

immunize against life-threatening illnesses through agricultural products in a safe and effective manner.

Mr. Speaker, during the 107th Congress we successfully created a competitive merit-based grant program at the National Science Foundation to conduct bio genome research on crops that can be grown in developing countries. I strongly believe this program can make invaluable contributions to the fight against hunger, malnutrition, and disease by providing research grants to the U.S. institutions and scientists in developing countries to address their agricultural challenges.

It is my hope that trade disputes between the United States and the European Union and the African countries do not prevent this promising technology from benefiting ordinary Africans who face ongoing food shortages due to agricultural challenges such as pest, drought, and disease. Indeed, the continent may be able to reduce dependency on food aid and increase self-sufficiency through increased investment in generic engineering.

We cannot hope to combat poverty without winning the war on HIV/AIDS. The HIV/AIDS epidemic has killed more people than all of the wars of this century combined, and it will leave 40 million children homeless and orphaned by the end of the next decade. The way to beat AIDS is not to ignore or deny it, but to actively prevent it. Countries such as Uganda and Senegal that have faced the threat squarely have begun to see reductions in their infection rates.

However, in order for these reforms to take place, Africa must have sustainable stability and peace. I have said repeatedly that our involvement in peacemaking in Afghanistan and Iraq, East Timor and elsewhere around the world is not an excuse for inaction in Africa. It is a challenge to do better. Crises in Congo, Liberia, or Sudan are serious roadblocks to the way of Africa's development, and ending them will be crucial to securing long-lasting prosperity.

One of the areas where the international community must improve is in developing the resources of our African partners—so that we can move together, quickly and effectively, to prevent and respond to crises.

Mr. Speaker, there is an Arab proverb that says, "He who drinks of African waters will drink again." Africa is too big to ignore, and too rich and too important to be the object of our pity. Africa matters. We will drink, and drink again.

Africans will determine their own fate, but our help can make a difference. Our support for democracy, conflict resolution, market reform and sustainable development—these policies serve our national interest and help give Africa hope.

LEAVE IRAQ TO THE IRAQIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GERLACH). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, it seems that every day we read about a young American soldier being killed in Iraq. Three were killed in a 24-hour period from Sunday to Monday. In its November 25 issue, "Fortune" magazine, long before the war started, said an American occupation would be "prolonged and expensive" and that it "could turn U.S. troops into sitting ducks for Islamic terrorists."

Unfortunately, this prediction has turned out to be deadly accurate. This past Saturday, the top of the front page of The Washington Post had a headline reading "Attacks By Iraqi's Growing Bolder." The next day a young American soldier was shot in the head at point blank range as he stood in line to buy a soft drink.

A few days ago, the leading Shiite cleric, the most respected figure of the largest population group in Iraq, demanded that the U.S. get out and leave Iraq to the Iraqis. It is so politically correct today and sounds so fashionable and intellectual to say that the U.S. will have to be in Iraq for several years and that it will not be easy and that we must be prepared for the sacrifice and the difficulties ahead.

Well, someone should ask why. Saddam Hussein was a very evil man, a tyrant, a dictator; but his total military budget was only about two-tenths of 1 percent of ours. He was no threat to us, as this 3-week battle, with almost no resistance, proved. Our military did a great job, as we all knew they would. Now we should bring them home.

President Eisenhower, as everyone knows, was a retired Army general, a graduate of West Point. He loved the military. Yet he warned us as strongly as he possibly could against what he call the military industrial complex. Pressured by this complex, we have now spent over \$100 billion on the operation in Iraq. The Congressional Budget Office originally estimated that a 3-month war followed by a 5-year occupation would cost us at least \$272 billion. Most estimate that we will stay in Iraq for 5 to 10 years, at a cost of 200 to \$300 billion, or more. And because we already face a \$400 billion deficit for this year, and hundreds of billions more in the years ahead, we will have to borrow the money to do all this. Once again, we should ask: Why?

Already we have had demonstrations by Iraqi soldiers demanding back pay, and similar demands from Iraqi retirees. Why should Americans taxpayers borrow hundreds of billions to pay the Iraqi military or Iraqi retirees to rebuild Iraq? We are jeopardizing the futures of our children and grandchildren. I believe our Founding Fathers would be shocked if they knew what we were doing today.

I remember reading a few years ago in The Washington Post that we had our troops in Haiti picking up garbage and settling domestic disputes. Later I read that we had our troops in Bosnia building latrines and giving rabies shots to Bosnian dogs. I have nothing

against the people in either Haiti or Bosnia, but they should pick up their own garbage and build their own toilets.

Now we are told that the military will build or rebuild 6,000 schools in Iraq and give free basic health care to any Iraqis who need it. We will stay in Iraq for many years, at great expense to U.S. citizens, because several large multinational companies will benefit from large contracts there. We will stay there because all the pressures and money and power and glory within the Department of Defense, the State Department, the National Security Council, and our intelligence agencies are to continue to do more and more in other countries.

These people are not seen as world statesmen and men and women of action unless we get involved in every dispute around the world. They never debate or discuss the merits of all this; they just label all opponents of an interventionist foreign policy as isolationist. However, whenever anyone uses this term, they are simply resorting to mindless name-calling.

Now I suppose we are going into the chaos in Liberia, as we have Haiti, Rwanda, Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, Iraq, and Lord knows where next.

What we really need are more Calvin Coolidges, more people in government who believe in a humble foreign policy. None of these countries were any threat to us. Should we now change the name of the Defense Department to the Department of Foreign Aid or the Department of International Social Work?

I believe in and have always supported a strong national defense, but I do not believe in massive foreign aid. Most of our foreign adventures are creating great resentment toward the U.S. around the world.

The Iraqi people may have hated Saddam Hussein, but they do not want Americans or our puppets running their country either. They have humongous oil wealth. Let them rebuild their own country. The only Iraqis who want us to stay there are the ones we are paying or who believe they can get money from us in the future.

Our first obligation should be to America citizens, and the lives of American soldiers should be precious to us. Let us bring our troops home before more and more of them are murdered. We can be friends with the Iraqi people without making our soldiers sitting ducks for Islamic terrorists.

Mr. Speaker, let us leave Iraq to the Iraqis.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO TOMAS SOTELO, JR.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay a posthumous tribute to Tomas Sotelo, Jr.,