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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: Lord, our refuge and our defense, show Yourself, our Deliverer. In the time of Moses, in response to the murmuring of Your people, You fed them in the desert. Amidst their struggles, Your servant Paul exhorted the early Christian community at Corinth not to grumble, but deepen their understanding. Yet in this Nation truly blessed and free, rich with options and opportunity, people find reasons to complain. Among the mournful crisis of this world, hear us and be patient with us, Lord.

Guide Your people, by Your spirit, that they may refine their perceptions and expand their vision so to distinguish mere inconvenience and frustration from true suffering and the pain of loss. The times and the issues which face this Congress and this Nation are so significant, Lord, You must silence the trivial in us.

You have called us to be Your moral witness and reform our lives. Free us from complaining so to learn determination, commitment, and perseverance; and prove ourselves faithful in living and unafraid to die for everlasting values 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 Nebraska (Mr. TERRY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. TERRY 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.

CONGRATULATIONS TO JOB CORPS

(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, I would like to congratulate Job Corps, a national program which serves more than 70,000 students each year, and especially I would like to congratulate Job Corps director Roy Larsen of Homestead and Luis Cerezo of Miami.

The Job Corps program teaches the job training skills necessary for young people to thrive in the workforce. Through cooperative work-based learning, students are able to gain hands-on experience which is vital to long-term career success.

Job Corps graduates enjoy a 91 percent placement rate through national partnerships with employers such as HCR, Manor Care, the U.S. Army, and Walgreens. These partners invest in Job Corps students and are rewarded with well-trained individuals to fill their employment needs.

Please join me in congratulating and recognizing the wonderful work that Job Corps provides and, most especially, Job Corps directors Roy Larsen of Homestead and Luis Cerezo of Miami for their dedication and hard work in the south Florida community and for our young people.

SOCIAL SECURITY IS AN IRREFUTABLE OBLIGATION OF U.S.

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Well, Mr. Speaker, the Republican majority has a new plan. Instead of taking on the extension of

the \$5.95 trillion debt ceiling, they are a little embarrassed to be increasing the debt of the United States when last year they predicted surpluses as far as the eye could see and paying the debt off within a few years. They are especially embarrassed that they are going to break open the Social Security lockbox, something they had us vote on seven times. They do not talk much about the lockbox anymore.

But now the most disturbing proposal. They are not going to raise the debt ceiling; they are going to disappear the Social Security trust fund. Yes, that is right. They decided yesterday that they are going to say that these special depository instruments, the debt of the Federal Government of the United States, which is held by the Social Security trust fund, over \$1 trillion, does not exist. Suddenly, they are wiping a couple of trillion dollars off the books, all because they do not want to take an embarrassing vote, or all because they do not want to roll back their obscene tax cuts or rein in their massive increases in military spending.

They cannot do this to the Social Security trust fund. It is an irrefutable obligation of the Government of the United States of America. They cannot disappear it.

NORTH KOREA AND THE AXIS OF EVIL

(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, President Bush said that there is an axis of evil governments at work in the world today, three countries ruled by evil governments that sponsor terrorism, practice genocide, and seek weapons of mass destruction. It should be pointed out that it is the governments, the rulers of these three countries the President has talked about, not the people who live there.

□ 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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No one knows better than the people of Iran, Iraq, and North Korea that their rulers are evil. Take, for example, the boy in this picture. A German doctor who was visiting the North Korean countryside took this photo more than a year ago. He said, When I see the brainwashing, starvation, concentration camps, medical experiments, and mass executions, I must say that Kim Jong Il is an upgraded version of Hitler's Nazi Germany. Children like this suffer from starvation, oppression, poor medical care, while the ruling elite live like kings.

The people of North Korea and other axis countries live in constant fear and, while they are sorely oppressed, they dare not complain. The people are not the ones that the President is talking about; it is the governments of these countries that are brutally oppressing their people.

CONGRESS HAS FAILED AGAIN

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday's vote in the other Chamber marked another sad chapter in America's inability to have an energy policy. Congress has failed again, as we unsuccessfully attempted to raise efficiency standards for the first time since 1975.

This means that this Congress has failed again to protect the environment, as we continue to consume 10 percent of the world's petroleum supply, just to get to and from work and the mall. Even if they invade the Arctic, relying on the most volatile region of the world for most of our energy is not going to change.

We have also failed the auto workers. Now people who want energy-efficient vehicles will have three choices in the next model year, all from Japan. The next time there is an energy shortfall, it will be foreign manufacturers in a prime position to satisfy consumer demand.

Most importantly, we failed the American public, the young people whose energy future we are squandering and the citizens that are more than willing to step up and meet this challenge of protecting the environment and conserving valuable petroleum resources.

I hope the public loses no opportunity to tell Congress about its misjudgment and lack of courage.

TRIBUTE TO CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER STANLEY L. HARRIMAN

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

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in tribute to Chief Warrant Officer Stanley L. Harriman of Wade, North Carolina, killed in action as a result of enemy fire during Operation Anaconda.

He had been assigned to the Third Special Forces Group in my district at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. He was the first Army soldier from North Carolina to die in action in the Afghan war.

Stanley, a loving husband and father, was a model soldier. Spending more than 16 years in the military, he hoped to complete at least 14 more before he planned to retire. He dedicated his life to the Special Forces and graduated with top honors from warrant officer school. He had been deployed in Haiti, Kuwait, Nigeria, Germany, and for Operation Desert Storm. During his career he earned two Meritorious Service Medals, three Army Achievement Medals, and an Army Superior Unit Award, among many others.

The accolades of Chief Warrant Officer Harriman's military career speak for themselves. I would like to highlight his strong moral character and dedication to our country. Stanley wanted freedom. He wanted freedom for us and for his children. He believed in the fight to free the world of terrorism. Stan loved his country, and we must not forget the ultimate sacrifice that he made for us and our children.

Recently I had the chance to visit Afghanistan and see the outstanding work that the Special Forces have done. Sheila, Barbi, and Christopher, our thoughts, our prayers, and those of a grateful Nation, are with you today.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE GIRL SCOUTS ON THEIR 90TH ANNIVERSARY

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Girl Scouts on their 90th anniversary. As a former Girl Scout, it brings me great pleasure to see the organization continue to teach girls to become strong, goal-oriented young women.

Since 1912, the Girl Scout program has been helping girls develop physically, mentally, and spiritually. Currently, there are more than 233,000 troops throughout the United States and Puerto Rico. Girls who participate in the Girl Scout program acquire self-confidence and empowerment. They take on responsibility, think creatively, and act with integrity. Our children are our future, and Girl Scout programs help shape these young minds to become good citizens and good leaders. Some actually become Members of Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have participated in the Girl Scouts, and I hope that many other girls continue to have the opportunity to take advantage of what Girl Scouts have to offer.

OPPOSE YUCCA MOUNTAIN

(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, the nuclear industry lobbyists are trying to simply pull the wool over our eyes. As well as most Members of Congress and the American people, we are gullible to some of their ludicrous remarks. They want us to believe that by supporting the Yucca Mountain project that the nuclear waste problem at over 100 commercial nuclear power plants will just disappear. Puff. Gone.

Now, I am not sure how many of us believe in fairy tales; but that is exactly what this is, a fairy tale of monumental proportions.

The truth is, there are over 100 nuclear waste sites around the country; and if Yucca Mountain was open, we would have not only those sites, but also Yucca Mountain, and high-level nuclear waste traveling across the country. After all, the waste will not just magically appear in Nevada, it will take at least 38 years and more than 96,000 truck shipments to transport the waste from 38 States.

Mr. Speaker, the viability of Yucca Mountain is not just a fairy tale, it is a nightmare. Protect America. Oppose Yucca Mountain.

THE MEDS ACT

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

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, adverse medical effects caused by patients misusing or not taking their medicine costs our health care system an estimated \$170 billion every year. Tragically, much of this cost results from seniors simply not being able to afford to buy the medicines they need or not knowing how best to take the drugs they have been prescribed.

The prescription drug benefit bill that the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. EMERSON) and I have introduced, the bipartisan MEDS Act, addresses this heavy burden on our Nation's health care system. Our bill includes provisions that cover critical medical management services to monitor and ensure seniors know what medicines they are taking and how to take them properly.

Some Members are concerned about the cost of providing a prescription drug benefit. Health insurance companies are in the business of making a profit and even they cover medicine as part of their health insurance plan, because they know it helps people to get well quicker, to live healthier lifestyles, and to live longer.

Mr. Speaker, we need to put this issue into perspective and think about the cost of not providing a prescription drug benefit and the cost our overburdened health care system bears when seniors improperly take or simply cannot afford their medicines.