The House met at noon.

The Reverend Dr. Ronald F. Christi- 
tian, Chaplain, Lutheran Social Serv- 
ces, Fairfax, VA, offered the following 
prayer:

Almighty God, we speak our words of 
gratitude from hearts that sense Your 
goodness.

You open Your hand and You satisfy 
the desire of every living thing, and so 
we raise our thankful song, for again 
the fall harvest has provided us with 
granaries that are overflowing.

The good Earth has produced bounti- 
ful fruits and seeds, and we are all 
blessed because of it.

So this day we are a chorus of Your 
grateful recipients, and we sing as so 
many have sung through the years.

Now thank we all our God with heart 
and hands and voices.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined 
the Journal of the last day’s pro-
ceedings and announces to the House 
his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Jour-
nal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman 
from Indiana (Mr. PEASE) come forward 
and lead the House in the Pledge of 
Allegiance?

Mr. PEASE led the Pledge of Alle- 
giance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the 
United States of America, and to the Repub-
lic 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 Mr. 
Lundregan, one of its clerks, an-
nounced that the Senate had passed 
without amendment a concurrent resolu-
tion of the House of the following title:

H. Con. Res. 235. Concurrent resolution 
providing for a conditional sine die adjourn-
ment of the first session of the One Hundred 
Sixth Congress.

The message also announced that the 
Senate had passed with an amendment in 
which the concurrence of the House 
is requested, a joint resolution of the 
House of the following title:

H.J. Res. 82. Joint resolution making fur-
ther continuing appropriations for the fiscal 
year 2000, and for other purposes.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. 
PEASE). Under the Speaker’s an-
nounced policy of January 6, 1999, and 
under a previous order of the House, 
the following Members will be recog-
nized for 5 minutes each.

THOUGHTS ON THE FIRST SESSION 
OF THE 106TH CONGRESS

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

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, as the 
first session of the 106th Congress con-
cludes, I think it is proper to give this 
legislative body my thoughts on what the 
House has accomplished this year and 
what is left to accomplish next year. Together 
we have enjoyed many victories and some disappointments.

When I became Speaker last January, 
the House needed some serious work. 
The distrust and bitterness and ramp-
ant partisanship of both parties threat-
ened to undermine the public support 
of this House. We had Members who 
would not even talk to each other, let 
alone work with one another.

Given that situation, last January in 
this very spot I said solutions to prob-
lems cannot be found in a pool of bit-
terness. Solutions can be found in an 
environment in which we trust one an-
other, and we trust one another’s word, 
and where we generate heat and pas-
sion, but where we recognize that each 
Member is equally important to our 
overall mission of improving the life of 
America’s people.

We have made progress in putting 
that bitterness behind us, because we 
decided to go to work. Members of the 
minority cosponsored six out of the ten 
top bills introduced by the majority.

Our greatest achievements this year 
had bipartisan support; The budget bill 
that we just passed, the Social Secu-
rity lockbox bill, the appropriations 
bills, the missile defense bill, the Edu-
cation Flexibility bill and the Finan-
cial Services Modernization Act. Both 
parties must continue to promote their 
views and their philosophies, but we 
must never sacrifice the common good 
of the American people on the altar of 
partisan competition.

We have proved that when we work 
together, we get our work done. This 
year, we passed the budget on time for 
only the second time since 1974. By 
completing our budget on time, we 
were able to complete all 12 appropria-
tions bills without dipping into the So-
cial Security Trust Fund, doing that 
for the first time since 1967. For the 
second consecutive year we passed a 
balanced budget. That is the first time 
that has happened since 1960.

The appropriations process was hard 
work and took longer than I wanted to 
take, but, thanks to the dogged deter-
mination of the gentleman from Flor-
ida (Chairman OSEY) and the rest of 
the Committee on Appropriations, we com-
pleted the work of the House; and, by 
doing so, we made great progress in 
preparing America for the next cen-
tury.

We had four goals at the begin-
ing of this Congress: Protect retire-
ment security for the next century, improve 
national security by bolstering our armed 
services, reform our education system 
so that all of our children can go to a 
good school in a safe environment, and 
secure economic security and fair-
ness by paying down debt while giving 
tax relief to American families.

We have made progress in all four 
areas. Our budget stopped the raid on 
Social Security for the first time in 30 
years. Why do we care so much about 
protecting Social Security and the sur-
plus? Let me give you three reasons.

First, it helps to strengthen the So-
cial Security system far into the next 
century. That means baby-boomers can 
have the peace of mind that Social Se-
curity will be there for them.

Second, when we protect the Social 
Security surplus, we also pay down the 
Nation’s debt. Think about how good 
you feel when you pay off your home 
mortgage or your car loan. When we 
take responsibilities for our Nation’s 
debt, we ease the crippling burden of 
our debt on our children and our grand-
children. Our budget discipline has 
allowed our government to make the 
largest debt reduction payment in the 
history of this Nation.

Third, when we protect the Social Se-
curity surplus, we stop the govern-
ment’s spending spree. We have torn up 
the government credit card and said 
that now it is time for a new era of fis-
cal responsibility.

Retirement security also includes 
vital programs like Medicare, and I am 
pleased that we were able to take steps 
to restore vital funding for Medicare. 
The health care bureaucrats misinter-
preted the Balanced Budget Act guide-
lines and began slashing Medicare re-
imbursements to nursing homes, hos-
pitals, and other health care agencies.

We believe that Medicare must be 
more efficient, yet still responsive to 

H.R. 4000. Consolidated Appropriations 
Act, 1999.