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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
May 11, 2005.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MICHAEL K. SIMPSON to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

PRAYER

The Reverend Daniel P. Gallagher, Pastor, Edon Church of Christ, Edon, Ohio, offered the following prayer:

O Lord, God of heaven and earth, there is no God like You. Your mercy and grace continue to shower down on Your servants, those of this great building who serve this Nation's people, a Nation started not by accident but by Your providence and watch care.

I ask of You, Lord, to help guide these men and women to make decisions that will make this country better and stronger, not just in the physical sense but in the spiritual as well. Help these leaders to keep their eyes focused on Your desires to make this country what You intended her to be when You first brought people to its shores to be a "light on a hill" for all the world to see. But, Father, may the world not see the might of this country but the Almighty, who is our Watchman. 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 Georgia (Mr. PRICE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia 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.

A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO DANIEL PATRICK GALLAGHER ON THE OCCASION OF HIS SERVICE AS GUEST CHAPLAIN TO THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a truly wonderful friend of the Fifth Congressional District of Ohio. Daniel P. Gallagher is currently the minister at Edon Church of Christ in Edon, Ohio. Today the House was honored to open our legislative session by the inspirational words of Daniel as our guest chaplain.

To his soldiers at Valley Forge, our Nation's Founding Father George Washington proclaimed, "To the distinguished character of patriot, it should be our highest glory to add the more distinguished character of Christian." Today, before our House could again open and continue to work the will of the people, we paused, and we paused, as we have each morning since the Continental Congress, to give thanks and ask for strength.

We have had a chaplain since 1789, and as Guest Chaplain, Daniel Gallagher continues the great tradition by

offering his leadership and guidance to this institution.

Through Reverend Gallagher's opening prayer today, the Village of Edon has extended its arms and offered their prayers to those elected to serve them.

Williams County, Ohio is proud to claim the Village of Edon and its nearly one thousand citizens. The county borders both the States of Michigan and Indiana. This wonderful area of Ohio produces great crops for consumption, machines for production and the toys which deliver upon us the joyful sounds of children laughing. Williams County and the Village of Edon provide the fruit of life to our Nation and today it has sent us its shepherd.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying special tribute to Daniel P. Gallagher as we give thanks for his inspiring words. On behalf of the people of the Fifth District of Ohio, I am proud to recognize his faith and service. We wish Daniel and his family the best as we salute one of Ohio's finest citizens.

NEW FOCUS TO BRING OUR TROOPS HOME

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, congressional Democrats are so sure that we will win back the Congress in 2006 on the Social Security issue that many have stopped challenging the administration on the war on Iraq: Let us take the war off the table as an issue and focus on other issues.

It is not a new strategy. It was pursued by congressional Democrats in 2002 when our leadership supported the war in Iraq. We lost. It was furthered in 2004 when our nominee supported the war. We lost. We lost a chance to regain the Congress and take back the White House, and the American people lost a chance for a new start. Why? Because we did not challenge the central vulnerability of the administration that led this country into war, into a

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war based on lies and misrepresentations.

Democrats' failure to challenge the war represents a failure of the two-party system. For the Democrats to become politically viable in 2006 and 2008, we must take on this administration on the War on Iraq, not giving them more money to keep the war going. We must move to cut off funds, to bring our troops home, to get out of Iraq, to make those who lied to us to get us into war accountable, to hold them accountable in the courts.

THEY WILL NOT JUST DIE
ANYWAY

(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, some time this summer, the House will vote on a bill to allow Federal funds to be used to destroy embryos stored at IVF clinics in order to harvest their stem cells. Those voting for this legislation will say that these are leftover embryos. They will say they are going to be killed anyway.

Well, they are wrong. Only 2.8 percent of embryos in IVF clinics have been set aside for research; the rest are destined for implantation or adoption.

But, we do not need to kill these embryos to do stem cell research. Stem cells can be taken from many adult sources: fatty tissue, spleen, liver, sinus, bone marrow, just to name a few. These are called adult stem cells.

Adult stem cell research is currently treating 58 diseases successfully. Embryonic stem cell research is treating none: 58, adult stem cell; zero, embryonic stem cell. If there were no ethical alternative, which there is, if we applied "they are going to die anyway" rationale to other areas of research, it would justify such things as harvesting organs from death-row inmates and from terminally ill patients.

We should support adult stem cell research, not embryonic.

UNITED AIRLINES DEFAULT RE-MINDS US OF NEED TO PRESERVE SOCIAL SECURITY

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, today we are given a stark reminder of what is at stake in this debate about Social Security.

Yesterday, United Airlines unloaded their pension plan for their 100,000-plus employees onto the taxpayer, resulting in benefits being cut up to 40 percent. Now, go ask those United Airlines' employees what they think of Social Security as part of their retirement.

Earlier this year, US Airways unloaded their pension plan on the taxpayers, cutting benefits up to 50 percent. Go ask those U.S. Airways' em-

ployees what they think of Social Security.

It may come as a shock to some, but the American people like the security that comes with Social Security. That is what this debate is about. For United Airlines' employees, U.S. Airways' employees, the steel industry before them and probably the auto industry coming next, Social Security is the linchpin to their retirement security. They reject the idea of doing to Social Security what just happened to their private plan, where they put their personal and employer-based savings. It is now on the roulette table, and benefits are being cut by 40 percent.

The fact is, that is what this debate is, for two-thirds of seniors and 40 percent of widows rely on Social Security as their only retirement. Mr. Speaker, this debate is more than about the solvency of Social Security; it is about retirement security for every American.

FILIBUSTER OF JUDICIAL NOMINEES ILL-SERVES AMERICA

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

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, blocking confirmation of judges by a minority in the Senate ill-serves the American people.

Filibustering judges is not part of the Constitution; it is not even part of the old Senate rules. The Constitution is clear on what is required of the Senate and its responsibility under the Advice and Consent Clause as it applies to judicial nominations: Majority support. Never has a nominee with clear majority support been denied an up-or-down vote.

Four vacancies continue to exist in the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals where my district of Cincinnati is contained. One of those vacancies could have been filled by Judge Richard Griffin whose nomination has been pending for 145 days, 145 days. Judge Griffin has the support of his colleagues and individuals such as former President Gerald Ford. He has been rated by the American Bar Association as "well qualified," a rating that has historically secured a nominee's confirmation, but not anymore.

If the Senate wants to amend the Constitution, it should do so as provided by our Founding Fathers, not by the threats of a minority to shut the place down if they do not get their way.

TRIBUTE TO MIGUEL CONTRERAS

(Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Miguel Contreras, who died unexpectedly on Friday, May 6, 2005.

As executive-secretary treasurer of the Los Angeles County Federation of

Labor and a vice president of the California Labor Federation, Miguel was a staunch champion for working families in Los Angeles and throughout our Nation. His leadership reenergized our Nation's labor movement.

Miguel began his life working in the fields of southern California alongside his immigrant parents. After meeting Cesar Chavez, he became active in the United Farm Workers Union.

Under Miguel's leadership, union membership in the Los Angeles County area grew by more than 125,000, creating a powerful voice for working families. Miguel led successful organizing campaigns for janitors and bus drivers, among others.

In a lifetime dedicated to service of working men and women, Miguel Contreras touched many lives, including my own. It was Miguel who encouraged and supported my run for executive-secretary treasurer of the Orange County Federation of Labor. I became the first Latina to head a federation, so I jokingly described myself as Miguel Contreras in high heels. I want to thank him for being a great role model and teaching me many of life's invaluable lessons.

Miguel was not only a friend and a mentor to me, but more importantly, he was a remarkable labor leader, activist, community spokesman, power broker, husband and father, and he will be sorely missed.

PROMOTING FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY IN EUROPE

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to say welcome back, Mr. President, from your historic trip to Europe.

As a former military officer and a high school history teacher, I thank and appreciate the Soviet Union and the Russian people for their sacrifice in helping to win World War II.

Some would justifiably argue that the Russians carried the lion's burden in Europe, both in sacrifice and materiel. However, as much as we thank the Russian people for their sacrifice, we must also remember the five decades of totalitarian regime that ruled over five of the Eastern European Block countries, those that we call the former captive nations. Loss of liberty, freedom, rule of law, executions, deportations and Russification was imposed on many countries. By the President book-ending his trip with a visit to Latvia and Georgia, we should know that old animosities can be put aside and a new Europe can emerge, one that promotes freedom and democracy and the rule of law.

NEW AXIS OF EVIL

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