we must always defend the losers. That is simply not true. We have to talk about expanding the pie for everybody. If we do, the American people understand this.

If the gentleman could put up this last chart, I know the gentleman wants to talk a little bit about the space race. There is an awful lot of cynicism, Mr. Speaker, and I absolutely understand it. A lot of times I tell people on my money it does not say, ''in Republicans we trust,'' it does not say, in ''Democrats we trust,'' it does not say ''in Congress we trust.'' It says ''in God we trust.'' I do not ask people to trust me, but I do ask them to trust themselves.

What we have put on here, and I hope people can see this chart, if they want to know how much this tax package will benefit them, we have a couple of web sites where people can actually call it up on their computer. There is a GOP tax calculator, and hopefully they can see that on their television. People can actually calculate the tax relief for themselves: What does this package mean to me?

Do not worry about what it might mean to some wealthy investor who may sell a large investment. Obviously they may get a tax break. But what people really want to know is, what will it do for me? What will it do for my family? If people look at this in those terms, they will decide it is a fair tax package, it is good for them, it is good for their family, and it helps them to save and invest for their future as well as take care of their kids. I am very proud of this tax package.

Let me say one other thing. I have just written a letter to the gentleman from Texas Mr. BILL ARCHER. The President and some of his friends are saying this gives too much tax benefits to the rich, and there are families at the lower-income levels who are working but yet would not receive tax relief under this package. What we have done is send a letter to the gentleman from Texas Mr. BILL ARCHER, and this is from a recommendation from a gentleman who called in on C-SPAN.

He said, ''I understand what the Republicans are saying, only people who pay taxes are going to get tax relief. But I kind of understand what the President and some of the Democrats are saying, too, and that is there are teachers just starting out, fire fighters just starting out. Under the Republican plan they would not get much tax relief.''

He offered what I think is a simple and sensible compromise solution. He said, ''Why do we not just say, let each family decide which package gives them the best bang for the buck?'' In other words, if right now they get a better deal under the earned income tax credit, they could take that. On the other side, if they thought they got a better bargain under the per child tax credit that the Republican conference committee has worked out, they should take that. They could either have the system under the earned income tax credit or the per child family tax credit. Give them the best of both worlds. They could choose one or the other.

I think that is a reasonable compromise. I would hope that the conferees would at least look at something like that to try and break this impasse, so that for the first time in 16 years we can actually provide working families with real tax relief.

I know the gentleman wants to talk a little bit about, and I want to give the gentleman a compliment, because he represents Cape Canaveral and the space industry down there, and the gentleman does it very admirably. Here recently we have heard a lot of interesting news about the space program, both with the Mir Space Station that is up there circling now, and we all hope and pray that that turns out for the better, but more interestingly, what has been happening on the planet Mars.

I know the gentleman has some great pictures that have come back from NASA, and I yield to the gentleman to discuss some of those projects that are currently going on at Cape Canaveral and with NASA in general. I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank him for being a space supporter. I know he has been fascinated by some of these issues.

I want to talk a little bit about our Nation's space program and the tremendous asset it is to America. We are a great Nation, 275 million people, 50 States, from sea to shining sea. It is a very variegated fabric of what makes up America. There are many great things that make our Nation great. Our number one asset is obviously our people and the people who make up so many of the great industries and institutions.

Of course, the space program has been getting a lot of attention lately, particularly as it relates to exploration of Mars. I wanted to talk a little bit about that.

Our space program is something that truly fascinates our children. Teachers in my district tell me, if you want to get kids excited about math and science and just why it is important and how it applies, just start talking about the space program and you will get their attention.

Why is that? I think there is something that burns in the heart of every human being, not just every American but every human being: a sense of curiosity, what is our destiny. We all know we have explored the world. There is much more to explore in this world, but we also know that much of it has been explored.

What is man's destiny? Is it just to reside here on planet earth, or is it to reach out and truly grasp the stars, to go to other planets, to visit other stars, to explore new worlds, to some day colonize other places in the universe?

If I could quote Neil Armstrong, his ''one small step for man,'' we had a small step a few weeks ago with the Mars Pathfinder, an incredibly successful mission, a mission that was launched from Cape Canaveral in December of last year, and it arrived at the red planet, a successful landing of the Mars Pathfinder vehicle shown here in this diagram, or this is actually a photograph of Mars. This is a photograph taken of the Sojourner, the vehicle that is able to go out and explore around on the planet.

Mr. Speaker, I want to also show this very, very interesting photograph. The Sojourner rolled off of the Mars Pathfinder and then turned around and took a picture of the Mars Pathfinder, and here we can see the Mars Pathfinder, and these bags that are around it are actually deflated balloons.

The way that Pathfinder landed, once it came into the atmosphere balloons all around the Mars Pathfinder blew up, and the thing actually bounced on the surface something like 20 times and then came to rest. Slowly the air was let out of the balloons, and the thing opened up and out goes this rover.

Here we can actually see in this photograph the tracks that the rover made in the surface of the planet. So it is a fascinating vehicle. It is a tremendous success, something I think that everybody at NASA can be proud of, particularly the people at JPL.

## ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BURR of North Carolina). The Chair would remind all Members to refrain from references to occupants of the gallery.

## FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES

Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to use my time today, and I do not plan to use it all, but I would like to use the time that I have today to discuss some foreign policy issues. The first relates to south Asia and to India in particular.

I am the cochair of the India Caucus, and very much a supporter of the efforts by the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan to bring their countries closer together, pursuant to the so-called Gujral Doctrine, which is named after the current Prime Minister of India.

Progress is being made by the two countries towards a peaceful settlement of their differences, as well as improved economic and trade relations, and a big part of this has been the discussions that have been held between the Prime Ministers and between officials in India and Pakistan at a level lower than the Prime Minister level.

But this progress is really one of the major reasons why I am concerned and very worried about a Senate initiative, an initiative by the other body that tilts, in my opinion, U.S. foreign policy again in favor of Pakistan and against India.

Mr. Speaker, I want to express today my strong opposition to an amendment that was passed in the other body, in the Senate last week, to the foreign operations appropriations bill, that lifts existing United States restrictions on military and economic assistance to Pakistan. This amendment would allow for the resumption of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, the International Military Education and Training Program, the Trade and Development Assistance, as well as the democracy-building programs such as the National Endowment for Democracy in Pakistan.

These restrictions were imposed by the Glenn–Symington amendment a few years ago, which restricted the delivery of aid and bilateral programs to Pakistan because of Pakistan's continual development of a nuclear weapons program. The restrictions were in place due to Pakistan's externally aided nuclear weapons program.

What is troubling to me, Mr. Speaker, is that the Senate repealed the Glenn–Symington amendment among reports that Pakistan has recently fired and tested a Chinese-built M–11 missile, or an indigenously developed medium-range missile similar to the M–11. United States intelligence reports that Pakistan is building or has built, with the aid of the Chinese, a missile factory. These missiles can carry nuclear devices. This factory is not subject to international inspection.

Mr. Speaker, for those familiar with Pakistan's nuclear program, it is well known that for several years Pakistan has moved forward with an aggressive program of acquiring nuclear technology and weapons delivery systems, as well as providing arms and training to rogue nations and terrorist groups.

The intent of the Senate action last week may have been, I hope that was the intention, but may have been to encourage Pakistan to cap its nuclear program. However, I would contend that history has shown otherwise. In 1985, United States intelligence reported that Pakistan was receiving United States arms and was simultaneously developing a nuclear weapons program. In response, and with the support of Pakistan, Congress in 1985 enacted the Pressler amendment, to deny assistance to Pakistan if the President could not confirm that Pakistan did not have or was not developing a nuclear device.

But later, in 1990, a few years later, United States intelligence found via overwhelming evidence that Pakistan did indeed have the bomb. The Bush administration at the time invoked the Pressler amendment and restricted United States aid to Pakistan.

The invocation of the Pressler amendment by the Bush administration gave Pakistan an opportunity to make an important choice. Pakistan could either work with the United States and cap its nuclear program, or ignore the Pressler amendment and continue with its nuclear weapons program.

□ 1400

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, Pakistan chose the latter course. In 1995, just 2 years ago, Congress amended the Pressler amendment with the so-called Brown amendment that allowed 370 million dollars' worth of previously embargoed conventional weaponry to be transferred to Pakistan.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to note that Pakistan did not agree to do anything in exchange for the equipment and no conditions on its nuclear program were imposed. Why do we keep rewarding Pakistan when it continues to work against our interests?

Nearly all of Pakistan's nuclear program is for military use with very little attention toward infrastructure and civilian use. In fact, in 1986, China and Pakistan signed a nuclear cooperation agreement. The details of that agreement are not known although intelligence reports show that the agreement includes the transfer of nuclear weapon technology in both the design of weapons and the enrichment of uranium fuel.

Mr. Speaker, we have to be very careful. We cannot allow this amendment, passed last week in the other body, to be viewed as support for Pakistan's nuclear program. Very little information exists with regard to Pakistan's nuclear program. Command and control systems that manage Pakistan's nuclear program are vague and really nonexistent.

A leading American think tank has stated that the primitive state of the Pakistan arsenal suggests that any Pakistan nuclear response could be haphazard and ill-managed. That is from the Institute for National Strategic Studies, a strategic assessment from 1997.

Furthermore, this amendment may hinder the progress, this Senate amendment may hinder the progress that has been made by talks between India and Pakistan over the last 6 months. This is really what I am concerned about.

I talked in the beginning about the Gujral doctrine and how these two countries are now working together toward peaceful solutions. This amendment passed in the other body, I think, could hinder these talks, because the Indian Government has already stated on the record that in light of the circumstances India will take the appropriate steps to safeguard India's security.

What is happening is that the traditional tilt toward Pakistan in United States foreign policy, which so many of us in the India caucus have been trying to reverse so that the United States is not partial toward Pakistan, this tilt is beginning to express itself again as a result of this amendment that was passed in the Senate. And I find it interesting that when India allegedly deployed the Prithvi missile, the United States quickly denounced the deployment. Yet when Pakistan continues to develop its nuclear program with the aid of the Chinese, we turn the other way. In fact, we reward them with aid.

Mr. Speaker, if we desire a peace in South Asia, we must work equally and fairly with all countries in the region. This amendment passed in the other body does not do this.

I know we are going to have discussions, we are going to have a vote here in the House next week on our foreign operations appropriations act. That bill will go to conference with the bill that passed the other body. My hope is, and I will certainly work toward taking out the amendment that was passed in the other body in conference so that when the conference bill eventually comes back to the two Houses, it does not include that amendment. I think that it is an amendment that again tilts United States foreign policy toward Pakistan, is not helpful in the overall effort to bring peace to the South Asia region and basically should not survive the conference, if there is anything that we can do in this House about that.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to turn now to another matter that is also important in terms of United States foreign policy toward India. When I visited India earlier this year, I had the opportunity to talk to the then-Prime Minister Gowda, who expressed continued concern that the United States has not prioritized India as part of its foreign policy.

Mr. Gowda stressed that an important gesture could be made in that regard if President Clinton was able to travel to India in conjunction with the 50th anniversary celebration which begins this August 15. There are many members of our congressional caucus on India, including myself, that have contacted the White House over the last few months in order to convince the President that he should travel to India this year. We know that the White House has given serious consideration to this request, and we want to reiterate our plea collectively today now that August 15 is drawing close.

The majority of our 90-member India caucus signed a letter today to the President, and I would like to just take some time now to read that letter for my colleagues.

It says, Dear Mr. President, as members of the congressional caucus on India and Indian Americans, we urge you to visit in India next month to celebrate the 50th anniversary of India's independence.

The United States and India, the world's two largest democracies, have many areas of common interest that have not been developed to the degree that they could be. The end of the cold war, combined with the historic opening of the Indian economy, forced us to

significantly reassess our strategies and priorities with regard to Asia. There is substantial room to build on the current Indo-U.S. partnership and the political, diplomatic, economic, and security spheres.

Under the auspices of our India caucus, we have had a number of opportunities in the past few years to interact with leaders from India's Government and private sector. Further, some of us have had the opportunity to travel to India recently. These direct contacts have convinced us that relations with India must take on a far greater prominence in United States foreign policy considerations as we move toward the 21st century.

At the same time we have seen that the Indo-U.S. relationship has at times been strained, often unnecessarily so, and owing in many cases to the lack of a firm foundation in relations between our two great nations.

Although many Americans may not recognize it, there is a rich tradition of shared values between the United States and India. Just as the United States proclaimed its independence from the British colonial order, so was India born of the struggle for freedom and self-determination. India derived key aspects of her constitution, particularly its statement of fundamental rights, from our own Bill of Rights. The Indian independence movement, under the inspired leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, had strong moral support from American intellectuals, political leaders, and journalists. In turn, Dr. Martin Luther King, in his struggle to make the promise of American democracy a reality for all of our citizens, derived many of his ideas of nonviolent resistance to injustice from the teachings of Gandhi. Thus we see a clear pattern of Indian and American democracy inspiring and enriching one another at every historical turn.

August 15 marks this historic occasion. A visit by an American President is long overdue. The last President to visit India was the Honorable Jimmy Carter. There is no doubt in our minds that a visit by an American President will improve and strengthen relations between the world's two largest democracies.

Mr. Speaker, this was signed by over 60 Members today alone. Many of us really feel very strongly that it would be a great thing if Pakistan could take the opportunity, either by August 15 or sometime after August 15, in this year of independence, which begins August 15, to visit India as a gesture, an important gesture really, of its priority in terms of United States foreign policy.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to turn now to another foreign policy issue to a different part of the world. I would like to basically take this opportunity, if I could, to express my opposition to a state visit that will occur next week, a state visit to Washington, to the President, to the Congress, that will occur next week by President Aliyev of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Mr. Speaker, while I recognize that our President must from time to time receive foreign leaders with whom we have differences, in the case of the visit of President Aliyev, I have grave reservations based on both the past actions and the current policies that Mr. Aliyev has pursued and is pursuing.

I would hope that this visit would offer an opportunity for our President and our administration to express our concerns about the lack of democracy and basic rights and freedom in Azerbaijan. I would especially hope the message would be sent to President Aliyev in no uncertain terms that Azerbaijan should immediately lift its blockades of Armenia and Nagorno-Karabagh.

Finally, I hope that President Clinton would stress to President Aliyev American support for a freely negotiated settlement of the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict that recognized the self-determination within secure borders of the people of Nagorno-Karabagh.

I am circulating a letter, Mr. Speaker, today that I have circulated today when we were in session, along with my colleague, the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. PORTER]. We are the cochairs of the Armenia caucus. Our letter to Pakistan expresses our concerns about the visit of President Aliyev.

Most of the members of our House Caucus on Armenia have signed the letter, and I would hope, I sincerely would hope that we can make something positive come out of this visit by President Aliyev. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, I am afraid that the direction which U.S. foreign policy is headed in the caucuses region does not bode well for the positive outcome that we seek.

The United States is in a unique position to be able to bring about a fair settlement of the Nagorno-Karabagh situation and to help promote the long-term security and economic development of that region. But that is not the way things are going.

The OSCE, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, established the Minsk conference to mediate a settlement of the Karabagh conflict. The United States, along with France and Russia, is a cochair of the Minsk group. However, I am concerned that the United States not use its position to force a settlement that does not allow Nagorno-Karabagh to adequately protect its land and its people in the future.

I am working with my colleagues to bring an official from the administration, the State Department, to come up to the Hill next week, hopefully to bring us up to date on the status of negotiations and for us to have an opportunity to impress upon the State Department the importance we attach to the self-determination of the people of Nagorno-Karabagh.

Mr. Speaker, Azerbaijan has some pretty powerful allies in its corner, including former top administration officials from both the Democratic and Republican parties. This was documented in a recent front page story in the Washington Post. Basically what the Post described is an effort, a big money influence effort being driven by oil money. In this case Azerbaijan has proven oil reserves in the Caspian Sea basin off Azerbaijan, some of the richest oil reserves in the world. And many U.S. oil companies are interested in getting into this region.

I want to stress that I have no problem seeing these petroleum reserves developed. Indeed, I would encourage construction of an oil pipeline from the Caspian Sea to the Mediterranean via Armenia. That would actually improve cooperation and the economic prospects of the entire caucuses region.

But, Mr. Speaker, the big problem that many of us have is that these oil companies and the former top United States Government officials that are working for their interests are essentially lobbying for United States foreign policy to ignore the unacceptable behavior of Azerbaijan in order to curry favor with the regime and gain access to the oil reserves.

Mr. Speaker, on the eve of President Aliyev's visit, I want to inform our colleagues about the type of leader this man is. The reason that so many of us oppose his coming here and are concerned about what it means is that he is coming here on a state visit, that Aliyev has a long record of human rights violations that date back to his four decades as an official of the Soviet KGB. During the 1960's, he orchestrated the depopulation of Armenians from their homes in Nakhichevan.

As the Communist party leader of Azerbaijan during the 1970's, he violently suppressed all nationalist and democratic dissent. His ardent support, and I stress his ardent support, for the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan earned him a seat on the Soviet Politburo under Leonid Brezhnev where he served until he was removed by Mikhail Gorbachev in 1987, for having engaged in widespread corruption.

Since his return to power through a military coup in 1993, President Aliyev has suppressed democracy in Azerbaijan and committed widespread violations of human rights in that country, which have been documented by the State Department.

I am also concerned that this visit to Washington by President Aliyev at this critical stage in the negotiations over Nagorno-Karabagh threatens to harm the peace process by undermining confidence in the role of the United States as an impartial mediator.

Many of my colleagues know that section 907 of the Freedom Support Act prohibits direct United States Government aid to Azerbaijan because of the Assyrian blockade of Armenia and Nagorno-Karabagh.

The administration continues to advocate against section 907 and this further reinforces the Azerbaijani perception that the United States, since the most recent OSCE summit in Lisbon has tilted toward Azerbaijan.

What we are saying, Mr. Speaker, is that this visit, this state visit by President Aliyev now could serve to encourage Azerbaijan to further harden its negotiating stance in negotiating a peaceful settlement of the Karabagh conflict.

This encouragement is particularly dangerous given President Aliyev's pattern of unacceptable behavior including his use of oil as a weapon against Armenia and Nagorno-Karabagh, his blockades of Armenia and Karabagh, his rapidly expanding military capabilities, his threats of force and intimidation tactics and his refusal to negotiate directly with the democratically elected representatives of Nagorno-Karabagh.

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to say, in conclusion, that I would urge my colleagues to join the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. PORTER] and me in letting President Clinton know of our concerns about his upcoming meeting with President Aliyev and to push our State Department toward a fair solution to the very difficult Nagorno-Karabagh conflict.

Mr. Speaker, I was in Armenia and in Nagorno-Karabagh earlier this year and believe me, there are no countries and no people that are more supportive of the United States and love and see the United States as such a great example of democracy and a market economy.

□ 1545

Armenia and Karabagh are Democratic nations. They are capitalistic nations. They really honestly believe that we are on their side. And we should be. Because they are on the side of what is right. They simply want to retain their own independence, their own freedom and exercise their own self-determination.

I think the U.S. policy should at least be neutral in this conflict. Unfortunately, there are many indications that it is not, and particularly our concern and my concern is that President Aliyev's visit is going to give the impression once again that the United States and our State Department tilt towards Azerbaijan.

But we will continue our efforts to raise the issue and to make sure that the United States takes a neutral position with regard to negotiations over Karabagh and, hopefully, we will be heard at the White House and in the State Department, if not now at some point in the future.

## THE SPACE PROGRAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. WELDON] is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise again to talk about our Nation's space program. I rose earlier in a special order with the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. GUTKNECHT] to talk about our Republican tax package and how it was going to help working families, and I talked at great length about a particular working family in my congressional district that was going to be helped tremendously by our tax package.

It was going to help them in many, many different ways. The $500 per child tax credit was going to help them, because they had three kids, and it was going to give them an extra $1,500 a year. But probably also, more importantly, the education tax credits were going to help them to be better able to send their kids to college.

This is the Auger family I was talking about, and they had one young man 15 years old, their oldest son, college material, and they were looking at some very, very serious financial strain. They had a family income of about a little less than $40,000 a year, but trying to raise three kids and send them to college was a real strain.

I was pleased to get up and to be able to talk about them, but I did want to talk a little more about our Nation's space program. I represent an area of our country that most people have heard a great deal about. We call it in the Space Coast of Florida. It is where Cape Canaveral and Kennedy Space Center is located.

We have a lot of men and women in our community that work in our Nation's space program, and I wanted to rise today and salute them and talk about the role that they have played in really forming a whole part of our American fabric.

We are a great Nation, extending from the bustling cities of our Northeast to the beautiful beaches of Southern California, from the beautiful northern Pacific coast to our sunny beaches in Florida.

There is a lot that goes into making up America and what makes this Nation the great Nation that it is, and a big part of it, in our modern era, is our Nation's space program, and it is something that all Americans, I believe, are very proud of.

What we have today was really built on a lot of the hard work of the people that began the program, the early pioneers, so to speak, in our Nation's space program. One important point I want to make is these people were risk-takers. We all know some of the hardships and, indeed, that actually people have lost their lives in our Nation's space program. So going up in space and exploring space has its risks. But I believe it is well worth the price.

I think there is something that beats in the hearts of every human being, not just Americans but all people all over the world, but particularly Americans, because we are a nation of pioneers. We all, except for our native Americans, we were all raised with the knowledge that our parents came to this country. They were either brought as slaves or their ancestors came from Europe or from Asia.

We are a nation of pioneers, people who ventured out into the unknown, and that desire that beats in the hearts of all people, and particularly all Americans, I think, is encapsulated in our space program and what our space program is.

We have had tremendous successes. Of course, we began with the Mercury program and the early astronauts, one of whom is a Senator in the other body to this day, and then it continued with the Gemini program, and, of course, on to the Apollo program, something that all schoolchildren today learn about, how the United States took part in the great space race with the Russians and we were able to succeed and win and get to the moon first.

But now we are in a new era, a new era of space exploration, and I wanted to talk a little about that. I have some really wonderful photographs I wanted to show. This, of course, is a photo of our space shuttle, the current reusable launch vehicle that we use to bring men and women up into space.

It has been a tremendously successful program. For those who have never seen one take off, I would highly encourage all Americans to try to get down there to the Kennedy Space Center area for a launch. You cannot get any closer than 3 miles, but even at 3 miles away, when this thing takes off, your shirt actually shakes from the power of the thing taking off.

It is 11 million pounds of thrust putting this thing into orbit, and what is amazing about it, it is the only reusable launch vehicle. It comes back, lands on a runway, and then can be reconfigured and restacked and cycled again, and they go up and they come back. What is truly amazing about this program is not only the amazing technology of the program, but that this is actually 25-year-old technology.

What I think is very, very exciting is a program that we are working on today in NASA, which is the new reusable launch vehicle. And I wanted to take a little time to talk about this program, because it is really in its infancy, but this artist's rendering of what it will look like, I think, encapsulates it very nicely.

This shows the new replacements for the shuttle that we are currently doing the early design work and engineering on, and it shows, obviously somewhere over our desert West, maybe California or Arizona, hypothetically coming in for a landing. Because it would take off going straight up, the vehicle would then land on a runway like our current shuttle does.

The important thing about this is that the whole idea with the new reusable launch vehicle to replace the space shuttle is to reduce the costs of putting payloads into orbit. Even though the shuttle program is a tremendous success, it is still costly to go up into space. It actually comes down to about, I believe it is $10,000 a pound for each pound that we put up into orbit. That is a considerable cost.

So our idea here in the Congress and the Senate, and the President supports