Mr. Speaker, millions

of Americans have grave concern about

this administration’s policy in Iraq,

and I am one of them. Several of us

have come to the floor today to express

those concerns. But before I do so, I

would like to relate a story from this

past Monday when I went to the deployment

of the United States Navy’s

frigate, the U.S.S. *Rodney Davis,* where

I saw off a group of what looked like

awfully young sailors to the potential

war zone.

Mr. Speaker, I went there to tell

those proud sailors something that

there is unanimity about in America. I

went to tell them that no matter what

people in America think of the policy

in Iraq, every single American is proud

of our men and women in the military

service. I wanted to tell them that because

the very freedoms that many

Americans have been exercising in various

places across this country in the

last few weeks are the freedoms that

our service personnel protect, and the

freedom of speech to dissent against

our government’s policies would not

exist without the courage and dedication

of our men and women in uniform.

So I told them that all Americans of

every stripe, short, tall, east, west,

Democrat, Republican, that during

their mission, our prayers would be

with them and our support would be

with them in every way shape and

form.

But I thought it important to come

back and think about the policy in Iraq

real hard, Mr. Speaker, because these

were young men. Mostly men. There

were some women. A mother came up

and she was bawling, and she said,

about her son, the sailor, ‘‘He’s just a

boy. He’s just a boy.’’ He had only been

out of bootcamp for just 2 weeks. Upon

reflection, I thought to myself that it

is old men like us who send young men

to combat, and so we should think real

hard about it.

With that in mind, I want to pose

some questions that millions of Americans

to the President before he

launches this war in Iraq.

Number one. Why should America

abandon its long-term bipartisan belief

that we should work with the international

community in a multilateral

effort at security in favor of an internationally

nonsanctioned preemptive

attack on another nation? Why are we

compelled to break with this long tradition,

that has been embraced by

Americans, that civilized countries

need to work together to stop aggression

for mutual security rather than to

open the door to war so that every

country that is aggrieved can start another

war against another one?

Why should we give Pakistan the

sanction to attack India without international

sanction? Why should we give

the sanction for any country to attack

another country absent imminent

threat without international sanction?

And why should our President tell the

United Nations that they can just stick

it in their ear and that America is

going to start a war anyway?

That is a question that the President

has not adequately answered to date

and that needs an answer before a war

starts.

Frankly, it is a little troublesome

that our President has said that he respects

the United Nations; that he

wants the United Nations to be effective;

that he wants the United Nations

to work together, but tells the United

Nations it does not matter a fig what

the United Nations thinks, because

America is going to start a war anyway.

This has not helped to build multilateral

international support for the

greatest country in the world, which is

the United States of America. And we

need that question answered before a

war starts.

Second question. How many billions

of dollars of taxpayer money are being

used to buy votes for this war? We have

heard of tens of billions of dollars for

Turkey. Now we hear the administration

trying to buy votes around the

world for this war. We need to know

how many billions of dollars of taxpayer

money are going to buy these

votes.

And the reason I say that is that unfortunately,

and I think it is most unfortunate,

if this war starts, it will not

be a coalition of the willing. The international

community will look at it

more as a coalition of the bribed. And

that is not something our country

needs to be proud of. We need to be

proud, and we are proud, of our men

and women in uniform, but this is not

a message to be sending internationally.

Third question: After months and

months and months of inquiry by

Americans across the country, where is

the compelling evidence that Iraq was

behind the September 11 attack on this

country? We have asked. We have

searched. We have given the benefit of

the doubt to the administration in

every way we could, and that evidence

has been wholly lacking.

Fourth: Why abandon inspections

right in the middle of this effort? Why

abandon something that is making

progress? Why abandon the process

that is destroying these missiles? And,

lastly, why create a chaotic situation

in Iraq that can be a breeding ground

for the al-Qaeda to regroup, like is happening

right now in northern Iraq

under our northern fly zone.

No, we should keep this tyrant, this

thug in his tight little box and we

should work with the international

community to keep him there. Mr.

Speaker, I hope that no war starts

until those answers are in to the American

people.