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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. McNULTY).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
May 9, 2007.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MICHAEL R. McNULTY 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:

Lord God, by Your Spirit You move and act within Your people and make them one to praise You and give You glory.

Bless each Member of this 110th Congress today, their constituents in their individual districts and those who work in their district offices, for this House is a place of human diversity, Lord. Representing the people who elected them, Members give voice to local needs and sometimes find common concern echoed across this vast country.

Gathered here in public service, these women and men are easily drawn into broader problems facing the Nation and grow in awareness of international issues as well. In the midst of it all, Lord, never let them forget where they come from. Keep them humble before You, and by consistent listening to those they represent. May the prayers of their family and neighbors in their districts join with us today as we pray for them, calling upon Your holy name.

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 New Jersey (Mr. SIRES) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. SIRES 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 passed without amendment a concurrent resolution of the House of the following title:

H. Con. Res. 124. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the National Peace Officers' Memorial Service.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 106-554, the Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore and upon the recommendation of the Republican Leader, appoints the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) to the Board of Directors of the Vietnam Education Foundation.

CONGRESS HAS THE POWER TO END THIS WAR

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, Congress has the power to end the war in

Iraq simply by refusing to pass any legislation to continue to fund it. The money is in the pipeline there right now to bring the troops home.

H.R. 1234 provides a plan for bringing the troops home, ending the occupation and stabilizing Iraq. This war will never end if Congress advances administration plans to privatize Iraq's oil through insisting on the passage of a so-called hydrocarbon act by the Iraqi legislature.

Today I will be distributing to Members of Congress a detailed report that explains how the legislation that we are advancing moves to privatize Iraq's oil.

INTELLIGENCE FUNDING CUTS

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, in an environment of unlimited demands and limited resources, our constituents expect us to make tough choices and set national priorities with their hard-earned tax dollars. The Democrats' Intelligence Authorization bill that we will vote on this week fails to do this.

Consider the priorities it sets. This bill makes deep cuts in the resources requested by the administration for important intelligence-gathering operations. Meanwhile, it also calls for the Director of National Intelligence to submit a National Intelligence Estimate to Congress on global warming.

In a post-9/11 environment, should we really be steering our intelligence community away from intelligence gathering so that they can start studying global warming?

Experts from the right and the left say that our ability to prevent another attack on America relies heavily on our intelligence capabilities.

Mr. Speaker, let's fully fund our intelligence community and not distract

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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it from fulfilling its core mission, to protect Americans from attack.

FOXES GUARDING THE HENHOUSE

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, Johnnie Burton and Terri Shaw, two of President Bush's administration's foxes that have been guarding the henhouse, are stepping down. And now they are gone and the American people are better off.

At the Interior Department, Johnnie Burton let Big Oil drill at taxpayers' expense and got away with it until Congress stepped in, costing the taxpayers billions of dollars.

At the Education Department, Terri Shaw is stepping down after several scandals were uncovered in the student loan industry. On her watch, lenders and Education Department officials undermined the student loan program, which millions of students and middle-class families count on to go to college with and achieve their American Dream.

Every day we see another headline and another story. Congress does its oversight job, and another Bush administration official at the center of the storm is eventually forced to step down.

The White House has had an approach of letting the industry govern itself. They cut out the middleman. They are the government industry lobbyists. From our energy and production to our college loans, nothing is out of bounds. And Americans sent a clear message last November. They are tired of corruption. They want a change and an end to business as usual here in Washington. Democrats got the message, and we're restoring accountability to the American people's government.

FLOOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1684

(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, in March, the Homeland Security Committee unanimously approved a bill to authorize funding for the Department of Homeland Security for the coming year. It wasn't a perfect bill, but it was one the committee accepted.

Now the liberal leadership plans to strip the most critical provisions in the legislation. These are not controversial points that should make my colleagues on the other side of the aisle uncomfortable. Unless, of course, the Democrats do not agree with an increased emphasis on immigration enforcement at the ports or secure biometric identification for aliens captured at sea or critical funding to protect America's food supply. But, as we've all seen since the Democrats took over in January, we know that is the case.

But it actually gets worse. The liberal leadership voted against allowing noncontroversial amendments to increase information sharing between DHS and cops on the beat, allowing DHS to investigate Social Security fraud at the workplace, and increased fines of employers who knowingly hire illegal aliens.

Mr. Speaker, this bill makes a mockery of the democratic process, does nothing extra to secure our borders and will, unfortunately, probably make our Nation less safer.

Welcome to Homeland Security, Democrat style.

DEMOCRATS TRIED TO CHANGE COURSE IN IRAQ BUT PRESIDENT BUSH REJECTED THAT CHANGE OF COURSE

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, last week, President Bush had a chance to change the direction of the war in Iraq, but he rejected it. He rejected a plan that would finally hold the Iraqi Government accountable for meeting the benchmarks that he laid out earlier this year.

According to the nonpartisan Brookings Institute, the Iraqi Government is failing to meet the political benchmarks they were supposed to make. By vetoing the bill, the President was condoning such inaction.

The President claims the situation is getting better in Iraq. Wrong. April was the deadliest month of the year and one of the deadliest of the entire war.

Retired General William Odom said last week, and I'm quoting, "No effective strategy can be devised for the United States until it begins withdrawing its forces from Iraq. Only that step will break the paralysis that now confronts us."

General Odom is correct. Today our troops are serving as referees in a deadly civil war that shows no end in sight. This Congress offered the President a dramatic change, and he rejected it. We're not going to give up, because ending this war is simply too important.

FUNDING FOR INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS

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

Ms. FALLIN. Mr. Speaker, one of the most effective tools we have against fighting our enemies like al Qaeda is intelligence, information that allows us to disrupt their terror cells and prevent attacks before they happen. And yet, the Democrats see fit to cut the funding of these operations.

Worst of all, they are shifting resources away from vital, war-related intelligence operations towards their

politically correct crusade on global warming.

Does the Democrat leadership really think that carbon emissions represent a greater threat to the United States than the 9/11 radical jihadists?

Yesterday, law enforcement foiled a plot by terrorists to attack and kill U.S. soldiers in New Jersey. Protecting our Nation should be our number one priority. Does the leadership really think that our surveillance satellites should be aimed at polar ice caps and not terror cells and that spies should be investigating global warming?

Congress must adequately fund our intelligence operations. If we don't, we may need to be more concerned about global warming in the United States caused by a global attack, caused by a nuclear attack in our own backyards.

THE STATUS QUO IS NO LONGER ACCEPTABLE

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

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Speaker, with President Bush's veto last week, it is clear that if this Congress is going to take this war in a new direction, we need some of our Republican colleagues to join with us. Unfortunately, it seems that the House Republicans are still willing to blindly follow the President, no matter the facts in Iraq.

Consider this statement from Minority Leader Boehner over the weekend. He said, and I quote, "We want a clean bill. We don't want artificial deadlines. We don't want artificial measures in there to try to ensure failure."

Let's not forget that the artificial measures that the minority leader is referring to were actually measures designed by President Bush himself to hold the Iraqi Government accountable. These are critical measures that will put the pressure on the Iraqi Government to make political, diplomatic and economic reforms. So far, none of these benchmarks have been met.

It is time that the House Republicans realize that the status quo is no longer acceptable to the American people. We have to keep pressure on the Iraqis to initiate these reforms and bring our troops home.

LIBERIAN REFUGEE IMMIGRATION PROTECTION ACT OF 2007

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

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, several years ago, my wife and I had the privilege of having a Liberian refugee stay in our home for almost a year.

This gentleman came from dire circumstances in his homeland, as his wife was brutally assaulted, and he was beaten and forced to leave his country. He still has scars from being beaten with the blunt end of a rifle.

Like thousands of other Liberians forced to leave their homeland, our