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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. KIRK).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 23, 2004.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MARK STEVEN KIRK to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

PRAYER

The Reverend Betsy Singleton, Pastor, Quapaw Quarter United Methodist Church, Little Rock, Arkansas, offered the following prayer:

God, this time of year, in this particular year, when hometown fairs are judging jams and bannered booths tout candidates with free bumper stickers, we hold our opinions fervently, our convictions with less compromise, each vote with care.

We confess that we are a people of preferences, each as unique as squares on a blue ribbon quilt stitched together by someone who favored cotton print over synthetics.

Daily, God, there are choices in this democracy, choices that lead us to debate, delay, exhaustion, hope. And then, together, we speak for the people who send us to represent them, the ones who, last weekend, got together in that small American town we call "Home"—the fireman, the teacher, the homemaker, the beauty queen, the clown, the cowboy—and held the annual parade down Main Street, because out of many, they believe we really are one.

Today, God, may we be one. 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 Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. SKELTON 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 THE REVEREND BETSY SINGLETON

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

Mr. SNYDER. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege today to welcome today's guest chaplain, Reverend Betsy Singleton from the Quapaw Quarter United Methodist Church in Little Rock, Arkansas, a position she has held for the last 3 years. This is my home church and Betsy is my minister. She is also my wife.

Reverend Singleton, Betsy, welcome to the House. Thank you so much.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair desires to make an announcement.

After consultation with the majority and minority leaders, and with their consent and approval, the Chair announces that during the joint meeting to hear an address by His Excellency

Ayad Allawi, Interim Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq, only the doors immediately opposite the Speaker and those on his right and left will be open.

No one will be allowed on the floor of the House who does not have the privilege of the floor of the House.

Due to the large attendance that is anticipated, the Chair feels the rule regarding the privilege of the floor must be strictly adhered to.

Children of Members will not be permitted on the floor, and the cooperation of all Members is requested.

The practice of reserving seats prior to the joint meeting by placard will not be allowed. Members may reserve their seats by physical presence only following the security sweep of the Chamber.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of Wednesday, September 15, 2004, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 5 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

During the recess, beginning at about 9:50 a.m., the following proceedings were had:

□ 0950

JOINT MEETING OF THE HOUSE AND SENATE TO HEAR AN ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY AYAD ALLAWI, INTERIM PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF IRAQ

The Speaker of the House presided.

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms, Bill Sims, announced the Vice President and Members of the U.S. Senate who entered the Hall of the House of Representatives, the Vice President taking the chair at the right

□ 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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of the Speaker, and the Members of the Senate the seats reserved for them.

The SPEAKER. The Chair appoints as members of the committee on the part of the House to escort His Excellency Ayad Allawi, the Interim Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq, into the Chamber:

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY);

The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT);

The gentleman from California (Mr. COX);

The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON);

The gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER);

The gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN);

The gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI);

The gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER);

The gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN);

The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON);

The gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS); and

The gentlewoman from California (Ms. HARMAN).

The VICE PRESIDENT. The President of the Senate, at the direction of that body, appoints the following Senators as a committee on the part of the Senate to escort His Excellency Ayad Allawi, the Interim Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq, into the House Chamber:

The Senator from Tennessee (Mr. FRIST);

The Senator from Kentucky (Mr. McCONNELL);

The Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SANTORUM);

The Senator from Texas (Mrs. HUTCHISON);

The Senator from Arizona (Mr. KYL);

The Senator from Virginia (Mr. ALLEN);

The Senator from Indiana (Mr. LUGAR);

The Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS);

The Senator from South Dakota (Mr. DASCHLE);

The Senator from Louisiana (Mr. BREAUX);

The Senator from Michigan (Mrs. STABENOW);

The Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON); and

The Senator from New Jersey (Mr. CORZINE).

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms announced the Acting Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, His Excellency Jesse Bibiano Marehalau, Ambassador of Micronesia.

The Acting Dean of the Diplomatic Corps entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seat reserved for him.

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms announced the Cabinet of the President of the United States.

The Members of the Cabinet of the President of the United States entered

the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seats reserved for them in front of the Speaker's rostrum.

At 10 o'clock and 2 minutes a.m., the Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms announced His Excellency Ayad Allawi, Interim Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq.

The Interim Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq, escorted by the committee of Senators and Representatives, entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and stood at the Clerk's desk.

[Applause, the Members rising.]

The SPEAKER. Members of the Congress, it is my great privilege and I deem it a high honor and a personal pleasure to present to you His Excellency Ayad Allawi, Interim Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq.

[Applause, the Members rising.]

ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY AYAD ALLAWI, INTERIM PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF IRAQ

Prime Minister ALLAWI. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Vice President, Members of Congress, distinguished guests, it is my distinct honor and great privilege to speak to you today on behalf of Iraq's interim government and its people. It is my honor, too, to come to Congress and to thank this Nation and this people for making our cause your cause, our struggle your struggle. Before I turn to my government's plan for Iraq, I have three important messages for you today.

First, we are succeeding in Iraq. It is a tough struggle, with setbacks, but we are succeeding. I have seen some of the images that are being shown here on television. They are disturbing. They focus on the tragedies, such as the brutal and barbaric murder of two American hostages this week. My thoughts and prayers go out to their families and to all those who lost loved ones.

Yet, as we mourn these losses, we must not forget either the progress we are making or what is at stake in Iraq. We are fighting for freedom and democracy, ours and yours. Every day we strengthen the institutions that will protect our new democracy, and every day we grow in strength and determination to defeat the terrorists and their barbarism.

The second message is quite simple, and one that I would like to deliver directly from my people to yours. Thank you, America. We Iraqis know that Americans have made and continue to make enormous sacrifices to liberate Iraq, to ensure Iraq's freedom. I have come here to thank you and to promise you that your sacrifices are not in vain. The overwhelming majority of Iraqis are grateful. They are grateful to be rid of Saddam Hussein and the torture and brutality he forced upon us, grateful for the chance to build a better future for our families, our country, and our region. We Iraqis are grateful to you Americans for your

leadership and your sacrifice for our liberation and our opportunity to start anew.

Third, I stand here today as the Prime Minister of a country emerging finally from the dark ages of violence, aggression, corruption, and greed. Like almost every Iraqi, I have many friends who were murdered, tortured, or raped by the regime of Saddam Hussein. Well over 1 million Iraqis were murdered or are missing. We estimate at least 300,000 are in mass graves which stand as monuments to the inhumanity of Saddam's regime. Thousands of my Kurdish brothers and sisters were gassed to death by Saddam's chemical weapons. Millions more like me were driven into exile. Even in exile, as I myself can vouch, we were not safe from Saddam; and as we lived under tyranny at home, so our neighbors lived in fear of Iraq's aggression and brutality.

Reckless wars, uses of weapons of mass destruction, needless slaughter of hundreds of thousands of lives and the financing and exporting of terrorism, these were Saddam's legacy to the world. My friends, today, we are better off, you are better off, and the world is better off without Saddam Hussein.

Your decision to go to war in Iraq was not an easy one, but it was the right one. There are no words that can express the debt of gratitude that future generations of Iraqis will owe to Americans. It would have been easy to have turned your back on our plight, but this is not the tradition of this great country. Not for the first time in history you stood up with your allies for freedom and democracy.

Ladies and gentlemen, I particularly want to thank you and the United States Congress for your brave work in 2002 to authorize American men and women to go to war to liberate my country because you realized what was at stake, and I want to thank you for your continued commitment last year when you voted to grant Iraq a generous reconstruction and security funding package. I met many of you last year, and I have in Iraq accepted your commitment to our country that you have come to see firsthand the challenges, and the progress we have and we are making.

Ladies and gentlemen, the costs we know have been high. As we have lost our loved ones in this struggle, so have you. As we have mourned, so have you. This is a bitter price of combating tyranny and terror, our hardworking families, every American who has given his or her life in the cause and every American who has been wounded to help us in our struggle. Now we are determined to honor your confidence and sacrifice by putting into practice in Iraq the values of liberty and democracy which are so dear to you and which have triumphed over tyranny across our world.

Creating a democratic, prosperous, and stable nation where differences are respected, human rights protected, and