

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 55 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 (Mrs. BIGGERT) at 2 p.m.

#### PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: Lord God of the Jewish-Christian scriptures, You call forth Your people to move out from blood-stained doorways into the wandering freedom of the desert, until they found a promised land.

By the spirit You led Jesus into the desert to discover Your living presence through fasting and prayer.

Guide Your people in these days of grace in and through the political ways of Congress. May the trials of argumentative discussions and the discipline of compromise lead Your people across the barren land of uncertainty. Shape within them new resolves of faithful service, and open for them paths of greater justice and new-found peace.

Help us, O Lord, to renew the covenant of old which makes us Your own, even 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 her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina 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.

#### DEMOCRATS AND CONFUSING SENIORS ABOUT MEDICARE

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

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I rise today to discuss the new Medicare prescription drug benefit. Under this historic program, seniors are receiving the drugs they need at reduced cost. So far, more than 27 million Medicare beneficiaries are now getting coverage and saving money on their prescription drugs. Even more amazing is that 380,000 new beneficiaries are signing up each week.

This is a program that is working for most seniors, and any early problems

are quickly being corrected. The new drug coverage offers more and better choices at a lower cost. Premiums have been lowered to an average of \$25 a month, down from the \$37 that was previously estimated. Yet Democrats continue their coordinated campaign of confusion. On the one hand they are telling seniors that the prescription drug program is a disaster, and then in the same breath they are urging them to sign up. Mr. Speaker, this reminds me of someone turning to you and saying, "Hey, this milk tastes bad. Try it."

Seniors are hearing from Democrats that the milk is bad, yet they are being asked to taste it. It is no wonder some seniors are confused. I would be, too.

#### MAKING THE TAX CUTS PERMANENT

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

Mr. KELLER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to give the American people some straight talk on why we need to make the tax cuts permanent. As tax day rapidly approaches, President Bush urged Congress to make the tax cuts permanent, and with good reason. If Congress does not make the tax cuts permanent, a family of four in central Florida making \$50,000 would see their taxes go up by nearly 50 percent.

It is no accident that we have a strong and vibrant economy today. During President Bush's first term, Congress acted to lower income tax rates across the board, cut taxes on capital gains and dividends, and eliminate the marriage penalty.

Now, what have we seen as a result? We have seen 5 million new jobs created in the last 2½ years. We have seen an unemployment rate that is lower than the average unemployment rate in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. We have seen home ownership rise to 69 percent, the largest record in history. So don't believe the hype. Our government has received more revenue after the tax cuts than we received before the tax cuts. Let's make these tax cuts permanent and keep our economy strong.

#### CONGRATULATIONS TO NORTH COLLEGE HILL TROJANS

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

Mr. CHABOT. Madam Speaker, at this time last year I predicted that I would be standing here once again to congratulate Coach Jamie Mahaffey and his North College Hill Trojans. Well, they proved me right after winning back-to-back Division III Ohio State high school basketball championships.

Just this past weekend, North College Hill captured its second State championship with a convincing 90-73 triumph over Cleveland Villa Angela-St. Joseph. The victory topped off an

impressive 26-1 season, including a number three national ranking by USA Today and a unanimous number one ranking in the final Ohio Associated Press State poll.

The Trojans made their road to Columbus look easy, defeating their opponents by an average of 33 points a game and knocking off the reigning Division I State champions from Ohio and Kentucky. In fact, statistics like these have already brought calls for a threepeat next year.

It gives me great pleasure to congratulate the North College Hill Trojans, the players, coaches, parents, fans, teachers, and administrators on bringing the championship back to the Cincinnati area. We are very proud of you, North College Hill.

#### AMERICAN FLAGS BANNED AT HIGH SCHOOL

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

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, students at Skyline High School in Colorado are banned from waving the American flag. The principal is reported as saying, "These flags were being used as a symbol of bigotry, a symbol of hostility. They were being used to inflame different groups, and we're not going to tolerate that."

This principal is more concerned about hurting the feelings of people illegally in the U.S. than he is about Americans' freedom of expression. This principal is obviously unaware the flag was offensive to the British who were also illegally in the U.S. When the British reinvaded the United States in 1814 and were illegally on American soil, they marched on Washington waving the British flag, and they burned this very building. The British then sailed upriver to Fort McHenry and were offended by this defiant American flag that was flying. They tried to shoot it down, but Old Glory flew, and we have it down the street in the National Archives, bullet holes and all. We got our National Anthem from the glory of the Star Spangled Banner at Fort McHenry.

The American flag cannot be banned in America. How absurd. What flag do you fly there at that high school, the white flag of surrender so as not to offend anyone illegally in the United States? Good thing the commander at Fort McHenry didn't care about what the British thought and was proud to be an American. And that's just the way it is.

#### RESPECTING CAPITOL POLICE

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

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Madam Speaker, last week we finally saw the Democratic Party roll out their ideas about how we should secure America,