The weekend's developments further demonstrate the need for a U.S. policy with regard to South Asia that turns away from the current stance of confrontation with India and towards recognition of India's legitimate security needs. We should have increased consideration for the prospects of greater Indo-U.S. cooperation in responding to the threats posed by China.

Mr. Speaker, last week's visit by the Chinese premier to Washington also raised important questions about how China, a potential adversary, and India, a potential partner threatened by China, are treated in terms of U.S. policy.

Last week official Washington witnessed the arrival of Premier Zhu with fanfare and ceremony at the White House, suggesting the visit of an international leader who was a trusted friend and partner. But during the premier's visit, as with other high level meetings between the United States and China, we kept hearing of the need for engagement, despite the fact that China has a terrible human rights record and has actually stepped up the pressure on dissidents; despite the fact that China threatens her neighbors, including Taiwan, and provides missile technology to unstable regimes like Pakistan; and despite, and I stress again, despite the growing evidence of Chinese espionage of American nuclear weapons secrets.

Yet, at the same time, when it comes to our relations with the world's largest democracy, that is India, we keep that country at arm's length, ever wary of their intentions and motives.

If pure economics were the only consideration, our policy double standard with the two Asian giants still would not make any sense, in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, because India's population is almost as large as China's, and will surpass China early in the next century. India offers opportunities for American trade and investment at least comparable to China, and India does not threaten fundamental U.S. interests, which is more than we can say about China.

Furthermore, India, a country that holds regular elections at the national and local levels, is seriously committed to improving her human rights situation and the treatment of all minority communities, again, much more than can be said for China.

I think, Mr. Speaker, we need to shift our focus from simply condemning India for becoming a nuclear power, which whether we like it or not is a reality, to adjusting our thinking to this new reality and working to promote peace, security, confidence-building, and nonproliferation in South Asia.

Within our U.S.-South Asia policy, our narrow India-Pakistan focus overlooks the role of China. I believe that China is the real threat to India, as well as to U.S. interests and to regional security. It is in this context that India's potential role as a partner for peace and stability should be understood. Even if the current climate for partnership is not ideal, at least we should stop seeing India as a threat.

In particular, India has legitimate concerns about China's support for Pakistan's nuclear and missile programs. A Rand study published last year indicated that technical help from China, as well as North Korea, is responsible for the accelerated development of Pakistan's missile program. In addition, China invaded India in 1962, and continues to have designs on Indian territory. Since the U.S. should also view China as a potential adversary, there is a growing convergence of American and Indian objectives for responding to China.

Mr. Speaker, in a previous statement on the Floor of the House of Representatives in February I said that the U.S. should pay attention to the emerging notion of minimum deterrence in the Indian subcontinent, combined with a declared policy of no first use of nuclear weapons.

I have always believed that our goal should be to make India a partner in the American foreign policy goal of minimizing the threat of nuclear war. One way of accomplishing this is to take the long overdue step of accepting India as a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council. While I recognize there is opposition to this step, we must find ways to make India a partner for peace for purposes of confidence-building, and also avoiding the dangers of isolation.

THE VINDICATION OF SUSAN MCDOUGAL AND THE CONFIRMATION OF BILL LANN LEE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this morning there are several things on my mind that I would like to share with this body. In particular, let me acknowledge and congratulate the vindication of Susan McDougal. When asked the question, what happened in that case and how did she feel, she clearly acknowledged the fact that all of us knew would come to light: Susan McDougal told the truth, that there was no substance in Whitewater to attribute illegal activities to the President and First Lady of the United States. During her tenure, truth was not enough for the special prosecutor and the special Independent Counsel, but a jury in Arkansas has vindicated her.

The same thing with the contempt charge for the President. A sad day, a sad occurrence. But it was what we argued in the Committee on the Judiciary, which was this was a civil matter that would be handled by the civil courts. Today that has occurred, or yesterday that has occurred.

Unfortunately, the tragedy of impeachment proceeded because others disagreed and felt that matters that could have been handled by the courts were the responsibility of this body to take on the highest act that this body could take in the impeachment of a president.

I am very happy, however, that the people of the United States saw the facts of this situation, and that this individual, the President of the United States, was not impeached, or was not convicted of these particular acts.

With that, let me also bring to the attention of this body the need to move forward with the confirmation of the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, Bill Lann Lee. This gentleman has served in this position for almost 2 years as the Acting Attorney General. Yet, it has not been seen fit to confirm him by the other body.

He has worked tirelessly and within the laws of the land. He is an outstanding civil rights attorney. He is a first generation Asian American. He has worked in the civil rights area for some 23 years. He has spent his time with his nose to the grindstone. He has in fact worked very hard, but he has not worked viciously, or with vindictiveness.

I have seen him work in my district, coming to Houston and joining me in a town hall meeting on hate crimes after the death of James Barrett, Junior. He has also worked with cases like the shooting death of Pedro Oregon, so he is concerned about law enforcement, but he is also concerned about justice, as well.

Mr. Lann Lee is someone who brings the kind of practical experience and leadership to the Justice Department that is needed. He has maintained a sense of dignity, and realizes that, although when we talk about civil rights there are those who will raise their voices and say, well, we have already crossed that hurdle, America is beyond that, there is no need to address those issues, and of course people will speak without facts, but I can assure them, with the devastating opinions like that in Texas, which has denied access of Hispanics and African-Americans to institutions of higher learning, with job discrimination against women in the work force, with the lack of equal pay for equal work, I can assure Americans that although they may want to turn their heads and may not want to hear about civil rights, it is important for those of us who uphold the law to not turn our heads, to not be afraid of the truth, but go forward and take the higher ground, and work with those of good will and good faith and ensure that this is truly a land of equal opportunity.

Bill Lann Lee does nothing but follow the law. He is not in any way changing the law. He is not interpreting the law, making the law in his own form. He is following the law of the land, which is affirmative action; not quotas, but the outreach to individuals to give them an opportunity, to give them a helping hand, not a handout.

He is following the law on fighting against discrimination of women in the workplace. He is following the law on being against the hate crimes like those perpetrated against James Byrd, Junior. He is following the law when he is investigating the allegations of police brutality that are not a respecter of color, creed, or religion, but happen across the Nation. He is following the law when he protects good law enforcement, as well.

As indicated by Sandy Bernard, who was president or is president of the 150,000 member American Association of University Women, in an editorial in the Houston Chronicle on Monday, April 12, 1999, ''For more than a year Lee has done an outstanding job as the Acting Assistant Attorney General, enforcing our Nation's civil rights laws effectively, fairly, and vigorously. His work on behalf of women is impressive, and he is moving forward.''

We cannot ask Bill Lann Lee, Mr. Speaker, to change the laws that he has to enforce. What we can simply do is say, do your job. He should be confirmed and confirmed now.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD a copy of the article in the Houston Chronicle of Monday, April 12, 1999.

The article referred to is as follows:

GET PAST POLITICS, APPROVE BILL LANN LEE NOMINATION

Civil rights laws are designed to protect equal opportunity, but these laws are meaningless without a strong leader to enforce them. That leader is Bill Lann Lee. The Senate must confirm Lee as assistant attorney general for civil rights if we are going to guarantee equal protection for all.

For more than a year, Lee has done an outstanding job as the acting assistant attorney general enforcing our nation's civil rights laws effectively, fairly and vigorously.

His work on behalf of women is impressive. He has challenged public-sector employment practices that have excluded women from many traditionally male jobs. He has enforced Title IX—the law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education—in many federal training and educational programs.

As chair of the National Task Force on Violence Against Health Care Providers, created after the murder of Dr. Barnett Slepian, he has vigorously protected reproductive health care providers. He has made prevention and prosecution of hate crimes a top priority of the division under his leadership.

Prior to his current position, Lee worked for two decades as a civil rights attorney and a champion of equal opportunity. He negotiated settlements in cases that successfully broke down workplace barriers, especially those that kept women from advancing. Lee made a name for himself by bringing about positive change through the law and building consensus and partnerships—something we need more of in Washington.

So what is the problem? I comes down to politics. In 1997 the Senate, Judiciary Committee held up Lee's nomination though he was clearly qualified for the job. Some senators thought that Lee would support ''unconstitutional'' affirmative action policies. Yet these policies are the law of the land. In fact, Lee has strictly adhered to recent Supreme Court rulings on affirmative action.

If our elected officials have an issue with the law, they should not take it out on those appointed to uphold the law. Interestingly, recent votes in the House and Senate have been supportive of affirmative action. It seems the Senate Judiciary Committee would rather hold the nation to its own agenda than allow a vote where the outcome may be disagreeable to them.

The American Association of University Women was sure of Lee's ability when he was first nominated a year ago, and we are only more convinced today. Lee's 23-year history of fighting discrimination and working for justice speaks for itself. His excellent work over the past year should be rewarded with a confirmation so he can continue his job.

By confirming Bill Lann Lee, the Senate will demonstrate that it can rise above political pettiness and prove its commitment to advancing civil rights for everyone.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform the nation of a continuing injustice. I rise to tell the nation of an attorney with impeccable credentials and qualifications to be the next Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights at the United States Department of Justice. I rise today to remind you of the story of Bill Lann Lee.

It is now more than two years since his appointment to fill the position of Assistant Attorney General. Yet, his appointment to be the next Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division has been frozen for more than two years in the Senate. The Senate has refused to complete the confirmation process.

Mr. Lee is one of the country's leading civil rights attorneys, with a long and distinguished history of defending the rights of all Americans. Mr. Lee's distinguished legal career has spanned more than 23 years. He has tirelessly spent his career seeking equal opportunity for all people and working diligently against discrimination in all forms, including employment, housing, voting and education. Mr. Lee has extensive experience in civil rights law.

Yet despite all these accomplishments, his confirmation remains unfinished. A man whose experience in civil rights law includes extensive work in employment discrimination, health care, prevention of lead poisoning in poor children, access to public transportation, and equal access to education.

I know first hand Mr. Lee brings a reasoned approach to his post. He has served the interests of his client, the American people without hesitation. During the last two years, he has served the nation as the Acting Assistant Attorney General. He has won my respect with his straightforward approach and on many occasions he has responded to the needs of the 18th Congressional District. Mr. Lee came to Houston to participate in a Town Hall Meeting on Hate Crimes.

During his two years as Acting Assistant Attorney General the Civil Rights Division has enforced the laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, and other factors. Known as a skilled consensus builder, he has tirelessly worked to improve civil rights for all Americans.

Bill Lann Lee brings the kind of practical experience and leadership to the Justice Department that is needed. His leadership of the Civil Rights Division has included many issues including the monitoring of elections and investigating the police as well as protecting citizens with disabilities. One needs to look no further than events in Jasper, TX and New York City to see the leadership of Bill Lann Lee.

I praised President Clinton in 1997 when he made this appointment and I continue my support today. It is long past the time that the Senate should have taken action to confirm Bill Lann Lee as the nation's Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights. I urge my colleagues in the Senate to complete this process. Congress needs to reaffirm its commitment to civil rights and we can send no greater sign than to confirm Bill Lann Lee.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are again reminded not to refer to the personal conduct of the President of the United States.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 11 a.m.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 11 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until 11 a.m.

□ 1100

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. EWING) at 11 a.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Reverend James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

We are thankful, gracious God, that with all our differences of tradition and experience, and with the contrasts between us that mark our individuality, we are still bound together by Your creative spirit. We are grateful, O God, this spirit can unite us and make us whole, that this spirit can show us the way to live in harmony and concord, that this spirit can show us the power of faith and hope and love. Breathe into our hearts and souls, O God, this spirit of unity and peace, and may we so learn to live our lives that we testify to the wonder of Your grace. Bless us this day and every day, we pray. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. COSTELLO) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. COSTELLO led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.