

weapons, at the same time implying that we can be more sure that weapons exist in the absence of inspections?

Is it not true that the U.N.'s International Atomic Agency was able to complete its yearly verification mission to Iraq just this year with Iraqi cooperation?

Is it not true that the intelligence community has been unable to develop a case tying Iraq to global terrorism at all, much less the attacks on the United States last year? Does anybody remember that 15 of the 19 hijackers came from Saudi Arabia and that none came from Iraq?

Was former CIA counterterrorism chief Vincent Cannistraro wrong when he recently said there was no confirmed evidence of Iraq's links to terrorism?

Is it not true that the CIA has concluded there is no evidence that a Prague meeting between 9-11 hijacker Atta and Iraqi intelligence took place?

Is it not true that northern Iraq, where the administration claimed that al Qaeda was hiding out, was in control of our allies, the Kurds?

Is it not true that the vast majority of the al Qaeda leaders who escaped appear to have safely made their way to Pakistan, another of our so-called allies?

Has anyone noticed that Afghanistan is rapidly sinking into total chaos, with bombings and assassinations becoming daily occurrences; and that is according to a recent U.N. report, the al Qaeda "is, by all accounts, 'alive and well' and poised to strike again, how, when and where it chooses"?

Why are we taking precious military resources away from tracking down those who did attack the United States, who may again attack the United States, and using them to invade countries that have not attacked the United States?

Would an attack on Iraq not just confirm the Arabs' worst suspicions about the United States, and is this not just what Osama bin Laden wanted to have happen?

How can Hussein be compared to Hitler when he has no navy or air force, and now has an army one-fifth the size it was 12 years ago, which even then proved itself totally inept in defending itself?

Is it not true that the constitutional power to declare war is exclusively given to Congress? Should presidents, contrary to the Constitution, allow Congress to concur only when pressured by public opinion? Are presidents permitted to rely on U.N. permission to go to war?

Are you aware of a Pentagon report studying charges that thousands of Kurds in one village were gassed by Iraqis, which found no conclusive evidence that Iraq was responsible, that Iran occupied the very city involved, and that evidence indicated, according to this Pentagon report, the type of gas used was more likely controlled by Iran, not Iraq?

Is it not true that between 100,000 to 300,000 soldiers have suffered from Persian Gulf War syndrome from the first Gulf War, and that thousands may have died?

Are we prepared for possibly thousands of American casualties in a war against a country that does not have the capacity to attack the United States?

Are we willing to bear the economic burden of a \$100 billion war against Iraq, with oil prices expected to skyrocket and further rattle an already shaky American economy? How about an estimated 30 years occupation of Iraq that some have deemed necessary to build democracy there?

Iraq's alleged violations of U.N. resolutions are given as reason to initiate an attack, yet is it not true that hundreds of U.N. resolutions have been ignored by various countries without penalty?

Did former President Bush not cite the U.N. resolution of 1990 as the reason he could not march into Baghdad, while supporters of a new attack assert that is the very reason that we can march into Baghdad?

Is it not true that, contrary to current claims, the no-fly zones were set up by Britain and the United States without specific approval by the United Nations?

If we claim membership in the international community and conform to its rules only when it pleases us, does this not serve to undermine our position, directing animosity toward us by both friend and foe?

How can our declared goal of bringing democracy to Iraq be believable when we prop up dictators throughout the Middle East and support military dictators like Musharraf in Pakistan who overthrew a democratically elected President?

Are you familiar with the 1994 Senate Hearings that revealed the United States knowingly supplied chemical and biological materials to Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war and as late as 1992—including after the alleged Iraqi gas attack on a Kurdish village?

Did we not assist Saddam Hussein's rise to power by supporting and encouraging his invasion of Iran? Is it honest to criticize Saddam now for his invasion of Iran, which as the time we actively supported?

Is it not true that preventive war is synonymous with an act of aggression, and has never been considered a moral or legitimate U.S. policy?

Why do the oil company executives strongly support this war if oil is not the real reason we plan to take over Iraq?

Why is it that those who never wore a uniform and are confident that they won't have to personally fight this war are more anxious for this war than our generals?

What is the moral argument for attacking a nation that has not aggressed against us nor is able to, even if it so wished?

Where does the Constitution grant us permission to wage war for any reason other than self-defense?

It is not true that a war against Iraq rejects the sentiments of the time-honored Treaty of Westphalia, nearly 400 years ago, that countries should never go into another for the purpose of regime change?

Is it not true that the more civilized a society is, the less likely disagreements will be settled by war?

Is it not true that since World War II Congress has not declared war and—not coincidentally—we have not since then had a clear-cut victory?

Is it not true that Pakistan, especially through its intelligence services, was an active supporter and key organizer of the Taliban?

Why do those who want war not bring a Declaration of War Resolution to the floor?

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

(Mr. FILNER 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.)

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

(Mr. SCHIFF 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 California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

NO LINK BETWEEN SADDAM HUSSEIN AND AL QAEDA

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, today's press reveals that the Bush administration has decided that they can find no linkage between Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda, despite some of the offhand remarks of Secretary Rumsfeld and Vice President CHENEY to the contrary. The intelligence agencies, turning all of their resources to this, cannot find existing links.

So that means that the President and his administration will have to make the case against Saddam Hussein to this Congress because the authorization passed by this Congress last fall was for the President to respond to those who were involved in the attacks and those who harbored or sponsored such attacks. That means a straight-up debate on the floor of the House of Representatives, hopefully a free and fair debate, over the wisdom of the first-

ever preemptive war by the United States of America against Iraq.

I believe that the burden the administration has to prove that the United States should break from all precedents in more than 200 years of history, should break from all precedents set lawfully under the United Nations conventions since the end of World War II and actually launch a preemptive war, is an extraordinary burden. They have to prove a very real, credible threat by the Saddam Hussein regime.

Now Saddam Hussein is a despicable individual. He has murdered tens of thousands, and all effective opposition. He has murdered people ethnically, religiously. He has used weapons of mass destruction. He has an absolutely horrible record, and obviously we would not trust this gentleman one inch.

But the question in this case becomes what is different today than a year ago or 2 years ago in terms of Saddam Hussein. It seems, when asked honestly and privately, the generals and admirals at the Pentagon feel containment is working, that he did not pose a credible and immediate threat to the United States of America or its allies in that region.

So the question becomes then if he is credibly threatened with a preemptive war, would he become more of a threat? Then there is the issue of our allies. Would any allies support the United States in this endeavor? Then there are the questions from 10 years ago, the same questions that President Bush's father had to confront, and Colin Powell as chairman of the joint chiefs, which is what if they went to Baghdad and took out Hussein, what then? They were confronted with a long and problematic occupation of Iraq and further destabilization in the region. And even with all the allies, including Arab nations at the time, they felt it was not worth the risk of doing that.

□ 1330

Well, the same question needs to be asked today. In fact, I witnessed on "Face the Nation," where one Republican Senator said, "Well, we don't need any allies. We will just go and do this. We will take them out." And then he said, "We will rule Iraq."

I do not know who he has been talking to or what he is thinking, but the United States being involved intimately in that region and trying to rule a country, a very large country, in an extraordinarily volatile area, is a recipe for disaster. So they need not only a credible plan for what if and how and why; but they need to explain that, both to Congress, some of it can be confidentially, but, for the most part, these should be things that could be laid out.

Prime Minister Chretien said yesterday that the President had nothing new to say. It was just the same rhetorical sort of "we have got to remove him sooner or later," the same thing we have been hearing from Ms. Rice and other advisers to the President.

So I have sent a letter to the President, signed by 17 other Members of Congress, which lays out a series of about 20 questions that I believe are critical that this administration address before they would undertake to ask even for authorization for a preemptive war, the first ever in our history; and I am hopeful that the administration will in good faith answer those questions. Most of them are questions that could be answered in public, could be given to the American people, and could, if they answer them I believe convincingly, as they have not thus far, lead to some sort of authorization from the United States Congress.

But we cannot just sort of have this shadow boxing and discussion in private. This is an extraordinary issue, a constitutional issue, an issue that breaks with all precedent of this country; something that needs to be fully, freely, and fairly debated before the American people before we commit our sons and daughters to lengthy involvement in a war against Iraq and a subsequent occupation and rebuilding of that country. We are not doing such a great job of stabilizing and rebuilding Afghanistan. One has to question what we would do with a much larger nation in a much more volatile region of the world.

A YOUNG MARINE RESTORED MY FAITH

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

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, the "Orange Register" in California every week recognizes a writer who eloquently expresses a viewpoint or engenders a debate on a topic of public interest. It is known as the Golden Pen Award.

The title of this letter to the editor of the "Orange Register," written by Ann Baker, a real estate agent of Huntington Beach, California, is "A Young Marine Restores My Faith."

"It was our normal Thursday morning business meeting at our real estate office. No big deal. Before the meeting, we hung around the bagel table, as usual, with our coffee. He stood aside, looking a little shy and awkward and very young, a new face in the room full of extroverted salespeople. An average looking guy, maybe 5 foot 8 inches. A clean-cut, sweet-faced kid. I went over to chat with him. Maybe he was a new salesman?

"He said he was just back from Kabul, Afghanistan. A Marine. Our office (and a local school) had been supportive by sending letters to him and other troops, which he had posted at the American Embassy door in Kabul. He stood guard there for 4 months and was shot at daily.

"He had come to our office to thank us for the support, for all the letters

during those scary times. I couldn't believe my ears," she said. "He wanted to thank us? We should be thanking him. But how? How can I ever show him my appreciation?

"At the end of the sales meeting he stepped quietly forward, no incredible hulk. As a matter of fact, he looked all the world 15 years old to me.

"This young Marine, this clean-faced boy, had no qualms stepping up to the plate and dodging bullets so that I may enjoy the freedom to live my peaceful life in the land of the free. No matter the risk. Suddenly the most stressful concerns of my life seemed as nothing. My complacency flew right out the window with his every word. Somewhere, somehow, he had taken the words honor, courage and commitment into his very soul and laid his life on the line daily for me and us. A man of principle. He wants to do it. Relishes it. And he came to thank us? For a few letters. I fought back the tears as he spoke so briefly and softly.

"He walked forward to our manager and placed a properly folded American flag in his hands. It had flown over the Embassy in Kabul. He said thanks again. You could hear a pin drop. As I looked around, I saw red faces everywhere fighting back the tears.

"In a heartbeat, my disillusionment with young people today quickly vanished. In ordinary homes, in ordinary towns, kids like him are growing up proud to be an American and willing to die for it. Wow. We will frame the flag and put it in the lobby. He only came to my office once, for just a few minutes, but I realize I rubbed shoulders with greatness in the flesh and in the twinkling of an eye my life is forever changed. His name is Michael Mendez, a corporal in the United States Marine Corps. We are a great Nation. We know because the makings of it walked into my office that day."

That is by Ann Baker of Huntington, California. I think that properly summarizes our Nation's respect for the men and women in uniform. We take for granted the sacrifices they and their families make to serve this country. We assume freedom comes without price at times; and September 11, which we rapidly approach, taught us a lesson, that America's freedom depends on the strong and vigilant men and women who fight our battles for our freedoms and fight for the integrity of this Nation.

Parents who allow their children to enter harm's way for the flag that flies behind me do so knowing for the freedom of a Nation men and women must offer themselves in sacrifice. Ann Baker's letter touched me as well because it signified from an average citizen that she recognized that day that that young man, Michael, who came to her office, changed her life; but it was also shaping the lives of future American leaders.

We pray for the safety of our troops here and abroad; but we also thank those special individuals who have