

10 years if we effectively could target waste, fraud, and abuse.

Mr. Speaker, our constituents are expecting fiscal restraint. They understand that concept much better, it seems, than even the Federal Government. They understand it from both a business and an individual family standpoint. The recession forced Americans to curb their spending at home. Businesses curbed their spending to hold down costs. They understood that ever over-spending would result in severe problems in the future.

Short-term deficits will not harm our economy. In fact, our economy is improving. However, if we continue to follow an alarming increase in Federal spending, the government will be faced with much more difficult choices in the future and with much more dire consequences.

We must, Mr. Speaker, maintain fiscal discipline and hold down this Federal spending.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 46 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

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

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Over the weekend, Jews of this country again kept holy the Sabbath, Christians celebrated their discipleship in Jesus, and Muslims began the great fast and spiritual renewal of Ramadan.

Lord God, we rejoice in oneness of Abrahamic faith as it finds living expression in our time across this country. In our pluralistic society, help us, Lord, to respect one another and come to a deeper understanding of each other.

By your living Spirit, You can awaken in all our hearts new insights born of our religious traditions that will enlighten the issues of life and justice which confound us.

Enable us to walk by faith into the future. Guide our President and the Members of Congress, that in them faith, loving compassion, and the commitment to justice will bring light and hope to an uncertain world. We rely on You, O Lord, now and forever. 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 South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina 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 THE ROMANIAN PRESIDENT TO AMERICA

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome Romanian President Ion Iliescu to Washington, and I look forward to personally meeting him tonight. He is meeting with President Bush, Secretary of State Colin Powell, and other American officials during his trip.

President Iliescu's Romania has become one of America's greatest allies on the war on terrorism, standing side by side with the United States in Afghanistan and now in Iraq. In what is a truly multinational effort, at least 600 Romanian troops are in Iraq working with American forces and military from at least 27 other nations.

The Romanian people have a clear understanding of what is at risk in the war on terrorism, as they have a fresh perspective on freedom and liberty. They also know the importance of redevelopment in Iraq, as they have rebuilt their own country over top of the rubble of the former dictator Ceausescu's regime, emerging from communist totalitarianism into new candidacy for NATO membership.

I join all my colleagues in welcoming a true friend, Romanian President Ion Iliescu, to America.

In conclusion, God bless our troops.

HOUSE LEADERSHIP BLOCKING ARMED FORCES TAX FAIRNESS ACT

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

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, it is shameful that the House Republican leadership has passed a \$230,000 tax break this year for people making over \$1 million in dividend income, but that same leadership has bottled up for 7 months the Armed Forces Tax Fairness Act.

The House and Senate passed this bill unanimously in March. It seems the House Republican leadership objects to the fact that the Senate paid for the bill by closing the egregious tax loophole that lets Benedict Arnolds re-

nounce their American citizenship in order to avoid paying American taxes.

It is outrageous that the Speaker of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT), and the majority leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), seem to be more interested in protecting the Benedict Arnolds who turn their backs on America than helping patriotic Americans who are fighting for our country in time of war.

It is insulting that the House leadership says today that we have time to rename three post offices in bills today, but they do not have time to schedule a final vote on the Armed Forces Tax Fairness Act. I believe military families and veterans all across America will be deeply offended if Congress finishes its work this year without passing the Armed Forces Tax Fairness Act.

FAILURE IS NOT AN OPTION

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

Ms. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, this House continues to conduct an essential debate over our Nation's policy in Iraq. Nevertheless, meeting the Iraqi people and hearing their story firsthand invoked an old adage with respect to those who offer armchair criticism: talk is cheap.

In the aftermath of the first Gulf War 12 years ago, we encouraged the Iraqi people to rise up against their brutal dictator. Then we left them to Saddam's murderous designs. While this decision may have made sense in terms of U.N. resolutions and international opinion, it amounted to a betrayal of the Iraqi people.

The blood, sacrifice, and heroism of our troops over the last 7 months have once again forged a bond of trust. In the faces of the Iraqis with whom I met, I witnessed a new hope that has not only demonstrated the success of our plan; it testified to the justice of our cause.

Mr. Speaker, regardless of one's opinion about the rationale for this war, one truth remains: to turn back now, to betray the Iraqi people once again will only embolden the terrorists. Let us not debate whether we will produce a free prosperous and peaceful Iraq. Failure is not an option.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken after 6:30 p.m. today.