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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: Lord, throughout the sacred history of the Bible, You have called people. Sometimes they are asked to leave the familiar and set out into an unknown future. In all cases, they are given a specific purpose or mission. Usually those You call are asked to serve others.

What a blessing it is to serve at Your call and to act in Your name.

Bless the Members of the House of Representatives. You have brought them here to be attentive to the needs of their constituents and at the same time serve the Nation and national interests.

Bless them for Your service. They come to do Your will. To pour out themselves in the service of others is to reveal Your Spirit at work in them. 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 York (Mr. McNULTY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. McNULTY 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. Monahan, one of its clerks, announced

that the Senate has passed without amendment a concurrent resolution of the House of the following title:

H. Con. Res. 355. Concurrent Resolution congratulating the University of Delaware men's football team for winning the National Collegiate Athletic Association I-AA national championship.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain ten 1-minutes per side.

AMERICA IS TIRED OF NEGATIVE POLITICS

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

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor outraged and disappointed at the conduct of the Presidential candidate, Senator JOHN KERRY. To issue a term about our Commander in Chief and calling him a liar is disgusting, despicable; and we reject this kind of politics.

Today, it was reported on Fox News that the Saddam Hussein government stole over \$4 billion from the Food-for-Oil Program to help the poor people in that country of Iraq. They spent the proceeds of that \$4 billion bribing and paying off officers all over the world. 400,000-plus people died at the hands of Saddam Hussein, and the candidate running for President is calling our Commander in Chief a liar.

I think that is regrettable, think it is disgusting; and they have consistently used this kind of terminology throughout this entire campaign. America is tired of negative politics.

I challenge the Senator to talk about what you will do for the people of this country rather than tearing down the institution of the President. You cannot have it both ways. You cannot have it both ways, and I am sick and tired of

this kind of language polluting political airways and making our children wonder why they should vote.

He did not think he was miked. What you say in silence is what you will say everywhere you go. So whether you thought the mike on or not, Mr. KERRY, you were wrong.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GOODLATTE). Members are cautioned not to make personal references to Members of the Senate even if they are apparently to be nominated Presidential candidates.

UNJUST IMPRISONMENT OF NGUYEN VU BINH

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to voice my outrage over the Vietnamese Government's imprisonment of Mr. Nguyen Vu Binh.

On December 31, 2003, writer Nguyen Vu Binh was sentenced to 7 years in jail plus 3 years of house arrest after that. His charge? Writing and exchanging with various opportunistic elements in the country and communicating with reactionary organizations abroad.

My colleagues might be surprised to know that the United States Congress is one of those reactionary organizations. On July 19, 2002, Mr. Binh submitted testimony to the congressional Human Rights Caucus, highlighting Vietnam's assault on human rights, and I would like to read an excerpt from that.

He said, "The ultimate goal of the Vietnamese government is to isolate, separate and divide the democracy activists. They achieve this goal through

□ 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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tactics carefully applied to each target.”

Two months after he submitted this testimony here, Mr. Binh became a target and was taken into custody. This simply must stop.

I urge the Vietnamese government to facilitate the immediate release of Mr. Binh and to afford its citizens the freedoms that they deserve.

ANNIVERSARY OF LEBANESE WAR OF LIBERATION

(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, 15 years ago today the Lebanese people and their last legitimate government, headed by Prime Minister Aoun, courageously engaged in a war of liberation against Syria.

For 19 months, this heroic people fought to save and defend that which Syria wanted to destroy, Lebanese sovereignty and independence. Tragically, the Syrian regime overpowered them and succeeded in turning Lebanon into a captive nation.

Today, Syria harasses, arrests, imprisons, tortures and disappears anyone who speaks out against Syria's domination of Lebanon, and its campaign of intimidation extends here to the U.S. Congress.

Late last year, General Aoun appeared before the Subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia, which I chair, to address Members about Syrian occupation of and terrorist activities in Lebanon. For this, he was charged with treason, tried in absentia and sentenced to 15 years of hard labor.

We must send a clear message to Syria that its continued occupation of Lebanon will not be tolerated. Lebanon is a captive nation, and we must not rest until Lebanon is free from Syria's regime and their strangle hold.

TRANSIT FUNDING

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, Federal transportation law currently penalizes communities like Redding and Lancaster, Pennsylvania, in my district or like South Bend, Indiana; Lubbock, Texas; Shreveport, Louisiana; Wichita, Kansas; Jackson, Mississippi; Fort Collins, Colorado; communities like them all over the country.

When these communities reach 200,000 people, transit systems in these areas are required to spend Federal money like the big-city transit system. They lose their flexibility. What they need is a small system with unique needs. They are lumped in with the New Yorks and the Philadelphias. But areas like Lancaster and Redding are nothing like Philadelphia.

As a result, people in these areas and dozens of others lose out, and that is

why I introduced a bill to prevent the Federal Government from penalizing these thriving communities, the Transit Flexibility Protection Act. This bill does not authorize new money. It merely protects small transit systems and their ability to use Federal funds wisely.

If we are going to invest in public transit, we should at least do it in a way that truly promotes it in communities like these.

IN DEFENSE OF ANTHONY RAIMONDO

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

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, I am here today to defend a good American and a good Nebraskan, Tony Raimondo, who lives the American Dream of building a manufacturing plant in Nebraska and having several others throughout the country, employing now 1,200 people that make farm equipment, fencing, tanks, metal buildings. The Bush administration has tapped his expertise to become the new American manufacturing czar; but of course, then this has to be roiled down into Presidential politics.

The Kerry campaign, in a rather deceitful way, attacking a great American, Tony Raimondo, because out of 1,200 American jobs that he has created, they have 180 jobs in China to make farm equipment to sell in China.

This is not an issue of outsourcing jobs. This is an issue of being efficient in a global economy. This is a great American, and I stand to defend him against these unwarranted, deceitful, political, presidential-year politics and attacks.

SIGNING OF IRAQI INTERIM CONSTITUTION

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to come to the floor of the House today to recognize a momentous event and a momentous event that occurred earlier this week, and I do not think it has gotten sufficient press and that, of course, was the signing of the Iraqi interim constitution by the 25 signatories earlier this week.

We heard a lot of information on Friday when the signing was held up, but the press scarcely reported what will likely be one of the events that will shape not only the world events around us but shape events for the next century.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate our President on his leadership for getting this accomplished. I want to congratulate Ambassador Bremer in Iraq. I know he is looking forward to the conclusion of his term there when sovereignty is returned to the Iraqis. They

have got a hard job ahead of them. Four elections within the next year's time will be a daunting task for them, but they have laid the groundwork. They have laid the foundation.

Again, congratulations to our President, congratulations on his leadership for getting this interim constitution signed in a timely fashion.

AMERICA STANDS WITH SPAIN

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, America awoke this morning to learn the tragic news that at least 170 people were massacred and over 600 wounded in terrorist attacks on the public transit system in Madrid, Spain. The Basque terrorist group, ETA, is believed to be responsible for these murderous bombings.

This is only the latest in a global campaign of terror that seeks to undermine freedom and democracy throughout the world by taking the lives of innocent civilians. Since the terrorist attacks of September 11 here in America, there have been deadly attacks from Morocco to Indonesia and from India to Turkey and Russia, along with assaults in Iraq and Saudi Arabia.

As British Prime Minister Tony Blair has rightly said this morning, "This terrible attack underlines the threat that we all continue to face from terrorism in many countries and why we must all work together internationally to safeguard our peoples against such attacks and defeat terrorism."

Our allies in Spain, led ably by the courageous prime minister, Jose Maria Aznar, should know that Americans mourn with them today. America is committed to stand by Spain to defeat global terrorism, as we are grateful for the Spanish heritage of America.

In conclusion, may God bless our troops; and we will never forget September 11.

RECOGNIZING ARIZONA CHAPTER OF ASSOCIATED GENERAL CONTRACTORS AND ARIZONA ROCK PRODUCTS ASSOCIATION

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

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to two local associations in my home State of Arizona: the Arizona chapter of the Associated General Contractors and the Arizona Rock Products Association.

Sunshine Acres Children Home, in my home district of Mesa, Arizona, was in desperate need of paved roads and paved emergency roads. These are required and mandated by the city of Mesa. The Associated General Contractors and the Arizona Rock Products Association were able to join forces and donate their expertise, materials,