

has been difficult to know exactly what is in it, and yet it is very significant, very important; and we in the Congress should not vote casually and carelessly on this issue. This is a major commitment. I think it is going in the wrong direction, and we should consider the fact that there are so often unintended consequences from our efforts to do what is right.

I understand the motivation behind this, but tragically this type of action tends to always backfire because we do not follow the rule of law. And the rule of law says if we commit troops, we ought to get the direct and explicit authority from the Congress with a war resolution. This, in essence, is a baby war resolution, but it is a war resolution.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I want to commend my colleague from Texas for stating the case for isolationism and appeasement as eloquently as he has. It is appropriate when we are discussing a major international issue that the various positions be laid out clearly so we can make an intelligent decision.

In this century we have had numerous instances when in this body the voices of isolationism presented their case. And whenever they prevailed—and they prevailed from time to time—the cost in blood and treasure later on was infinitely greater than it would have been had the perpetrators of violence and human rights abuse—whether they were called Hitler or Saddam Hussein or the Indonesian militia or the thugs of Milosevic—had they been stopped early on, the cost would have been infinitely less in both blood and treasure.

Here now we have the case of East Timor. My friend from Texas, instead of placing the burden of blame on the thugs who have persecuted a small Catholic minority in a large Muslim nation, the largest Muslim nation on the face of this planet, blames the United States for contributing 200 individuals and providing logistical and technical assistance to an international peacekeeping armada. I could not disagree with him more strongly.

One of the great victories that I am sure we all cherished was the collapse of the Soviet empire. The Soviet empire and the threat it represented to civilized democratic peace-loving nations across the globe was clearly one of the greatest threats of the 20th Century. And it was the determination of the United States and our allies, in facing up to the mighty Soviet Union, that resulted in the collapse of the Soviet empire and the fact that large numbers of countries, from Poland to the Czech Republic, are now democratic and free, and three of them are now members of NATO.

Now, if we did not yield to the threats of the gigantic Soviet Union, a powerful nuclear nation with vast conventional forces, it would be intriguing to know why we should now yield to

the militia thugs in East Timor who are denying the Catholic population of that little island their right to live under rules and authorities and leadership of their own choosing. I have difficulty following the logic.

If the Soviet Union could be resisted by Democratic and peace-loving nations, it is hard to see why Milosevic should not be resisted in Kosovo and why the thugs of the militia in East Timor should not be resisted by democratic forces.

Let me also point out to my friend, as he well knows, it is our ally, Australia, which is carrying the bulk of the load in East Timor. That is as it should be. Australia is the most powerful military force in the whole region, and our friends in Australia willingly and proudly accepted their international responsibility. For the United States to bail out on this effort would undermine our long-term policy, conducted by Democratic and Republican presidents, supported by Democratically controlled and Republican controlled Congresses, of speaking out for and taking a stand on the matter of collective security.

I think it is important to realize that there is a common thread running through our opposition to the Japanese warlords in the Second World War, to Mussolini and Hitler, to the long regime of Joseph Stalin, and to other dictators ranging from Saddam Hussein through Milosevic to the militia, the thugs, in East Timor. To argue at the end of the 20th century that we should revert to isolationism is really a sorry spectacle. What it reveals is that nothing, nothing has been learned from the bloody experiences of this entire century, which so clearly demonstrate that neither appeasement nor isolationism are proper policies for the United States.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LANTOS. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. The gentleman makes a good case for the humanitarian needs of the people. My point is that sometimes our efforts do not do what we want.

For instance, the gentleman talks about the thugs that are in Indonesia, those who are violating the rights of the East Timorese. We have to realize that they have been our allies and we helped set up the situation. So our interventions do not always do what we want.

Also, the gentleman talks about the Soviets. We supported the Soviets.

Mr. LANTOS. Reclaiming my time, if I may, Mr. Speaker. If I may remind my colleague of history, it was President Ford and under President Ford's tenure that we acquiesced in the occupation of East Timor by the Indonesian military.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will continue to yield, I think the gentleman is absolutely correct.

But I happen to see these things in a very nonpartisan manner. So to turn this into a Republican versus Democrat issue, I think, I think, is in error.

I would like to suggest that the careless use of the word isolationism does not apply to me because I am not a protectionist. I believe in openness. I want people and capital and goods and services to go back and forth. When we trade with people, we are less likely to fight with them.

So the proposal and the program I am suggesting is a constitutional program. I believe it is best for the people. It has nothing to do with isolating ourselves from the rest of the world. It is to isolate ourselves from doing dumb things that get us involved in things like Korea and Vietnam, where we do not even know why we are there and we end up losing. That is what I am opposed to.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I must say to my colleague from Texas that we have heard voices in the last few days on the part of one presidential candidate calling our participation in the Second World War against Hitler a mistake. Now, this is a free country, and people can choose to accept any position that they are inclined to do so.

But let me state for myself that I think our participation in the Second World War was one of the most glorious aspects of the whole of American history. Our standing up to the regime of Stalin and other Communist dictators in the second half of this century is among the most glorious aspects of our history. The work of President Bush in pulling together a coalition in facing up to Saddam Hussein was an important and glorious chapter in our history.

And what we are seeing unfolding in East Timor now represents just another chapter in the determination of the American people and the American government to stand up to the horrendous dictatorships that still are present in many parts of this globe.

And I hope that as we enter the 21st century, this bipartisan policy of rejecting isolationism will continue.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, may I ask how much time both sides have?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GIBBONS). The gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) has 4 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) has 11 minutes remaining.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL).

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to respond. To try to tie in World War II is not quite fair. I think the gentleman has to admit that we are not talking about that. Besides, I am talking as much about procedure as I am talking about the policy itself.

In World War II there was a serious problem around the world. It was brought to this Congress. We voted on