

the letter is from two doctors who practice in my home State of Georgia: "Dear Representative GINGREY, although we continue to see Medicare patients in our practice, we are no longer accepting new Medicare patients. Further cuts in payments to physicians treating Medicare patients will undoubtedly result in a mass exodus of medical providers and secondarily limit access to medical care for the Medicare recipients. We have already noticed that many Medicare patients are having difficulties getting routine care. Despite the fact that we are physiatrists treating musculoskeletal problems, we find ourselves ordering routine care to working-up medical problems that their internists or primary care providers no longer have time to address. Unfortunately, we do not have the time to address these other issues either.

"Please help this situation by averting additional Medicare pay cuts. The courtesy of a response is appreciated.

"Sincerely, Amy M. Long, M.D. and Daryl L. Figa, M.D."

Madam Speaker, the courtesy of a response has been requested. What is our answer? Will we abandon those doctors who treat our most needy? Madam Speaker, we must stop, we must stop the 4.2 percent Medicare physician payment cut. Help our doctors help those who need their care the most. Madam Speaker, we must not forget doctors are the linchpin of the Medicare program.

ORTHOREHAB,

Lawrenceville, GA, October 13, 2003.

Hon. PHILIP GINGREY,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE GINGREY: Although we continue to see Medicare patients in our practice, we are no longer accepting new Medicare patients for treatment. Further cuts in payments to physicians treating Medicare patients will undoubtedly result in a mass exodus of medical providers and secondarily, limit access to medical care for the Medicare recipients.

We have already noticed that many Medicare patients are having difficulties getting routine care. Despite the fact that we are physiatrists treating musculoskeletal problems, we find ourselves ordering routine care to working-up medical problems that their internists or primary care providers no longer have time to address. Unfortunately, we do not have the time to address these other issues either.

Please help this situation by averting additional Medicare pay cuts.

The courtesy of a response is appreciated.

Sincerely,

AMY M. LANG, MD,
DARYL L. FIGA, MD.

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

(Mr. CONYERS 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 gen-

tleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2004

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER) is recognized for one half the time until midnight as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Madam Speaker, today we have heard a great debate on H.R. 3289, the supplemental concerning Iraq and Afghanistan. This \$87 billion supplemental is the largest supplemental in American history, and we should look at it very closely; and we should be considering all portions of this supplemental.

I support the supplemental basically, and I will be voting for it even if my perfecting amendments are rejected. However, I have several suggestions that I will be making tomorrow that I believe are vital to the well-being of the American people.

So tonight I thought I would speak a little bit about the supplemental and about several of the changes that need to be made in order to ensure that the interests of the American people are being met.

First of all, of the \$87 billion we are being asked for in this supplemental, \$66 billion of it is for our military. And this portion of the supplemental I support. And I will have to suggest that, even as we have heard today, if someone is complaining that there was a lack of body armor, one does not suggest that the way to solve that is not to give them the money that they believe is necessary to complete their mission in Iraq. In fact, being someone who respects our Armed Forces and their leaders and respects the job and the courage it takes to do this job and knowing that I am not an expert on military matters, I would lean towards granting the requests from our military when they claim they need a certain amount of money in order to get their job done and to come home safely.

Certainly, a great deal of our defense resources have been expended in Afghanistan and Iraq; and many of these resources need to be replaced, whether it is fuel or ammunition, whether it is repairing equipment or whatever. We are going to need to spend a certain amount of money just to bring ourselves up to the point where we are not vulnerable because of the commitments that we have made overseas in these last 2 years. If we do not do this, if we do not pay heed to what our military says they need in order to finish their mission successfully and come home safely, either they will not succeed in their mission, more people will be killed, or we will be left vulnerable in years ahead. This makes no sense.

So I will give the benefit of the doubt to the military, to Mr. Rumsfeld to try to do his best job and get this operation over in Iraq and bring our troops home safely.

But, fundamentally, many people are talking about and challenging whether or not our military should have been in Iraq in the first place. Let me note that taking care of Saddam Hussein was necessary for America's security, and we should applaud our President for making the tough decisions and taking the heat and putting up with all the backbiting and nit-picking that he has had to go through in order to make sure that our operation, the democratic offensive there in Iraq, to make sure it kept going and was successful. The President has his detractors, and I am not saying he has not made mistakes, but by and large this has been a great President, a historic President who stepped up to the plate and did what was necessary and met the challenge of his day. And let us note that almost very few of the people who are now attacking our President and are attacking the supplemental would advocate that we permit Saddam Hussein to get back into power, and earlier we even heard the proposals that we give this to the United Nations so that Saddam Hussein will not come back into power. Unless we are going to provide leadership, the United Nations is useless, as we know. It is a debating society, and unless America provides the leadership, it will do nothing. So we can be very proud that our President said, I am going to take care of America's security.

Saddam Hussein was a monster. He is a monster. And he was a monstrous threat when he was in power. He was a mass murderer to his own people. He was a torturer, and he was not only a scourge to his own people in his right, but he was a threat when he was in power to the United States of America. He was a threat to our safety because Saddam Hussein hated America, hated every one of us, and would have done us harm had he had the chance because America humiliated him by driving his forces out of Kuwait a decade ago. There is no getting around it.

He had a blood grudge against us. What that means in that part of the world with a man who murders hundreds of thousands of his own people, that means he would not think twice if he had the opportunity to kill Americans in great numbers; and I am very pleased that our President took this tyrant out, eliminated this threat to America, and promoted democracy in Iraq at the same time.

Unfortunately, the reason we had to do that now was because a decade ago President Bush One did not do his job. He did not finish the job he set out to do, and now we have been paying for it. Let us make sure that the decisions we make now with this supplemental and other decisions that we will be making ensure that we will not have to go back to that region. Let us finish the job,

get it done right. Let us not short-change our people when they ask for their needs in the military, but let us make sure we get the job done so we do not have to go back again.

How do we do that? First and foremost, yes, we back our military because Saddam Hussein was one of the most powerful military forces in that part of the world. In fact, he was the most powerful military force in that part of the world. So we had to use that tool to get him out. But succeeding also requires having the people of Iraq on our side. We need to help them build a democratic society. And I was in the forefront along with the gentleman from California (Mr. COX) in passing the Iraq Liberation Act 5 years ago, and I might note that the State Department under the last administration and under this administration until after September 11 did not expend the funds that were given to them in order to help the people of Iraq provide the democratic alternative to Saddam Hussein that they needed. That was a failure for the last 5 years of our government.

We need now to work with the people of Iraq and build their democratic institutions, and we are succeeding in that. And, yes, there are people who will kill an American soldier, and we are drawing in the al Qaeda and the terrorists from around the world to attack Americans there. But overwhelmingly the people of Iraq are very gleeful that Saddam Hussein is gone and grateful to America for this. And I suggest that in years ahead that once the situation is stabilized and Iraq becomes part of the family of nations, the civilized family of nations, instead of headed by a rogue general like Saddam Hussein, that we will find that the people of Iraq are our best friends. They will be so grateful to us that they will stand beside us in the challenges that we face in the future, and they will tell us how grateful they are and the suffering that they went through under Saddam Hussein.

And already our stand in the Middle East has done so much to increase our prestige. Already, for example, in Iran we see changes, movement for change in Iran, one of the most hardened anti-Western of Islamic societies, and we see that throughout the Islamic world that there is a possibility now because of America's increase in prestige that we can actually step in and do some good and we can be proud that with only a minor loss of civilian life we actually achieved our goal of eliminating Saddam Hussein's monstrous regime.

In fact, more civilians would be dead, Iraqi civilians would be dead today, had we left Saddam Hussein in power and he killed the number of civilians that he was killing, that his rate of massacre of his own people would have continued unabated by American troops. Also, there were limited casualties on our side; and, yes, there are still a few casualties. Every day we hear about that. It is a tragedy. It is

part of the price we are paying, but it does not reflect the Iraqi people, but instead is the last gasp of a tyrant and of a dictator of a monstrous regime that we have driven into oblivion and put on the ash heap of history.

So our soldiers can be proud, and we are proud of them. They are risking their lives, and we are going to make sure they can do their job. So I want to make it very clear that I support those elements in the bill that will assist our military in that job; and as I say, America is safer because of what we have done. America will always be safer when we are championing the cause of liberty and justice.

All too long in the Cold War, we found ourselves supporting dictators and tyrants, and there has been talk about what we did for Saddam Hussein himself at a time when he was in a conflict with Iranians. And, yes, people did help. I might add that the guaranteed loans that my friend referred to earlier happened in 1989 after Ronald Reagan had left the White House. I know that because it was my first year here, and one of the first things I did on the floor of this House was to pass out leaflets to Members as they came in through that door asking them not to vote for the loan guarantees to Saddam Hussein. These were loan guarantees that were going to permit him to buy American grain, which meant we were paying for his food while he used his money to pay for his army. It was a horrible mistake. It was a horrible thing to do. Anytime we give credit to dictators, it is wrong. When we helped support people like Samosa and these other dictators around the world, it was wrong. What we need to do now to be secure is to promote freedom.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Madam Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. ROHRABACHER. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. And I know he did serve in the course of the Reagan Presidency. I do believe, however, that one of the gravest mistakes that was made during the course of the 1980s right up until 1990 was this unholy, if you will, relationship that was formed with Saddam Hussein.

□ 2245

As the gentleman knows, it is the current Secretary of Defense, Mr. Rumsfeld, who was the special envoy to Saddam Hussein.

In 1982, and I have this discussion because I think it is important that the American people pay attention, because we all have to learn from errors that were made in the past. In 1982, Saddam Hussein was removed from the terrorist list. In 1986, the United States installed an embassy in Baghdad, and, over the course of time, right up until the invasion by Saddam Hussein in Kuwait, but particularly during the Iraq-Iran war, we were providing intelligence, we were selling, or we allowed to be sold, dual-use technology, and I

have a long list and I would commend my friend to go to a Congressional Research Service publication dated June 22, 1992.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. If I could reclaim my time, let me just note that at times during World War II, we were known to send weapons to Joseph Stalin in order to fight Adolph Hitler, and during the Cold War we at times backed dictators like Samosa and some nefarious characters. And, I might add, we did not start winning the Cold War until Ronald Reagan said, and let me stress this, when he came to power he said, We are not just against communism anymore, we are for democracy. That is a very important part of how we won the Cold War.

During that time period, Iran was considered a terrible threat, engaged with terrorist activities, murdering Americans, et cetera. We all remember that. I will admit probably the Reagan Administration, trying to balance off that Iranian threat, did some of these things that the gentleman is referring to.

Mr. DELAHUNT. If the gentleman will yield for a moment, I want to be clear. It was after the Iran-Iraq war had concluded, and it was not President Reagan, but it was President Bush that denied this Congress by threat of veto to impose sanctions on Iraq for the atrocities that were committed in Halabja, the gassing of some 5,000 Kurdish Iraqis by Saddam Hussein.

The lesson, I would respectfully submit, that we should learn is that we have got to be careful with whom we lie and forge an alliance.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. That is absolutely correct, and I am very proud that in the United States history we have been pragmatic at times, but all of our pragmatism has been balanced with a love of liberty and justice. And there have been debates on this floor, unlike in other countries where they are backing dictators, that it does not make the debate on the floor. And we can be very proud of our country, that we did save the world from the Nazis and the Japanese militarists.

I am very proud of my father's generation. My father has passed away now. He was in the Pacific war. So many of these people did so much back in those days. The Japanese militarists and Nazis would have dominated this planet without them stepping forward.

I am also very proud of what we did during the Cold War. It was a very perilous moment for humankind. We stepped forward. It was Americans that stepped into the breach. I might add, our allies nitpicked and backbit us every moment, the French and Germans, every time we tried to make a stand against the communists during that time period.

But, today, who would have guessed after the Cold War that we would face a new major threat, a massive threat? On September 11, that threat became evident to all of us. That threat, where terrorists overseas, in a faraway country, their little tyranny, the Taliban

tyranny in Afghanistan, was able to be used as a base of operations, their country was used as a base of operations to slaughter 3,000 Americans in the worst terrorist attack in the history of our country. This was the greatest slaughter of American civilians in the history of our country.

This brought us to the reality of another great threat that we face. I would like to say that I believe President Bush has stepped up to this challenge. In Afghanistan, I think we did a terrific job. This bill does put another \$1.5 billion in for reconstruction, which I believe should have happened immediately after the Taliban were thrown out, so we have not been exactly quick on this. We should have been quicker, no doubt.

But we have got the terrorists on the run. Their home base has been eliminated. The Taliban regime, the ones that are not dead are running, along with bin Laden and their gang, looking over their shoulders. Otherwise, we would have had very many more terrorist acts in the United States.

We arrested this guy in Thailand. He is the one who conducted the bombing of this discotheque in Indonesia, murdering a couple of hundred people, mostly surfers, one from my district, a guy named Webby Webster, who went down there to go surfing.

These terrorists, radical Islamists, hate America's way of life. We must do our best to reach out to the Muslim world, to the moderate Muslims, to those people who would believe in democracy and want to be part of the Western family of nations. We must do so, and we must start right here in Iraq. This is the best place to turn around the entire Muslim world. Congress is being asked now.

So I am supporting what we have done. But there is something in this bill which I find myself in opposition to, and I think the American people need to pay attention, and I would like to call this to the attention of my colleagues. I believe it is a vitally important issue which will be decided tomorrow.

Of this \$87 billion supplemental, Congress is being asked to approve \$18.6 billion of it as a reconstruction package for Iraq. This American aid will be used, to some degree, to rebuild what was damaged or destroyed in our military operations, but, to a greater degree, it will be used to upgrade, refurbish and to make operational an Iraqi infrastructure that was neglected and allowed to degenerate under decades of Saddam Hussein's tyrannical dictatorship.

The reconstruction package includes billions of dollars to be taken from the pockets of the American people to upgrade and refurbish Iraq's electric and water systems, as well as repairing and upgrading Iraq's oil industry, among many other projects, I might add.

Well, these costly improvements, for example, there are clinics, and there are cranes that we are going to buy,

and airports and things that will help Iraq in the future prosper, these costly improvements are necessary just to keep that society functioning, because it is so low at this point. But it will also lay the foundation for the future, a future of stability, and, yes, we can predict a future of prosperity in Iraq.

Should we help now? The answer is yes. We bought onto that role when we sent our troops into that country. The administration is asking, again, for \$66 billion for our military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. I have no problem with that, because we do need to finish the job and see our troops come home safely. Again, I will not second-guess or undercut our military about what form the military spending will take.

The question facing us, however, is what form the \$18.6 billion reconstruction program will take. Should it be in the form of a grant, a giveaway, something that will never be repaid, or should it be in the form of loans and investments in Iraq?

Iraq's infrastructure challenges can be fixed and paid for by Iraqi consumers and producers through the sale of oil and through fees on the purchase of electricity and water and oil and gas. So the Iraqi people can pay for these things over a 20-year period, just as any similar effort to upgrade or refurbish systems in our country, whatever systems they are, you have the capital costs, and they are made part of the bill that the consumer pays, and then that is paid off over a 20-year period.

Well, why can that same thing not work for the Iraqi people, especially when considering the Iraqi people in the future may be very prosperous?

Our level of Federal Government deficit spending this year will be at least \$400 billion. How can we borrow, which is being proposed to us, that we take \$18 billion and give it as loans? We are borrowing that because we are in deficit. How can we borrow \$18.6 billion and give it to the people of Iraq? We are being told we want to give it to them because we cannot expect them to accept more debt.

Well, our people will have to pay it back. Our people, in time, will have to pay back that debt. What we are doing is borrowing money to give to the people of Iraq so that our children can pay back that debt.

Well, the Iraqi people should pay that back. Iraq has the third largest oil reserves in the world. That is what we know today. They are just behind Saudi Arabia and Canada. But, guess what? Once a full and honest assessment is made, we may find that Iraq is the world's number one oil producer. That is it. It may end up that 10 years from now Iraq is the biggest oil producer in the world.

Iraq today has 112 billion barrels of proven oil reserves, but only 10 percent of the country has been explored. Only 17 percent of the country's 80 oil fields have been developed. We are talking

about what may well be the richest country in the world.

The only reason it is poor today is because it has been exploited and its people have been beaten down and its economy robbed by this monster, Saddam Hussein. But if they are potentially one of the richest countries in the world, why must we give away our limited resources, and give it away just as a grant, as a giveaway, never to be repaid? Why must our people pay for everything and never expect to get paid back? Why must the American people have to shell out another \$18.6 billion, to be taken from their pockets or to be taken from the money needed to run our schools or our hospitals or our transportation systems? Why? Why must we bear the burden, the whole burden?

The answer we are being given by global planners over at the State Department suggests they are not watching out for the interests of the American people when they propose this plan, but, instead, they are watching out for what is best for the world. Well, who is supposed to watch out for the American people, if our government does not watch out for them?

Unfortunately, the motive behind the strategy we have been presented of grants instead of loans does not appear to be based on a humanitarian concern for the long-suffering people of Iraq. That might be a little understandable, if the planners over at the State Department were basing it on that, because their hearts were touched. No, that would be admirable. It might be wrong-headed, but it would be admirable. It might be, for example, misguided charity.

But, no, this is not a rational benevolence. That is not the driving force behind this \$18.6 billion. The Americans are being told that we must give that as a gift, rather than expect any payback. Of course, the country we are giving it to is potentially a very, very wealthy country.

No, what is motivating this demand, and we have heard it in the debate tonight, that it be a gift instead of a loan, this \$18 billion reconstruction plan, is concern for the powerful international banking and financial interests. They are the driving force behind the demand that Americans give the gift of \$18 billion for Iraqi reconstruction, rather than loan it to them. What is happening here is that a loan would increase the level of debt in Iraq.

□ 2300

We are told that Iraq already owes about \$120 billion in foreign debt; and if we add another \$18.6 billion to that, it just might be the straw that breaks the camel's back. And on this floor tonight we have heard that argued: oh, this is what happened to Germany in World War I, and this is what leads to further conflict, in that we put this debt, we give them such a burden of debt that the society breaks down; and then they say, nobody is going to get paid back

because the economy will fail, along with any hopes of recovery or any hopes of stability because of too much debt on Iraq. Well, that is what we are being told. All I have to say is, that is total, absolute nonsense. That is limiting our options and building a straw man and destroying a straw man.

The American people have already carried a far too heavy burden. They have carried the load, the full load for peace and stability for almost the entire planet. Now we are being asked to cough up another \$18.6 billion, never to be repaid back. And why are we being asked? We have to give it away? Why is that? Because if we make it a loan, then it might threaten the viability of the loans that huge German, French, and Belgian banks have made to Saddam Hussein's regime. That is it. Got it?

Now, do we know why everybody is saying the American people should not be paid back? Because if we make it a loan, those \$120 billion that were loaned to Saddam Hussein might, in some way, be put in jeopardy. We are asking the American people to put out \$20 billion to protect loans made by international bankers in Germany and France to Saddam Hussein's dictatorship? No. And Saddam Hussein, of course, was given credit lines by people like the Saudis and others in the Persian Gulf; and when he got these loans and this credit that we are talking about, he did not build bridges; he did not feed babies. He bought sophisticated weapons and opulent palaces that were complete with jacuzzis and torture chambers. That is what he did with those loans. The people of Iraq never benefited from those loans. He let his own country's infrastructure rot even though these loans were providing him billions of dollars along with Iraq's oil money.

Now the American people are told we must donate \$18.6 billion because to loan it, coupled with Saddam Hussein's debt, it would be too heavy a burden for the Iraqi people to climb out from under, and it would hurt the pillars of international finance.

Well, the solution, I might add, again, there is another solution. We are not just talking about either a loan in and of itself and not changing anything else, or a gift. No, if we make a loan, it has to be coupled with a change in policy. The solution is not another \$18.6 billion to be taken from the hides of the American people. The solution is a repudiation of the Iraqi dictator's \$120 billion debt.

The Europeans, who loaned Saddam Hussein billions which he used for weapons and palaces, should try to find Saddam Hussein and collect from him if they want their money back. We are not the world's repo man or collection officer. The American position on the debt left by Saddam Hussein should be based on the principle that no people who rid themselves of a tyrant should be expected to pay the debts incurred by that dictator. Any financial institu-

tion or country that loans money or provides credit to a gangster regime like that of Saddam Hussein's should do so at their own risk, and they should certainly not expect America's taxpayers to guarantee their amoral transactions.

Now, we have heard on this floor that none of this money is going to go to repay those loans. Yes, none of that money in particular. But by not making this a loan, by never getting it back, by just giving away \$20 billion which our children will have to repay, because we are borrowing that, what that means is we are doing that in order to secure those loans so those big German and French and Saudi moneyed interests get paid the loans they made to Saddam Hussein.

In summary, the insistence that we give, rather than loan, Iraq this \$18.6 billion is really aimed at protecting these financial institutions that back Saddam Hussein's bloody regime. The debt left by Saddam Hussein's dictatorship should be repudiated. It should be wiped away. We have heard earlier today talk about the Marshall Plan. We have heard about, oh, we have to pass this as a gift, because other donor countries will not help in the weeks ahead.

Well, first of all, look at the Marshall Plan argument. What did we do to make sure that Germany was able to prosper? The first thing we said in the Marshall Plan was that the German Government is not going to be responsible for the debts of the Hitler regime. Now, the reparations, yes. That is when the Nazis did things and that government had to pay reparations, but not the debts, not the people who just loaned money to the Hitler regime. All of those debts were forgiven.

So here we have the Marshall Plan argument, and it just does not work here.

The institutions, the institutions and the governments that hold the debt from Saddam's regime cannot be permitted to profit from these loans to this gangster. And when we go to that conference and we are asking, the President is saying, oh, we have to make it a grant instead of a loan because these other people then will not donate when we go to the donors conference. Look, my colleagues just noted, I worked in the White House for 7 years. This is ridiculous.

First of all, how much money are we expecting to get from those people? I will guesstimate that it will be a very small amount. If there is \$10 billion, I will be shocked, and shocked if the \$10 billion is ever donated. But there is nothing that we can do at that donors conference; there is no amount of money that they can give that will be more beneficial to the economy of the Iraqi people than the repudiation of the debt that Saddam Hussein accumulated to those very same countries' banks.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Madam Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. ROHRABACHER. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Madam Speaker, I think that is an excellent point that the gentleman makes, because we have heard a lot about the donors conference, and the gentleman uses a figure of \$10 billion, which I would suggest is optimistic.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Really high.

Mr. DELAHUNT. If he is unaware, he should know that the European Commission, which is the executive arm of the European Union, has already made its commitment. Now, obviously, individual countries will be asked to come and contribute. But does the gentleman know the figure that the European Union's executive arm, the European Commission, has made?

Mr. ROHRABACHER. No. What is that?

Mr. DELAHUNT. Madam Speaker, \$230 million. So again, I do not think that we are going to realistically expect that a figure of \$10 billion, which has been circulated about, is realistic. And I cannot agree with the gentleman more. Not only have we carried the burden of military presence in Iraq, but at this point in time, to just simply give the money away, without having it collateralized with future oil revenue, it just simply is unfair to the American taxpayer and to the American people. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Madam Speaker, I think the gentleman's information puts to bed the idea that we have to spend \$18.6 billion and give it as a gift in order to make sure that the Europeans at this donors conference cough up the money. Well, there is very little chance that they will. But again, no matter how much money they give, in no way would it be as beneficial as if we had a policy that the debt owed or the debt accumulated by Saddam Hussein and spent by Saddam Hussein is no longer the responsibility of the Iraqi people. That would free the Iraqi people from a burden that will bend them over and break their economy.

□ 2310

Mr. DELAHUNT. Madam Speaker, if the gentleman would yield for just a moment. I seek information. But what has gone unremarked during the course of this debate is that the American taxpayer has already, through our government, negotiated a loan to the government of Turkey for \$8.5 billion. That is not part of this supplemental.

Now, we are loaning American dollars, hard earned American dollars, to Turkey for \$8.5 billion. We are taking dollars from Americans and loaning them to Turkey and, of course, American taxpayers will be asked to pay the interest on that \$8.5 million.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Madam Speaker, reclaiming my time, we will be paying the interest on that for 20 years and then our children, our young children today will have to pay those debts off in the future.

Again, this comes back to a basic argument we will have on the floor tomorrow, and this is one of the center

core debates we will have tomorrow, about fiscal responsibility and what is going on.

I support the President's war efforts. I have been a point person on them. No one can doubt that in this body. I support the Iraqi war efforts, supported what we did in Afghanistan. I am proud of our President. But we must stand up for fiscal responsibility, especially when it comes to this part of the package I think it is one-eighth of the package or something, one-sixth of the package, which deals specifically with Iraqi reconstruction. Should it be a loan? Should we expect that when Iraq gets back on its feet, starts producing its oil, which it may be the world's biggest oil producer in years to come, should we expect them to pay it back as we continue to prosper or should our children pay for that money because we had to borrow, make a greater debt to get the money there in the first place?

Well, let me tell you what happened in the past when we followed the same course. We pressured the democratic governments that replaced the communist dictatorships in Russia and Eastern Europe to pay their debts of oppressors of the preceding communist regimes. What did that do when we forced them to pay for that? What happened was a decade of chaos, a decade of uncertainty, a decade where there was very little growth, and there was actual decline instead of what we could have had in Eastern Europe and Russia which could have been an era of progress, of freeing, of uplifting. But instead we wanted those people to pay for the debts.

Well, all of this was done. Why? Here we were risking the democratic development of Russia itself and bringing us out of the Cold War and into a new world in order to protect powerful financial interests who had done business with these bloody dictatorships. Mainly, yes, huge European banks who had loaned money to Russia and to Eastern European countries. And we risked instability and we risked the whole future of development of the post-Cold War world in order to make sure that their loans to the dictatorships were honored. We cannot do that now. We cannot base our policy on keeping the loans to Saddam Hussein's loans viable for these nutty financiers from Saudi Arabia and from French and German banks.

We are here to do right by the people of Iraq. And we can do that. What is right is for us to let them wipe the slate clean. Let them repudiate these debts. As I say, no amount of money is going to be donated at this conference that will make up, that could be anywhere as beneficial as just repudiating the Saddam Hussein debt.

And let us renew, let us start anew, let them start anew as well. Let us offer money for reconstruction as a loan. If they can or cannot repay it in the future if something happens, we have not lost anything if we put it as a

loan. Because if we give it as a grant, we are certainly not going to get anything back.

Now, tomorrow I am going to offer two amendments on the Iraqi reconstruction. And my first amendment will suggest that the \$18.6 billion in Iraqi reconstruction, that part of the supplemental should be made only as a loan. Now, it may well be ruled out of order. It may be said that it is not germane because you cannot legislate on an appropriations bill. And we are talking about an appropriations bill.

If my amendment there is ruled out of order, I will then offer another amendment. And that amendment will be to cut the \$18.6 billion in reconstruction money from that bill. And I can assure my Democratic colleagues and my Republican colleagues, my friends on both sides of the aisle, that if we stand up and do what is right and insist that they not spend the money unless it is a loan, I can guarantee them the next day the administration will be here, will be here with a loan proposal.

And, so, the vote on the Rohrabacher amendment tomorrow, and that is not a cutting amendment but it is an insistence that it be a loan instead of a give-away, the people of the United States need to know how we are voting, they need to contact their Member of Congress to say to vote for the Rohrabacher amendment making it a loan, and cutting it if it is not. Because it will come back within a few days as a loan.

And I would hope that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will be able to support that. We can stand by the people of Iraq, but we do not have to stand on the face of the American taxpayer to do it.

IRAQ WATCH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MUSGRAVE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT) is recognized for the remaining time until midnight as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Madam Speaker, before the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER) leaves, I want to convey to him my own confidence that there will be many Democrats, his colleagues on this side of the aisle, that will support the common sense amendment, the Rohrabacher amendment, rather than a give-away of American tax dollars.

There has to be an insistence that the funding provided in terms of the reconstruction phase is money that will be paid back with interest to the American people. Because he might be unaware, but this supplemental that is before us now, this \$87 billion is not \$87 billion. That is the principal. \$87 billion. And it has been calculated by respected authorities, it will cost each year the American taxpayer some \$4 billion in interest. So add that on, add that on to the \$87 billion that we will be voting on tomorrow.

Now, the ranking member of the Committee on Appropriations, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), has done some work. Just that \$4 billion, not the \$87 billion that represents the principal, that means that, as I said, on a permanent basis we will be spending over \$4 billion a year just to cover the interest payments that this supplemental will be required of us and future generations.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Madam Speaker, would the gentleman yield for a moment? I appreciate the expressions of support. And if we can help improve this even a little bit by that portion of the bill dealing with reconstruction, I think that it will at least make these a little bit better.

I would hope that those people who are listening or reading this in the newspaper would be calling their Congressman and let the people know that the Rohrabacher amendment is something that we know is in the deep interest of the American people and that we need to stand up for the American people sometimes.

□ 2320

Mr. DELAHUNT. Madam Speaker, I think it is so important to understand that it has bipartisan support, and that we are working here tonight in a bipartisan fashion to represent the best interests of the American people.

The American people, as the gentleman has enumerated during the course of his remarks these past 45 minutes, are a generous people. But there comes a point in time, particularly as we look at a \$500 billion deficit, that we have to say, enough is enough. Because generations of Americans will find that their economy will suffer because we know that the deficit and the debt becomes a drag on the economy. If there should be a recovery that is sustained, I fear that it will be short term.

I thank the gentleman and look forward to working with him tomorrow.

That \$4 billion a year, just on the interest payments, to put it in perspective, it is more than we currently spend each year on research for Alzheimer's disease, autism, breast cancer, ovarian cancer, prostate cancer, diabetes, Parkinson's disease, Lou Gehrig's disease, multiple sclerosis, and all forms of kidney diseases combined. Combined.

Where are our priorities? Where are our interests? What about those Americans that suffer from these dreadful, in some cases deadly, diseases?

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STRICKLAND).

Mr. STRICKLAND. Madam Speaker, I think it is appropriate that the gentleman points out the neglect of the needs that are right here at home and the fact that the President frequently talks about forcing Congress to restrain spending, but yet he is so willing to ask us to spend so much in Iraq. And the gentleman mentioned all of these