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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:

O God of light and understanding, fill Your people with great expectations. With Your guidance and creative presence, good people working together can accomplish almost any goal set before them. Heartfelt prayer must conform their intention to Your holy will.

Be with the Members of Congress today as they accomplish the work of the people in this House of Representatives. Stir within them a wisdom that penetrates every problem. Send them sound knowledge to surround every issue important to this Nation, so that the consequences of their action, which will be felt around the world, may build true security and grant lasting peace both in our day and forever. 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 gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio 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 entertain up to 10 one-minutes on each side.

HONORING OUR TROOPS' SACRIFICE

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, following an historic election, the Iraqi people took another huge step towards democracy with nearly 79 percent approving a new constitution. However, this political milestone was not reached without a cost paid by our American soldiers.

As we sadly marked the 2,000th death in Iraq, we must take time to honor the sacrifice our soldiers have made for this country. Our men and women are fighting terrorists in Iraq, so that we do not have to fight them in this country. Now is the time to honor these soldiers and thank their families for the sacrifices they are making to keep our country safe.

Unfortunately, there are some out there who have chosen this solemn occasion to score political points. They are using this opportunity to call for withdrawal of our troops from Iraq. Nothing could be more wrong. Bailing out would hand a victory to the terrorists and a defeat to the United States.

One group is actually using this occasion to raise funds. Featured on their Web site is a television ad featuring a coffin in the sand. Click on this ad, and you are immediately taken to a contribution page asking for a donation.

Mr. Speaker, we need to continue to honor our troops by staying the course in Iraq. Using these sacrifices for political purposes, as many are doing, is wrong.

CLEAN DRINKING WATER

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, our Chaplain reminded us that our actions on the floor of the House are felt around the world. Well, today, one half of the people who are ill around the world are sick needlessly from waterborne disease, and up to 5 million are going to die this year as a result.

We know how to solve this problem, and the solution is affordable. For less than what it costs our Europeans for perfume in a year, or less than what Americans spend on elective surgery, we could fulfill the United Nations commitment to cut in half the people without safe drinking water and sanitation by the year 2015.

Sadly, the United States, despite its leadership in the United Nations on this issue, still does not have a comprehensive program to address this crisis. Our International Relations Committee is sending to the floor bipartisan legislation to correct this policy deficiency. H.R. 1973, the Senator Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act, will establish safe drinking water and sanitation as a core foreign policy principle and create a plan. Today is the last day to add your name to the list of sponsors. I ask that you do so before it reaches the floor.

SHERIFF SIGI GONZALEZ, JR., TEXAS LAWMAN

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

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, in the early morning hours of this past weekend, I accompanied Zapata County Sheriff Sigifredo ''Sigi'' Gonzalez, Jr., his SWAT team and posse of deputies who were patrolling the U.S.-Mexico border in south Texas.

Every day Sigi leads his small 24-member force into the daily battle to protect Zapata County from the invasion of drug lords and human smugglers. Lots of drug money, filthy lucre, as I call it, fund these dangerous drug organizations and human smugglers that lurk across the Rio Grande River. These outlaws have better guns, better

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vehicles, better electronic surveillance equipment than the good guys. They even track our peace officers with GPS when they use their cell phones. These drug demons who bring narcotics into the United States make $30,000 a week. Sheriff Gonzalez makes about $40,000 a year.

Sheriff Gonzalez is an unwavering patriot and an outstanding Texas lawman. He is defending America against illegal invaders and fighting the war against vicious, violent drug cartels that threaten our home and our country. He and his dedicated deputies need resources and funding to help fund the war for the border. Our homeland is worth protecting. That is just the way it is.

THREE GREAT WOMEN

(Mrs. JONES of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I rise today to discuss the lives of three great women. The old people used to say that trouble comes in threes; and the threes I am thinking of are Constance Baker Motley, who was the first African-American woman elected to the New York State Senate in 1964, first woman to serve as Manhattan Borough president in 1965, and appointed the first African-American Federal judge in 1966.

The second is C. Delores Tucker, the first African-American woman to serve as Secretary of State of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and in any State in America. She went on to be an advocate for appointment of women in presidential administrations.

Third, we lost Rosa Parks this week. They are three significant, hard-working, dedicated African-American women who stood out in history in the work that they did. I stand today and ask all of you to join me in extending sympathies and condolences to the families of C. Delores Tucker, Constance Baker Motley, and Rosa Parks.

PRESIDENT ADDRESSES ECONOMIC CLUB OF WASHINGTON, DC

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

Mr. PENCE. When it comes to making tough choices in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, Madam Speaker, Presidential leadership will make the difference. Yesterday in remarks before the Economic Club of Washington, DC, the President of the United States called on Congress to ''redouble our efforts to be wise about how we spend your money.'' The President went on to say, ''We can help the people of the gulf coast region recover and rebuild and we can be good stewards of the taxpayers' dollars at the same time.'' He called on Congress to reduce unnecessary spending, to identify offsets, and pledged again to offer spending rescissions to provide the emergency relief, in his words, in a fiscally responsible way.

President George W. Bush yesterday encouraged Congress to push the envelope when it comes to cutting spending, and his strong leadership will make the difference. Congress should heed the call of President Bush to rebuild with generosity and fiscal responsibility in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

CLIMATE CHANGE

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I am urging all Members of the House to join in support of House Resolution 151, which is a resolution of inquiry that requests the President of the United States to provide to the House of Representatives documents in his possession relating to the anticipated effects of climate change on the coastal regions of the United States.

With the devastation of hurricanes Wilma, Rita and others, we are aware that there is a new phenomenon that is affecting this country with respect to climate change. Scientists may dispute whether or not the meteorological changes that we have witnessed are somehow related to changes in the global climate, but one thing for sure, it is important that Congress begin a dialogue with the administration.

It is important that we find out what connection there may be with climate change and effects on coastal regions. Hurricane Katrina certainly illustrated that we should be concerned about climate change. This resolution of inquiry, now sponsored by 151 Members of the House, aims to get the facts from the administration and begin a dialogue that would be important to our Nation's economy and our national security.

CONCERN—NOT PANIC

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, have you seen the headlines:

Bird Flu Anxiety Spreads Across Europe.

Bird Flu Could Kill 150 Million People.

WHO Warns of Dire Flu Pandemic.

Media should report facts, not create panic. Unfortunately, today many of the stories we see and read are short on facts and long on panic. It is time we brought some sanity to all the sensationalism. No one should doubt the potential of the bird flu. However, responsible people are working diligently to be certain that we are prepared for any threat and are able to respond quickly.

Certain facts are important to keep in mind. This Avian flu virus has been around since at least 1997. It is not a new phenomenon. The CDC states that ''the current risk to Americans is low.'' So there is cause for concern, but not panic. Our real concern should be expanded. We need to address our ability to respond to any infectious disease. Providing incentives to U.S.-based companies for vaccine production and building a routine adult immunization program are just two of the positive steps we should take. Importantly, these actions should move forward in an environment of concern, not panic.

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IRAQ MILESTONES

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Madam Speaker, this week we passed two milestones in Iraq: The constitution was ratified, and, tragically, the 2,000th American died. These milestones, one positive, one clearly negative, provide us with an opportunity to review our progress in Iraq. This is not a time to debate how we got into Iraq. What is important is resolving the mess.

Hear what the experts are saying: Retired Army Lieutenant General William Odom, former head of the National Security Agency, said that the invasion of Iraq ''will turn out to be the greatest strategic disaster in U.S. history.''

Brent Scowcroft, National Security Adviser under the first President George Bush, said, ''You have to know when to stop using force. You can encourage democracy over time, with assistance, and aid, the traditional way. Not how the neoconservatives'' are trying to do it in Iraq.

And Lawrence Wilkerson, a retired lieutenant colonel and former Secretary of State Colin Powell's former Chief of Staff at the State Department, said President Bush's foreign policy was ''ruinous'' and said that ''we have courted disaster in Iraq, in North Korea, in Iran.''

These are not the words of partisans or the board members of MoveOn.org. As these experts and the American people know, it is time for a new direction and new priorities. We can do better. The current path is not a path to success. It is time for the President to level with the American people and produce a plan forward.

SUPPORTING THE NOMINATION OF DR. BEN BERNANKE

(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. Madam Speaker, I am thrilled that President Bush has nominated a son of South Carolina to serve as Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board.

As a boy in Dillon, South Carolina, Ben Bernanke demonstrated his brilliance for economics at a young age. He