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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. BONNER).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC.

May 18, 2006.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JO BONNER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

PRAYER

Chaplain Blan Maurice Stout, Jr., Office of the Army Chief of Chaplains, Arlington, Virginia, offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, You dwell in lofty places, yet You also live in the hearts of those who are lowly in spirit. The greatness of Your person inspires our heart to worship, while the goodness of Your concern shapes our character to wholeness.

As we align ourselves with Your nature, fling open the shuttered windows of our souls so that we may see beyond the walls of individual perspective and view this world, at least in part, as You do.

As we remember our military, wipe the tears from the faces of broken-hearted warriors who have lost beloved comrades. For the families of the fallen heroes, be a "father to the orphan and husband to the widow." Encourage all who support them in this Congress, and we ask Your blessing on the military chaplaincy, whose courageous spirit and compassionate service provide for the free exercise of religion.

In the name of Jesus I pray. 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 gentlewoman from Georgia (Ms. MCKINNEY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. MCKINNEY 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.

RECOGNIZING CHAPLAIN MAURY STOUT

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

Mr. RYUN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome Chaplain Maury Stout to the House floor. Chaplain Stout is presently an action officer at the Army Chief of Chaplains at the Pentagon. Prior to that he served as the brigade chaplain for the First Brigade, First Infantry Division at Fort Riley in my district.

Prior to coming to Fort Riley, Chaplain Stout served as the Task Force Chaplain at Camp Kabal, Kuwait. He has also served at many other posts and was awarded the FORSCOM Excellence in Ministry Award while serving as the Squadron Chaplain at Fort Polk, Louisiana.

Chaplain Stout is impressively educated, holding degrees from Central Bible College, Harvard University, the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, and Georgetown University.

He has been honored with numerous awards, including the Meritorious Service Medal, the Army Commendation Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism

Service Medal, the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, the Korean Defense Service Medal, to name just a few.

But I am sure he will tell you that his highest honor is with his family, who is up here seated in the gallery today, his wife, Jeressa, and they have four children.

Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to welcome Chaplain Stout to the House Chamber. I commend him for his outstanding service, and express my appreciation to him for opening our session today.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will recognize each side for up to 10 minutes for 1-minute remarks.

RECOGNIZING GEORGE OLSON

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

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a heroic American that winters in my district and lives in Muskegon, Michigan. George Olson, a World War II veteran, has traveled here with his family to visit the long-overdue memorial dedicated to veterans of the greatest generation.

Sergeant Olson served in the European theater in the U.S. Army Air Force as a tail gunner in a B-17. His plane was shot down, he was held a prisoner of war for some 11 months. Mr. Olson was awarded the Purple Heart, among other commendations.

The sacrifice of those like Sergeant Olson ensured we could live in a free society as we do today, and they deserve every bit of gratitude we can offer.

Like so many silent heroes of his generation, Mr. Olson returned home,

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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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married his sweetheart, Rose, and they had three children, Stuart, Garry and Lisa. Also with us today are his grandchildren, Katherine, Ryan and Kyle, Doug, Becky, Charlotte, Kelly, Jack, Nina, Kelly and Ken are also in the Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, I hope you will join me in acknowledging a great American, George Olson, today and wish him and his family well as they continue their visit to Washington, DC.

The sacrifices of his generation ensured we could live in a free society as we do today, and they certainly deserve every bit of gratitude we can offer.

FEMA HOUSING

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

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, the Bush administration failed the people of the Gulf Coast before Hurricane Katrina and continues to fail them today.

Now, people who were abandoned and left to fend for themselves are about to get kicked to the curb again.

First, we had to fight and force FEMA to allow survivors to temporarily stay in hotels and motels. Now, survivors may be on the streets again.

On May 31, 55,000 displaced families could lose emergency shelter assistance, even though it was promised to them for at least a year.

FEMA says that these families are supposed to apply for a different kind of assistance, yet four out of five applicants reportedly are being turned down. Those who do receive assistance have to reapply every 3 months. Why are we messing with these people who deserve to be treated better by their own government?

FEMA has failed to submit its plan for permanent transitional housing for Congress, which was due in January. Instead of assistance, they have offered incompetence. In the place of aid, they have offered nothing but bureaucracy.

Why in the world are we adding insult to injury? Katrina survivors deserve better.

THE PARTY OF NO

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, the rhetoric from the other side of the aisle, which is usually full of hyperbole, has suddenly dissolved down into one simple word. No.

It is no to energy solutions. It is no to immigration reform. It is no to tax relief.

Last year Republicans passed not one but two energy bills, the Gasoline for America's Security Act, and the Energy Policy Act. More recently, we passed the Refinery Permit Process Schedule Act. And the Democrats response: No.

Last year Republicans passed not one but two immigration reform bills, the Border Protection, Antiterrorism and Illegal Immigration Control Act, and the REAL ID Act. And the Democrats response: No.

Finally, just last week, Republicans approved a tax conference agreement that will help keep the Bush economic boom going and prevent a massive tax increase. The Democrats response: No.

Mr. Speaker, the Democrats favorite new slogan is "America Can Do Better." The American people have a clear choice in November: The party that is accomplishing things, or the party that stands on the sidelines and says "no." Yes, America can do better, better than the party of no.

KATRINA SURVIVORS

(Ms. MCKINNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. MCKINNEY. Mr. Speaker, after evicting all Katrina survivors in temporary housing on March 15, FEMA has now announced that 55,000 families will lose their emergency housing assistance as of May 31.

Tens of thousands of these families are being told they are ineligible for further assistance because of FEMA's onerous and discriminatory rules.

Is this how we treat people who have lost everything?

Where do we expect families who have lost their homes, their jobs, even their city, to turn without housing assistance?

Nearly 9 months have passed since Hurricane Katrina hit. If FEMA can't help these families reclaim their lives, then Congress has to act.

Literally dozens of Katrina bills are still languishing in committees, including H.R. 4197, the most comprehensive relief package offered to date.

I urge my colleagues to pass H.R. 4197 in support of Katrina's survivors.

MEXICO SUES AMERICA—LONE STAR VOICE: CURTIS KRUEGER

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, my office has been inundated by calls from citizens since the announcement that the Mexican government plans to sue the United States over our military troops along our border, hauled into court by the Fox south of the border.

Curtis Krueger of Kingwood, Texas, writes to me:

"Now I read that Mexico is considering suing the United States over border patrols. To not respond to this would be egregious. We as Americans have a sovereign right to have our borders protected by however and whomsoever we see fit. Our government should vocalize this in every way possible, not sit back and let someone else formulate public opinion. To say we cannot handle the immigrant insurgency in

our country flies directly in the face of what we are doing in Iraq. If we are in Iraq to handle insurgents, why aren't we able to do so within our own borders. I, along with a vast majority of Americans, say to you and the government, 'We want our country back.'"

America is now going to be sued in our courts by foreign nations for protecting our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, this ought not to be. We the people have become we the defendants. Mr. Krueger has got it right. Hopefully our government does.

And that's just the way it is.

CHENEY'S SECRET ENERGY TASK FORCE HAS PAID DIVIDENDS FOR BIG OIL

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

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, 5 years ago this week Vice President CHENEY convened his secret energy task force, bringing Big Oil and energy lobbyists together to craft the Bush administration energy agenda. Last year House Republicans rubber-stamped that agenda, and the administration happily signed the legislation into law.

Today, the results are in. Big Oil is laughing all the way to the bank. During the first quarter of this year, the big five oil companies reported profits of \$32.8 billion. These profits are a direct result of those secret Cheney meetings. Big Oil has experienced record profits because Washington Republicans chose to shower Big Oil with more than \$20 billion in gifts.

While Big Oil is prospering, the decisions made in those secret Cheney meetings are not paying off for the American consumer. Over the past 5 years the average American family is paying \$2,000 more a year in gas, home heating and electrical bills.

Washington Republicans continue to hurt everyday Americans by cozying up to Big Oil. Is it any wonder that Americans are demanding change? Democrats will end Big Oil price gouging and rapidly move our country to energy independence and a renewable, clean energy future.

CONGRATULATING RICHMOND NATIVE AND AMERICAN IDOL CONTESTANT ELLIOTT YAMIN

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

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to congratulate Richmond, Virginia, native and American Idol contestant Elliott Yamin for pursuing his dream while sharing his powerful voice with all of us. Elliott is returning home a star; a man with an extraordinary gift who dared to put his talent on display and achieved great success. Elliott's personality and amazing ability won over the judges and the viewers to earn him national recognition as a