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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 17, 2019.

I hereby appoint the Honorable SCOTT H. PETERS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2019, 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. All time shall be equally allocated between the parties, and in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m. Each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, shall be limited to 5 minutes.

COMMEMORATING CONSTITUTION DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, when our country was founded, the idea of a democratic republic was not foreign; it was nonexistent. Besides intermittent cooperation to win independence, the Colonies had no sense of unity, and being American had little meaning. Few citizens could have realized the amount of sacrifice needed

to write and ratify a document to unite them all.

Our Constitution truly is a miracle. Aside from its genius, its history helps us appreciate the blessing it is. Our colleague, Congressman CHRIS STEWART, and Judge Ted Stewart wrote a wonderful book, "Seven Miracles That Saved America." In it, they offer three reasons to believe God had a hand in the crafting of the Constitution.

For the remainder of my time today on Constitution Day, I would like to quote them.

"One, Timing. The window of opportunity for the writing and ratification of the Constitution was very small. Every effort to make the Articles of Confederation workable between 1776 and 1787 had already failed. But then suddenly, in May of 1787, a group of 55 patriots came together with both the wisdom of the ages and enough youth to energetically fight for the ratification of the Constitution.

"Any attempt to create a constitution later than 1787 would have almost certainly resulted in failure as well. Just 2 years after the Convention finished its work, France became embroiled in its own revolution, which lasted a full decade and degenerated into a bloody, violent affair.

"Surely, this example of failure would have frightened the Founding Fathers, giving them reason to think very differently about the degree of power to be retained by 'the people.'

"Making matters worse was the fact that the Founders split into two distinct political camps in the years that immediately followed the Convention. Had the Constitutional Convention been called just a few years later than 1787, many of these men would have been unwilling to stand together. And without their input, the Convention would never have had a chance of success.

"Two, Miraculous Compromise. The second way in which the Constitution

is demonstrably a miracle is the manner in which it came about.

"During the course of the Convention, every delegate had to give up on some cherished principle.

"James Madison, who had come to the Convention more prepared than anyone and was primarily responsible for the general outline of the government established by the Constitution, lost on many issues. Most dear to him was his belief that the House and the Senate should be based on proportional representation.

"Franklin wanted an executive council voted for life, rather than a single executive. He did not want the chief executive to have the power of the veto. He did not want anyone in the executive position to receive a salary. He lost on all counts.

"But during the course of the 560 roll calls, no man lost every time, and everyone was part of a winning vote on some occasion. These men of social stature, political and business success—'demigods' all—swallowed their pride, accepted defeat of personal agendas, and went forth and convinced a nation to accept the product of the Convention.

"Three, 4,400 Miraculous Words. Perhaps the greatest miracle of the Constitution is the document itself. In essence, the Constitution has had only 13 substantive amendments in over 200 years.

"History has proven that the Constitution creates a system that defies despotism and tyranny.

"How was it able to do this? Primarily through the underlying premise, part of Madison's gift to the world, that the Constitution comes from the people. Madison coined the phrase 'We the People.' These words are far more than a clever phrase. They restate the principle, first asserted in the Declaration of Independence, that God gives man rights and the only legitimate purpose of government is to protect those rights.

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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