transfusions have saved lives around the world. Instead, we must focus our hearts and minds on the 7.4 million African Americans without healthcare insurance and the millions more who can barely afford to pay their premiums. The President makes no serious attempt to address these issues in his budget.

In addition, the President's budget cuts by 15 percent funding for the Office of Minority Health. This office supports disease prevention, health promotion, and educational efforts in minority communities. Black Americans suffer proportionally higher rates of heart disease, obesity and diabetes and are in need of such services.

The disparities between the lives of many African Americans and the rest of our country are unconscionable. Whether one looks to jobs, education and healthcare the President's budget fails to address problems facing the African American community at virtually every turn.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to be here today speaking of African American contributions and achievements. Instead, I am compelled to talk about the persistence of ''separate but equal'' in our society, and the sad fact that the President's budget does little to confront this entrenched separation in our country.

A WISE CONSISTENCY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BEAUPREZ). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, a wise consistency is the foundation of a free society, yet everyone knows or thinks they know that consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds.

How many times has Ralph Waldo Emerson been quoted to belittle a consistent philosophy defending freedom? Even on this floor I have been rebuked by a colleague with this quote for pointing out the shortcomings of Congress in not consistently and precisely following the oath to uphold the Constitution.

The need to discredit consistency is endemic. It is considered beneficial to be flexible and pragmatic while rejecting consistency. Otherwise, the self-criticism would be more than most Members could take.

The comfort level of most politicians in D.C. requires an attitude that consistency not only is unnecessary, but detrimental. For this reason, Emerson's views are conveniently cited to justify pragmatism and arbitrary intervention in all our legislative endeavors.

Communism was dependent on firm, consistent, and evil beliefs. Authoritarian rule was required to enforce these rules, however. Allowing alternative views to exist, as they always do, guarantees philosophic competition.

For instance, the views in Hong Kong eventually won out over the old communism of the Chinese mainland, but it can work in the other direction. If the ideas of socialism within the context of our free society are permitted to raise their ugly head, it may well replace what we have if we do not consistently and forcefully defend the free market and personal liberty.

It is quite a distortion of Emerson's views to use them as justification for the incoherent and nonsensical policies coming out of Washington today. But the political benefits of not needing to be consistent are so overwhelming that there is no interest in being philosophically consistent in one's votes.

It is a welcome convenience to be able to support whatever seems best for the moment, the congressional district or one's political party. Therefore, it is quite advantageous to cling to the notion that consistency is a hobgoblin. For this reason, statesmanship in D.C. has come to mean one's willingness to give up one's own personal beliefs in order to serve ''the greater good,'' whatever that is.

But it is not possible to preserve the rule of law or individual liberty if our convictions are no stronger than this. Otherwise, something will replace our Republic that was so carefully designed by the founders. That something is not known, but we can be certain it will be less desirable than what we have.

As for Emerson, he was not even talking about consistency in defending political views that were deemed worthy and correct. Emerson clearly explained the consistency he was criticizing. He was most annoyed by a foolish consistency. He attacked bullheadedness, believing that intellectuals should be more open-minded and tolerant of new ideas and discoveries.

His attack targeted the Flat Earth Society types in the world of ideas. New information, he claimed, should always lead to reassessment of our previous conclusions. To Emerson, being unwilling to admit an error and consistently defending a mistaken idea, regardless of facts, was indeed a foolish consistency. His reference was to a character trait, not sound, logical thinking.

Since it is proven that centralized control over education and medicine has done nothing to improve them, and instead of reassessing these programs, more money is thrown into the same centralized planning, this is much closer to Emerson's foolish consistency than defending liberty and private property in a consistent and forceful manner while strictly obeying the Constitution.

Emerson's greatest concern was the consistency of conformity. Nonconformity and tolerance of others obviously are much more respected in a free society than in a rigidly planned authoritarian society. The truth is that Emerson must be misquoted in order to use him against those who rigidly and consistently defend a free society, cherish and promote diverse opinions, and encourage nonconformity.

A wise and consistent defense of liberty is more desperately needed today than at any time in our history. Our foolish and inconsistent policies of the last 100 years have brought us to a critical juncture, with the American way of life at stake. It is the foolish inconsistencies that we must condemn and abandon. Let me mention a few.

One: conservatives who spend. Conservatives for years have preached fiscal restraint and balanced budgets. Once in charge, they have rationalized huge spending increases and gigantic growth in the size of government, while supporting a new-found religion that preaches deficits do not matter. According to Paul O'Neill, the Vice President lectured him that Reagan proved deficits do not matter.

Conservatives who no longer support balanced budgets and less government should not be called conservatives. Some now are called neo-conservatives. The conservative label merely deceives the many Americans who continuously hope the day of fiscal restraint will come. Yet if this deception is not pointed out, success in curtailing government growth is impossible.

Is it any wonder the national debt is $7 trillion and growing by over $600 billion per year? Even today, the only expression of concern for the deficit seems to come from liberals. That ought to tell us something about how far astray we have gone.

Number two: free trade fraud, neomercantilism. Virtually all economists are for free trade. Even politicians express such support. However, many quickly add, yes, but it should be fair. That is, free trade is fine unless it appears to hurt someone. Then a little protectionism is warranted, for fairness' sake. Others who claim allegiance to free trade are only too eager to devalue their own currencies, which harms a different group of citizens, like importers and savers in competitive devaluations in hopes of gaining a competitive edge.

Many so-called free trade proponents are champions of international agreements that undermine national sovereignty and do little more than create an international bureaucracy to manage tariffs and sanctions. Organizations like NAFTA and WTO and the coming FTAA are more likely to benefit the powerful special interests than to enhance true free trade.

Nothing is said, however, about how a universal commodity monetary standard would facilitate trade, nor is it mentioned how unilaterally lowering tariffs can benefit a nation. Even bilateral agreements are ignored when our trade problems are used as an excuse to promote dangerous internationalism.

Trade as an issue of personal liberty is totally ignored; but simply put, one ought to have the right to spend one's own money any way one wants. Buying cheap foreign products can have a great economic benefit for our citizens and serve as an incentive to improve production here at home. It also puts pressure on us to reassess the onerous regulations and tax burdens placed on our business community.

Monopoly wages that force wage rates above the market also are challenged when true free trade is permitted; and this, of course, is the reason free trade is rejected. Labor likes higher-than-market wages, and business likes less competition.

In the end, consumers, all of us, suffer. Ironically, the free traders in Congress were the most outspoken opponents of drug reimportation, with the convoluted argument claiming that the free trade position should prohibit the reimportation of pharmaceuticals. So much for a wise consistency.

Number three: following the Constitution, arbitrarily, of course. Following the Constitution is a convenience shared by both liberals and conservatives, at times. Everyone takes the same oath of office, and most Members of Congress invoke the Constitution at one time or another to make some legislative point. The fact that the Constitution is used periodically to embarrass one's opponents when convenient requires that no one feel embarrassed by an inconsistent voting record.

Believing that any consistency, not just a foolish one, is a philosophic hobgoblin, gives many Members welcome reassurance. This allows limited-government conservatives to massively increase the size and scope of government while ignoring the deficit. Liberals who also preach their own form of limited government in the areas of civil liberties and militarism have no problems with a flexible, pragmatic approach to all government expenditures and intrusions. The net result is that the oath of office to abide by all constitutional restraints on government power is rarely followed.

Number four: paper money, inflation and economic pain. Paper money and inflation have never provided long-term economic growth, nor have they enhanced freedom. Yet the world, led by the United States, lives with a financial system awash with fiat currencies and historic debt as a consequence.

No matter how serious the problems that come from central bank monetary inflations, the depressions and inflations, unemployment, social chaos and war, the only answer has been to inflate even more. Except for the Austrians, free market economists, the consensus is that the Great Depression was prolonged and exacerbated by the lack of monetary inflation. This view is held by Alan Greenspan and is reflected in his January 2001 response to the stock market slump and slower economy, namely, a record monetary stimulus and historically low interest rates.

The unwillingness to blame the slumps on the Federal Reserve's previous errors, though the evidence is clear, guarantees that greater problems for the United States and the world economy lie ahead. Though there is adequate information to understand the real cause of the business cycle, the truth and proper policy are not available.

Closing down the engine of inflation at any point does cause short-term problems that are politically unacceptable, but the alternative is worse in the long run.

It is not unlike a drug addict demanding and getting a fix in order to avoid the withdrawal symptoms. Not getting rid of the addiction is a deadly mistake. While resorting to continued monetary stimulus through credit creation delays the pain and suffering, it inevitably makes the problems much worse. Debt continues to build in all areas, personal, business and government; inflated stock prices are propped up, waiting for another collapse; malinvestment and overcapacity fail to correct; insolvency proliferates without liquidation.

These same errors have been prolonging the correction in Japan for 14 years, with billions of dollars of nonperforming loans still on the books. Failure to admit and recognize that fiat money, paper money, mismanaged by central banks gives us most of our economic problems, along with a greater likelihood for war, means we never learn from our mistakes.

□ 2015

Our consistent response is to inflate faster and borrow more, which each downturn requires to keep the economy afloat. Talk about a foolish consistency. It is time for our leaders to admit the error of their ways, consider the wise consistency of following the advice of our founders, and reject paper money and central bank inflationary policies.

Number five: Alcohol prohibition. For Our Own Protection.

Alcohol prohibition was a foolish consistency engaged in for over a decade, but we finally woke up to the harm done. In spite of prohibition, drinking continued. The alcohol being produced in the underground was much more deadly, and related crimes ran rampant. The facts stared us in the face and, with time, we had the intelligence to repeal the whole experiment.

No matter how logical this reversal of policy was, it did not prevent us from moving into the area of drug prohibition, now in the more radical stages for the past 30 years.

No matter the amount of harm and cost involved, very few in public life are willing to advise a new approach to drug addiction. Alcoholism is viewed as a medical problem, but illicit drug addiction is seen as a heinous crime. Our prisons overflow with the cost of enforcement, now into the hundreds of billions of dollars, yet drug use is not reduced.

Nevertheless, the politicians are consistent. They are convinced that a tough stand against usage, with very strict laws and mandatory sentences, sometimes life sentences for nonviolent offenses, is a popular political stand. Facts do not count, and we cannot bend on consistently throwing the book at any drug offender. Our prisons are flooded with nonviolent drug users.

Mr. Speaker, 84 percent of all Federal prisoners are now nonviolent drug users, but no serious reassessment is considered.

Sadly, the current war on drugs has done tremendous harm to many patients' needs for legitimate prescribed pain control. Doctors are very often compromised in their ability to care for the seriously and terminally ill by overzealous law enforcement.

Throughout most of our history, drugs were legal and, at times, were abused but, during that time, there was no history of the social and legal chaos associated with drug use that we suffer today. One hundred years ago a pharmacist openly advertised, ''Heroin clears the complexion, gives buoyancy to the mind, regulates the stomach and the bowels and is, in fact, a perfect guardian of health.'' Obviously, this is overstated as a medical panacea, but it describes what it was like not to have hysterical busybodies undermine our Constitution and waste billions of dollars on a drug war serving no useful purpose.

This country needs to wake up. We should have more confidence in citizens making their own decisions and decide, once again, to repeal Federal prohibition, while permitting regulations by the States alone.

Six: The FDA and legal drugs. For Our Own Protection.

Our laws and attitudes regarding legal drugs are almost as harmful. The FDA supposedly exists to protect the consumer and patients. This conclusion is based on the assumption that consumers are idiots and all physicians and drug manufacturers are unethical or criminals. It also assumes that bureaucrats and politicians, motivated by good intentions, can efficiently bring drugs onto the market in a timely manner and at a reasonable cost. These same naive dreamers are the ones who say that in order to protect the people from themselves we must prohibit them from being allowed to reimport drugs from Canada or Mexico at great savings.

The FDA virtually guarantees that new drugs come on line slower and cost more money. Small companies are unable to pay the legal expenses and do not get the friendly treatment that politically connected big drug companies receive. If a drug seems to offer promise, especially for a life-threatening disease, why is it not available with full disclosure to anyone who wants to try it? No, our protectors say that no one gets to use it or make their own decisions until the FDA guarantees that each drug has been proven safe and effective. And, believe me, the FDA is quite capable of making mistakes, even after years of testing.

It seems criminal when cancer patients come to our congressional offices begging and pleading for a waiver to try some new drug. We call this a

free society. For those who cannot get a potentially helpful drug, but might receive a little comfort from some marijuana raised in their own backyard legally in their home State, the heavy hand of the DEA comes down hard, actually arresting and imprisoning ill patients. Federal drug laws blatantly preempt State laws, adding insult to injury.

Few remember that the first Federal laws regulating marijuana were written as recently as 1938, which means just a few decades ago our country had much greater respect for individual choices and State regulations in all health manners.

The nanny state is relatively new but well entrenched. Sadly, we foolishly and consistently follow the dictates of prohibition and government control of new medications, never questioning the wisdom of these laws.

The silliness regarding illegal drugs and prescription drugs was recently demonstrated. It was determined that a drug used to cause an abortion can be made available over the counter. However, Ephedra, used by millions for various reasons and found in nature, was made illegal as a result of one death after being misused. Individuals no longer can make their own decisions at an affordable price to use Ephedra. Now it will probably require a prescription and cost many times more. It can never be known, but weight loss by thousands using Ephedra may well have saved many lives, but the real issue is personal choice and responsibility, not the medicinal effects of these drugs. This reflects our moral standards, not an example of individual freedom and responsibility.

Number seven: Foreign Policy of Interventionism.

Our foreign policy of interventionism offers the best example of Emerson's foolish inconsistency. No matter how unsuccessful our entanglements become, our leaders rarely question the wisdom of trying to police the world. Most of the time, our failures prompt even greater intervention, rather than less. Never yielding to the hard, cold facts of our failures, our drive to meddle in nation-building around the world continues. Complete denial of the recurrent blow-back from our meddling, a term used by our own CIA, prompts us to spend endlessly, while jeopardizing the lives of hundreds of thousands of people.

Refusing to even consider the failure of our own policies is outrageous. Only in the context of commercial benefits to the special interests and the military industrial complex, molded with patriotic jingoism, can one understand why we pursue such a foolish policy. Some of these ulterior motives are understandable, but the fact that average Americans rarely question our commitment to these dangerous and expensive military operations is disturbing. The whipped-up war propaganda too often overrules the logic that should prevail. Certainly, the wise consistency of following the Constitution has little appeal.

One would think the painful consequences of our militarism over the last 100 years would have made us more reluctant to assume the role of world policeman in a world that hates us more each day.

A strong case can be made that all the conflicts, starting with the Spanish-American war up to our current conflict in the Middle East, could have been avoided. For instance, the foolish entrance into World War I to satisfy Wilson's ego led to disastrous peace at Versailles, practically guaranteeing World War II. Likewise, our ill-advised role in the Persian Gulf War I placed us in an ongoing guerilla war in Iraq and Afghanistan, which may become a worldwide conflict before it ends.

Our foolish antics over the years have prompted our support for many thugs throughout the 20th century, Stalin, Somoza, Batista, the Shah of Iran, Noriega, Osama bin Laden, Saddam Hussein and many others, only to regret it once the unintended consequences became known. Many of those we supported turned on us or our interference generated a much worse replacement, such as the Ayatollah in Iran.

If we had consistently followed the wise advice of our early presidents, we could have avoided the foreign policy problems we face today and, if we had, we literally would have prevented hundreds of thousands of needless deaths over the last century. The odds are slim to none that our current failure in Afghanistan and Iraq will prompt our administration to change its policies of intervention.

Ignoring the facts and rigidly sticking to a failed policy, a foolish consistency as our leaders have repeatedly done over the past 100 years unfortunately will prevail, despite its failure and huge costs.

This hostility toward principled consistency and common sense allows for gross errors in policymaking. Most Americans believed, and still do, that we went to war against Saddam Hussein because he threatened us with weapons of mass destruction and his regime was connected to the al Qaeda. The fact that Saddam Hussein not only did not have weapons of mass destruction but essentially had no military force at all seems to be of little concern to those who took us to war.

It was argued, after our allies refused to join in our efforts, that a unilateral approach without the United Nations was proper under our notion of national sovereignty. Yet resolutions giving the President authority to go to war cited the United Nations 21 times, forgetting the U.S. Constitution that allows only Congress to declare war. A correct declaration of war was rejected out of hand.

Now, with events going badly, the administration is practically begging the U.N. to take over the transition, except, of course, for the Iraqi Development Fund that controls the oil and all of the seized financial assets. The contradictions and distortions surrounding the Iraqi conflict are too numerous to count. Those who wanted to institutionalize the doctrine of preemptive war were not concerned about the Constitution or consistency in our foreign policy and, for this, the American people and world peace will suffer.

Number eight: Promoting Democracy. An Obsession Whose Time Has Passed.

Promoting democracy is now our Nation's highest ideal. Wilson started it with his ill-advised drive to foolishly involve us in World War I. His Utopian dream was to make the world safe for democracy. Instead, his naivete and arrogance promoted our involvement in the back-to-back tragedies of World War I and World War II. It is hard to imagine the rise of Hitler in World War II without the Treaty of Versailles, but this has not prevented every President since Wilson from promoting U.S.-style democracy to the rest of the world.

Since no weapons of mass destruction or al Qaeda have been found in Iraq, the explanation given now for having gone there was to bring democracy to the Iraqi people. Yet we hear now that the Iraqis are demanding immediate free elections not controlled by the United States, but our administration says the Iraqi people are not yet ready for free elections. The truth is that a national election in Iraq would bring individuals to power that the administration does not want. Democratic elections will have to wait.

This makes the point that our persistence in imposing our will on others through military force ignores sound thinking, but we never hear serious discussions about changing our policy of meddling and empire-building, no matter how bad the results. Regardless of the human and financial costs for all of the wars fought over the past 100 years, few question the principle and legitimacy of interventionism.

Bad results, while only sowing the seeds of our next conflict, concern few here in Congress. Jingoism, the dream of empire, and the interests of the military industrial complex generates the false patriotism that energizes supporters of our foreign entanglements.

Direct media coverage of the more than 500 body bags coming back from Iraq is now prohibited by the administration. Seeing the mangled lives and damaged health of thousands of our other casualties of this war would help the American people to put this war in proper perspective.

□ 2030

Almost all war is unnecessary and rarely worth the cost. Seldom does a good peace result.

Since World War II, we have intervened 35 times in developing countries, according to the L.A. Times, without a single successful example of a stable democracy. Their conclusion, ''American engagement abroad has not led to

more freedom or more democracy in countries where we have become involved.''

So far the peace in Iraq, that is, the period following the declared end of hostilities, has set the stage for a civil war in this forlorn, Western-created, artificial state. A U.S.-imposed national government unifying the Kurds, the Sunnis, and the Shiites will never work. Our allies deserted us in this misadventure, dumping the responsibility on the U.N., while retaining control of the spoils of war as a policy of folly that can result only in more Americans being killed. This will only fuel the festering wounds of Middle East hatred toward all Western occupiers.

The Halliburton scandals and other military industrial connections to the occupation of Iraq will continue to annoy our allies and, hopefully, a growing number of American taxpayers.

I have a few suggestions on how to alter our consistently foolish policy in Iraq. Instead of hiding behind Wilson's utopianism of making the world safe for democracy, let us try a new approach.

First, the internal affairs and the needs for nation-building in Iraq are none of our business. Our goal in international affairs ought to be to promote liberty and private property, free market order through persuasion and example and never by force of arms, clandestine changes or preemptive war.

We should give up our obsession with democracy, both for ourselves and others, since the dictatorship of the majority is just as destructive to a minority, especially individual liberty, as a single Saddam Hussein-like tyrant.

Does anyone really believe that the Shiite majority can possibly rule fairly over the Sunnis and the Kurds?

A representative republic loosely held together with autonomy for each state or province is the only hope in a situation like this. But since we have systematically destroyed that form of government here in the United States, we cannot possibly be the ones who will impose the system on a foreign and very different land 6,000 miles away, no matter how many bombs we drop or people we kill.

This type of change can only come with a change in philosophy and an understanding of the true nature of liberty. It must be an intellectual adventure, not a military crusade.

If for no other reason, Congress must soon realize that we can no longer can afford to maintain an empire circling the globe. It is a Sisyphean task to rebuild the Iraq we helped to destroy while our financial problems mount here at home. The American people eventually will rebel and demand that all job and social programs begin here at home before we waste billions more in Iraq and Afghanistan and many other forlorn lands around the world.

The Constitution places restraints on Congress and the executive branch so as not to wage war casually and without proper declaration. It provides no authority to spend money or lives to spread our political message around the world. A strict adherence to the rule of law and the Constitution would bring an immediate halt to our ill-advised experiment in assuming the role of world policeman.

We have been told that our efforts in Iraq has been worth the 500-plus lives lost and the thousands wounded. I disagree. With great sadness for the families who have lost so much and with so little hope for a good peace, I can only say I disagree and I hope I am wrong.

Number nine: Fighting terrorism with big government, a convenience or necessity?

Fighting terrorism is a top concern for most Americans. It is understandable, knowing how vulnerable we now are to an attack by our enemies, but striking out against the liberties of all Americans with the Patriot Act, the FBI, or the Guantanamo-type justice will hardly address the problem.

Liberty cannot be enhanced by undermining liberty. It is never necessary to sacrifice liberty to preserve it. It is tempting to sacrifice liberty for safety, and that is the argument used all too often by the politicians seeking more power. But even that is not true.

History shows that a strong desire for safety over liberty usually results in less of both. But that does not mean that we should ignore the past attacks or the threat of future attacks that our enemies might unleash.

First, fighting terrorism is a cliche. Terrorism is a technique or process, and if not properly defined the solutions will be hard to find. Terrorism is more properly defined as an attack by a guerilla warrior who picks the time and place of the attack because he cannot match the enemy with conventional weapons. With too broad a definition of terrorism, the temptation will be to relinquish too much liberty, being fearful that behind every door and in every suitcase lurks a terrorist-planted bomb. Narrowing the definition of terrorism and recognizing why some become enemies is crucial.

Understanding how maximum security is achieved in a free society is vital.

We have been told that the terrorists hate us for our wealth, our freedom and our goodness. This war cannot be won if that belief prevails. When the definition of terrorism is vague and the enemy pervasive throughout the world, the neo-conservatives who want to bring about various regime changes for other reasons conveniently latch onto these threats and use them as the excuse and justification for our expanding military presence throughout the Middle East and the Caspian Sea region.

This is something they have been anxious to do all along. Already plans are being laid by neo-conservative leaders to further expand our occupations to many other countries, from Central America and Africa to Korea. Whether it is invading Iraq, threatening North Korea or bullying Venezuela or even Russia, it is now popular to play the terrorist card. Just mention terrorism and the American people are expected to grovel and allow the war hawks to do whatever they want. This is a very dangerous attitude.

One would think that with the shortcomings of the Iraqi occupation becoming more obvious every day more Americans would question our flagrant and aggressive policy of empire building.

The American people were frightened into supporting this war because they were told that Iraq had 25,000 liters of anthrax; 38,000 liters of botulinum toxin; 500 tons of sarin, mustard, and VX nerve gas; significant quantities of refined uranium and special aluminum tubes used in developing nuclear weapons.

The fact that none of this huge amount of material was found and the fact that David Kay resigned from heading up the inspection team saying none will be found does not pacify the instigators of this policy of folly. They merely look forward to the next regime change as they eye their list of potential targets, and they argue with conviction that the 500-plus lives lost were worth it.

Attacking a perceived enemy who had few weapons, who did not aggress against it and who never posed a threat to us does nothing to help eliminate the threat of terrorist attacks. If anything, deposing an Arab Muslim leader, even a bad one, incites more hatred towards us, certainly not less. This is made worse if our justification for the invasion was in error.

It is safe to say that in time we will come to realize that our invasion has made us less safe and has served as a grand recruiting tool for the many militant Muslim groups that want us out of their countries, including the majority of those Muslims in Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Afghanistan and the entire Middle East.

Because of the nature of the war in which we find ourselves, catching Saddam Hussein or even killing Osama bin Laden are almost irrelevant. They may well simply become martyrs to their cause and incite even greater hatred toward us.

There are a few things we must understand if we ever expect this war to end. The large majority, especially all the militant Muslims see us as invaders, occupiers, and crusaders. We have gone a long way from home and killed a lot of people, and none of them believe it is to spread our goodness.

Whether or not some supporters of this policy of intervention are sincere in bringing democracy and justice to the region, it just does not matter. No one over there believes us.

This war started a long time before 9/11. That attack was just the most dramatic event of the war so far. The Arabs have fought Western crusaders

for centuries, and they have not yet forgotten the European Crusades centuries ago. Our involvement has been going on to some degree since World War II but was dramatically accelerated in 1991 with the Persian Gulf War invasion and with the collapse of the Soviet system.

Placing U.S. troops on what is considered Muslim holy land in Saudi Arabia was pouring salt in the wounds of this already existing hatred. We belatedly realized this and have removed these troops.

If these facts are ignored, there is no chance that the United States-led Western occupation of the oil-rich Middle East can succeed. Seventy percent of the world's oil is in the Persian Gulf and Caspian Sea regions. Without a better understanding of the history of the region, it is not even possible to define the enemy, know why they fight or understand the difference between guerilla warrior attacks and vague sinister forces of terrorism.

The pain of recognizing that the ongoing war is an example of what the CIA calls blowback and an unintended consequence of our foreign policy is a great roadblock to ever ending the war.

Number ten: Judicial review.

Respect for the original intent of the Constitution is low in Washington. It is so low it is virtually non-existent. This causes much foolish inconsistency in our Federal courts. The Constitution, we have been told, is a living, evolving document; and it is no longer necessary to change it in the proper manner. That method is too slow and cumbersome, it is claimed.

While we amended it to institute alcohol prohibition, the Federal drug prohibition is accomplished by majority vote by the U.S. Congress. Wars are not declared by Congress but pursued by executive orders to enforce U.N. resolution.

The debate of the pros and cons of the war come afterwards, usually following the war's failure, in the political arena rather than before with the proper debate on a declaration of war resolution. Laws are routinely written by unelected bureaucrats with themselves becoming the judicial enforcement authority.

Little desire is expressed in Congress to alter this monster that creates thousands of pages each year in the Federal Register. Even the nearly 100,000 bureaucrats who now carry guns stir little controversy. For decades executive orders have been arrogantly used to write laws to circumvent a plodding or disagreeable Congress. This attitude was best described by a Clinton presidential aide who bragged, ''Stroke of the pen, law of the land, kinda cool.''

This is quite a testimonial to the rule of law and constitutional restraint on government power.

The courts are no better than the executive or legislative branches in limiting the unconstitutional expansion of the Federal monolith. Members of Congress, including committee chairmen, downplay my concern that proposed legislation is unconstitutional by insisting that the courts are the ones to make such weighty decisions, not mere Members of Congress.

This was an informal argument made by House leadership on the floor during the debate on campaign finance reform. In essence, they said, we know it is bad, but we will let the courts clean it up. And look what happened. The courts did not save us from ourselves.

Something must be done, however, if we expect to rein in our ever-growing and intrusive government. Instead of depending on the courts to rule favorably when Congress and the executive branch go astray, we must curtail the courts when they overstep their authority by writing laws rubber-stamping bad legislation or overruling State laws.

Hopefully, in the future we will have a Congress more cognizant of its responsibility to legislate within the confines of the Constitution.

There is something Congress by majority vote can do to empower the States to deal with their first amendment issues. It is clear that Congress has been instructed to write no laws regarding freedom of speech, religion or assembly. This obviously means that Federal courts have no authority to do so either. Therefore, the remaining option is for Congress to specifically remove jurisdiction of all first amendment controversies from all Federal courts, including the Supreme Court.

Issues dealing with prayer, the Ten Commandments, religious symbols or clothing or songs, even the issue of abortion are properly left as a prerogative of the States. A giant step in this direction could be achieved with the passage of my proposed legislation, We The People Act.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, Emerson's real attack was on intellectual conformity without a willingness to entertain new ideas based on newly acquired facts. This is what he referred to as a ''foolish inconsistency.''

The greatest open-minded idea I am aware of is to know that one does not know what is best for others, whether it is in the economic, social or moral policy or in the affairs of other nations. Believing one knows what is best for others represents the greatest example of a closed mind. Friedrich Hayek referred to this as a pretense of knowledge. Governments are no more capable of running the economy made fair for everyone than they are of telling the individual what is best for their spiritual salvation.

□ 2045

There are a thousand things in between that the busybody politicians, bureaucrats, and judges believe they know and yet do not. Sadly, our citizens have become dependent on government for nearly everything from cradle to grave and look to government for all guidance and security.

Continuously ignoring Emerson's advice on self-reliance is indeed a foolish consistency which most of the politicians now in charge of the militant nanny state follow, and it is an armed state, domestic as well as foreign. Our armies tell the Arab world what is best for them, while the armed bureaucrats at home harass our own people into submission and obedience to every law and regulation, most of which are incomprehensible to the average citizen.

Ask three IRS agents for an interpretation of the Tax Code and you will get three different answers. Ask three experts in the Justice Department to interpret the anti-trust laws and you will get three different answers. First, they will tell you it is illegal to sell too low. Then they will tell you it is illegal to sell too high, and it is certainly illegal if everybody sold products at the same price. All three positions can get you into plenty of trouble and blamed for, first, undermining competition; second, for having too much control and gouging the public; and, third, for engaging in collusion. The people cannot win.

Real knowledge is to know what one does not know. The only society that recognizes this fact and understands how productive enterprise is generated is a free society, unencumbered with false notions of grandeur. It is this society that generates true tolerance and respect for others.

Self-reliance and creativity blossom in a free society. This does not mean anarchy, chaos or libertine behavior. Truly, only a moral society can adapt to personal liberty. Some basic rules must be followed and can be enforced by government, most suitably by local and small government entities. Honoring all voluntary contractual arrangements, social and economic, protection of all life, and established standards for private property ownership are the three principles required for a free society to remain civilized. Depending on the culture, the government could be the family, the tribe, or some regional or State entity.

The freedom philosophy is based on the humility that we are not omnipotent but also the confidence that true liberty generates the most practical solution to all our problems, whether they are economic, domestic security, or national defense. Short of this, any other system generates authoritarianism that grows with each policy failure and eventually leads to a national bankruptcy. It was this end, not our military budget, which brought the Soviets to their knees.

A system of liberty allows for the individual to be creative, productive, or spiritual on one's own terms, and encourages excellence and virtue. All forms of authoritarianism only exist at the expense of liberty. Yet the humanitarian do-gooders claim to strive for these very same goals. To understand the difference is crucial to the survival of a free society.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the gentlewoman from California's (Ms. LEE) Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BEAUPREZ). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

IRAQ WATCH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, we are here again this evening. As I am sure many of our colleagues are aware, during the course of the past 8 months, several of us have taken to the floor to discuss issues surrounding Iraq, Afghanistan, and other issues of concern related to the war on terror, particularly as it is focused in the Middle East.

I am joined tonight by two members of that group. We call ourselves the Iraq Watch, my colleague who is sitting to my right, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE); and I know that the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STRICKLAND) will soon join us.

Earlier today before the House Committee on International Relations, Secretary of State Colin Powell appeared and testified concerning the budget proposal put forth by the Department and by the administration for the coming year. The Secretary had to leave earlier than some of us would have hoped, but I commend him for bearing up, if you will, for some 3 hours before the House Committee on International Relations.

During the course of his testimony, he mentioned the tragedy that occurred in the town of Halabjah, a town he well knows because during the course of President Reagan's last 4 years he served in the capacity as the national security adviser and during the administration of George Herbert Walker Bush he served in the capacity of chief of staff of the Joint Chiefs. So he was very familiar, obviously; and many of us remember his service to the country during the Gulf War and prior to that what was occurring in the region.

If I had had an opportunity to question him, I was going to indicate to him that I have a profound concern about what we are currently doing in terms of establishing alliances and relationships with some extremely unsavory regimes that very well might come back to haunt us. Some can only be described as extremely harsh dictatorships with abysmal human rights records. Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan come to mind immediately.

Now we have a base in Uzbekistan where last year the Department of State used the following language in describing the abuse of human rights in that particular Nation. Let me quote, ''The security services routinely torture, beat and otherwise mistreat detainees. They allegedly use suffocation, electric shock, rape and other sexual abuse.'' The list goes on and on and on.

Of course, the budget proposal put forth by the Department of State, under the leadership of Colin Powell, directs millions of dollars to Turkmenistan, whose leader has created a Stalinist personality cult that rivals anything we saw with Saddam Hussein. He even went so far as to rename the month of January after himself and the month of April after his mother.

I remember observing the interview between Mr. Russert and President Bush this past Sunday; and the President described, appropriately so, Saddam Hussein as a madman. I might have used a different word. He might be crazy but he is not stupid, I guess is what I would say; but the new President, if you will, of Turkmenistan, who has changed his name to Turkmenibashi certainly seems to fit that particular description, and Karimov in Uzbekistan is nothing more than a thug with ambitions for regional power, again, very similar to Saddam Hussein.

When the Secretary of State alluded to Halabjah, it provoked me to think that, are we repeating the same mistakes that we made in the 1980s when the United States Government supported Saddam Hussein? Let us remember, it was the United States Government that removed Saddam Hussein from the terrorist list. We now hear that he supported terrorist groups. He was doing that in the 1980s, but the Reagan-Bush administrations removed him from the terrorist list, but they did not stop there. They went further. They restored full diplomatic relations with Saddam Hussein. In fact, they provided him credits and loan guarantees and, in fact, provided him intelligence during the course of his war with Iran.

What I found particularly disturbing, and later when one of my colleagues speaks, I have a chart that shows just a minuscule number of transfers of dual-use technologies that were approved by the Reagan-Bush administration, the Reagan-Bush White Houses, if you will, that no doubt became the building blocks of the tools for Saddam Hussein to develop that nuclear program that was discovered in the aftermath of the Gulf War. I mean, it was those White Houses, those administrations, that allowed the transfer of those dual-use technologies.

Let me tell my colleagues where I received that information: not from a newspaper report, not from a think tank with a particular bias, but with an institution that everyone in this Chamber would acknowledge is free of bias, is what we all rely on to do our research, the Congressional Research Service.

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That particular report was authored and produced in June of 1992. But I guess what is particularly disturbing is when I hear the Secretary of State refer to Halabjah and say that we know he used chemical weapons against his own people. In this case, it was the Iraqi Kurds in the north who had aligned themselves with the Iranian forces with which Iraq was at war at the time.

The only action that I can discover in terms of my research was mild, off-the-record condemnations by the United States Government. And when this Congress back in 1988, 1989 and 1990 passed legislation, both branches independent of each other, that would have imposed sanctions on Saddam Hussein, it was the administration of George Herbert Walker Bush that blocked it. I agree obviously with the Secretary of State, he did use these weapons against his own people.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STRICKLAND).

Mr. STRICKLAND. Mr. Speaker, the fact is, at the time he used those weapons we were cooperating with him. The first Bush administration was cooperating with him. He was a part of our team, so to speak, because we felt it was best if Iraq would be able to prevail over Iran at the time. And then to think that, 10 or 12 years later, there is no evidence that I know of or that the administration has brought forth to show that Saddam Hussein used chemical weapons following that incident some 12 or so years ago. And then to come back after a decade and use that as an excuse to launch a preemptive war simply does not make sense.

When Saddam Hussein used these chemical weapons against his own people, our government was silent. We knew it was happening, and we were silent. And then for these self-righteous statements to be made a decade later does not make sense.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, not only were we silent, and it is very important that the historical record be revealed to the American people, and that is why we are tonight. If any viewer has any questions about the accuracy of what we state, I am sure that the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STRICKLAND) and the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) and any other member of Iraq Watch, we would be happy to respond and see that the reports, unbiased, that were authored back in 1992, would be provided to anyone who has an interest. They can contact our office.

But it was not just silence. It was absolutely, according to this report, action to block the imposition of sanctions at that point in time. I dare say what would have happened if in 1988 and 1989 and 1990 there were sanctions on Iraq, that would have been a message to Saddam Hussein. We can speculate that maybe we would have avoided the first Gulf War if we had taken on that thug then. But, no, we were not