



U.S. CAPITOL
Visitor Center

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Exhibit Changes at Capitol Visitor Center

WASHINGTON, DC – Terrie S. Rouse, CEO for Visitor Services at the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, announced today that 50 different documents will be on display beginning April 13 in the Visitor Center’s Exhibition Hall. The new documents will be on display through October 1, 2009.

“Visitors old and young will appreciate the historic significance of many of these documents – for example, whether or not you were alive during World War II, there’s no question that seeing the actual legislation declaring war with Germany will have an impact,” said Rouse. “The rotation of documents keeps our exhibit on Congress fresh – something that returning visitors will definitely appreciate.”

The new items include the first draft of Senate Joint Resolution 119, a joint resolution adopted by the House and the Senate on December 11, 1941, declaring war against Germany. This first draft of the resolution shows that the Senate used the previous declaration of war against Japan, S.J.Res. 116, as the basis of the document, and replaced references to “Japan” with “Germany.”

The 1787 Constitutional Convention printed only two drafts of the Constitution for discussion. The second draft, which will be on display at the Visitor Center, replaced a list of states with the phrase “We the People of the United States,” emphasizing that the national government represented the people rather than a coalition of states.

As a junior congressman from Illinois in 1849, Abraham Lincoln drafted a bill to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia. His proposal offered payment to slave owners and only emancipated children born after 1850. Lacking support for the bill, Lincoln abandoned it. In 1862, as President, he signed an act emancipating slaves in the nation’s capital. On display are Lincoln’s original notes for the legislation.

From another era, a list of supplies requisitioned by the famous explorer, Meriwether Lewis, also is on display. Along with food, clothing, arms, ammunition, medicine, and other equipment, in June, 1803, Lewis requested gifts for the Indian nations that the explorer would encounter on the historic “Lewis and Clark” expedition in June, 1803.

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These original documents are loaned to the Visitor Center from the National Archives and Records Administration and the Library of Congress.

As the largest expansion of the U.S. Capitol, the Visitor Center provides numerous amenities to visitors. Since opening on December 2, 2008, the Capitol Visitor Center has welcomed close to 700,000 people wishing to visit the Capitol. For more information about the Capitol Visitor Center, go to www.visitthecapitol.gov.

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Editors Note: 2 attachments

1. Photo of S.J.Res. 119 - Records of the U.S. Senate, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.
2. Photo of Meriwether Lewis' List of Supplies – Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 8, 1941

Mr. CONNALLY introduced the following joint resolution; which was read twice, considered, read the third time and passed

JOINT RESOLUTION

Declaring that a state of war exists between the ~~Imperial~~ Government of ^{Germany} Japan and the Government and the people of the United States and making provision to prosecute the same.

~~Whereas the Imperial Government of Japan has committed unprovoked acts of war against the Government and the people of the United States of America: Therefore be it~~

- 1 *Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives*
- 2 *of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*
- 3 That the state of war between the United States and the
- 4 ~~Imperial~~ Government of ^{Germany} Japan which has ~~thus~~ been thrust
- 5 upon the United States is hereby formally declared; and
- 6 the President is hereby authorized and directed to employ
- 7 the entire naval and military forces of the United States and
- 8 the resources of the Government to carry on war against the
- 9 ~~Imperial~~ Government of ^{Germany} Japan; and, to bring the conflict to
- 10 a successful termination, all of the resources of the country
- 11 are hereby pledged by the Congress of the United States.

Indian Presents

- 5^{lb}. white Wampum
- ✓ 5^{lb}. White Glass Beads mostly small
- ✓ 20^{lb}. Red do. do. Aperted
- ✓ 5^{lb}. Yellow & Orange do. do. Aperted
- ✓ 30 Calico Shirts
- ✓ 12 Pieces of East India muslin Stanchuhs
shaped & checked with brilliant Colours.
- ✓ 12 Red silk Stanchuhs
- ✓ 144 Small cheap looking Glasses
- ✓ 100 Burning Glasses
- 4 Vials of Phosfours
- ✓ 288 Stubs for striking fire
- ✓ 144 Small cheap Razors
- ✓ 20 Pair large do.
- ✓ 12 Groes Needles aperted No 68 Common points
- ✓ 12 Groes do. aperted with points for sewing leather
- ✓ 288 Common brass Chimblers - part W. office
- ✓ 10^{lb}. Sewing Thread aperted
- ✓ 24 Hanks Sewing silk
- ✓ 8^{lb}. Red lead
- ✓ 2^{lb}. Vermillion. at War Office
- ✓ 288 Knives small such as are generally used for the Indian
trade, with fine blades & handles intaid with brass