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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mrs. WALDHOLTZ].

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
May 1, 1995.

I hereby designate the Honorable ENID G. WALDHOLTZ to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING BUSINESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 1995, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member except the majority and minority leaders limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

RECESS IN SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOSS. Madam Speaker, the House has just completed a district work period, as Members know. Members are returning to Washington as we speak. The district work period is a time we all go home and listen to what the people we work for have to say. We reflect on what has been accomplished here in Washington. We report back to them. We get a little bit of a report card on how things should be done and

instructions about what it is that the people that we work for would like us to try and achieve as we go forward with the congressional agenda.

This year's spring break tragically, as we all know, was overshadowed by the terrible bomb blast that occurred April 19 in Oklahoma City. Our hearts and our prayers go out to the victims, their families, the entire Oklahoma community, and all the extraordinary Americans who have rallied together in this time of crisis. So many people were touched by this tragedy. Even in remote southwest Florida that I represent the grief was felt in families who lost loved ones who were killed in the blast. We certainly applaud the efforts of the President, Federal and local law enforcement, and Members of this Congress in coming together to bring the perpetrators to justice and explore the challenge of preventing such a tragedy from recurring again.

Madam Speaker, I spent a good part of the break meeting with citizens in Florida, from small business owners and operators to students, to representatives of the media, a broad cross section of the people who make things tick in our small corner of America. It was an extremely valuable period of dialog for me, a time to share ideas and reflect on where we as a nation need to be headed. The timing of the recess—which we all know included the tax filing deadline of April 17—helped focus people's attention on the functions of their Federal Government and the need for change in the way we conduct the Nation's business. Just about everywhere I went in my travels throughout the district and beyond the district as well, people were encouraged by the changes that are taking place up here in Congress in terms of increased efficiency, streamlined operations, less Government interference in their daily life, and maybe even achieving a better return to citizens for their hard-earned

tax dollars in the way we spend them. But there was also growing interest in tackling the challenge of reforming our tax system in a comprehensive way, and I suspect that may have had something to do with the fact that people were trying to understand those very difficult instruction forms at the last minute on April 15 when they were rushing to get in even before the extended deadline of April 17 this year. I think most people recognize that our current tax structure is inefficient, it is unfair, and it is largely incomprehensible certainly to the average American if they try and read the instructions. The paperwork alone is enough to ruin anyone's day, and the feeling is pervasive that many filers are paying too much and do not see a fair return on the investment they are required to make, and I think many agree that taxes are not moneys that are always well spent by Washington.

In fact, it was while I was home over this break that I received a note from our UPS delivery person who brought a package to my house. He scribbled his message right on the little yellow delivery ticket one gets right over the printed instructions so I could not read it exactly, but the sentiment was very clear. It said: "Today's tax system is unfair and needs to be changed." This particular citizen urged my support for a flat tax, an option that is gaining in popularity and deserves our close attention. There are, in fact, many possibilities for tax overhaul, including not just the flat tax, or some version of it, but the national sales tax and other variations on those themes. I am pleased that the chairman of the House Committee on Ways and Means and the House majority leader have committed to beginning the dialog of tax reform this year, with the possibility of real change by next year. That would certainly be a welcome relief by the time April 15 came around.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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