

1998 was the passage of something called the Omnibus Appropriations Bill. That was the one that weighed in here at 40 pounds, almost broke the table up here at the front of the Congress, and which was presented in such a fashion that few if any Members knew what was in it until weeks later, as the reporters began to discover all the pork that was laden in this allegedly conservative bill.

Undoubtedly some Americans are going to be pleased to hear that this Congress is shut down and not doing anything, instead of approving that kind of nonsense. No doubt there will be some on the fringes who really believe the government should do nothing that will be very pleased that their dreams have been realized and that this House is largely doing nothing.

February, well, it does not look noticeably better. Under the best of circumstances, this House may convene for a few hours on about 10 days to approve a few largely uncontested bills.

Today, for example, we will pass the first piece of legislation in this Congress. It is a measure that we are approving, reapproving today, in the very same words that we approved unanimously last year. For some reason the Senate never got around to considering it.

Tomorrow we will replace one stopgap measure approved last fall with another stopgap measure to carry us forward just a few more months until the House finally gets down to work to develop a meaningful bipartisan long-term solution to the transportation problem.

I would say that even if we gave Ken Starr another \$50 million or so to waste, I do not even believe he could find anything notable that this House has done in the opening weeks of 1999 to help the ordinary American citizen. Most of the folks that I represent down in central Texas would prefer to see their Representatives in this House, the people's House, tending to the Nation's business.

The President has outlined what I think are a number of very important budget priorities throughout December and January. I believe they demand our attention and debate. He has emphasized the importance of conserving the surplus, letting it build up. I believe we should do that. I believe it is time to stop the shutdown of this House and get back to the Nation's business.

HOW LONG WILL THE WAR WITH IRAQ GO ON BEFORE CONGRESS NOTICES?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I ask my fellow colleagues, how long will the war go on before Congress notices? We have been bombing and occupying Iraq since

1991, longer the occupation of Japan after World War II. Iraq has never committed aggression against the United States.

The recent escalation of bombing in Iraq has caused civilian casualties to mount. The Clinton administration claims U.N. resolution 687, passed in 1991, gives him the legal authority to continue this war. We have perpetuated hostilities and sanctions for more than 8 years on a country that has never threatened our security, and the legal justification comes from not the U.S. Congress, as the Constitution demands, but from a clearly unconstitutional authority, the United Nations.

In the past several months the airways have been filled with Members of Congress relating or restating their fidelity to their oath of office to uphold the Constitution. That is good, and I am sure it is done with the best of intentions. But when it comes to explaining our constitutional responsibility to make sure unconstitutional sexual harassment laws are thoroughly enforced, while disregarding most people's instincts towards protecting privacy, it seems to be overstating a point, compared to our apathy toward the usurping of congressional power to declare and wage war. That is something we ought to be concerned about.

A major reason for the American Revolution was to abolish the King's power to wage war, tax, and invade personal privacy without representation and due process of law. For most of our history our presidents and our Congresses understood that war was a prerogative of the congressional authority alone. Even minimal military interventions by our early presidents were for the most part done only with constitutional approval.

This all changed after World War II with our membership in the United Nations. As bad as it is to allow our presidents to usurp congressional authority to wage war, it is much worse for the President to share this sovereign right with an international organization that requires us to pay more than our fair share while we get a vote no greater than the rest.

The constitution has been blatantly ignored by the President while Congress has acquiesced in endorsing the 8-year war against Iraq. The War Powers Resolution of 1973 has done nothing to keep our presidents from policing the world, spending billions of dollars, killing many innocent people, and jeopardizing the very troops that should be defending America.

The continual ranting about stopping Hussein, who is totally defenseless against our attacks, from developing weapons of mass destruction ignores the fact that more than 30,000 very real nuclear warheads are floating around the old Soviet empire.

Our foolish policy in Iraq invites terrorist attacks against U.S. territory and incites the Islamic fundamentalists against us. As a consequence, our efforts to develop long-term peaceful

relations with Russia are now ending. This policy cannot enhance world peace. But instead of changing it, the President is about to expand it in another no-win centuries-old fight in Kosovo.

It is time for Congress to declare its interest in the Constitution and take responsibility on issues that matter, like the war powers.

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 30 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 at 2 p.m.

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

May Your gifts of goodness and peace, O God, be upon us and all people; may Your blessings of joy and happiness be and abide with us all; may Your abundant favor touch every person in the depths of their hearts; and may Your comfort bring healing and assurance to all in need. Above all the noise of each day and above any clash or contention, we are thankful that Your still small voice strengthens and ministers to us in our very souls. For this we are eternally grateful. 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 Ohio (Mr. TRAFICANT) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. TRAFICANT 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 THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 20, 1999.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted to clause 5 of rule III of the

Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on January 20, 1999 at 11: 45 a.m.

That the Senate passed without amendment H. Con. Res. 11.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

JEFF TRANDAHL,
Clerk.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 29, 1999.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted to clause 5 of rule III of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on January 29, 1999 at 1:00 p.m.

That the Senate passed S. Res. 30.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

JEFF TRANDAHL,
Clerk.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO INVESTIGATIVE SUBCOMMITTEES OF COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS OF OFFICIAL CONDUCT

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to the provisions of clause 5(a)(4)(A) of rule X and the order of the House of Tuesday, January 19, 1999, the Speaker on Thursday, January 28, 1999 named the following Members of the House to serve on investigative subcommittees of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct for the 106th Congress:

Mrs. BIGGERT of Illinois,
Ms. GRANGER of Texas,
Mr. HASTINGS of Washington,
Mr. HULSHOF of Missouri,
Mr. LATOURETTE of Ohio,
Mr. MCCRERY of Louisiana,
Mr. MCKEON of California,
Mr. SESSIONS of Texas,
Mr. SHIMKUS of Illinois, and
Mr. THORNBERRY of Texas.

COMMUNICATION FROM HON. RICHARD A. GEPHARDT, DEMOCRATIC LEADER

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

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 26, 1999.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to clause 5(a)(4)(A) of Rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives I designate the following Members to be available for service on an investigative subcommittee of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct:

Mr. CLYBURN of South Carolina,
Mr. DOYLE of Pennsylvania,
Mr. EDWARDS of Texas,

Mr. KLINK of Pennsylvania,
Mr. LEWIS of Georgia,
Ms. MEEK of Florida,
Mr. STUPAK of Michigan,
Mr. TANNER of Tennessee.

Two additional Members will be so designated at a later time.

Sincerely,

RICHARD A. GEPHARDT,
Democratic Leader.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE JOHN F. KENNEDY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to the provisions of section 2(a) of the National Cultural Center Act (20 U.S.C. 76h(a)) and the order of the House of Tuesday, January 19, 1999, the Speaker on Tuesday, January 26, 1999 appointed the following Member of the House to the Board of Trustees of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts:

Mr. HASTERT of Illinois.

ELECTION OF MEMBER TO COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Democratic Caucus, I offer a privileged resolution (H. Res. 29) and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 29

Resolved, That the following named Member is, and is hereby, elected to serve on the standing committee as follows:

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Ms. BERKLEY, Nevada.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PLEDGE TO WORK HARD FOR CALIFORNIA'S 41ST CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

(Mr. GARY MILLER of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GARY MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor for me to be here as an elected representative of California's 41st Congressional District. Here, in the greatest representative body in the world, Members of the 106th Congress have a great deal of responsibility to the American people.

It is my intention to work in a bipartisan manner on some of the key issues facing us today. I will work to reduce government waste, bureaucracy, and red tape. I will work towards reducing the tax burden on the American people. For the senior citizens of my district, I promise to focus on saving Social Security. I will work to reform managed health care.

As a member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, I will work with members of the California delegation to maintain Ontario International Airport and reduce traffic congestion on our region's interstate highways.

As a member of the House Committee on Science, I pledge to work towards maintaining our space program as well as ensuring that our country leads the world in technological innovation.

Finally, I wish to thank my family, friends, and the people of the 41st Congressional District for their guidance and their support.

To the people of my district, I pledge to you that I will work for your interest and will continue to earn your support.

IMF WANTS TO AID IRAQ

(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, it is time to throw up. That is right. Check this out. Uncle Sam gives billions to the International Monetary Fund. Reports now say that the IMF wants to give billions of dollars in aid to Iraq. That is right, Iraq.

And you guessed it, the same reports say the White House has, quote-unquote, given their blessing. Unbelievable. While the White House bombs Iraq, the White House is supporting billions of dollars for Saddam Hussein. Beam me up. Who is on first, Mr. Speaker? What is on second?

Mr. Speaker, I yield back evidently all the advice the White House is getting from Larry, Moe, and Curly.

OPPOSE H.R. 45, NUCLEAR WASTE POLICY ACT OF 1999

(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, the month of January of this year has already come and gone. In just that one month, there have been seven major earthquakes in Yucca Mountain, Nevada. This is a site where this city's powerful nuclear waste lobbyists want to bury their nuclear waste.

This should not be a surprise, however, because Yucca Mountain, you see, is a mountain. It is not geologically stable. In fact, it is a mountain that is tectonically active.

Jerry Szymanski, a former Department of Energy geologist, said seismic design for a facility to transfer nuclear waste canisters above ground at Yucca Mountain is not possible there. He said, with 32 faults in the area, the mountain is capable of a magnitude 8.5, folks, earthquake, and poses too many risks and variables to design seismic standards.

Realize that one does not store nuclear waste in an area that ranks third in the country for seismic activity, an area that has more than 621 earthquakes in the past 20 years, and an area that had seven earthquakes in less than 30 days.

Oppose H.R. 45, my colleagues. This could weigh heavily on my colleagues' souls.