

on the floor. The cooperation of all Members is required.

RECESS

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to the order of the House of Thursday, September 7, 2000, the House stands in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 7 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

During the recess, beginning at about 9:52 a.m., the following proceedings were had:

□ 0945

JOINT MEETING OF THE HOUSE AND SENATE TO HEAR AN ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE, PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA

The Speaker of the House presided. The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms, Richard Wilson, announced the President pro tempore and Members of the U.S. Senate who entered the Hall of the House of Representatives, the President pro tempore of the Senate taking the chair at the right of the Speaker, and the Members of the Senate the seats reserved for them.

The SPEAKER. The Chair appoints as members of the committee on the part of the House to escort His Excellency Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the Prime Minister of India, into the Chamber:

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY);

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY);

The gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. WATTS);

The gentleman from California (Mr. COX);

The gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN);

The gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER);

The gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE);

The gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GREENWOOD);

The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT);

The gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ);

The gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. GELDENSON);

The gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS);

The gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN);

The gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE);

The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN); and

The gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT).

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The President pro tempore of the Senate, at the direction of that body, appoints the following Senators as a committee on

the part of the Senate to escort His Excellency Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the Prime Minister of India, into the House Chamber:

The Senator from Mississippi (Mr. LOTT);

The Senator from Indiana (Mr. LUGAR);

The Senator from Wyoming (Mr. THOMAS);

The Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK);

The Senator from Nebraska (Mr. HAGEL);

The Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. CHAFEE);

The Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN);

The Senator from Delaware (Mr. BIDEN);

The Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID);

The Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY); and

The Senator from New York (Mr. MOYNIHAN).

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms announced the Acting Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, His Excellency Kingsley Layne, Ambassador of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

□ 1007

At 10 o'clock and 7 minutes a.m., the Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms announced the Prime Minister of India, His Excellency Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

The Prime Minister of India, escorted by the committee of Senators and Representatives, entered the Hall of the House of Representatives, while seated at the Official Reporters of Debates chair at the rostrum.

[Applause, the Members rising.]

The SPEAKER. Members of the Congress, it is my great privilege and I deem it a high honor and a personal pleasure to present to you the Prime Minister of India, His Excellency, Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

[Applause, the Members rising.]

ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY, ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE, PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA

Prime Minister VAJPAYEE. Mr. Speaker, Mr. President pro tem, honorable Members of the United States Congress, it is with a deep sense of honor that I speak to you today. I would like to thank you, Mr. Speaker, and the Members of the Congress, for giving me this opportunity.

In November 1999, a remarkable event took place in the House of Representatives. By a vote 396 to 4, the House adopted a resolution congratulating India and my government on the successful elections completed in October 1999. This display of broad-based bipartisan support for strengthening relations with India is heartening. It is a source of encouragement to both President Clinton and to me, as we work together to infuse a new quality in our

ties. I thank you for the near-unique approach that you have adopted towards my country.

Those of you who saw the warm response to President Clinton's speech to our Parliament in March this year will recognize that similar cross-party support exists in India as well for deeper engagement with the United States of America.

I am also deeply touched by the resolution adopted in the House 2 days ago welcoming my visit and the prospect of close Indo-U.S. understanding. I am equally encouraged by the resolution adopted by the Senate yesterday.

Mr. Speaker, American people have shown that democracy and individual liberty provide the conditions in which knowledge progresses, science discovers, innovation occurs, enterprise thrives, and, ultimately, people advance.

To more than a million and a half from my country, America is now home. In turn, their industry, enterprise and skills are contributing to the advancement of American society.

I see in the outstanding success of the Indian community in America a metaphor of the vast potential that exists in Indo-U.S. relations, of what we can achieve together. Just as American experience has been a lesson in what people can achieve in a democratic framework, India has been the laboratory of a democratic process rising to meet the strongest challenges that can be flung at it.

In the half century of our independent existence, we have woven an exquisite tapestry. Out of diversity we have brought unity. The several languages of India speak with one voice under the roof of our Parliament.

In your remarkable experiment as a Nation state, you have proven the same truth. Out of the huddled masses that you welcomed to your shores, you have created a great Nation.

For me, the most gratifying of the many achievements of Indian democracy has been the change it has brought to the lives of the weak and the vulnerable. To give just one figure, in recent years it has enabled more than a million women in small towns and distant villages to enter local elected councils and to decide on issues that touch upon their lives.

□ 1015

Two years ago, while much of Asia was convulsed by economic crises, India held its course. In the last 10 years, we have grown at 6.5 percent per year. That puts India among the 10 fastest growing economies of the world.

Economic activity gets more and more diversified by the year. President Clinton and many among the friends gathered here have had occasion to glimpse our advances in information technology.

We are determined to sustain the momentum of our economy. Our aim is to