

more letters a year. We respond to them all. It is a challenge for us to get that job done. But the value to me, of course, is hearing from my constituents, having their input, having their ideas and their views. I always learn from them, and I appreciate it very much.

Mr. SCHAFFER. We are all part of the Republican majority here in Congress, and many people wonder how it is that we have two divergent viewpoints in Washington about how to lead the country, that which is represented by the President and that which is represented by the majority here in Congress, and I think tonight's special order by Republicans, Members of the majority party, is one indication of how it is we come to differences of opinions on such important matters of public policy.

I am proud to be a part of the party that takes its direction from the people of the country, that reads the mail, that listens to the phone calls, that responds to the opinions that come to us at town meetings, and, as we all know, there are legions of special interests whose lobbyists parade through the halls of Congress trying to leverage every bit of influence that they can on politicians, but it is the voice of real people, ordinary Americans who will commit to 10, 15, 20 minutes to sit down and put their thoughts in writing and communicate to their Congressman that, if they continue to do so in great numbers and reach out and realize the tremendous difference that a Republican majority has made in this Congress for the American people, it is not only possible but, I believe, imminent that the voice of the people will rise up over and above those of the special interests that have so much influence at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue.

So I am very, very proud to be associated with the colleagues that have joined me here tonight, Mr. Speaker, in this special order. I am grateful for the indulgence in yielding to us an hour for the majority party, and for those members of the majority party we try to reserve this hour every Wednesday night, and we will be back next week.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KUYKENDALL). The Chair is concerned about a couple of remarks made by previous speakers earlier this evening and will remind all Members that the rules of decorum in the debate prohibit the attribution of unworthy motives to the President. That standard applies both to debate and to extraneous material read into the RECORD.

A NECESSARY EVIL?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of Jan-

uary 6, 1999, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I want to follow up on the previous set of speakers and talk about the Kosovo burden, the Kosovo burden and decision-making in the 106th Congress, how it impacts and will impact on everything we do in the rest of this Congress.

I might begin by stating that I previously stated already that Kosovo is, in my opinion, a campaign of compassion. I think that it was important to confront Slobodan Milosevic. He gave the civilized nations no choice. I think this war is a necessary evil.

All wars are evil, necessary evils, but the word "necessary" becomes very important. "Necessary" is a vital word that many of my constituents are questioning, and like the gentlemen before me, I have gotten many letters and many comments, and I welcome those comments and those letters, both those that agree with me and those that do not agree with me. It is important that we discuss and have a dialogue about whether or not this war, like all other wars, it is an evil, but is it a necessary evil?

I think it very important to note that I, too, have had a series of town meetings, and in three or four town meetings, the first three, unanimous agreement when I asked do they support the present actions in Kosovo. Ninety-five percent of the people in the audience raised their hands. One meeting I had 200 people. I was shocked to see that kind of percentage. When I got to the fourth meeting already, less than half of the people raised their hands. That was on April 27. So it is obvious that the conduct of the war, the implementation of the war, has a great deal to do with the opinions that people now have of the action, and I would like to separate the blundering conduct of the war from the cause, the fact that we are confronting what I call a sovereign predator.

Slobodan Milosevic is a sovereign predator who has given us no choice, if you want to accept a new kind of morality in the world. The old morality was you never, you never interfered with the internal affairs of a country. If they want to do things within their boundaries, then you do not get involved. You let them destroy their people if they want to. I suppose, as my colleagues know, following that reasoning, Adolf Hitler, as long as he was murdering Jews in Germany, the world had no basis for condemning him or no basis for challenging him. As my colleagues know, as long as you do things within your borders, the sovereign Nation can do whatever it wants to do. That is the old morality, international morality.

I like to believe that in the Kosovo action that is now underway we have challenged that old morality and said

you cannot do whatever you want to do to people within your borders and not have the condemnation of the international community, and beyond the condemnation they may take some action in some cases and have taken action in this case. So I welcome and applaud the actions of my colleagues who are questioning how we can get out of this mess.

I support what the President is doing. I support the initial action. I certainly do not support all the blunders that have taken place. But despite my support for the action, I also welcome and applaud the actions of many of my colleagues in Congress, those who have taken upon themselves to initiate their own kinds of diplomatic initiatives. This is an unprecedented action, and so I think the dialogue and the debate and the methods ought to also be unprecedented.

I think that the journey that the Members of Congress took to Vienna was a remarkable initiative, especially since it was led by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON) and the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE). As my colleagues know, they are two Members of Congress which everybody generally would acknowledge are different ends of the spectrum with respect to ideology, if you can still put old labels on people in terms of who is conservative, who is liberal, who is progressive, and who is militaristic, and who is a dove and who is a hawk. The joint delegation led by Mr. ABERCROMBIE and Mr. WELDON certainly defy all of those descriptions.

I think it was a great initiative. I do not know the details of it. I have heard the reports that were made on the floor, and I applaud what they did.

I think we should always bear in mind what Robert McNamara has been saying for the last decade. Robert McNamara was the Secretary of Defense under President Johnson during most of the time of the Vietnam War, and McNamara has come out with some revelations and confessions that are really astounding. We ought to pay close attention to the unfortunate experience and the grieving of Mr. McNamara, who has now spent a lot of time in Vietnam, of all places, talking to the Vietnamese who were in charge of the war in Vietnam and, through that dialogue, trying to leave a legacy for mankind so that we will not make the same kinds of mistakes in the future.

In this particular war, in this particular situation involving Kosovo, it would be good if we were to take many of those things into consideration. One of the things Mr. McNamara said was that both sides greatly misjudged the intensity of the others in terms of their conviction and what they were willing to do in order to prevail, and I think that it is important, if we are going to get out of this present situation, that that be remembered by both