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House of Representatives

The House met at 11 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. HANSEN].

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
May 8, 1996.

I hereby designate the Honorable JAMES V. HANSEN to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

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

O, gracious God, from whom all blessings flow, bestow upon us the gifts of Your spirit. Where there is hunger, may people know the gifts of Your bounty; where there is loneliness, may there be a spirit of sharing and caring; where there is violence, may people know security; and where there is anxiety or pain, may every person know the confidence and the healing that Your word can give. May Your blessings, O God, that are new every day, be with us now and evermore. 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 Minnesota [Mr. GUTKNECHT] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GUTKNECHT 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. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate had passed with an amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 1296. An act to provide for the administration of certain Presidio properties at minimal cost to the Federal taxpayer.

The message also announced that the Senate had passed a bill of the following title, in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1467. An act to authorize the construction of the Fort Peck Rural County Water Supply System, to authorize assistance to the Fort Peck Rural County Water District, Inc., a nonprofit corporation, for the planning, design, and construction of the water supply system, and for other purposes.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces there will be fifteen 1-minute speeches on each side.

DOES ICWA REALLY PROTECT CHILDREN?

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

Ms. PRYCE. Mr. Speaker, the Indian Child Welfare Act has been misapplied and distorted in recent years, hurting countless children.

Consider the story I heard from a mother in Alaska. The little girl who is now her adoptive daughter was placed in foster care at the age of 7 months due to the Indian Child Welfare Act. After a year, the baby was placed with a biological grandmother, a native American, with the understanding that her two sons, both convicted child sex abusers, move out and live elsewhere.

Well, they never left and the baby was found in a compromised situation, upon which the grandmother returned the child to the youth services with no explanations and no belongings. Only after this horrifying ordeal and after the native community failed to find a safe native home was she placed with this Native Alaskan couple who eventually adopted her.

The adoptive mother writes to me, ''We are lucky. Our daughter was placed in only five foster homes before she found a family that was suitable to the tribe.'' There are many other children who are being kept from loving homes for 3, 4 and 5 years awaiting tribal action.

Mr. Speaker, this is a native American speaking. She knows ICWA needs reform. She knows firsthand.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, HARRY

(Ms. MCCARTHY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to our late President, Harry S Truman, on the 112th anniversary of his birth.

In his life and his Presidency, Harry Truman exhibited the characteristics of leadership courage decisiveness, humility, and deep respect for others. His no-nonsense, buck-stops-here approach to facing even life's most difficult situations enabled him to become one of our country's greatest presidents.

President Truman was a leader in the true sense of the word. He refused to let uncomfortable situations or unpopular opinions stand in his way of

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making the difficult decisions required of a statesman. He stepped into the Presidency at a time of crisis for this Nation, and he guided us into our most productive years.

The lessons we can learn from Harry Truman are applicable today. As we in Congress continue our efforts to balance the budget, reform welfare and health care, and provide a future our children can say yes to, we should remember his approach to governing, and his commitment to the people of this Nation. Above all, Harry Truman got the job done. It is time for us to get the job done, Mr. Speaker, in memory of this great American. Happy birthday, Harry.

THE OBSTRUCTIONIST MINORITY

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

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, Bill Clinton is no Harry Truman.

Mr. Speaker, you would have thought that when the people of this Nation spoke so overwhelmingly for change in 1994 by sending a new majority to Congress, the new minority would have cooperated and yielded to the wishes of the American people.

Mr. Speaker, it is sad to say, but the new minority, the liberal Democrat whiners, have done nothing but stand in the way of change. Just let me give you a few examples of their obstructionism. Instead of helping balance the budget, they brought false charges against the new Speaker of the House, taking up his time when he could have been working on the legislative agenda.

Instead of helping the new Republican majority reform welfare, the liberal whiners just wanted to march to the floor and accuse the new Republican freshmen of being extremists and wanting to starve children.

Instead of helping middle-income families get tax breaks, the liberal obstructionists wanted to falsely charge the new majority with giving tax breaks to the rich.

Instead of helping the Republican majority save Medicare, the liberal whiners and complainers just stuck their heads in the sand and tried to scare the elderly.

Mr. Speaker, if there is a good example of do-nothingness in the 104th Congress, it rests squarely on the shoulders of the whining, complaining, liberal, obstructionist Democrats.

HARRY TRUMAN'S WISDOM

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

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, today we celebrate the birthday of a truly great American. Harry Truman was a straight talking, commonsense Democrat who took over as President after the death of Franklin Roosevelt and led this Nation to victory in World War II.

Harry Truman took responsibility for his actions. He kept a sign on his desk in the oval office that said, ''The buck stops here.'' And he wasn't afraid of his critics. He often said, ''If you can't stand the heat, stay out of the kitchen.''

Republican House Speaker NEWT GINGRICH would do well to consult the wisdom of Harry Truman who could offer better advice than the management gurus the Speaker turned to when he led us to two Government shutdowns.

In today's Washington Post, the Speaker attacks the press and says that there is what he calls a conspiracy in the media that is undoing the Republican revolution. Mr. Speaker, there is no conspiracy. The American people reviewed your program and rejected it. As Harry Truman would have said, ''If you can't stand the heat, stay out of the kitchen.''

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN, A DEMOCRAT TACTIC

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

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, we saw during last winter's budget battle that if liberal Democrats down at the White House did not get their way, they simply shut down the Government. They fought with every fiber against saving Medicare, against commonsense tax relief for families, against welfare reform and a balanced budget.

Mr. Speaker, the cycle is repeating itself.

Yesterday, the Democrat leader in the other body, issued an ultimatum: ''We are simply going to shut this place down.'' In other words, because the Democrats did not get their way, they are willing to shut down the business of this country.

This is shameless. Liberal Democrats are willing to shut down the Government so that they can pander to the big union bosses here in Washington.

Tax relief, welfare reform, a balanced budget, saving Medicare, all of that is on hold because the Democrats want to score a few cheap political points with the special interests here inside the beltway.

MAKE SURE THAT WORK PAYS

(Mrs. KENNELLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. KENNELLY. Mr. Speaker, I recently received a letter from the Jobs Partnership Committee of HART, one of the preeminent community groups in Hartford, CT. In the midst of a highly charged political debate on the minimum wage, this letter points out the real world concerns so many Americans are dealing with, and I would like to share a portion of it with my colleagues:

> We write to support congressional efforts to increase the minimum wage. Many jobs in Connecticut are posted at $4.27 an hour, but we cannot afford to live on yearly incomes of $8,880. We ask how the Government can impose sanctions on welfare benefits and time limits, and at the same time uphold poverty rate income levels in the private sector.

I think that is a good question. If we are serious about moving people from welfare to work, we have to make sure that work pays. The proposed modest increase in the minimum wage is a first step—and a necessary step—toward welfare reform, and I would urge my colleagues to take it.

TAX FREEDOM DAY

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

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, yesterday was tax freedom day, May 7—the latest it has ever been.

That means American working families are working longer for the Federal Government than ever before.

American working families pay almost 40 percent of their total income to the Government in taxes.

American working families are giving more to the Government, leaving less for their everyday needs.

Less for groceries, less for gas, less for whatever we may desire.

American working families have watched their tax freedom day fall later each year under the Clinton watch.

That is not rhetoric. Those are straight-up facts. The Republican-passed family tax cut would have turned this trend around. A repeal in the gas tax would turn this trend around. A capital gains tax cut would turn this trend around.

American working families are taxed too much. Let us turn this Clinton tax trend around. Let us cut taxes. Let us get the Government out of America's pocket.

RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE SHOULD BE A BIPARTISAN EFFORT

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

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. Speaker, last Monday in Chicago, IL, I met a lady who works for Montgomery Ward and makes barely more than the minimum wage. She is staying off welfare. She is raising her children. She is doing the right and responsible thing. She deserves a raise.

Mr. Speaker, I asked her what she would do with the $150 a month which would come her way if the Democrats and 21 brave Republicans who have joined us have our way and raise the minimum wage. She said, ''The first