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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 (Mr. BISHOP of Utah).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

Washington, DC, September 23, 2003.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ROB BISHOP of Utah to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Monahan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 3. An act to prohibit the procedure commonly known as partial-birth abortion.

The message also announced that under the authority of the Order of July 30, 2003, the Senate disagrees to the amendment of the House to the bill (S. 3) "An Act to prohibit the procedure commonly known as partial-birth abortion", agree to a conference asked by the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints Mr. HATCH, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. SANTORUM, Mrs. FEINSTEIN and Mrs. BOXER, to be the conferees on the part of the Senate.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2003, 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 leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

REPEALING THE TAX ON THE DEATH GRATUITY

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, this is a very important issue that I bring to the floor. As you can see behind me, these are the faces of just a few of the men and women who have died for this country, both in Afghanistan and Iraq. I bring this to the floor because last year I introduced a bill to repeal the tax on the death gratuity.

The death gratuity, Mr. Speaker, is a "thank you," if you will, not enough, but it is a check that is given to the families of those who have given loved ones in uniform that have died for this country. I want to say to the leadership on both sides that last year you did, and I thank both sides, put the language from that bill into a larger bill to bring tax relief to our men and women in uniform, but the other body did not pass the bill.

This year, I put the bill back in as H.R. 693, to repeal the tax on the death gratuity. It was put into a larger bill known as the Military Tax Fairness Act, supported by both sides, sent to the other body, known as the Senate, and they still have not moved that bill. So I am coming to the floor as much as possible to ask the leadership on the House side, both Republican and Democrat, to please bring up as a stand-alone bill, H.R. 693.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to show you another photograph. This is a young fellow whose father was killed in Iraq. His name is Tyler Jordan. His father was a Gunnery Sergeant killed while fighting for freedom in Iraq. Mr. Speaker, I bring this to the floor because this next year, his mother will receive a tax bill from Uncle Sam.

Mr. Speaker, how much does a family have to give? It gives a loved one, who has died for freedom, to protect the American people. Why can we not, as a Congress, send to the President, before we leave in November, a bill to say that we are going to repeal the tax on the death gratuity?

Mr. Speaker, I hope that the leadership on the House side, both Republican and Democrat, will join me in bringing this bill to the floor as a stand-alone bill, and let us send it to the other body and ask them to please look into their own hearts and pass that legislation and send it to the President. No family that has given a loved one, and in many cases a child, a father, a husband, should be asked next year by Uncle Sam to pay a tax on that gift.

So, with that, Mr. Speaker, I am going to close, as I do all over my district, the Third District of North Carolina, the home of Camp Lejeune Marine Base, Cherry Point Marine Corps Air Station and Seymour Johnson Air Force Base.

Mr. Speaker, I ask God to please bless the men and women in uniform; I ask God to please bless the families of the men and women in uniform; I ask God to please hold the families who have lost loved ones in His loving arms. I ask God to please bless the House and Senate, that we will do what is right in the eyes of the Lord; and I ask God to please bless the President of the United States, that will he have courage and wisdom to what is right for this Nation, today and tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, I close three times by asking God, God please, God please, God please continue to bless America.

THE COST OF THE IRAQ WAR AND OCCUPATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Ohio

□ 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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