Madam Speaker, it has

been 3 years since the U.S. launched its

war against Saddam Hussein and his

weapons of mass destruction. Of

course, now almost everybody knows

there were no weapons of mass destruction

and Saddam Hussein posed no

threat to the United States. Though

some of our soldiers serving in Iraq

still believe they are there because

Saddam Hussein was involved in 9/11,

even the administration now acknowledges

that there was no connection.

Indeed, no one can be absolutely certain

why we invaded Iraq. The current

excuse, also given for staying in Iraq,

is to make it a democratic state friendly

to the United States. There are now

fewer denials that securing oil supplies

played a significant role in our decision

to go into Iraq and stay there.

That certainly would explain why the

U.S. taxpayers are paying such a price

to build and maintain numerous, huge,

permanent military bases in Iraq.

There are also funding a new $1 billion

embassy, the largest in the world.

The significant question we must ask

ourselves is, what have we learned

from these 3 years in Iraq? With plans

now being laid for regime change in

Iran, it appears we have learned absolutely

nothing. There still are plenty of

administration officials who daily

paint a rosy picture of the Iraq we have

created. But I wonder, if the past 3

years were nothing more than a bad

dream and our Nation suddenly awakened,

how many would for national security

reasons urge the same invasion?

Or would we instead give a gigantic

sigh of relief that it was only a bad

dream, that we need not relive the 3-

year nightmare of death, destruction,

chaos and stupendous consumption of

tax dollars? Conceivably, we would still

see oil prices under $30 a barrel, and,

most importantly, 20,000 severe U.S.

casualties would not have occurred. My

guess is 99 percent of all Americans

would be thankful it was only a bad

dream and would never support the invasion

knowing what we know today.

Even with the horrible results of the

past 3 years, Congress is abuzz with

plans to change the Iranian government.

There is little resistance to the

rise and clamor for democratization in

Iran, even though their current President,

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, is an

elected leader.

Though Iran is hardly a perfect democracy,

its system is far superior to

most of our Arab allies, about which

we never complain. Already the coordinated

propaganda has galvanized the

American people against Iran for the

supposed threat it poses to us with

weapons of mass destruction that are

no more present than those Saddam

Hussein was alleged to have had.

It is amazing how soon after being

thoroughly discredited over the

charges levied against Saddam Hussein

the neoconservatives are willing to use

the same arguments against Iran. It is

frightening to see how easily Congress,

the media and the people accept many

of the same arguments against Iran

that were used to justify an invasion of

Iraq.

Since 2001, we have spent over $300

billion and occupied two Muslim nations,

Afghanistan and Iraq. We are

poorer, but certainly not safer, for it.

We invaded Afghanistan to get Osama

bin Laden, the ringleader behind 9/11.

This effort has been virtually abandoned.

Even though the Taliban was removed

from power in Afghanistan,

most of the country is now occupied

and controlled by warlords who manage

a drug trade bigger than ever before.

Removing the Taliban from power

in Afghanistan actually served the interests

of Iran, the Taliban’s archenemy,

more than our own.

The long time neocon goal to remake

Iraq prompted us to abandoned the

search for Osama bin Laden. The invasion

of Iraq in 2003 was hyped as a

noble mission, justified by misrepresentation

of intelligence concerning

Saddam Hussein and his ability to attack

us and his neighbors. This failed

policy has created the current chaos in

Iraq, chaos that many describe as a

civil war.

Saddam Hussein is out of power, and

most people are pleased. Yet some

Iraqis who dream of stability long for

his authoritarian rule. But, once again,

Saddam Hussein’s removal benefited

the Iranians, who considered Saddam

Hussein an arch-enemy.

Our obsession with democracy, which

is clearly conditional when one looks

at our response to the recent Pakistani

elections, will allow the majority Shia

to claim leadership title if Iraq’s election

actually leads to an organized government.

This delights the Iranians,

who are close allies of the Iraqi Shia.

Talk about unintended consequences.

This war has produced chaos, civil war,

death and destruction and huge financial

costs. It has eliminated two of

Iran’s worst enemies and placed power

in Iran’s best friends.

Even this apparent failure of policy

does nothing to restrain the current

march towards a similar confrontation

with Iran. What will it take for us to

learn from our failures? Common sense

tells us the war in Iraq soon will spread

to Iran. Fear of imaginary nuclear

weapons or an incident involving Iran,

whether planned or accidental, will

rally the support needed for us to move

on Muslim country number three.

All the past failures and unintended

consequences will be forgotten. Even

with deteriorating support for the Iraq

war, new information, well-planned

propaganda, or a major incident will

override the skepticism and heartache

of our frustrating fight. Vocal opponents

of an attack on Iran again will be

labeled unpatriotic, unsupportive of

the troops, and sympathetic to Iran’s

radicals.

Instead of capitulating to these

charges, we should point out that those

who maneuver us into war do so with

little concern for our young people

serving in the military and theoretically

think little of their own children

if they have any. It is hard to conceive

that political supporters of the war

would consciously claim that a preemptive

war for regime change where

young people are sacrificed is only

worth it if the deaths and the injuries

are limited to other people’s children.

This I am sure would be denied, which

means their own children are technically

available for the sacrifice that

is so often praised and glorified for the

benefit of families who have lost so

much. If so, they should think more of

their own children. If this is not so and

their children are not available for

such sacrifice, the hypocrisy is apparent.

Remember, most neocon planners

fall into the category of chicken

hawks.

For the past 3 years, it has been inferred

that, if one is not in support of

the current policy, one is against the

troops and supports the enemy. Lack of

support for the war in Iraq was said to

be supportive of Saddam Hussein and

his evil policies. This is an insulting

and preposterous argument. Those who

argued for the containment of the Soviets

were never deemed sympathetic

to Stalin or Kruschev. Lack of support

for the Iraq war should never be used

as an argument that one was sympathetic

to Saddam Hussein. Containment

and diplomacy are far superior to

confront an enemy, and are less costly

and far less dangerous, especially when

there is no evidence that our national

security is being threatened.

Although a large percentage of the

public now rejects the various arguments

for the Iraq war 3 years ago,

they were easily persuaded by the politicians

and media to fully support the

invasion. Now, after 3 years of terrible

pain for so many, even the troops are

awakening from their slumber and

sensing the fruitlessness of our failing

effort. Seventy-two percent of our

troops now serving in Iraq say it is

time to come home. Yet, the majority

still cling to the propaganda that they

are there because of the 9/11 attacks,

something even the administration has

ceased to claim. Propaganda is pushed

on our troops to exploit their need to

believe in a cause that is worth the

risk to life and limb.

I smell an expanded war in the Middle

East and pray that I am wrong. I

sense that circumstances will arise

that demand support regardless of the

danger and the cost. Any lack of support

once again will be painted as being

soft on terrorism and al Qaeda. We will

be told we must support Israel, support

patriotism, support the troops, defend

freedom. The public too often only

smells the stench of war after the killing

starts. Public objection comes later

on, but eventually it helps to stop the

war.

I worry that before we can finish the

war we are in and extricate ourselves,

the patriotic fervor for expanding into

Iran will drown out the cries of,

‘‘Enough already.’’ The agitation and

congressional resolutions painting Iran

as an enemy about to attack us have

already begun. It is too bad we cannot

learn from our mistakes. This time,

there will be a greater pretense of an

international effort sanctioned by the

U.N. before the bombs are dropped. But

even without support from the international

community, we should expect

the plan for regime change to continue.

We have been forewarned that all options

remain on the table, and there is

little reason to expect much resistance

from Congress. So far there is little resistance

expressed in Congress for taking

on Iran than there was prior to

going into Iraq.

It is astonishing that after 3 years of

bad results and tremendous expense

there is little indication, we will reconsider

our traditional non-interventionist

foreign policy. Unfortunately,

regime change, nation-building, policing

the world, protecting our oil still

constitutes an acceptable policy by the

leaders of both major parties. It is already

assumed by many in Washington

I talk to that Iran is dead serious

about obtaining a nuclear weapon and

is a much more formidable opponent

than Iraq. Besides, Mahmud

Ahmadinejad threatened to destroy

Israel, and that cannot stand. Washington

sees Iran as a greater threat

than Iraq ever was, a threat that cannot

be ignored.

Iran’s history is being ignored just as

we ignored Iraq’s history. This ignorance

or deliberate misrepresentation

of our recent relationship to Iraq and

Iran is required to generate the fervor

needed to attack once again a country

that poses no threat to us. Our policies

toward Iran have been more provocative

than those toward Iraq. Yes, President

Bush labeled Iran part of the axis

of evil and unnecessarily provoked

their anger at us. But our mistakes

with Iran started a long time before

this President took office. In 1953, our

CIA, with the help of the British, participated

in overthrowing the democratic-

elected leader, Mohammed

Mossadegh. We placed in power the

Shah. He ruled ruthlessly but protected

our oil interests, and for that, we protected

him. That is, until 1979. We even

provided him with Iran’s first nuclear

reactor.

Evidently, we did not buy the argument

that his oil supplies precluded a

need for civilian nuclear energy. From

1953 to 1979, his authoritarian rule

served to incite a radical opposition led

by the Ayatollah Khomeini who overthrew

the Shah and took our hostages

in 1979. This blow-back event was slow

in coming, but Muslims have long

memories. The hostage crisis and overthrow

of the Shah by the Ayatollah

was a major victory for the radical

Islamists. Most Americans either never

knew about or easily forgot about our

unwise meddling in the internal affairs

in Iran in 1953.

During the 1980s, we further antagonized

Iran by supporting the Iraqis in

their invasion of Iran. This made our

relationship with Iran worse, while

sending a message to Saddam Hussein

that invading a neighboring country is

not all that bad. When Hussein got the

message from our State Department

that his plan to invade Kuwait was not

of much concern to the United States,

he immediately preceded to do so. We,

in a way, encouraged him to do it almost

like we encouraged him to go into

Iran. Of course, this time our reaction

was quite different, and all of a sudden,

our friendly ally, Saddam Hussein, became

our arch enemy.

The American people may forget this

flip-flop, but those who suffered from it

never forgot. And the Iranians remember

well our meddling in their affairs.

Labeling the Iranians part of the axis

of evil further alienated them and contributed

to the animosity directed toward

us.

For whatever reasons the

neoconservatives might give, they are

bound and determined to confront the

Iranian government and demand

changes in its leadership. This policy

will further spread our military presence

and undermine our security. The

sad truth is that the supposed dangers

posed by Iran are no more real than

those claimed about Iraq. The charges

made against Iran are unsubstantiated

and amazingly sound very similar to

the false charges made against Iraq.

One would think promoters of the war

against Iraq would be a little bit more

reluctant to use the same arguments to

stir up hatred toward Iran. The American

people and Congress should be

more cautious in accepting these

charges at face value, yet it seems the

propaganda is working since few in

Washington object as Congress passes

resolutions condemning Iran and asking

for U.N. sanctions against her.

There is no evidence of a threat to us

by Iran and no reason to plan and initiate

a confrontation with her. There

are many reasons not to do so: Iran

does not have a nuclear weapon and

there is no evidence that she is working

on one, only conjecture. Even if

Iran had a nuclear weapon, why would

this be different from Pakistan, India,

and North Korea having one? Why does

Iran have less right to a defensive

weapon than these other countries? If

Iran had a nuclear weapon, the odds of

her initiating an attack against anybody,

which would guarantee her own

annihilation are zero, and the same

goes for the possibility she would place

weapons in the hands of a nonstate terrorist

group.

Pakistan has spread nuclear technology

throughout the world, and in

particular, to the North Koreans. They

flaunt international restrictions on nuclear

weapons, but we reward them just

as we reward India. We needlessly and

foolishly threaten Iran, even though

they have no nuclear weapons, but listen

to what a leading Israeli historian,

Martin van Creveld had to say about

this: ‘‘Obviously we do not want Iran to

have a nuclear weapon, and I do not

know if they are developing them. But

if they are not developing them, they

are crazy.’’

There has been a lot of misinformation

regarding Iran’s nuclear program.

This distortion of the truth has been

used to pump up emotions in Congress

to pass resolutions condemning her and

promoting U.N. sanctions. IAEA Director

General Mohamed ElBaradei has

never reported any evidence of

undeclared sources or special nuclear

material in Iran or any diversion of nuclear

material. We demand that Iran

prove it is not in violation of nuclear

agreements, which is asking them impossibly

to prove a negative. ElBaradei

states Iran is in compliance with the

nuclear nonproliferation treaty required

IAEA safeguards agreement.

We forget that the weapons we feared

Saddam Hussein had were supplied to

him by the United States, and we refused

to believe U.N. inspectors and the

CIA that he no longer had them. Likewise,

Iran received her first nuclear reactor

from us; now we are hysterically

wondering if some day she might decide

to build a bomb in self-interest.

Anti-Iran voices beating the drums of

confrontation distort the agreement

made in Paris and the desire of Iran to

restart the enrichment process. Their

suspension of the enrichment process

was voluntary and not a legal obligation.

Iran has an absolute right under

the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty to develop

and use nuclear power for peaceful

purposes, and this is now said to be

an egregious violation of the NPT. It is

the U.S. and her allies that are distorting

and violating the Nuclear Proliferation

Treaty.

Likewise, our proliferation of nuclear

material to India is a clear violation of

the nuclear proliferation treaty as

well.

The demand for U.N. sanctions is now

being strongly encouraged by Congress.

The Iran Freedom Support Act, H.R.

282 passed in the International Relations

Committee and recently the

House passed H. Con. Res. 341, which

inaccurately condemned Iran for violating

its international nuclear nonproliferation

obligations. At present,

the likelihood of reason prevailing in

Congress is minimal. Let there be no

doubt, the neoconservative warriors

are still in charge and are conditioning

Congress, the media, and the American

people for a preemptive attack on Iran,

never mind that Afghanistan has unraveled

and Iraq is in a Civil War.

Serious plans are being laid for the

next distraction which will further

spread this war in the Middle East. The

unintended consequences of this effort

surely will be worse than any of the

complications experienced in the 3-

year occupation of Iraq.

Our offer of political and financial

assistance to foreign and domestic individuals

who support the overthrow of

the current Iranian government is

fraught with danger and saturated with

arrogance. Imagine how Americans

citizens would respond if China supported

similar efforts here in the

United States to bring about regime

change. How many of us would remain

complacent if someone like Timothy

McVeigh had been financed by a foreign

power? Is it any wonder the Iranian

people resent us and the attitude

of our leaders?

Even though ElBaradei and his IAEA

investigations have found no violations

of the NPT required IAEA safeguard

agreement, the Iran Freedom Support

Act still demands that Iran prove they

have no nuclear weapons, refusing to

acknowledge that proving a negative is

impossible. Let there be no doubt,

though, the words ‘‘regime change’’ are

not found in the bill. That is precisely

what they are talking about.

Neoconservative Michael Ladine, one

of the architects of the Iraq fiasco, testifying

before the International Relations

Committee in favor of the Iraq

Freedom Support Act stated it plainly.

‘‘I know some members would prefer to

dance around the explicit declaration

of regime change as the policy of this

country, but anyone looking closely at

the language and the context of the

Iraq Freedom Support Act and its close

relative in the Senate can clearly see

that this is, in fact, the essence of the

matter.

You can’t have freedom in Iran without

bringing down the mulahs.’’

Sanctions, along with financial and

political support to persons and groups

dedicated to the overthrow of the Iranian

government, are acts of war. Once

again, we are unilaterally declaring a

preemptive war against a country and

a people that have not harmed us and

do not have the capacity to do so. And

do not expect Congress to seriously debate

a declaration of war. For the past

56 years, Congress has transferred to

the executive branch the power to go

to war as it pleases, regardless of the

tragic results and costs.

Secretary of State Rice recently signaled

a sharp shift toward confrontation

in Iran’s policy as she insisted on

$75 million to finance propaganda,

through TV and radio broadcasts into

Iran. She expressed this need because

of the so-called ‘‘aggressive’’ policies of

the Iranian government. We are 7,000

miles from home, telling the Iraqis and

the Iranians what kind of government

they will have, backed up by the use of

our military force, and we call them

the aggressors? We fail to realize the

Iranian people, for whatever faults

they may have, have not in modern

times invaded any neighboring country.

This provocation is so unnecessary,

costly and dangerous.

Just as the invasion of Iraq inadvertently

served the interests of the Iranians,

military confrontation with Iran

will have unintended consequences.

The successful alliance engendered between

the Iranians and the Iraqi majority

Shiia will prove a formidable opponent

for us in Iraq as that civil war

spreads. Shipping in the Persian Gulf

through the Straits of Hormuz may

well be disrupted by the Iranians in retaliation

for any military confrontation.

Since Iran would be incapable of

defending herself by conventional

means, it seems logical that they

might well resort to terrorist attacks

on us here at home. They will not passively

lie down, nor can they be easily

destroyed.

One of the reasons given for going

into Iraq was to secure our oil supplies.

This backfired badly. Production in

Iraq is down 50 percent, and world oil

prices have more than doubled to $60

per barrel. Meddling with Iran could

easily have a similar result. We could

see oil at $120 a barrel and gasoline at

$6 a gallon. The obsession the neo-cons

have with remaking the Middle East is

hard to understand. One thing that is

easy to understand is none of those

who plan these wars expect to fight in

them, nor do they expect their children

to die in some IED explosion.

Exactly when an attack will occur is

not known, but we have been forewarned

more than once that all options

are on the table. The sequence of

events now occurring with regards to

Iran are eerily reminiscent of the hype

to our preemptive strike against Iraq.

We should remember the saying: ‘‘Fool

me once, shame on you; fool me twice,

shame on me.’’ It looks to me like the

Congress and the country is open to

being fooled once again.

Interestingly, many early supporters

of the Iraq War are now highly critical

of the President, having been misled as

to reasons for the invasion and occupation.

But these same people are only

too eager to accept the same flawed arguments

for our need to undermine the

Iranian government.

The President’s 2006 National Security

Strategy, just released, is every

bit as frightening as the one released in

2002 endorsing preemptive war. In it he

claims, ‘‘We face no greater challenge

from a single country than from Iran.’’

He claims the Iranians have for 20

years hidden key nuclear activities,

though the IAEA makes no such assumption,

nor has the Security Council

in at least 20 years ever sanctioned

Iran. The clincher in the National Security

Strategy document is if diplomatic

efforts fail, confrontation will

follow. The problem is the diplomatic

effort, if one wants to use that term, is

designed to fail by demanding the Iranians

prove an unprovable negative.

The West, led by the U.S., is in greater

violation by demanding Iran not pursue

any nuclear technology, even

peaceful, that the NPT guarantees is

their right.

The President states: Iran’s ‘‘desire

to have a nuclear weapon is unacceptable.’’

A desire is purely subjective and

cannot be substantiated nor disproved.

Therefore, all that is necessary to justify

an attack is if Iran fails to prove it

does not have a desire to be like the

United States, China, Russia, Britain,

France, Pakistan, North Korea, India

and Israel whose nuclear missiles surround

Iran. Logic like this to justify a

new war, without the least consideration

for a congressional declaration of

war, is indeed frightening.

Commonsense telling us Congress, especially

given the civil war in Iraq and

the mess in Afghanistan, should move

with great caution in condoning a military

confrontation with Iran.

Madam Speaker, there are reasons

for my concern and let me list those.

Most Americans are uninterested in

foreign affairs until we get mired down

in a war that costs too much, lasts too

long, and kills too many U.S. troops.

Getting out of a lengthy war is difficult,

as I remember all too well with

Vietnam while serving in the U.S. Air

Force in 1963 to 1968. Getting into war

is much easier.

Unfortunately, the legislative branch

of our government too often defers to

the executive branch and offers little

resistance to war plans, even with no

significant threat to our security. The

need to go to war is always couched in

patriotic terms and falsehoods regarding

an imaginary, imminent danger.

Not supporting the effort is painted as

unpatriotic and wimpish against some

evil that is about to engulf us. The real

reason for our militarism is rarely revealed

and hidden from the public.

Even Congress is deceived into supporting

adventurism they would not

accept if fully informed.

If we accepted the traditional American

and constitutional foreign policy

of nonintervention across the board,

there would be no temptation to go

along with these unnecessary military

operations. A foreign policy of intervention

invites all kinds of excuses for

spreading ourselves around the world.

The debate shifts from nonintervention

versus intervention, to where and for

what particular reason should we involve

ourselves. Most of the time, it is

for less than honorable reasons. Even

when cloaked in honorable slogans,

like making the world safe for democracy,

the unintended consequences and

the ultimate costs cancel out the good

intentions.

One of the greatest losses suffered

these past 60 years from interventionism

becoming an acceptable policy

of both major parties is respect for the

Constitution. Congress flatly has

reneged on its huge responsibility to

declare war. Going to war was never

meant to be an executive decision, used

indiscriminately with no resistance

from Congress. The strongest attempt

by Congress in the past 60 years to

properly exert itself over foreign policy

was the passage of the Foley amendment,

demanding no assistance be

given to the Nicaraguan contras. Even

this explicit prohibition was flaunted

by an earlier administration.

Arguing over the relative merits of

each intervention is not a true debate,

because it assumes that intervention

per se is both moral and constitutional.

Arguing for a Granada-type intervention

because of its success and against

the Iraq War because of its failure and

cost is not enough. We must once

again, understand the wisdom of rejecting

entangling alliances and rejecting

Nation building. We must stop trying

to police the world and, instead, embrace

noninterventionism as the proper

moral and constitutional foreign policy

of our country.

The best reason to oppose interventionism

is that people die, needlessly,

on both sides. We have suffered over

20,000 American casualties in Iraq already,

and Iraqi civilian deaths probably

number over 100,000 by all reasonable

counts.

The next best reason is that the rule

of law is undermined, especially when

military interventions are carried out

without a declaration of war. Whenever

a war is ongoing, civil liberties are

under attack at home. The current war

in Iraq and the misnamed war on terror

have created an environment here at

home that affords little constitutional

protection of our citizens’ rights. Extreme

nationalism is common during

war. Signs of this are now apparent.

Prolonged wars, as this one has become,

have profound consequences. No

matter how much positive spin is put

on it, war never makes a society

wealthier. World War II was not a solution

to the Depression, as many claim.

If $1 billion is spent on weapons of war,

the GDP records positive growth in

that amount, but the expenditure is

consumed by destruction of the weapons

or bombs it bought, and the real

economy is denied $1 billion to produce

products that would have raised someone’s

standard of living.

Excessive spending to finance the

war causes deficits to explode. There

are never enough tax dollars available

to pay the bills, and since there are not

enough willing lenders and dollars

available, the Federal Reserve must

create new money out of thin air and

new credit for buying Treasury bills to

prevent interest rates from rising too

rapidly. Rising rates would tip off everyone

that there are not enough savings

or taxes to finance the war.

This willingness to print whatever

amount of money the government

needs to pursue the war is literally inflation.

Without a fiat monetary system,

wars would be very difficult to finance

since the people would never tolerate

the taxes required to pay for it.

Inflation of the money supply delays

and hides the real cost of war. The result

of the excessive creation of new

money leads to the higher cost of living

everyone decries and the Fed denies.

Since taxes are not levied, the increase

in prices that results from printing

too much money is technically the

tax required to pay for the war.

The tragedy is that the inflation tax

is borne more by the poor and the middle

class than the rich. Meanwhile, the

well-connected rich, the politicians,

the bureaucrats, the bankers, the military

industrialists and the international

corporations reap the benefits

of war profits.

A sound economic process is disrupted

with a war economy and monetary

inflation. Strong voices emerge

blaming the wrong policies for our

problems, prompting an outcry for protectionist

legislation. It is always easier

to blame foreign producers and savers

for our inflation, our lack of savings,

excessive debt and loss of industrial

jobs. Protectionist measures only

make economic conditions worse. Inevitably

these conditions, if not corrected,

lead to a lower standard of living

for most of our citizens.

Careless military intervention is also

bad for the civil disturbance that results.

The chaos in the streets of America

in the 1960s while the Vietnam War

raged, aggravated by the draft, was an

example of domestic strife caused by

an ill-advised unconstitutional war

that could not be won. The early signs

of civil discord are now present. Hopefully,

we can extricate ourselves from

Iraq and avoid a conflict in Iran before

our streets explode, as they did in the

1960s.

In a way, it is amazing there is not a

lot more outrage expressed by the

American people. There is plenty of

complaining but no outrage over policies

that are not part of our American

tradition. War based on false pretenses,

20,000 American casualties, torture

policies, thousands jailed without due

process, illegal surveillance of citizens,

warrantless searches, and yet no outrage.

When the issues come before Congress,

executive authority is maintained

or even strengthened while real

oversight is ignored.

Though many Americans are starting

to feel the economic pain of paying for

this war through inflation, the real

pain has not yet arrived. We generally

remain fat and happy with a system of

money and borrowing that postpones

the day of reckoning. Foreigners, in

particular the Chinese and Japanese,

gladly participate in the charade. We

print the money and they take it, as do

the OPEC Nations, and provide us with

consumer goods and oil. Then they

loan the money back to us at low interest

rates, which we use to finance the

war and our housing bubble and excessive

consumption. This recycling and

perpetual borrowing of inflated dollars

allow us to avoid the pain of high taxes

to pay for our war and welfare spending.

It is fine until the music stops and

the real costs are realized, with much

higher interest rates and significant

price inflation. That is when outrage

will be heard and the people will realize

we cannot afford the humanitarianism

of the neo-conservatives.

The notion that our economic problems

are principally due to the Chinese

is nonsense. If the protectionists were

to have it their way, the problem of financing

the war would become readily

apparent and have immediate ramifications,

none good.

Today’s economic problems, caused

largely by our funny money system,

won’t be solved by altering exchange

rates to favor us in the short run or by

imposing high tariffs. Only sound

money with real value will solve the

problems of competing currency devaluations

and protectionist measures.

Economic interests almost always

are major reasons for wars being

fought. Noble and patriotic causes are

easier to sell to a public who must pay

and provide cannon fodder to defend

the financial interests of a privileged

class. The fact that Saddam Hussein

demanded Euros for oil in an attempt

to undermine the U.S. dollar is believed

by many to be one of the ulterior

motives for our invasion and occupation

of Iraq. Similarly, the Iranian

oil burse now about to open may be

seen as a threat to those who depend on

maintaining the current monetary system

with the dollar as the world’s reserve

currency.

The theory and significance of ‘‘peak

oil’’ is believed to be an additional motivating

factor for the United States

and Great Britain wanting to maintain

firm control over the oil supplies in the

Middle East. The two nations have

been protecting our oil interests in the

Middle East for nearly 100 years. With

diminishing supplies and expanding demands,

the incentive to maintain a

military presence in the Middle East is

quite strong. Fear of China and Russia

moving in to this region to consume

more control alarms those who don’t

understand how a free market can develop

substitutes to replace diminishing

resources. Supporters of the

military efforts to maintain control

over large regions of the world to protect

oil fail to count the real cost of

energy once the DOD budget is factored

in. Remember, invading Iraq was costly

and oil prices doubled. Confrontation

in Iran may evolve differently, but we

can be sure it will be costly and oil

prices will rise significantly.

There are long-term consequences or

blowback from our militant policies of

intervention around the world. They

are unpredictable as to time and place.

9/11 was a consequence of our military

presence on Muslim holy lands; the

Ayatollah Khomeini’s success in taking

over the Iranian government in 1979

was a consequence of our CIA overthrowing

Mossadech in 1953. These connections

are rarely recognized by the

American people and never acknowledged

by our government. We never

seem to learn how dangerous interventionism

is to us and to our security.

There are some who may not agree

strongly with any of my arguments,

and instead believe the propaganda

Iran and her President, Mahmoud

Almadinejad, are thoroughly irresponsible

and have threatened to destroy

Israel. So all measures must be taken

to prevent Iran from getting nukes,

thus the campaign to intimidate and

confront Iran.

First, Iran doesn’t have a nuke and it

is nowhere close to getting one, according

to the CIA. If they did have one,

using it would guarantee almost instantaneous

annihilation by Israel and

the United States. Hysterical fear of

Iran is way out of proportion to reality.

With a policy of containment, we

stood down and won the Cold War

against the Soviets and their 30,000 nuclear

weapons and missiles. If you are

looking for a real kook with a bomb to

worry about, North Korea would be

high on the list. Yet we negotiate with

Kim Jong Il. Pakistan has nukes and

was a close ally of the Taliban up until

9/11. Pakistan was never inspected by

the IAEA as to their military capability.

Yet we not only talk to her, we

provide economic assistance, though

someday Musharraf may well be overthrown

and a pro-al Qaeda government

put in place. We have been nearly obsessed

with talking about regime

change in Iran, while ignoring Pakistan

and North Korea. It makes no

sense and it is a very costly and dangerous

policy.

The conclusion we should derive from

this is simple. It is in our best interest

to pursue a foreign policy of nonintervention.

A strict interpretation of

the Constitution mandates it. The

moral imperative of not imposing our

will on others, no matter how well intentioned,

is a powerful argument for

minding our own business. The principle

of self-determination should be

respected. Strict nonintervention removes

the incentives for foreign powers

and corporate interests to influence

and control our policies overseas. We

can’t afford the cost that intervention

requires, whether through higher taxes

or inflation. If the moral arguments

against intervention don’t suffice for

some, the practical arguments should.

Intervention just doesn’t work. It

backfires and ultimately hurts the

American citizens both at home and

abroad. Spreading ourselves too thin

around the world actually diminishes

our national security through a weakened

military. As the only superpower

of the world, a constant interventionist

policy is perceived as arrogant, and

greatly undermines our ability to use

diplomacy in a positive manner.

Conservatives, libertarians, constitutionalists,

and many of today’s liberals

have all at one time or another endorsed

a less interventionist foreign

policy. There is no reason a coalition of

these groups might not once again

present the case for a pro-American

nonmilitant noninterventionist foreign

policy dealing with all nations. A policy

of trade and peace, and a willingness

to use diplomacy is far superior to

the foreign policy that has evolved

over the past 60 years. It is time for a

change.