

Our foreign policy was in the spotlight last week, which is exactly where it should be. Almost two years ago many voters elected someone they thought would lead us to a more peaceful, rational co-existence with other countries. However, while attention has been focused on the administration's disastrous economic policies, its equally disastrous foreign policies have exacerbated our problems overseas. Especially in times of economic crisis, we cannot afford to ignore costly foreign policy mistakes. That's why it is important that U.S. foreign policy receive some much needed attention in the media, as it did last week with the leaked documents scandal.

Many are saying that the Wikileaks documents tell us nothing new. In some ways this is true. Most Americans knew that we have been fighting losing battles. These documents show just how bad it really is. The revelation that Pakistani intelligence is assisting the people we are bombing in Afghanistan shows the quality of friends we are making with our foreign policy. This kind of thing supports points that Rep. Dennis Kucinich and I tried to make on the House floor last week with a privileged resolution that would have directed the administration to remove troops from Pakistan pursuant to the War Powers Resolution.

We are not at war with Pakistan. Congress has made no declaration of war. (Actually, we made no declaration of war on Iraq or Afghanistan either, but that is another matter.) Yet we have troops in Pakistan engaging in hostile activities, conducting drone attacks and killing people. We sometimes manage to kill someone who has been identified as an enemy, yet we also kill about 10 civilians for every 1 of those. Pakistani civilians are angered by this, yet their leadership is mollified by our billions in bribe money. We just passed an appropriations bill that will send another \$7.5 billion to Pakistan. One wonders how much of this money will end up helping the Taliban. This whole operation is clearly counterproductive, inappropriate, immoral and every American who values the rule of law should be outraged. Yet these activities are being done so quietly that most Americans, as well as most members of the House, don't even know about them.

We should follow constitutional protocol when going to war. It is there for a reason. If we are legitimately attacked, it is the job of Congress to declare war. We then fight the war, win it and come home. War should be efficient, decisive and rare. However, when Congress shirks its duty and just gives the administration whatever it wants with no real oversight or meaningful debate, wars are never-ending, wasteful, and political. Our so-called wars have become a

perpetual drain on our economy and liberty.

The founders knew that heads of state are far too eager to engage in military conflicts. That is why they entrusted the power to go to war with the deliberative body closest to the people – the Congress. Decisions to go to war need to be supported by the people. War should not be covert or casual. We absolutely should not be paying off leaders of a country while killing their civilians without expecting to create a lot of new problems. This is not what America is supposed to be about.