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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. FOLEY).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

December 14, 2005.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MARK FOLEY to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: "O radiant Dayspring, Splendor of eternal light, come and shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death."

In today's world, we try to evade winter's darkness by touching a switch. Nevertheless, Lord, the modern world knows a darkness of mind and spirit that can match anything Stone or Bronze Age ancestors felt.

Technology's brilliance alone cannot lift the veil of darkness. Far too many of Your people, Lord, walk in the shadow of death or press on in a life without direction or meaning.

Come, Lord, and shed Your light upon this Nation and its leaders. Diffused within Your people, who are prepared to live transparent lives, You can remove the darkness of fear and anxiety with rays of hope, 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 gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KENNEDY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota 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.

THE FREEDOM PATH

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, in less than 24 hours, the Iraqi people will elect a permanent parliament that will govern their free nation for the next 4 years. They will stand tall against tyranny and watch democracy unfold before their eyes. Mr. Speaker, I went to Iraq for the first historical elections in January and saw firsthand the birth of democracy in this land far, far away.

We will not cut and run on freedom and on Iraq. Otherwise, the terrorists will have won the day, and the Iraqi hope for freedom will disappear into the dismal abyss of lost causes. Freedom has a price. Our troops are paying that sacrificial price for the Iraqi people and world freedom. We will continue to support these sons and daughters of liberty. On the eve of the elections, we pay tribute to our freedom fighters.

President Kennedy once said, "The cost of freedom is always high, but Americans have always paid it, and one path we shall never choose and that is the path of surrender or submission."

Mr. Speaker, we have chosen the right path, the hard path, the freedom path. We will persevere with the free-

dom-loving people of Iraq until the journey down this path is successfully completed. That's just the way it is.

GENOCIDE IN DARFUR

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, as we approach the last week of our work this session, there are 2 million people trapped in the unfolding nightmare in Darfur; 500 people a day being killed as we prepare for the holiday season. Since we are going to be delaying the work of the House until the end of January, this week is also the last chance for us to act to at least keep the African Union peacekeepers on the job; 7,300 people for an area the size of Texas seems like a fragile reed with which to stop the ongoing genocide in Darfur.

The Defense Appropriations train leaving the station could contain \$50 million, which would be the smallest of steps to halt what all of us here say we condemn. We all ought to ask ourselves what we are going to do about it this week.

CIADA—CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to read and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am honored today to salute an organization that has ably served the citizens of North and South Carolina for 50 years. With approximately 2,500 members, the Carolinas Independent Automobile Dealers Association is the largest chapter within the National Independent Dealers Association in the country. Led by executive director Jim Edwards, CIADA encourages its members to abide by a published code of ethics and to actively

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