

I accuse the Cuban government of separating the Cuban family, who, in desperation flee Cuba for political reasons.

I accuse the so-called "revolutionary government" of the political and democratic ignorance our people suffer, as they deceive the unwary people of the world with their propaganda of mass and cultural opinion education. They accomplish this by creating public opinion created by the state using Nazi-style techniques copied from Bolshevik Russia where Cubans pay a high price, acting hypocritically as they pretend to go along in public in order to subsist.

We ask the addressees of these lines, soon to convene in Geneva, Switzerland, at the Human Rights Commission, to discuss Cuba, to consider the ill-treatment of the Cuban people by its own government. I know that no delegation, not even those who defend Castro, will be permitted to come to visit me so they can corroborate this raw truth.

If any justice exists in the world for Maritza Lugo and her denunciation, this government, the government of Castro, should be sanctioned for this and so many other violations that they are constantly inflicting upon the Cuban population as they deceive and laugh at the whole world.

This, Mr. Speaker, is the reality of Cuba today, from Maritza Lugo, President of the 30th of November Democratic Party, from the women's prison popularly known as Black Cloak.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 5 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. GILLMOR) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Lord God, source of creation and well-spring of revelation, Your word reverberates an awareness of how our behavior affects others. Your spirit penetrates our indifference to the consequences of our actions or to the suffering of others. Once illusion sets in or the infectious sin begins in any of us the whole human system can be measured by its fever.

As Isaiah says: "The whole head is sick, the whole heart is faint."

One continent will not contain the epidemic. One system of any organization cannot localize the dysfunction. One group will not absorb the injustice without infecting us all.

By Your Spirit, give us a clear diagnosis of the evils within us that we may be on our way to discovering a

remedy to our Nation's weakness and a lasting cure for our problems both here and abroad both now and forever. 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.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPs) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. CAPPs 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.

COMMUNICATION FROM HON. RICHARD A. GEPHARDT, DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from RICHARD A. GEPHARDT, Democratic Leader:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
OFFICE OF THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER,
Washington, DC, March 12, 2001.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to section 5(a) of the James Madison Commemoration Commission Act (P.L. 106-550), I hereby appoint the following Members to the James Madison Commemoration Commission:

Mr. Rick Boucher, VA.
Mr. Jim Moran, VA.

Yours Very Truly,
RICHARD A. GEPHARDT.

COMMUNICATION FROM HON. RICHARD A. GEPHARDT, DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from RICHARD A. GEPHARDT, Democratic Leader:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
OFFICE OF THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER,
Washington, DC, March 12, 2001.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to section 5(b) of the James Madison Commemoration Commission Act (P.L. 106-550), I hereby appoint the following individuals to the James Madison Commemoration Advisory Committee:

Dr. James Billington, VA.
The Honorable Theodore A. McKee, PA.

Yours Very Truly,
RICHARD A. GEPHARDT.

NOW IS THE TIME FOR TAX RELIEF

(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, this House, indeed, this Congress has a lot to celebrate and a lot to be proud of.

After decades of wasteful spending and rising Federal deficits, our fiscal house is in order. Since 1997, we have paid down \$363 billion of the Federal debt, and we are on course to paying off the complete \$2 trillion of the Federal public debt over the next 10 years.

This Republican Congress has set aside nearly \$3 trillion for the protection of Social Security, Medicare and further debt relief. Mr. Speaker, the nonpartisan CBO estimates that we will have a \$5.6 trillion surplus over the next 10 years. Our fiscal house is not only in order, it is in the best possible shape in generations, and now we are going to give Americans what they need, want and deserve, real tax relief.

No one doubts that if the surplus money stays in Washington, it will be spent on bigger, more wasteful Federal bureaucracy. We need to put America's families first. The surplus belongs to them, not the wasteful spenders in Washington. The right thing to do is return the surplus to the people who earned it, the American taxpayers.

MILITARY BERETS SHOULD BE MANUFACTURED IN UNITED STATES

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

Mrs. CAPPs. Mr. Speaker, the Army is preparing to outfit every soldier with a new black beret. Some people oppose this policy, but whether or not it is a good idea, one thing we can all agree on is that these berets should be made in the United States.

So why is the Pentagon acquiring 2.5 million berets from companies who make these berets in countries like China, Romania and Sri Lanka? This is very troubling.

The Pentagon has waived the law which requires domestic production of military uniforms. This decision is costing American companies millions of dollars; and even worse, the overseas berets may actually be more expensive so U.S. taxpayers will get stuck with a bigger bill.

Mr. Speaker, I am circulating a letter to President Bush urging him to review this shortsighted decision. I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will join with me.

DEBT REDUCTION

(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, in order to be a leader, one has to have credibility. If you do not have a record of accomplishment on an issue, people simply will not listen.

It is worth pointing out that for almost four consecutive decades, Congress was run by our Democratic friends, and never, not once, did they ever balance the Federal budget. Never once did they pay back a dime on the public debt.

Mr. Speaker, I am not pointing this out to be partisan. I am pointing it out because now it is those same Democrats who are claiming President Bush's tax relief package will keep us from paying down the debt.

Look at the Republican record: Almost immediately after taking control of Congress, Republicans started balancing the budget, paying down our public debt. Four years in a row, we balanced the budget. Four years in a row, we paid down on the public debt.

We already paid near half a trillion dollars. We are paying down the public debt; and in 10 years, we will have paid off every dime available to be paid.

If we stick with the President's plan, there will be enough for tax relief, Social Security, education and paying off our public debt.

BERETS SHOULD ONLY BE MADE IN AMERICA AND WORN BY THE ELITE ARMY RANGER FORCE

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

Mr. TRAFICANT. First, the Air Force bought Chinese boots. Now, the Pentagon is buying berets made in China. The Pentagon said China is cheaper. Unbelievable. What is next? At 17 cents an hour, will the Pentagon hire Chinese soldiers?

Unbelievable. Think about it. The beret once signified our elite ranger force. Now it is about to become a product of communism.

Beam me up. What has happened to the common sense of America? I say it is time to tell the Pentagon we can hire generals and admirals a lot cheaper from China, too.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the fact that the berets should only be made in America and should only be worn by the elite Army ranger force.

BAD DECISION-MAKING REGARDING BLACK BERETS

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, the decision to give black berets to all Army troops rather than just to rangers who earned them was a bad decision.

Far worse was the decision to order these berets from a Chinese firm rather than an American firm which could have done them for far less costs.

This was apparently done so the berets could be delivered by the Army's birthday in June.

It would really have made no difference at all to have them given out on some later historic day and have saved millions for our taxpayers.

This decision shows once again that bureaucrats can rationalize and justify almost anything and will almost never admit a mistake.

Mr. Speaker, I say bureaucrat because, by this decision, General Shinseki has acted more like an arrogant bureaucrat than a soldier. Also, by giving this work to Chinese rather than American workers, especially in a slow economy and especially when Americans could have done it at millions less in cost, was both unwise and harmful to this Nation and its workers.

We seem at times, Mr. Speaker, to be giving our own country away.

PRESIDENT'S TAX CUT IS PARTISAN ISSUE

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, last week, the House voted for the President's signature proposal, a cut in income taxes heavily tilted towards millionaires and billionaires.

Republican National Committee Chairman Jim Gilmore highlighted my no vote as evidence, he says, that I do not want to see lower taxes for my constituents.

My district in Northeast Ohio is not heavily tilted towards the millionaires and billionaires whom President Bush and the Republican Party Chair Gilmore want to help. Most of the people I represent are middle-income people or lower-income working families working their way up.

The right kind of tax cut would mean something to them. Unfortunately, that is not what the President delivered.

Medicare means something to the people in my district. The President's plan uses an accounting trick to siphon funds for the Medicare trust fund. Medicare cannot afford that. The elderly people in my district cannot afford that.

Mr. Speaker, tax cuts are not a partisan issue, but this tax cut is. If the President would work with us on a tax cut that would benefit all Americans, we could easily pass one in this body, but I could not support a bill which gives tax cuts to the wealthiest people, robs Medicare and fails to pay down the national debt.

SUNDRY MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Sundry messages in writing from the President of the United States were communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Evans, one of his secretaries.

STABILIZATION AND PACIFICATION OF SOUTHERN SERBIA ACT

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

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member today is introducing legislation entitled the Stabilization and Pacification of Southern Serbia Act. This bill is a response to the ongoing violence in southern Serbia and in Macedonia that has been fomented by Albanian extremists seeking to create a greater Kosovo by annexing areas of Macedonia and southern Serbia that also contain large concentrations of Albanians.

This legislation would terminate U.S. economic assistance for Kosovo on June 30, 2001, unless the President certifies that citizens or residents of Kosovo are no longer providing assistance to the extremists that are responsible for the worsening situation in both southern Serbia and Macedonia and that leaders of the three main ethnic Albanian political parties of Kosovo are taking positive measures to halt the ethnically motivated violence against non-Albanians residing in Kosovo.

It does contain a waiver for the President to continue U.S. assistance if he deems it in the national interests.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support of the legislation.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GILLMOR). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair announces that he will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Such record votes, if postponed, will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules, but not before 6 p.m. today.

CONDEMNING HEINOUS ATROCITIES THAT OCCURRED AT SANTANA HIGH SCHOOL, SANTEE, CALIFORNIA

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 57) condemning the heinous atrocities that occurred on March 5, 2001, at Santana High School in Santee, California, as amended.