An amendment to reimburse any servicemember or any family who purchases protective body armor. We voted $79 billion last April, we borrowed, the House of Representatives, the Senate, the President, borrowed $79 billion for this war last April, and it did not include the body armor. Well, the money was there, yes. But Rumsfeld did not order it because he said, oh, the troops are not going to be there long enough to need it, and people are going to greet them by waving little tiny American flags. So he just did not order the body armor. It is not that they did not have the money. They did not order it. They did not order the armored Humvees for our troops.

What they have not done is incredible, but what they have done is even worse. They have indebted the people of the United States of America for $87 billion, most of it to benefit the residents of another nation and not here in America.

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

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. PALLONE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

DISAGREEING WITH THE PASSAGE OF H.R. 3289

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I think we need to put in perspective what just happened and unfolded on the floor of the House. And I think it is important to share this with the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD because that is what we are sharing with this afternoon, the journey that we just took and the importance and the monumental statement that we made today.

Just for a slight bit of history and fairness to the debate, might I just say that I opposed the War Resolution of 2002 on the basis of facts. The first question was whether or not the administration made its case on the existence of weapons of mass destruction and whether or not the United States was under imminent attack.

Though I am trained to be polite, and I do not want to say I told you so, clearly this war was not about weapons of mass destruction which have not yet been found, and clearly the United States with the condition of Saddam Hussein and the poorness of his country were not about to be imminently attacked. But the war did occur.

And so I disagree with the majority leader, it is not war. The war against terrorism is our war. And that war had the embrace of the world leaders and nations after 9/11. And we blew up that coalition by going singly, unilaterally without a Constitutional vote in a war against Iraq. We broke the coalition. We broke the friendships and the alliances around the war against terrorism. The war against terrorism is our mutual vote. But there is no suggestion that Iran or Iraq or Korea is anymore engaged in the war against terrorism that would have warranted a preemptive attack against Iraq. But yet our young men and women went forward to the front lines, our neighbors or friends, our sons and daughters, and we rallied around them.

I take issue with the majority leader who would question any Member's patriotism because we refused to go down the rosy path of destruction and foolishness of this administration. How dare you suggest who is unpatriotic and who is not? Yes, I support the troops, and you cannot dare tell me I do not. What have you done?

This past weekend I spent many, many hours with troops in the Middle East, young men and women who did not care whether or not their names were cited. They wanted us to know that there is no exit strategy, that they have been there for 7 and 8 and 9 months and no one will tell them when they can go home, that there are no jobs for them to do there in terms of their particular responsibilities, that the part of their work is over, and yet they still cannot go home, that carpenters and painters and electricians are being used as police officers to knock open doors. Why not the Iraqi police?

When they ask about their pay, Reservists and National Guard, they cannot even get paid proficiently and efficiently. But yet, Madam Speaker, today the majority of this Congress voted $3.2 billion for security and law enforcement in Iraq, $1.3 billion for justice public safety and civil society infrastructure, $5.65 billion for electrical generation, and $2.1 billion for oil infrastructure, and $4.3 billion for water resources.

□ 1515

Of course we should help rebuild Iraq; I am not an isolationist. As we should Liberia and Haiti. But it is interesting how you can find little help and little resources for them.

This U.N. Security Council resolution that we are bragging about, it is a paper tiger. There is no commitment of troops. There is no fresh infusion of troops. The RAND Corporation said that if we were going to have the number of troops that we needed, we needed 350,000 troops on the ground. We have barely 130,000. We do not have fresh troops to be able to put in so our other troops can go home. And then on top of that we have a situation where we are not paying our troops.

So my amendments regarding making sure they get paid, not allowed. My amendments saying there should be an exit strategy, not allowed. My amendment to prohibit funds to be used until there is an exit strategy, not allowed. My amendment that would restore back to Condoleezza Rice the right to coordinate the funds to oversee the President's plan, stricken or not allowed. They have language in there that says she cannot control the monies, and she has been put over the plan that should be rebuilding Iraq.

My amendment to separate the vote, meaning vote from the troops separately from the rebuild so that we can collaborate in the Madrid conference, not allowed. None of the serious amendments allowed on the basis of supporting our troops was in order. We were stopped in our tracks.

I am glad to say that most of the American people have enough sense to know that this is a foolish, misdirected, and unfortunate policy of the United States. I hope we will come together on behalf of the troops. And how dare you suggest that any of our patriotism should be questioned.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MUSGRAVE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

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

(Mr. SKELTON addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

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

MISGUIDED POLICY OF NATION BUILDING IN IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, I want to spend a little bit of time this evening talking about the bill that we spent 3 days debating. That is the $87 billion appropriations bill that we just voted on and passed, not so much that I want to rehash what we did during these 3 days as much as to make a point that we ought to be debating something other than the technicality of how to spend $87 billion of the taxpayers' money. And that has to do with overall policy.

I think so rarely we deal with policy and we deal only with technicality and accounting and an attempt made at oversight. So I would like to spend a little bit of time emphasizing a different type of foreign policy that we have become unaccustomed to. Because there was an American foreign policy once well known to us, to our country and especially to our founders, a policy of nonintervention. Today, and essentially for a hundred years, we have been following a policy of foreign intervention, that is, that we assume more than I believe we should overseas. And I object to that because I see it as not gaining a constitutional mandate as well as I see it as being a great danger to us both in the area of national defense, national security, as well as the economic dangers it presents.

The debate has ended, it is said, with this vote; but in many ways I think the debate is only really getting started. The debate has been going on a long time dealing with Iraq.

It did not even start after 9–11. It is true within weeks after 9–11 the Project for New American Century saw this as an opportunity to bring forth their suggestions that they had made many years ago, and they have been agitating forth for over 10 years, and that is to go into Iraq; and they saw this as an opportunity. But actually, this debate has been going on even a lot longer. Certainly since the first Iraqi war in 1990 and the persistence of our bombing of Iraq, as well as the embargo and boycotts of Iraq served to do a lot of internal damage to the Iraqi people.

But the debate, instead of ending, I think is really just starting. Because the vote today, although it was overwhelmingly in support of the $87 billion, I noticed a lot more people in the Congress voted against the appropriations reflecting probably the views of many taxpayers in this country who are very reluctant to spend this kind of money overseas, especially if they perceive what we are doing is not being very productive. And not only do we have to deal with whether or not what we are doing is productive or not, but the final analysis will be, can we afford it?

It may be that the lack of affordability may bring us to our senses before the logic of a foreign policy. That might make more sense than what we have been doing. Before the Iraqi war, the 18 months, actually there was a pretty strong debate here in the Congress. Several of us, quite a few of us, got to the floor and talked about the potentiality of war and why we thought it was a bad idea. My conclusion in October of 2002, 6 months or so before the invasion, was that we should not go in to Iraq. And it was a deeply held conviction, not only philosophically, because of a strong belief I have in nonintervention and the restraints that are placed on us by the Constitution, but also because I was convinced that our national security was not threatened by Saddam Hussein and that 9–11 had nothing to do with Iraq and Iraq had nothing to do with 9–11 nor Saddam Hussein. And I think the events since that time have proven that assumption to be correct.

There is no evidence that Saddam Hussein was capable of fighting or invading anybody. There was no resistance and he had been shooting at our airplanes for over 12 years and never hit one of them. To assume he was a threat to the world was, I think, overblown. Those are the reasons why I so strongly objected to it.

Now, the argument goes that whether or not we supported the war at the beginning, we should support the troops now. The troops are there and if you vote against the appropriations, it means that you lack support for the troops. Well, this is not true; and those who argue that case know it is the case, that it is not true because the funding that is already in the pipeline is certainly enough for several months of leaving and coming home. And so that argument just does not hold water. And besides, if you really talk to the troops, and now we are getting so much more information from the troops, if you ask them whether there is somebody in the Congress that votes to have them come home, whether that indicates a lack of support for them, I think you would get a very clear answer. Probably a very large number, if not all of them, would like to come home tomorrow and they do not see a lot of benefit by the sacrifices that are being made over there. But I think if the support for the war is weak, why are we there? What drives us? And what drives our foreign policy?

Basically, we have come to the acceptance, at least especially throughout the 20th century, of accepting the notion that we have some moral obligation to make the world safe for democracy. And we have heard so much about this that we are over there to spread democracy. Well, if you look to the Constitution, there is no grant of authority even to the Congress or to the President that that should be a goal. That does not mean that our values should not be looked upon and spread; but to be done through the military and by force, that is an entirely different story.

What we are involved here now with our intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan and other places, we are involved in nation-building. And nobody in this country campaigns, whether it is for the Presidency or for a congressional seat or a Senate seat, nobody goes out and says, Elect me to Congress because I want to get into the business of nation-building. Nobody does that and yet really that is what we are talking about today.

We are very much involved in nation-building in Afghanistan, and the successes there are very shaky. We probably occupy one city and not much more. And everybody reads daily about the shakiness of our occupation of Iraq. And we are very much involved in internal affairs of other nations, the kind of thing our founders said do not get involved in. Do not get involved in the internal affairs of other nations. Stay out of entangling alliances. And we are very much involved. The entangling alliance that I had the strongest objection to is the entangling alliance with the United Nations.

So although it was seen by the world that we went into Iraq by defying the United Nations, if anybody would like to check and go back and look at the authorization for the use of force which was a transfer, illegal transfer of power to the President to pursue war, the United Nations was cited 16 times. There was a need to enforce the United Nations resolution. That was the justification for the Congress to transfer this power to the President in allowing him to make his own decision.

Well, that is technically flaunting the Constitution and that the proper method for us going to war is for the Congress to declare war, and then, of course, go out and win the war. But the authority comes from the people to the Congress and the Congress cannot transfer this power and this decision-making to the President under a majority vote in the legislative body.

There have been others, in particular the neo-conservatives who have been very influential in foreign policy the last several years and who have been associated with the Project for a New American Century. They have been explicit in their goals. And one of their explicit goals has been to redraw the lines of the Middle East and to have preemptive regime change. These are serious beliefs that they have; and everybody has a right to their beliefs. Their beliefs that we have this obligation to remove regimes that we do not like and to redraw lines and to spread our way of life and our democracy by the use of force, they sincerely hold those beliefs; and I sincerely disagree with them.

But I believe that the Constitution is on my side and not on their side. And when we do what they want and what we have done and have been doing, it is dangerous. It is dangerous to our security. It is dangerous to our financial situation and our economy. And it is a tremendous drain on so many taxpayers here trying to struggle and make a living.

There are others who influence our policy, and it is not the conspiracy buffs that had coined the phrase ''the military industrial complex.'' And everybody knows where that phrase came from. But it is alive and well. Believe me, it is alive and well. There is a tremendous amount of influence by those who make profits, refurbishing the weapons they get, rebuilding the bombs, rebuilding the airplanes and lining up at the trough to see how they will get to participate in this $87 billion that has just been recently appropriated.

□ 1530

This is one of the reasons why I think the debate just in these last couple of days on whether or not the money would be a loan or a grant really did not have a whole lot of merit. I happen to have supported all the amendments that said it should be a loan, not a grant, but it does not make a bit of difference because the likelihood of a country like Iraq, that does not have a government, being able to make a promise and then pay us back, we generally never get paid back anything. So that to me was a red-herring argument that was sort of one of the tactical or accounting arguments that occupied a tremendous amount of time here by avoiding the bigger issue on whether or not it is a proper role for the United States to be telling the rest of the world how to live and it is our obligation to nation-build and our obligation to redraw the lines of the Middle East. That is the bigger question, and this is the debate I hope to hear that we have on this floor some day.

The policy of interventionism, I think it is dangerous as instead of reducing the odds of a terrorist attack, I believe it increases the odds of a terrorist attack. When I see us occupying Saudi Arabia, having an air base on land which is considered holy land, occupying the Persian Gulf that has a lot of oil, and it has been said we are there to protect our oil, that it would be equivalent to the Chinese coming in to the Gulf of Mexico and saying we do not have enough oil. And if they happen to be stronger and that they could come over and say, well, we are more powerful, we need imports, we are going to protect our oil in the Gulf of Mexico, we will have our Navy in the Gulf of Mexico, and if we need to we are going to put air bases in Florida and Texas and wherever. And then if the Chinese come in and say, well, your way of life is not our way of life, and we should teach you a better system, that is what I see as being equivalent to us being in the Persian Gulf occupying the Arab lands, and especially, now, Afghanistan and Iraq.

In other words, no matter how well-intended those individuals are who drive our foreign policy and drive these expenditures and drive our military around the world, no matter how well-intended under these circumstances, if what I am saying is correct, there is no way it is going to work, and the sooner we admit it and the sooner we discover it is not going to work, the better it is for all of us and the less killing that is going to occur.

So I am strongly suggesting that we here in the House someday get serious about talking about the big picture, the strategic picture, the philosophic picture and the Constitution, deciding what we really should be doing in our foreign policy.

Some people say, well, it sounds to me like what you are advocating is isolationism, and nobody wants to be an isolationist. When they throw that term out, it is usually done there to try to discredit those individuals, like myself, who are arguing the case for nonintervention. Isolationism is quite a bit different. Isolationism is those who want to put barriers on trade and travel in exchange of ideas. That is true isolationism. That is mercantilism and protectionism. That is not what I am talking about, and that is not what nonintervention is.

Nonintervention in foreign policy means we do not impose our will on other people, something that a lot of very conventional politicians have talked about for years as a matter of fact, especially when they are campaigning.

I would like to quote from the memoirs of George Bush, Senior, which he wrote, and they were published approximately 5 years ago, dealing with Iraq and what he thought about it, about the invasion of Iraq and why he did not go into Iraq. This comes from A World Transformed. This is George Bush, Senior. He says, Trying to eliminate Saddam would have incurred incalculable human and political costs. Apprehending him was probably impossible. We would have been forced to occupy Baghdad and, in effect, rule Iraq. There was no viable exit strategy we could see, violating another of our principles. Furthermore, we had been self-consciously trying to set a pattern for handling aggression in the post-Cold War period. Had we gone the invasion route, the United States could conceivably still be an occupying power in a bitterly hostile land.

That comes from George Bush, Senior. That is not coming from me, who has always had great concern about our military activity. I think that is sound thinking and sound advice, totally ignored.

In the campaign before the last Presidential election, our President said, If we are an arrogant Nation, they will resent us. If we are a humble Nation but strong, they will believe us. If we are a humble Nation, they will respect us as an honorable Nation.

I think we have lost a little bit of our humility, to say the least, and, as of now, I do not think that our reputation has been enhanced, especially in the Arab-Muslim world, and that concerns me because it is this lack of civility between countries and the antagonism which leads to conflicts and hatreds and killing and guerrilla wars which we are fighting right now.

I express my concern about the way we went to war because it was a transfer of power from the Congress by mere vote, which circumvented the Constitution, rather than a declaration of war, and I base my concern on the fact that we have had a lot more trouble in the last 50 years when we quit declaring war and at least prior to that the wars we declared, they came to an end.

Look at Korea. We did not declare war there. We went there under a U.N. resolution. We are still there. We spent over $1 trillion, and we are still in conflict with North Korea, and it is a serious problem, and we do not trade with them.

Going into Vietnam, we went once again into Vietnam without a declaration of war. It really came to no resolution other than the fact that we walked away. We had to get out because we were not winning. The determination to win was not there because the Vietnamese were not a threat to our national security. Nobody was going to declare war, but look at the difference.

We are still in North Korea. That was under a U.N. resolution, and just look at what has been achieved by leaving Vietnam. They have become Westernized and, to a degree, capitalized. They are more capitalistic. We trade with them, making the point that it is very, very hard to impose our will and our system of values on somebody with the use of arms, but by the willingness of trade and exchanges with people and ideas, they are more likely to come in our direction. So the difference between the 10 terrible years in the 1960s, as we lost 60,000 men and achieved nothing, compared to the next decade or two, how we have become more friends with the Vietnamese, there is a powerful message there if we would listen to it and pay attention to it, but no, since that time we have continued to go into many areas.

I think this was a problem going into Iraq in 1990. It was an undeclared war. It was a U.N. war. It did not end it. It continued and it is still continuing into its 15th year, and here we are still arguing over the financing which I think is at very early stages. How long will we be there and how many men are going to die and how is it going to end? I am convinced as long as we follow this principle of foreign interventionism that we take it upon ourselves to spread democracy around the world, we are going to be running into trouble like this.

James Madison early on in 1798 gave us some advice about the Presidential power and congressional power to go to war, but he was explaining why it was important to keep it in the hands of the legislative body. He says, The Constitution supposes what the history of all governments demonstrate, that the executive is the branch of power most interested in war and the most prone to it. It has accordingly with studied care vested the question of war in the legislature.

That is what our Constitution did, but because now it has drifted from the legislature, we allow our Presidents to do more than they should be able to do, and then we allow them to incorporate this into United Nations' mandates. It means that the people have lost their control.

How do the people stay involved in this? In one way, they pay the bills and the young people die. That is what is at stake. Our economy's at stake, our young people are at stake and our freedoms are at stake because we allow the

prerogatives that were explicitly given to the Congress to drift away and get into the hands of the executive branch and into the United Nations. We do not declare war. We do not win them. They persist, they last a long time, and this is the reason why we should really and truly talk about how do we get out of this mess, instead of just expanding the mess, how do we get out and restore a policy that makes a lot more sense.

The famous General, General Douglas MacArthur, who knew a lot about war, also had advice to us about how to handle the issue of war, and he said, The powers in charge keep us in a perpetual state of fear, keep us in a conscious stampede of patriotic fervor, with a cry of grave national emergency. Always there has been some terrible evil to gobble us up if we did not blindly rally behind it by furnishing the exorbitant sums demanded. Yet, in retrospect, these disasters seem never to have happened, seem never to have been quite real.

Here is a man who knew about World War I, World War II and Korea, and he was suggesting that they were overblown.

One thing that we did not talk about in the debate of the $87 billion was a $600 million appropriation. It is not written in there explicitly, but there is a $9.3 billion authority to transfer funds over into the Pentagon and more or less having a slush fund to spend just about any way they want without any significant congressional oversight, but the $600 million has been asked for and will be achieved through this appropriation to continue the search for weapons of mass destruction. They have spent $300 million for six months, with 1,200 individuals combing the entire country of Iraq, and nothing has been found. So typically, American style, modern America, that is, double the amount of money, double the number of people and keep searching, because something will be found.

My answer is, what if you do find something? What does it prove? Does it prove that he was a threat to our national security? No way. Does it prove that it was a relationship to Iraq and 9/11? No way. So this obsession is for saving face and nothing more. If there was a major nuclear or chemical weapon available that was about to be unleashed against us, it would have surely been found by now, but that was not debated, but I am sure that search will go on, and ''when something is found,'' and I put that in quotes, there will be a lot of questions asked. More questions will be asked than answers given.

I guess early this week we also had another vote that emphasizes my concerns, because it again is going in the wrong direction, and that was the vote we had on Syria. A couple of us voted against this. Syria is a hard country to defend, and I am not going to defend Syria. I am defending the Constitution, and I am defending nonintervention, but the Syrian resolution was more or less the first major step in the direction of war against Syria.

This is exactly what the project for a new America century wants. Syria is on their list and the sanctions put on Syria are essentially a prelude to war because that country, as part of the axis of evil, we have to get rid of that regime and they are helping the Iraqis so, therefore, war is coming, and I just cannot see how the average American is sitting around worrying about the Syrians, but they said the Syrians, there may be some people going back and forth from Syria and participating in the guerrilla war in Iraq, which may well be true, but then again, what about other borders?

There is a border between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Pakistan's on our side, Afghanistan is half and half, but right on that border is Osama bin Laden most likely.

□ 1545

And he is probably in Pakistan. So do we decide that we have to go after Pakistan? No, we recognize that the borders are uncontrollable.

Here we are putting sanctions on Syria because we do not like the way they are handling their borders, but there are a lot of people in this country who would like to see us do a better job with our own borders. We do not have control of our own borders, yet here we are putting on sanctions and initiating another step towards war against Syria because we are not satisfied with what they are doing.

We cannot achieve some of these goals that we have set for ourselves through force. We have what comes close to an obsession with democracy. You hear it constantly. We are over in Iraq because we are going to make it a democracy. Well, democratic elections are the way we all get here; but this obsession with democracy, well, democracy means there is a ruling of the majority. But what if the majority does not support freedom?

I would like to see a time come to this place where we talk a lot less about democracy and more about liberty. Liberty is where the minority is protected. Under democracy, the majority is protected, and they can obliterate the minority. And this, in a sense, is what we keep talking about. But let us say they do not want democracy. Are we going to force it upon them? It looks like that is our goal; that we will, by gosh, force them into it if we have to.

I have come to the conclusion that you cannot achieve this through the force of arms and that if you are participating in an unwelcome occupation, you cannot change a culture, you cannot change religious values, you cannot change a legal system. We would not accept the Chinese trying to tell us to live like the Chinese; and we are just as strange and different in Iraq as the Chinese would be here. So even with this grand motivation, it is a lost cause; and the sooner we own up to it, the better.

If we want Iraq and other countries to act more like we do, it can be done; and that should be a goal. But there is a difference. There are two different ways we can do it. One, we can force people to do things and the other way is we can try to talk them into doing it in a voluntary fashion. If we did an exceptionally good job and we had a truly prosperous economy, which I believe a free market would achieve, which we do not have, where the greatest number of people would have the greatest benefits, truly set an example, have democratic elections but obey a constitution that is designed to protect liberty and protect minorities, if we set an example, then I sincerely believe others then would be more inclined to emulate us and to see us as an example.

In a way, what happened in Vietnam, the achievement there without the Army was far better than the losses that occurred when we were trying to use force. But I just am worried about what is happening. I am worried about the expenditures. I am worried that the guerilla war is going to spread. I am concerned because I believe so sincerely that our policy of foreign intervention serves more to incite terrorists against our country than we will calm down by our being over there.

I am convinced that these articles that now appear in the media about the al Qaeda now having an easier time recruiting, I believe those stories. I believe them. Whether it is right or wrong, I do not want to get into that issue, but I believe they are true. And that is a practical reason why nonintervention is so much better than intervention. Intervention leads to trouble, and it leads to expenditures. It leads to debt.

It is such a grand idea that the Founding Fathers gave us about nonintervention and nonentangling alliances. It will do more to serve the cause of peace and prosperity than any other single change of any policy we could have here in this Congress.

I am a little bit encouraged, though, about the fact that the debate may be shifting. In the Congress, not yet. Not yet. There are not too many supporters, and I know that, for nonintervention, for a constitutional foreign policy, to looking to the Founders. It is considered old-fashioned, and that truths do not stay so static, and times are different, and we have this obligation, and all the reasons why we have this moral obligation to go about the world. But where I am encouraged is outside of this place, where the American people are getting concerned.

I would bet if we had a referendum in this country today with this $87 billion, I will tell you where I think that vote would have come down. I bet the American people would not have voted for it. I am convinced of that. But just yesterday, there was an announcement of a group that has organized that I find very fascinating and very encouraging. This group is called Coalition for a Realistic Foreign Policy.

I have a copy of their statement of principles. More than 100 individuals are involved, mostly professors and other academicians and think-tank people. I do not know if there are any politicians in there. Hopefully, no politicians will be involved. But this is important. This is important because they want to get together and try to change the tone and the nature of the debate. Now, are they liberals or are they conservatives? Are they libertarian or are they constitutionalists? All of them. It is a mixture. They do not want just the liberal flavor or just the right-wing conservative flavor. It is anybody who is willing to sit down and talk about the disadvantage, the practical disadvantage of this road to empire and why we come up on the short end and that this moral obligation of us policing the world really is not a wise idea.

I want to read a little bit from their statement of principles. It says: ''We are a diverse group of scholars and analysts from across the political spectrum who believe that the move toward empire must be halted immediately. The need for a change in direction is particularly urgent because imperial policies can quickly gain momentum with new interventions begetting new dangers, and thus the demand for further actions. If current trends are allowed to continue, we may well end up with an empire that most Americans, especially those whose sons and daughters are or will be sent into harm's way, don't really favor.

''The American people have not embraced the idea of the American empire, and they are unlikely to do so. Since rebelling against the British Empire, Americans have resisted the imperial impulse, guided by the founders' frequent warnings that republic and empire are incompatible. Empire is problematic because it subverts the freedoms and liberties of freedoms at home while simultaneously thwarting the will of the people abroad. An imperial strategy threatens to entangle America in an assortment of unnecessary and unrewarding wars.

''There are ominous signs that the strategy of empire has already begun to erode our fundamental rights and liberties. More and more power is being claimed by the executive branch. And on the economic front,'' which is important in my argument, ''on the economic front, an imperial strategy threatens to weaken us as a Nation, overextending and bleeding the economy and straining our military and Federal budgets.''

Further reading on from the Coalition for a Realistic Foreign Policy: ''The defenders of empire assert that the horrific acts of terrorism on September 11 demand that we assume new financial burdens to fund an expensive national security strategy, relax our commitment to individual liberty at home, and discard our respect for stated sovereignty abroad. Nothing could be further from the truth. Following 9–11, we should have refocused our attention on the very threats facing us in the 21st century. As a nation, we must not allow the events of 9–11 to be used as a pretext for reshaping American foreign policy in a manner inconsistent with our traditions and values and contrary to our interests.''

And that is basically a brief outline of the principles of the Coalition for a Realistic Foreign Policy.

We have been told by some of our leaders that standing up for good against evil is very hard work and it costs a lot of money and blood, but they have gone on to say we are willing to pay. These are the politicians. This has been true for thousands of years. The politicians are always grandiose in their goals and their schemes and their plans for what they think is best for the world, and they are always willing to pay with dollars and blood.

But the politician never pays. Politicians here on the floor who are so anxious to go, many of them have not served, and many of them would not be very anxious to be serving over there. It is the politicians who promote the wars that rarely serve. The only way that anybody on this floor should ever vote to send our troops into harm's way is they should look at it in a very personal way. They should look at it in the sense of what would it be like if I would go there and I would be carrying a rifle on the front line, or I would be a target for some sniper. Do I want to be there? Is it worth that? Or would I send my son to do that, or would I send my grandson or my granddaughter to that type of danger?

It has to be personalized. Because if it is just, oh, we are willing to pay. Where does the money come from? We are flat-out broke. We have had the biggest deficit ever. Our dollar is going down on the market, and we are now assuming more liabilities. When we spend $87 billion in Iraq, that is literally taken out of our economy. Imagine how many jobs and how much improvement on the standard of living of Americans could occur with $87 billion, and at the same time believe sincerely that a policy of nonintervention would be the best policy for peace and prosperity.

I do not know how anybody could reject that policy. It is fantastic. It is the policy of free people. It is not the policy of empire. It is not the policy of imperialism.

But I am going to win this argument. Not because I am persuasive. I will win this argument that we have gone too far and have overextended. Sadly, I will win this argument because we are going to go broke. Because all great nations who believe that they can spread their will around the world, they always overextend; and then it virtually always leads to the debasement of the currency.

In the old days, they deluded the metal or clipped the coins. Today, it is more sophisticated, because we run up the debt, we send it over to the Fed, and they print the money. But that is debasing the currency, and it undermines the standard of living, already occurring with people on fixed incomes. So it will finally come to a halt, just as our intervention in Vietnam finally came to a sad halt. It did end. But the rest will come to an end when we can no longer afford it.

We should have greater faith and greater confidence in freedom. Freedom works. And that was the message of the Founders. That is the message of the Constitution. But we have lost our confidence. We have lost our way. We cannot even have one single problem exist throughout the country without coming here for another law.

I think it is time that free people gain some confidence, believing sincerely that we will all be better off, we will all be more prosperous, we will all be much freer, and we will all be much safer. And then, when we achieve that, then I believe other countries of the world will have a stronger desire to emulate us, rather than hate us.

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MEETING OUR RESPONSIBILITY IN IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MUSGRAVE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, I opposed the President's decision to rush to war earlier this year. Many of us, at that time, warned of the high costs and difficulties of winning the peace that we face today in Iraq. But the President's poor decisions have painted our country into a difficult corner, and I believe that we now have a responsibility to provide funds and to maintain security on the ground in Iraq and to assist in the reconstruction of that country.

Let us not fool ourselves or the American people. It will not just be the tens of billions of dollars that we passed in the bill today. It will require billions more in the years ahead. We also have other responsibilities, to level with the American people and to pay for our efforts in Iraq in a straightforward and up-front manner. The President shirked the first responsibility by failing to prepare the American people for the true costs of the war and winning the peace.

Now, he seeks to escape responsibility for the second by putting those costs on our national credit card and running up huge deficits. Every penny of the $87 billion requested by the President is money borrowed from the next generation of Americans. His out-of-sight, out-of-mind approach to such important issues will end up costing our children down the road. We should not be waging war and peace by credit card. If we are willing to pay the price to defeat the scourge of terrorism, we