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No. 5

House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC.
January 10, 2007.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ALCEE L. HASTINGS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

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

"Let us sing a new song to the Lord.
Let us praise the Lord in all the works of justice."

Lord, may the Nation be strengthened in hope and be inspired to think through things anew. With new Members and experienced Members working together in Congress, may new tactics and decisions be revealed as the will of the people and in accord with Your provident plan.

In You, O Lord, we find creativity, wisdom and faithful love, now and forever. 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 Florida (Mr. STEARNS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. STEARNS 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.

IRAQI SURGE

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

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, the President's proposal that he will announce tonight to increase rather than decrease the number of troops in Iraq defies the reality on the ground and the advice of our wisest military commanders. This decision will only serve to put more forces in the crossfire of a growing civil war. If there ever was a justifiable mission to depose a ruthless dictator, that mission has been accomplished. The Congress never authorized this military occupation. It is irresponsible and, in fact, immoral to allow more innocent American lives to be lost in vain.

Iraq is an artificial nation that was created by Winston Churchill and Gertrude Bell in 1922 to promote their concept of British imperialism. The reality is that this was never a winnable war for the United States of America nor in my view is it a sustainable civil society, and adding more troops is not going to change that reality.

DEPUTY GILMER HERNANDEZ— BORDER LAWMAN

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, in the small border town of Rocksprings, Texas, where drug smugglers and human smugglers sneak across the Rio Grande into America, lone Deputy Sheriff Gilmer Hernandez was on patrol. In the

stillness of the vast night, a speeding Suburban runs a red light. Deputy Hernandez, 25, stops the vehicle, but suddenly, without warning, the vehicle takes off. Deputy Hernandez says the vehicle tried to run him down. The lawman fires several shots, one of which shoots out the rear tire, just like in the movies.

The vehicle stops, and eight or nine illegals jump out and take off running into the sagebrush. One illegal had a minor injury from a bullet. The U.S. Government rounds up six or seven of the illegals and, guess what, prosecutes Deputy Hernandez, claiming he recklessly discharged his firearm and uses the illegals as witnesses against the lawman during a trial.

Citizens of his town are mad. One said, "Our deputy's in jail for doing his job."

Mr. Speaker, another example of how the Federal Government is more concerned about people illegally invading America than it is about the men who protect America. Once again, our government is on the wrong side of the border war.

And that's just the way it is.

CONGRATULATING BULGARIA ON BEING ADMITTED INTO THE EU- ROPEAN UNION

(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, this has been a joyous new year for the people of Bulgaria. On January 1, Bulgaria and Romania were admitted into the European Union. In less than 16 years Bulgaria has successfully transitioned from a Communist totalitarian regime into a free market democracy.

Three years ago, I was honored to be at the White House with former Prime Minister Simeon Saxe-Coburg Gotha as

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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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Bulgaria was admitted into NATO. Bulgaria has proven to be a true ally in the global war on terrorism and there are currently plans for three U.S. bases to be located within Bulgaria. Bulgaria has one of the fastest-growing European economies, and membership in the EU will accelerate its pace.

Congratulations to President Georgi Parvanov, Prime Minister Sergey Stanishev, Ambassador to Washington Elena Poptodorova, and my longtime friend and former ambassador to Athens, Stefan Stoyanov. I am grateful to serve with Congresswoman ELLEN TAUSCHER as co-chair of the Bulgaria Caucus.

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

IT'S TIME TO RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE

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

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. It's time to raise the minimum wage.

Mr. Speaker, I love America, and I want to make real the ideal expressed in the Pledge of Allegiance, liberty and justice for all. Justice not just for those who make more in a day than a minimum wage worker makes in a year, not just for those who are in, those who are in charge, in control, included, but justice also for those who are out, who are left out of the economic recovery, who are without health insurance, who are locked out of an apartment because they cannot afford to pay rent.

Mr. Speaker, in the final analysis, the justness of America will not be determined by how we treat millionaires in the suites of life but, rather, how we treat minimum wage workers in the streets of life.

GO GATORS

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the University of Florida Gators for their win Monday night to capture their second football national championship. With the Gators' 41-14 defeat of the Ohio State Buckeyes, they become the first Division I school to hold the national championship in men's basketball and football at the same time.

Coming into this game, many of the so-called experts did not give the Gators any chance of defeating the previously undefeated Buckeyes. However, once they took the field, the Gators were not intimidated. In fact, the Gators held Ohio State to only 82 yards of total offense, the fewest number of yards in BCS history.

The Florida Gators are an excellent example of both the university and the great State of Florida in their tenac-

ity, spirit and, of course, their desire to succeed. I take great pride in representing the University of Florida and congratulate Coach Urban Meyer and the entire university on this great accomplishment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. I wanted to ask my colleague to continue for another minute since I am from Florida.

IRAQI SURGE

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

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, we need a surge of congressional action to stop George Bush's disastrous policy in Iraq. The country needs and is desperate for a change in policy in Iraq, and tonight President George Bush will continue his policy of failure, of giving us just more of the same.

It is clear that we need to insist on a political solution in Iraq rather than to insist on Americans continuing to pour billions of dollars and thousands of lives into this political chaos in Iraq. The President has refused to listen to the bipartisan panel calling for a change in Iraq. He has refused to listen to the American people. But he cannot refuse to listen to a Congress that fulfills its obligation under the Constitution to exercise the power of the purse to stop this misguided escalation.

The U.S. House should vote in clear and no uncertain terms to fund the troops that are there and to cut off funding for any escalation. It is our constitutional obligation. It is a commonsense policy to insist on Iraqis standing up. That is the direction and the change we need in this country.

STEM CELL BREAKTHROUGH

(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 recognize and congratulate Wake Forest University's Institute for Regenerative Medicine for its recent medical breakthrough in amniotic fluid stem cell research. Using these specific cells does not require the destruction of human life at any stage.

This is tremendous news. Not only does this prevent the destruction of human life but these stem cells have amazing properties that show very promising results. Unlike embryonic stem cells, these remain stable for years without forming tumors and are easily retrieved for medical use. They also have the ability to grow into brain, muscle and other forms of tissue that could potentially cure diseases. In addition, since these cells are a genetic match to a fetus, they can be used to help cure birth defects or even be frozen over time to use as a personalized tissue bank for use later in life.

In addition to being a medical breakthrough, this gives hope to millions who support the sanctity of life that

curing diseases and the potential for regenerative tissue growth are possible in a moral and ethical way.

I am proud to recognize the truly amazing work of Wake Forest University's Institute of Regenerative Medicine and look forward to the promise of its continued research.

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RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE

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

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, today we have the opportunity to raise the wages of 13 million Americans, and we should take it.

Why raise the minimum wage in America? For the simple reason that men and women in the richest Nation on Earth should not work full time and still be relegated to living in poverty. What does it mean for the father or mother in a family of three to live on the current minimum wage? It means an income of \$10,000 a year.

Imagine living in Glendale, Burbank or Pasadena, or any city in America, and trying to get by on \$10,000 a year. A raise in the minimum wage will be an additional \$4,000 for that family of three. It will mean more groceries on the table and a greater opportunity to get health care. It will mean potentially pulling that family out of poverty. It is the right thing to do. We have the opportunity today to make that happen for millions, and we should take it.

REDUCING TAX AND REGULATORY BURDEN

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak briefly about the issue that my good friend from Burbank, Mr. SCHIFF, did, and that is the issue of minimum wage.

I am well aware of the fact that 80 percent of the American people believe we should increase the minimum wage, and I am for everyone's wage being increased. I want those who are struggling to get on the first rung of the economic ladder to have every opportunity possible.

That is why I think it is very important that as we prepare to embark on this debate on the minimum wage, that we focus on the most important item that we face and that was raised by Mr. SCHIFF, that being the issue of our being the richest economy in the world.

Mr. Speaker, that is not by accident. It is because of policies that we have put into place that are doing everything we can to ensure economic growth. So that is why as we look at this issue of making sure that people