald Reagan's term. Just 1 year later, as deficits began to grow, President Reagan showed his mettle by joining with a Republican Senate and a Democratic House to pass into law the Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 1982, raising taxes in the face of a deficit. And then he signed into law several other tax increases, including the Deficit Reduction Act of 1984.

But today the Republican President and the Republican House leaders do not have the vision and the gumption of the former President. The same day that they will pass his birthday resolution, they are going to also pass a resolution saying despite the huge and mounting deficits just like in the first term of President Reagan, they are going to hold steady to the huge tax increases tilted toward the wealthiest in this country.

It would be more appropriate and more fitting to recognize the spirit and the leadership of Ronald Reagan by admitting you were wrong and rescinding or freezing further tax cuts and dealing with the deficit honestly in this House.

CONGRESSIONAL SPENDING

(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, keeping the American people safe is our government's most important duty. We are spending billions of dollars to fight terrorism and to keep the homeland secure. In addition, the recession has cost the government billions more in lost revenue. These things are unavoidable. And it looks like, after passing four balanced budgets in a row, the first time in 40 years, that we will

again run a budget deficit this next year.

But even with all of this necessary spending, we should put plans in place now to return to a balanced budget as soon as we can. We have worked too hard to start paying off the debt to give up now.

In his State of the Union Address, President Bush urged us to limit spending so we can return to surpluses in a year or 2.

So let us fully fund the war on terrorism, let us make sure our airports and power plants are secure, and if the other body ever passes the stimulus package, let us make it law right away. But when it comes to other things, we need to tighten our belt and rein in spending. That is the only way we will stay on track and pay off the public debt. We have paid down over half a trillion dollars in debt already. Let us pay off the rest as soon as we can.

WELFARE BILL REAUTHORIZATION

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Over 30 years ago, Mr. Speaker, I was a single mom with three small children, and even though I was working, I needed AFDC, welfare, to add to my income for health care, child care and food stamps.

When Congress passed welfare reform in 1996, I warned that getting women off the welfare rolls and into dead-end jobs would not be enough, especially if we had a downturn in the economy. The goal of welfare must be to break the cycle of poverty, not just get women jobs that pay slightly above minimum wage.

Under the welfare reauthorization that is before us this year, education must count as work so we can help recipients gain access to training and education so that they can improve their economic future and the future for their children. But without skills, the skills needed for a job, a job that pays a livable wage, and the knowledge that their children are getting good child care while they are away at work, moms will have a hard time succeeding.

THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET—MEETING THE GOALS OF OUR TIME

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, America faces a unique moment in history. Our Nation is at war, our homeland was attacked, and our economy is in recession. The President's budget meets the requirements of victory and the test of responsibility. The President's budget holds government accountable for results that address these priorities of the American people: Winning the war on terrorism, strengthening protec-

tions of our homeland, and revitalizing our economy and creating jobs.

What his budget does is increase spending, nearly doubles homeland security spending, and provides immediate assistance to workers who have lost their jobs, while holding the growth in spending for programs outside of defense and homeland security to the cost of living. His budget provides significant funding increases for important priorities like health care, prescription drugs, education, the environment, agriculture and retirement security, and returns to budget surpluses within 2 to 3 years, if Congress adheres to the President's call for fiscal responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, this budget is an important step forward to protect this country.

TANF REAUTHORIZATION

(Mrs. MINK of Hawaii asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, this year we will be working on the reauthorization of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, known as TANF. It was a rewrite of the welfare law that we had previously enacted called Aid to Dependent Children. One of the major differences of the two concepts was in the old bill we cared about what happened to the families and to the children. That was our primary purpose. Under TANF it is a 5-year restricted cash assistance to families with the primary emphasis on going to work.

What has happened is that the rolls of welfare have dropped, but poverty has remained the same. What we are trying to do in the bill that I have introduced which has 57 sponsors is to put the emphasis on caregiving. It has always been the high principle of Congress to say families count first, the responsibilities of families to nurture their own children. We want to put that at the top, as the emphasis of this new reauthorization: caring for children, allowing parents to stay home to care for their small children and giving them support to build their families' economic future through education. Education must count and be equivalent to work.

PRESIDENT REAGAN'S LEGACY

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, mark your calendar. It is official. I have, in fact, as of this date and this hour heard everything: President Ronald Wilson Reagan on the occasion of his 91st birthday used as an example in the House of Representatives as a tax increaser in America and as an example of someone who believed in the virtue of tax increases.