

on Friday. First of all, presumably, we anticipate another CR coming. I am sure we have to have another CR at least for some agencies. How long do you think that CR would run? I yield to my friend.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend again for yielding. We are continuing to consult with the Senate on that. Of course, as a senior appropriator, as you well know, as we work the appropriations bills out, the nature of that CR changes. Ideally, we would not have to have a CR because it would be clear that we would have all the bills passed by Friday. If not, we would have to consult with the Senate, see how long they are willing to have a CR or how long we think is in the best interest of the process, but the appropriations work has gone well and I would not see any being extended for a significant period of time.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for that information.

The budget reconciliation bill, we did not take it up today and the mandatory spending cuts bill today. When might we consider that?

Mr. BLUNT. I thank my friend again for yielding, and we are continuing to work on that bill. We have asked our budget chairman to take one final look at it. We have not had a mandatory review of the mandatory programs in terms of looking at their budget for almost a decade now. Frankly, what we are learning is when you have not done anything in almost 10 years, it takes a little longer to do it than you thought it would.

We hoped to have that bill on the floor today. The appropriate eagerness of Members to want to be sure and be home tomorrow for Veterans Day events and, frankly, the challenge of the last few details did not allow us to have that happen. So we have asked the budget chairman to look at those details again, and we hope to have that bill on the floor next week.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman. So it is possible that that bill will be back next week?

Mr. BLUNT. It is possible. I would like to say likely. I think it is likely it will be back, and certainly, it is possible it will be back next week.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, as I understand it, from your announcement, the tax reconciliation bill will also be on the floor next week? I yield to my friend.

Mr. BLUNT. I thank my friend for yielding. At this point, we are still talking to the Ways and Means chairman about his schedule of moving forward with that event. Like some of our other chairmen, he is also involved in the mandatory spending reconciliation, and we will be talking to him about his view of how he manages those two conflicting things going on and whether we can have them both going on at the same time or not.

□ 1630

Mr. HOYER. I thank my colleague for that information. Reclaiming my

time, the pension bill, as the gentleman knows, which had passed through the Education and the Workforce Committee, was considered by Ways and Means and marked up on Wednesday, I believe. Is it my colleague's expectation that that might be on the floor next week as well? I yield to my friend.

Mr. BLUNT. I thank my friend for yielding. My expectation is not that we would have that on the floor next week, but that we would have that on the floor between now and the time we leave here for the end of this year.

Mr. HOYER. Let me then go to that question about when is the end. As I understood from our previous colloquies, we are going to be out Friday for at least 14 days, that would be the Thanksgiving week and the week thereafter. And then if we need to come back, am I correct that we are still looking at coming back the week of December 5? I yield to my friend.

Mr. BLUNT. I thank my friend for yielding. I understand everybody has their holiday plans or wants to begin to make their holiday plans. The gentleman is correct in his observations about our past discussion here. We would not intend to be here the week of Thanksgiving or the week after Thanksgiving. We do plan to be back and do not see any reason we would not be, and every Member should anticipate being back the week of December 5.

It is possible it could take 2 weeks to complete our work for the year and that we could have some work even into the week that begins on December 12. But we definitely intend to be here the 5th and would encourage Members to plan to be here both of those weeks in case our work carries over into the week following the week of December 5. That would be the week of December 12.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his information.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2005 AND HOUR OF MEETING ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2005

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 6 p.m. on Monday next, and further, when the House adjourns on that day, it adjourn to meet at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, November 15, 2005, for morning hour debate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT OF HON. FRANK R. WOLF TO ACT AS SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE, TO SIGN ENROLLED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS THROUGH NOVEMBER 15, 2005

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
November 10, 2005.

I hereby appoint the Honorable FRANK R. WOLF to act as Speaker pro tempore to sign enrolled bills and joint resolutions through November 15, 2005.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the appointment is approved.

There was no objection.

DEMOCRATS ARE LIKE SIRENS

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to set the record straight on some of the false accusations in the debate over the majority's plan to help reform government and yield savings for American taxpayers.

Unfortunately, some Members on the other side of the aisle have decided to attack Republicans with false statements which may sound true, but which actually ring false in their reality.

In fact, the Republican plan will help save and strengthen Medicaid by reducing waste, fraud and abuse, strengthen and simplify the student loan process, reduce our dependence on Middle Eastern oil, restrict illegal immigrant access to food stamps and Medicaid, and reduce the deficit by \$50 billion.

The Democrats remind me of the sirens in Greek mythology. Sirens would sing beautiful songs to sailors who were unable to resist the beautiful music and would try to swim or steer their boats to the music. The problem, Mr. Speaker, is that the sirens actually lived on islands of sharp rocks that sank the sailors' boats or stranded the sailors for eternity.

The Democrats, like sirens, are trying to strand the American public on an island of myth.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

IRAQ AND VETERANS DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, the irony could not be thicker or, for that matter, sweeter. Today, the day before Veterans Day, the Republican leadership failed to gather the necessary votes to pass a shameful budget reconciliation bill that will, among other things, decrease funding for veterans. Somewhere Mr. DELAY should be left to wonder how the callously efficient arm-twisting regime that he installed in the House has crumbled so quickly.

The sheer audacity of trying to pass a budget reconciliation bill that provides more tax breaks to the wealthy at the expense of important social-net programs for the poor is unbelievable. The programs slated to be cut include health care for veterans, Medicaid, student loans, and child support enforcement.

The idea that America's Republican leaders would slash funding for veterans the day before they should be honoring them would be even more appalling than it already is if it were not so commonplace. In fact, this pattern has repeated itself throughout President Bush's tenure in office.

The U.S. invasion of Iraq in March 2003 coincided with the sharp decrease in veterans health care and other benefits for those who have bravely served in our Nation's military. The backlog at veterans hospitals had never been greater than when the United States went to war in Iraq. Now, with more than half a million soldiers having served in Iraq, the burden on the VA will only increase.

And while the U.S. has spent over \$200 billion for military operations and reconstruction in Iraq over the past 2 years, during this same time period the Bush administration and the Republican Congress have repeatedly refused to provide veterans with the benefits they have earned and the benefits they deserve.

Our Nation's so-called leaders have continually refused to fix the system called "concurrent receipt," whereby veterans health benefits are deducted from their retirement benefits. This veterans tax is wrong, and it needs to be fixed. Unfortunately, the Republicans in Congress are too busy trying to pass bills that would make the rich even richer, instead of fixing real inequities in our system.

Mr. Speaker, veterans deserve our respect not only on November 11, Veterans Day, but all throughout the year. They deserve our respect, they deserve our support, and they deserve all of the benefits our government has promised them without scrimping, without exception, without escape clauses. They certainly did not offer any excuses when they enlisted in our military.

Six weeks ago, I traveled to Iraq with a small congressional delegation to learn more about the mission and the

heroic Americans carrying it out. Nothing I saw changed my mind about the wrongness of our Iraq policy. But one thing did move me: I came away from the trip absolutely awed by our soldiers. They were even more committed, more dedicated, and more courageous than I had ever imagined.

Having met and talked with them, it pains me to the core that their fate rests in the hands of leaders who have failed them time and time again. The men and women who wear the uniform deserve so much more. They deserve civilian leaders who will put their safety before their own political interests. They deserve leaders who would not send them to Iraq on false pretenses on a poorly defined mission without all the tools they need and without a plan to get them out of there; and they deserve leaders who will give them adequate medical and financial support when they come home.

For all the reasons I have mentioned today, it is time to bring our troops home from Iraq. We need to focus on healing the wounds incurred over the last 2½ years of war and administering to America's domestic priorities. If we want to truly honor our veterans on Veterans Day, the best thing we can do is prevent more veterans from being created. We could do this tomorrow, if we wanted to, by ending the war in Iraq and bringing our troops home. That would be the best gift of all.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. FOXX). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FRANKS of Arizona addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SCHIFF addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. EMANUEL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ENGLISH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. ENGLISH addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. WYNN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. WYNN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maine (Mr. ALLEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. ALLEN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MCDERMOTT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mrs. JONES of Ohio (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for November 8 on account of business in the district.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to: