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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. BROOKS).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC.,
November 30, 2011.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MO BROOKS to act as speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2011, 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 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

THANKING GOD FOR HIS MANY BLESSINGS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. DUNCAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, this past weekend I joined millions of Americans in celebrating Thanksgiving with friends and family. As Americans, each of us has so much to be thankful for this holiday season.

America is the greatest, most free country in the history of the world. As a Nation, we can do anything we set out to accomplish. We have built the world's most free and successful Repub-

lic right here in America. We've used innovation to cure disease, fight hunger, and spread the message of freedom all across the globe.

We've changed the way societies interact by inventing things like the telephone, the automobile, and the airplane. We've built some of the finest schools and universities in the history of the planet. We've changed our world for the better, but none of it would have been possible without the grace and blessing of our Almighty God.

That's why I was both surprised and disappointed that President Obama failed to make a single reference to God during his Thanksgiving address to the Nation. Since the President has a history of doing this sort of thing, it's hard to believe that this was simply an oversight on his part. Perhaps this glaring omission was an attempt at being politically correct. But regardless of the intention, there is no excuse for once again leaving out the One on whom the foundation of our liberties rest.

What did our Founding Fathers say in the Declaration of Independence? Not that our rights come from governments, but rather that our rights come directly from God.

As the Apostle Paul said, "In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

We should never pass up an opportunity to thank the Lord for the blessings he has bestowed upon our great Nation.

I know the specter of political correctness looms over our country more than ever before. There's a lot of pressure from elements within our society to censor public comments about faith in Jesus Christ. Groups like the ACLU seek to drive God out of our schools and our classrooms. Universities are discouraged from praying before graduation and athletic events.

Some shopping malls and radio stations would rather play Christmas

music only about Santa Claus, and never mention the reason for the season, Jesus Christ. Seeking guidance from the Lord through prayer and thanking Him for the blessings He has given our Nation is something our country should do more of, not less.

Praying and giving thanks to God for all blessing was the example set for us by the first settlers who came to America for religious freedom. Times were tough for them. They endured bitterly cold winters, food shortages, and plagues. The early settlers faced insurmountable odds, but they kept the faith, persevered, and later thrived, leading to the formation of this great Nation.

General George Washington, who went on to become our first President, was known for frequently stopping whatever he was doing and getting down on one knee to seek guidance from the Lord, and to praise Him for the blessings that were given his troops.

Here in this building there's a chapel where Members of Congress can go to pray for our country. And in that chapel there is a beautiful stained glass window, depicting our first President, George Washington, in his colonial uniform, frozen, kneeling in prayer. That chapel should be a reminder for all of us that our country's faith should be nothing to hide, but rather something to embrace and protect. And that image of George Washington in prayer should be a reminder that our leaders need to seek wisdom of the Lord whenever possible.

For the past several weeks, former Heisman Trophy winner and current starting quarterback of the Denver Broncos, Tim Tebow, has come under fire for publicly professing his faith. Facing mounting criticism from the media, from sports commentators, and even some of his own teammates, Tim Tebow gave the following response to

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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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reporters, a response that I believe perfectly explains how our country should recognize God.

Quarterback Tebow said this: "If you're married and you really love your wife, is it good enough only to say to your wife 'I love her' the day you get married? Or should you tell her every single day when you wake up and every opportunity?"

"My relationship with Jesus Christ is the most important thing in my life. So any time I get the opportunity to tell Him that I love Him, or given the opportunity to shout Him out on national TV, I'm going to take that opportunity. And so I look at it as a relationship that I have with Him that I want to give Him the honor and the glory any time I have the opportunity."

Tim Tebow's brave comments are an excellent reminder that we need to look for every opportunity to thank the Lord for our blessings of liberty that He's bestowed upon this great country.

May God forgive this Nation of its sins, may He overlook the times we forget to thank Him for His gifts, may our people turn to Him for guidance and salvation, and may He continue to bless the United States of America.

EQUITY IN TAXATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WEBSTER). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, it's a sign of maturity to be able to retain two different but related concepts in your head at the same time. For instance, taxes should not be raised on the majority of working Americans while the economy is in this very difficult situation. But a little more can reasonably be paid by those who are extremely well off.

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The simple fact is that our economy and our families cannot afford to take the economic hit that is poised to pull a hundred billion dollars out of the economy with the expiration of the 2 percent payroll tax holiday that's scheduled to expire this year.

There is currently a proposal that's being debated in the other body that I hope we'll have the opportunity to vote on here to be able to extend and expand the payroll tax cut and to pay for it.

Under this proposal, employees would receive a 50 percent additional cut in the payroll tax, cutting it essentially in half, and employers would have a reduction in the payroll tax that they pay on their employees up to the first \$5 million of payroll. This would help 98 percent of businesses but not give unnecessary giveaways to large and profitable organizations, and, most importantly, it would prevent the typical family from suffering a significant increase in their taxes while the economy is still fragile. This proposal

would give the average family \$1,500 a year extra to spend. You would think that people ought to be able to corollate those two concepts.

The way that this would be financed is a small surtax on not just rich, but superrich people. These are folks who make over a million dollars a year, and they would just pay the surtax on that amount that they earn over the million dollar threshold. It's far less than the 1 percent that we are hearing argued about. They would still pay lower Bush-era tax rates on the first million, and those that have extensive investment income, which most of them do, would still benefit from those lower rates.

Unfortunately, we find people here who are caught up in an ideology that trumps concern for the economy and the typical American family. It was this refusal to consider a balanced approach that is supported by the vast majority of the public that led to the collapse of the so-called supercommittee. Americans were and are ready for action that is bold, big, balanced and fair.

Now, we actually can start on the road of recovery just by going on autopilot. The default that is set up that will let the Bush-era tax cuts expire unless Congress does something and moving towards automatic sequestration will actually solve most of the deficit problem that we face just by doing nothing.

But we can do better than nothing. We can adjust. We can craft. We can focus it to get the most benefit. And we can start with a modest adjustment.

I hope my colleagues will not let the worship of the top one-tenth of a percent of the economic pyramid trump concerns for the rest of working families and the American economy.

HAMESH KHAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BROOKS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROOKS. Aslum Hamayun lives in Alabama's Fifth Congressional District. He is a father who loves and cares very much about his son, Hamesh Khan. At Mr. Hamayun's request, let me share with you and the American people the plight of Mr. Hamayun's son, Hamesh Khan.

Mr. Khan is an American citizen who, thanks to the Obama administration and the United States Government, has been wrongfully held for over a year and a half in Pakistan prisons without indictment for a specific crime or trial. This is Hamesh Khan's story.

Mr. Khan has lived in America since he was 10 years old. Mr. Khan earned a bachelor's and two master's degrees from Georgia Southern University. Following graduation, Mr. Khan worked for Citibank in Pakistan. In 2003, the Musharraf government appointed Mr. Khan to head Pakistan's Punjab Bank.

Unfortunately for Mr. Khan, the Musharraf government fell in April

2008. As seems to be so often the case in the world, a new government regime meant that appointees of the past regime risked trouble. In American citizen Hamesh Khan's case, the new Punjab government issued an arrest warrant on suspicion of corruption and corrupt practices. Let me emphasize that point, on suspicion of corruption and corrupt practices.

Fearing politically motivated reprisals, Mr. Khan fled Pakistan for his home, America. Thereafter, Pakistan sought extradition of Mr. Khan pursuant to the arrest warrant for suspicion of corruption and corrupt practices.

Let me be clear on this point. Three parties are involved in this tragedy: a new Pakistani regime; President Obama and the United States Government; and Hamesh Khan, an American citizen.

The United States had to decide whom to support: Pakistan or an American citizen. The Obama administration chose Pakistan over its own American citizen. Mr. Speaker, it would be wonderful to know why the Obama administration made that decision.

In any event, on December 10, 2009, Mr. Khan was arrested by United States marshals in his office in Washington, D.C., and held without bond for 5 months. Remarkably, persons in Mr. Khan's position are barred from fully defending themselves at extradition hearings. For example, Mr. Khan was barred from presenting evidence to impeach the allegations against him. Mr. Khan fought extradition until it became clear that the severe evidentiary limitations made it impossible for him to defend himself.

On May 13, 2010, the United States Government forcefully handed Mr. Khan over to Pakistani authorities at John F. Kennedy Airport in New York. Mr. Khan was bound in handcuffs and leg chains. With the Obama administration's historic act, Hamesh Khan became the first American citizen ever extradited to Pakistan. The one concession the United States State Department received from the new Pakistani regime was a promise that Mr. Khan would be fairly treated under Pakistani law.

While anyone hearing this story can suspect political motivations for the prosecution of Mr. Khan by Pakistani authorities, I am not in a position to make a judgment on that issue. But I am in a position to make a judgment about our United States Government and its responsibility to protect American citizens.

Whether he is innocent or guilty of the charges by Pakistani authorities, Hamesh Khan has not been served justice. Under Pakistani law, after arrest for suspicion, Pakistan's National Accountability Bureau can hold a person for up to 3 months without bail. Within that 3 months, Pakistan's National Accountability Bureau must either indict a held person for specific crimes for trial or order his release; yet it is now