

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Thursday, March 17, 2005

The House met at 10 a.m.

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: In the Book of the Deuteronomy we read:

“The Lord your God has chosen you from all the nations on the face of Earth to be a people especially his own. It was because the Lord loves you and because his fidelity to the oath he has sworn to your fathers that He brought you out with a strong hand from the place of slavery and ransomed you.”

“Understand, then, that the Lord, your God, is God indeed, the faithful God who keeps his merciful covenant to the thousandth generation toward those who love him and keep his commandments.”

Lord, as we prepare for the great feasts of Passover and the Sacred Triduum, Lord our God, breathe forth Your Spirit on all the Members of Congress and the people of this great Nation. Make of us Your own. Recreate us in Your image. Convert our hearts that we may long to do Your will and that we may lead others in the world by revealing Your self-giving love in our lives.

You are faithful, O God, now and forever. 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 gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia 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

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain 5 one-minute speeches per side.

BILL SAVING TERRI SCHIAVO

(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, last night when H.R. 1332 was passed by the House this Chamber did a good thing. It offered to the disabled an opportunity to live and it reaffirmed our culture's desire to value the right to life of each and every member of it regardless of disability.

This bill gives Terri Schiavo a right to appeal the ruling of the Florida State courts in Federal court, and it will allow her to challenge the ruling that she is to starve to death.

The bill applies only to medically incapacitated patients, not to convicted criminals. And it is further evidence that the disabled have a place in our culture, that life has a place in our culture.

I commend the chairman of the committee, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON) for taking the lead and I thank the House leadership for expediting action on it. Now the Senate must do the same. Terri deserves to live.

MORALITY LACKING IN REPUBLICAN BUDGET

(Ms. LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the Republican budget. This budget is fiscally reckless, morally irresponsible and represents a failure of leadership.

The budget slashes funding that provides a vital lifeline to our most vulnerable communities. It cuts funding for support of housing for the disabled by 50 percent. Where is the morality in turning our back on the disabled?

This budget will dramatically cut housing opportunities for people living with AIDS. Where is the morality in forcing people living with AIDS to choose between medication and housing?

At the same time, this budget seeks to extend tax cuts to the most wealthy. Where is the morality in turning people out into the streets in order to pay for these tax cuts?

As a person of deep religious conviction, I know that there is nothing moral about balancing the budget on the backs of those who can least afford it. A moral budget does not seek to punish the least of these.

Mr. Speaker, this is an example, a gross example of the moral irresponsibility of the Republican budget.

U.S. TRADE AMBASSADOR PORTMAN

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

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, for those who are Irish, those that think they are Irish, and those that wish they were Irish, happy, happy St. Patrick's Day.

I would also like to take a moment to congratulate and commend the President of the United States, George Bush, for his appointment of the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN), a member of the Committee on Ways and Means, as the next United States Trade ambassador.

The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) is an outstanding, outstanding choice. He is one of the hardest working, most thoughtful members of our panel. He has immersed himself in the details of trade and tax law. He is an extraordinary individual who has served this President in a wonderful way as adviser to the White House and one of the closest confidants he has here on Capitol Hill.

I believe it is an extraordinary opportunity, not only for the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) and his family but for the United States trade representation around the globe. I urge my colleagues on the other side of the building to quickly dispatch that name forward to the committee of responsibility and urge the passage and allow the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) to show the great credentials he has displayed in our committee on this floor and ultimately as the next trade ambassador for the country.

SOCIAL SECURITY PRIVATIZATION HARMS AMERICANS

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

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise because the constituents in the 32nd Congressional District are very concerned about the privatization of Social Security.

There are nearly 60,000 Social Security beneficiaries in my district who are very concerned about the risky privatization scheme that the President is proposing. However, other young workers also are very concerned about the future of their retirement security.

To date my office has held well over 25 senior center visits, high school visits, parent centers visits, and health

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

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