Mr. Speaker, I will submit the State Department's memorandum for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and would like to thank C-N-S-News.com and its executive editor Scott Hogenson for breaking this important story and shedding light on this contemptible behavior by our State Department.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. SCHAKOWSKY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

END-OF-THE-YEAR SPENDING ORGY IN CONGRESS RIGHT NOW

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, we seem to have an end-of-the-year spending orgy going on in Congress right now. David Broder mentions in his column in The Washington Post today that spending for fiscal year 2001 will be $100 billion more than allowed under the last major budget deal, according to the ''Congressional Quarterly.''

Apparently most of the congressional leadership feels that we have to give into the excessive spending demanded by the President, because the alternative is to shut down the government. Unfortunately, there simply are not enough fiscal conservatives to override presidential vetoes. However, we are spending away a surplus that we do not yet have.

We are jeopardizing the economy and our children's future in the process. We now have a foreign trade deficit of almost a billion dollars a day. This means we are buying roughly $350 billion a year from other countries more than we are selling to them. This is primarily because we have entered into bad trade deals, deals good for some big multinational companies, but very bad for small American businesses and American workers.

Most economists agree that we lose roughly 20,000 jobs per billion, and no country can sustain a $350 billion-a-year trade deficit for very long. Do we ever wonder why so many young people are working as waiters or waitresses or why so many young people are going to graduate school because the good jobs are not there for even college graduates like they used to be?

Along with this foreign trade deficit is all the spending our government does in and for other countries. The liberals found out many years ago that foreign aid was very unpopular, so they just started spending foreign aid money through numerous other foreign programs.

They will very misleadingly say that our foreign aid money is less than 1 percent of our Federal budget. What they do not say is that we spend in addition to regular foreign aid, many billions more through the military, the Agriculture and Commerce Departments, the State Department, the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and on and on and on.

This administration has deployed our troops around the world more times than the six previous administrations put together, mostly just turning our military in international social workers. Billions and billions and billions in Haiti, Rwanda, Somalia, Bosnia and Kosovo. Right now we are spending $2 billion a year on what the Associated Press has described as a forgotten war against Iraq.

□ 1915

Most of our people do not even realize we are still bombing there against a nation now so weak that it is absolutely no threat to us at all unless our continued bombing forces them into some type of desperate terrorist actions.

Many large companies benefit greatly from these trade deals and from our sending billions to other countries in military or non-military missions. They and their allies in the national media and elsewhere have made it politically incorrect to oppose these trade deals or oppose sending mega billions overseas.

Those who do oppose all this foreign spending or these trade deals that benefit big international corporations are very falsely accused of being isolationists. However, if Members hear anyone make this charge, they should realize immediately that this name-calling simply means that the person calling someone an isolationist is trying to avoid an argument on the merits.

This Nation should be friends with every nation. We should have all sorts of foreign exchange programs and diplomatic relations, and send our experts in every field when requested, and lead international fundraising in times of human catastrophe. But this does not mean that we should keep sending billions and billions overseas, or continually bombing people who have not threatened us, or be the world's policeman through our military.

President Kennedy said in 1961 that with just 6 percent of the world's population, we must realize that we are neither omnipotent nor omniscient, and that there is not an American solution to every world problem. Now we are less than 4 percent of the world's population.

George Washington warned against entangling alliances with foreign countries, and Dwight Eisenhower warned against a military-industrial complex that would commit us all over the world simply so that it and its companies could get more money.

Professor John Moser, writing in the Autumn 1999 issue of Ohio History, noted that Senator Robert Taft was often falsely called an isolationist when he was really a conservative nationalist. Moser writes of Taft: ''. . .he was remarkably prescient on many of the problems inherent in a highly interventionist foreign policy: unprecedented accumulation of power in the hands of the executive branch of the government, curtailment of civil liberties at home, the charge of 'imperialism' arising from American influence abroad, and most importantly, the danger of what Paul Kennedy referred to as 'imperial overreach,' the extension of overseas commitments beyond the ability of a nation to meet them.''

Senator Taft once said, ''Nothing can destroy this country except the overextension of our resources.'' We should heed these words today.

STUDENT LOAN DEFAULT RATES

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

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, there is much good news in higher education this year and we should take a few moments in the House of Representatives to take note of it. This is news for which we can all take some credit—the Congress, the Administration, borrowers, colleges and universities, lenders, loan guaranty agencies—so it is in that spirit that I offer these observations.

Twenty to 25 years ago, few people left college with student loan debt. But today, student loans are a fact of life for millions of students and graduates. They have opened the door of opportunity to individuals who otherwise would have no options to improve their earning potential.

President Clinton recently announced that the student loan cohort default rate is the lowest on record, falling from a high of 22.4 to 6.9 percent.

This represents a savings to taxpayers of approximately $7 billion over the period from fiscal year 1993 to fiscal year 2000. But more importantly, it speaks volumes about the Department of Education's program flexibility and willingness to work with borrowers.

Secretary of Education Riley noted that this record has been achieved by ''a robust economy, strong department management, tougher enforcement tools authorized by Congress, and stepped up efforts by colleges, lenders, guaranty agencies, and others.''

What makes this even more noteworthy is that the decline in defaults came at a time when student loan volume was tripling and educational opportunity was expanding to more low-income students, entailing higher risks. It is a great achievement.

The President also recently announced a reduction in interest rates for students in the Direct Loan Program who make their first 12 payments on time. Students have especially welcomed this reduction in college costs. Student organization leaders have noted that all students benefit when the Direct Loan Program can offer the same kinds of repayment incentives as the bank-based Federal Family Education Loan Program.

This encourages healthy competition between the programs, which makes students the ultimate beneficiaries.

This reduction is possible because of the change Congress made in the 1998 Higher