DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
WASHINGTON, DC,
November 17, 1999.

I hereby appoint the Honorable EDWARD A. PEASE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Reverend Duane Carlson, Pastor Emeritus, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Springfield, Virginia, offered the following prayer:

O God, we are bold to ask that You deliver us.

Deliver us from failure of moral fiber in our citizenship, from the counting of things material above virtues spiritual; deliver us from vulgarity of life, loss of social conscience and collapse of character.

Deliver us by the deep faiths on which the foundations of our land were laid and the sacrifices of the countless who have gone before us; by the memories of leaders of this Nation whose wisdom saved us, whose devotion chastens us, whose character inspires us.

Keep us from pride of mind and boasting, but deliver us by our devotion to You and the principles You have revealed for our edification and the strength of our society. Deliver us by our insistent prayer for a world of peace and prosperity for all people. Lord God, hear our prayer and mercifully bless not only us who have been chosen to guide, but bless all our people by Your grace and power. 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 Florida (Mr. WELDON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WELDON of Florida 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 1-minute requests on each side.

MORE TIME THAN MONEY

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

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, a few months ago we made a commitment to the American people to lock away every penny of the Social Security surplus so that Washington big-spenders could not keep raiding the funds to spend on government programs. Now, we have the opportunity to meet this commitment if only President Clinton will stop playing partisan games with the retirement dollars of hard-working Americans.

When the President says, we cannot trim waste 1 percent from the massive Federal budget in order to protect Social Security, I cannot help but question his priorities. Paying for more wasteful spending of taxpayer dollars, or protecting Social Security. The choice is simple.

As we close in on a final budget, let us be very clear on one thing: we will not go home until every penny of the Social Security Trust Fund is protected and we are not going to raise taxes on working Americans, and we are going to keep the budget balanced.

We have more time than money, and we will use whatever time is necessary to get the job done.

EXPEDITED RESCISSION LEGISLATION

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

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, we have heard a lot of rhetoric, but no legislation from the other side of the aisle about protecting the Social Security surplus and eliminating wasteful spending, even though the appropriation bills passed by the majority would have spent $17 billion of the Social Security Trust Fund before the final budget negotiations even began.

I am introducing legislation today that will give the President the ability to help the majority put some reality behind their rhetoric. This legislation known as ''modified line-item veto,'' or expedited rescission, would strengthen the ability of Presidents to identify and eliminate low priority spending with the support of the majority in Congress.

Under this bill, the President would be able to single out individual items in tax or spending legislation and send a rescission package to Congress which would then be required to vote up or down on the package.

Senator JOHN MCCAIN and others have identified $13 billion of low-priority or special-interest spending. Instead of subjecting these spending items to scrutiny, the majority has proposed an across-the-board cut that treats good programs the same as low priority and wasteful spending.

I urge my colleagues to join me by cosponsoring this legislation.

BUILDING UPON OUR SUCCESSES

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

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, after the rhetoric of the last speaker, let us come back to reality for just a moment. This Congress has succeeded in passing many pieces of meaningful legislation this session.

We have passed bills which have granted more local control over our education and funding decisions and we have sent that control and those decisions to our States and local school districts. We passed legislation which provided a much-needed pay raise for our military personnel, and we funded the replacement of old equipment, strengthening our armed forces. We made it a national policy to fund and deploy a national missile defense system.

This Congress has succeeded in addressing these and other important issues to strengthen our country, including saving Social Security. Now, Mr. Speaker, we are faced with one final task, legislative task, that is, eliminating wasteful government spending.

Let us build upon our success and pass bills which fund the necessary programs, but do not waste the hard-earned tax dollars of Americans.

Mr. Speaker, this Republican-led Congress has successfully passed important and responsible legislation, and we can do it again.

TAKE PORK OUT OF SPENDING BILL

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

Mr. MINGE. Mr. Speaker, we have essentially a colloquy here this morning, and I would like to join with my colleague from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) in pointing out the irony of what is happening.

We are dipping into the Social Security Trust Fund, according to the leadership's plan, by at least $17 billion. We are cutting across the board, or proposed to have cut, 1 percent. But at the same time, as Senator MCCAIN, a Republican, has pointed out, we have billions and billions earmarked for pork barrel projects.

As the cochair of the House bipartisan Pork Barrel Coalition, I am strongly opposed to this type of pork barrel spending, and I call on our leadership here in the House of Representatives and in the Senate to excise all of these earmarked projects from this massive bill that is to be presented to us this week. If we would take that one simple step, we would be able to avoid going into the Social Security Trust Fund.

We owe it to our Nation's seniors, and we owe it to the next generation to take this modest step.