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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

Dr. James D. Strauss, Professor Emeritus, Lincoln Christian Seminary, Lincoln, Illinois, offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, as we finalize the 20th century, we are still searching for transcendence and meaning and community. We pray that integrity and moral commitment may dominate our decisionmaking as it affects American culture and our global village.

I pray that You, God, will be the foundation of our vision. Vision without strategy is impotent. Strategy without vision is powerless. The flies that light on the Sistine Chapel ceiling see but have no vision.

Oh God of Abraham, ruler of all that there is, DNA, black holes in space and periodic charts, give us vision and strategy as we search for transcendence and meaning and community wherein dwells our peace, hope, love and justice. Without Your presence, we are cosmic orphans in our daily lives and decisions. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. 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. Will the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. PALLONE 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

The SPEAKER. The Chair will recognize 15 one-minutes on each side.

DR. JAMES D. STRAUSS

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

Mr. REDMOND. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege this morning to welcome to the U.S. House of Representatives Dr. James D. Strauss. Professor Strauss was born on July 3, 1929, at a transition time in our history. He has studied in the United States, France and Germany. Professor Emeritus of Lincoln Christian Seminary, Lincoln, Illinois, he has taught philosophy and theology for 30 years.

His special emphasis has been the influence of scientific development on the Christian world view. His major concern is to critique the impact of media and education on the Christian faith in our multicultural pluralistic era.

Dr. Strauss is no ordinary professor. For 40 years his sharp mind has ignited sleeping minds, his commitment has influenced great accomplishments in others, his servant's heart has moved others to service. His profound grasp of reality has inspired others in such a way that they understand their place in the universe. He has acknowledged that if he has made any contribution in his journey at all, it is because he has stood on the backs of giants.

With humility, we welcome to the House of Representatives Dr. James D. Strauss.

THE MARRIAGE PENALTY

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

Mr. GINGRICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring to my colleagues' attention the fact that the House budget resolution, which will be debated today and probably voted on tomorrow, calls for about \$100 billion over five years in tax cuts. It specifically singles out the marriage penalty as a key tax burden that we should provide families relief from. Let me just say, I have a particular interest in this because my younger daughter got married earlier this year. She actually found out how much more she and her husband will pay.

But without drawing my own family directly into this, let me cite from Bobby and Susan from Marietta, Georgia, whom I represent. Bobby and Susan wrote in. They said, "When we figured our 1996 tax return, we figured what our tax would be if we were just living together instead of married. Imagine our disgust when we discovered that if we just lived together instead of being married we would have saved an additional \$1,000. So much for the vaunted family values of our government. Our government is sending a very bad message to young adults by penalizing marriage this way."

I just think this is a chance to vote a very simple principle. We can save 1 percent of spending over the next five years and get rid of the marriage penalty that punishes people for being married. I think to have a pro-family tax code with a slightly leaner government is a pretty good "yes" vote. I hope my colleagues will join me. Let us save 1 percent of projected Federal spending, get rid of the marriage penalty and send the right signal to all Americans.

THE REPUBLICAN BUDGET SHOWS THE GOP'S TRUE COLORS

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

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

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Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, if anyone out there was worried that the Republican leadership of the House was straying from their extremist agenda, fear not, because the budget resolution coming to the House floor today is as extreme as they come.

First and foremost, the Republican budget resolution fails to protect Social Security, but it does not stop there. The budget resolution also cuts funding to educate our children, protect our environment, and provide adequate health care for working American families.

What is really upsetting about this Republican budget resolution is that these extreme cuts are not done in the name of fiscal responsibility or debt reduction. No, instead what Speaker Gingrich and the Republican leadership want to do is provide more tax breaks for the wealthy at the expense of American seniors, kids and working families.

The Republican budget resolution clearly demonstrates that the Speaker's priorities lay somewhere beyond the American working family. The Republican leadership has not learned any lessons since 1995, and we will see today that the Speaker will not even get the support of many of his own House Republicans, much less the American people.

A COMMON SENSE BUDGET

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

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, only the Democrats would call this budget extremist. Only the Democrats would say taking 1 percent out of a \$9 trillion spending spree by this government actually designed by them is extremist, one penny out of \$1.

The Kasich budget is a common sense document that mandates a smarter, more efficient government. It says that we in Washington should spend a little less so that the American working family can spend a little more to help them achieve their dreams.

Some Democrats find this burden to be unbearable. They say that we will not be able to find the savings. They say that we are extremist. They say we should not give working families tax relief.

I urge the opponents of this budget to justify their opposition to the American people. Tell them that you cannot save a penny on the dollar. Tell them that they do not deserve tax relief today. I urge my colleagues to support the common sense budget.

AN EXTREME BUDGET

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

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, one of the proudest moments of this Congress is when Democrats and Republicans, the

Congress and the White House put aside their partisan differences and worked out a balanced budget. It not only balanced the Federal budget and brought us into surplus but has led to a very hot, growing economy.

Now the Republican budget would reject that bipartisan agreement and take us back to the extremism that led to the shutdown of our government. It would mean cuts up to 25 percent, not 1 percent, of many programs that we have in government.

Do not take my word for it. Senator DOMENICI said the Republican budget is a mockery. Senator STEVENS, chairman of the Senate Committee on Appropriations said, "I do not think Congress could function."

This is an extreme budget. For the sake of our veterans, for the sake of our students, for the sake of our seniors, for the sake of our taxpayers, let us, in a bipartisan manner, reject this extreme budget.

THE ENERGY POLICY ACT OF 1997

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, Congress wrote a massive energy bill in 1994 called the Energy Policy Act which outlined ways for the United States to address our Nation's vulnerable reliance on foreign oil.

Unfortunately, this statute has already run into trouble. The Department of Energy admits this in its own report to Congress stating, quote, "Despite the many uncertainties, it preliminarily appears that the programs authorized by Congress in EPACT will fall substantially short of the year 2010 goal of 30 percent displacement."

Mr. Speaker, the program does not work. I and the gentlewoman from Missouri (Ms. MCCARTHY) have introduced legislation to address this problem. Our legislation would allow fleet managers to use biodiesel blends to comply with the mandates of EPACT, without tax credits or incentives.

I urge my colleagues to cosponsor H.R. 2568, the Energy Policy Act of 1997.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

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

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a proud new parent of a baby boy born to Tawni and myself a week ago last Wednesday. Tawni and Matthew are doing very well at home right now. Matthew's older brother Johnny is also recovering from all the excitement.

I could not think of a better birthday present to give to Matthew and the other children around this country, as we resume debate this week on campaign finance reform, that this United States Congress enacts meaningful

campaign finance reform, reform that starts to get the big money and the influence of money out of this political process so that children like Matthew across the country, who want to grow up and serve in public service, do not have to be either independently wealthy or have to go out and raise a million dollars for the campaign. That, I think, would be a tremendous gift that we can give to the children in this country.

Matthew, happy birthday. I look forward to a very long and happy life as your and Johnny's father.

SUPPORT FOR RESTORATION OF FOOD STAMPS FOR LEGAL U.S. RESIDENTS

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, today the House will likely vote on legislation which was passed overwhelmingly by the Senate to restore food stamps to thousands of disabled and elderly U.S. legal residents, as well as families with children, and they have entered this country legally, they pay their taxes and they abide by the law.

Since Congress unfairly ended food stamp benefits to U.S. legal residents, more than 900,000 taxpayers have lost their access to food stamps. Sixty-five percent of those affected are families with children. In my home State of Florida nearly 10 percent of the recipients lost eligibility, and most were families with kids. The funds for food stamps in this bill will only be directed to legal U.S. residents who were here before the benefits were terminated.

It is fitting that this great Nation, which gave these permanent residents a new opportunity, will now lend them a helping hand in their times of need after years of contributing to our country. I urge my colleagues to restore the benefits of food stamps to U.S. legal residents.

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VOTE AGAINST THE ISTOOK AMENDMENT

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

Mr. EDWARDS. Parents, beware, Mr. Speaker. If the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. ISTOOK) in the next 5 hours is successful in beginning the process to amend the Bill of Rights for the first time in our Nation's history, public schools across America will begin to look like public airports, where religious groups, cults and fanatics can go to our public school grounds and try to convert small children to their particular religious beliefs.

I do not think the parents of America want to send their children to school to be proselytized. They send their children to school to be educated.