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Senate

The Senate was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 6, 1999, at 12 noon.

House of Representatives

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18, 1998

PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE—IMPEACHING WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, FOR HIGH CRIMES AND MISDEMEANORS

(Continued)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The Chair reminds all persons in the gallery that they are here as guests of the House. Any manifestation of approval or disapproval of proceedings is in violation of the rules of the House.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MASCARA).

(Mr. MASCARA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MASCARA. Mr. Speaker, I come to the well today to express my disappointment at the impeachment proceedings that are taking place on the House floor today. I am deeply disappointed and disillusioned. As debate continues tonight, I would like to ironically quote President Nixon who said the Nation needs a sense of history more than a sense of histrionics.

As I listened to the Clerk reading the articles of impeachment today, I was both saddened and ashamed to be a part of these proceedings. It is an emotional time for me, to participate in this dark period of our history impeaching the President of the United States. I have consistently defended the integrity of public service generally and service in this House, specifically saying that in spite of the

cynicism and the low regard, oftentimes, and hatred for elective office, I am proud and honored to be a Member of the United States House of Representatives. Regrettably, those feelings have been somewhat diminished and tainted as a result of these unfair proceedings.

While the President's behavior was reprehensible, most constitutional scholars believe these charges do not rise to a level of impeachment.

I oppose the House Resolution 611.

Mr. Speaker, I seldom come to the House floor to speak unless I have something important to say. And I have never made disparaging remarks about any Member of this House—Republican or Democrat.

I come to the well today to express my disappointment at the impeachment proceedings that are taking place on the House floor today. I am deeply disappointed and disillusioned. As the debate continues tonight I would like to ironically quote President Nixon who said "The nations needs a sense of history more than a sense of historionics. As I listened to the clerk reading the articles of impeachment this morning, I was both saddened and ashamed to be a part of these proceedings. It was an emotional time for me to participate in a dark period of our history—Impeaching the President of the United States.

I have consistently defended the integrity of public service generally, and service in this House specifically, saying that in spite of the cynicism out there regarding elective office, I am proud and honored to be a Member of the House of Representatives. Regrettably, those feelings have been somewhat diminished and tainted as a result of these unfair proceedings.

While the President's behavior was reprehensible most constitutional scholars, be-

lieve the charges here today do not rise to the level of impeachable offenses.

We have been asked to vote our conscience, yet the majority is denying Members, both Democrats and Republicans, the right to vote their conscience in favor of censure. That is patently unfair. A majority of the American people are being denied an opportunity for their voice to be heard on an issue overturning their electoral will. This is deeply dividing our Nation. Polarizing our citizens.

I ask our Republican friends to be fair! To do the right thing! Permit a vote on censure.

I oppose House Resolution 611.

Mr. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 40 seconds.

I just want to respond to the charges of the coup d'etat again and what the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) said a while ago, that all the scholars we had before our committee said that these were nonimpeachable offenses, that prosecutors would not indict, that this would overthrow an election.

The fact is, there is a wide division over the impeachment question. We had just as many scholars who said these are impeachable.

I happen to believe deeply perjury is equally grave or more grave than bribery and we in fact punish it more severely. As far as prosecutors, there are a lot of prosecutors who indict. We had one panel of the President's witnesses saying that.

We are not about to overthrow an election. We are simply about to send a matter to a trial in the Senate who might choose to do that if they find the President guilty of perjury and obstruction of justice.

□ 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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