Mr. Speaker, I thank

the gentleman from New Jersey for

yielding me this time and for his leadership

and his work with all of us here.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday students held

a peace rally on the west front of the

Capitol. It may have been the first

rally on the Capitol grounds in opposition

to war with Iraq I attended, and I

heard representatives of America’s

youth asking questions. Why? Why war

against the people of Iraq? Why assert

military power, which threatens innocent

civilians? Why war to settle differences?

Why separate our Nation

from the world community? Why not

give peaceful resolution a chance?

I looked into the eyes of our youth. I

looked at their fresh faces, faces hopeful

and optimistic yet challenging, asking

why. Soon the voices of our youth

will be heard across this Nation, and

we should pay them heed. They will be

heard on campuses, in town halls, and

many marches. They will be raised to

challenge and to confront senseless violence,

mindless war, the death of innocents,

the destruction of villages to

save villages.

Voices will be lifted up in urgency because

the future knows when the place

it needs to build could be destroyed.

The future knows and is skeptical

about promises of peace that are

wrapped in fire and brimstone. Our

young people opposing war represent a

message from the future America, the

America that can be, and with the

upwardly-spiraling aspirations of millions

of Americans of all ages, the

America that will be.

The future America works to make

nonviolence an organizing principle in

our society. The future America works

to make war archaic. It is a Nation

that lives courageously in peace, working

to settle differences at home and

abroad, without killing. The future

America comprehends the world as an

interconnected whole. It understands

that changes in transportation, communication,

and trades have made people

throughout the world neighbors.

The future America believes that

each person is sacred, that each person

makes a difference, that each choice

we make affects others, that an injury

to one person is an injury to all, that

justice ought to be international, and

that vengeance is reserved to the Lord.

It is an America where human rights

and workers’ rights and environmental

quality principles are within the arc of

the human covenant. It is a Nation

where each life is given an opportunity

to unfold, where all have access to

health care, to higher education, to

jobs, and to a secure retirement; where

quality of life matters, where people

build families, build communities,

build an American community of our

dreams; where our highest aspirations

light the way to a better Nation and to

a better world.

The future America is a Nation

which works to sustain life on Earth. It

champions protection of the global environment.

It works with all nations to

abolish nuclear weapons, chemical

weapons, and biological weapons. It is

a Nation which preserves the heavens

for the restless human soul, and it rejects

putting weapons in space because

it knows that the kingdom that will

come from the stars should bring eternal

peace and not war. While some

voices clamor for war, a future America

looks for deeper unity of all people

worldwide and seeks not empire but harmony.

So to you, young America protesting

this war, I sing a hymn of praise. Because

while some may want to send

you marching off to fight yesterday’s

wars, you are advancing from the future,

reminding us that our Nation has

a higher calling, reminding us of an

America that can be, reminding us that

there has to be a better way, reminding

us to find that better way, joining with

us to make straight the path of democracy.

This is a time for caution as we

would face war; but it is also a cause

for joy, because the same revelry that

sounds a battle cry and clangs the toxins

of war brings forth legions of others

enlisted in a holy cause to relight the

lamp of freedom in our own land. So

come forth young and old, prepare for

America’s future.