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House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
July 28, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable GEORGE HOLDING 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 7, 2014, 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, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

ENDING THE FEDERAL BAN ON MARIJUANA

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, The New York Times produced a carefully balanced rationale for ending the Federal ban on marijuana. In more than 40 years, this failed attempt at prohibition has been hopelessly out of step.

The Times editorial points out the fallacy the as States marching toward decriminalization, medical marijuana,

and adult use, the Federal Government maintains its schizophrenic posture, pretending that marijuana is as dangerous—as heroin or LSD, worse than cocaine or methamphetamine.

While the current administration has been somewhat tolerant of the actions that have taken place in three-quarters of our States that are acting to decriminalize, authorize medical marijuana, and, more recently, in Colorado and Washington State, to legalize adult use, there is no guarantee that future administrations will have a lighter touch.

That is wrong. As the Times and others have pointed out, there are significant financial costs and huge human costs of this failed experiment in prohibition which, falls disproportionately on young men of color, especially African Americans.

The Times readily acknowledged that this issue has troubling aspects. We have all struggled, as a society, to deal with drugs, legal and illegal. Addiction to cigarettes and alcohol, prescription drugs and narcotics extracts a heavy toll.

We are all deeply concerned about the impact that marijuana and other dangerous substances have on young people. This is particularly a problem dealing with the development of the young brain affected by marijuana use.

While this clearly can have serious consequences, so, too, there are horrific costs associated with alcohol and tobacco, to say nothing of other illegal drugs. We, as a society, have struggled with these challenges, but we have actually had some measure of success with controlling use of cigarettes and alcohol.

The use by adults of tobacco has declined two-thirds in a generation. There is no reason to think we can't do the same for marijuana if we act rationally.

As a practical matter, the current system doesn't accomplish keeping it

out of the hands of children, while it does inflict that real damage on casual users and those young men of color.

Currently, there is a vast illegal network that supplies the public and children with marijuana. No one checks ID. There is no business license to use.

For those of us working to reform our flawed marijuana laws, the Times editorial marks a significant milestone, joining other publications and organizations arguing for a new approach. It comes while we in Oregon, which was the first State to decriminalize marijuana, will vote this fall to become the third State to legalize adult use.

The Times editorial and the promise of more discussion in the paper joins with other editorial pages across the country. The Portland Oregonian had a particularly thoughtful and very positive editorial just the day before, on Saturday, the 26th of July, talking about the opportunities in our State for legalization.

The Nation's editorial pages are playing a constructive role in promoting a broad, nuanced, careful discussion of the marijuana policy, its failure, and the alternatives. Here in Congress we have started the discussion and have seen growing awareness among significant floor action that slightly reduces the outmoded and illogical restrictions.

It is time for the administration and Congress to elevate this discussion to keep pace with what is going on with opinion leaders like the Nation's editorial writers and the march towards rational policy that is taking place in States across America.

It is not too late for this Congress to make constructive contributions. We have several opportunities: the cultivation of industrial hemp; changing banking regulations so we don't force legal marijuana businesses to be all cash; tax equity; and protecting medical marijuana from heavy-handed Federal interference.

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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The recent positive votes in Congress suggest that more progress is possible before we adjourn.

CHRISTIANITY IS BEING ERADICATED IN IRAQ

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

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, another Sunday has come and gone without mass being said in Mosul.

There is no doubt about it; religious cleansing is continuing to occur in Iraq. The churches have been seized and some turned into mosques. Every trace of Christianity is being eradicated in Iraq. The Christians' property has been seized, looted, and given to others.

Canon Andrew White, the vicar of the only Anglican church in Baghdad, Iraq, recently stated, "Things are so desperate, our people are disappearing. We have had our people massacred, their heads chopped off. Are we seeing the end of Christianity? We are committed," he said, "come what may, we will keep going to the end, but it looks as though the end could be near."

Vicar White, continuing, said, "The Christians are in grave danger. They are literally living in the desert and on the street. They have nowhere to go."

The question remains: What should the world be doing to help the Christians and other religious minorities in Iraq?

The administration has taken a small step, although it needs to do much more. The President of the United States needs to speak out on this issue.

This morning, after a 9-month vacancy, the White House announced the nomination of Rabbi David Saperstein to be the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom. Rabbi Saperstein is well-respected on these matters and has been engaged on this issue for a long time. I welcome this nomination. It is a good nomination, and I ask the Senate to confirm Rabbi Saperstein quickly.

On Friday, the House passed legislation that creates the position of Special Envoy for Religious Minorities in the Middle East and South Central Asia. This was bipartisan legislation that was introduced by Congresswoman ANNA ESHOO and myself. Our office worked closely with our former colleague, Senator ROY BLUNT.

I call on the President to sign this bill quickly and to fill this position as quickly as possible. Time is of the essence. We cannot afford to wait any longer. Christianity, as we now know it, is being wiped out before our very eyes in Iraq.

23 IN 1—KERMIT

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

Mr. GALLEGOS. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to continue the journey

through the 23rd District of Texas and talk about Kermit, Texas, which many people know as being one of the communities in the center of all of the action with respect to the energy economy in Texas, but I know it as the home of the Yellow Jackets, the Yellow Jackets who, for years, have been a formidable foe for my own Alpine Bucks.

Kermit started life, the town started as a local trading and supply company, or trading and supply depot, for the ranches that dotted the west Texas landscape. Kermit gets its name not from a notable green frog known for being the first frog to communicate with humans, but, instead, it gets its name from Kermit Roosevelt, the only place in the United States that is named for the son of a former U.S. President, Teddy Roosevelt.

Kermit, Texas, became the county seat of Winkler County in 1910 and was a city, like many of the other rural communities in Texas, that had a challenge staying alive.

Small towns have always had a particular challenge, and in Kermit's case, they were devastated by a drought that struck the area in 1916 that forced many homesteaders and ranchers to leave. Kermit ran dry by 1924, and the Ern Baird family was the sole family in town, with three houses, a single-student school, and a lone courthouse.

The whole town nearly evaporated into the air until that sea of oil was discovered below the surface and, in 1926, Kermit, Texas, became a boomtown. That boomtown continued into the sixties, and through the boom, the town has seen tremendous growth.

During the rapid expansion of the city, flooding actually became a problem. As with small towns that are scattered throughout rural Texas, they worked through that problem to a solution. They constructed crown streets, and the city kept growing and building additional infrastructure to support the oil boom and the growing needs of their county.

Kermit, Texas, although small in size, has displayed that same attitude reflected in many of the successes of our great Nation. They work through tough situations with creativity and resolve, and, as a result, we as a nation greatly benefit from their willingness to stick through it.

Kermit, Texas, and those who worked and lived and raised families there, they have all contributed to our energy security. They have all contributed to the energy security of our entire country. Without them, it would have been difficult to meet the energy demands of World War II and, after the war, the economic boom that the U.S. would experience.

Even today, Kermit is a mainstay of the west Texas economy, an active chamber, an active community, a wonderful place to live and to raise kids, and, of course, the ever-proud Yellow Jackets.

If you find yourself near Kermit, Texas, I invite you to visit this small

and historic town that has contributed so much so greatly to our Texas values, our Texas history, and our Texas success, Kermit, Texas.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF DR. JIM FULGHUM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WOLF). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize North Carolina Representative Dr. Jim Fulghum, who recently passed away after a brief but courageous battle with cancer.

A lifelong resident of Raleigh, Jim attended Broughton High School and married his high school sweetheart, Mary Susan. They both received their medical degrees at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and Mary Susan continues to serve the Raleigh community as a doctor, as Jim did for so many years.

I want to commemorate Jim for all he contributed to the field of medicine, the city of Raleigh, North Carolina, and our country. Jim was a world-renowned neurosurgeon, served his country in the gulf war, and later went on to serve in the North Carolina State Legislature.

Jim was truly a great American, a good friend of mine, and a mentor to me and so many others that he came in contact with. As a member of the North Carolina House of Representatives, Jim was an exemplary statesman on behalf of his constituents. He was a compassionate man and touched the lives of many.

Throughout Jim's life, he tirelessly offered his services to the community. He was involved in numerous organizations in the State, including Edenton Street United Methodist Church, where he was active throughout his life.

Mr. Speaker, Jim served his community with great honor and distinction, and North Carolina mourns his passing. My thoughts and prayers are with Jim's wife of 47 years, Mary Susan, and the rest of his family: Emily, Molly, Patrick, Jens; his sisters Peggy, Mary Anne, and Ruth; and his two grandchildren, Margaret and Kirk.

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 12 o'clock and 14 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING) at 2 p.m.