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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. OXLEY).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
June 17, 1998.

I hereby designate the Honorable MICHAEL G. OXLEY to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

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

With humble hearts, gracious God, we confess our shortcomings, and with grateful hearts we celebrate the wonderful opportunities that our world allows. We realize that we have not cared for the resources of the land as we should, and yet we use our land to feed the hungry and nourish the soul.

In all things, O God, we have occasions to be responsible custodians of the gifts of the Earth, and so we pray this day that we will pledge ourselves to be faithful and good stewards of all Your blessings and use Your gifts to the welfare and prosperity of every person.

This is our earnest prayer. 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.

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on

agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Chair's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5, rule I, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. SHIMKUS 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 PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain 15 one-minutes on each side.

THE SUDANESE GOVERNMENT MUST BE HELD TO INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS STANDARDS

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of persecuted religious believers in Sudan.

Mr. Faisal Abdallah, a 39-year-old Christian convert from Islam currently

is imprisoned in Khobar Prison in Khartoum. Though accused of evangelism, Mr. Abdallah has not formally been charged with apostasy. Instead he has been charged with criminal violations of, and I quote, "political conspiracy against the Khartoum regime." This charge requires the death penalty upon conviction.

The Sudanese Government is attempting to force extremist Islam on the entire population of Sudan. Reports are that authorities beat, torture, sell into slavery, force to convert to Islam in exchange for food and force to fight against their own people, anyone who disagrees with the Khartoum government. Christians, Animists and moderate Muslims suffer terribly.

Mr. Speaker, these horrifying atrocities must not continue. The Sudanese Government must be held to international human rights standards which protect religious and other fundamental freedoms.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1891

Mr. HOLDEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have my name removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 1891.

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

There was no objection.

ORANGE COUNTY'S FINEST

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

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to truly outstanding students from California's 46th Congressional District.

Last year I had the opportunity to nominate young men and women from my district to our finest military academies, and I am pleased that five high

□ 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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school seniors were among those offered appointments to join our academies for the 1998 academic year. These students from Orange County will now prepare for one of the most exciting, challenging and educational experiences of their lives, years of commitment and service to their Nation. During their years in high school several of these students excelled in academics, athletics, and more importantly, these students were very devoted to community service.

I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the following students who were appointed to the United States military academies for the 1998 academic year:

Robert J. Kennedy of Garden Grove
Julio A. Nelson of Anaheim
Michael Bigrigg of Santa Ana
Joshua Fogle of Garden Grove
Leo Kosi of Garden Grove

SUPPORT THE CHILD CUSTODY PROTECTION ACT

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, today the Committee on the Judiciary will vote on a bill that is of great importance to the protection of my rights, my colleagues' rights and the rights of every American parent. The Child Custody Protection Act will protect the most sacred bond that exists, that between every parent and their children. As Members of Congress we have shown great determination in our pursuit of prosecuting and punishing sexual predators who prey on our children. We must also act to stop those who decide to play parent to our children.

Mr. Speaker, these strangers smuggle children across State lines in order to circumvent a State's parental law on abortions. Let us safeguard our parental rights by passing H.R. 3682 so that the laws of every State regarding abortion for minor girls are respected. This bill makes it a Federal crime for a non-parent to transport a minor girl across State lines to evade her home State's parent involvement law and obtain an abortion. It does not establish a nationwide parental notification retirement, but it does respect parental rights.

Mr. Speaker, no stranger should break the sacred bond between a parent and her child.

HOUSTON HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

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

Mr. GREEN. Mr. Speaker, too often from these microphones we hear what is wrong with our country, and today I want to talk about what is right with our country.

In Houston this week we are celebrating the kickoff of the 1998 Jimmy Carter and Habitat For Humanity work project, the largest Habitat for Humanity project ever attempted. Throughout this week volunteers from all across the country will be building 100 houses in Houston and at least 40 in the congressional district that I am honored to represent. One hundred families will have a roof over their heads as well as an affordable place to live and raise their families. The Jimmy Carter work project will give Houston families an opportunity to buy a home where there is no profit included in the sales price and no interest charged on the mortgage.

On Monday morning not only myself, but my staff and I, joined in this project putting up that house, and all this week staff and volunteers are working on our house to have a safe and decent home for our family, Francisco and Claudia Villanueva and their five year-old child, Ana. This home is being built as a House that Congress Built project that is being built nationwide across all Members of Congress, 435. I am glad to have this opportunity to directly provide a house in our district, but also participate nationwide.

Mr. Speaker, that is what is right with our country.

SUPPORT BETTER EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR CHILDREN

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

Mr. ROGAN. Mr. Speaker, the defenders of the education status quo are on the wrong side of history. Each year these people ask for more money for the same failed programs that gave us such poor education results in the first place. Parents are fed up with broken promises and the lack of accountability that has been the hallmark of these demands for more and more money. Parents and reformers are demanding change. Charter schools, school choice and education IRAs are the wave of the future. Yet these reforms are fought tooth and nail by the special interests and their defenders in Congress.

But these bureaucracy lovers will ultimately fail. They will fail because parents who care about the education of their children will no longer accept failure no matter how much money is wasted on the failure.

Mr. Speaker, parents and their children who desire more educational opportunities are looking to Congress to pass the Coverdell legislation and vote for better educational opportunities for their children. That is the mandate and the obligation of this Congress, and I urge my colleagues to follow it.

WE MUST DEAL WITH NORTH KOREAN MISSILE SALES

(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, more threats from Communists: North Korea said, "We will sell missiles to your enemies, and if you want to stop us, Uncle Sam, you will have to pay us."

Unbelievable.

Sources say that North Korea believes there is a softening of resolve in Washington. Evidently, North Korea believes that a White House that will make no demands on China after China threatened Taiwan and Los Angeles is a White House that will make no demands on communists, my colleagues.

Beam me up. North Korea would never say in-your-face threats to Ronald Reagan.

Congress better look at these foreign entanglements that endanger our national sovereignty.

I yield back any missiles pointed at America.

TAX CODE ELIMINATION OFFERS A FRESH OPPORTUNITY

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

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, for a number of years now we have heard political leaders call for reform of the Tax Code, but nothing ever seems to change. Now Congress has a real chance to do what so many Americans have been asking for for a long, long time.

Today the House of Representatives will have an opportunity to vote on the Tax Code Elimination Act, a bill that will finally get rid of the Tax Code once and for all. It will sunset the Tax Code on December 31, 2002, and it will require Congress to come up with an alternative way to collect revenue. By voting for this bill, Mr. Speaker, Congress will be putting America on notice that a national debate must begin about a new tax system that is simpler, more fair and more transparent.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to choose a more rational system of taxation, one that average people can understand without having to consult accountants and tax attorneys. It is time for a national debate, and it is time for that national debate to begin now.

FIRST—ONE OF THE MOST INNOVATIVE AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS EVER CREATED

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

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow Capitol Hill will be given the opportunity to experience what I believe is one of the most dynamic, innovative and educational programs ever created in our country. This program, called FIRST, teaches our youth that science and technology can be fun, it can be exciting and, yes, even cool.

Mr. Speaker, teams of high school students work with local adult mentors