

There is another way, a better way than intervening in almost every major political, ethnic, religious or military dispute around the world. The middle way between isolation and intervention is to have trade and tourism, cultural and educational exchanges, help out during humanitarian crises, give technical advice by government agencies and try to be friends with all nations but maintain an enlightened neutrality on disputes that really are none of our business.

This new directive is more about money than it is about security. Like any gigantic bureaucracy, the Pentagon and its Defense contractors always want more money. One of the most common ways any government agency uses to get more money is by expanding its mission. You can never satisfy any government's appetite for money or land. They always want more.

President Eisenhower warned us many years ago of what he called the military-industrial complex. I have great respect for anyone who serves in the military. I believe in having a strong national defense. But I do not believe in the U.S. providing international defense, and it is certainly not a traditional conservative position to make those in our military the policemen of the world or take on the defense needs of the whole world.

And it is certainly not conservative, nor is it constitutional, for the U.S. to do nation-building all over the world, whether it is done by the Defense Department or any other department.

□ 2300

A NEW DAY FOR IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SCHWARZ of Michigan). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, the initial reports of yesterday's Iraqi election all point to it having been a remarkable day for the Iraqi people. Although Iraq's security situation remains precarious and the country's economy and much of the infrastructure have yet to be repaired, the past year has seen important progress in the country's political development.

More than 11 million Iraqis went to the polls to cast their votes for a new parliament and a new future. Iraq Sunnis who boycotted the polling in January, turned out in force to ensure their voices would be heard in the new legislature. For weeks, Sunni imams had been imploring their congregants to vote and their calls were heeded. Election observers estimated that turnout was in excess of 70 percent nationwide and the turnout was matched by preelection polling that showed a high degree of enthusiasm for and optimism about the elections and what they mean for the future of Iraq.

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of yesterday's voting was the absence

of violence. Across the country, only 52 attacks were recorded, and there were no mass casualty incidents. This stands in marked contrast to the January election when voters in polling stations were hit by more than 300 insurgent attacks.

Yesterday's relative calm was due to the men and women of our Armed Forces. Our troops and their commanders did a magnificent job over the past months to prepare the country for this crucial election. Even as we celebrate the success of the voting, we cannot overlook the incredible sacrifice of our military men and women. They have performed magnificently, but at an enormous cost.

While the election itself was a remarkable achievement, we, our coalition partners and the international community, must move quickly to ensure that Iraq's fragile, nascent democracy is able to flourish.

Two days ago I was invited to the White House, along with a number of my Democratic colleagues, to meet with the President and senior administration officials on preparations for the elections and next steps in Iraq. I appreciated the President's efforts to reach across the aisle for unity, and we had a far-reaching discussion on how best to move forward in Iraq. I hope that the President's recent willingness to engage with Members of Congress, and especially Democrats, augurs more consultations with the Hill on Iraq and the broader array of national security challenges that confront us.

Counting the votes will take days and perhaps weeks, given the sheer number of ballots cast for the more than 300 political parties that registered to compete in the election, as well as the bifurcated nature of allocating seats by province and nationwide.

As we move forward, I see a series of five steps as crucial to Iraq's future.

First, Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, who has done a remarkable job in Kabul and in Baghdad, must work with the Iraqis to assemble a new government that will include the diverse array of Iraqi voices in order to maximize the legitimacy of the government in the eyes of the Iraqi people while minimizing the prospects for the dissolution of Iraq. The apparently strong showing by the secular Iraqi National List, headed by former interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi, may be an early indicator that a broad-based government may be possible.

Second, we must work with a new parliament and help them execute the revisions to Iraq's Constitution that were promised in the days leading up to the October referendum. Constitutional changes that strengthen the power of the central government and ensure that the Sunnis are able to share in the nation's oil wealth will do much to allay the concerns of Iraq's Sunnis.

Third, we must ramp up our efforts to train and equip Iraq security forces

so that a significant portion of American forces can be redeployed from Iraq with the remainder of American troops adopting a much lower profile. This will allow us to better safeguard the lives of our troops even as we continue to act as the ultimate guarantor for the new Iraqi state.

Fourth, we must fracture the insurgency in order to weaken it. The Iraqi insurgents are made up of three distinctly different groups. The first group, the foreign jihadis, must be destroyed. The second group, which is made up of the hard-core Baathists, is also likely to fight to the bitter end. The third wing of the insurgency is composed of disaffected Sunnis who are motivated primarily by the loss of their status in Iraqi society.

Yesterday's election and the consolidation of a broad-based government should be instrumental in diminishing the threat from this faction.

Finally, we must redouble our efforts to reconstruct Iraq. While there has been some progress in restoring basic services and providing opportunities for Iraqis, there is much work yet to be done. This is an area where we should make a new effort to reach out to the international community and engage them in Iraq's future.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday's voting was a triumph for the Iraqi people, for the cause of democracy in the Arab world, and for our Armed Forces; but now we must act quickly and effectively to solidify these political gains.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment bills of the House of the following titles:

H.R. 3963. An act to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to extend the authorization of appropriations for Long Island Sound.

H.R. 4508. An act to commend the outstanding efforts in response to Hurricane Katrina by members and employees of the Coast Guard, to provide temporary relief to certain persons affected by such hurricane with respect to certain laws administered by the Coast Guard, and for other purposes.

H.J. Res. 38. Joint resolution recognizing Commodore John Barry as the first flag officer of the United States Navy.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, bills of the House of the following titles:

H.R. 2520. An act to provide for the collection and maintenance of human cord blood stem cells for the treatment of patients and research, and to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize the C.W. Bill Young Cell Transplantation Program.

H.R. 3402. An act to authorize appropriations for the Department of Justice for fiscal years 2006 through 2009, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which concurrence of the House is requested: