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House of Representatives

The House met at 11 a.m.

PRAYER

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

We pray, O gracious God, that we will be given the insight and the wisdom to see clearly what needs to be seen, to hear what needs to be heard, to understand what needs to be understood, so that we will truly be the servants of the people by doing justice and loving mercy. Give us patience, we pray, that before we speak or act or judge, we hear Your word of strength, comprehend the issues presented and the values involved, and then act for the good of every person. Bless us, O loving God, this day and every day, 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. The gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. LOBIONDO] will lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. LOBIONDO 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. The Chair announces that there will be fifteen 1-minutes on each side.

REPUBLICAN CONTRACT WITH AMERICA

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, our Contract With America states the following:

On the first day of Congress, a Republican House will require Congress to live under the same laws as everyone else. We promise to cut the congressional budget. And we have.

Next we passed a balanced budget amendment, legislation on unfunded mandates, and a line-item veto. We have kept these promises.

We also promised to pass a new crime package that would take violent criminals off our streets; a National Security Restoration Act; Government regulatory reform to cut down on regulations; and commonsense legal reform.

Mr. Speaker, we have done these things.

Next we passed welfare reform to encourage work, not dependence.

Today we will be debating congressional term limits. For the first time in years that will be on the floor of the House for a vote.

Next we are going to have tax cuts for the middle class and Senior Citizens Equity Act to allow senior citizens to work without Government penalty.

Mr. Speaker, this is our Republican Contract With America.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. FOGLIETTA. Mr. Speaker, a point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TORKILDSEN). The gentleman will state his point of order.

Mr. FOGLIETTA. Mr. Speaker, I ask the Speaker to rule whether or not it is proper for Members to be wearing badges during 1-minutes and the rule, accordingly.

The SPEAKER. The Chair will state under a previous ruling it is not appropriate for Members to wear badges when they are addressing Members of the House, and would ask all Members to take note of that ruling.

Mr. FOGLIETTA. I thank the Speaker.

APPOINT AN INDEPENDENT COUNSEL

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

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, a dark ethical cloud lingers over this Congress. To safeguard the public trust, to ensure that high ethical standards are maintained, there are times when it is appropriate to appoint an independent counsel. An investigator who is not biased, who is not linked to either party to investigate thoroughly may be essential.

That has occurred in this House on a number of occasions, in the matter of Congressman Charles Diggs, in the matter of ABSCAM, regarding Congressman George Hansen, regarding Congressman St Germain, regarding the Page scandal, regarding Speaker Jim Wright, and most recently in 1989 regarding Mr. GINGRICH.

Why not now? If charges are partisan, if they are unjustified, what better way to demonstrate it than to have an independent counsel verify that?

Last year before the election, so many of the Republicans talked to us about the President and Whitewater, why is it that now the election is over all they talk about with reference to Mr. GINGRICH is whitewash.

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