

## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Wednesday, November 3, 1999

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE).

### DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,  
November 3, 1999.

I hereby appoint the Honorable STEVEN C. LATOURETTE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Reverend James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

Let us pray, using the words of Psalm 46:

God is our refuge and strength,  
a very present help in trouble.  
Therefore, we will not fear  
though the earth should change,  
though the mountains shake in the heart of  
the sea;  
though its waters roar and foam,  
though the mountains tremble with its tumult.  
There is a river whose streams make glad  
the city of God,  
the holy habitation of the Most High.  
God is in the midst of her, she shall not be  
moved;  
God will help her right early.  
The nations rage, the kingdoms totter;  
He utters His voice,  
the earth melts.  
The lord of hosts is with us;  
the God of Jacob is our refuge. 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.

Mr. McNULTY. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Chair's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Chair's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. McNULTY. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California 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 Ms. McDevitt, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed bills and concurrent resolutions of the following titles in which concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 440. An act to provide support for certain institutes and schools.

S. 1843. An act to designate certain Federal land in the Talladega National Forest, Alabama, as the "Dugger Mountain Wilderness".

S. 1844. An act to amend part D of title IV of the Social Security Act to provide for an alternative penalty procedure with respect to compliance with requirements for a State disbursement unit.

S. Con. Res. 66. Concurrent resolution to authorize the printing of "Capitol Builder: The Shorthand Journals of Captain Montgomery C. Meigs, 1853-1861".

S. Con. Res. 67. Concurrent resolution to authorize the printing of "The United States Capitol: A Chronicle of Construction, Design, and Politics".

### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain 15 1-minute speeches on each side.

### GOOD NEWS

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

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, no surprises, just some good news. Yesterday the U.S. Government announced that it paid off nearly \$16 billion of the national debt.

There is more. The Treasury Department also stated that it expected to retire another \$12 billion in the first

quarter of next year alone. We are beginning to pay off that \$5.5 trillion national debt, and for the first time since Dwight D. Eisenhower was President, the U.S. can boast of back-to-back budget surpluses.

How did we achieve those budget surpluses? Simple, a Republican Congress remained committed to reducing wasteful government spending.

As we continue to debate the appropriation bills for next year, it is my hope that we can continue to build upon our successes. Americans want and deserve a Federal Government that spends their tax dollars wisely. Let us not disappoint them.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of any remaining government waste that continues to permeate this area.

### REGARDING THE BROOKLYN MUSEUM

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the First Amendment on a very important victory. A Federal court has ordered the mayor of the city of New York and his administration to end its campaign to evict the Brooklyn Museum from its facilities over an exhibit that he and some others found offensive.

This was not a serious challenge for the First Amendment, because it is clear to even students of the most basic constitutional law class that this case had no merit and was brought for entirely political reasons, though every once in a while it is nice to reaffirm that the First Amendment is as strong as ever.

Mr. Speaker, the Bill of Rights is clear, the government may not interfere with the free expression of anyone. What the mayor and his administration attempted to do was censorship, pure and simple. The mayor tried to impose his own cultural tastes on the museum, and tried to hold it hostage to his demands that a particular exhibition would be withdrawn.

If he had been victorious, it could have had a real chilling effect. But the First Amendment is stronger than the whims of elected officials. It has won yet again. Quoting from the said Federal court decision, "There is no Federal constitutional issue more grave than the effort by government officials to censor works of expression and to threaten the vitality of a major cultural institution as a punishment for failing to abide by governmental demands for orthodoxy."

This is a victory for the Brooklyn Museum, for the artistic community, a

☐ 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.