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

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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


I hereby appoint the Honorable EDWARD A. PEASE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

PRAYER

The Reverend Duane Carlson, Pastor Emeritus, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Springfield, Virginia, offered the following prayer:

O God, we are bold to ask that You deliver us.

Deliver us from failure of moral fiber in our citizenship, from the counting of things material above virtues spiritual; deliver us from vulgarity of life, loss of social conscience and collapse of character.

Deliver us by the deep faiths on which the foundations of our land were laid and the sacrifices of the countless who have gone before us; by the memories of leaders of this Nation whose wisdom saved us, whose devotion chastens us, whose character inspires us.

Keep us from pride of mind and boasting, but deliver us by our devotion to You and the principles You have revealed for our edification and the strength of our society. Deliver us by our insistent prayer for a world of peace and prosperity for all people.

Lord God, hear our prayer and mercifully bless not only us who have been chosen to guide, but bless all our people by Your grace and power. 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 1, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. WELDON of Florida 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 PRO TEMPORE

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

MORE TIME THAN MONEY

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

Mr. WELDON of Florida, Mr. Speaker, a few months ago we made a commitment to the American people to lock away every penny of the Social Security surplus so that Washington big-spenders could not keep raiding the funds to spend on government programs. Now, we have the opportunity to meet this commitment if only President Clinton will stop playing partisan games with the retirement dollars of hard-working Americans.

When the President says, we cannot trim waste 1 percent from the massive Federal budget in order to protect Social Security, I cannot help but question his priorities. Paying for more wasteful spending of taxpayer dollars, or protecting Social Security: The choice is simple.

As we close in on a final budget, let us be very clear on one thing: we will not go home until every penny of the Social Security Trust Fund is protected and we are not going to raise taxes on working Americans, and we are going to keep the budget balanced.

We have more time than money, and we will use whatever time is necessary to get the job done.

EXPEDITED RESCISSON LEGISLATION

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

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, we have heard a lot of rhetoric, but no legislation from the other side of the aisle about protecting the Social Security surplus and eliminating wasteful spending, even though the appropriation bills passed by the majority would have spent $17 billion of the Social Security Trust Fund before the final budget negotiations even began.

I am introducing legislation today that will give the President the ability to help the majority put some reality behind their rhetoric. This legislation known as "modified line-item veto," or expedited rescission, would strengthen the ability of Presidents to identify and eliminate low priority spending with the support of the majority in Congress.

Under this bill, the President would be able to single out individual items in tax or spending legislation and send a rescission package to Congress which would then be required to vote up or down on the package.

Senator JOHN MCCAIN and others have identified $13 billion of low-priority or special-interest spending. Instead of subjecting these spending items to scrutiny, the majority has proposed an across-the-board cut that treats good programs the same as low priority and wasteful spending.

I urge my colleagues to join me by cosponsoring this legislation.

BUILDING UPON OUR SUCCESSES

(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, after the rhetoric of the last speaker, let us come back to reality for just a moment. This Congress has succeeded in passing many pieces of meaningful legislation this session.

We have passed bills which have granted more local control over our education and funding decisions and we have sent that control and those decisions to our States and local school districts. We have passed legislation which provided a much-needed pay raise for our military personnel, and we funded the replacement of old equipment, strengthening our armed forces.

We made it a national policy to fund and deploy a national missile defense system.

This Congress has succeeded in addressing these and other important issues to strengthen our country, including saving Social Security. Now, Mr. Speaker, we are faced with one final task, legislative task, that is, eliminating wasteful government spending.

Let us build upon our success and pass bills which fund the necessary programs, but do not waste the hard-earned tax dollars of Americans.

☐ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., 1407 is 2:07 p.m.
Mr. Speaker, this Republican-led Congress has successfully passed important and responsible legislation, and we can do it again.

TAKE PORK OUT OF SPENDING BILL

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

Mr. MINGE. Mr. Speaker, we have essentially a colloquy here this morning, and I would like to join with my colleagues from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) in pointing out the irony of what is happening.

We are dipping into the Social Security Trust Fund, according to the leadership’s plan, by at least $17 billion. We are cutting across the board, or proposed to have cut, 1 percent. But at the same time, as Senator MCCAIN, a Republican, has pointed out, we have billions and billions earmarked for pork barrel projects.

As the cochair of the House bipartisan Pork Barrel Coalition, I am strongly opposed to this type of pork barrel spending, and I call on our leadership here in the House of Representatives and in the Senate to excise all of these earmarked projects from this massive bill that is to be presented to us this week. If we would take that one simple step, we would be able to avoid going into the Social Security Trust Fund.

We owe it to our Nation’s seniors, and we owe it to the next generation to take this modest step.

STOP BALANCING THE BUDGET ON THE BACKS OF OUR SENIOR CITIZENS

(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, although the Democrats claim they are the stand-alone founders and saviors of Social Security and Medicare, their actions of late have proven just the opposite.

Our Vice President, Mr. Gore, and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GERRY, our minority leader, have both claimed that no Republicans voted for the establishment of Social Security. False.

Here are the facts. When the House passed the 1935 Social Security Act on April 19, 1935, 79 percent of the 97 Republicans voted for it: “Aye.” When the Senate acted on June 19, 1935, 75 percent of the 20 Republicans voted “aye.”

Now, claims like those we are hearing suggesting that Democrats have created everything from Social Security to the Internet are quite amusing.

Yet, the debate over the future of our most important social program is no laughing matter. We must stop balancing the budgets on the backs of our senior citizens.

DO-LITTLE CONGRESS

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

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, here we are in mid-November and quite frankly, the Republican-led Congress has done very little. The appropriation bills languish and the needs of the American people are not being met. Now we seem to be arguing over four-tenths of 1 percent of a cut.

Instead, the American people asked for things that cost very little and would improve their lives, like a Patients’ Bill of Rights so patients and doctors can make their medical decisions; like an increase in minimum wage so everyone can enjoy the strong economy: like 100,000 more teachers so that we can have smaller classes. And, Mr. Speaker, why can we not provide prescription drug coverage for all of our seniors?

Mr. Speaker, let us work for the American people. Unfortunately, under the Republican-led Congress, it is always the same old song. Tax breaks for the rich and a tax on government. America wants a Congress that works for them like Democrats are fighting for, for 100,000 teachers, 50,000 new police officers, a real Patients’ Bill of Rights, protecting our environment and providing prescription drug coverage for all seniors, all paid for, all paid for without busting the budget or raiding Social Security.

RHETORIC AND WASTE IN WASHINGTON

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. President, come home and solve this final budget problem that we have here. We may again have an across-the-board reduction in spending to finally find the offsets to cover the additional spending the President wants to put forth. We need him to return from all of these foreign affairs trips he is taking.

It is too bad I only have 1 minute here, because I could go on for hours about the waste, fraud, and abuse in the Federal Government. He claims we cannot reduce by 1 penny out of $1 trillion.

Here is an example. Mr. Speaker, $14.2 billion that was for low-income WASTING AMERICA’S TAX DOLLARS IN RUSSIA

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

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, since 1992, Uncle Sam has given Russia billions of dollars to dismantle their weapons of mass destruction. Now, who is kidding whom? Instead of dismantling, reports say Russia has built missiles, submarines, and more nuclear warheads. If that is not enough to savor with vodka, the report said that Russia just bought 11 strategic bombers and 500 additional cruise missiles. To boot, they say what they did not spend, those Communist stole and pocketed for themselves.

Unbelievable. Whatever happened to President Reagan’s policy: Trust, but verify. It has turned into turn the other cheeks.

Beam me up, Mr. Speaker. Boris might have fallen, but he keeps getting up with our cash.

I yield back the nuclear waste of our tax dollars spent in Russia.

PARENTS AND TEACHERS, NOT WASHINGTON BUREAUCRATS, KNOW WHAT IS BEST FOR OUR CHILDREN

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

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, in 1992, then Governor Bill Clinton, in his campaign treatise, putting people first, said that we need to, and I quote, “grant expanded decision-making powers at the school level, empowering principals, teachers and parents with increased flexibility in educating our children.” That was back in 1992.

In 1999, President Clinton has drastically trimmed his tune. When asked just last week about State governors wanting more freedom from Washington education bureaucrats, he expressed irritation. I will again quote: “because it is not their money,” he said. If they don’t want the money, they don’t have to take it.

With that response, President Clinton summed up the utter arrogance of Washington’s liberal elite who really do believe that big government knows what is best for the hard-working Americans who earn those tax dollars.

Mr. Speaker, it is their money. Let us send it back to those who earned it and know best how to spend it.

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—HOUSE

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PHOTO: "beam me up, Mr. Speaker."