

## PRAYER

The Chaplain Rev. James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

We pray, O God, for the spiritual virtues that are the gift of Your hand and the promise of Your word. For faith to reach beyond the usual barriers of time and space, we offer our thanksgiving; for hope to see Your assurances and to claim Your promises, we offer our praise; for love to know fulfillment of all our endeavors and to relate to others in freedom and trust, we offer our adoration. May these gifts, gracious God, be on our lips and written in our hearts that we will be filled with Your gifts and enjoy Your peace that passes all human understanding. In Your name, we pray. Amen.

## THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. 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. Will the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. TRAFICANT] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. TRAFICANT 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.

## ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. There will be 15 minutes on each side.

## AN ABSENCE OF LEADERSHIP FROM THE WHITE HOUSE

(Mr. HOKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, Thomas Jefferson said, "We should consider ourselves unauthorized to saddle posterity with our debts, and morally bound to pay them ourselves." And yet—

At the end of Friday, the national debt stood at \$4,859,130,968,274 and 89 cents, an increase of roughly \$2.3 billion from the day before.

The debt burden for each individual American, including those babies born over the weekend, now stands at \$18,537 and 2 cents.

In the time it takes me to finish this short 1-minute speech, the national debt will have increased by another \$1,597,222 and 20 cents.

Despite the financial and moral imperative to act, President Clinton has failed to demonstrate even the slightest interest in this matter.

It has been 75 days since we challenged the President to present his plan to balance the budget and 19 days since we asked him to help us help fix Medicare.

In the absence of leadership from the White House, Republicans have offered a blueprint to balance the budget by 2002 so that our children will have a future free from debt and a standard of living better than our own.

Mr. President, where is your plan. We are still waiting.

## MEDICARE TAX CUT

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

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, the Republicans have now unveiled their slash-for-cash budget.

The Republicans will slash Medicare by nearly \$300 billion to get the cash for a tax cut of that same amount.

How?

It's simple.

If you are a senior citizen, you will just have to cough up about \$3,500 in out-of-pocket costs to pay for Medicare cuts.

Then, the top 1 percent of the wealthiest American families can rake in over \$20,000 each in tax cuts.

See? Simple. Slash for cash.

In fact, the Republicans could make the whole process much simpler.

With this handy envelope.

Elderly Americans—those who guided us out of a depression and through a world war, those who educated us, fed us and led us—you just put your money in here.

Then send it off to the wealthy, in care of the Republican Party, here inside the beltway.

But, look at the bright side.

If the Republicans are feeling generous, maybe they will kick in for the stamps so that you seniors can send in your money.

## NO WHITE HOUSE LEADERSHIP ON SAVING MEDICARE

(Mr. BOEHNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, this January, Mexico was near bankruptcy, and the Clinton administration mounted a furious effort to save it.

He might have been misguided or wrong. But at least he had the courage to be a leader.

Where is the President now that Medicare is on the same path to bankruptcy as Mexico?

He has made no proposals to save Medicare, even though his own Cabinet officials say it is going bankrupt.

He is not even willing to negotiate with Republicans who are trying to save it.

Mr. Speaker, the President is willing to save Mexico, but not the millions of senior citizens who rely on Medicare.

## THE BUDGET

(Mrs. SCHROEDER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, we have now seen a new kind of socialism introduced in this new budget. It is called socialism for the rich. You cut the middle class so you can cut the richest's taxes. Yes, everybody gets cuts, but there is a big difference between a tax cut that equals \$20,000 a year for people making over \$200,000 a year and the cuts that are going to come to the middle class, which means the average family is going to be straining to help mom and dad pay the additional Medicare costs, the kids paying additional student loan costs, kids paying additional school lunch costs.

I do not think this is fair. I think the polls today show the Americans have figured it out. They do not think it is fair either. Let us go after some of those pet rocks in the budget that will put this budget in balance. We need it in balance, but not on the backs of the middle class so the fat cats can get one more tax break.

## HISTORY

(Mrs. SEASTRAND asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Mr. Speaker, we are on the verge of making history. For the first time since my 25-year-old son was born, Congress actually has a plan to balance the Federal budget. We made a promise to balance the budget and protect Social Security. We kept that promise. We made a promise to save Medicare from bankruptcy, and we are keeping that promise to preserve, protect and improve Medicare. This week we will vote on our plan to balance the budget and save the future for our children.

While we are making history, where is President Clinton? He is defending the status quo over change and defending big government over local solutions. That is not leadership, and that is ignoring a crisis and turning your back on the next generation.

We have several choices: savings Medicare or allowing the problem to become a crisis; giving the next generation the family farm or simply handing them the mortgage; putting the Federal Government on a sensible diet or allowing big government to eat Twinkies off the taxpayer's plate.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to consider history this week and vote with me to provide opportunity for the next generation.

## THE EPA AND SAN DIEGO

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

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, check this out. A Mexican spokesman said,