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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Lord God, You offer every generation an opportunity of repentance and by Your Spirit You stir within the hearts of Your people holy desires to reconcile differences, to forgive injuries and establish Your kingdom of peace and justice on this Earth.

Refresh all in this Nation whose spirits are parched from a lack of prayer. Nourish all those who hunger to hear Your Word and accomplish Your will.

Be with the Members of the House of Representatives this day. May everything they do begin with Your holy inspiration, continue with Your help and come to fulfillment under Your guidance. For You alone are Lord, forever and ever. 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 Texas (Mr. GREEN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GREEN of Texas 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.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Monahan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a concurrent resolution of the House of the following title:

H. Con. Res. 357. Concurrent Resolution permitting the use of the rotunda of the Capitol for a ceremony to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Dr. Dorothy Height.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a concurrent resolution of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. Con. Res. 92. Concurrent resolution congratulating and saluting Focus: HOPE on the occasion of its 35th anniversary and for its remarkable commitment and contributions to Detroit, the State of Michigan, and the United States.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 106-398, as amended by Public Law 108-7, in accordance with the qualifications specified under section 1238(b)(3)(E) of Public Law 106-398, the Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, and upon the recommendation of the Majority Leader, in consultation with the chairmen of the Senate Committee on Armed Services and the Senate Committee on Finance, appoints the following individual to the United States-China Economic Security Review Commission:

Gary J. Schmitt of Washington, D.C., vice Michael A. Ledeen of Maryland.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 108-173, the Chair, on behalf of the Democratic Leader, appoints the following individual to serve as a member of the Commission on Systemic Interoperability:

Herbert Pardes, M.D., of New York.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain 10 one-minutes per side.

TIME FOR MEDICAL MALPRACTICE REFORM

(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, Americans pay a lot for health care, and there are a lot of reasons for the high costs. One of them is excessive awards in medical malpractice cases. In Pennsylvania alone there are \$1.2 billion in payouts for medical malpractice cases a year. That is \$1,000 for every man, woman and child in our Commonwealth.

People who are mistreated by medical professionals should receive the money they need to compensate for their injuries, but in my State, 40 percent of these awards go to trial attorneys. The result is out-of-control insurance premiums on doctors and higher costs for consumers.

A recent survey this year said that 70 percent of Pennsylvania's doctors have considered closing their practice because of the cost of medical malpractice insurance. Many have left, and many of the new doctors are going elsewhere. Of those that purchase coverage, the costs are going up exponentially every year, as much as 50 percent a year. The same survey reported that frivolous lawsuits are preventing them from getting specialized care for their patients. This is a big problem, and one that Congress should address.

The House has acted with common-sense reform. Now the other body should get past political games and pass reform of the medical liability lawsuit system in this country. Our doctors need it. More importantly, the American people need it. We need to pass lawsuit abuse reform.

PROTECTING SOCIAL SECURITY FOR WORKING AMERICANS

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

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my deep disappointment in Federal Reserve Chairman Greenspan's remarks about Social

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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Security. For any of you who missed his shocking pronouncement, Mr. Greenspan suggested Social Security benefits be cut for retirees, that the retirement age should be raised, and the cost of living adjustment, which was a whopping 2.2 percent this year, should be modified because it is too "generous."

In 2001, President Bush inherited a strong economy and a \$5.6 trillion 10-year surplus. But that has been squandered and turned into a projected deficit of \$2.9 trillion. We got into this mess not because of the war on terror, that I think all of us support, but because of the administration's fiscally irresponsible tax cuts.

But Mr. Greenspan, who advocates permanent extension of these deficit-creating tax cuts, suggested we fix this economic disaster by raiding Social Security, not just borrowing from it like we do now.

Surely this administration does not want to pay for tax cuts on the backs of the elderly. It is pretty easy for Mr. Greenspan to sit in his ivory tower and modify Social Security to meet his economic world view, but for those people living in the real world, for folks who are hanging sheet metal, who are working on our docks and ports, working on the assembly line all day, Social Security is a critical safety net that cannot be taken away or reduced. These are not folks who have the luxury of playing the stock market, as the administration would propose, or work a few more years, as Mr. Greenspan suggests.

I hope and pray we reject his proposals and do not privatize Social Security.

CONTINUING THE LEGACY OF SUSAN B. ANTHONY BY SUPPORTING THE UNBORN VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE ACT

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to speak of a courageous woman in America's history, a woman who fought relentlessly for 69 years to establish equal rights for women, slaves, and the unborn. Her name, Susan B. Anthony.

She had a deep desire, dedication and passion that our country live up to its promise that everyone be treated equally. Her leadership helped lead to the adoption of the 19th amendment, giving women the right to vote.

On this 184th year following her birth, let us honor the woman who fought for equality for all by continuing her legacy today and voting for the Unborn Victims of Violence Act. This act recognizes the rights and values of women and unborn children, and Susan B. Anthony would be proud to see this extension of her life's work by protecting the defenseless and speaking for those who cannot speak for themselves.

THE DEFENSE OF IMPOSSIBILITY

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

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I think it was highly inappropriate for Justice Scalia to go on a hunting trip with Vice President CHENEY when he was a defendant in a case, but it is inaccurate to say that this calls into question Justice Scalia's impartiality. You cannot call into question that which does not exist.

Questioning Justice Scalia's impartiality is like questioning Janet Jackson and Justin Timberlake's sense of propriety, or Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction, or the President's plan to cut the budget deficit in half in 5 years.

In fact, if you read Justice Scalia's opinions, they are singularly devoid of impartiality. Here is a man of very vigorous views and prejudices, and he does not see any reason why he should not write them into various opinions.

So, I guess in some ways this is a defense of Justice Scalia. I wish he had refrained from going on that hunting trip with the Vice President, but those who accuse him of having damaged his impartiality, he has a defense of that, well-known to lawyers, it is a defense of impossibility.

IN HONOR OF SISTER CATHERINE DOMINIC

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

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Sister Catherine Dominic, whose life has been devoted to helping and caring for her neighbors.

Sister Catherine will be retiring from St. Mary's Hospital in Rogers, Arkansas, after more than 40 years of service. Her devotion and joyful spirit have given us all strength, and we are fortunate to have shared her friendship.

Throughout her career at St. Mary's, Sister Catherine served the hospital in a variety of roles, including administrator, anesthetist, surgery supervisor and nursing service director. As both a registered nurse and chaplain, Sister Catherine has split her time providing medical care and spiritual support to those in St. Mary's Hospital.

Mr. Speaker, our community will greatly miss Sister Catherine as she returns to the Dominican mother house in Springfield, Illinois. We are extremely grateful for her tireless efforts on our behalf.

I ask my colleagues today to join me in honoring this wonderful Dominican sister for her commitment and dedication to the Third District of Arkansas.

HELPING THOSE IN NEED IN HAITI

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address

the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as many of us woke up this morning, we saw the pending violence in Port-au-Prince, Haiti; innocent people being subjected to murder and random and reckless violence.

Yesterday the Congressional Black Caucus met with the President and asked for humanitarian assistance. I am reminded of the aid that we gave to Bosnia, Albania and Kosovo when refugees fled for their lives. I think it would be a shame that with our neighbor, just 650 miles away, we turn refugees back who are fleeing because they are in fear of their lives or persecution.

It is time for this administration to share its humanitarian perspective, if you will, to those who are neighbors, who helped fight for our independence.

Let me conclude simply by saying we have another tragedy in this country as well. For anybody to suggest that Social Security should be cut for those who have worked long years and hard for that benefit, they should take another look. I hope that we will stand up as a Congress against the idea of taking away Social Security for those who worked so very hard and have invested in this Nation, who have built this Nation. Social Security cannot be cut for those who have worked and given to this Nation.

PRESERVING SOCIAL SECURITY FOR WORKING AMERICANS

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

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, what a rather startling revelation by Mr. Greenspan, Chairman of the Fed, that the answer to the deficit that this administration has run up and the long-term debt of this Nation is to raise the basic retirement age of Social Security and to cut benefits.

Mr. Greenspan and the Republicans speaking for the investor class decided that average working people in this country, the ironworkers who are rebuilding the San Francisco Bay Bridge, the people who are building the skyscrapers in our major cities, who are building our transportation systems, who are working out there in snow and rain and cold weather all through the winter to provide for their families, that they should just work a few years longer so that they will not have to pay for Social Security.

This administration has run up the largest deficit in history, and now they are using that deficit as an excuse to attack Social Security, which is the backbone of retirement for millions and millions of Americans. Maybe not for Mr. Greenspan and his friends who have stock options, who have golden parachutes, who have buyouts when they leave their corporations, but for millions of hard-working Americans it