

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, the Congress of the United States has just received from the White House a proposed draft which would put this Congress on the path of approving a war with Iraq. The text of the resolution is very instructive, because the text of the resolution seems to ignore some basic facts, and facts are important. They are urgent at this moment in our Nation's history.

The first fact we must keep in mind: Iraq had nothing to do with 9-11, yet the text of the administration's resolution implies that Iraq is connected to 9-11.

Second: Iraq has not been connected to al Qaeda, but the text of the administration's resolution implies that somehow Saddam Hussein has something to do with the al Qaeda terrorist network. Even the United States' own intelligence agencies, which have considerable resources, have not been able to establish that.

We also know that Iraq was not connected to the anthrax attacks upon this Nation. Yet the resolution which the administration has presented to this Congress would ask this Congress to wage war against Iraq as a matter of self-defense.

Now, what is self-defense? Self-defense is when someone attacks you, you have a right to defend yourself. On September 11, the year 2001, the United States was attacked. We have a right to defend ourselves. On the vote that came before this Congress on September 14, I joined other Members of Congress in voting for America to defend itself and in voting for America to pursue the terrorists and to bring them to justice; a task, I might add, which is unfinished. Yet that is ignored in this resolution.

This resolution instead will urge the American people to finance to the tune of over \$100 billion a war against a nation which has not waged war against us. For the first time in our country's history, we are going to be asked to approve a resolution to wage a war of aggression, not a war of defense.

This is an important moment in the history of our Republic. All credible intelligence says that Iraq does not have usable weapons of mass destruction. They were destroyed in the Gulf War. Those weapons capabilities, which Iraq got from, guess who, the Bush administration, the first Bush administration, capabilities for biological, chemical and nuclear weapons of mass destruction, they were all destroyed in the Gulf War. Yet the administration would have the people of this country believe that Iraq still possesses those capabilities.

They do not. We have the ability to tell if anyone in the world is making nuclear weapons. We have technology that can tell if gamma rays are being emitted, which are an essential tell-tale proof of this work of construction of nuclear weapons.

There are 17 nations in the world which either possess, are trying to get,

or actually have nuclear weapons capability. Are we going to begin waging war against some of those nations? Because this resolution brought by the administration to this Congress would somehow enable the administration to pursue war wherever they wanted to in the region.

Think about this, America: Iraq does not have any usable weapons of mass destruction. They do not have the ability to deliver those weapons to the United States. No one can come before this House and say that Iraq can launch a missile, if they had one, from Baghdad and send it here.

We have to establish the truth. "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free," it says in the Scriptures. Let the truth guide America in this period. Let the truth create peace. Let the truth steer us away from war and find a path where America can protect the very soul of our Nation.

□ 1630

TRUTH FOR AMERICA

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

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Speaker HASTERT, today marked the 1,355th day that you have been Speaker of the House. During that time, in particular, in the past 1 year, while the Republicans have had a majority in the House, my colleagues will recall a year ago, they had a Republican majority in the Senate, and they passed their tax breaks, they passed their budget. They got their spending, they got their taxes. They increased spending by 16 percent and they cut taxes by 8 percent. So in one year, they have now added \$440,605,894,921 to the national debt.

Those of us who have studied American history will be quick to note that from the day that George Washington became President almost until the beginning of World War II, our Nation did not acquire that much debt in well over 150 years. The Republican Congress, in one year, has increased the debt by that much.

One would think that their response to that would be some shame because, after all, all they are doing is sticking our kids with their bills. That is what they did today. They passed a bill to say that some kids can inherit unlimited amounts of money and not pay a penny's worth of tax on it. For those of us who are self-employed as a welder, a logger or a shrimper like some of my friends back home, they pay the employer's share of Social Security, they pay the employee's share of Social Security, so right off the bat they are paying about 18 percent of taxes. Plus they are paying income tax on that. But for the very wealthiest Americans, those who make the biggest campaign contributions, they can now, under the

Republican plan, inherit unlimited amounts of money and not pay a dime on it; not pay a dime. Tell me it is fair to the self-employed person. Tell me it is fair to the lady who is going to clean up this building tonight who is going to pay at least 8 percent taxes just for Social Security and Medicare.

But what is really unfair is that in order to give the Bush kids and the Cheney kids this huge inheritance tax-free, they are sticking my kids, the Taylor kids, they are sticking the Jones kids, they are sticking the Jackson kids and everybody else's kids with the bill.

Mr. Speaker, this is real money, and when America borrows money, it is just like when a citizen back home uses their credit card. As long as you owe it, you have to pay interest on it. I bet not one person watching this realizes that the biggest expense of your Nation is not welfare, it is not food stamps, it is not transportation, it is not taking care of veterans, it is not defense; it is interest payments on the national debt. It is \$1 billion a day. Almost every American can visualize \$1,000. That is a big rent check, a house note and a car note for some people, but we can visualize a thousand bucks.

So what we are spending today on the interest is a thousand times a thousand times a thousand. It is squandered. It does not educate our kids, it does not help the military, it does not help old folks, it does not help kids, it does not help anybody. A third of that goes to Japanese and German lending institutions, the folks that lend us the money. So I am sure our World War II vets are particularly pleased to know that the folks we defeated in World War II now have the ability to crush our economy any time they call in the note.

So, Mr. Speaker, one would think that the prudent thing to do in response to running up that debt was come to this House Floor and say, okay, we have to cut spending, and maybe we ought to take a look at some of those gigantic tax breaks the Republicans gave their big contributors but, instead, no, they want to make them permanent, even though just last week, the head of the Office of Management and Budget, Mitch Daniels, told us that even with this huge increase in the debt, only 10 percent of the tax breaks have kicked in. So we are \$440 billion broker than we were a year ago today. What do we think we are going to be when the big tax breaks really kick in?

Our Nation is now \$6 trillion, that is a thousand times a thousand times a thousand times a thousand times 6 in debt. Why does it affect every one of you? Because you folks that I cannot talk to in the gallery under House rules, you pay Social Security taxes. You probably do not know that right now there is not a penny in the Social Security trust fund, and that if we could find the so-called Social Security lock box, all we would discover is an IOU for \$1 trillion, 300 billion. That is a thousand times a thousand times a thousand times a thousand.

Every one of you who has ever worked paid Medicare taxes. The money is supposed to be set aside to help pay your health care bills when you get older. If you could find the so-called lock box, all you are going to find is an IOU for \$263 billion, a thousand times a thousand times a thousand times 263. That is your money that they have taken and stolen, because it is borrowed if they have a plan to pay it back, but if you have no plan to pay it back, and there is no plan to pay it back, it is stolen.

Mr. Speaker, you have now been speaker for 1,355 days and you will not let this House vote to balance the budget. You will not allow a vote on a Balanced Budget Amendment to the Constitution, and you do not deserve to be speaker, but the American people deserve to know the truth.

LONELY IN THE QUEST FOR PEACE

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. Mr. Speaker, sometimes the well of the House is lonely in both appearance and the substance of which one comes to speak. Today I speak about a matter that has troubled me from the time that the first pronouncements came from the White House as we moved toward the summer recess and then went home to our respective districts to be with our constituents and to listen to their viewpoints and to do their bidding; from that moment in June, I stood on the floor of the House and asked for concern and reconciliation on issues dealing with Iraq. In February of 2001 I stood on the floor to ask that we not abandon the crisis in the Mideast and, to my dismay, for 9 months, there was no attention to the proliferation of suicide bombings and killings, and even in the last 24 hours tragedy occurred in the State of Israel, our friend, with the suicide bombing. The war of terrorism still wages in Afghanistan, and President Karzai is depending upon the United States remaining strong and fighting against terrorism, building the Nation, helping the men and women and children that want democracy in Afghanistan. Based on the resolution that I supported after the terrorist acts, the horrific acts, and my own personal visit to Afghanistan visiting with the people, walking the streets, seeing the landmines and the devastation, I remain committed to fighting terrorism.

But it costs \$1 billion a month, and we realize that the horrific act, as we have just seen, that occurred on September 11 occurred because we needed to do some things better, intelligence-sharing and information, and I hope that the families will get the truth.

But now we come with a pronouncement that we are prepared to make a unilateral attack on Iraq. As I read the

resolution that the President has now offered to us, there are some things that I agree with, that Iraq persists in violating resolutions of the United Nations Security Council by continuing to engage in brutal repression of the civilian population. I agree. Whereas members of al Qaeda as organizations being housed, or the responsibility for attacks in the United States may be known to Iraq, I agree. But they may be known as well to Saudi Arabia and Pakistan.

We must realize that in this determination, we are better, as Americans, if we work through this process through reconciliations and the United Nations Security Council. What are we to do when nations around the world disturb us? Is it our responsibility to, on behalf of the American people, send our young men and women into harm on a unilateral basis? Are we to continue operating on a deficit where there is no money to wage war without substance?

I ask the President, as this resolution is sent forward, let us sit down at the table and really enunciate a policy that brings no shame to this Nation. For there are no wimps in this Nation; not a one of us would shy away from a fight to defend this land. I may not be in a position to go, but you could ask any one of us who would accept to go, but those young men and women are already on the frontline. I have seen them. I have seen the body bags in Afghanistan. Those of us who know history know how we left the marine troops in Lebanon where 200-plus died. Those of us who know history know about Vietnam and the body bags, 56,000 that came home.

Mr. Speaker, I have no intent to argue against an administration that wants to do what is right for America; I want to follow the Constitution that says this body must declare war.

This resolution in its language allows the President the opportunity to do unilateral attack on Iraq with no support from our multinational allies and to do a preemptive attack. I will go home this weekend to hold a citizens forum to listen to the constituents of the 18th congressional district. Whoever is hearing my voice, I ask you to join around kitchen tables, PTA meetings, churches and synagogues and mosques. Begin the discussion. Do not be acted upon. This is America.

Mr. Speaker, though this is a lonely place, I would much rather stand here today on September 19, 2002 and raise my voice, for I will never forget Secretary MacNamara's words post the Vietnam War: he wished he had said something. He wished he had stood up. He wished he was counted against a war that may not have been what we all thought it could have been; not against those heroes who died, Mr. Speaker, we will always respect the Vietnam vets, but I will come to this well lonely so that we can hear the truth and that peace will survive.

FREE SPEECH FOR AMERICA'S RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I will not take the full hour, but as we are talking about our men and women in uniform, and I want to join with the gentlewoman from Texas, that we are very fortunate to have the men and women who serve this Nation, and God bless them, and also the families of those who serve this Nation, the men that serve this Nation and the women, that we do appreciate them. That is really one of the reasons I am on the floor today, because I do appreciate and I cherish the First Amendment right of the Constitution of the United States of America, and I know that many men and women have died for that right and other rights that we enjoy based on our Constitution.

But the reason I am here, Mr. Speaker, is because our churches and synagogues are denied the First Amendment rights to talk about issues such as political issues. Well, some people might not know the history, and the history is this, that from day one of the beginning of this Nation, the preachers and priests have had the freedom to talk about political issues and actually had that freedom until 1954. If this was 1953, Mr. Speaker, I would not even be on the floor, because there would be no problem. The churches had freedom of speech until 1954.

In 1954, Lyndon Baines Johnson, United States Senator and majority leader, a very strong position that he held in the United States Senate, had the H.L. Hunt family back in Texas opposed to his reelection because they were saying that Johnson was soft on communism. So the H.L. Hunt family had established 2501(c)(3) think tanks, obviously not churches, but think tanks. So Johnson, being the man that he was, put an amendment on a revenue bill going through the Senate in 1954 that was never even debated; they never debated the amendment. Basically what he said was if you are a 501(c)(3), you may not have political speech.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I am one who believes sincerely that the strength of this Nation depends on our spiritual leaders having the right of free speech, whether it be a political issue that they think is important or whether it should be a moral issue that is somewhat political. What Mr. JOHNSON did was to give the authority to the Internal Revenue Service to be able to say what can be said and not said as it relates to political issues of the day.

I must say, Mr. Speaker, that I believe sincerely that the moral future of this country depends on our religious leaders having the freedom to talk about issues, should they choose.