Americans. I ask, Mr. Speaker, that you, and all fellow Members, join me in paying tribute to this program that works to protect our future.

INTRODUCTION OF THE LEWIS AND CLARK RURAL WATER SYSTEM ACT OF 1995

HON. TIM JOHNSON

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 14, 1995

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing legislation, along with my colleague, Representative DAVID MINGE of Minnesota, to authorize the Lewis and Clark Rural Water System. I introduced similar legislation last year during the 103d Congress, with Representative MINGE and then Representative Grandy of Iowa as original cosponsors. I look forward to again working closely with my colleagues for timely consideration of this important measure.

The Lewis and Clark Rural Water System is made up of 22 rural water systems and communities in southeastern South Dakota, northwestern Iowa, and southwestern Minnesota who have joined together in an effort to cooperatively address the dual problems facing the delivery of drinking water in this region—inadequate quantities of water and poor quality water.

This region has seen substantial growth and development in recent years, and studies have shown that future water needs will be significantly greater than the current available supply. Most of the people who are served by 10 of the water utilities in the proposed Lewis and Clark project area currently enforce water restrictions on a seasonal basis. Almost half of the membership has water of such poor quality it does not meet present or proposed standards for drinking water. More than two-thirds rely on shallow aquifers as their primary source of drinking water, aquifers which are very vulnerable to contamination by surface activities.

The Lewis and Clark system will be a supplemental supply of drinking water for its 22 members, acting as a treated, bulk delivery system. The distribution to deliver water to individual users will continue through the existing systems used by each member utility. This regionalization approach to solving these water supply and quality problems enables the Missouri River to provide a source of clean, safe drinking water to more than 180,000 individuals. A source of water which none of the members of Lewis and Clark could afford on their own.

The proposed system would help to stabilize the regional rural economy by providing water to Sioux Falls, the hub city in the region, as well as numerous small communities and individual farms in South Dakota and portions of Iowa and Minnesota.

The States of South Dakota, Iowa, and Minnesota have all authorized the project and local sponsors have demonstrated a financial commitment to this project through State grants, local water development district grants, and membership dues. The State of South Dakota has already contributed more than $400,000.

Mr. Speaker, I do not believe our needs get any more basic than good quality, reliable drinking water, and I appreciate the fact that Congress has shown support for efforts to improve drinking water supplies in South Dakota. I look forward to continue working with my colleagues to have that support extended to the Lewis and Clark Rural Water System.

AMERICAN OVERSEAS INTERESTS ACT OF 1995

SPEECH OF

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 8, 1995

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1561), to consolidate the foreign affairs agencies of the United States; to authorize appropriations for the Department of State and related agencies for fiscal year 1996 and 1997; to responsibly reduce the authorizations of appropriations for United States foreign assistance programs for fiscal year 1996 and 1997, and for other purposes:

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Chairman, I want to express my strong support for the amendment proposed by my distinguished friend from New York, Mr. ACKERMAN. His reasonable amendment calls for reports by the Congressional Budget Office and the Office of Management and budget prior to implementing the provisions of this legislation requiring the consolidation of the functions of the Agency for International Development, the United States Information Agency, and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency into the Department of State.

The organizational changes that are mandated in this legislation are the most sweeping and comprehensive changes ever proposed to the structure and function of the agencies charged with the conduct of our Nation's foreign policy. None of the Members of the Congress—no matter how long they have been serving in this House or in the other chamber—have dealt with changes in our foreign policy agencies of this massive a scale and none of us have any sense of what the unforseen consequences may be.

Before the Department of Defense scaled back and reorganized our national defense effort, a Bottom-Up review was conducted to assess our Nation's defense requirements in the post-cold war world. But here in the case of the Department of State, we have had only a few general hearings before the International Relations Committee earlier this year on reorganization in general. After the specific provisions of this legislation were drafted, the International Relations Committee held a single hearing on the specific reorganization proposals in this legislation—a hearing, I should add, which was requested by the Democratic members of the Committee to provide the administration with the opportunity to comment on the language in the bill.

Mr. Chairman, our Nation is facing unprecedented challenges and threats to the security of our Nation as we face the uncertainly of the post-cold war world. No effort has been made a assess the nature of the perils we face, no effort has been made to assess how our Nation's foreign policy agencies can best address these threats, no effort has been made to determine the impact of this massive restructuring of our foreign policy organizations.

In view of the scope of the changes that have been proposed, the amendment of Mr. ACKERMAN is a reasonable, prudent, and thoughtful effort to consider the impact and evaluate the consequences of consolidation before that irreversible step is taken. In the last few months, Mr. Chairman, this House has not been given to actions that are reasonable, prudent, and thoughtful. In this case, however, we are dealing with the national security of the United States—and caution is only appropriate and reasonable in this case.

If this consolidation policy is so all-important and self-evident, why did we not have such proposals from two presidents and four Secretaries of State in the previous administrations. Alexander Haig, George Schultz, Jim Baker, and Larry Eagleburger were obviously guilty of a tremendous dereliction of duty and responsibility for not proposing the wholesale downsizing of our foreign policy apparatus. If there is such urgency for this action, if there is such necessity to take these decisions without essential review, study, and reflection before acting, these previous Secretaries of State should have been able to see and make such recommendations for change.

Furthermore, Mr. Chairman, no effort has been made to consult and work with the Department of State and the administration to come up with a bipartisan consensus to deal with this consolidation. All of us agree that government can and should be made more efficient and that redundancies should be eliminated. But it is highly inappropriate for the Congress to dictate to the administration the structure of our foreign policy agencies. These are decisions that can and should be made cooperatively in a bipartisan fashion.

Mr. Chairman, during the 14½ years that I have served in this Congress, 12 of those years were with a Republican administration and a Democratically-controlled House of Representatives. During those 12 years, the Democratic members of the Foreign Affairs Committee consulted with our Republican colleagues on the Committee and with the Republican administration to try to achieve a truly bipartisan foreign policy. While there were some areas of disagreement, in the foreign policy realm we were remarkably successful in achieving broad bipartisan agreement.

Mr. Chairman, in coming up with the legislation that is now before us, I find that the procedure which we used through the years—of consulting with Republicans and Democrats to come forward with bipartisan proposals—is all gone by the board. I think it is a sad spectacle when the bipartisan foreign policy process of this Nation is torn asunder for cheap partisan political ends. This is not the way to build a superpower and enhance its ability to conduct foreign affairs in the 21st century.

What we see in this legislation—in this rush to consolidation with no regard for the consequences and with no consideration of alternatives—is rampant isolationism in action. As I told my colleagues in the markup of this legislation in the International Relations Committee, this is nothing more than pathetic, preposterous partisan posturing. It is cutting to shreds the international capabilities of the one remaining superpower on the face of this planet. It was aptly and accurately described by Dr. Tony Lake, the National Security Advisor to the President, as unilateral disarmament.