agreements that not only protect our corporations and protect our intellectual property and our copyrights because we recognize that those are significant aspects of our society and significant aspects of our economy, but I want to see America illustrate its values, what we stand for. At this time, especially in this country, what do we stand for?

I believe the citizens of this country stand for a strong commitment to our environment and a strong commitment to the working people, the average people who at this point in the world are being taken advantage of. We talk about free trade, but we do not talk about it when we are talking about the African farmer or when we are talking about labor and environmental standards.

I think it is time to even the playing field out, give our workers a chance, and let us start exporting what we stand for in this country and that is a commitment to the values and the freedoms that we have established over many years, and that is the environment and the labor standards. We have the political capital to do it; now we just need the political will to do it.

IRAQ RECONSTRUCTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) is recognized during morning hour debates for 4 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, as our forces persevere in Iraq, working to stabilize and rebuild this country which has been devastated by a violent, oppressive regime for 35 years, we continue to be flooded in the press by charges of America being an imperialist empire. Such a charge is wrong.

The United States is indeed the lone super power in the world. However, this was not our goal. We now have the job that most countries do not want, and a burden that most are not capable of shouldering. We are requested to intervene in disputes affecting other countries. Kofi Annan, the Secretary General of the United Nations, is urging the U.S. to deploy troops to Liberia immediately.

The fact remains that when security and influence is needed, it is the United States that is called upon to act. Given this fact, I continue to find it difficult to understand the charges levied against the United States, particularly with our involvement in Iraq. When we are facing a world where the majority of nations do not have the capability or the desire to ensure the safety and basic freedoms of individuals is not lost, we are then faced with a choice of whether or not to act.

As stated recently in the Atlantic Monthly, ''The consequences of attack by weapons of mass destruction are so catastrophic the United States will have no choice but to act preemptively on limited evidence exposing our actions to challenge.''

It is precisely that opportunity, to challenge a government's actions, that Iraq lacked for so long. Of course we read stories of protests in Najaf or other areas of Iraq. However, these protests represent the kind of free speech in a country for which less than 6 months earlier a person would have been greeted with a gunshot to the head. The fact is that the United States freed people that other nations outside of our coalition refused to do. These nations were content to continue to allow Iraq to descend into a culture of violence.

Today, the people of Iraq have the ability to choose a future of their own. We are helping them to rebuild, teaching them to police their citizens without torture, and teaching them to govern and rebuild a destitute economy. Yet we continue to encounter criticism of our efforts and strategy in a postwar Iraq, and the length of time to return the governing of Iraq to its people.

Let us look at history for a moment. At the end of World War II, it was believed that the occupation of both Germany and Japan would be brief. However, the reality was that Japan's occupation lasted over 6 years, and a directly military government in Germany lasted 4 years. Both situations faced humanitarian crises as a result of the war. Each nation's wealth was severely weakened, and a large percentage of each country's population was homeless; but reconstruction efforts resulted in functional democratic institutions. Constitutions were drafted with civil liberties that did not exist prior to the war in these countries. And today, both Germany and Japan are integral to the world economy and representative of the success of properly administered civil reforms. The situation in Iraq is not dissimilar.

Our troops do face a continued threat by terrorists, and security situations are very tense. But looking at our history, what Americans have accomplished in the past, how much more vast are our resources, our ingenuity and our compassion, we are making progress in Iraq. The new governing council may soon be recognized by the United Nations, small provincial governments are operating in smaller Iraqi towns, mass media is available where only state-run news previously existed. We are giving the Iraqi people a chance.

Prime Minister Tony Blair spoke before us recently. He said, ''How hollow would the charges of American imperialism be when these failed countries are seen to be transformed from states of terror to nations of prosperity, from governments of dictatorship to examples of democracy, from sources of instability to beacons of calm.'' He went on to say, ''Why America? The only answer is because destiny put you in this place in history in this moment of time, and the task is yours to do.''

The United States did not ask for the world role in which we find ourselves. The simple truth is we are the ones that are willing and capable to bring about a positive change in the world; and with help from our friends and patience from our citizens, we will do just that.

TRADE DEFICIT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized during morning hour debates for 4 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, when you are in a deep hole in Washington, D.C., what do you do? You dig it a little deeper. That is what my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are proposing with the Chile and Singapore free trade agreements.

The United States ran a record $435.7 billion trade deficit last year, up from $358.3 billion in 2001, and we are headed toward a new record this year. We have a failed trade policy. We are exporting millions of jobs every year while Americans cannot find work. But this one is even better. This is truly a groundbreaking agreement.

The Bush administration has gone further than the losers in the Clinton administration who pushed free trade and the Bush administration I and the Reagan administration, 20 years of failed trade policy in this country. This one is even better. We are going to export jobs and import workers. It has a little provision they snuck in, and Congress is not allowed any amendments in these trade agreements, that will actually import skilled workers to the United States. They are only coming on a temporary basis, only take away jobs on a temporary basis. We are going to export all those obsolete industrial jobs, they say. I think we need those industrial jobs, but that is the theory on that side of the aisle. They say do not worry, we will retrain people for these new jobs, the high-tech jobs, the skilled jobs.

Now the estimates are that we are going to export 3.3 million highly skilled high-tech jobs over the next 5 years. And under this trade agreement, we are going to import workers to do the few that are left here. This is really great. This is wonderful. What a great country.

Mr. Speaker, if the American people could only have a voice on this issue. They will not get a voice here in the House, and it is very unlikely they will get a voice in the United States Senate. We are exporting $1.5 billion a day in U.S. wealth. We are continuing to drag down the economy.

The output of our economy over the last decade, according to credible economists, has been drug down by 35.2 percent over 10 years because of our trade deficit. What will this legislation do with Chile and Singapore, which is the forerunner for massive new free trade agreements all up and down