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No. 205

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. WICKER].

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
December 20, 1995.

I hereby designate the Honorable ROGER F. WICKER 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:

May Your word, O God, that brought the Earth into being and sustains us along life's way not only comfort us, but examine and correct us in our vision, our motivations, and our purposes. We know that we are accountable to You for our lives and responsible to each other for our deeds so we pray that we will see Your mighty purposes for justice among us. Sustain us, strengthen us, judge us, forgive us, and minister to us in the depths of our hearts. This is our earnest prayer. 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 Mississippi [Mr. MONT-

GOMERY] come forward and lead the membership in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. MONTGOMERY 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 agrees to the report of the committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 1530), "An Act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 1996 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe personnel strengths for such fiscal year for the Armed Forces, and for other purposes."

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain fifteen 1-minutes per side.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON TODAY

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with today.

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

There was no objection.

DEMOCRATS AND PRESIDENT DUCK RESPONSIBILITY

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, there are two arguments the Democrats and the President use to justify their not signing a 7-year balanced budget agreement.

One is the Medicare scare. Right now the difference between what the President and we are proposing is .7 percent a year or \$11 billion. So how can Americans believe the President when he said, "I simply cannot sign a budget that devastates Medicare to the elderly." Come on, Mr. President, we are in agreement on Medicare so stop the scare.

The other sound bite for Democrats and the President is tax cuts. The American people have suffered through at least 19 different major tax increases since 1981 without one single tax cut. There is no reason why they should have to wait another 7 to 10 years for tax relief.

Our tax cuts were paid for on April 5, 1995, before the debate began on saving Medicare. And they have nothing to do with saving Medicare. In fact we have a lock box in the Medicare legislation to keep all savings there.

The President and the Democrats have fabricated the Medicare-scare and tax cut connection because it is useful politically. "It allows them to attack and to duck responsibility, both at the same time." Those are not my words. That is from the Washington Post editorial on September 25, 1995.

Come on, Mr. President, sign the agreement and let us stop ducking responsibility.

GET VETERANS' CHECKS OUT ON TIME

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

Mr. MONTGOMERY. Mr. Speaker, first we must be sure that the 3 million

□ 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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