Madam Speaker, I was recently

asked why I thought it was a

bad idea for the President to initiate a

war against Iraq. I responded by saying

that I could easily give a half a dozen

reasons why; and if I took a minute, I

could give a full dozen. For starters,

here is a half a dozen.

Number one, Congress has not given

the President the legal authority to

wage war against Iraq as directed by

the Constitution, nor does he have U.N.

authority to do so. Even if he did, it

would not satisfy the rule of law laid

down by the Framers of the Constitution.

Number two, Iraq has not initiated

aggression against the United States.

Invading Iraq and deposing Saddam

Hussein, no matter how evil a dictator

he may be, has nothing to do with our

national security. Iraq does not have a

single airplane in its air force and is a

poverty-ridden Third World nation,

hardly a threat to U.S. security. Stirring

up a major conflict in this region

will actually jeopardize our security.

Number three, a war against Iraq initiated

by the United States cannot be

morally justified. Arguing that someday

in the future Saddam Hussein

might pose a threat to us means that

any nation any place in the world is

subject to an American invasion without

cause. This would be comparable to

the impossibility of proving a negative.

Number four, initiating a war against

Iraq will surely antagonize all neighboring

Arab and Muslim nations as

well as the Russians, the Chinese and

the European Union, if not the whole

world. Even the English people are reluctant

to support Tony Blair’s prodding

of our President to invade Iraq.

There is no practical benefit for such

action. Iraq could end up in even more

dangerous hands like Iran.

Number five, an attack on Iraq will

not likely be confined to Iraq alone.

Spreading the war to Israel and rallying

all Arab nations against her may

well end up jeopardizing the very existence

of Israel. The President has already

likened the current international

crisis more to that of World War II

than the more localized Viet Nam war.

The law of unintended consequences

applies to international affairs every

bit as much as to domestic interventions,

yet the consequences of such are

much more dangerous.

Number six, the cost of a war against

Iraq would be prohibited. We paid a

heavy economic price for the Vietnam

war in direct cost, debt and inflation.

This coming war could be a lot more

expensive. Our national debt is growing

at a rate greater than $250 billion per

year. This will certainly accelerate.

The dollar cost will be the least of our

concerns compared to the potential

loss of innocent lives, both theirs and

ours. The systematic attack on civil

liberties that accompanies all wars

cannot be ignored. Already we hear

cries for resurrecting the authoritarian

program of constriction in the name of

patriotism, of course.

Could any benefit come from all this

war mongering? Possibly. Let us hope

and pray so. It should be evident that

big government is anathema to individual

liberty. In a free society, the

role of government is to protect the individual’s

right to life and liberty. The

biggest government of all, the U.N.

consistently threatens personal liberties

and U.S. sovereignty. But our recent

move toward unilateralism hopefully

will inadvertently weaken the

United Nations. Our participation more

often than not lately is conditioned on

following the international rules and

courts and trade agreements only when

they please us, flaunting the consensus

without rejecting internationalism on

principle, as we should.

The way these international events

will eventually play out is unknown,

and in the process we expose ourselves

to great danger. Instead of replacing

today’s international government, the

United Nations, the IMF, the World

Bank, the WTO, the international

criminal court, with free and independent

republics, it is more likely

that we will see a rise of militant nationalism

with a penchant for solving

problems with arms and protectionism

rather than free trade and peaceful negotiations.

The last thing this world needs is the

development of more nuclear weapons,

as is now being planned in a pretense

for ensuring the peace. We would need

more than an office of strategic information

to convince the world of that.

What do we need? We need a clear understanding

and belief in a free society,

a true republic that protects individual

liberty, private property, free markets,

voluntary exchange and private solutions

to social problems, placing strict

restraints on government meddling in

the internal affairs of others.

Indeed, we live in challenging and

dangerous times.