six times the inflation rate. So with the problem of a tremendously progressive tax system, we are in a situation where, according to the Heritage Foundation, over 50 percent of the benefits from Federal spending go to individuals who collectively pay less than 1 percent of the income tax. So the old safeguard, if you are going to have more government spending, somebody has to pay for it, we have to now in our collective efforts divide the wealth and try to make sure that there is some good distribution, to make sure that people are not going to go hungry and have a home, and our welfare systems and our food systems and, at the same time, reducing the amount of tax that low-income people pay. We have redistributed wealth to the extent where most, the top 10 percent of taxpayers, pay approximately 90 percent of the total income taxes in this country.

As we look at the challenges of where we go on spending, there are a lot of people in everybody's district that say, well, we would like you to spend a little more on this program or that program; and quite often, these individuals, and that represents maybe 50 percent of the constituency of many of us in Congress, are looking at a situation where it does not cost them very much in their income taxes, so their willingness to call for increased spending is at little or no cost to themselves.

We have had a system from the founders of our country, and it was interesting that we went up to New York, the first time this Congress left session in Washington, D.C. in over 200 years and went to the Federal building up in New York where George Washington was first sworn in and where, in 1789, the first Congress presided and we passed the Bill of Rights. We have had a country that sort of has the motivation, the incentive that those that learn, that try, that save and invest end up better off than those that do not. I mean, that has been our motivation. As we keep trying to divide the wealth, where we lose that kind of motivation, we are going to lose some of the incentives that have caused such a great success, I think, in the American economy over the 226-odd years that we have been in existence.

Let me briefly look at some of the other increases in spending, and these dramatic increases in spending have even been during a Republican majority for many of these years. The Interior spending, we are now looking at spending that is going to be 40 percent higher than 1998, or about a 7.1 percent average. So that is maybe 2½ times the rate of inflation that we have grown in the Interior spending. The Treasury and Postal spending has gone up 41 percent since 1998, an average of 7.2 percent per year increase in spending, much higher than inflation.

I have another chart here, this is a so-called spending history; and discretionary spending growth will average at least 7.5 percent each year since we balanced the budget in 1998. So you see, since 1998 we have just really taken off. What we did was we balanced the budget, we said it is important to balance the budget, and then we have sort of extra money, so everybody came up with ideas of how we could spend that extra money.

What it means is that it is going to be more difficult to face the challenges of a good Medicare program, a good Medicaid program, a solvent Social Security plan. I think it should be another incentive to this body and the body on the other side and the President to hold the line on less important spending as we face the war on terrorism.

Veterans Affairs, HUD, International, it has grown 39 percent since 1998, an 8 percent increase per year. Commerce, Justice and State also has grown with an average of 29 percent, 29 percent since 1998. Defense, not including our extra money that we have spent on terror, has gone up 46 percent, almost four times the rate of inflation. Transportation, it has increased by 52 percent since 1998, 9 percent average per year increase. Agriculture has gone up 21 percent since 1998.

My point is that we are spending a lot of money, and are we doing a proper job of prioritizing that spending? In some areas I think we are, because for example, we have had a 132 percent increase in education spending since 1996. In Health and Human Services, almost a 100 percent increase; in December, a 48 percent increase that does not include the extra money since last September 11, a year ago.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I call on my colleagues, I call on the President to hold the line on spending and resist some of the pressures coming in from all of these special interest lobbyists that are giving millions of dollars toward campaigns for this election on November 5, saying we want more money for our constituency, for our particular clients. And so often, a Member of Congress, when they come up with more spending and new programs, they end up back home cutting a ribbon on some project they have taken back to their district, they get on television and in the newspaper. So the tendency has been for a Member of Congress to increase their chances of being reelected if they spend more money and take more pork barrel projects home to their particular district.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is going to take the President, number one, and it is going to take the American people, number two, to say, look, now is the time to hold the line on spending.

THE CASE FOR PEACE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PUTNAM). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity to address the House of Representatives. I would first like to say that in this next hour, I and several of my colleagues will discuss the issue which is uppermost in the minds of the American people, the issue of war and peace, the issue of whether our sons and daughters are going to be sent to a distant land to fight in a war which the American people really have not had a chance to talk about in their own communities. So tonight we are going to make the case as to why the United States should not go to war against Iraq. We are going to talk about the various elements which are motivating this effort to go to war against Iraq; and finally, we are going to talk about what people can do who are concerned about what appears to be this effort that has almost seemingly unstoppable momentum towards a war, because this still is the government of the people. That is the beauty of this wonderful forum we are in, the House of Representatives, and we are going to this evening have an opportunity to show how a government of the people works, not only here, but how it works back in the communities which we represent.

So as we begin our discussion, I want to recognize my colleague, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR), who has been a fearless defender of the rights of working people, a defender of the highest principles this country stands for, and someone who is respected and admired across this Nation. I want to thank the gentlewoman for participating in this 1-hour, and at this time I yield to her.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the able gentleman from Cleveland, Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH), for bringing us together and exhibiting the leadership role that he has, both within the Congress and outside in our country, in attempting to deliver the messages to the American people that they need to hear about decision-making here in Washington on the important issues of war and peace, and how it affects them in their families, in their communities, and, obviously, in our country.

I know there will be many other Members who will speak, and I want to thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) for also appearing on programs like ''Crossfire'' and trying to get out the message to the American people, which largely is being blocked here in Washington because of the way we are functioning as a Congress. Here it is the middle of the week, we have had a few votes today, we could not say any of them were very earthshaking, and now votes have been canceled next Monday and Friday. We will not be here this Friday, we were not here this Monday, and our floor time is extraordinarily limited. So it has been very difficult to talk to the American people about this continuing drumbeat toward war because essentially, our institutions and our ability to function as a lawmaking body have been heavily proscribed by the Republican leadership in this Chamber, and it has been hard to get the word out.

I would say that no gentleman has worked harder than the gentleman from Cleveland, Ohio, to talk to the American people and to present the information that is very important. I know this will be an exchange tonight, and we will go back and forth; but it is probably important to put in some context what happened about one year ago, 9–11, 2001 when 17 individuals, international criminals from Saudi Arabia, 17 of 19 created carnage in our country in New York, over Pennsylvania, and here in Washington, from the al Qaeda network, which is a Middle Eastern terrorist network.

Their supposed leader, Osama bin Laden, made the statement at that time that these crimes were being committed against the American people because he wanted Western infidels out of Saudi Arabia. Iraq was not even on the table. Iraq is not an issue. Our major confrontation has been with al Qaeda; and, of course, they took refuge inside of Afghanistan, and so all of us have troops from our districts currently deployed, Navy, Army, Air Force, and Marines, in that region of the world and here at home protecting the American people and defending our freedom. But it is important to remind ourselves that the enemy we are fighting is the terrorist network of al Qaeda. The President came down here to the floor of Congress and said that.

I think it is also important to point out that al Qaeda is an Islamic fundamentalist network. In other words, it is very religious. They have a sacred rage that has turned their views highly political and highly dangerous into the international realm, and they do not have a presence in Iraq, because Iraq is a secular state.

□ 1830

Al Qaeda has not been known to use Iraq as its base. So there is a disconnect between the policies that we are pursuing in order to bring to justice those who have done so much harm globally through al Qaeda, and also there has been an ignorance of Saudi Arabia's role in permitting the Saudis to operate inside Saudi Arabia and then promoting madrassahs outside of Saudi Arabia as well, producing hate-filled young boys who ultimately become terrorists in years hence in places like Pakistan and Afghanistan, in Malaysia, indeed around the world.

So I wanted to just place on the record as we begin who the enemy is in terms of September 11 and subsequently, and all of a sudden emerging then through this summer we begin to hear about war with Iraq, and we ask ourselves the questions and we have gone to all the security briefings here on the Hill, what is the connection? What has Iraq done in the last 4 months different than the prior 4 years? What is anticipated over the next 4 months or 8 months or 1 year different than what happened over the last 5 or 10 years? And no evidence. We have been presented with no photographs, with no intelligence information to give us any connection between what has happened relative to al Qaeda and the enemy we are fighting and Iraq, and yet there is this tremendous drumbeat toward going to war with Iraq.

The President said at the United Nations last week, and I am very thankful that President Bush went to the United Nations because we still have been engaged as one of 189 nations in the world, the international community, he said that Iraq presented a grave and gathering threat. Not an imminent threat, a grave and gathering threat to the world. So those words I listened to very carefully. I asked myself what is really going on here?

I also want to place on the record tonight an article that was in the Washington Post on Sunday entitled An Iraqi War Scenario, Oil Is Key Issue. I think it is important for the American people to know that even though technically the President wants to go to war with Iraq, today 8 percent of the oil we consume here in the United States is from Iraq. That may sound like a paradox. After Saudi Arabia, Iraq presents the largest oil fields in the world and in fact has proven reserves of 112 billion barrels of crude oil. This article talks about the reshuffling of the world petroleum markets related to any change of regime in Iraq, and I think it is important to follow the business pages which today showed that with the possibility of Iraq's regime changing, oil prices in the world were beginning to actually drop because, as this article states, five permanent members of the Security Council, the United States, Britain, France, Russia, and China, have international oil companies with major stakes in a change of leadership in Bagdad; and without question, it says, the United States would almost certainly be the dominant foreign power in Iraq after the aftermath of Saddam Hussein's fall.

The leader of a group called the Iraqi National Congress, based in London, an umbrella organization of opposition groups backed by our country, among others, the leader of that group, Ahmed Chalabi, says that American oil companies would have a big shot at Iraqi oil. I think it is really important for the American people to distinguish between our war with the al Qaeda terrorist network and Islamic fundamentalist network, with no real home country but with deep roots in Saudi Arabia, and Iraq, which actually had been an ally of the United States prior to the Persian Gulf war, and we should be insisting as a country on the evidence for any invasion.

I know that the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) would like to add to what I have said and I again thank him so much for his international leadership on this important question.

The article referred to is as follows:

[From the Washington Post, Sept. 15, 2002]

IN IRAQI WAR SCENARIO, OIL IS KEY ISSUE

(By Dan Morgan and David B. Ottaway)

A U.S.-led ouster of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein could open a bonanza for American oil companies long banished from Iraq, scuttling oil ldeals between Baghdad and Russia, France and other countries, and reshuffling world petroleum markets, according to industry officials and leaders of the Iraqi opposition.

Although senior Bush administration officials say they have not begun to focus on the issues involving oil and Iraq, American and foreign oil companies have already begun maneuvering for a stake in the country's huge proven reserves of 112 billion barrels of crude oil, the largest in the world outside Saudi Arabia.

The importance of Iraq's oil has made it potentially one of the administration's biggest bargaining chips in negotiations to win backing from the U.N. Security Council and Western allies for President Bush's call for tough international action against Hussein. All five permanent members of the Security Council—the United States, Britain, France, Russia and China—have international oil companies with major stakes in a change of leadership in Baghdad.

''It's pretty straightforward,'' said former CIA director R. James Woolsey, who has been one of the leading advocates of forcing Hussein from power. ''France and Russia have oil companies and interests in Iraq. They should be told that if they are of assistance in moving Iraq toward decent government, we'll do the best we can to ensure that the new government and American companies work closely with them.''

But he added: ''If they throw in their lot with Saddam, it will be difficult to the point of impossible to persuade the new Iraqi government to work with them.''

Indeed, the mere prospect of a new Iraqi government has fanned concerns by non-American oil companies that they will be excluded by the United States, which almost certainly would be the dominant foreign power in Iraq in the aftermath of Hussein's fall. Representatives of many foreign oil concerns have been meeting with leaders of the Iraqi opposition to make their case for a future stake and to sound them out about their intentions.

Since the Persian Gulf War in 1991, companies from more than a dozen nations, including France, Russia, China, India, Italy, Vietnam and Algeria, have either reached or sought to reach agreements in principle to develop Iraqi oil fields, refurbish existing facilities or explore undeveloped tracts. Most of the deals are on hold until the lifting of U.N. sanctions.

But Iraqi opposition officials made clear in interviews last week that they will not be bound by any of the deals.

''We will review all these agreements, definitely,'' said Faisal Qaragholi, a petroleum engineer who directs the London office of the Iraqi National Congress (INC), an umbrella organization of opposition groups that is backed by the United States. ''Our oil policies should be decided by a government in Iraq elected by the people.''

Ahmed Chalabi, the INC leader, went even further, saying he favored the creation of a U.S.-led consortium to develop Iraq's oil fields, which have deteriorated under more than a decade of sanctions. ''American companies will have a big shot at Iraqi oil,'' Chalabi said.

The INC, however, said it has not taken a formal position on the structure of Iraq's oil industry in event of a change of leadership.

While the Bush Administration's campaign against Hussein is presenting vast possibilities for multinational oil giants, it poses

major risks and uncertainties for the global oil markets, according to industry analysts.

Access to Iraqi oil and profits will depend on the nature and intentions of a new government. Whether Iraq remains a member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, for example, or seeks an independent role, free of the OPEC cartel's quotas, will have an impact on oil prices and the flow of investments to competitors such as Russia, Venezuela and Angola.

While Russian oil companies such as Lukoil have a major financial interest in developing Iraqi fields, the low prices that could result from a flood of Iraqi oil into world markets could set back Russian government efforts to attract foreign investment in its untapped domestic fields. That is because low world oil prices could make costly ventures to unlock Siberia's oil treasures far less appealing.

Bush and Vice President Cheney have worked in the oil business and have longstanding ties to the industry. But despite the buzz about the future of Iraqi oil among oil companies, the administration, preoccupied with military planning and making the case about Hussein's potential threat, has yet to take up the issue in a substantive way, according to U.S. officials.

The Future of Iraq Group, a task force set up at the State Department, does not have oil on its list of issues, a department spokesman said last week. An official with the National Security Council declined to say whether oil had been discussed during consultations on Iraq that Bush had had over the past several weeks with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Western leaders.

On Friday, a State Department delegation concluded a three-day visit to Moscow in connection with Iraq. In early October, U.S. and Russian officials are to hold an energy summit in Houston at which more than 100 Russian and American energy companies are expected.

Rep. Curt Weldon (R–PA) said Bush is keenly aware of Russia's economic interests in Iraq, stemming from a $7 billion to $8 billion debt that Iraq ran up with Moscow before the Gulf War. Weldon, who has cultivated close ties to Putin and Russian parliamentarians, said he believed the Russian leader will support U.S. action in Iraq if he can get private assurances from Bush that Russia ''will be made whole'' financially.

Officials of the Iraqi National Congress said last week that the INC's Washington director, Entifadh K. Qanbar, met with Russian Embassy officials here last month and urged Moscow to begin a dialogue with opponents of Hussein's government.

But even with such groundwork, the chances of a tidy transition in the oil sector appear highly problematic. Rival ethnic groups in Iraq's north are already squabbling over the giant Kirkuk oil field, which Arabs, Kurds and minority Turkmen tribesmen are eyeing in the event of Hussein's fall.

Although the volumes have dwindled in recent months, the United States was importing nearly 1 million barrels of Iraqi oil a day at the start of the year. Even so, American oil companies have been banished from direct involvement in Iraq since the late 1980s, when relations soured between Washington and Baghdad.

Hussein in the 1990s turned to non-American companies to repair fields damaged in the Gulf War and Iraq's earlier war against Iran, and to tap undeveloped reserves, but U.S. government studies say the results have been disappointment.

While Russia's Lukoil negotiated a $4 billion deal in 1997 to develop the 15-billion-barrel West Qurna field in southern Iraq, Lukoil had not commenced work because of U.N. sanctions. Iraq has threatened to void the agreement unless work began immediately.

Last October, the Russian oil services company Slavneft reportedly signed a $52 million service contract to drill at the Tuba field, also in southern Iraq. A proposed $40 billion Iraqi-Russian economic agreement also reportedly includes opportunities for Russian companies to explore for oil in Iraq's western desert.

The French company Total Fina Elf has negotiated for rights to develop the huge Majnoon field, near the Iranian border, which may contain up to 30 billion barrels of oil. But in July 2001, Iraq announced it would no longer give French firms priority in the award of such contracts because of its decision to abide by the sanctions.

Officials of several major firms said they were taking care to avoiding playing any role in the debate in Washington over how to proceed on Iraq. ''There's no real upside for American oil companies to take a very aggressive stance at this stage. There'll be plenty of time in the future,'' said James Lucier, an oil analyst with Prudential Securities.

But with the end of sanctions that likely would come with Hussein's ouster, companies such as ExxonMobil and ChevronTexaco would almost assuredly play a role, industry officials said. ''There's not an oil company out there that wouldn't be interested in Iraq,'' one analyst said.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) and again repeat what an honor it is to serve with her in this House and I thank her for enabling me to be in this House because she assisted in that effort.

Mr. Speaker, I want to raise this question, and that is why is war with Iraq being presented as inevitable? Is it not time to insist that our leaders suspect this incessant talk of preemptive war, of assumed right to unilateral action, and is it not time for insistence upon preventative diplomacy and our obligations to work with the world community on matters of global security? Why is this war being presented as inevitable?

The headlines from the New York Times of September 12, 2002, read: Bush to Warn UN, Act on Iraq or U.S. Will. He Leads Nation in Mourning at Terror Sites. Mr. Speaker, there is no credible evidence linking Iraq with 9–11. There is no evidence linking Iraq with al Qaeda. There is no evidence linking Iraq with the anthrax attacks on this Nation. There is no credible evidence that Iraq has usable weapons of mass destruction, the ability to deliver those weapons or the intention to do so. When Iraq used such weapons, sad to say, they did it with the knowledge and sometimes with materials from the United States.

During the administration of Ronald Reagan, 60 helicopters were sold to Iraq. Later reports said Iraq used U.S. helicopters to spray Kurds with chemical weapons. We have heard about that. We have heard about the Kurds being attacked by Iraq with chemical weapons, but what we have not heard is that U.S. helicopters were used.

According to the Washington Post, Iraq used mustard gas against Iran with the help of intelligence from the CIA. Now, we heard that Iraq used mustard gas against Iran, but we did not hear that they did it with the help of intelligence from the CIA. Intelligence reports cited the use of nerve gas by Iraq against Iran. What was Iraq's punishment? At that time, the United States reestablished full diplomatic ties, believe it or not, around Thanksgiving of the year 1984, for the fans of George Orwell.

Throughout 1989 and 1990, U.S. companies, with the permission of the administration of the first President Bush, sent the government of Saddam Hussein tons of mustard gas precursors, live cultures for bacteriological research, helped to build a chemical weapons factory, supplied West Nile virus, supplied fuel air explosive technology and computers for weapons technology, and hydrogen cyanide precursors, and computers for weapons research and development, and vacuum pumps and bellows for nuclear weapons plants.

Now, we have to recognize that our country made a mistake in its past dealings with Iraq; that America made a mistake giving biological weapon capability and chemical weapon capability and nuclear weapon capability to Saddam Hussein. That was a mistake.

But we also have to recognize that the Gulf War destroyed most of that capability; that through 7 years of work, Scott Ritter, an arms inspector, determined that 95 percent of what they were able to track down in terms of Iraq's weapons have been eliminated through that weapons inspection process, and anything else was obliterated during the war. So there is a good reason to believe that Iraq does not have any usable weapons of mass destruction.

I want to conclude this part, and then go to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE), and then back to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR).

There is a way out of this. We do not have to go to war. It is important that we get those inspectors in there on a timely basis. There is a comprehensive solution to the crisis in Iraq. It appropriately involves the United Nations.

Inspections for weapons of mass destruction should begin immediately, and inspectors should have free and unfettered access to all sites; but, also, we need new negotiations concerning the counterproductive policies of regime change and sanctions. Emergency relief should be expedited; free trade, except in arms, must be permitted; foreign investments must be allowed; and the assets of Iraq abroad must be stored.

So, in conclusion, on this segment, Mr. Speaker, this whole idea about war being inevitable is wrong. War is not inevitable. We do not have to send America's sons and daughters to perish in the streets of Baghdad. We do not have to do that. There is a way out of this, and the American people have a right to expect that we solve this without going to war. They have a right to expect it.

I want to thank my colleague, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE), who has been articulate and passionate and learned in her explication of this issue, as she is in her explication of all issues; who serves honorably and with great integrity on the Committee on the Judiciary.

I want to say what a pleasure it is to have the participation of the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) in this discussion. I thank the gentlewoman for her presence, and I yield to her.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) and the distinguished gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR).

May I remind those who are here today that this could almost be the debate, if you will, since yesterday was the celebration or commemoration of the signing of the Constitution, we could almost drift back to how seriously the Founding Fathers, though some of the mothers were missing, took the debate in establishing this country.

As I recall, if we would read some of the history books on this, this was not a short-lived debate. The writing of the Constitution was not short-lived. So I want to say to the distinguished gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH), my applause to him for being the curdles, if you will, and it sounds like I am saying ''kernel'' because I have a cold, but curdles in the milk to cause this to rise to the level of hearing of the United States.

I think it is important before I begin my remarks, and I will try to be concise, to let my colleagues who are listening to this debate realize that most of us have been in Iraq meetings all day long, and in fact, all week long.

I think part of our difficulty is to convey to the American people that there is percolating in a broad spectrum of thought across party lines and body lines, House and Senate, there are voices who are raising the thought processes of what we believe the American people would like to us to engage in, raising questions of either skepticism or reason around this very monumental decision.

I do not wish to call colleagues' names who are probably in meetings as we speak, but I remember a meeting this morning where a colleague brought to our attention his service in Vietnam. What rings in my mind is his recounting of 56,000 body bags. This colleague did not mention that to suggest he was fearful of war, or that he would not stand for his Nation again if he was called to do so. But I think he wanted to remind us of the sanctity of our obligation, our moral obligation, as well as the high responsibility that we have as the articulators of foreign policy and the constitutional holders of the responsibility of declaring war.

So I think it is important to know that all around the Congress there are meetings. There are closed-door meetings, there are open meetings, and Members are in discussion about the question of war. It saddens us, of course, that this very active and vigorous questioning does not get shared with the American people.

So this conversation, this debate today, I say to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH), is so vital. I know we will be making this point clear.

Might I say that part of what we are trying to do, I say to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR), we have gotten some suggestions we are going to take from meetings that we have been in all day long to bring in the American people, to hear from them, by opening up our various web sites.

I think, even though this is sort of an instruction comment I am making, I think that will be very important.

□ 1845

Might I say to you that I will be flying home to hold a citizen forum on Iraq with experts on the issues in the area, in Houston. The question will be simple. Should we go to war? And we will open it up at the University of Houston. We will have the opportunity there to hear presentations with questions and answers.

I only say this publicly because I ask my colleagues as we are in meetings here in Washington, because no one is reporting that we are in meetings, that we are having intense discussions, that we go home and do the same.

Now, getting aside those as my issues, let me turn now very briefly again to why I joined my colleagues in saying we have options. The gentlewoman has already eloquently given us a historical perspective about how we have treated Iraq, what we gave to Iraq as the gentleman has said. Let me bring it forward to suggest two themes.

During our recesses we were hearing something that disturbed many of us, the question of regime change. For the life of me, I could not remember in any way where we had adopted a policy on behalf of the United States that I did not like my neighbor and I would simply knock on their door and say, It is time to get out of your house. We all made the point that we, not a one in this Congress would claim that Saddam Hussein is a friend to any of us including his own people. But the United States has never functioned as an offender, has never functioned as a perpetrator, if you will, of violence. We have always been victorious as a defender.

The times we have stepped over the line, we have questioned that policy. And I raise Vietnam because I remember very clearly the domino theory. That is why we went in allegedly. We were fearful of communism spreading, but in the end we lost 56,000. And I am not sure the final conclusion of that, though we never, never, never in any way condemned the young men and women, the men who lost their lives and the valor of our heroes who served us in Vietnam. I will never undermine their services. They are my heroes.

But I took from that a greater responsibility whenever I made a decision as a Member of this body to go to war. And so the point that should be made is that we have an alternative and there is an alternative voice. I believe that voice is free of politics. I, in fact, believe that there are voices and we have heard voices on both sides of the aisle, Republicans, Democrats, and Independents.

For that reason, I believe a very pronounced statement by one of our distinguished colleagues, one of the ranking members of an important committee, the Committee on International Relations, should be heard, that we should have a special session in order to let everyone have the time to deliberate as the Founding Fathers did, so that the members of this Nation can listen to deliberative thought on what the next step should be.

I believe, further, that we have heard a response and we should claim victory where victory has been gained. One, Congress is now engaged based upon the voices that were raised a few weeks ago; and, of course, I think we as Members raised our voices, many of us, even before the recess; and so it was heard and Congress has now actively engaged.

The second victory is that the President of the United States, who I will give applause to, did go to the United Nations. We gave, if you will, the world body the understanding that we do play on the world stage in a unified manner because we will only stand together or fall together. We must give credibility to that decision where the United Nations joined us in saying to Saddam Hussein, we must have unfettered entry into your country. And then what do we get in the last 24 hours? A response back, yes, you can.

Now, we can always reject the bride, the fiance, I do not know what we wish to call him, on the basis of I have heard this before. But how unfortunate it would be if peace looks us in the eye or some reconciliation looks us in the eye and we do not accept it. I believe it is important that we go with a thousand U.N. inspectors unfettered and immediately respond to Iraq's invitation, get there now and begin to challenge him on his own soil. Let us look.

I do not believe we should spin it, that he is not serious, that this is worthless in terms of his offer and we are now headed towards war. And the reason why I say that, as I try to conclude on some elements of where many of us are thinking, is because another colleague today in a long meeting on Iraq mentioned his constituents who traveled a mighty long way to plead with him of the desperate need of prescription drug benefits through Medicare guarantee, of nursing homes that are closing, of hospitals that may be closing, of Social Security issues that are falling around our knees, of people who have lost millions of dollars in stocks and 401(k)s that we have not responded to, and they asked us to put a

reasonable restraint on going to war because they asked us about the money.

I believe he might have responded, I am not putting words in his mouth, that we are already spending a billion dollars a month in Afghanistan. And then he had to confront the article and the statement from Lawrence Lindsey, Bush economic aid says on September 17 that the cost of the Iraq war may top $100 billion.

That is why this debate is so vital, and that is why the voice of those who have been in meetings all day long for fear that nobody is reporting the seriousness of these discussions. I have said this two or three times, this is why we have got to be able to get the attention of the American public and as well the President, that we have an action item, U.N. inspectors, and we do not need to take it to the next level of a war.

I believe if we can engage the American people, we will find the respect of the world because there is no doubt of this Nation's military power. We have to make no excuses for what we have the ability to accomplish.

Our greater, our greater results will be our ability to coalesce in the world arena, to be successful in the agenda of ridding Iraq of these weapons of mass destruction in the manner of the world family and the United Nations, and saying to this country, we will send no son and no daughter into harm's way, into the evils of war without deliberative thought and all manner of diplomacy tried, and all efforts of each and every one of us and the administration working together.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman because when she spoke of sons and daughters, that is what this is really about. This is about the sons and daughters of American people. It is about the sons and daughters of the Iraqi people who have to suffer this dictator, Saddam Hussein; and it is also about future generations. And so I thank the gentlewoman for participating in this discourse and she is welcome to stay if she can.

I want to go back to our good friend and my colleague, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR), who has ended the last discussion. We were talking about the impact on oil as an issue here, and I thought she raised some good points; and I wanted to thank her and if the gentlewoman would continue.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to join the gentlewoman from Houston, Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE), and commend her highly for the forum that will be held in Houston on Iraq and should America go to war. As always she is in the forefront of the leadership in this institution and in our country.

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to follow up on something that the gentlewoman had stated regarding reasons of war and to point out to those who are listening that there is in this post-Cold War world that there is a shifting of relationships, and nations are trying to find their way forward with new alliances; and the United States in that context has to be careful in order to not be perceived as, one, a Nation that would commit naked aggression. That is something the United States fought for the entirety of the 20th century. Rather, a Nation that always engages for justified wars, justifiable purposes. And there is a distinction, and we should not abrogate our heritage. It is what has gained us the stature that we do have internally and externally.

Mr. Speaker, I also wanted to follow on something the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) talked about when we were discussing the internal state of Iraq, their economy and their military. I think it is important to put on the record that two-thirds of Saddam Hussein's forces were leveled in the Persian Gulf War. In other words, the force is one-third of what it used to be.

The American people should not have the illusion that over the 10 years during which we and other countries have maintained the no-fly zone over Iraq that there has not been constant bombing and constant economic sanctions that have made life difficult for people inside that country, and, indeed, children dying, not enough food, extraordinary poverty among so many people. The conditions inside Iraq are abysmal.

In addition to that, Iraq essentially is an oil state. And as I mentioned earlier, it has the largest reserves outside of Saudi Arabia. Prior to the Persian Gulf War, Iraq had been pumping 3.5 million barrels a day. Today she pumps but 1.7 million barrels a day. That says that not only are the sanctions hurting her, but the lack of production is hurting her as well.

And Iraq does not operate in a vacuum. She operates in a part of the world where not everyone is her friend. And certainly she has had historic rivalries with Iran, and we all know about the invasion of Kuwait. Iraq is a secular nation in that part of the world that also has tried to defend herself from fears relating to relations with surrounding countries. So I think it is important to be realistic about what is going on there.

Therefore, we read in the Wall Street Journal, September 17, Lawrence Lindsey, the President's head of the White House National Economic Council, making the following statement, '''When there is a regime change in Iraq, you could add 3 million to 5 million barrels of production to world supply each day,' Mr. Lindsey estimated. 'The successful prosecution of the war would be good for the U.S. economy.' '''

Mr. Speaker, the entire article is as follows:

[From the Wall Street Journal, Sept. 17, 2002]

BUSH ECONOMIC AIDE SAYS COST OF IRAQ WAR MAY TOP $100 BILLION

(By Bob Davis)

WASHINGTON.—President Bush's chief economic adviser estimates that the U.S. may have to spend between $100 billion and $200 billion to wage a war in Iraq, but doubts that the hostilities would push the nation into recession or a sustained period of inflation.

Lawrence Lindsey, head of the White House's National Economic Council, projected the ''upper bound'' of war costs at between 1% and 2% of U.S. gross domestic product. With the U.S. GDP at about $10 trillion per year, that translates into a one-time cost of $100 billion to $200 billion. That is considerably higher than a preliminary, private Pentagon estimate of about $50 billion.

In an interview in his White House office. Mr. Lindsey dismissed the economic consequences of such spending, saying it wouldn't have an appreciable effect on interest rates or add much to the federal debt, which is already about $3.6 trillion. ''One year'' of additional spending? he said. ''That's nothing.''

At the same time, he doubted that the additional spending would give the economy much of a lift. ''Government spending tends not to be that stimulative,'' he said. ''Building weapons and expending them isn't the basis of sustained economic growth.''

Administration officials have been unwilling to talk about the specific costs of a war, preferring to discuss the removal of Mr. Hussein in foreign-policy or even moral terms. Discussing the economics of the war could make it seem as if the U.S. were going to war over oil. That could sap support domestically and abroad, especially in the Mideast where critics suspect the U.S. of wanting to seize Arab oil fields.

Mr. Lindsey, who didn't provide a detailed analysis of the costs, drew an analogy between the potential war expenditures with an investment in the removal of a threat to the economy. ''It's hard for me to see how we have sustained economic growth in a world where terrorists with weapons of mass destruction are running around,'' he said. If you weigh the cost of the war against the removal of a ''huge drag on global economic growth for a foreseeable time in the future, there's no comparison.''

Other administration economists say that their main fear is that an Iraq war could lead to a sustained spike in prices. The past four recessions have been preceded by the price of oil jumping to higher than $30 a barrel, according to BCA Research.com in Montreal. But the White House believes that removing Iraqi oil from production during a war—which would likely lead to a short-term rise in prices—would be insufficient to tip the economy into recession. What is worrisome, economists say, is if the war widens and another large Middle East supplier stops selling to the U.S., either because of an Iraqi attack or out of solidarity with Saddam Hussein's regime.

Mr. Lindsey said that Mr. Hussein's ouster could actually ease the oil problem by increasing supplies. Iraqi production has been constrained somewhat because of its limited investment and political factors. ''When there is a regime change in Iraq, you could add three million to five million barrels of production to world supply'' each day. Mr. Lindsey estimated. ''The successful prosecution of the war would be good for the economy.''

Currently, Iraq produces 1.7 million barrels of oil daily, according to OPEC figures. Before the Gulf War, Iraq produced around 3.5 million barrels a day.

Mr. Lindsey's cost estimate is higher than the $50 billion number offered privately by the pentagon in its conversations with Congress. The difference shows the pitfalls of predicting the cost of a military conflict when nobody is sure how difficult or long it will be. Whatever the bottom line, the war's costs would be significant enough to make it

harder for the Bush administration to climb out of the budget-deficit hole it faces because of the economic slowdown and expense of the war on terrorism.

Mr. Lindsey didn't spell out the specifics of the spending and didn't make clear whether he was including in his estimate the cost of rebuilding Iraq or installing a new regime. His estimate is roughly in line with the $58 billion cost of the gulf War, which equaled about 1 percent of GDP in 1991. During that war, U.S. allies paid $48 billion of the cost, says William Hoagland, chief Republican staffer of the Senate Budget Committee.

This time it is far from clear how much of the cost—if any—America's allies would be willing to bear. Most European allies, apart form Britain, have been trying to dissuade Mr. Bush from launching an attack, at least without a United Nations resolution of approval. But if the U.S. decides to invade, it may be able to get the allies to pick up some of the tab if only to help their companies cash in on the bounty from a post-Saddam Iraq.

Toppling Mr. Hussein could be more expensive than the Persian Gulf War if the U.S. has to keep a large number of troops in the country to stabilize it once Mr. Hussein is removed from power. Despite the Bush administration's aversion to nation building, Gen. Tommy Franks, commander of U.S. troops in the Middle East and Central Asia, recently said that the U.S. troops in Afghanistan likely would remain for years to come. The same is almost certain to be true in Iraq. Keeping the peace among Iraq's fractious ethnic groups almost certainly will require a long-term commitment of U.S. troops.

During the Gulf War, the U.S. fielded 500,000 troops. A far smaller force is anticipated in a new attack on Iraq. But the GOP's Mr. Hoagland said the costs could be higher because of the expense of a new generation of smart missiles and bombs. In addition, the nature of the assault this time is expected to be different. During the Gulf War, U.S. troops bombed from above and sent tank-led troops in for a lighting sweep through the Iraqi desert. A new Iraq war could involve prolonged fighting in Baghdad and other Iraqi cities—even including house-to-house combat.

The Gulf War started with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, which prompted a brief recession. The U.S. started bombing Iraq on Jan. 16, 1991, and called a halt to the ground offensive at the end of February.

With Iraq's invasion, oil prices spiked and consumer confidence in the U.S. plunged. But Mr. Lindsey said the chance of that happening again is ''small.'' U.S. diplomats have been trying to get assurances from Saudi Arabia, Russia and other oil-producing states that they would make up for any lost Iraqi oil production. In addition, Mr. Lindsey said that the pumping equipment at the nation's Strategic Petroleum Reserve has been improved so oil is easier to tap, if necessary. Both the Bush and Clinton administrations, he said, wanted to ''make sure you can pump oil out quickly.''

On Thursday, Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan said he doubted a war would lead to recession because of the reduced dependence of the U.S. economy on oil. ''I don't think that . . . the effect of oil as it stands at this particular stage, is large enough to impact the economy unless the hostilities are prolonged.'' Mr. Greenspan told the House Budget Committee. ''If we go through a time frame such as the Gulf War, it is unlikely to have a significant impact on us.''

The U.S. economy also has become less dependent on oil than it was in 1990, said Mark Zandi, chief economist at Economy.com, an economic consulting group in West Chester, Pa. A larger percentage of economic activity comes from services, as compared with energy-intensive manufacturers, he said. Many of those manufacturers also use more energy-efficient machinery.

We have to begin to connect the dots here with the President's advisers and with what is really going on, knowing the internals of Iraq, the nations that she relates to, her internal economic situation, and keeping our eye on when the enemy is, who was responsible for the World Trade Center, for the Pentagon and for the disaster over Pennsylvania. It is al Qaeda. They do not have roots in Iraq.

We have persistently asked the administration for any ties that they can see there; and I would just urge, as I know my colleagues are, the American people to distinguish between hearsay and evidence regarding what al Qaeda has done and what Iraq's record might be.

Now, is Iraq a perfect country? I daresay not. It is not my favorite form of government. No repressive state is. But in that part of the world there is not a single democracy or functioning democratic republic. It simply does not exist. This is the challenge for the new generation, to embrace this part of the world in ways that builds more open societies. But, certainly, naked aggression by a superpower with no evidence presented to this Congress is not a way to make friends in that part of the world where, frankly, America needs to make friends.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to put on the record tonight if there are any officials who may be listening, and I am sure my colleague, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH), would agree with this, from the government of Iraq. I, as one Member of Congress, and I know some of my colleagues would join me in this, would certainly entertain a request from the government of Iraq from Saddam Hussein to meet with Members of this Congress to negotiate the terms of inspection, respecting the role of the United Nations, having members of the United Nations team join us for that; but to extend an open arm to the people of Iraq as we move into this 21st century, to write a new page in history.

We know we do not have a great deal of trust, but one has to confront one's enemies. One has to be able to talk. Only with that kind of negotiation does one avoid war. Whether it is through third parties first and then we move to that step, as I as one Member of Congress would certainly be open to it. And I think that a number of my colleagues would join me in that effort.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, the gentlewoman is correct in suggesting that we should open up discussions and negotiations. I mean, is that not our purpose as a Nation to find a way to communicate with other nations and with the community of nations bring about global security? Certainly when any one nation in that community of nations wants to stand apart and threaten the safety and the peace of the community of nations, that needs to be regarded. That is why we need arms inspectors in Iraq.

But I want to go back to something I said initially, and that is that Iraq has not been connected to 9–11. There is no connection at all. There is no connection between Iraq and al Qaeda.

□ 1900

Even the CIA had to admit that. There is no connection between Iraq and the anthrax attacks. Americans are still grieving about 9–11, but I do not think there is a single person in this country who believes that we should attack a Nation as a payback for 9–11 when they did not have anything to do with it, and yet some people in this confusion are turning around and connecting Iraq with 9–11.

We need the inspectors, but we already know from the work that Scott Ritter did that there are not any usable weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. They do not have the ability to deliver such weapons to attack the United States. If Israel thought they had the ability to deliver such weapons to Israel, Israel has the military force to destroy that Iraqi capability if they had it.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KUCINICH. I yield to the gentlewoman from Ohio.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to mention during the Persian Gulf War when I served here and Iraq was able to launch some SCUD missiles into Israel, at that time, she could have equipped them with chemical weapons, with biological weapons, but it was not done, and why would that be? I think because Saddam Hussein, as military leader in his own country, recognized that he and his Nation would face annihilation if that happened. So there is a rational military mind working there.

Mr. KUCINICH. The gentlewoman is correct, and we go back to this, that there is a way out of this mess that we are in. We need a comprehensive solution to the crisis in Iraq, and that solution appropriately involves the world community through the United Nations.

Those inspections ought to begin immediately, and we should work cooperatively with all nations to rid Iraq of any weapons of mass destruction or any capability they may have if such weapons exist, and we should come up with a comprehensive solution which includes negotiations over sanctions because we know that hundreds of thousands of innocent Iraqi children have perished because of those sanctions, and we should include negotiations over the no-fly zone. We need to create a framework in the region for a zone free of weapons of mass destruction to ensure we do not come back to the situation at another time.

The thing that gets me is we want Iraq to give up weapons of mass destruction if they have them, but why

would Saddam Hussein want to cooperate with the United States if we have a policy of regime change which also includes a policy of wanting to assassinate him? If you have inspectors in your country and they are measuring you for a box, you might think twice about showing them around because sooner or later something might happen to you.

So if we truly want to get rid of weapons of mass destruction, we should set aside the regime change policy which defeats the goal of assuring compliance. We should rescind our policy which permits assassination of foreign leaders. I think there is a comprehensive solution which can avoid the war, and if the administration truly desires a solution without war, it must explain how that squares with its stated policy of regime change.

The goal of the United Nations is weapons inspections with these competing goals of, on one hand, weapons inspections and then regime change is going to make it very difficult to have peaceful resolution. I think that war is not inevitable here. Except if the administration's goal, if the irreducible goal is the overthrow of the Iraqi government, then we are going to have difficulty completing the inspections in which we place so much hope.

So one of the things that we have been told over the last few weeks is that Iraq presents an imminent threat. A number of us have had discussions across the country, and we have talked to people who are really learned on these arms issues, and they say Iraq really is not an imminent threat. So what is the rush to war? In my district, which is similar to the gentlewoman from Ohio's (Ms. KAPTUR), in Toledo, in Cleveland, people talk about an imminent threat, but they do not talk about Iraq. They talk about the threat of not having health insurance. There are 41 million people in this country without health insurance. That is imminent threat. Senior citizens talk about not having access to a plan which can reduce the cost of prescription drugs for them. The high cost of prescription drugs, that is an imminent threat to the American people.

The corruption in Wall Street which took hundreds of billions of dollars away from investors over a period of time, that is an imminent threat. So many people lost their 401(k)s. That is imminent threat.

People in our manufacturing industries losing their job, that is imminent threat to the American people and a long-term threat to our economy. I get calls in my office in Cleveland from people who are right on the edge of losing their homes. They have an imminent threat of losing their homes. People who need a job, retirees who lost their health insurance because their company went bankrupt, they are an imminent threat because they cannot get decent health care and they are in their senior years, not yet eligible for Medicare, though.

American people have a right to expect that we do something about these issues that affect their domestic economy, but because of all this war talk, because of this talk of an imminent threat from Iraq, which does not have usable weapons of mass destruction, which does not have the ability to deliver those weapons, which has not indicated an intent to do so, which did not have anything to do with 9–11, which did not have anything to do with al Qaeda, which did not have anything to do with the anthrax attacks, because of this imminent threat by Iraq, we somehow are supposed to forget all of the concerns of the American people who are suffering in this economy and an economy which is slowing down. We are supposed to forget all that because Iraq is an imminent threat.

Iraq is not an imminent threat, but the destruction of the American economy, the destruction of people's 401(k)s, the destruction of a family when someone has a serious illness and they cannot pay for it, that is an imminent threat, and we in this country have an obligation. We should demand that this country start focusing on the real problems which affect the daily lives of the American people. I did not come here to have to cast a vote on a bogus war against Iraq to let the real human concerns of my people in my district go wanting.

As the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) said, $100 billion and more will be spent on this war and my senior citizens in my district are splitting their pills so they can make their prescriptions last because they cannot afford the cost of a prescription drug.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his passionate statement and the people of the Cleveland area are indeed fortunate to have him here.

I would only add, when the gentleman talks about imminent threat, that if one looks at why we are in the current recession and what triggered it, it was rising oil prices, as happened during the 1970s, when the Arab oil embargo twice delivered body blows to this economy and we had prices skyrocket. The price of oil doubled per barrel until the OPEC nations said, gosh, this is not so good if we make America fall to its knees because of imported oil. Then it started to control prices from places like Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, all those countries, and then we moved into the Persian Gulf War in the early 1990s when Iraq invaded Kuwait, and again, why? Because of the threat to the world economy, especially our own, and the instability inherent in these oil economies.

Then just 2 years ago next month, the suicide bombing of the USS Cole in Yemen harbor, our destroyer. What was she doing there? Guarding the lanes of commerce as those oil tankers come out of the Persian Gulf into the West here, unload, and then it is refined here. Now, with Iraq and all these statements being made by the Bush administration, which has enormous ties to oil, it is no secret that Kenneth Lay and Enron were the largest contributors to the Bush campaign, we have this drumbeat for more U.S. involvement in that part of the world where oil props up every single one of those countries, whether it is Saudi Arabia, whether it is Iraq, whether it is Kuwait.

We really start looking around and saying, oh, and even Afghanistan, where the pipeline has to run from the Caspian Sea through Afghanistan in order for that crude oil to reach its destination, one of the imminent threats to the United States where over half of our oil is now imported, 25 percent of it from that part of the world, about 28 percent actually, we have to become energy self-sufficient here at home.

So I would say to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) thanks for all the efforts he has made with us to move into renewable energy supplies from a hydrocarbon economy to a carbohydrate, a photovoltaic economy, moving into fuel cells and new forms of power for this country so we can cut the umbilical cord to so many of these places in the world that have undemocratic regimes, and every time a consumer in our country goes to the gas pump, half the money they pay for that fuel goes to Saudi Arabia, Iraq. It goes to Venezuela, Nigeria. Not a single democratic republic among them.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I have a report here that was done by Miriam Pemberton, who is with the Institute for Policy Studies. She delivered this to a congressional briefing. She said that fears that the U.S. might go ahead with an attack on Iraq have already begun to affect oil prices. When people are going around to the pumps, just the talk of war is starting to affect oil prices. Oil is already trading close to an 18-month high of $30 a barrel. Ten months ago, according to this report, we forget, but 10 months ago, the price was half that. So within 10 months, oil has doubled in the price per barrel.

As the war fever keeps going, in effect what we have, the war fever has created a premium. So the oil companies are making more money on the war talk, and each time a U.S. official comes out and says something, she says in this report, that suggests an attack is actually imminent or is likely to happen, oil prices spike.

Vice President CHENEY made the first of two such speeches on August 26, for example, and by the end of the day the price of each barrel sold on the U.S. market had jumped 65 cents. Think about that, what war talk does.

What does a real war do? The last invasion of Iraq, right after it, oil prices doubled. They stayed high, according to this report, for the better part of a year. A repeat would create ripple effects throughout our economy. Miriam Pemberton says that estimates by Wall Street analysts indicate that a $10 per

barrel rise in oil prices, that would be half the amount of the last Gulf War, would over a year's time reduce U.S. GDP growth by about half a percent and add nearly 1 percent to inflation.

She goes on to say the economic drag from this oil price shock is being felt most strongly across the transportation sectors, and she also says that most analysts expect that a U.S. attack on Iraq would send the price of oil beyond $50 a barrel. In other words, more than three times what it was 10 months ago.

So I think that we need to understand that the cost of war is not only in our tax dollars, not only in this horrible cost of the lives of the young men and women we send over there, but also when we combine it with the tax cuts and the large increases in military spending, we are looking at a disaster for our economy. Slower growth, a recession. So we should be very concerned about the economic impact, the immediate impact of this war, and we should be concerned about the long-term economic impact of this war.

This is still about the economy, and remember, all of these debates get swept aside with the war talk. Each time the administration stands up and talks about war, we pay for it at the gas pump.

□ 1915

If we go to war, the prices are going to go up three times what they were 10 months ago. These are the concerns I have.

Mr. Speaker, in the closing few minutes I would like to, with my colleague, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR), talk about what I am hearing from my constituents in Cleveland. When they ask me what can we do, what can anyone do about this rush towards war, talk about a few things that are possible. I hear from the people in my district; they do not want a war. They expect us to solve this without going to war. They expect that we have the talent and the ability to solve these very difficult problems with other nations, particularly with a nation that used to be a good friend over in the gulf and to whom we sold chemical and biological and nuclear weapons capabilities; and if we could do that a few years ago, why not solve this. Look at the battlefields of World War II. We were at war with Japan and Germany, and they are our good friends now.

We need to work with the international community now. Let us suppose this effort, despite all of our work, just keeps moving along. What can people do, they ask me. Here is what can be done. There needs to be meetings all over this Nation in city councils, town halls, in labor halls and community centers. People need to come together, and they need to talk about how they feel about this. They need to organize.

When I was elected to city council in Cleveland many years ago, I got elected by knocking on doors. I did not have any money. I just went door to door and talked to people. We need to talk to each other again. We need an up-lifting of our civic consciousness. We need to recreate our civic soul in this country. We need to recreate our national sense of conscience; and we do it by talking to each other, by organizing door to door. Go to your neighbors, create a place for a meeting. Take the information door to door about the meeting. Let people know where they can come to talk about it and then talk about gathering more and more people. Gather by the thousands in your town squares. This is what I tell my constituents.

We need a national revival of this concept of government of the people. Government of the people works because people stay involved. Lincoln's prayer, the prayer that he gave at Gettysburg, a government of the people, by the people, and for the people, the way it is realized is when people get involved. So knock on doors. Put a piece of literature in people's hands, I tell my constituents. Tell them how they can come to a meeting. Tell them that they are needed. Bring people together, set an agenda, invite your Member of Congress or other government officials. Invite church leaders to moderate it. We need it talk to each other about this. We can avoid this war. It is not inevitable. We need to connect again with each other.

Each of us is an architect of the world, and our thoughts and words and our deeds are part of that structure of the world. We can recreate the world right now. War is not inevitable. Peace is inevitable if we begin talking to each other and organize at a community level.

There are polling lists available. You can go to a board of elections and find out who the voters are in your precinct, and you can get a list of phone numbers and call people and go back to contacting people, hold those meetings and hold those rallies. I believe, as I tell my constituents about this, that we can turn this around, that we are not stuck with war; but we need to hear from the American people. And my constituents, I tell them, if you talk to your neighbors about it, we can catalyze a change in this country. And I know that the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) works closely with her constituents and tells them how they can make a difference.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, some of the best forums that we have involved a combination of universities, church leaders, community activists, citizens, just inviting ordinary citizens to learn. Many people feel powerless. They feel this is foreign policy, what can I do about that. I think they underestimate their own power.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I think the gentlewoman is right. Today we have this new structure of the Web. They say I do not know how to use it. I say ask your kids. They have computers. They can get you on a site and you can start to talk to people.

We need to use the available technology that we have; but the best technology in a democracy is the human heart because across this country people can feel in their hearts that this war is wrong. Across this country, people know that America has a higher destiny, that it is not our destiny to be the policeman of the world. It is not our destiny to choose who should be the ruler or leader of another nation. It is our destiny to fulfill the democracy here and to defend freedom when we must.

I want to thank the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) for participating here and for starting this discussion that war is not inevitable, that Iraq was not connected to 9–11, that there is a chance that we can move forward with our intelligence, that we can some day evolve to a place where what President Franklin Roosevelt called the science of human relationships can be used to resolve our problems, not weapons technology which destroy, but our own capability to evolve in heart and soul, to become more than we are so we fulfill this dream of our founders of a government which is enlightened and a government which has a special connection to its people.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PLATTS). The Chair would remind Members to direct their remarks to the Chair and not to the television audience.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDO) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, I want to address the House tonight on an issue of importance, I think, to the Nation in terms of what we are facing in the area of domestic policy decision, which I think is an extremely important one for the country. Not surprisingly, I am going to be talking about immigration and immigration reform and a number of related issues this evening.

Mr. Speaker, recently in the Colorado newspapers there have been a series of stories and editorials about an incident that occurred some time ago that was brought to the attention of the public as a result of a story published in the Denver Post maybe a month ago, perhaps a little more than that. The story was one that identified a particular individual in Colorado, actually a particular family in Colorado who were illegal immigrants to the United States.

According to the news reports, even the Denver Post went to the Mexican consul in Denver or the Mexican consul