

be touched by Your word and rise to new life.

Our land and its children believe in the approaching spiritual solstice; and readies itself for the surprises of goodness and generosity which You alone can bring; both in this life 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 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.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 3678. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to public health security and all-hazards preparedness and response, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 107-12, the Chair, on behalf of the Majority Leader, announces the appointment of William Pickle of Virginia to serve as a member of the Medal of Valor Review Board.

OCCUPIED TERRITORY

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, several nations are involved. These nations, with their thousands of peoples, have occupied someone else's sovereign country. They moved in silently over a long period of time. Some of the infiltrators were organized, some were not. They crossed national boundaries without regard for the rule of law. The migrant peoples began to colonize the new land because it was flowing with milk and honey. And the inhabitants did not resist the infiltration. The inhabitants of the occupied land paid little attention to the invasion. The inhabitants and their leaders were too busy. After all, they were protecting the borders of other nations. The colonists from the foreign nations began to take from the new land. They demanded and received benefits from the inhabitants. The locals suddenly became alarmed and asked, how can this be happening?

These foreign nations were uninvited. They cared little about the sovereignty of the occupied nation. They came and brought another culture, another language. They moved in and lived on the land because they could.

Mr. Speaker, this ought not to be. But it is. It is the occupied territory of the United States of America. And that's just the way it is.

DEMOCRATS SIX FOR 2006 WILL BE IMPLEMENTED EARLY NEXT YEAR

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

Mr. CARNAHAN. Madam Speaker, last month the American people demanded change from Washington, and in January they are going to get it.

Over the last couple of years, the American people have grown increasingly disillusioned with a government that was not working for them. It is time that Washington stop listening exclusively to the elite special interests and start listening to the people who send us here.

That is why Democrats want to repeal billions of dollars in tax breaks for big oil companies to instead invest in new energy technologies. Rather than handouts to Big Oil, we should be working to make America energy independent. The inclusive Democratic agenda starts us down that path.

Our agenda also looks out for American seniors over the interests of drug companies. There is simply no reason why our government shouldn't negotiate for lower prices. The government already negotiates on behalf of our veterans, and they are now enjoying a 42 percent savings on their drugs. Democrats and Republicans have heard the loud voices of Americans. Their voices should be echoed in this people's House by every Member of this new Congress.

CONFIRMATION OF DR. ROBERT GATES

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

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, with the recent resignation of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, I urge my Senate colleagues to work swiftly in a bipartisan manner to confirm President Bush's nominee, Dr. Robert Gates, as soon as possible. I was pleased to learn that the Senate Armed Services Committee unanimously agreed to forward Mr. Gates' confirmation to the Senate floor for final approval.

We are currently fighting a global war on terror and it is essential to have a Secretary of Defense at the helm in the Pentagon to oversee and effectively utilize the vast resources of the Department of Defense. A Nation at war needs Dr. Gates' leadership at this time.

He is a superb choice and is highly qualified. He recently left his position

as president of Texas A&M University, the seventh largest university in the Nation, after serving 27 years in the intelligence community. He has a distinguished record of public service, having served six Presidents of both parties, and most recently as the director of the Central Intelligence Agency from 1991 to 1993. He is the only career officer in the CIA's history to rise from an entry-level employee to the director. He is highly regarded and extremely qualified.

I urge my Senate colleagues to act swiftly to confirm Dr. Gates.

A NEW CONGRESS AND A NEW DIRECTION IN IRAQ

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, the American public did not vote for the Iraq Study Group. They voted for a new Congress and a new direction in Iraq: Out.

Now, many who voted for change will be surprised to learn that there are some who say they oppose the war and will continue to fund it in the name of supporting the troops. We will not abandon our troops in the field, some solemnly pronounce, while continuing to fund a war that even generals say cannot be won militarily.

Well, then, we have already abandoned our troops in the field. We have abandoned them to lies about why the war was being fought. We have abandoned them to getting shot at from all sides. We have left them in a type of hell where we profess a strange love for them by keeping them there.

The money is in the pipeline right now to bring the troops home now; \$70 billion was appropriated for Iraq on October 1. The administration will ask for another \$160 billion in the spring. That is a total of \$230 billion for the Iraq war. In less than 2 years the war on the so-called defense budgets will cost more than \$1 trillion.

Stop wasting money. Stop wasting lives. Bring the troops home now and cut off funds for more war.

GODSPEED TO ERIC DELL

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, today I rise with mixed feelings. As the 109th Congress draws to a close, my longtime chief of staff, Eric Dell, will complete his tenure on Capitol Hill.

Eric and I have worked together for the past 14 years. More than a trusted, competent staff member, Eric is a good friend. While I know he will go on to great things, his counsel and leadership in the office will be missed. I am happy about his new opportunities.

Raised in Ridgeland, South Carolina, by his loving parents, Wayne and Ouida