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House of Representatives

The House met at 11 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. ROGERS].

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 20, 1996.

I hereby designate the Honorable HAROLD ROGERS 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:

Remind us, O gracious God, that we should use our words in ways that point to the truth and in a manner that elicits conversation and discussion. May our expressions not bring forth only a concern that only promotes our place or advantage, but may our words bring hope to those who despair, light to those who cannot see, encouragement to those who feel alone, and a beacon for those who seek the truth. And may the words that we say with our lips, we believe in our hearts and all that we hold in our hearts, may we practice in our daily lives. 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 gentlewoman from Texas [Ms. JACK-

SON-LEE] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas 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-minutes on each side.

AGRICULTURE IN OKLAHOMA

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

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, in most years Rogers and Hammerstein hit the nail right on the head when they penned, "Oklahoma, where the wind comes sweeping down the plain, and the waving wheat can sure smell sweet when the wind comes right behind the rain."

Well, my friends, this is not a typical year. There has been no rain, there is no waving wheat, and it seems all we are getting this year is the wind. It is dry, my farmers and ranchers are facing another bad year, and I am just praying that most of them will make it through this tough time.

Now I know this might not be a proper place to give a Southern Plains crop and weather report, but it's the only forum I have got. On national agriculture day, we in unison should all tip our hats to the men and women that fight the elements to provide us with the cheapest and safest food and fiber supplies that this world has ever known. We can't bring them rain. But colleagues, we can give them a workable farm policy. While I have great

faith in the conferees on the farm bill to do what is right for American agriculture, I take this floor to urge them to work expeditiously to make this happen.

REPEAL HIV-DISCHARGE PROVISION IN DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

(Ms. HARMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. HARMAN. Mr. Speaker, last night the other body voted to repeal the hateful and punitive provision in the Defense Authorization Act requiring the immediate discharge of service men and women infected with the AIDS virus. I congratulate them.

Let us hope the House supports the other body's courageous action.

Mr. Speaker, requiring the discharge of HIV-positive personnel is unfair and punitive and is opposed by the Pentagon, including all the surgeons general of the military services. It is also opposed by the Veterans Administration, the Disabled American Veterans, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Air Force Association, former Senator Barry Goldwater and conservative columnists George Will and Charles Krauthammer.

It is both unnecessary and bad policy for the Congress to interpose its own personnel policy on the military. As General Shalikashvili has testified, "discharging service members with HIV deemed fit for duty would waste the Government's investment in the training of these individuals and be disruptive to the military programs in which they play an integral role."

Let's join such prodefense Senators as SAM NUNN, JOHN MCCAIN and CONNIE MACK in repealing the requirement that HIV-positive personnel be immediately discharged.

□ 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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