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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. GIBBONS).

### DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,

April 9, 2003.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JIM GIBBONS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,

*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: Lord, God, You are the living God, the eternal King of Nations.

Yet, in tumultuous times, confident prayer is parsed with frustration. Constant trust is punctuated with anger. The weeks of war chip away resistance and lay bare the anguish of the human heart. With the prophet Jeremiah the cry goes out: "You are just, O Lord! Yet I must argue my case against You. Why does the way of the goddess prosper?"

Let such defiant questions only prove the deep faith of this Nation, Lord.

Strengthen here the leaders of Your people. Be with our troops in battle.

Bring about the resolve of justice that will build peace.

For no one is like You, O Lord. Great are You, great and mighty is Your Name, 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 Maine (Mr. MICHAUD) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. MICHAUD 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 up to 10 one-minute per side.

### HONORING SOUTH FLORIDA'S Y-100 RADIO STATION AND JOHN KROSS

(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, on this great day, as we celebrate the freedom of the Iraqi people and continue the international war against terrorism, let us also continue our war against domestic drug abuse. And because of their valiant cause against substance abuse, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize south Florida's Y-100 radio station and John Kross, known as "Footy," for this weekend's upcoming 16th Annual Wing Ding.

This annual charity event benefits Here's Help, Incorporated, a private, non-profit, comprehensive youth drug and alcohol treatment facility in south Florida. This important grass-roots effort seeks to combat the menace of drug abuse among the most vulnerable members of our society, our young people.

Here's Help has made an invaluable contribution to protecting the dignity and the innocence of the youth of south Florida.

I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Y-100 and Footy for their un-

wavering commitment to our precious south Florida young people, as well as for the patriotic support that the radio station Y-100 has given to our Armed Forces throughout Iraqi Freedom.

### VIETNAM NEEDS TO RELEASE BUDDHIST MONKS

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of two of Vietnam's most prominent Buddhist leaders and outspoken dissidents, the most Venerable Thich Huyen Quang, patriarch of the banned Unified Church of Vietnam, and his deputy, the Venerable Thich Quang Do, a 2003 Nobel Peace Prize nominee.

Last week, 36 of my colleagues joined me in sending an urgent appeal to the Government of Vietnam, calling for the immediate release of both of these individuals, both of whom are facing complications from advancing age and deteriorating health.

Both men have been detained without charge or trial for most of the past 25 years for their peaceful advocacy of human rights and religious freedom, rights guaranteed by the Vietnamese constitution and by the U.N. Covenant on Human Rights, which Vietnam has both ratified and has pledged to uphold.

The Venerable Thich Quang Do's alleged crimes included launching an appeal for democracy in Vietnam and organizing a humanitarian effort to rescue flood victims.

I urge the Government of Vietnam to release these two men.

### U.N. SHOULD NOT BE CENTRAL TO PEACE IN IRAQ

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

□ 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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minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, just three weeks from the launch of Operation Iraqi Freedom, the battle for Baghdad is drawing to a close. Less than 2 hours ago, amidst the cheers and grateful smiles of the newly freed people of Iraq, the 3rd Army met the 1st Marine expeditionary force at the Tigris River.

Thanks to U.S. and coalition courage and leadership, liberty has reached the center of Baghdad, darkened by tyranny for more than a quarter of a century.

Soon we will turn this body's attention to reconstruction, to interim governments, to the creation of a free and democratic Iraq, and as the President said in Belfast yesterday, the United Nations will play a vital role in helping to stand up our humanitarian efforts.

Despite the fondest wishes of the President of France, I would offer, Mr. Speaker, since the U.N. chose against being central to the war, the U.N. should not and will not be central to the peace.

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#### AMERICA RX

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

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, today, nearly 65 million Americans go without adequate prescription drug coverage, yet drug prices continue to rise, forcing more people to choose between medicine and food.

Today, I am introducing America RX, which uses the power of the free market to negotiate fairer drug prices for Americans. Like the law we passed in Maine, it is a fresh approach that will not cost the taxpayer a single dime. This approach is simple, it is fair and it works.

Everyone has heard of a volume discount. That is exactly what we are talking about when we are talking about America RX. More Americans can afford to buy prescription drugs, which means higher volume, low prices.

The time has come to lower drug prices so that more Americans are not forced to ride a bus to Canada.

I invite my colleagues to join me in moving this initiative forward.

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#### CONGRATULATING MITCHELL HIGH SCHOOL LADY MOUNTAIN- EERS

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

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate North Carolina's 2A high school basketball champions, the Mitchell High School Lady Mountaineers. Led by Coach Bruce Woody, the Lady Mountaineers blazed victory's trail by winning their final 19 games of the season, knocking off the top three ranked teams in the State.

In spite of their winning streak going into the March 15 championship game in Chapel Hill, the Lady Mountaineers were considered underdogs against the previously undefeated and formidable Lady Red Devils of Red Springs High School, but the Lady Mountaineers knew they could win, and cheered on by over 1,100 loyal fans in purple, the Lady Mountaineers fought hard through five lead changes and three ties.

Defense was the name of the game, and every athlete in purple did her part. Coach Woody could not believe his eyes when the final buzzer rang and the score read 61 to 50, with the Lady Mountaineers winning.

North Carolina's 10th District salutes our Lady Mountaineers. We are all inspired by the team's tenacity and winning spirit. Congratulations, Mitchell High School Lady Mountaineers.

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#### NATIONAL DAY OF SILENCE

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

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give voice to those who are silent: the many youth in our high schools who are afraid to speak of their place in our society because they are gay or lesbian, bisexual or transgender.

Today marks the National Day of Silence in which we celebrate the diversity of our population, but mourn the population's ignorance and intolerance toward that diversity.

I commend my colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), for introducing H. Con. Res. 86, which memorializes the National Day of Silence. This resolution encourages each State and local jurisdiction to adopt laws to prohibit discrimination and harassment against persons of alternative sexual orientation or gender identity. This is a goal I applaud and support.

It is hard to believe that in a country dedicated to the principles of freedom and individual liberty that some persons still experience out-and-out harassment because they are not heterosexual. This is especially true of gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender youth who literally fear for their safety at school and on the street, where they are subjected to violence, hatred and taunts.

The National Day of Silence is a way to raise awareness of this issue and to work for the justice of those most vulnerable among us: our youth. I ask you all to support H. Con. Res. 86 and to support the National Day of Silence.

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#### IS RUSSIA OUR ALLY?

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, right after September 11, Russia stood with us as an ally in the war on terrorism, but re-

cent weeks have shown that Russia may have another agenda.

Russian companies have sold military equipment to Iraq, equipment used to harm American soldiers. Russian officials were told about this in June of 2002, but did nothing.

The Russian Government continues to maintain friendly relations with Kim Jong Il of North Korea, a fact that only encourages this regime's dangerous actions.

Russia has also been involved in helping Iran develop two nuclear facilities that are part of a nuclear weapons program. This is in addition to building Iran a nuclear reactor and providing them with low-enriched uranium in 1995.

Russia is deeply involved in arming terrorist-sponsoring countries.

Arming rogue regimes cannot be compatible with being an American ally. We must make it clear that Russia cannot arm America's enemies and call itself an ally. If Russia wants to be an ally, it is time to start acting like one.

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#### MINORITY HEALTH MONTH

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

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, last year with the help of Congressman J.C. Watts and many others, we passed a sense of Congress that April should be Minority Health Month.

There have already been many conferences, briefings and other activities to call attention to the poor health, the lack of access and the wide disparities in the health of this country's minority populations. Whether it is heart disease, cancer, stroke, diabetes or AIDS, just to name a few, African Americans in particular, but all people of color, die and are disabled in numbers far disproportionate to their representation in our country.

No country can achieve its full greatness when it continues to essentially ignore the plight of one-third of its citizens and residents, when the right of health care is denied to so many.

Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King said that "of all the forms of injustice, the denial of health care is the most shocking and inhumane." As we debate the budget, it would be shocking and inhumane to pass a tax cut of any size while almost 75 million people do not have full health insurance and while hundreds of people of color die every day prematurely from preventable causes.

We are a better country than this. Let us prove it before we go home to face our constituents and celebrate the most important holy days of the Christian and Jewish faith. In health, as in education, no one should be left behind.

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#### HONORING CAPTAIN CHRIS WACHTER

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1