

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. CLARKE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. FOXX addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

DON'T PANIC AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, this was a historic day. There was a bill in which we had Members who meant well, who had come to this floor and said, look, I understand we all have these principles, and this violates some of our principles, but we need to set those aside in order to avoid risk here. Well, first of all, that is a faulty premise. I just couldn't think of anything but the Declaration of Independence, when the people who founded this place came forward and said the principles of not having the king, not having the Government run everything are too important. And they signed their name where everybody could see, pledging their lives, their fortunes, their sacred honor, saying, "On these principles we will stand or fall."

And I think today the House, by its vote, said we're standing on the same principles. But not only that, these are the principles on which this Nation has become the greatest Nation in the world and the most prosperous. We can't abandon those principles.

So to have a bill that would come before Congress that basically gave the Secretary of the Treasury incredible powers—he was going to be able to bail out any bank in the world with American taxpayer dollars, the only exception was a central bank of a foreign government, but other banks that weren't central banks of other governments could be bailed out. And then, looking at judicial review, as that's my background, it was extraordinary. Nobody was going to be able to object legally and have a chance of prevailing under the standards that were set forth.

So the American people need to hear this message: Don't panic. You saw a Congress bipartisanship come in here and stand on principle and want you to know, don't panic, we are going to address this. We're going to come back, it will take a couple of days, and we'll look at the other solutions. One of them was proposed by the former Chairman of the FDIC and said, look, Paulson wanted \$700 billion of American taxpayer money to buy these

mortgage-based securities that, because the market is frozen, they have no value. And he is going to put a value on there, and it would be either the value, if you do a discounting based on the cash payments made on that mortgage, how regularly they're made, there's a way to get a formula and put a value on there, or you can base it on a discounted value of the underlying property that is securing that mortgage.

And then you have a value. And that's what Secretary Paulson was going to come in and spend to buy these assets with American taxpayer dollars. The FDIC former Chairman said, look, if you will just allow these banks to value these assets, what they're really worth and what Secretary Paulson was willing to come in and pay, then they're not under water, the banks don't fail. Washington Mutual didn't have to fail. And even when it failed, all those people that had money with Washington Mutual, they woke up the next day, they had the same money in the account, it is now under a JP Morgan name. And the same way with Wachovia; all their deposits, as I understand it, they have been purchased, and the people can wake up tomorrow and know they've got all that money, it's just under a different name, in the same amount.

Don't panic. When Roosevelt said, "All we have to fear is fear itself," that is so true right now because this Congress is committed to principle in a bipartisan way. And I appreciate my friend, Ms. KAPTUR, and her diligence in pursuing this. And we've heard some of the same presentations. And we're going to come back with a better bill; and if we don't, we're going to keep doing it until we get it right.

Some of the other proposals were excellent. You know, rather than make American taxpayers buy these things—including in, possibly, foreign countries—why not just say, look, if you will come and buy these assets, you won't have any capital gains on the income you make off of these, that encourages the free market to flow.

We have heard—I was not aware—that there may be hundreds of billions of American dollars in foreign banks. And one idea was, if you say we will allow you to repatriate those hundreds of billions of dollars if you will bring them in, no tax, no penalty, and buy these assets to help things along, that brings America money.

There are all kinds of fantastic ideas. And we are going to be stronger in America if the fearmongering will go away so Americans can use their own judgment and understand that this was a good thing today. Please don't fear, please don't panic. We're going to come back from this stronger, with our principles intact.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MORAN of Kansas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

CONGRESS DID WHAT WAS RIGHT, NOT WHAT WAS FAST

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, in thanking my colleague, Congressman GOHMERT, for all of his efforts to make this institution function in the manner that it was duly constituted to function, I was reminded today, as I was walking through the halls—not expecting the result that was just yielded on that important vote relating to Wall Street—there is a fresco downstairs, and above the door it has this quote, that "Here there are no temples but the Capitol, and no oracle but the Constitution."

No matter how powerful any group is or any set of individuals, our duty is a different one, and that is, to work together across this aisle for the best legislation, the best law making that is humanly possible to serve the people that sent us here, through regular order. And that means hearing from the membership, especially on a matter of such extraordinary magnitude as we were just asked to vote upon.

This is the Congress of the United States, and we are a deliberative body. We are not a military order. There are no generals, and they are not able to command down the ranks. We operate through consensus. And when that process breaks down, we don't produce good legislation and, in turn, do not serve the American people.

On the matter that was before us, I think it's fair to say that most committees that should have met did not. They were discharged of their duties in a strange process that I hope I never see again.

The bill came to the floor with a closed rule. A few Members said to us after the vote, "Well, where is your alternative? If you don't like this, where is your alternative?" And our answer was, we had alternatives, but we were summarily denied the ability to present them through regular order. There was no reason to go to the Rules Committee, as it was a closed rule. We were not allowed to invite witnesses—and many of us asked, it's not like we didn't try. But let the record be very clear, Members were not able to testify, and therefore, we were not able to glean the best intelligence from our country as this bill moved forward.

"There is no temple but the Capitol, and no oracle but the Constitution." I really believe this Congress met its duty, its sworn obligation today in this truly historic vote. We have a lot of work to do. And I think one thing happened today that is actually very good for the Republic, and that is, whatever artificial line may exist down that middle aisle, I think it crumbled, and

there is a new working energy inside this institution to do what should have been done in the first place.

Now, we have respect for our leadership, and we have respect for the President of the United States. And whatever was presented a few weeks ago that had to be acted upon with such urgency, we are willing to remain and to reconstitute ourselves and to exercise the duties of the office to which we have been elected as our constitution demands.

People don't have to be fearful, Wall Street doesn't have to be worried, we can take care of this. If we look to some of the institutions that have run up into a little trouble these last few weeks, we've seen what the FDIC has done. The insurance programs are working. Savings deposits are safe in our institutions. One can argue whether we should increase the FDIC-insured rate over \$100,000 per depositor, but if we do this right, we can really give strength back to our credit markets because this is not a liquidity crisis, this is a credit crisis related to accounting standards.

We can hear from the best accountants in America. That should have been done. They could have helped us work through this; they were not given voice. We can take a look at the housing crisis, its foreclosure crisis—which is at the heart of the credit seize-up—because we have markets that aren't working there, we have a lot of empty properties, people being foreclosed. There was nothing in this legislation that would do workouts at the local level. Why didn't the Federal Reserve, you know, and the administration, they wanted all this money, but they didn't want money to help Main Street bankers and mortgage holders and families try to work out loans at the local level where we can save people in their homes. My goodness.

These are issues America has dealt with before. There should be calm across the country. The Congress has made a decision, and I believe that we will present a better bill in a very short period of time.

I thank you, Madam Speaker. And what a joy it was to work with Members on both sides of the aisle to do what was right, not what was fast.

□ 1515

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

EATONTON BICENTENNIAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Georgia. Madam Speaker, for over 200 years, Eatonton,

Georgia, has served as the seat of Putnam County and has continuously reflected the American spirit and ideals.

Both town and county were named after American patriots. Israel Putnam was a hero of Bunker Hill, and William Eaton was a famous officer and a diplomat during the First Barbary War.

Eatonton is a gorgeous town with patriotic people, beautiful homes, historic churches, and a magnificent courthouse. Sitting on the famous courthouse square, there's a statue of Brer Rabbit, the central figure of the Uncle Remus stories, which pays tribute to great literary contributions and cultural preservation.

Just outside of Eatonton is St. Paul's Methodist Church, which is over a century old and sits near Rockville Academy, the State's first consolidated rural school. Many generations have used this historic church to worship God, and many individuals have come to know His saving grace within its walls.

There are many Antebellum and Victorian-era homes within Eatonton that survived the war between the States. When General Sherman conducted his destructive "March to the Sea" during that great war, he bypassed Eatonton and left its beautiful homes untouched. Now visitors to the town have the opportunity to see grand American architecture of long ago.

The sons and daughters of Eatonton have served, fought, and died for their country for over two centuries. Every single time America has called upon its citizens for help, the residents of Eatonton have answered. They have served in the armed services, and, during the Civil War, they cared for the wounded on both sides of the conflict.

There are many famous people from Eatonton, but some of the best known are Alice Walker, author of "The Color of Purple"; Vincent Hancock, a recent Olympic Gold Medalist in shooting; and Truett Cathy, founder of Chick-fil-A. These great Americans are products of Eatonton's two proud centuries of history, culture, and religion.

As Eatonton celebrates a great milestone in historic history, I applaud its historical accomplishments. I thank God for its prosperity, and I pray that He, God, will continue to bless this great American town.

Madam Speaker, on another topic, today we did have a historic vote. I encourage our leaders on both sides to listen to Mr. William Isaac, the former Chairman of the FDIC. Democrats and Republicans alike have come to the floor and talked about his perspective solution to this problem we have in our credit crunch.

There are other solutions. Congressman JEB HENSARLING introduced a bill, and I am proud to be a cosponsor of that bill. I'm sure my colleagues on the other side have other alternatives too that they would like to introduce.

But I hope we will bring forward a simple bill that this House produces, as constitutionally we are supposed to,

and then we won't let Mr. Paulson bully us, as he did, to demand his product that we just tweaked around the edges.

Madam Speaker, this bill was a bad one, and that's the reason it went down in defeat. We were offered a little marshmallow of sweetness to put in the bill, but the bill itself was a cow patty with a marshmallow in the middle. And, Madam Speaker, I'm not going to eat this cow patty even though it has a marshmallow in the middle, and many other of our colleagues also refuse to eat it.

We need to have a bill that's simple, that eliminates capital gains for 2 years, that cuts out the mark-to-market accounting that the SEC and Mr. Paulson demand, one that will give insurance to those banking institutions so that they can insure the securities that they have that are mortgaged based, and not have anything else.

And I hope our leaders will bring forth a very simple bill that our colleagues on the Democratic side and my colleagues on the Republican side can put forward and that we can pass in the next few days that will solve this crisis that we have in America and bring us to financial security in this Nation, and I call upon our leaders to do so.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

SECRETARY PAULSON'S BAILOUT PLAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Madam Speaker, just a week ago, Secretary Paulson sent an insult down to Congress, an insult to the American people, an insult to the Constitution, an insult ultimately to the economy of the United States. He sent down a bill that said, in 3 pages, give me \$700 billion and suspend all the laws, and I will do with it as I see fit and I will fix this problem.

Now, one problem with that is, of course, Mr. Paulson reigned as the head of Goldman Sachs while these financial weapons of mass destruction were being created, and he amassed tremendous wealth, taking a bonus of \$39 million in 1 year, accumulating \$750 million when he left Wall Street to go into public service. So people would say, oh, that's just Hank, he's a tough negotiator. That was an absurdity. And it's based on a premise that if the American tax borrows money, \$700 billion, and we take their junk—some pundits called it "cash for trash"—that somehow this would create liquidity on Wall Street and then from there it would ultimately trickle down to Main