

foreign military financing, and it is my understanding that the State Department officials have informed some committee staff that Colombia's share of those funds will be around 36 to \$37 million.

All told, that is another \$100 million in additional military aid for Colombia. Mr. Speaker, that is more money than the State of Massachusetts will receive under the supplemental for critical homeland security priorities. It is more than most States will receive.

In Massachusetts, communities are laying off police, firefighters, and other emergency first responders. Dozens of our cities and towns have critical vacancies because many of our local police, our State police, our sheriffs, firefighters, and medical staff have been called to active duty and are right now serving in Iraq.

I have been told that there is just not enough money to help places like Seekonk or Worcester or Southborough fill these critical vacancies to keep our families safe; but apparently there is plenty of cash for Colombia.

Mr. Speaker, there is nothing that Colombia needs that cannot be handled through the regular authorization and appropriations process. Indeed, just last month on February 12, this Congress approved over \$500 million for Colombia for fiscal year 2003, \$400 million for the Andean Counterdrug Initiative, and another \$99 million in foreign military financing.

For fiscal year 2004, the President has asked for more than \$700 million for Colombia in the foreign operations and defense appropriations bills. Those bills will begin moving through subcommittee shortly after Congress returns from our April recess.

U.S. military and other aid for Colombia has been approved and is in the spending pipeline ready to go. On Monday, when he sent up the supplemental request, President Bush asked the Congress "to refrain from attaching items not directly related to the emergency at hand."

Mr. Speaker, Colombia falls into that category. These requests for Colombia are unrelated to the needs of our troops and our missions in Iraq and South Asia and unrelated to meeting the needs of our own homeland security; and I call upon the administration to withdraw the request for Colombia from this supplemental, and if that fails to happen, I ask the Committee on Appropriations to eliminate those requests and shift those resources to help our States and our communities meet critical hometown security priorities.

Mr. Speaker, I was in Colombia in February. I traveled to several sites throughout the country. I met with local military commanders, religious leaders, governors, mayors, labor leaders, school teachers, displaced families, indigenous peoples, Afro-Colombians, lawyers, the magistrates of the constitutional court, members of the Colombia Government and U.S. embassy

staff. I was also in Colombia 2 years ago, and the difference is striking.

Sadly, Mr. Speaker, today the human rights situation is worse. The violence has increased. There is less political space for people to organize, speak out or voice alternatives to official policy. The country is increasingly militarized; and there is little support for basic economic development, unless it comes from other countries or the U.N.

The 40-year-old civil war in Colombia is dirtier and uglier than ever and shows no signs of ending anytime soon. The nature of the U.S. role in that war has changed. We are now more deeply involved in a counterinsurgency than ever before. Americans have died and are being held hostage by guerrilla forces. The Colombian military continues to work with awful right-wing paramilitary forces.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to see American men and women dying in a war in Colombia where the Colombian military is still reluctant to engage directly insurgent and paramilitary forces. I think it is a mistake for the United States to escalate its military involvement in Colombia.

Some of my colleagues may disagree, but at the very least, this escalation deserves a full debate. We must not allow such a dramatic increase in our military involvement to pass without comment and votes. Congress must assert its proper role.

Withdraw the requests for Colombia in this supplemental. Put that money to better use by supporting our police and firefighters here at home.

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

(Mr. MCCOTTER 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 Rhode Island (Mr. KENNEDY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take my special order at this time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

USE OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS

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

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor with an issue that I

feel the Members of this House should think about.

The BBC carried a story on March 27 saying that there was proof of biological weapons found. They found protection suits, gas masks; and officials argued that these precautions were not to counter the threat of coalition attacks, as the Iraqis would know that the United Kingdom and U.S. forces in the gulf do not possess chemical and biological weapons.

Mr. Hoon, who is the Secretary in the British Government, conceded that the discovery of the suits was obviously not conclusive proof that Iraqi forces were set to use chemical or biological weapons, but he added, "It's clearly indicative of an intention, otherwise why equip his own forces to deal with a threat which he knows we do not have?"

I just received an e-mail message from one of my friends in the British House of Lords who said to me there was a news story on the BBC this morning about the U.S. administration saying they may be prepared to use nonlethal chemical weapons in Iraq in an urban situation where it would be preferable to stun people rather than kill them. Now I do not know how we put those two stories together. We think the Iraqis are getting ready to do something; but the BBC, the very same, carries the story which we will never find in an American newspaper or on American television that we are talking about using chemical weapons.

My correspondent went on to say this would be illegal; they are very nasty substances and can kill children. They would be effective against military forces equipped with even rudimentary gas masks. I am sure my colleagues will be speaking out against such a thing. However, it might help them to know that I am hoping to ask our government what action they would take in such a situation.

□ 1430

"My party will certainly call for the U.K. troops to cease work with American forces if they use illegal chemical weapons, even nonlethal ones. If it happens during the Easter recess, we would call for a recall of Parliament to debate it."

Mr. Speaker, I bring this to the floor because the media in this country has done a terrible job reporting the war. They give us one side, they are all embedded inside our military, and they get whatever they are supposed to put out about what is going on. They are not looking broadly across the horizon at what is happening.

The Washington Post carried a story today that the American people are so dissatisfied with the American press that the number one hit on the Internet is Al Jazeera, a Qatar television station that provides another point of view. Americans are trying to find out what the truth is.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know, I cannot make head nor tail out of this. I looked

quickly to see if I could find the story, but it is not written in the BBC. I have no reason to believe that my correspondent would not tell me the truth. I believe this Congress should look into this issue.

If we are going to start a war in which we are going after a country and we say they have weapons of mass destruction, we know it, but we have not found any, and now the story comes out that we are getting ready to use them. Remember what happened in Moscow when the Chechnyan rebels took over that theater with all those people in there, and the Russian Army used a nonlethal chemical weapon to stun the people, and they had several hundred die? The question is, are we prepared to use those on civilians in Iraq or how do we keep it only on the military and not on the civilians? When gas is spread, it goes around, and people breathe it.

The United States Congress should be made aware of this. I do not go to the secret briefings because I want to be able to talk out here about what I hear in the general public. I do not think that they will tell Members in a secret briefing whether they will use it, but Congress should demand from the people in the war department and the White House as to whether or not they intend to use any kind of nonlethal chemical weapons. Are they talking about tear gas? What are they talking about? We do not want to be a part of doing the very thing that we accuse the Iraqis of.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Ms. CARSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. CARSON of Indiana 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 Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

THE WAR IN IRAQ

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

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I listened to the previous speaker, and I am curious if the gentleman's preference is tear gas or bullets. I think it is a fair request that it be disclosed, what kind of gas or what kind of chemical might be used, but I think it is somewhat of an exaggeration to say the United States is going to use chemicals like those which Iraq possesses, and those are chemicals like nerve gas, ricin, and

anthrax. I can assure the gentleman that the United States has no intention of using ricin, nerve gas, anthrax or those types of weapons.

I think it is entirely appropriate, if we enter into urban combat, which we have to expect is going to happen, if we have an opportunity, primarily because the civilian population is in a particular facility, if we can use tear gas instead of putting a mortar into the building, maybe we ought to use tear gas.

But for people from foreign countries to stand up and say the United States is using gas, they will be disappointed to find out the type of gas, and I do not know whether it would be used or not, but I think it would make sense to use tear gas if we can disarm and minimize our casualties towards civilians. Keep in mind the United States has done an incredible job on minimizing casualties on civilians.

It is interesting to note that the Iraqis care less about their people because they are willing to use their people as human shields than we care about their people. The United States cares enough about their people that on many occasions we will not return fire because of the Iraqi citizen that is being used as a human shield, but not on all occasions. They should not depend on that working every time. They think less of their citizens because they will use them as a shield. We think more of their citizens because we do not want citizen casualties.

I listened today to some comments from some of my colleagues, and there are two things that I want to correct. One, this is the United States against Iraq; and two, Europe is opposed to this.

In fact, if we look at Europe, Members will find that Jacques Chirac likes to pronounce that France is Europe. France is not Europe. France is a part of Europe. It is not Europe.

Jacques Chirac likes to play like he is the king of the kingdom of Europe. Europe has many different countries, and most of those countries in Europe support the United States of America. The United States of America is not acting alone in this action. The United States of America, in fact, has more allies in this action than we had during the entire first Persian Gulf War, not less, more. And on the European continent, look at the countries that are supporting the United States.

First, perhaps it is more appropriate to look at the countries that are opposing the United States. There are six, three of them being in Europe: France, Germany, and Belgium.

Now look at the countries that are supporting the United States. The British, the strongest ally we have had in a long time, the Italians, the Spanish, the Polish, the Hungarians, the Dutch. I can give Members generally the countries, Afghanistan, Albania, Australia, Colombia, the Czech Republic, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Georgia, Iceland, Japan, South Korea, Lithuania,

Macedonia, Nicaragua, the Philippines, Romania. It is not just the United States. It is the United States and the British who are leading the cause, but they have lots of support throughout this world. And when Jacques Chirac speaks about Europe, he ought to be more careful.

It is such a sad case in our history that a long-time alliance and friendship with our old friends in France and Germany has been so denigrated by political leaders in Germany and France who are seizing upon popular opinion to use the United States as a vehicle to bash to continue to increase their ratings in the popularity policy. This alliance and this relationship we have had over there has gone way too many years for it to be trashed by Chancellor Schmidt in Germany and Chirac over in France, but they have done a pretty successful job of doing it.

I can tell Members in my opinion we would not be engaged in military combat today had the French and the Germans, or had the French and the Germans initially in 1992, in 1993, in 1994, in 1995, in 1996, in fact, after the Iraqis gassed 60,000 of their own people, and not with the type of gas like the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT) was talking about, tear gas and so on, gassed them with ricin. They killed 60,000. But what did the French and the Germans do? Negotiate, negotiate, negotiate. Let us have meeting, after meeting, after meeting; resolution, after resolution, after resolution. Had the French and the Germans and the country of Belgium, had they decided to get tough back in 1992 or any of those other years, we would not be where we are today.

I note that my colleague says the United States started this war. This war was started back in 1991 when Iraq continually defied the world's demand that he disarm those weapons of mass destruction.

There is not a country in the world, including the French, by the way, including Germany, there is not a nation in the world that denies that Saddam Hussein has these weapons or denies that he is a wicked guy. But there are a lot of them that want to do everything they can to get rid of Saddam Hussein except fight him. That is where the French fall in place.

I think it is important for our population to understand, I think it is very important that there are lots of other reasons that Jacques Chirac and Chancellor Schmidt over in Germany are taking on this anti-U.S. attitude and feeding the frenzy to hate America.

Once this gets resolved, take a look at how many contracts the French have with the Iraqis, business contracts. Mr. Speaker, do you know who approved the building of a nuclear plant in Iraq years ago, and the building of a nuclear plant that was justified because they needed it for energy in the country that has the second largest oil reserves in the world? Jacques Chirac approved it when he was prime minister.