

WELCOMING CONGRESSMAN
MEEKS

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

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, many of us have the great task of succeeding Members of the House of Representatives that have left, as Reverend and Congressman Floyd Flake has, but indeed, the strong keep coming, and we are so fortunate that a young man a few years back was born in East Harlem, saw fit to go to Queens, got his training there, became an administrative judge for workmen's compensation, and then joined the great legislature of the State of New York in the New York State Assembly. And as I look in front of me, it looks like there is hardly a Member of the New York delegation in our Congress that did not serve in our State legislature.

Having served there for 6 years and working hard each and every day, he was selected by the African-Americans, as well as the Puerto Rican Hispanic Members of that group to head up the Black and Hispanic Caucus. He has worked hard, he has got two lovely daughters that are here with his wife, Simone-Marie. His brothers and his family are here to support him as they were during the great election that with more than a half a dozen candidates, he came through with 57 percent of that vote.

At this time I would like to yield to a senior member, the senior Republican Member of our delegation, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN).

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, Chairman RANGEL, serving as the chair of our New York delegation, and my colleagues of the New York delegation, and all of our colleagues, we are so pleased to be able to welcome Mr. MEEKS to the Congress.

Our retired colleague, Floyd Flake, amassed a distinguished record of congressional service. His dedication in fighting for the concerns of his 6th District, his patriotism, his hard work are a testament to the leadership that he displayed, and while Congressman Flake leaves his shoes to fill, his successor seems to me to be able to come with a great potential to do just that.

GREGORY MEEKS comes to the Congress after already having had a distinguished career in public service, graduating from Howard University Law School. He joined the Queens County District Attorney's Office, was quickly promoted to the Office of Special Narcotics Prosecutor, something Mr. RANGEL and I have been working on for a number of years in our battle against drugs. We are pleased to welcome a legislator with the experience and determination in fighting the war on drugs. Congressman MEEKS, I know while he was serving on the New York State Commission on Investigation, directed criminal and civil investigations and major organized crime figures, and we hope he will continue his devotion to

fighting crime as he did in the past. We want to commend you and we wish you well. I am pleased to welcome you and your two daughters, Ebony and Aja and your wife, Simone, to the pantheon of congressional families, and we are here ready to help you in your work. God bless.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, there are so many Members that would like to be heard, but a lot of people have to make trains and planes, and so we have in our delegation not only an outstanding Member from Queens County, but the Democratic county leader that was able to guide the membership of the great organization there so that they were able to make the proper decision for the election, TOM MANTON, for purposes of introducing our brand-new member.

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MEEKS

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

Mr. MANTON. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues, our newly-elected Member, GREGORY MEEKS, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to welcome you, GREGORY and your family and all of your supporters in Southeast Queens from the 6th Congressional District to this great Hall. I am not going to be repetitive here, but I would just like to say that your credentials were impeccable, starting off after law school as a prosecutor, and later on as a judge in the worker's compensation system, and then your service in the New York State Assembly.

□ 1430

So you have come here, you have hit the ground running, and we welcome you and ask that you have a long career in these sacred halls.

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from New York yield?

Mr. MANTON. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to yield to the Speaker.

The SPEAKER. It would please the Chair to recognize for his first time here the newly elected gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS), and to recognize him on behalf of the House and offer him an opportunity to speak to the House.

EXPRESSION OF THANKS FOR
SUPPORT

(Mr. MEEKS of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Mr. Speaker, thank you.

The first feeling that I have is: God is good. God is good. He has truly blessed me, and but by His grace am I here today. He has blessed me for an individual who grew up in public housing and a product of public education to be able to go on and receive a degree at the great institution known as Howard University School of Law, which I am

proud of; to be blessed with individuals who are really responsible for me being here.

Mr. Speaker, it started with my mother, who is not with us any longer, but she is with us. She gave me the strength, the support, and the upbringing so that this day could be possible. She gave me the vision and the determination to make things happen, and I will be so ever thankful to God who blessed me with her as a mother.

I want to thank my dad, who is here, who always was behind me and taught me the lessons of life and family.

I want to bless and thank my wife, Simone-Marie, who gave her energy, her time, and gave me her permission to seek the office of the United States House of Representatives.

My sisters, Rosalyn and Janella, who are here, who worked diligently day and night on this campaign, thank you.

And the Lord blessed me with two beautiful daughters who I am so proud of for all that they are doing and how they are growing up. That is Ebony and Aja.

And, as indicated, my mother is not with me, but the Lord blessed me with a great mother-in-law, Miss Eleanor Sing.

Mr. Speaker, let me say thank you, particularly, to my political godfather, Bob Simmons, and all of the individuals who are up in the balcony who are responsible for that huge victory on February 3. I will never forget them, for they are why I am here to represent the constituency and the people of the 6th Congressional District.

I know that I have very big shoes to fill, and I can say that I am not Floyd Flake. I am GREGORY MEEKS. I am going to do the best I can. I believe that Floyd Flake was on the right path, the same path of many of the Members of this hall that I have admired for a long time. The path of Barbara Jordan who sat here. The path of Shirley Chisholm. The path of Adam Powell. The path of Brother DELLUMS. The path of Charlie Rangel. The path of Thomas Manton.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with you. I look forward to trying to make a difference in the lives of the people of this great country. I look forward to living the dream that Dr. King had that all of us will be able to walk together, talk together, live together under this big tent and this great Nation. Thank you very much.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair wishes to simply observe for the RECORD, if I might, that we are welcoming a new Member whom we are delighted to have with us and who we think has a great future. We are welcoming him on a day when we are losing a great Member who has had a great career and to whom we are all indebted for being a model of representing democracy in a free society.

So while we are saying good-bye to the gentleman from California (Mr.

DELLUMS) we are saying hello to the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) and that is the biological process by which a free people renews itself.

We will miss you, Mr. DELLUMS; and we are grateful to have you here, Mr. MEEKS.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Democratic Caucus, I offer a privileged resolution (H.Res. 351) and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 351

Resolved, That the following named Members be, and are hereby elected to the following standing committees of the House of Representatives:

To the Committee on Banking and Financial Services:

Max Sandlin of Texas; Gregory Meeks of New York.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. DREIER, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 105-415) on the resolution (H. Res. 352) providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

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

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I ask for this time for the purposes of inquiring from the distinguished Chief Deputy Majority Whip regarding the schedule for today, the remainder of the week, and the following week.

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman from Michigan, my good friend, will yield, I am pleased to announce that we have finished the legislative business for the week.

The House will reconvene on Wednesday, February 11, at 3 p.m. for legislative business. Members should note that we do not expect any recorded votes before 5 p.m. on Wednesday; and on Thursday, February 12, the House will meet at 10 a.m. for legislative business.

On Wednesday and Thursday, the House will consider the following legislation: a resolution providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules and a resolution regarding the contested election in the 46th Congressional District of California.

Once the rule allowing suspensions next week has been agreed to, we hope to consider the following bills under suspension of rules:

H.R. 1428, the Voter Eligibility Verification Act; H. Con. Res. 202, the Daycare Fairness for Stay-at-Home Parents; and, S. 927, the National Sea Grant College Program Reauthorization Act of 1997.

Mr. Speaker, we hope to conclude legislative business for the week by early afternoon on Thursday, February 12. Friday, February 13, marks the beginning of the President's Day district work period from which the House will return on Tuesday, February 24.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, could the gentleman clarify two points for me? On the return date of Tuesday the 24th, can the gentleman enlighten us on when we can expect the first vote on that day?

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, there will be no votes until after 5 o'clock.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

Finally, the gentleman said that on February 12, which is Thursday next, I think, we will meet at 12 for legislative business?

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, 10 o'clock for legislative business.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

A MATTER OF TRUTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment to speak on what has been happening in the country lately. It is not about impeachment of the President or prosecution of the President; it is about what is on my mind and my conscience.

First of all, for all the clamor in the press and on radio and TV about allegations swirling around the President, there has been a blanket of silence on the part of many who ought to provide commentary on the moral tone of this country. And I am not sure why there has been this silence. Perhaps there is

a "do not rock the boat" feeling. Times are good and let us just sweep this under the rug and not focus on the moral aspects of this.

Perhaps the talk of impeachment and prosecution, which I think have been gotten out there too early, may have preempted those who might have felt obligated to comment on the moral issue and its impact on the leadership of the country.

Their reluctance was not evident in earlier cases. The young woman who flew the Air Force B-52s. The military general passed over for Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. The Tailhook scandal, which touched a number of senior Navy officials. Charges against a former Senator who resigned. A Supreme Court nominee and a Presidential candidate and others brought a tidal wave of comment from every corner of America.

In America, a person is innocent until proven guilty. But we are not talking about a court of law. We are talking about right and wrong.

We must give the President the benefit of the doubt. But let us not say that these things do not matter, because they do. They are at the very heart of honor, integrity, character and leadership.

What a person does in private affects the type of person he or she is in public, and a leader has an obligation to take responsibility for his or her actions and not try to explain them away or blame others.

If, indeed, we have lost the capacity to distinguish vice from virtue, if we believe that private behavior has no public consequences, if we believe that our Nation's leaders do not have to be good or moral and righteous men and women who live by the truth, then we abandon the very heritage of this Nation.

□ 1445

I believe America ought to expect more from its leaders, and I think most of the American people agree. If, as has been the case for ages, kids want to grow up to be President of the United States, then like it or not the person holding that title has a special responsibility, and we have every right to hold him or her accountable to that duty.

Saying Americans do not care just does not wash with me. Truth is something we have always honored in this country. We teach our children from an early age to be truthful. George Washington's birthday is coming soon, and we have long told the story about him admitting to cutting down the cherry tree, where he said, I cannot tell a lie.

When any President takes office, there is an implied promise that he or she will level with the people, that he or she will be honest with them. A solemn bond of trust has always existed between the President and its people. And it must always be that way. Every President has an obligation to tell the whole truth. If Richard Nixon had told