President Bush has led our country further and further away from the fold of the international community, ignoring the United Nations Security council's findings, and virtually demolishing the international support we had received following September 11th. He has challenged Americans to a ''you're either with us or against us'' agenda, which leads to the most dangerous kind of patriotism—where questioning and dissent are considered un-American. Well I, as an American and a patriot, am now standing again to ask questions about the cost of this war.

We spent $396 billion in military spending alone for 2003. As big as this number is, it does not even include the cost of the Iraq war, which was funded through two additional supplemental requests; the first for $79 billion, the second was another $87 billion. Together, that amounts an amazing $562 billion. For 2003, that amounts to almost $11 billion dollars spent ever week, and more than $1.5 billion spent every day. Compare that to this year's Department of Education budget of $54 billion, which works out to less than 150 million dollars per day, which averages out to less than $3 million per day in education spending in each state. $1.5 billion on the military, $3 million on education: so where are our priorities?

Here at home, 9 million Americans are unemployed, 35 million live under the official poverty line, 44 million have no health insurance, and millions more are unable to make ends meet. States face their worst fiscal crisis since the Great Depression, and the yearly federal budget deficit is passing $500 billion and growing rapidly. My own state, New Jersey, is facing a projected $5 billion budget deficit for 2004.

And this administration doesn't intend to change course anytime soon. According to the 2005 budget released this week, they are planning to spend $2.2 trillion on the military over the next 5 years.

For 2004 alone, they plan to spend $399 billion on the military (which does not include any possible future supplemental funding requests for Iraq or Afghanistan) which is more than the combined spending that year for education, Health, Justice, Housing Assistance, International Affairs, Veterans Benefits, Natural Resources & Environment, Science & Space, Transportation, employment, Employment Training, Social Services, Income Security, Economic Development, Social Security, Medicare, Agriculture, and Energy.

Where we spend our money is a telling sign of where our priorities lie. We have abandoned our children, our teachers, our laborers, our homeless, our veterans, and our seniors in order to fund these regime-changing, unilateral military actions. We are under funding No Child Left Behind, IDEA, after-school programs, and family literacy programs. We have not extended unemployment benefits for those without jobs. We have offered our seniors a Medicare program that does almost nothing to cut their prescription drug costs, and we're threatening to destabilize their Social Security through privatization.

I am very concerned about the direction in which our country is headed. We're sliding further and further down a slippery slope where our county's basic needs are not being met. That is why this year's presidential election is so key. We need a leader that can mend the relationships broken by this unnecessary war and its ill-administered aftermath. We need to bring home the tens of thousands men and women whose lives have been placed on the line for no good reason. We must see change for the better.

More numbers:

For the cost of every cluster bomb, we can enroll 2 children in Head Start.

For the cost of every minute of the war on Iraq, we could have paid the annual salary and benefits for 15 registered nurses. For every hour of the war on Iraq, we could improve, repair, and modernize 20 schools. For the cost of one day's war on Iraq, we could have prevented all of the budget cuts to education programs in 2003. For the amount of money we spend ever week in Iraq, we could build 142,857 units of affordable housing. For the amount of money we spend to buy one stealth bomber, we could pay the annual salary plus benefits for 38,000 teachers. We might be able to give a few of them a raise—image that!

Each day the Pentagon spends $1.7 billion, which is enough to build 200 new elementary schools, house 136,000 homeless, or provide Pell grants to one million college students (per day!).

With less than the cost of ONE of the Iraq supplementals, we could do all these things: Provide basic health and food to the world's poor: $12 billion. Rebuild America's public schools over 10 years: $12 billion. Reduce class size for grades 1–3 to 15 students per class: $11 billion. Reduce debts of impoverished nations: $10 billion; Provide health insurance to all uninsured American kids: $6 billion; Increased federal funding for clean energy and energy efficiency: $6 billion; Public financing of all federal elections: $1 billion; Fully fund Head Start: $2 billion.

Other countries military spending: Russia—$65 billion; China—$47 billion; Japan—$42.6 billion; U.K.—$38.4 billion.

These combined are a total of $193 billion, which is less than half our FY '03 or FY '04 military spending—not including the cost of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Please don't confuse military spending with the safety and security of our Nation. It is a common misconception that higher military enhances homeland security. However, many of these responsibilities fall onto our struggling, under funded State and local government agencies, whom we know as ''first responders,'' and to agencies outside of the Defense Department, such as the FBI, FEMA, and the Coast Guard. This massive military spending budget addresses none of these programs.

Another matter of concern to me is not only how much money we're spending on our military, but how that money is being spent. The President's $87 billion supplemental contained an astronomical waste of taxpayer dollars. These are just some of the administration's requests:

$100 million for several new housing communities, complete with roads, schools, and a medical clinic; $20 million for business classes, at a cost of $10,000 per Iraqi student; $900 million for imported kerosene and diesel, even though Iraq has huge oil reserves; $54 million to study the Iraqi postal system; $10 million for prison-building consultants; $2 million for garbage trucks; $200,000 each for Iraqis in a witness protection program; $100 million for hundreds of criminal investigators; and $400 million for two prisons, at a cost of nearly $50,000 per bed.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KING of Iowa). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

□ 2030

REPORT ON TRIP TO LIBYA, IRAQ, AFGHANISTAN, UZBEKISTAN, AND MILITARY HOSPITAL IN GERMANY

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

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, the topic of my Special Order this evening, and I think I will be joined by other Members from both sides, is our recent trip to Libya, Iraq, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, and our military hospital for our troops in Germany. But before I get into my comments about the trip, let me put some specific quotes from Dr. Kay, who has just been referred to by a previous speaker, who made the allegation that Dr. Kay said there was no basis for our activity in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, let me put the actual quote in the RECORD, not something that is paraphrasing, but the actual quote. In an interview that Dr. Kay conducted on NBC TV, he was asked to comment on whether it was prudent to go to war. Dr. Kay said, ''I think it was absolutely prudent. In fact, I think at the end of the inspection process, we will paint a picture of Iraq that was far more dangerous than we even thought it was before the war.''

Mr. Speaker, that is not me paraphrasing; that is not me summarizing or putting my own spin on what Dr. Kay said. That is a direct quote from Dr. Kay, and the American people and our colleagues need to understand that as we analyze what has been said in the findings of the Kay report, that we actually look at those statements, as opposed to trying to spin them. Some of our colleagues on the other side, especially those running for the Presidency, have tried to put a spin on what Dr. Kay said. It is more important for the American people and for our colleagues to look at in actuality what he said.

But, Mr. Speaker, there is one more point I want to make on this whole effort of the spin of Dr. Kay, which ties into our trip, because of the 45 meetings that we held over the 7 days, visiting eight different countries and traveling 25,500 miles in military aircraft, including a military aircraft to get over, a Navy plane, C–130s and