

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

dreaded diseases, and that is appropriate; but I also think it is appropriate for American people to understand that when the VA/HUD appropriations bill was dealt with in this Chamber just a couple of weeks ago, that when we passed that bill, VA health care was underfunded by \$1.8 billion.

Now, think of that. Compare underfunding VA health care by \$1.8 billion because the President and the leadership of this House says, well, we just simply cannot afford to provide this level of health care for our veterans, less than \$2 billion. And yet they are so willing to come to this Chamber and to ask us to spend \$87 billion in addition to the \$65 billion that we have already appropriated for Iraq. That just seems incongruous to me that we would have that kind of leadership.

Now, this past week I was in my home town of Portsmouth, Ohio, and I was there with the National Commanders of the AMVETS at an AMVETS meeting hall; and I was talking with many of those veterans, and I want to state that they were upset. They talk about the underfunding of VA health care; they talk about the fact that the administration is trying to increase the cost of prescription drugs for their medicines; that the President has asked that they pay a \$250 annual enrollment fee to participate in the VA health care system; that many veterans, some of them combat decorated veterans who are being totally excluded from VA health care because they are being considered higher income and they can earn as little as \$24,000 a year and be considered higher income.

And yet we nickel and dime the veteran and are so willing to ask for huge sums of money to build roads and bridges and schools and hospitals and prisons and medical clinics and to establish phone systems and cell phone capability in Iraq, and we are shortchanging the American people.

We are especially shortchanging our veterans. That just simply does not make sense to me.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Madam Speaker, I want to concur with my friend from Ohio (Mr. STRICKLAND). I think the most egregious aspect of this war supplemental submission is the fact that American veterans have been left out. The gentleman indicated that not only are deductibles being raised, not only are co-payments being insisted upon for prescription drugs, but that a substantial number of veterans are now so-called priority 8 veterans, which means that they make over \$24,000 a year and are denied access to the veterans health care system. That is unconscionable.

Mr. STRICKLAND. Madam Speaker, it puzzles me. I do not understand why the President and the leadership in this House do not just solve this problem. It is so easy for them to ask for \$87 billion for Iraq; it should be a no-brainer, quite frankly. They should decide to-

morrow that they are going to add this \$1.8 billion. If we had an additional \$1.8 billion in the VA budget, we would not have to increase co-payments on drugs. We would not have to impose an enrollment fee. We would not have to exclude priority 8 veterans from care. We would not have to do any of these things if we had sufficient funding for VA health care.

How can those who are so willing to boast of their support for our military be so callous, so unfeeling when it comes to the men and the women who have fought our past wars, who have borne the battle and who are now in need? It just puzzles me that why is it so easy to ask for \$87 billion on top of the \$65 billion that has already been appropriated, and yet they nickel and dime the veterans and refuse to add the \$1.8 billion.

I want to state, and the gentleman is aware of this, I am sure, the veterans groups in this country know what is going on. The DAV, the Paralyzed Veterans, the American Legion, the Vietnam Vets, the AMVETS, all of these vets. I have met with them. I am on the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. They have been before our committee. Every last one of these veterans organizations are asking that we restore \$1.8 billion.

It is unconscionable, it is unconscionable that those of us who serve in this House would refuse to do what needs to be done for veterans health care and be so willing to just go into the pockets of the American taxpayer and take out \$87 billion and use it for Iraq. It just does not make sense to me.

Mr. DELAHUNT. If we could just juxtapose these two pictures. As these young men and women get on an American naval vessel and go to war, the bands are playing, there is confetti, there are waves, there is our flag, there is our political leadership applauding them; and yet when they return and assume that honored title "veteran," we disrespect them, dishonor them; and we have broken our promises to them again and again and again.

The most dishonored, disrespected group who deserves our ultimate gratitude in this country is the American veteran. And as the gentleman has so well put it, we are ignoring them. I do not know if anyone who has this information could vote for this supplemental, including this gift to Iraq, and not insist that the American veterans' health needs be met.

□ 2330

My colleague mentioned earlier about deductibles. I know the gentleman knows because of his service on the Committee on Veterans Affairs, and because of his work with veterans all over this country, that there is a long waiting list to get an appointment in veterans health care centers, whether it be primary care or even veterans hospitals.

Mr. STRICKLAND. Madam Speaker, if the gentleman would yield, it is not

only veterans who are being neglected, but those who support this \$87 billion supplemental and the President, this administration, they are trying to say to us, if you oppose this, then you are not supporting our troops, and I say balderdash. There is absolutely no truth to that.

The fact is that right now, right now this very night, as my colleague and I are standing here in this chamber of the House of Representatives, there are young soldiers in Iraq who are in danger because they do not have adequate protective vests. It is estimated that about 44,000 American soldiers this very moment are in Iraq, and they have Vietnam-era vests that cannot protect them from bullets. Why is that? It is because this Pentagon, this administration did not make it a priority.

Mr. DELAHUNT. The civilian leadership.

Mr. STRICKLAND. The civilian leadership, not the military. It is the civilian leadership, and we had months to prepare for this war. There were months during which we knew that war was likely to occur before the actual conflict started.

General Myers has said recently, wait a minute, this is not a matter of money, this is a matter of production. We just cannot simply get these vests produced rapidly enough, and so our soldiers will not receive these until December, but he is saying that after they were exposed. If the public had not achieved knowledge that these soldiers were being unprotected, they would not be trying to get these vests made for the soldiers. It was only after they were exposed.

In May, I received a letter from a young soldier saying that I and all of my men have the vests that will not stop bullets, and we have had stories of moms and dads taking money out of their own pockets and buying these protective equipment and sending them to Iraq and young soldiers literally duct taping them to their bodies because they do not have the proper vests to hold these ceramic inserts. That is quite shameful.

I do not want anyone in this administration lecturing me about my concern for our troops. I would spend the last dollar available to this government to protect our soldiers, but I will not support a policy that is flawed.

I see we have been joined by the gentleman from Washington State (Mr. INSLEE) as well.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Another member of the Iraq Watch. We are usually led by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOEFFEL), but I am sure something has come up so we have a truncated version tonight, but I want to welcome the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE).

Before I yield to him, I want my colleague to know that yesterday I met with families of a detachment of the Massachusetts National Guard who explained to me the concern that they

have for their husbands and their sons and daughters because of exactly what my colleague is saying. One mother went out and bought a Kevlar body armor piece for \$900. I would think that anyone hearing us tonight is just simply incredulous that this is the case, and then had to pay, had to pay to have it shipped through the post office some \$500, and my colleague is right. Do not ever tell anyone in this House that we do not support the troops.

Mr. STRICKLAND. Madam Speaker, if my friend would yield for a moment, we all support the troops. There is not a Member of this chamber that does not care about the young Americans, and some of them are middle-aged because they are reservists and National Guard. They are moms and dads and people who are serving us this very night, not only in Iraq but in Afghanistan and in other dangerous places around this world. We honor them. We love them for their service to this great country, but what we are talking about here is a policy that is flawed, and we are talking about the need to bring some common sense and sanity to the way we support our troops and the way we spend the American tax dollar.

Mr. DELAHUNT. When they come home, to honor them and to respect them and provide them with adequate health care coverage, and they are not receiving it now.

Let me suggest, those that speak of patriotism and indulge in rhetoric about America, they are not serving America, and they, in my opinion, are unpatriotic until they come before this House with the appropriate resources to fully fund veterans health care in America.

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

Mr. DELAHUNT. I yield to the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. INSLEE. Madam Speaker, I appreciate that segue and why I came to the floor tonight to talk about the sad fact that we, and I am from the State of Washington, are hearing story after story after story about how our troops are not getting the tools they need to do the job and how their families are not receiving the benefits they need to keep the home fires burning while particularly these reservists and Guard men and women are in these extended duties, and that is what I wanted to focus on.

Every Member of Congress I think has heard from mothers and fathers of troops. I met with a group of reservists, wives and mothers and fathers and husbands last weekend, and the story I heard about was of a mother who is a nurse who had to go out and herself buy medicine for the troops that her son, who is a medic in the Army, the Army simply was not providing. She had to actually ship over medicine disguised as brownies or food or something to her troops to get this kind of stuff to them. We heard story after story of that.

In a grander scale, on a macro scale, as the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT) indicated, we need to have a significant restructuring to provide the health care and benefits. We are going to have to improve or we are not going to have a reserve force. We are not going to have a meaningful National Guard force because the families that I have been talking to are going to be making some different career decisions if we do not start to cut the mustard.

Now, as a result of that, I offered an amendment today in the Committee on Rules to significantly improve the health care situation for reservists so that they could buy into TRICARE or Uncle Sam would essentially continue their employer-paid programs for at least 6 months after their deployment. This would be a significant benefit to families in the reserve because they will say at least we are going to be able to continue our existing level of coverage for the whole family during these extended family deployments. It is not just a year anymore. It is 18 months for a lot of these folks because they changed the rules on what is an in-country deployment.

This is a Democrat offering this amendment. We are going to hear a lot of people suggesting we are not supporting the troops because we are raising issues about this policy, but this amendment was not allowed for a vote on the floor here. I offered an amendment that would allow us to vote on this floor to give reservists better health care, and the Republican majority would not allow even a vote on this effort to improve reservists' health care, and I think that is a failure not only for the families which have a big dog in this hunt but in our military security force structure. We are going to have to do these kinds of things or we are just going to have people leaving the reserves and the National Guard in significant numbers.

The second issue, I will be joining the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK) who will be offering an amendment to take a little bit of money out of the Iraq reconstruction fund and put it where it belongs, which is a pay increase for these folks fighting this battle, and this is appropriate given the extraordinary nature of this extended deployment, and it should have been done in the first instance. I hope the majority party will join us in improving the lot of our soldiers on the line.

The third issue, and I just want to mention this briefly before I yield, there is a huge irresponsibility in this plan that the President has presented. The irresponsibility is while these soldiers are risking all in Iraq, who are sacrificing their time, their limbs, their lives, the President of the United States has not asked folks to sacrifice a little bit to pay for this war and instead wants people on Social Security, essentially in the trust fund, to pay because every single last dollar of this money he is taking out of the Social

Security trust fund to pay for this war, instead of asking for a small sacrifice to perhaps delay or defer the tax cuts for people earning over \$300,000.

□ 2340

Now, is that too much sacrifice to ask, people earning \$300,000, when our kids and our husbands and our wives are serving in Iraq?

Mr. STRICKLAND. Madam Speaker, if my friend would yield, the President talks about the fact that we are not going to cut and run, that we are going to stand strong and that we are going to sacrifice to pursue this war on terror. The only people sacrificing, with due respect to the President, the only people sacrificing are the soldiers in Iraq and the loved ones back here at home, and the children in our country who are being given the bill to pay for all of this. Those are the people who are sacrificing.

The President is not sacrificing. I am not sacrificing. No Member of this House of Representatives is sacrificing. No Senator is sacrificing. We are continuing to draw our salaries and enjoying whatever benefits are coming to us. We are not sacrificing, but we are using Social Security trust fund monies. We are increasing the debt. And that debt has to be paid sometime in the future, and the children in this country are being given this huge burden.

Now, the President says he wants to build schools in Iraq. I care about children everywhere, but if we are going to build schools in Iraq, let us pay for those schools now. He wants to build schools in Iraq, and he wants to give the bill to America's kids.

He wants to build hospitals in Iraq, and he wants America's children to pay for it sometime in the future. They want to build two big prisons in Iraq, two 4,000-bed prisons. They are asking for \$410 million to build these two prisons, and we could build those two prisons in this country for an estimated \$113 million.

So with all due respect to the President, when he talks about our willingness to sacrifice, he is not asking anyone to sacrifice except the kids, the old people who depend upon Social Security, and the soldiers and their families. He is not asking Members of Congress to sacrifice. He is not asking his rich wealthy friends to sacrifice.

Mr. DELAHUNT. And, Madam Speaker, he is certainly not asking the lobbyists on K Street to sacrifice. He is certainly not asking a select group of businesses in this country to sacrifice.

I found it particularly interesting that back on September 30, in an article in The Washington Post, it was announced that a group of businessmen, linked by their close ties to President Bush, his family and his administration, had set up a consulting firm to advise companies that want to do business in Iraq, including those seeking pieces of taxpayer-financed reconstruction projects.

I am sure my colleagues are aware, but I guess this firm is headed by Joe

Albaugh, who happened to be Mr. Bush's campaign manager back in the year 2000 and served as the head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency until last March. So one can only imagine that the \$87 billion is not going to create jobs for Americans.

And I think our friend, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHR-ABACHER), made a very good point. It is not even going to create jobs for Iraqis. It is going to create jobs that will benefit a very select few in our country.

Mr. STRICKLAND. Madam Speaker, if my friend will yield once again, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHR-ABACHER), who is a Republican and a strong supporter of the President usually, is going to offer an amendment tomorrow to have at least a large portion of this \$87 billion given in loans instead of grants. Now, the President says, oh, we cannot do that because we cannot put this great debt burden on the Iraqi people.

Mr. DELAHUNT. But we can put it on the American people.

Mr. STRICKLAND. But the President is putting it on America's children. I mean it is a puzzle to me. This is strange thinking, that we are willing to pile debt upon America's kids and we are not willing to expect Iraq, with these huge oil reserves, to bear some of the burden.

And, remember, Deputy Secretary of Defense Wolfowitz told the Senate in March of this year that Iraq was such a wealthy country that they would be able to finance, in most part, their entire reconstruction. He said that in March.

Mr. DELAHUNT. What has happened since March? Maybe one of my colleagues can inform us.

Mr. INSLEE. Well, Madam Speaker, what has happened is that many misstatements have been laid bare to the American people, and that is why the American people are demanding Congress ask the questions we are constitutionally obligated to ask about this program. And we will not be dissuaded by those who will simply try to demagogue this issue by saying that we are not supporting the troops. We are the ones who want to improve the troops' pay grades; we are the ones who want to make sure that, in fact, this gets paid.

I want to make one point also. This debate tomorrow is not going to be about whether or not we continue to fulfill a responsibility in Iraq, because there is bipartisan consensus that we have some responsibility in Iraq; and anybody who says otherwise, well, that is just a red herring. But what we are saying is, let us not repeat the errors that a Democratic President made in the 1960s of deciding to try to fight a war on the cheap and saying we can have both guns and butter and create these enormous deficits.

Now, it is the same as what happened in the 1960s here. This is going to create enormous deficits. There is a little difference, though. At least in the 1960s

it was our butter. Now it is going to be the Iraqis' butter that Americans are going into debt to pay. Now, maybe some of that has to happen by the vicissitudes of fate we find ourselves in, but we should not repeat the mistake of the 1960s that ended up with a horrendous deficit going through the roof in the 1970s.

Mr. STRICKLAND. Madam speaker, if my colleague will yield, someone said that this is not a debate about guns and butter; it is a debate between our butter and their butter. And there is some truth to that. But on a very serious note, I said something in the Chamber earlier this evening, and I want to repeat it.

I deeply resent, I deeply resent those who would use our troops as leverage, those who would use our troops as hostages in order to extract from this Congress an agreement to spend \$87 billion in Iraq. All of us support our troops, but this President and this leadership will not allow us to have separate votes on the money to support our troops and the money to build Iraq and money that could and probably will be used in a non-bid contracting-kind of environment.

But it really offends me to imply that because we do not want to just give the President \$87 billion to spend basically as he wants to spend it, that somehow we are not being supportive of our troops. I find that a painful thing to have to cope with.

Mr. DELAHUNT. And, Madam Speaker, I think that is very important to understand. And for those that may be listening to us at this late hour, the vote tomorrow, or maybe early on Friday morning, will be on the entire package. Many of us have pressed the administration and the Republican leadership to allow separate votes. But as the gentleman from Ohio indicates, they refuse to do it because they know that, yes, the body would support the needs of American troops; and, therefore, they feel that the other monies, the monies that are going to be going to large multinational corporations to rebuild Iraq would be very much at risk.

□ 2350

That is a ploy, a stratagem that I daresay is again unconscionable. And for anybody to suggest that a vote against the \$87 billion is a vote against supporting the troops is misleading the American people. We have had enough of misleading the American people. Let us really tell it as it is.

Mr. INSLEE. The way it is is that those of us who are raising questions about this proposal, I will not call it a plan because it does not rise to the dignity of a plan. It is not a Marshall Plan. It is not even a partial plan. We do not have a schedule, we do not have a schematic, we do not have a plan. It is the beginning of a proposal of an idea maybe, but that is why we are here asking these questions. But what those of us who are asking these ques-

tions, the one thing we do know is this. The amount the administration has proposed for military expenditures is actually inadequate for the job at hand. We are the ones who are saying that what has been proposed is not enough to fulfill this responsibility. It is not enough because it does not take care of the health care of Reservists, it is not enough because it does not take care of the health care of National Guards, it does not provide some of the basics to the service personnel. It is billions of dollars short on what it is going to take to rebuild the tracked vehicles that get essentially destroyed in the sands of the Mideast. There are billions of dollars we are going to have to spend that are not in that figure that should be ultimately. There is not a method of paying for the interest on the debt they want to rack up to do this.

In a whole host of ways, we are the ones who are saying we actually need to beef up the amount needed for the military expenditure in this mission. So we will not hear or suffer those who would attack our willingness to invest in the military part of this operation.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Let us remind our colleagues tomorrow during the course of the debate and the American people here tonight that there exists in Iraq a so-called governing council that Mr. Bremer himself in consultation with the White House and the leadership in the administration selected. There are 25 of them. They were handpicked by Mr. Bremer. These individuals came to Washington 3 or 4 weeks ago to say, cede us more authority or things are unraveling and, furthermore, you are spending money that you should not be spending. You are wasting American taxpayers' dollars.

Let me just give you one example. There was a cement factory somewhere in Iraq. The American estimates for rebuilding that cement factory and bringing it up to Western standards was \$15 million. And somebody in the military, not in the civilian leadership of the Department of Defense, but in the military said, I am going to make a decision and let the Iraqis build it. It is now up and running. The cost went from \$15 million down to \$80,000. \$80,000. And they want a blank check. No, no, no, Madam Speaker, no blank checks anymore. No.

Mr. INSLEE. If the gentleman will yield, I would like to just address how large this blank check is. I mean, it is a large figure. It sounds big. But in reference, it is, for instance, compared to the Marshall Plan, it is 10 times per capita benefit going to the Iraqi folks than went to the German folks. Ten times per capita. This is an enormous sum of money. Speaking as one who has supported foreign aid, even though it is sometimes controversial, there are many circumstances where we ought to support foreign aid. But this is 50 times larger per capita foreign aid to the country of Iraq than the next largest

developing nation. Fifty times per capita. This is an extraordinary amount of money for one country.

Frankly, this is not the only country that presents us problems. Yemen is a potential terrorist site. The Sudan is a potential terrorist site. Somalia is a potential terrorist site. Afghanistan, we are doing lip service to and frankly it is too little in my opinion for Afghanistan given what is going on there with the Taliban perhaps restructuring. Indonesia, throughout that part of the world. We have lots of places where we need to keep stable governments.

Mr. STRICKLAND. If the gentleman will yield, we are talking about the \$87 billion that is currently under consideration. We ought not to forget, we have already appropriated for Iraq about \$65 billion. And, mark my word, this administration is going to come back here next year and they are going to ask for another \$50 billion or more. This \$87 billion is just part of what they are asking for. And every dollar of that \$87 billion is going to come out of Social Security and Medicare trust fund moneys. It is going to be added to our debt. Our children are going to be responsible for paying it off. And in the meantime we are nickel and diming our veterans as we said earlier. All they need is \$1.8 billion to increase their health care budget to bring it up to where we can take care of the veterans in a reasonable, defensible manner. They are not willing to spend an additional \$1.8 billion on our veterans. Think about that. Hear that, people. They are not willing to spend 1.8 billion additional dollars on our veterans, and they are asking for \$87 billion for Iraq. It in my judgment it is shameful. Shameful. And this is one of the things we ought to be talking about tomorrow when this bill comes to the floor for our consideration.

Mr. INSLEE. The gentleman just provoked a thought. You think about who is really paying for this in financial terms. The soldiers are paying for it with their lives. But in financial terms, it is our young who are going to be saddled with this debt, billions of dollars of debt, and it is our older folks, including veterans, who are not going to get their health care because this President wanted to send this money to Iraq and did not pay for it. So we are hurting the two most sort of vulnerable groups in our neighborhoods, in our communities, because this plan is not a responsible plan that fulfills our mission in Iraq and our responsibilities to our future kids and our current elders. For that reason, we ought to be asking serious questions.

Mr. STRICKLAND. Could I just say in closing before I turn it over to our good leader here this evening, I am not sacrificing for this war. The President has not asked Ted Strickland to sacrifice a thing. I am getting my full salary, my full benefits. No one in this Chamber is sacrificing. And you know the President is not sacrificing. Who is

sacrificing? His wealthy contributors are not sacrificing. Halliburton is not sacrificing. The Vice President is not sacrificing. You know who is sacrificing? Our soldiers are sacrificing. Their loved ones back here who worry that they do not have protective armor so that when they are out on patrol they are not as protected as possible. They are sacrificing. And the children of this country who are being given a huge debt to pay off at some time in the future, they are the ones that are sacrificing. I do not want to hear the President talking about us being willing to sacrifice. The sacrifice ought to be shared sacrifice. We all should be sacrificing, including the wealthy among us.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Like we did in World War II and in subsequent wars that this country has had to fight. Speaking of wars, much has been talked about the war on terrorism earlier during the course of the debate but I think it is important to remember and remind the American people that after Vice President CHENEY made the statement on national TV that there possibly were some links between Saddam Hussein and September 11, the President finally came forward and stated unequivocally that there was no evidence whatsoever in supporting that link. I would also urge Democrats to seriously consider supporting the Rohrabacher amendment, a good, conservative Republican from the State of California, because he is right. It ought to be a loan, not a giveaway. Because America and America's future is riding on this. Because once we establish that as a precedent, and the gentleman from Ohio is right, they will be coming back looking for more and more and more money right out of the pockets of the American taxpayer.

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mrs. JONES of Ohio (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and the balance of the week on account of a death in the family.

Mr. MARSHALL (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of illness.

Mr. MCHUGH (at the request of Mr. DELAY) for today on account of traveling on a congressional fact-finding trip to Iraq.

Mr. SAXTON (at the request of Mr. DELAY) for today on account of traveling on a congressional fact-finding trip to Iraq.

Mr. HAYWORTH (at the request of Mr. DELAY) for today on account of attending to family business.

#### SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. STRICKLAND) to revise and

extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. LIPINSKI, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BLUMENAUER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GREEN of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HINCHEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HINOJOSA, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. EMANUEL, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. NORTON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HOLT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. STRICKLAND, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MCDERMOTT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CONYERS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. KUCINICH, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. ROHRBACHER) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, today, October 16 and 17.

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. FEENEY, for 5 minutes, today and October 16.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota, for 5 minutes, today and October 16.

Mr. GINGREY, for 5 minutes, today.

#### BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Jeff Trandahl, Clerk of the House reports that on October 14, 2003 he presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill.

H.R. 2152. To amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to extend for an additional 5 years the special immigrant religious worker program.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Mr. DELAHUNT. Madam Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at midnight), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, October 16, 2003, at 10 a.m.

#### NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING

U.S. CONGRESS,  
OFFICE OF COMPLIANCE,

Washington, DC, October 15, 2003.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,  
Speaker of the House, House of Representatives,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: A Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPR) for proposed amendments to the Procedural Rules of the Office of Compliance was published in The Congressional Record dated September 4, 2003. The period for submission of comments announced in that NPR ended on October 6, 2003.