

work of the people You lay upon their shoulders.

Fill them with wisdom and prudence that all their efforts on behalf of the needy and the forsaken may bring them satisfaction in their labors. And enkindle renewed hope for those who are in most need of Your mercy.

Make of them true leaders who live beyond self-interest and serve their brothers and sisters in this land of promise. To You, our God and Father, we commend this Nation, and we ultimately place all our trust in You, now and forever. 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. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON 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.

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. 148. An Act to establish a United States Boxing Commission to administer the Act, and for other purposes.

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES SCORING VICTORIES ON EVERY FRONT

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

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, ever since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, punctured both our national security and our national economy, the House has responded on both fronts. We have worked tirelessly to both secure our homeland and defeat our terrorist enemies around the world, and we have worked with equal determination to secure our economy, helping it to grow and create jobs over the last 3½ years.

These two missions, economic prosperity and military victory, are so intertwined that it could be said that winning the war on terror is America's top economic priority, while growing our economy is a wartime necessity. Both prongs of our agenda are succeeding, Mr. Speaker.

Last week, the Department of Labor reported that 274,000 jobs were created in April, far more than economists predicted, while unemployment came in at just 5.2 percent. Meanwhile, the Congressional Budget Office reported that the deficit projection for the first 7 months of the fiscal year is \$50 billion lower than previously estimated. The deficit is going down. New home sales grew 12.2 percent over last year, and the overall economy grew at 3.1 percent for the first quarter of 2005. The economy is strong, it continues to grow, and that strength and growth make it possible for us to meet the needs of our military and conquer the challenges of the war on terror.

Last week, Mr. Speaker, we built on those successes by passing President Bush's emergency supplemental war budget with strong bipartisan support. And at the same time, offensive operations in the Iraqi and Afghani theaters have netted our troops significant victories over the last week. Dozens of terrorists and insurgents have been captured, and our intelligence gatherers continue to close the noose around our enemies.

Our continued success around the world enhances our security here at home, where this week we will add to that momentum by taking up a bill to reform the way that the Federal Government funds our first responders.

Under the new bill, firefighters, police, and emergency medical personnel will get the money they need via a streamlined funding system. That will help bolster our homeland security and national preparedness, which will further protect our economy, which will, in turn, continue to support our war effort.

All of these priorities are of a kind, Mr. Speaker: homeland security, national security, and economic strength; and this week, the House will score victories on every front.

U.S. NEEDS TO GET OUT OF IRAQ

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, the administration is closing defense bases here at home and building new bases in Iraq. There is no money to maintain some defense installations here, but there is \$270 billion and counting for establishing a permanent presence in Iraq. The Armed Forces ranks are depleted. Enlistment is falling off. So the administration is hard at work privatizing the war, having hired about 20,000 so-called contractors, mercenaries, to do work that used to be done by the military.

A member of the new private army in Iraq may make as much as 10 times more than what an enlisted soldier makes, and private companies making billions from the Iraq war will no doubt be quick to make political contributions to make sure the war keeps

going. Our Reservist and National Guard units are fortifying a mission to which they should have never been called.

Iraq has turned into a tragedy. What is even more tragic is the thinking that says, Well, we are there; now we need to stay and finish the job.

Mr. Speaker, we need to get out. The sooner the better. And we need to hold accountable those whose lies sent our soldiers there at the cost of many American lives and the lives of innocent Iraqis.

RECOGNIZING THE WOMEN OF TOMORROW MENTOR AND SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

(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, I would like to recognize an outstanding group from my congressional district, south Florida, the Women of Tomorrow Mentor and Scholarship Program: its founder, Jennifer Valoppi; its sponsor, NBC Channel 6; and, of course, their board of directors, Don Browne, Katherine Fernandez-Rundle, Donna Feldman, Judge Judy Kreeger, Marita Srebnick, and Sherry Williams, for their steadfast commitment to the women of our south Florida community.

Women of Tomorrow is a mentor and scholarship program designed to guide, to inspire, and to help at-risk young women achieve their true potential through education, job training, resume-building, and skill development.

We as a society have a profound obligation to enrich the lives of all of our citizens, and Women of Tomorrow fulfills that obligation by encouraging young women to achieve their dreams and embrace their true dignity.

I am proud of all of those who are associated with Women of Tomorrow for their continuing efforts to improving the lives of south Florida's youth.

ADDRESSING GANG VIOLENCE

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak about the increasing problem of gang violence.

Since 2001, we have seen drastic budget cuts in youth violence prevention. At-risk kids need support and a place to go after school. They need the fundamental tools to make good choices.

Instead of funding these programs, the Congress has chosen to lock them up and throw away the key.

Mr. Speaker, what kind of message is this, and the bill that we are going to take up this week, giving to our at-risk youth? We must provide at-risk youth with a path to succeed, not a path to prison.