

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

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

Mr. GEPHARDT. Mr. Speaker, I seek recognition for the purpose of inquiring with the majority leader the schedule for next week. I yield to the majority leader for that purpose.

Mr. ARMEY. I thank the distinguished minority leader for yielding.

Let me announce the schedule for the rest of this week and the following week. We have had a long but productive day, and the vote we have just concluded is the last scheduled vote for today. Members should be advised that votes on further business are possible but I believe unlikely. Certainly we will not be calling any from our side, and I doubt that they will be called from the other side. Still, nevertheless, it is possible.

The remainder of this week and next week will be extremely busy workdays. Although we do not expect votes on the floor the remainder of this week or next, committees will be fully occupied with their organizational meetings, hearings, and markups on contract bills and other business.

I would like to remind all Members that under our new rules attendance at committee meetings are particularly important. First, any votes taken in committee will be open to public record. Second, there is a ban on proxy voting so Members will have to attend all meetings at which votes are taken in order for their constituents' voices to be heard.

In order to reiterate, the House will meet at 10 o'clock tomorrow in pro forma session. Friday the House will not be in session.

Next week the House will meet in pro forma session Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. The House will convene at 2 o'clock, 11 a.m. on Wednesday and 10 a.m. on Friday.

Mr. GEPHARDT. Could the gentleman perhaps relate to Members as to when he thinks in the following week there will be the first vote and at about what time and on what day? Would that be on Tuesday?

Mr. ARMEY. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GEPHARDT. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. ARMEY. Monday of the following week of course is a holiday. We are not prepared at this point to announce any votes for that week. Should it develop that committees are able to produce work that could be possibly scheduled for the floor we will make an announcement to the Members in a timely fashion. I would advise Members that they may want to check their whips, rotary whips.

Mr. GINGRICH. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GEPHARDT. I yield to the Speaker.

Mr. GINGRICH. Mr. Speaker, I want to take the floor for a second just to say that we are very interested in

working with the other side in moving legislation, including fairly small things that might be mutually agreed to, as early as possible. But frankly, as Members know, if we protect your rights to have, for example, 3 days for the minority reviews on bills coming out of committee, and then we protect your rights going through the Rules Committee process, we probably have about 10 or 12 days where we have to say to our colleagues yes, you have to be here; no, we are not going to put Mickey Mouse on the legislative schedule just to give you some cover. And since we do not have proxy voting anymore, you are going to have to be here and be in committee, and this is substantive work. We may have to consult with you to find what is the best way in the interest of the House to manage this 2-week transition process. But I do not want us, and in fact we will not try to run over your rights to file minority views, your rights to have the process at the Rules Committee, your rights to have something come out the Rules Committee to come to the floor. As you know, we do not have a chart that shows it, but it could not be hard to generate one. If we really guarantee both sides their rights, it is about an 8- to 10-legislative-day process I am told by the Rules Committee members to get something done in a fair way, so we have about a 2-week startup process here that is very real, and I think the press will have more than enough to cover to amuse itself. But it will not be on the floor.

So we would rather go to pro forma sessions, but have Members here, and have them understand that with this no-proxy-voting situation it is a very real requirement to be here when your committees meet, because very real decisions will be made without proxies.

So I would hope that we could work it out. I just outlined that because I know some Members on both sides have been confused, and on your side several Members suggested, well, gee, all of a sudden we will have no business. Here we have the chairman of the Rules Committee who has an example of why it takes about 10 days, and we can talk this out.

I would just say to any of your Members who suggest to us this is a sign that we have not planned it out or that we are being dilatory that in fact the only way to preempt this is to go to suspensions or to in some way minimize the rights of Democrats to file minority views and to file amendments. So I would hope we could work together, get the fastest possible startup time, but do so in a way that protects every Member.

I appreciate the majority leader and minority leader allowing me to intervene for a moment to express my deepest concern on this, and I thank them.

Mr. GEPHARDT. I would simply suggest to Members on our side and probably on your side as well that they need to communicate with the Chair and ranking member of their commit-

tees to determine whether or not there are meetings and markups and other activities of the committees so they know when they are expected to be there.

□ 0200

But I understand what you are saying. We will communicate with our Members through the whip system, through the cloakrooms.

Mr. ARMEY. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GEPHARDT. I am happy to yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. THOMAS. One of the difficulties on some committees, I would tell the minority leader, is we do not yet know the minority composition of the committee. I was wondering if the minority leader would indicate when I might know the makeup, for example, of the minority members of the Committee on Oversight.

Mr. GEPHARDT. As soon as we can do that.

Mr. THOMAS. That might be part of the problem. It is difficult to hold an organizing meeting of the committee when the members of the committee have not been named.

Mr. GEPHARDT. I understand that.

Mr. THOMAS. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. ARMEY. If the gentleman would yield further, let me just thank the gentleman from Missouri.

I believe we have clearly communicated to Members what to expect and how to check either with their committee chairman or ranking member or with their whip system. We will give as much notification as we can and see to it every Member's rights are protected.

I thank the gentleman.

Mr. GEPHARDT. I thank the gentleman.

ADJOURNMENT FROM THURSDAY, JANUARY 5, 1995 TO MONDAY, JANUARY 9, 1995

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns on the legislative day of Thursday, January 5, 1995, it adjourn to meet at 2 p.m. on Monday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAZIO of New York). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

ADJOURNMENT FROM MONDAY, JANUARY 9, 1995 TO WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 1995

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns on Monday, January 9, 1995, it adjourn to meet at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, January 11.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.