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House of Representatives

The House met at noon.

The Reverend Stephen J. Rossetti, President, St. Luke Institute, Silver Spring, Maryland, offered the following prayer:

Good and gracious God, we gather in a time of challenge. We labor long and hard for peace, but continue to be visited by war. We work hard for unity, but continue to be plagued with conflict and division. We strive for charity among sisters and brothers, but experience so much hatred in our world.

Give us the grace to know that it is You who are the source of our unity and our peace, You who are the one God, living and true. It is You who unites us.

Bring peace to our world, peace to our families, and peace to our hearts. Bind us together in harmony across the divisions and aisles of life. Make us one in unity and love.

And when we have finally looked upon the face of unity, the face of charity, and the face of peace, it will be Your beautiful face we have gazed upon.

We make this prayer in God's name. 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 Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. KILDEE 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

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 5 1-minute speeches on each side.

PRESIDENT BUSH PROMOTES JOB GROWTH

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today The New York Times reported that employment had grown for 13 consecutive months. This reflects the impact of President Bush's economic plan for tax cuts to revive the economy by people investing their own money.

President Bush came to office in a recession, and the economy lost 1 million jobs due to the terrorist attacks of September 11. Despite this, the President helped create nearly 2 million new jobs.

The gross domestic product has been growing faster than in 20 years. Productivity has grown faster than in 20 years.

As a former real estate attorney, I am happy to see construction spending the highest ever, over \$1 trillion, creating wonderful job opportunities.

In contrast, JOHN KERRY last night proposed tax increases, which sounded like an exclusive group, but in fact, over 80 percent of the Kerry tax increases would be on small businesses which create the most jobs.

All Americans can take pride in our economy that is improving under the leadership of President Bush.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will always remember September 11.

NEW ECONOMIC POLICY FOR AMERICA

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, it is official. President Bush will be the first President since Herbert Hoover to face reelection with fewer people working than when he started.

Yesterday, the Labor Department issued its last update on job creation before the elections. The stock market dropped sharply, reacting to the job report that raised significant doubts about the economy's strength under President Bush.

Most economists agree that Bush's tax cuts failed to stimulate the economy because they overwhelmingly favored very wealthy households. Mr. Speaker, 1.6 million private sector jobs have been lost since President Bush entered office. Economists estimate that the Nation needs to add roughly 150,000 jobs a month to keep pace with the growth in the workforce, and we need to add many more than that to make up for the ground that has been lost under President Bush. Since July, the economy has added only, on the average, 103,000 jobs a month.

Mr. Speaker, clearly, there is a need for a change in economic policy here in Washington, which can only occur with a new President, JOHN KERRY.

PRESIDENT FATED TO STRIKE OUT

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, the President stepped up to the plate last night and, Strike 2, the President swung right through on an easy pitch. It was not a fast ball or a curve or a slider or a sinker. It was ordinary Americans pitching the truth to the

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

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President of the United States, and he could not even foul it off. He flat out missed it again.

He has not kept his eye on the ball on the war on terror; he has not kept his eye on the ball on the faltering economy. Everyone saw the pitch last night and everyone saw what the President did with it.

The truth is, a home run pitch right down the middle, and the self-proclaimed steward of the land missed it again. For the third and last night, next week the President steps up to the plate. On November 2, 24 days from now, it will be Strike 3, and the American people will say, "You're out, Mr. President."

MANY DISAPPOINTED WITH PRESIDENT'S USE OF POWER

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

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, now Bremer has told us what went wrong in Iraq and why. He said we did not have enough troops and, specifically, we did not have enough troops in the days immediately following the fall of Saddam. This led to violence and looting immediately after that fall and created the sense of lawlessness which is killing our troops today.

The question is, why did we not have enough troops?

We had a plan worked out by our superb military not only to bring 200,000 troops from the south, but to bring 60,000 from the north, the Fourth Infantry Division, et cetera. When the Turkish parliament refused to let those 60,000 troops through Turkey, the President could have gone to the U.N. and got the U.N. resolution the Turkish parliament required. He could have delayed the invasion until those troops could be positioned in the south. He did neither. He was too impatient, too foolhardy with the lives of the Americans. He threw away the plan, threw away the northern half of the plan and moved on with the southern half of the plan.

Mr. Speaker, no wonder so many of us who voted to empower the President are so disappointed in how he used that power.

REPUBLICANS STRIP HATE CRIME PREVENTION PROVISIONS FROM DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL

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

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, later this afternoon we will be voting on the Defense authorization bill, which I strongly support, and I commend the committee for bringing it to the floor. I want to especially acknowledge the great work of our ranking member, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) for his leadership on the legislation.

I want to particularly acknowledge two things. One is, under the leadership of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS), we had the phased-in elimination of the 2-tier survivor benefit over a period of 3½ years. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) took the lead on that initiative with the Edwards discharge petition. They made it possible for the survivors.

I want to acknowledge the work of the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. MARSHALL), working with the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) to eliminate the 10-year phase-in of the disabled veterans tax for those with 100 percent VA disability ratings.

However, one area where I was very disappointed, and I condemn the action of the conference committee, for the second time in 4 years, the Republican leadership has unconscionably ignored the will of the House and the Senate and stripped the hate crimes prevention provisions from the bill. The needs of law enforcement, which has repeatedly requested Federal assistance in solving and preventing a wide range of violent hate crimes, have been ignored. The measure enjoyed strong bipartisan support, was endorsed by over 175 law enforcement, civil rights, civic and religious organizations, including the National Sheriffs Association, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, and many others.

That list would have added sexual orientation, gender, and disability to the Federal hate crimes laws, allowing the Federal Government the ability to provide critical assistance to the States. It is very, very unfortunate that it has happened. I want the RECORD to show that this is the second time that this has happened.

Four years ago, there was strong bipartisan support in both Houses supporting adding this to the Defense authorization bill. It was rejected 4 years ago. Once again, the Republican leadership of the House has decided that we will continue to discriminate against those on the basis of their sexual orientation.

Having said that, I plan to support the Defense authorization and, once again, commend our colleagues for bringing it to the floor.

SENATOR KERRY STUMBLES BADLY ON STEM CELLS RE- SEARCH

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, in the debate last night, Senator KERRY stumbled badly when asked a question on the stem cell research debate. He suggested that the only choice was between continuing cryogenically freezing those embryos or their destruction. That is not the only option. Those embryos can be and are being adopted.

A couple of weeks ago, right nearby, in the Capitol here, I met with more than a dozen little children who were once cryogenically frozen embryos who were adopted. Their parents, in their love and compassion, those who had made the contribution and had created these new embryos, allowed those individuals to be adopted; and those kids had names like Michael and Katie. They are not throwaways. No human being is a throwaway.

I hope we will disabuse ourselves, Mr. Speaker, of this false idea that there is such a thing as a "spare" embryo. Every embryo that is not wanted, that is not going to be implanted in the donor mother—these mothers, ought to allow that embryo to be adopted.

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PRETTY PATHETIC

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, the Republican-controlled Congress is shambling to the end of one of the lightest workloads in decades without a hint of embarrassment, New York Times, 9/24/04. No budget, no budget enforcement plan. No energy bill. No highway bill. No intelligence reform. No export tax relief. No welfare reform. Eleven of 13 appropriations bills still on the desk. Lost jobs.

The 108th Congress is a do-nothing Congress, contemptuously arrogant and disdainful of long-established political and parliamentary procedures. So said Al Hunt in the New York Times.

Norman Ornstein's much simpler, much more pointed observation about the 108th Congress. "Pretty pathetic," said Norm Ornstein. And the last 24 hours have been a stunning testament to the pathetic product of this 108th do-nothing, do-bad Congress.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4837, MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AP- PROPRIATIONS ACT, 2005

Mr. KNOLLENBERG submitted the following conference report and statement on the bill (H.R. 4837) making appropriations for military construction, family housing, and base realignment and closure for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2005, and for other purposes:

CONFERENCE REPORT (H. REPT. 108-773)

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 4837) "making appropriations for military construction, family housing, and base realignment and closure for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2005, and for other purposes," having met, after full and free conference, have agreed to recommend and do recommend to their respective Houses as follows:

That the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate, and