



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 110th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 153

WASHINGTON, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2007

No. 26

House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. INSLEE).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 12, 2007.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JAY INSLEE 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.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 31 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SIRES) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

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

Lord God, Divine Architect of history, the birthday of Abraham Lincoln is a moment to not only hear his voice echoed in countless prayers of people the world over, now is the time for this Nation to touch his spirit, for we are caught up again in the lingering debate of war and peace.

Perhaps, Lord, the wordsmith Carl Sandburg best describes our debility and Lincoln's vision for us when he writes:

"Decreed beyond any but far imagining of its going asunder was Lincoln's mystic dream of the Union of States achieved. Beyond all the hate or corruption or mocking fantasies of democracy that might live as an aftermath of the war were assurances of long-time conditions for healing, for rebuilding, for new growth.

"As a result flowing from the war, the United States was to take its place among nations counted world powers . . . and as a world power, the expectation was it would be a voice of the teachings of Washington, Jefferson, Jackson, and Lincoln speaking for a republican government, for democracy, for institutions 'of the people, by the people, for the people.'

"Though there might come betrayals and false pretenses, the war had put some manner of seal on human rights and dignity in contrast with property rights, and even the very definition of property . . .

"Out of the smoke and stench, out of the music and violet dreams of the war, Lincoln stood perhaps taller than any other of the many great heroes. None threw a longer shadow than he. And to him the great hero was the People. He could not say too often that he was merely their instrument."

Lord God, in our own day, take us beyond the hate and mocking fantasies. Hammer out renewed commitments for healing, for rebuilding and for new growth. Make today's government an instrument of Your people, that we may take our rightful place among the nations as a world power, which is wit-

ness to human rights and dignity for all Your people. 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 Texas (Mr. POE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. POE 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.

THE SIGN MUST STAY

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

Mr. POE. "This Is America. When Ordering, Please Speak English." This sign is located in the window of Geno's Restaurant, tourist landmark for the famous Philly cheese steak.

Philadelphia's Commission on Human Relations has been ordering its owner, Joe Vento, to take down the sign, however. They have even suggested that he hire Spanish-speaking employees to help communicate. But Joe is not giving in to the bureaucrats. Vento says that Geno's will serve and his staff will help out customers who don't speak English, but the sign is staying.

Joe Vento is of Italian descent. His grandparents came from Italy. They were proud of their American citizenship and quickly learned English. But

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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now the Commission on Human Relations is taking legal action against Vento, charging him with discrimination simply for asking his customers to speak English.

No business owner should be forced to hire a whole gauntlet of foreign-speaking translators because of individuals who feel they won't learn our language. Individuals who come here need to understand that this country is not Mexico, France, Korea or the Middle East. This is America, and English is spoken here.

And that's just the way it is.

PREMATURE WITHDRAWAL FROM IRAQ WILL ENDANGER U.S.

(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, sadly, many people try to separate the current Iraq conflict from the attacks of September 11 and the Global War on Terrorism; it is impossible to do so. The attacks of September 11 were not isolated, random events. Al Qaeda has openly stated Iraq is the central front in the war on terror. And our enemy is highly intelligent, well financed and committed to the destruction of freedoms.

The concept that America's retreat in Iraq will bring an end to sectarian violence and terrorist activity in the region ignores history. Premature retreat will embolden the enemy and make us more vulnerable to attacks. Withdrawals from Beirut and Mogadishu led to the 1993 World Trade Center attack, the 1998 embassy bombings across Africa, the 2000 bombing of the USS *Cole*, and then September 11. Osama bin Laden has characterized the struggle in Iraq as the third world war. We ignore this claim at our peril, which threatens American families.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.

SUPPORTING THE IRAQ MISSION

(Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, this week we will debate a non-binding resolution that will do nothing more than undermine the mission in Iraq, weaken the morale of our troops, and embolden our enemy.

No doubt mistakes have been made in the battle with Iraq. With every war mistakes are made. The question before us is, Are we going to learn from the mistakes and correct them and move forward with a plan of success, or are we going to retreat in defeat?

Mr. Speaker, the terrorists themselves believe Iraq is a central front in the war on terror. Al Zawahiri, al Qaeda's deputy leader, has repeatedly said Iraq and Afghanistan are the "two most crucial fields" in the Islamists' war. A policy of retreat and defeat

would result in pervasive instability and embolden radical Islamist terrorists and rogue regimes to expand new areas in the region.

Mr. Speaker, the stakes are real and they are high. And the American people deserve leadership, not partisan politics. I will continue to support our troops by continuing to support their mission.

WE MUST WIN THE BATTLE OF IDEAS

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Victory in Iraq Caucus, I continue to stand and support our troops. I feel it is imperative that we continue to strongly speak out in favor of the efforts that our troops are carrying out against terrorism, not only in Iraq, but in 30 different countries around the globe.

The terrorists tell us, just as my colleague said, that Iraq is the central battle in the war on terror. War is not quick, and it is not painless. It is up to us here in the people's House to continue to support the troops and to be behind their efforts, funding them 100 percent of the way.

In order to win, Mr. Speaker, we must not only succeed on the battlefield; we must win in the battle of ideas. We must win the civic and economic battles with the Iraqi people. They are as critical as any firefighter that they face every day.

The idea of freedom and prosperity is a powerful idea. Our coalition is breathing life into that idea with the Iraqi people. We need to stand firm, fund our troops, support our men and women in harm's way.

PROCESS IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, it is not good to talk process in the House of Representatives. I keep hearing that. But when the process that you are talking about is the execution of our right in a democratic society to speak and make a difference, then it is necessary to speak on process.

Mr. Speaker, this week we will spend 4 days on the Iraq resolution. I say "the" Iraq resolution because it has already been crafted by Speaker PELOSI; it already is a final product. The only thing left to do is in fact to vote on it because we will not be allowed to amend it; the rule will be a closed rule. Democracy and speech and debate will not in fact change anything. The final vote will be exactly at the end of the week where it was at the beginning. That is wrong. Republicans never did that when we held the Speaker's gavel.

Democrats should not do that as they hold the Speaker's gavel.

The right to amend and the right to debate that leads to a better bill is a right of this democracy, and this body has been reduced by the taking of that right.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken after 6:30 p.m. today.

RECOGNIZING AND HONORING THE EMPLOYEES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 134) recognizing and honoring the employees of the Department of Homeland Security for their efforts and contributions to protect and secure the Nation.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 134

Whereas the United States must remain vigilant against all threats to the homeland, including acts of terrorism, natural disasters, and other emergencies;

Whereas the Department of Homeland Security marked its 4th anniversary on January 24, 2007;

Whereas the more than 208,000 employees of the Department work tirelessly to prepare the Nation to counter acts of terrorism, natural disasters, and other emergencies;

Whereas the Department's employees work diligently to deter, detect, and prevent acts of terrorism;

Whereas the Department's employees stand willing, ready, and able to respond if catastrophe strikes;

Whereas the Department's employees support the Department's mission to protect continuously the Nation's borders, airports, seaports, rail lines, and other transit systems;

Whereas the Department's employees, together with employees of other agencies and departments of the Federal Government, work with State, local, and tribal partners to enhance disaster preparedness at all levels of government;

Whereas the Department's employees are called upon to sacrifice time with their families to work long hours to fulfill the Department's vital mission; and

Whereas the Nation is indebted to the Department's employees for their efforts and contributions: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives recognizes and honors the employees of the Department of Homeland Security for their exceptional efforts and contributions to protect and secure the Nation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARNEY) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.