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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 26, 2008.

I hereby appoint the Honorable YVETTE D. CLARKE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

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 debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 30 minutes and each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, limited to 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) for 5 minutes.

FREEDOM FOR CUBA IS A WORTHY GOAL

Mr. FLAKE. Madam Speaker, just 2 days ago, we witnessed a transition of power in Cuba. It is no surprise that the new government in Cuba looks a lot like the old. It's time for a get-tough policy on Cuba. It's time to end the isolation that has been both a friend and an enabler to decades of oppression. This isolation has given the Cuban Government a convenient scapegoat for the failure of socialism. We should not give Raul Castro the same

benefits that we gave his brother Fidel. We cannot continue to be the Goliath to their David.

For too long, U.S. policy toward Cuba has missed the island by about 90 miles. Our Cuba policy, under both Republican and Democratic administrations, has been more about Florida than about Cuba, more about securing votes in Miami than securing the right to vote in Havana.

Madam Speaker, we are too great a country than to deny Cuban American families the right to visit family members in Cuba. We are too great a country than to deny our own citizens the right to travel to the island and to give aid and comfort to those who have endured decades of oppression.

Freedom in Cuba is a worthy goal, a goal that would perhaps be more easily achieved if we practice a little more of it ourselves.

SUPPORT FOR PRESIDENT KARZAI

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS) is recognized during morning-hour debate for 1 minute.

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, recently there have been a number of stories in the Western media bashing Afghanistan President Karzai. One in the Washington Post even raised doubts about his anti-Taliban activities before he became President. This is deeply disturbing.

President Karzai has a proven track record of being a very strong ally of the United States and a courageous and visionary leader for his own country. His record of activities against the Taliban are well-known and well-documented. He testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in the year 2000. And in a policymakers' forum, right here in this Capitol building in 1999, he warned us of the dangers of neglecting Afghanistan and the

threat the cruel and brutal Taliban posed to the stability and security of Afghanistan and the region and, indeed, the world.

This rash of articles is perplexing. Karzai is a leader who clearly holds the best chance of leading his country towards lasting peace, unity and democracy. The international community and the United States must continue to support President Karzai.

STEROIDS IN SPORTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) is recognized during morning-hour debate for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, like many of my colleagues, I'm a big sports fan. I have had the opportunity to play sports in high school and in an industrial league. I played it in the Boys Club back in 90-pound football. And I think, like most of us, we understand that the vast majority of stars today were a testament to true hard work. They were determined to succeed and often times under difficult situations. Their performances, victories, records and careers seemed to capture the straightforwardness of honesty, hard work and integrity that is based upon the heart of sports today, at least in the past, the ideal that sports allow success based upon merit, whether it be on the court, the field or the track.

Unfortunately, Madam Speaker, the scourge of steroids and performance-enhancing drugs is not simply a footnote in the history of sports in America. Steroid use goes much deeper, to the basic integrity of sports and all of athletics. At the most fundamental level, steroid use is just plain cheating. And furthermore, it is illegal.

Steroids are classified as a Schedule III controlled substance under the Controlled Substance Act. Those caught in illegal possession of steroids without a

□ 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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prescription face arrest and prosecution. Dealers face a Federal felony charge and up to 5 years in prison.

Furthermore, steroid use involves significant health risks for all athletes who use them. Studies suggest that use of steroids can lead to stunted growth in adolescents, increased risk of heart and liver disease, as well as cancer and hormonal problems for both men and women. And that is why these and other factors demand that our elite athletic organizations, both professional and amateur, establish uniform, world-class drug testing standards that are consistent and robust, just as our criminal laws are today.

However, the most worrisome development is that steroids are not only infiltrating their professional and elite amateur leagues, they are finding their way into middle schools and high school sports programs. In fact, according to the most recent Monitoring for the Future survey, funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse, 3½ percent of high school seniors have used steroids with similar percentages for grades 8–10.

These are alarming numbers that represent just a part of the susceptible youth population that is out there. These estimates suggest that the high school steroid problem is just as great, if not greater, than it is in the professional leagues.

As any parent knows, high school is a trying time for many kids, let alone student athletes. These exceptional kids now face yet another hazard all the way to adulthood, that is trying to claim the safe haven of sports as its next growth market.

We must take an aggressive stand against this plague before these pressures lead young student athletes to use steroids, its destructive effects on honesty and fair play and ultimately, their very health and well-being.

And here and before the Commerce Trade and Consumer Protection Subcommittee last year, which I chaired in the last Congress, we heard testimony from a parent of a young man who tragically took his own life when that pressure to succeed, coupled with steroids, became too much. Unfortunately, these tragic stories are all too common.

Richard Pound, the founder and chair of the World Anti-Doping Agency says, “Do we want our children to be forced to become drug addicts in order to be successful in sports? Like it or not, sports stars are heroes and idols to our kids. Our kids copy their heroes’ behavior. That’s why we have to encourage the stars to be good role models both on and off the field.” Congress must continue to look into the use of illegal steroid and performance enhancing drug use.

Professional leagues have an obligation to be the gold standard with regard to education, detection and sanctions for the illicit use of steroids and other performance-enhancing drugs. The recent scandals in baseball, the

Olympics, professional wrestling and in other professional amateur sports have served to highlight the significance of the steroids problem.

Now, sometimes I’m asked back in the district why I care about drugs in sports. Shouldn’t the athletes perhaps do whatever they want? They are only hurting themselves, is the reply. The use of steroids and performance-enhancing drugs by athletes today goes beyond just the integrity of the sport. By using illegal drugs, athletes are, in effect, telling our children that the only way to be successful and compete at the highest level is to cheat. That is not the message I want our children to hear.

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 41 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until noon.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

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

PRAYER

The Reverend Dr. Adolphus C. Lacey, Mount Olivet Baptist Church, Peekskill, New York, offered the following prayer:

Eternal and all wise God, creator of life and light, we bless You on this day that You have let life and light dwell in each of us. We thank You, O God, for another opportunity to get it right. We pray now for Your discernment for these Representatives as they deliberate on the course of this great Nation. May their thoughts be on the common good and their actions help form a more perfect Union. We pray for strength in the continued sacrifices that each son and daughter, husband and wife make as they send a piece of themselves to serve all of us. May their sacrifices be not in vain. Grant now to each Representative purpose, clarity of mind, determination and commitment, not only for this day, but also in the continuing days of this 110th Congress. Hear our prayer, O God, and grant to each of us Your peace.

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.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. 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. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. 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 Texas (Mr. SMITH) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. SMITH 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.

WELCOMING REV. DR. ADOLPHUS C. LACEY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from New York (Mr. HALL) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. HALL of New York. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to be able to stand here today and thank the Reverend Dr. Adolphus C. Lacey for leading the House of Representatives in prayer today. I am hopeful that his presence and prayer here today will help us in the House to display the same leadership and sense of community that he exhibits every day in the Hudson Valley.

Rev. Lacey came to Mount Olivet Baptist Church in Peekskill, New York, in 2005 to serve as its 14th pastor and has been a leader in the community ever since. He is also president of the Peekskill/Cortlandt area Pastors Association and has been a strong voice in the public sphere for the values that are guided by his faith.

In addition to serving as a religious and community leader, Rev. Lacey is also a family man. He is the husband of Cheryl Mathews Lacey and the father of Cameryn Alexandra and Adolphus Matthew.

I have had the honor of addressing his congregation and been able to see his leadership where his counsel is often sought. I thank him again for leading us in prayer today.

DEMOCRATS FIGHT TO END SUBSIDIES FOR BIG OIL AND INSTEAD SUPPORT RENEWABLE ENERGY

(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, this week the House Democrats will