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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. HOOLEY).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 23, 2007.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DARLENE HOOLEY to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Reverend Dr. Alan Keiran, Office of the Chaplain, United States Senate, offered the following prayer:

God of grace and glory, we pray this day for our distinguished Representatives and the Nation they so ably serve. Equip them with the wisdom, strength and perseverance needed to bring important issues to closure. Bless those they love in their times of separation from family and friends. Bless their staff members as they labor to support the honorable men and women they so gallantly serve. For military men and women deployed in harm's way and their families, we pray Your Providential protection, comfort and peace.

O Lord, our precious Savior and eternal King, equip leaders across this great land with the wisdom and endurance to meet the challenges ahead.

In Your holy Name we 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 her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. McNULTY. Madam Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. McNULTY. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. BARRETT) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to five 1-minutes on each side.

H.R. 1234 IS THE VEHICLE FOR PEACE

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Four years ago, Congress was told we had no alternative but to go to war; that was wrong. Now Congress is telling the American people we have no alternative but to continue the war, and that by continuing

the war for just another year or two we will then be able to end the war. War equals peace. I don't think so.

This war has achieved a momentum that has swept up into its tragic hold people of otherwise good will who would vote to continue a war when they really want peace and when the American people want peace.

I believe you cannot say you are for peace and vote to keep this war going. You cannot say you are for peace and facilitate the theft of Iraqi oil. You cannot say you are for peace and give the President enough money not just to keep this war going, but to attack Iran if he so chooses. If you want peace, vote for peace now. If you want peace, stop funding this war. If you want peace, stand for the truth.

What America must do and what Congress has the power to do is to stop the war now, use the money in the pipeline to bring the troops home, set in motion a diplomatic process that would involve the world community in moving into Iraq as our troops move out. We need to stand for peace. H.R. 1234 is the vehicle to do that.

WE WILL NOT RUN FROM DUTY

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, today we vote on the "Iraq surrender bill." Approval of it means we vote to abandon Iraq at an arbitrary time, no matter the situation. We vote to retreat even if it means defeat. We vote to quit while our troops are in the field. And we vote for peace at any price.

This bill will put American troops at risk. And for some odd reason, this emergency Iraqi bill is loaded with squealing pork that has nothing to do with our troops or the war. One provision is to give \$3 billion to farmers hurt by bad weather, like my rice farmers in southeast Texas that were

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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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devastated by Hurricane Rita. But I will not barter my position. I will not betray our troops for 30 pieces of silver or \$3 billion of squealing pork.

The troops in Iraq need our total commitment, not total defeatism. Ronald Reagan put it best, “Men cry ‘peace, peace,’ but there can be no peace as long as there is one American somewhere dying for the rest of us.”

And that’s just the way it is.

DEMOCRATS ADDRESS VETERANS, HEALTH CARE IN IRAQ ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

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

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, we owe our Nation’s freedom and quality of life to America’s veterans. These brave men and women left their families behind and risk their lives for us and their country. Our government promised to take care of them when they returned home; this is a promise we simply must not break.

Today, the House has an opportunity to live up to these promises. The emergency supplemental bill provides \$1.7 billion more than the President’s request to fund veterans’ health care needs. The bill provides \$550 million to address the maintenance backlog at VA health care facilities, preventing situations like the one at Walter Reed. \$250 million for medical administration to ensure sufficient personnel to maintain a high level of service for the rising number of veterans. \$100 million to allow the VA to contract with private mental health care providers to offer veterans timely mental health care. And \$62 million to speed up claims processing for returning veterans.

Mr. Speaker, those who put their lives on the line for our country deserve not only our respect, but also the best medical care we can provide. This bill will ensure that they receive just that, while beginning a process to bring our troops home.

DEMOCRATIC SUPPLEMENTAL IS DANGEROUS

(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, the supplemental bill is dangerous for our troops and dangerous for America.

Defense Secretary Robert Gates re-stated yesterday to the bipartisan Army Caucus that timetables will stop the military from completing its mission. The Washington Post has criticized the proposal, saying it could lead to massive civilian casualties, to al Qaeda establishing bases to attack America and our allies, and to a regional war of disastrous consequences.

Al Qaeda spokesman Zawahiri has identified Iraq and Afghanistan as the

central fronts in the global war on terrorism. Bin Laden has specifically referred to Iraq as the “Third World War.”

As a 31-year veteran with four sons in the military, including one Iraq veteran, I understand the importance of supporting our troops in combat. I hope my colleagues of both parties will join me to support former Vietnam POW SAM JOHNSON’s bill to fully support and fund our men and women in uniform.

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

TODAY CONGRESS WILL END THE WAR IN IRAQ

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

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, today we will demonstrate that this Nation is not doomed to repeat the mistakes of the past.

Forty years ago we were in another war. We had lost just about as many soldiers, about 3,000 young men, at this point in the Vietnam War. Our President urged the Congress to stay the course so that he could save face, and the Congress did, as the President demanded, until we had lost another 55,000 soldiers before we eventually accepted the fact that it, too, was an inconceivable war.

Today, the Congress is going to end this war, this fiasco that we never should have begun. It is going to focus on our priorities of strengthening our military, going after the people who actually did attack us in 2001 and reinvesting in our nation’s true priorities.

We will bring our troops home as soon and as safely as possible. We will not repeat history. This is an important vote, and all of the American people should be proud of their Congress.

THE BUDGET IS WRONG FOR OUR NATION

(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, the Budget Committee marked up the budget for fiscal year 2008. Unfortunately, instead of a commonsense balanced budget that lowers spending, reforms unsustainable entitlement programs and encourages economic growth without raising taxes, it is full of a lot of empty promises, with the exception of two, higher taxes and more spending.

My Republican colleagues and I believe that government should limit its taxing and spending, ease the burden on the economy and let the country grow. This Democratic budget trusts government more than it trusts the people. Those are the guys paying the bills.

As a result of Republican support of tax policies passed in 2001 through 2005, every taxpayer who paid income taxes

will get tax relief this year. If these tax policies are eliminated, as the Democratic budget calls for, these taxpayers will see a tax hike.

Mr. Speaker, for these and many other reasons, the budget put forth this week is just plain wrong for our Nation.

SUPPORT THE SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION BILL

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

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, let this be the day that, respectful of the sacrifice of our men and women overseas, inspired and emboldened by the clarion call of the American people on November 7, 2006, and determined to show a decent respect for the opinions of thoughtful and caring people the world over, this Congress says to an administration that has been arrogant in its bearing and incompetent in its execution, no longer shall you turn a blind eye to the readiness of our troops. No longer shall you ignore the needs of our veterans. At long last, you are being called to account for a failed policy in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the supplemental appropriation bill, which marks the return of sanity and wisdom in the conduct of American foreign policy.

SONG TITLES FOR 110TH CONGRESS

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

Mr. WESTMORELAND. You know, Mr. Speaker, Alan Jackson lives in my district, a great country singer, and I was thinking of some songs for him. One of them was “I Would Rather Be in New York Raising Money Than Funding the War in Iraq.” The other one was “How I Turned the Blue Dogs Yellow.”

Then there is also an author in my district, Ferrell Sams; he writes a lot of books; you may have read some of them, but a good book is “How to Lose a War and Store Peanuts.”

Let me say this, Mr. Speaker, for Alan Jackson to look at the rules. And he could do a whole album on the rules here. “We Only Change Them When We Have To” would make a great title for that rules album. “We Only Leave the Vote Open When We Are Losing, When the Time is Up,” would be another good one. And the last one would be, “We Only Change Them When We Have To.”

IRAQ SUPPLEMENTAL

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

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, in any endeavor, one must set achievable goals