So, tonight, I want to close with a motion and a supporting speech made by Benjamin Franklin.

□ 2330

Let me set the stage here.

The American Revolution, you remember the Declaration of Independence, 1776. And then the war went on for 7 years. We got to 1783. The revolution was won. There was a Treaty of Paris, 1783. I did not know until I came to Congress, as a historian, history degree I've got, I didn't know until I saw an original copy in the State Department of the Treaty of Paris of 1783—this was a critical document because this was getting Great Britain to acknowledge in writing that the United States was a country that was and should be free and they would have to recognize that. So they wanted it in the name that even Great Britain would be afraid to break and breach.

I was shocked. It starts with big, bold letters at the top of the Treaty of Paris that forced Great Britain to recognize us; in these big, bold words it says, ''In the name of the most Holy and undivided Trinity.''

Then we had the Articles of Confederation in this country, but they were too loosely woven. There were a number of problems, no common currency; there were problems and haggling between the States. And by 1787, it was very clear that if the Nation was to survive, it was going to have to have a new constitution.

So they went to George Washington and said, we need you to come back to preside. And he said, I did my part as God led me to do and you appointed me to do; I did my part. And they said, You don't understand; the 13 colonies will only come back together if you are willing to preside because they know you, they know your heart, they know you're not in it for yourself; you proved that the day you surrendered all power, as had never been done in the history of the world, surrendered all power and went home; won the revolution, commander of the military. You know, when you do that, historically, you could be called Czar, King, Caesar, whatever you want to be called. George Washington didn't do any of that.

When King George, III heard that Washington might resign after the revolution and just go home, he knew history, he said that would never happen. He said, in his exact words, ''If Washington were to do that, he would be the greatest man alive.'' He probably was.

So then we come to have the Constitutional Convention, with George Washington presiding. They went on for nearly 5 weeks with no success. At that point, Benjamin Franklin was recognized by the President of the Constitutional Convention, George Washington. And Benjamin Franklin rose to his feet and this is what he said—his exact words as recorded by James Madison with help from some of the others there. Benjamin Franklin:

''Mr. President, the small progress we have made after four or five weeks close attendance and continual reasonings with each other—our different sentiments on almost every question, several of the last producing as many noes as ayes, is, methinks, a melancholy proof of the imperfection of the human understanding. We indeed seem to feel our own want of political wisdom, since we have been running about in search of it. We have gone back to ancient history for models of government and examined the different forms of those Republics which having been formed with the seeds of their own dissolution now no longer exist. And we have viewed modern states all around Europe, but find none of their constitutions suitable to our circumstances.

In this situation of this Assembly, groping as it were in the dark to find political truth and scarce able to distinguish it when presented to us, how has it happened, sir, that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of Lights to illuminate understanding? In the beginning contest with Great Britain, when we were sensible of danger, we had daily prayer in this room for the Divine protection. Our prayers, sir, were heard, and they were graciously answered.

''All of us who were engaged in the struggle must have observed frequent instances of a superintending Providence in our favor. To that kind of Providence we owe this happy opportunity of consulting in peace on the means of establishing our future national felicity. And have we now forgotten that powerful friend? Or do we imagine that we no longer need His assistance?

''I have lived, sir, a long time. And the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth—that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid? We have been assured, sir, in the Sacred writing that, ''except the Lord build the House, they labour in vain that build it.'' Firmly believe this; and I also believe that without His concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel.

''We shall be divided by our little partial local interest, our projects will be confounded, and we ourselves shall become a reproach and bye word down to future ages. And what is worse, mankind may hereafter, from this unfortunate instance, despair of establishing governments by human wisdom and leave it to chance, war and conquest.

''I, therefore, beg leave to move that henceforth prayers employing the assistance of heaven and its blessing on our deliberations be held in the Assembly every morning before we proceed to business, and that one or more of the clergy of this city be requested to officiate at that service.''

According to the record, Mr. SHERMAN seconded the motion.

Mr. Speaker, that was George Washington's recognition of Benjamin Franklin, and the words I read are verbatim from Benjamin Franklin.

We've begun every day here in this House, here in session with the prayer, just as Franklin moved and requested. There is a higher power; there has to be accountability. Decisions in this body must be made in deference to the Father of Lights, as Benjamin Franklin called Him, and doing so with prayer, and as Franklin prayed, that God will illuminate our understanding.

We are in a perilous time, and it is time for responsibility and accountability, or otherwise, we lose this precious country.

It is time now for the majority leadership to stop playing so fast and loose with the rules and with enforcement of the rules. It is time that, after 2 years in the majority, that promises of opportunity to amend bad Democratic bills be fulfilled. It is time that rules apply to CEOs, to speakers, to committee chairmen, to leaders, and the leaders start leading by example.

George Washington said, back during the revolution, these words: ''A people unused to restraint must be led, they will not be drove.'' He led from the front. When I was in the Army, they taught you to lead from the back. Not Washington, he led from the front. He said, ''A people unused to restraint must be led, they will not be drove.''

As someone pointed out previously, we have the only National Anthem whose first verse ends with a question: Oh say does that star-spangled banner yet wave, o'er the land of the free and the home of the brave? The answer as to whether that banner will yet wave depends on whether this Congress begins to acknowledge some accountability and do the right and the wise thing, not the convenient, not the political thing, do the legal, ethical and moral thing, not the Woodstock thing.

May we get back to following God's directives so that this does not cease to be the land of the free and the home of the brave. May we get back to those things that cause God to pour out his richest blessings.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 39 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 0008

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MCGOVERN) at 12 o'clock and 8 minutes a.m.