

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Wednesday, February 2, 2000

The House met at 10 a.m.

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

Oh, gracious and loving God, as we come together in this time of prayer, we celebrate the diversity of our own lives and in the lives of the people around us.

As we see the differences in our own heritage and in our own histories, we are grateful that we can learn from each other, tell our stories and ideas and traditions and deepen our understanding of our shared humanity.

Even as we see that which makes us distinctive, so at that moment we marvel at the beauty of Your mighty creation and the grandeur and the miracle that You have made us as one people. Bless us this day and every day we pray. 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 Washington (Ms. DUNN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. DUNN 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.

CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL FOR THE REAGANS

(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, next week, the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DUNN) and I will introduce legislation to award the Congressional Gold Medal to former President and First Lady, Ronald and Nancy Reagan, in recognition of their distinguished record of service to the United States.

I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join us in commemorating the Reagans and their service to our great Nation.

Under President Reagan's leadership, the United States experienced unprece-

dent economic growth and gained a renewed sense of national pride.

Known as the Great Communicator, Ronald Reagan maintained his unique poise and uncanny wit during his tenure in office and throughout his life.

His wife, Nancy, served as gracious First Lady and as the tireless leader of the well-known anti-drug "Just Say No" campaign. She held her own.

Together, the Reagans have been dedicated to promoting national pride and improving the quality of life in America. Ronald Reagan will celebrate his 89th birthday this weekend. Awarding the Congressional Gold Medal to the Reagans would certainly make a wonderful birthday gift; but more importantly, the award would be a fitting tribute for their contributions to our country.

DEPLORING NEOFASCISM IN AUSTRIA

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

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, on whatever side my colleagues were last night in the New Hampshire primary, I am calling on all of them to join me as I introduce a resolution this morning with respect to the outrageous neofascist developments in Austria.

Austria for decades paraded as Hitler's first victim, when in point in fact Austria was Hitler's first ally. Now, the neo-Nazi leader is about to be admitted to the Austrian government. All other 14 nations of the European Union are downgrading diplomatic relations with Austria, and my resolution calls for a voluntary boycott of tourism to Austria, the purchase of Austrian products, the use of Austrian Airlines, and the downgrading of our own diplomatic relations with Austria.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a time to introduce fascism into the New Europe. I applaud the European leadership for denouncing this outrageous neofascist development.

MARRIAGE TAX PENALTY

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

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remind my colleagues of the fact that the Committee on Ways and Means is marking up marriage penalty relief and also to talk about the

negative impact of the marriage penalty.

Under current law, 21 million couples are required to pay on average an additional \$1,400 a year in taxes simply because they are married. The marriage penalty is a ridiculous policy that is undermining the institution of marriage and making it harder for working families to get ahead.

Mr. Speaker, the marriage penalty is especially hard on the family's second wage earner, often the wife's salary, because their income is taxed at higher marginal rates. In response to these higher rates, many people, especially the second earners, choose not to work or to work less. This not only makes these couples worse off because of their decreased income, because it also reduces the national output. In short, the marriage penalty punishes success.

I commend the leadership for making the marriage penalty relief a top priority, and I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to pass this common-sense legislation.

HONORING MONROE SWEETLAND

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, as the voters of New Hampshire salvage some dignity from the presidential nominating process, it was keenly observed in Oregon by Monroe Sweetland, the father of Oregon's modern Democratic Party.

Last month in Portland, we gathered to celebrate his 90th birthday. Although a partisan Democrat, he was introduced at this gathering by his good friend, Republican Senator Mark Hatfield.

Monroe was a confidant of Eleanor Roosevelt and ally of President Truman. He was in Indonesia during "the year of living dangerously" and then returned to the United States to be political director for Western States of the NEA for over a decade.

Monroe is a journalist, State senator, and small businessman who last year ran a very competitive race for State senate. Legally blind for years, his slogan was that his eyesight may be dim, but his vision is clear. I am proud of the many contributions of this great man and look forward to his next decade of public service. He shows how politics should be conducted while living life to the fullest.

□ 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.