

little over two-tenths of 1 percent of ours, most of which he spent protecting himself and his family and building castles. He was no threat to us whatsoever.

Mr. Speaker, we all respect, admire and appreciate those who serve in our Nation's Armed Forces. As I said a few days ago on this floor, serving in our military is certainly the most honorable ways anyone can serve our country. I believe national defense is one of the very few legitimate functions of our national government, and certainly one of the most important. However, we need to recognize that our military has become the most gigantic bureaucracy in the history of the world, and like any huge bureaucracy, it does many good things, of course, always at huge expense to the taxpayer. And like any huge bureaucracy, our military does many things that are wasteful or inefficient. And like any huge bureaucracy, it tries to gloss over or cover up its mistakes. And like any huge bureaucracy, it always wants to expand its mission and get more and more money.

Counting our regular appropriations bills, plus the supplemental appropriations, we will spend more than \$750 billion on our military in the next fiscal year. This is more than all the other nations of the world combined spend on their defense.

The GAO tells us that we presently have \$50 trillion in unfunded future pension liabilities, on top of our national debt of almost \$9 trillion. If we are going to have any hope of paying our military pensions and Social Security and other promises to our own people, we cannot keep giving so much to the Pentagon. No matter how much we respect our military, and no matter how much we want to show our patriotism, we need to realize there is waste in all huge bureaucracies, even in the Defense Department.

There is a reason why we have always believed in civilian leadership of our Defense Department. The admirals and generals will always say things are going great because it is almost like saying they're doing a bad job if they say things are not doing well. And the military people know they can keep getting big increases in funding if they are involved all over the world. However, it is both unconstitutional and unaffordable, and, I might add, unconservative, for us to be the policemen of the world and carry on civilian government functions in and for other countries.

National defense is necessary and vital. International defense by the U.S. is unnecessary and harmful in many ways. Now we are engaged in a war in Iraq that is very unpopular with a big majority of the American people. More importantly, every poll of Iraqis themselves shows that 78 to 80 percent of them want us to leave, except in the Kurdish areas. They want our money, but they do not want us occupying Iraq. Surely we are not adopting a for-

ign policy that forces us on other people, one that says we are going to run Iraq even if the people there want us to leave.

The majority of the Iraqi Parliament has now signed a petition asking us to leave. It is sure not traditional conservatism to carry on a war in a country that did not attack us, did not even threaten to attack us, and was not even capable of attacking us. And it is sure not traditional conservatism to believe in world government, even if run by the U.S.

Mr. Speaker, President Bush, when he ran for office in 2000, campaigned strongly against nation building. Unfortunately, that is exactly what we have been doing in Iraq. The President, in 2000, said what we needed was a more humble foreign policy. That is what we needed then, and it is what we need now.

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

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

U.S. SHOULD NOT SELL ARMS TO PAKISTAN

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. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor this evening to discuss a contract recently awarded by the U.S. Government to Lockheed Martin for 18 Sniper Advanced Targeting Pods, or ATPs, to be sold to the Government of Pakistan. Sniper ATPs allow aircrews to perform intelligence, targeting, surveillance and reconnaissance missions from extended standoff ranges.

Mr. Speaker, I believe it is irresponsible for the U.S. Government to sell high-grade weapons technology to Pakistan, a nation that has turned a blind eye to the increasingly dangerous Taliban insurgency in the western region of its country.

Numerous press accounts in recent months have discussed the growing presence of Taliban training camps and bases in the tribal regions of western Pakistan that border Afghanistan. Just last week, in the port city of Karachi, over 40 people were killed, with even more injured during 2 days of gun battles and mayhem in response to an antigovernment rally. Most reports claim that this violence against protesters was perpetrated by the Muttahida Quami Movement, or MQM, which is an ethnically based Mafia allied with Pakistani President Musharraf.

In a country that claims to be somewhat democratic, the actions of the MQM and President Musharraf seem to be just the opposite. Coupled with the Pakistani President's refusal to put

forth a good-faith effort to root out Taliban insurgents in his country, it hardly seems like a good idea for the United States to be selling arms to the Government of Pakistan.

Earlier this year, Democrats passed H.R. 1, which implemented the recommendations of the bipartisan 9/11 Commission. Included in this bill was language that would end U.S. military assistance and arms sales licensing to Pakistan in the 2008 fiscal year unless Pakistani President Musharraf certifies that the Islamabad government is "making all possible efforts to end Taliban activities on Pakistani soil."

I believe that the U.S. should live up to this commitment by ceasing the sale of arms to the Government of Pakistan. I fear that if we do, in fact, provide these weapons technologies to countries in unstable regions, such as Pakistan, they could be used against U.S. allies, such as India.

This U.S. policy of military sales to Pakistan will contribute to increasing security concerns throughout South Asia. The U.S. has no way of knowing if these technologies will be used against al Qaeda and the Taliban, and not against India or other peaceful nations. In fact, the government has simply watched while terrorist groups like Lashkar-e-Tayyaba, or LET, committed terrorist acts in Jammu and Kashmir and other parts of India. The actions within its own country prove themselves not fit for, in this case Pakistan, for receiving these weapons.

Mr. Speaker, although Pakistan has claimed to be an ally in the global war on terror, it clearly has not taken the necessary steps to end terrorism in its own backyard. I strongly believe that economic assistance is necessary to support economic restructuring that will stop Pakistan from becoming a breeding ground for terrorists.

At the time after 9/11, when we decided that we would allow economic assistance to Pakistan and development assistance, I was all for it because I think it makes sense; that's the way to lead to a democratic and stable Pakistan. But military assistance is another matter. Allowing this sale sends the wrong message, I think, particularly in the climate that we live in here today, and what Pakistan has been doing in not living up to its part of the deal in fighting the Taliban.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO BOARD OF VISITORS TO THE UNITED STATES MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to 46 U.S.C. 51312(b), and the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Members of the House to the Board of Visitors to the United States Merchant Marine Academy:

Mrs. McCARTHY, New York
Mr. KING, New York

□ 2015

THE 30-SOMETHING WORKING
GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to be here on the floor tonight. It is like old times, Mr. RYAN and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. And we have the gas pump there, and it is just, you, know a wonderful feeling.

Mr. Speaker, just to see you in the Chair there inspired me as an American to continue to be a part of this great democracy of ours. Our good friends from the Clerk's office and the Capitol Police and all the folks that make it possible for us to be here tonight, we are just forever appreciative.

As you know, in the 109th and 108th Congress, this was the trio here. Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ brought quite a bit of class to our operation. She came in the 109th Congress, and, Mr. RYAN, we started to wear better ties and study more so that we could keep up with an educated policymaker.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I started wearing pink ties, because we had the whole goddess thing going on.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. RYAN started wearing his pink ties, which my daughter always says, real men wear pink. That is actually salmon, but we won't talk about it.

Mr. Speaker, in all seriousness, we have an awful lot of business that will be taking place in the next 24 hours. We are approaching Memorial Day, and there have been a lot of reports about the Iraq emergency supplemental. There has been a lot of discussion about lobbying reform. There has been a lot of discussion about the reauthorization of the agriculture bill. But I can tell you one thing, Mr. Speaker: Unlike previous Congresses, the work is being done here by those of us that are under the dome, doing what the people of America sent us up here to do.

As we talk about the war, I think it is important to know that the issues in Iraq and Afghanistan are very, very serious to all of us here, to all of us in Washington, D.C., and Americans throughout the country, and especially the family members of those serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. We always give this report. As of 10 a.m. this morning, the death toll in Iraq as it relates to the men and women in uniform is 3,424; wounded in action and returning to duty is 14,073; and wounded in action and not returning to duty is 11,476. I think it is very important that we pay very close attention to those numbers.

The days of six supplementals passing off of this floor, half a trillion dollars spent and no strings attached to any of those appropriation dollars, those days are over. I am very proud of the leadership in the House and the

Senate in fighting with the White House and bringing about the kind of accountability that the American people have called for.

You heard me say here on this floor in the past, Mr. Speaker, that there have been bills that in the spirit of the bill, I voted for those bills, but as it relates to the substance of those bills, I have had a few problems with the lack of accountability. That is paramount now in this bill that hopefully will pass the House floor tomorrow. There are benchmarks. There are reporting periods that the President has to report back to the Congress. In September, we will be coming in for a landing and making some real decisions.

The Iraqi Parliament, as you know, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, they have been holding quite a few conversations, as a matter of fact, talking about going on vacation for 60 days. The Defense Minister called his Ministers together to plan for an immediate U.S. withdrawal of troops, because I believe they know with this new Congress in place, the days of the Iraqi Government drawing down on the taxpayer dollars, the U.S. taxpayer dollars, without accountability, are over; and if they are not willing to reform themselves, then we should not be willing to have our men and women on the streets of Iraq fighting on behalf of safety and patrolling the streets, when the Iraqis are not doing what they are supposed to be doing.

With that, I will yield to one of my good friends. I will yield to Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, who is a very good friend, and then Mr. RYAN comes in after her in my friendship.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. You have just known me longer.

Thank you, Mr. MEEK. It is a pleasure to be here. We have been trying to get the three of us back together again. It is a good problem to have. We have a lot more on our plate now that the Democrats are in the majority. The other good part of our problem is that we have expanded the active members of the 30-Something Working Group, with the Speaker that is in the chair this evening and a number of other Members, Mr. ALTMIRE, and we are really happy about that.

But I am glad the three of us were able to come back together this evening to continue our effort to speak to both our generation and to the American people, the rest of the American people, about our concerns and the Democratic new direction that we have been successful in moving in since November 7th when we were victorious in the election and when the American people indicated to this Congress that they wanted to move in a new direction.

We struggled through the last number of years. Gradually, and unfortunately a cloud hung over this institution and this Capitol, a culture of corruption had developed, Mr. RYAN, and we just could not allow it to continue any longer. The American people were

fed up with it, and that is why tomorrow we are going to be considering lobbying reform and ethics reform, so that we can inspire the confidence of the American people once again in their leaders, both as individuals, because traditionally they have said to pollsters that they support their Member of Congress, they like their Member of Congress, but they can't stand the institution.

That is a sad state of affairs. We need to make sure that our institution, the one we are proud to serve in, is one that the American people can be proud of as well. There has been too much corruption here, unfortunately led by individuals formerly in the leadership in this institution on the other side of the aisle for far too long, and we need to take some significant steps to clean it up, which is why we are going to be considering this legislation on the floor tomorrow.

We also talked about during the campaign and leading up to, and now since NANCY PELOSI, our Speaker, took office, that we are going to implement the priorities that were important to the American people, including the minimum wage. We passed our "Six in 06" agenda in the first 100 hours that we were in the majority. The minimum wage was part of that. The implementation of the 9/11 Commission recommendations was a part of that. Making sure that we could repeal the \$14 billion in subsidies that we gave away to the oil industry under the Republican leadership, that was a part of that package, and a number of other provisions.

Our priorities since taking control of the House of Representatives have been a reflection of the priorities of the American people.

We have been interacting with this President, which in my experience the only thing I can analogize it to, Mr. RYAN, is like trying to move an iceberg. This is a person who occupies the White House now that seems to have no respect for the system of checks and balances, no respect for the fact that the Founding Fathers created three branches of government that were considered coequal, and that he was not elected king of this country. The Founding Fathers very definitely intended for us not to have a monarchy, not to establish a monarchy, and he doesn't get to just decide what is going to happen, particularly when it comes to war and executing the powers of the Presidency. He does have to have input from us.

I can tell you from my perspective, I think from your perspective, Mr. MEEK, and Mr. RYAN as well, that this is the beginning of the end. The actions we have taken, insisting upon him not having a blank check and ending the blank check and the open-ended commitments that have been there, it is the beginning of the end.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. While we are hitting on the war, I think it is important for us to maybe go back and reevaluate