

streets and criminal violence are not anywhere near being under control.

But there is another question that is equally important: Are the American people better off because of the Iraq war?

One thing for sure, the 1,500-plus dead American soldiers are not better off. The nearly 20,000 injured or sickened American troops are not better off. The families, the wives, the husbands, children, parents, and friends of those who lost so much are not better off. The families and the 40,000 troops who were forced to reenlist against their will, a de facto draft, are not feeling better off. They believe they have been deceived by their enlistment agreements.

The American taxpayers are not better off having spent over \$200 billion to pursue this war, with billions yet to be spent. The victims of the inflation that always accompanies a guns-and-butter policy are already getting a dose of what will become much worse.

Are our relationships with the rest of the world better off? I would say no. Because of the war, our alliances with the Europeans are weaker than ever. The anti-American hatred among a growing number of Muslims around the world is greater than ever. This makes terrorist attacks more likely than they were before the invasion. Al Qaeda recruiting has accelerated. Iraq is being used as a training ground for the al Qaeda terrorists, which it never was under Hussein's rule.

So as our military recruitment efforts suffer, Osama bin Laden benefits by attracting pre-terrorist volunteers.

Oil was approximately \$27 a barrel before the war; now it is more than twice that. I wonder who benefits from this?

Because of the war, fewer dollars are available for real national security and defense of this country. Military spending is up, but the way the money is spent distracts from true national defense and further undermines our credibility around the world.

The ongoing war's lack of success has played a key role in diminishing morale in our military services. Recruitment is sharply down and most branches face shortages of troops. Many young Americans rightly fear a coming draft, which will be required if we do not reassess and change the unrealistic goals of our foreign policy.

The appropriations for the war are essentially off-budget and obscure, but contribute nonetheless to the runaway deficit and increase in the national

debt. If these trends persist, inflation with economic stagnation will be the inevitable consequences of a misdirected policy.

One of the most significant consequences in times of war that we ought to be concerned about is the inevitable loss of personal liberty. Too often in the patriotic nationalism that accompanies armed conflict, regardless of the cause, there is a willingness to sacrifice personal freedoms in pursuit of victory. The real irony is that we are told we go hither and yon to fight for freedom and our Constitution, while carelessly sacrificing the very freedoms here at home we are supposed to be fighting for. It makes no sense.

This willingness to give up hard-fought personal liberties has been especially noticeable in the atmosphere of the post-September 11 war on terrorism. Security has replaced liberty as our main political goal, damaging the American spirit. Sadly, the whole process is done in the name of patriotism and in a spirit of growing militant nationalism.

These attitudes and fears surrounding the 9/11 tragedy and our eagerness to go to war in the Middle East against countries not responsible for the attacks have allowed a callousness to develop in our national psyche that justifies torture and rejects due process of law for those who are suspects and not convicted criminals.

We have come to accept preemptive war as necessary, constitutional, and morally justifiable. Starting a war without a proper declaration is now of no concern to most Americans or the U.S. Congress. Let us hope and pray the rumors of an attack on Iran in June by U.S. Armed Forces are wrong.

A large segment of the Christian community and its leadership think nothing of rationalizing war in the name of a religion that prides itself on the teachings of the Prince of Peace, who instructed us that blessed are the peacemakers, not the warmongers.

We casually accept our role as world policemen and believe we have a moral obligation to practice nation-building in our image regardless of the number of people who die in the process.

We have lost our way by rejecting the beliefs that made our country great. We no longer trust in trade, friendship, peace, the Constitution, and the principle of neutrality while avoiding entangling alliances with the rest of the world. Spreading the message of hope and freedom by setting an exam-

ple for the world has been replaced by a belief that the use of armed might is the only practical tool to influence the world. And we have accepted, as the only superpower, the principle of initiating war against others.

In the process, Congress and the people have endorsed a usurpation of their own authority, generously delivered to the executive and judicial branches, not to mention international government bodies. The concept of national sovereignty is now seen as an issue that concerns only the fringe in our society.

Protection of life and liberty must once again become the issue that drives political thought in this country. If this goal is replaced by an effort to promote world government, use force to plan the economy, regulate the people, and police the world against the voluntary desires of the people, it can be done only with the establishment of a totalitarian state. There is no need for that. It is up to Congress and the American people to decide our fate, and there is still time to correct our mistakes.

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#### 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 Ms. WOOLSEY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. KIND, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SCHIFF, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. EDWARDS, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, for 5 minutes, today.

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

Mr. KIRK, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GINGREY, for 5 minutes, today.

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#### ADJOURNMENT

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

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Friday, April 8, 2005, at 10 a.m.

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#### EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for speaker-authorized official travel during the first quarter of 2004 and the first quarter of 2005, pursuant to Public Law 95-384 are as follows: