

APPOINTMENT OF HON. FRANK R. WOLF OR HON. TOM DAVIS OF VIRGINIA TO ACT AS SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE TO SIGN ENROLLED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS THROUGH DECEMBER 6, 2004

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. OSE) laid before the House the following Communication from the Speaker:

THE SPEAKER'S ROOMS,  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, November 20, 2004.

I hereby appoint the Honorable FRANK R. WOLF or, if he is not available to perform this duty, the Honorable TOM DAVIS to act as Speaker pro tempore to sign enrolled bills and joint resolutions through December 6, 2004.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the appointment is approved.

There was no objection.

COMMUNICATION FROM HON. NANCY PELOSI, DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from NANCY PELOSI, Democratic Leader:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
OFFICE OF THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER,  
November 20, 2004.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to section 1012(c)(1) of the Medicare Prescription Drug Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 42 U.S.C. 242b note, I hereby appoint Dr. Simon P. Cohn, of Oakland, California to the Commission On Systemic Interoperability.

Best regards,

NANCY PELOSI.

### SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

### ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of turn at this time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

### THE HUNT FOR BIN LADEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, 3 years ago Osama bin Laden was able to run his al Qaeda network freely, thanks to the protection of the Taliban regime. Today, he is on the run, frequently crossing the border between Afghani-

stan and Pakistan to elude coalition forces.

Last January, I traveled to Pakistan and Afghanistan to determine how Osama bin Laden continues to avoid capture. When I traveled to the Kyber Agency, I was reminded that the State Department had run a very successful rewards program that had previously led to the arrest and capture of Mir Amal Kansi, a terrorist who had murdered two CIA employees and injured three others in a 1993 shooting outside CIA headquarters in Virginia. The promise of a significant monetary reward was enough for some Pakistanis to turn Kansi in to the proper authorities. The program worked before, and it could easily work again.

When I returned, I talked to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), the chairman of the Committee on International Relations, and had help from the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), the ranking Democratic member, and we introduced legislation to increase the maximum reward this program could offer from 25 to \$50 million for some of the world's most dangerous terrorists. It made sense that we increase the reward for information leading to the capture of Osama bin Laden. Additionally, our bill allowed the State Department to use non-cash awards, and in a rural community, the provision of a truck or feed or farm animals can mean a lot in a rural community which could provide information leading to the arrest of Osama bin Laden.

I am pleased to report this legislation was included in the omnibus appropriations bill that was just passed by the House of Representatives. When the President signs this bill into law, he will give the State Department a new and powerful tool that can be used in the hunt for Osama bin Laden and his senior associates.

Bottom line, with passage of this bill the reward for the arrest of Osama bin Laden can rise to \$50 million. The passage of this bill could not come at a more critical moment, as earlier this week both the United Nations and the White House issued their latest estimate for the Afghan poppy harvest for the year. The estimate did not contain good news.

This year, the crop yielded enough poppy to produce 4,950 metric tons of opium. This represented a 239 percent increase in the crop last year. Evidence suggests that Afghanistan is in danger of becoming a narcostate; and worse, we know that al Qaeda and the remnants of the Taliban are now primarily funded by the sale of heroin.

Following the September 11 attack, the U.S. targeted bin Laden's Afghan sanctuary. We destroyed the Taliban's bases and bin Laden abandoned his terrorist training camps and also abandoned his foreign fund-raising efforts; but in their place, he and the Taliban have turned to the sale of heroin to finance terrorism. It appears that bin Laden and his patron, Mullah Omar,

plan to rely more heavily on heroin profits than ever before.

The international community wrongly praised the Taliban when Mullah Omar eradicated Afghanistan's poppy crop in 2001. They failed to see that the Taliban only destroyed poppies after it had stored tons of opium paste in its own warehouses. The purpose of Mullah Omar's touted eradication was an effort simply to corner the market on heroin for greater profits.

During my mission to Afghanistan earlier this year, the brave new antinarcotics minister for Afghanistan, Mirwais Yassini, noted that one Afghan drug kingpin, Haji Bashir Noorzai, delivered 2,000 kilograms of heroin every 8 weeks to al Qaeda operatives. At the market price in Pakistan, this one supply chain alone would yield Osama bin Laden \$28 million a year. The 9/11 Commission estimated that the September 11 attack cost only \$500,000.

Passage of this law shows that we are recognizing the growing connection between bin Laden's finances and the sale of heroin. During consideration of intelligence legislation, I offered an amendment calling for the administration to study the feasibility of bringing the Drug Enforcement Agency back in to the formal intelligence community. My amendment passed unanimously, underscoring how critical it is to recognize the connection between drug cartels and terrorism.

Mr. Speaker, Congress has turned up the heat on bin Laden today. Our new law raises the top award to \$50 million. We also allow for rewards to help in the arrest of drug kingpins who finance terror. We also give greater flexibility to paying awards in commodities, such as a truck or grain, that can mean a great deal to a rural family.

I applaud the action of the Congress and urge the President to make full use of his new authority to offer a \$50 million award for the arrest of Osama bin Laden.

### CONCLUSION OF THE 108TH CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my thoughts on the 108th Congress and the challenges that we face in the upcoming 109th Congress.

The 108th Congress has been dominated by concerns about security. Our constituents are worried about their personal security, and that is not surprising given the war on terror, but they are also concerned about economic security. They are worried about jobs. They are worried about health care, and they are worried about their families, about making this world a better place to live for their children and their grandchildren. They are also worried about the high costs of energy and especially gas and natural gas.

This House has tried to address those concerns.

First and foremost, we supported our President as he led us in the fight against terrorism. We passed a war supplemental this spring that provided our troops with the critical equipment, the weapons, the ammunition and the training, to get the job done in Iraq and Afghanistan.

We have had notable success in Iraq and Afghanistan in the last year. In June, Hamid Karzai, the President of the new Afghanistan addressed a joint session of the Congress; and in September, President Allawi, the President of the new Iraq, also addressed the Congress.

Think about it. Instead of a Taliban regime that abused women and trained terrorists to attack America, we have a democratically elected pro-American President in Kabul. Instead of a brutal dictator who terrorized his own citizens, who intended to develop weapons of mass destruction and who actively supported and funded terrorist organizations in Baghdad, there is a new President of Iraq who is trying to build a democracy.

This is still a tough fight. The terrorists have flocked to Iraq because they know that if they are successful there we will have turned a corner in the war on terror, but we must not turn away now. We must see this to the end.

This is a two-pronged war on terror. As we win the war overseas, we must strengthen our defenses at home.

□ 1630

The 9/11 Commission gave us an important roadmap to strengthening our homeland defenses by improving our intelligence agencies, bolstering our border security and strengthening our anti-terror laws.

The Congress has reacted quickly to this report. Our committees canceled their August break to hold hearings on the recommendations, and we came back in September to start the hard work of the legislation. It is easy to make recommendations, but it is a lot harder to make law.

And since the Commission made its recommendations, the Congress has worked around the clock to make a good law that will make this country safer. We hope to find consensus and to pass the bill before the end of this year.

I am proud of our efforts. Reforming the intelligence agencies is difficult. Our former colleague, Porter Goss, who is now the CIA Director, has found out how hard it is to get entrenched bureaucrats to change. He is doing an excellent job under very difficult circumstances.

The Congress took effective action in the 107th Congress to create a Department of Homeland Security. In the 108th Congress, we made this historic change in our committees to oversee that new department. We created a Select Committee on Homeland Security. We also created a Subcommittee on Homeland Security of the Committee

on Appropriations, dedicated to funding our Homeland Security needs. I intend to make the Select Committee permanent in the next Congress. I hope my colleagues will join me in that effort.

As we did our part in the war on terror, we also fought hard to make America more secure on the domestic front. Job security was at the forefront of our efforts. We had an active agenda to spur job growth here in America. This fall, we passed the American Job Creation Act, and this bill cuts taxes for domestic manufacturers so that they can create jobs here.

We also passed the Working Families Tax Relief Act, aimed at helping families keep more of what they earn so they can spend more on their needs. These tax cut measures helped spur steady economic growth and job creation. More than 1.5 million jobs have been created over the last 12 months, thanks in no small part to our efforts here.

This Congress also grappled with health care security. I am proud of the Medicare Reform Act, which for the first time added prescription drug benefits to the Medicare program. Health Savings Accounts were included in that legislation, and now millions of Americans have a chance to use HSAs to get better health care for their own families. I like Health Savings Accounts because they put consumers in the driver's seat when it comes to controlling costs, not government bureaucrats.

Education remains an important part of our domestic agenda. In the 107th Congress, we reacted to the No Child Left Behind law, which greatly increased accountability and increased standards for our Nation's schools. Yesterday, we completed work on a reauthorization of a special education bill that will help free up resources for local schools. We have a responsibility to help all children in our society, and this bill does exactly that.

We also leave this Congress with some unfinished business. I am very disappointed we did not finish the highway bill. A first-class economy needs a first-class transportation system. And while we made great progress by passing the highway bill out of both Chambers, we could not finish the conference report. We will get this done early next year.

I was also disappointed we did not finish the energy conference report. Energy prices are too high, and we are too dependent on foreign sources. The energy conference report that passed the House would have given incentives to American companies to produce energy in America for Americans. Trial lawyers held this bill up. We must overcome their opposition and pass this common-sense approach to energy independence in the next Congress.

We need to pass medical liability reform. Trial lawyers, again, are driving OB/GYNs out of business, making it hard for women in many States to get the health care that they need. We

passed it, but it was stopped in the other body. We will finish that job next year, also.

Other liability reform efforts are also important. Class action lawsuits are out of control. Asbestos legislation is killing jobs. And in this country we need to make some real changes so that we can create jobs and not force them overseas. Every time a court claim goes against an American manufacturer, nine times out of ten those jobs go overseas. Each consumer pays a tort tax that puts our products at a competitive disadvantage. We need to reform our tort laws if we are serious about reforming our economy next year.

Next year, we also have other big issues that we need to tackle. Social Security reform is on the agenda. The President campaigned on it. Many of our Members have talked about it. And if we do nothing, the system will go bankrupt. We can do this without raising taxes or cutting benefits for senior citizens. We can do it by giving younger Americans ownership of their retirement to help them get a better return on their investments.

We need to take a serious look at tax reform. Our Tax Code is too complex and too anti-competitive. It costs our citizens \$250 billion every year just to prepare their taxes. This is ridiculous. If we want to keep jobs here in America, we need to simplify our tax system. There are a lot of ideas out there, and I hope that we can have a national debate on how best to do that.

We have a fiscal crisis that we must deal with. Our national debt is too high, and our budget deficit is too big. We need to cut spending first. We need to look closely at entitlement programs and spending. We need to reform the government. We need to make this government smaller and smarter. We can make it more efficient. We can weed out waste, fraud, and abuse, and we can get to balanced budgets again as soon as possible.

But as we look at reform in government and cutting the deficit, we should also resist the calls to raise taxes. Growing the economy is the best way to close a deficit. We lost \$350 billion of revenue when the Internet bubble burst. Strong, sustained economic growth will bring back those revenues. But we will not get the growth if we raise taxes.

Looking back over this last session of Congress, I am concerned about the bitter partisanship that has engulfed this House. I am especially concerned that some might want to use the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct for partisan politics. Congressional ethics is important. We all have a duty to represent our constituents with the highest ethical standards, but an ethics committee is only as good as the will of its Members.

We should remember why we have this committee in the first place. The ethics process protects the reputations of all of us by investigating abuses by

some of us. But when some seek to subvert that process for political gain, we all suffer. It is wrong to file frivolous and overly partisan ethics complaints.

The House is an interesting institution because it has rules that protect the rights of the minority and it guarantees that the will of the majority be carried out. Unlike in the other body, where the rules tend to encourage bipartisanship, our rules tend to encourage partisanship. In my opinion, we should do a better job of resisting that temptation towards partisanship and work for more bipartisanship.

All too often, both the majority and the minority in the House have retreated to their separate camps, drawing lines in the sand, refusing to negotiate, and the result has been partisanship. That is bitter and counterproductive. We will have fundamental disagreements on many issues. That is the beauty of the two-party system. But we ought to seek a way to bridge those disagreements whenever we can.

I pledge to work with my colleagues in the minority party who want to work with the majority to get good things done. I have great respect for Members like the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL), the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. DINGELL), the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), and many others. And I have a high regard for the minority leadership. I know that they want the best things for this country, even when I disagree with their approach. We all have a duty to our constituents to make this country as strong as possible. We work best when we work together.

I want to thank all the Members for their patience and for their perseverance. Public service in the Congress of the United States is not an easy vocation and especially hard on families. I want to thank to all the Members for their service to this Nation.

I would also like to thank the dedicated staff, especially the floor staff, legislative counsel, the clerks, and the pages who work long and hard to make this place work. Thank you for your fine service, and thank you from this Nation. God bless you.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. OSE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### WHERE TO FROM HERE?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, the election of 2004 is now history. It is time to ponder our next 4 years. Will our country become freer, richer, safer, and more peaceful? Or will we continue to suffer

from lost civil liberties, a stagnant economy, terrorist threats, and an expanding war in the Middle East and Central Asia? Surely the significance of the election was reflected in its intensity and divisiveness.

More people voted for President Bush than any other Presidential candidate in our history. And because of the turnout, more people voted against an incumbent president than ever before. However, President Bush was reelected by the narrowest margin vote of any incumbent president since Woodrow Wilson in 1916. The numbers are important and measurable. The long-term results are less predictable.

The President and many others have said these results give the President a mandate. Exactly what that means and what it may lead to is of great importance to us all. Remember, the Nation elected a president in 1972 with a much bigger mandate who never got a chance to use his political capital.

The bitter campaign and the intensity with which both sides engaged each other implies that a great divide existed between two competing candidates with sharply different philosophies. There were plenty of perceived differences, obviously, or a heated emotional contest would not have materialized.

The biggest difference involved their views on moral and family values. It was evident that the views regarding gay marriage and abortion held by Senator KERRY did not sit well with the majority of American voters, who were then motivated to let their views be known through their support of President Bush. This contributed to the mandate the President received more than any other issue. But it begs the question: If the mandates given was motivated by views held on moral issues, does the President get carte blanche on all the other programs that are less conservative? It appears that the President and his neo-con advisers assume the answer is yes.

Ironically, the reason the family and moral values issues played such a big role in the election is that on other big issues little differences existed between the two candidates. Interestingly enough, both candidates graduated from Yale and both were members of the controversial and highly secretive Skull and Bones Society. This fact elicited no interest with the media in the campaign.

Both candidates supported the war in Iraq and the continuation of it. Both supported the PATRIOT Act and its controversial attack on personal privacy. Both supported the U.N. and the internationalization under UNESCO, IMF, World Bank, and the WTO. Both candidates agreed that a President can initiate a war without a declaration by Congress. Both supported foreign interventionism in general, foreign aid, and pursuing American interests by maintaining a worldwide American empire. Both supported our current monetary system, which permits the Federal Re-

serve to accommodate deficit spending by Congress through the dangerous process of debt monetization. Both supported expanding entitlements, including programs like the National Endowment for the Arts, medical benefits, and Federal housing programs. Both candidates supported deficit financing. Both candidates supported increased spending in almost all categories.

Though President Bush was more favorably inclined to tax cuts, this, in reality, has limited value if spending continues to grow. All spending must be paid for by a tax, even if it is the inflation tax, whereby printing press money pays the bills and the tax is paid through higher prices, especially by the poor and the middle class.

The immediate market reaction to the reelection of President Bush was interesting. The stock market rose significantly, led by certain segments thought to benefit from a friendly Republican administration, such as pharmaceuticals, HMOs, and the weapons industry. The Wall Street Journal summed up the election with a headline the following day: Winner is Big Business.

□ 1645

The stock market rally following the election likely will be short-lived, however, as the fundamentals underlying the bear market that started in 2000 are still in place.

More important was the reaction of the international exchange markets immediately following the election. The dollar took a dive and gold rose. This indicated that holders of the trillion dollars slushing around the world interpreted the results to mean that, even with conservatives in charge, unbridled spending will not decrease and will actually grow. They also expect the current account deficit and our national debt to increase. This means the economic consequence of continuing our risky fiscal and monetary policy is something Congress should be a lot more concerned about.

One Merrill Lynch money manager responded to the election by saying, "Bush getting re-elected means a bigger deficit, a weaker dollar, and higher gold prices." Another broker added, "Four more years of Bush is a gift to the gold markets, more war and more deficits and more division."

During the Bush administration, gold surged 70 percent, and the dollar lost 30 percent of its value. A weakened currency is never beneficial, although it is argued it helps our exporters. People who work to earn and save dollars should never have the value of those dollars undermined and diminished by capricious manipulation of the money supply by our government officials.

The value of the dollar is a much more important issue than most realize in Washington. Our current account deficit of 6 percent of GDP and our total foreign indebtedness of over \$3 trillion pose a threat to our standard of living. Unfortunately, when the crisis