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No. 4

House of Representatives

The House met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HINOJOSA).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC.

January 9, 2007.

I hereby appoint the Honorable RUBEN HINOJOSA to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

IRAQ

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

No matter what you call it, another escalation in the war in Iraq is wrong. I will oppose in both word and deed any effort to send more troops. We've tried it before. It will not just mean more American casualties. It will bring more violence to the Iraqis while adding to the burden on our already strained Armed Forces. We should start instead bringing our troops home, not sending more into harm's way in what the

President's advisers have already admitted is a political decision, not a strategic one. Let's take advantage of the new congressional leadership to change direction in what Americans know is our most important issue, ending the war in Iraq.

We should start with the resolution the Bush administration used to authorize this disaster. Knowing what we know now, the authorization of force bears little relation to reality. Instead, the committees of jurisdiction should use their upcoming hearings to craft new legislation that will mean a withdrawal of our troops as well as guide our continued involvement in Iraq until that withdrawal is complete. I will introduce legislation later this month that would provide exactly that sort of guide by refocusing our efforts on political, diplomatic and economic strategies.

Most importantly and most immediately, Congress has clear authority through its power of the purse. We must demand accountability for how money is spent, who is getting how much and for what purpose. We need to target war profiteering. There are too many accounts of contractors who have taken taxpayer dollars and abandoned our troops under fire and the Iraqi people in need. We need an entity like the Truman Commission during World War II to aggressively investigate contractors, punish war profiteers and recover misspent funds by canceling any failed or fraudulent contracts. By redirecting as much of the money as possible to projects run for and by Iraqis, we can repair that damaged country as cost effectively as possible.

We must also reconsider the unprecedented privatization of our military effort. The outsourcing of these basic support functions in Iraq has left contractors unaccountable to the American people, immune from military law and has cost the taxpayers much more than we've needed to spend.

While we're at it, Congress should end the outsourcing of our work. It should be embarrassing to the Republican leadership that it took the Iraqi Study Group to provide the oversight and accountability that Congress should have done these past 4 years.

We need to work to make sure the political discussion surrounding Iraq is not just more civil but more effective. We need to make it possible to debate this issue in terms of facts and the policy consequences and not hide behind the cloud of politics. In the 2002, 2004 and 2006 election cycles, there was lots of talk about Iraq, but people didn't tell the truth. Instead, the issue was manipulated for political purposes. We must resist the efforts to reduce this discussion to how it will impact the next election rather than how we got into this mess and how we are going to get out of it. In all of this conversation, we need to be dealing with the long-term security of the United States.

We must look at the President's plan to escalate the war in Iraq in the context of those violent fundamentalists around the world that would do us harm, threats of genocide in Darfur and chaos in Somalia, nuclear proliferation, global warming and the loss of America's influence in the world. In none of those areas does escalating the war in Iraq make the world a safer place.

The American people would welcome Congress doing our job right. Only then can we turn this disaster around and provide the security for families in America and around the world.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 40 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until noon.

□ 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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□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MORAN of Virginia) at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

This Nation is still in mourning for President Gerald Ford. Today, as the House of Representatives pays tribute to him, we pray to You, Lord God, paraphrasing his own remarks in 1974 on taking the oath of office as President:

"We believe that truth is the glue that holds government together, not only our government but civilization itself. That bond is unbroken at home and abroad.

"In all our public and private acts as Members of Congress, we expect to follow our instincts of openness and candor with full confidence that honesty is always the best policy in the end.

"As we bind up internal wounds, let us restore the golden rule to our political process and let mutual love purge our hearts of suspicion and of hate."

At the beginning of the 110th Congress, we ask the people of this Nation for their prayers. With all the strength and all the good sense we have gained from life, with all the confidence our family, our friends and dedicated staff impart to us and with the good will of countless Americans we have encountered, we now solemnly reaffirm our promise to uphold the Constitution, to do what is right as God gives us to see the right, and to do the very best we can for America.

"God helping us, we will not let you down."

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 Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas 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.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced

that the Senate has agreed to the Following Resolution:

S. RES. 19

Whereas Gerald Rudolph Ford, the 38th President of the United States, was born on July 14, 1913, in Omaha, Nebraska;

Whereas Gerald Ford was raised in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where he was active in the Boy Scouts, achieving the Eagle Scout rank, and where he excelled as both a student and an athlete during high school;

Whereas after graduating from high school, Gerald Ford attended the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, where he played on the university's national championship football teams in 1932 and 1933, and was honored as the team's most valuable player in 1934, before graduating with a B.A. degree in 1935;

Whereas Gerald Ford later attended Yale Law School and earned an LL.B. degree in 1941, after which he began to practice law in Grand Rapids;

Whereas Gerald Ford joined the United States Naval Reserve in 1942 and served his country honorably during World War II;

Whereas upon returning from his service in the military, Gerald Ford ran for the United States House of Representatives and was elected to Congress;

Whereas Gerald Ford served in the House of Representatives from January 1949 to December 1973, winning reelection 12 times, each time with more than 60 percent of the vote;

Whereas Gerald Ford served with great distinction in Congress, in particular through his service on the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, of which he rose to become ranking member in 1961;

Whereas in addition to his work in the House of Representatives, Gerald Ford served as a member of the Warren Commission, which investigated the assassination of President John F. Kennedy;

Whereas in 1965, Gerald Ford was selected as minority leader of the House of Representatives, a position he held for 8 years;

Whereas after the resignation of Vice President Spiro Agnew in 1973, Gerald Ford was chosen by President Richard Nixon to serve as Vice President of the United States;

Whereas following the resignation of President Nixon, Gerald Ford took the oath of office as President of the United States on August 9, 1974;

Whereas upon assuming the presidency, Gerald Ford helped the nation heal from one of the most difficult and contentious periods in United States history, and restored public confidence in the country's leaders;

Whereas Gerald Ford's basic human decency, his integrity, and his ability to work cooperatively with leaders of all political parties and ideologies, earned him the respect and admiration of Americans throughout the country;

Whereas the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 recommended that America's next nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, designated as CVN-78, be named as the U.S.S. Gerald R. Ford, in honor of our 38th President; and

Whereas Gerald Ford was able to serve his country with such great distinction in large part because of the continuing support of his widely admired wife, Elizabeth (Betty), who also has contributed much to the nation in many ways, and of their 4 children, Michael, John, Steven, and Susan: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate notes with deep sorrow and solemn mourning the death of President Gerald Rudolph Ford.

Resolved, That the Senate extends its heartfelt sympathy to Mrs. Ford and the family of President Ford.

Resolved, That the Senate honors and, on behalf of the nation, expresses deep apprecia-

tion for President Ford's outstanding and important service to his country.

Resolved, That the Senate directs the Secretary of the Senate to communicate these resolutions to the House of Representatives and transmit a copy thereof to the family of the former President.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 197. An act to authorize salary adjustments for justices and judges of the United States for fiscal year 2007.

RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the sad truth is that we have an epidemic of working poor in this country. These are Americans who work 40 to 60 hours a week and sometimes 7 days a week, yet can't afford the basic necessities. At \$5.15 per hour, a full-time minimum wage worker makes less than \$11,000 a year, which is less than most of us make in a month. These aren't just teenagers working part time. Most minimum-wage workers are actually hardworking disadvantaged adults. Each day these working poor are faced with the impossible decision of having to choose between food, clothing, shelter, medicine and utility bills. No American who works hard for a living should have to make those types of choices. We cannot continue to look away while hardworking Americans linger in poverty. This isn't just an economic issue, it is an ethical and moral issue.

I commend the Democratic leadership for their dedication to this issue, and I urge my colleagues to support this raise for the millions of Americans who deserve it.

MEXICO GOES HIGH-TECH ON ILLEGAL ENTRY

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, Mexican illegals looking to breach entry into the United States are receiving encouraging help from their own government. In the past, the Mexican government has provided pamphlets to illegals on how to sneak into the United States. Now the Mexican government has announced it is going high tech. The government will provide illegals with GPS tracking devices, allowing them to call on the U.S. Cavalry, the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol, if they get lost among the treacherous rivers and deserts lining the U.S.-Mexico border.

By passing out GPS devices free of charge, Mexico wants the U.S. to rescue illegals that are in trouble on American soil and provide them free medical attention but supposedly let them still stay in the United States. Instead of discouraging Mexican citizens from illegally entering America,