

Tonko	Wasserman	Wilson (OH)
Towns	Schultz	Wilson (SC)
Tsongas	Waters	Wittman
Turner	Watson	Wolf
Upton	Watt	Woolsey
Van Hollen	Waxman	Wu
Velázquez	Weiner	Yarmuth
Visclosky	Welch	Young (AK)
Walden	Westmoreland	Young (FL)
Walz	Wexler	
Wamp	Whitfield	

NOT VOTING—16

Boyd	Hall (NY)	Rangel
Campbell	Larson (CT)	Rogers (MI)
Capuano	McCollum	Speier
Davis (IL)	Miller, Gary	Stark
Ehlers	Perriello	
Garrett (NJ)	Putnam	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 1512

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, on March 4, 2009, I missed two votes, that on H. Res. 195 (rollcall vote No. 95) and H. Res. 45 (rollcall vote No. 96). Had I been present, I would have voted “yea” for both H. Res. 195, Recognizing and honoring the employees of the Department of Homeland Security on its sixth anniversary for their continuous efforts to keep the Nation safe, and H. Res. 45, Raising awareness and promoting education on the criminal justice system by establishing March as “National Criminal Justice Month.”

DESPITE OUR DISAGREEMENTS,
WE ARE ALL STILL AMERICANS

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

Mr. BOCCIERI. Mr. Speaker, many economic indicators show that our country is in her greatest time of need since the Great Depression, with too many citizens unemployed, losing their homes and their jobs, and they're looking to us here in Washington for leadership.

I become increasingly alarmed when I hear the voice of divisive mainstream media hosts attempting to inspire others to join them in wishing failure upon our government, our elected President, and our country in crisis. To wish failure on our elected leaders is to wish failure upon our financial markets, our businesses, our workers, and our children.

Ironically, during the debate leading to the Iraq war conflict, many of the same “opinion leaders” suggested that anyone who held a contrary opinion to the President about going to war was somehow uninspired, unpatriotic, and even un-American.

I put my life on the line for this country along with my brothers and sisters in the military so such ill wishers could say whatever they wanted to. The minority's wishing that President Obama fail is wishing that our Nation fails and inflames and ignites and divides our great Nation.

This is the time for a debate of ideas and solutions. In this great time of need, I reject extremism that divides our country, and we should all embrace a voice that unites us around a common thread: that despite all of our disagreements, we are all still Americans.

□ 1515

TRIBUTE TO JAMES L. WATSON

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

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, my district, Gaston County and the City of Gastonia lost a great leader when they lost three-term City Councilman James L. Watson, who passed away this Wednesday.

“Slug” Watson, as he was known, became a great baseball player in youth and was always known as “Slug.” He was a great friend of mine and an early supporter of mine. He was an Army veteran, president of his own small business and a community stalwart. Citizens of West Gastonia had no greater friend and advocate than James Watson.

James was also an active member of his church, where he was a deacon. Upon his election in 2003, his constituents in Ward 6, the only area of Gastonia that overlaps with my congressional district, found themselves also served by a city councilman who had a passion for service and loved helping people. Slug showed us all perseverance. He ran three times for city council and lost, but he was elected three times after that.

James left his native Gastonia to serve our country in the Army and later went on to earn a degree in Small Business from the University of South Carolina.

Upon returning, he embarked on a successful business career with several firms, culminating in the founding of Watco of Gastonia, a parts company of which he was the President and Owner for the past 24 years.

Citizens of West Gastonia had no greater friend or advocate than James Watson. He was a stalwart in the community for decades. He served on the Shiele Museum Board of Trustees, The Gastonia Recreation Advisory Board, was on the first Executive Board of Gastonia Community Watch Association, was past President of the Hunter Huss High School Booster Club, and was a Shriner. He was also an active member of Maranatha Baptist Church where he was a former Deacon.

In politics, I learned a real lesson from James, that of persistence. He ran for City Council three times before he was victorious.

I want to extend my condolences to his wife of nearly 50 years, Carolyn,

and the entire Watson family, as well as the mayor and city council of Gastonia. We have all lost a true statesman and a great leader.

PUTTING THE COUNTRY BACK ON
TRACK

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

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, as we start to debate the budget that was submitted last week, I think a lot of Americans all across the country and a lot of people here in this Chamber have some very serious concerns about the direction that this administration seems to be taking us in. This rampant spending and tax increases are dangerous to our country and our economy at a time when we are having trouble and difficulty all across the land.

The last thing we need is a \$1.4 trillion tax increase, over \$600 billion of which would fall on the backs of every small business owner in this country, and over \$600 billion in the form of a carbon tax, a tax on energy, that every consumer in this country would pay in higher utility rates.

This is surely not the time to be raising taxes to the tune of over \$1.4 trillion on the backs of small businesses and families across this country. We need to go in a better direction. We will be proposing that, and hopefully the administration will work with us to put us on a better path to get our country back on track.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages in writing from the President of the United States were communicated to the House by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

THE RED COATS ARE COMING—
THE RED COATS ARE COMING

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I should inform you that the Red Coats are coming! The Red Coats are coming! The United States Capitol once again has been invaded by the Red Coats. I am not talking about Prime Minister Gordon Brown who spoke to this assembly this morning. I am not talking about the fact that the British came and burned this building in 1814. No, not at all. But the Nation's Capitol is simply being taken away from the American people.

The new Capitol Visitors Center, the CVC as they call themselves, opened its

doors in December of 2008, and since that day many new bureaucratic rules have been decreed. These new regulations infringe on the American people's right to visit this Capitol. It is their building. It doesn't belong to us or to the Red Coats.

Mr. Speaker, there once was a time when a family would come from my district. They would show up at my office and they would ask to see the Capitol. Myself or a staffer would bring them over to the Capitol, take them through these mighty halls by showing them the statues of the two famous people from Texas, Stephen F. Austin and Sam Houston, giving them a peak at the old Supreme Court Chamber, and they could spend as much time in this building as they wanted to. But no more. Apparently the good old times have been replaced by censored, controlled tours which can only be given by the CVC staff, the Red Coats.

Now, before a staff member can even help on a tour of this Capitol, that person must attend a 6-hour or 2-day-long propaganda school given by the CVC Red Coats. The actual tour that everybody must see before they come into this building starts with an opening video given by the Red Coats. It is a controlled and censored video and a controlled and censored trip through this building. The theme opens in the video by saying that the national motto of the United States is "E Pluribus Unum", which means, according to the video, "Out of Many, One."

Well, Mr. Speaker, I must have missed something. I thought that the United States motto was directly above your head, which says "In God We Trust." But not according to the Red Coats. They just changed the national motto on their own. There is, in fact, no mention of those words or religious history of our country in the entire CVC complex. This includes their exhibit halls, which are supposed to chronicle the real history of America. But the Red Coats have rewritten the history of the United States and omit religion or any reference to God.

Once citizens watch the video, they are allowed into this building to go on their tour, as long as they do it on time and they are not late. You can't wander around and get away from the Red Coat tour guide like the old days. They get to spend a few minutes in the rotunda, a few minutes in Statuary Hall and a couple of minutes in the crypt. But that is it. There is no looking around at the paintings by Brumidi in the hallways. And if your State statue is not on the controlled tour, you are out of luck. You don't get to see it. Unfortunately, now one of Texas' statues is off the approved route. I guess my constituents will just have to become a Member of Congress before they will ever get to see it.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that we should make visiting our Capitol a safe and pleasurable experience for all constituents and all Americans everywhere, and these politically correct positions

by the Red Coats are not the way to do it.

I recently signed a letter that is being sponsored by Mr. KIRK and Mr. LOEBSACK that outlines just a few of these ridiculous regulations. This letter, bipartisan, of course, goes to Mr. Ayers, the acting Architect of the Capitol, who is the chief Red Coat.

Member offices have little control over scheduling tours. Once in awhile somebody will just show up in my office and they want to go see this building. It is their first and only trip to Washington. You can't do that anymore. You have got to get on a list and you have got to make that request a month ahead of time at least before you can come into this building. Those "dropin" days are over, unfortunately, because the Red Coat police are in charge, and if they walk through the building and they get off the tour, the Red Coat police dress them down.

Late groups are often turned away. If a family misses their tour by a few minutes or the security lines are too long and they don't get there on time, they may be out of luck and not even get in this building. They are sent home to come back another time. Unless they are trained by the CVC, congressional staff members are no longer allowed to even give tours. And don't forget those "reeducation sessions" last between 6 hours and 2 days.

According to a letter I just received from the CEO of the Visitor Center, things are going pretty good, according to them. They say thousands of people are making reservations. Well, apparently that is true, because my staff assistant is having an impossible time booking tours for our constituents during the first week of April, spring break, when most of them are coming up here. And the Capitol, unfortunately, is not friendly anymore.

Mr. Speaker, the United States Capitol belongs to the American people. It doesn't belong to us. It doesn't belong to the Red Coats. It belongs to the American people. And I am disappointed in the new regulations from the CVC and the disrespect that has been shown to the American people and Members of Congress.

Mr. Speaker, the Red Coats have arrived and they are stealing the people's Capitol away from America. That ought not to be, but that's just the way it is.

LET'S GIVE THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD DIGNITY AND OPPORTUNITY

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, the Iraqi Government is reopening the infamous Abu Ghraib prison. It has been renovated to include computers, recreational areas, a library and a barber shop for the prisoners. The Iraqis promise to treat prisoners humanely

and in accordance with international standards.

Some disagree with this decision to reopen Abu Ghraib. They say it should have been turned into a museum to document the crimes that took place there. Others say it should have been simply knocked down. But the Iraqi Government says it must keep the facility because it actually needs the space.

The renovations are designed to remove any reminders of the terrible violations of human rights that took place at Abu Ghraib when it was under U.S. control. Those violations did a great deal of damage, Mr. Speaker, to America's reputation. Even worse, they sent a terrible signal to the world. The UN has reported that nondemocratic countries have used U.S. actions in places like Abu Ghraib to justify their own abuses.

Mr. Speaker, the people of the world expect America to offer a better example than that. They expect us to work for peace and to treat people with dignity and compassion.

The Obama administration has already taken important steps in that direction. The President has renounced torture. He has ordered the closing of Guantanamo Bay. His administration has also released documents which show how the previous administration violated the constitutional rights of the American people right here at home.

President Obama has also pledged to use diplomacy instead of war as the first tool of American foreign policy. He has signaled his willingness to talk to Iran and Syria, two nations that we must engage to create stability in the Middle East. He is trying, Mr. Speaker, to diffuse tensions with Russia, and Secretary of State Clinton has pledged a vigorous effort to kick-start the stalled peace process between Israel and the Palestinians.

But there is still a lot more that we just have to do. We must remove all of our troops and military contractors out of Iraq by August 2010. Leaving 50,000 residual troops is unacceptable. The Iraqi people will view it as an enduring occupation force and it will delay the reconciliation and the unification the Iraqi people need. They need that to build stability and democracy in their country.

We must also redeploy our troops out of Afghanistan and use humanitarian assistance instead of military force to achieve our goals there.

□ 1530

Every expert on Afghanistan knows that foreign military intervention never succeeds in that part of the world. Helping the Afghan people to build schools and roads will work a lot better than sending in more troops.

I've also called for a worldwide ceasefire or "time-out" to give diplomacy, to give humanitarian assistance and conflict resolution a chance to work. By intensifying our efforts in