

policies, that our military is now at its lowest rate of readiness since before World War II?

All of this adds up to reckless incompetence or worse. The world economy is sinking. This administration has done everything in its power to tie our national well-being to the crooks and tyrants throughout the world who would drag us down all in the name of creating a global economy.

Going into the next Congress, we have got serious work to do. If the President and his staff are incapable of providing the leadership this country needs to keep us safe, to ensure our prosperity, then we must step forward, and Congress must stand up and take the leadership role.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 59 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. BARRETT of Nebraska) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

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

O gracious God, from the beginning You have known us and Your grace has been our constant blessing, and so we pray on this day that Your gifts will be upon us depending on our need and our concerns. If lives need healing or recovery, grant strength and hope; if lives need forgiveness, grant mercy and pardon; if lives need vision beyond self-centered designs, grant the freedom of truth and the openness that comes when we see others as created by Your eternal hand. So we thank You, O God, that we can all share in Your blessings and in the bounty of Your free gifts. Bless us this day and everyday, we pray. 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 gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. CUMMINGS 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.

IN MEMORY OF FORMER MEMBER D. FRENCH SLAUGHTER, JR.

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

Mr. BLILEY. Mr. Speaker, it is with a great sadness I announce the death of French Slaughter, Junior, our former colleague from Culpeper, Virginia. French represented the Seventh District with honor and integrity. I am proud to be one of his successors as the Representative from the Seventh District of Virginia.

First and foremost, French was devoted to his constituents. French was a native of Culpeper and represented the Seventh District for 7 years in Congress. Prior to his service in Congress, French was devoted to his country and his constituents.

French served in the U.S. Army as an infantryman and earned the Purple Heart and Bronze Star during the Battle of the Bulge. After the war, he earned both a Bachelor's Degree and a law degree from the University of Virginia.

From 1958 to 1978 he served in the Virginia House of Delegates and championed legislation creating Virginia's community college system. He served on the Board of Visitors of the University of Virginia and Germanna College.

Elected to Congress in 1985, he constantly focused on constituent services. French was a great friend whom I could trust. I always knew I could rely on French for help during our service together in the House. French was and will always be a Virginia gentleman. My prayers are with his family.

French Slaughter was a legislator devoted to his constituents. No request from his constituents was too small. It in an era when C-SPAN first projected our speeches nationwide, French preferred to stay out of the limelight and focus on constituent service.

French heard the call of his nation during the perilous days of World War II. French was a student at Virginia Military Institute when he postponed his studies and joined the United States Army as an infantryman. While serving with the Army's 84th Division, French was wounded in action at the Battle of the Bulge in 1944. French was awarded the Purple Heart and Bronze Star for his actions that day.

After the war, French returned to school and earned a bachelor degree and a law degree from the University of Virginia. During the late 50's, French won a seat in the Virginia House of Delegates. During his 20 years of service, he often ran without opposition because of his faithfulness to constituent service. In 1966, he sponsored legislation to establish Virginia's Community College system. Upon his retirement from the House of Delegates, French was a member of the Board of Visitors of his alma mater from 1978 to 1982. French contin-

ued to find ways to stay active in the community because public service was his calling.

Like a true Virginian, French had a deep appreciation for the history of his native soil, and a love for passing on that heritage. He served as a loyal board member and attorney for The Memorial Foundation of the Germanna Colonies in Virginia, Inc., a foundation that continues to convey the heritage of the first European settlement on the Rapidan River by German Calvinists and Lutherans beginning in 1714. As a Germanna Colonies board member, he was instrumental in persuading the Foundation to donate 100 acres of the original 1714 settlement to the Commonwealth in order to build Germanna Community College. French also served on the Germanna College's board from 1978 to 1985. I am proud to say the main building at Germanna College is named in his honor.

French heard one more call to duty and served his constituents in Congress from 1985 to 1991. During his tenure in Congress, French served on the Judiciary, Small Business and Science Committees in Congress. Once again, French championed constituent service for the people of Manassas, Winchester, Charlottesville, Fredericksburg, and most importantly, Culpeper during his service in Congress. French focused his legislative efforts on interests of interest to the elderly, particularly health care. French favored a balanced budget amendment while opposing tax increases. French's conservative agenda for smaller government served the people of the Virginia Seventh District well during his seven years in Congress.

French was also very kind to keep me informed of the days events on the floor of the House of Representatives. French was a great friend with whom I could trust. He will be sorely missed by many. My prayers are with his family during this sad time.

French is survived by his son, D. French Slaughter, III of Charlottesville; a daughter, Kathleen Slaughter Smith of Gilbert, Arizona; nine grandchildren; a brother, Johnson Slaughter of Houston; and a niece, Connie Slaughter Koenig, also of Houston.

TAXPAYER FUNDS SHOULD NOT BE USED FOR INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND BAILOUTS

(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, Russia got \$20 billion, Asia got over \$100 billion, and now International Monetary Fund wants a \$30 billion bailout for Brazil. That is right, the same Brazil that illegally dumps millions of tons of steel in America, below the production cost, destroying American jobs and American families.

Unbelievable. Think about it. Bailout for Russia, they sell missiles to our enemy; bailout to Asia and Japan, they rip us off with illegal trade; bailout to Brazil, they destroy American jobs. What is next, a bailout for Saddam Hussein?

We are not playing monopoly down here. These are taxpayer dollars. Enough is enough. Last I heard it was Uncle Sam, not Uncle Sucker. I yield

back the balance of the hard-working jobs that the steel industry is losing.

CONGRATULATIONS TO DAN AND PAIGE PITTS ON THEIR MARRIAGE

(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, this past weekend my son, Dan, was married to Paige Overton of Knoxville, Tennessee. So today I would like to talk to them.

Dan and Paige, what a magnificent wedding. We love you and are so happy for you. Never forget what the pastor shared; that according to the scriptures, the institution of marriage and family was God's idea. That is why it is so right and good.

When you think about family, they are the people that God brings into your life. You do not choose your brother or sister, your parents or children. God gives them to you.

So, Paige, we are so delighted to welcome you into our family. You are a very special young lady. Dan and Paige, you waited and prayed for each other, and God has given you the desires of your heart. His very best. Congratulations.

We love you, we are proud of you, we are grateful for you, and we wish you a lifetime of happiness together. And have a great honeymoon.

HOW AMERICANS HAVE BENEFITED BY ELECTING REPUBLICANS TO CONGRESS

(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 40 years of Democratic leadership, which brought higher taxes, increased spending, and enormous budget deficits, my liberal colleagues are labeling us as a do-nothing Congress. So, Mr. Speaker, as the 105th Congress draws to a close, I am proud to submit a progress report on how this Republican-led Congress has benefitted America.

By electing Republicans, Americans have benefitted from their first tax cut in 16 years. And now, for a second consecutive year, we will again provide significant tax relief. By electing Republicans to control Congress, Americans benefitted not only from the first balanced budget in over a generation, but a budget surplus on top of that. And with this surplus Republicans are helping save Social Security. By electing Republicans, Americans have benefitted from a truly needed and meaningful Patient Protection Act, legislation that will ensure Americans have accountable, accessible and affordable health care for themselves and their families.

Is it any wonder that Americans continue to elect and reelect Republicans to lead this body into the next century? Republicans remain committed

to a future that benefits the American people, a future that is pro-family, pro-business and pro-America; a commitment that this and future generations have a rendezvous with a brighter destiny.

COST OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS AND THE PRESCRIPTION DRUG FAIRNESS ACT

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

Mr. FORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Prescription Drug Fairness Act. Anyone in America who has older relatives or friends who are living on a fixed income and taking prescription drugs understand firsthand the devastating impact that the high cost of medication can have on the health and well-being of seniors.

As we all know, with age comes a greater susceptibility to health problems. As such, it is no surprise that, on average, Americans over the age of 65 spend three times as much of their income, over 20 percent, on health care than Americans under the age of 65. Three-quarters of Americans 65 and older take prescription drugs. On average, Americans take 2.4 prescription drugs at any one time.

One would think that since older Americans make up such a large segment of the market for prescription drugs that they would pay reasonable prices for their medication. Unfortunately, that is not the case. Due to cost shifting and the limited power of seniors, they get the short end of the stick compared to HMOs and other most-favored customers when it comes to the cost of drugs, which is why I rise in support of the Prescription Drug Fairness Act.

Thanks to the leadership of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. JIM TURNER) and the gentleman from Maine (Mr. TOM ALLEN) we now have legislation which is designed to help level the playing field by; one, providing Medicare beneficiaries with a drug benefit card that will entitle the holder to purchase drugs at reduced prices from participating pharmacies; and, two, allowing pharmacies to purchase drugs at the same lower price as the Federal Government.

As a public policymaker at the Federal level, I believe Congress has a responsibility to help protect seniors from the unreasonably high cost of prescription drugs. The Prescription Drug Fairness Act is designed to accomplish just that. I hope every one of my colleagues signs on and supports this legislation.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the provisions of clause 5, rule I, 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 4 of rule XV.

Such rollcall votes, if postponed, will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules, but not before 5 p.m. today.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEES HEALTH CARE PROTECTION ACT OF 1997

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendments to the bill (H.R. 1836) to amend chapter 89 of title 5, United States Code, to improve administration of sanctions against unfit health care providers under the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendments:

Page 2, line 3, strike out "1997" and insert "1998".

Page 12, line 8, strike out "January 3, 1998" and insert "or before January 2, 1999".

Page 12, lines 13 and 14, strike out "January 3, 1998" and insert "or before January 2, 1999".

Page 12, line 18, strike out "January 3, 1998" and insert "or before January 2, 1999".

Page 13, line 13, strike out "January 3, 1998" and insert "or before January 2, 1999".

Page 13, line 19, strike out "January 3, 1998" and insert "or before January 2, 1999".

Page 14, lines 2 and 3, strike out "January 3, 1998" and insert "or before January 2, 1999".

Page 14, line 10, strike out "January 3, 1998" and insert "or before January 2, 1999".

Page 14, line 16, strike out "January 4, 1998" and insert "January 3, 1999 or such earlier date as established by the Office of Personnel management after consultation with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, as appropriate".

Page 14, line 24, strike out "January 3, 1998" and insert "or before January 2, 1999".

Page 15, line 13 after "Office" insert "of Personnel Management".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the bill, H.R. 1836, as amended by the Senate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON), the chairman of the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, for introducing this very important bill. I also want to thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA), chairman of the Subcommittee on Civil Service, for his