The subject of my Special

Order is Iran.

Madam Speaker, at the time the war

in Iraq began in March of 2003, who

would have thought that we were being

led into perhaps the worst foreign policy

disaster in America’s history?

Many of us voted against the war authorization

in the first place. But

many more Members wish they had

voted against it. We now know that

this country was led into this war with

faulty intelligence and a deafening war

drum from the administration.

The question that we raise tonight is

this: Could the Bush administration

possibly be planning for a war with

Iran? There isn’t any empirical evidence

to prove that the Bush administration

is planning for war. But there

are experts that are indeed worried

that the same playbook that was used

to bring this country into the Iraq war

is now being used to toward Iran. The

administration is pushing suspect intelligence.

And it has severely increased

and sharpened since their rhetoric

first began toward Iran.

We come to the floor tonight to resist

efforts by this administration to

paint war with Iran as a necessary next

step in our so-called war on terror. A

vast majority of foreign policy and

military experts agree that war with

Iran would be a colossal error.

Allow me to spend a few minutes to

explain why I feel that U.S. strikes

against Iran are a real possibility. Let

us look at some of the signs that we

may be headed for war. The increased

rhetoric. The administration is building

the volume of inflammatory rhetoric

toward Iran in a similar fashion to

the run-up to the Iraq war. Strong

statements about Iran’s intervention

in Iraq could set the stage for U.S. attack

on Iranian military or nuclear facility.

Surrogates in the administration, including

the President himself, have increasingly

stressed a full range of negative

Iranian behavior, including that

Iran is killing U.S. soldiers in Iraq,

supplying weapons, training and funding

to special groups.

They also say that Iran is interfering

with the peace process in the Middle

East. And they go on to talk about

General Petraeus and Ambassador

Crocker as they argued that Iran is the

major future threat to stability in

Iraq.

Iran seeks to build nuclear weapons.

When this point was dismissed by the

recent National Intelligence Estimate

stating that Iran had long since halted

their nuclear enrichment, the administration

criticized the report.

Allow me to read a short selection of

clips from recent press clippings that

expose the irresponsible rhetoric coming

from the Bush administration. This

headline from the Daily Telegraph on

April 7, 2008: British Fear U.S. Commander

is Beating the Drum for Iran

Strikes. ‘‘British officials gave warning

yesterday that America’s commander

in Iraq will declare that Iran is waging

war against the U.S.-backed Baghdad

Government. A strong statement from

General David Petraeus about Iran’s

intervention in Iraq could set the stage

for a U.S. attack on Iranian military

facilities, according to a Whitehall assessment.’’

Another headline: Petraeus Says Iranian-

Backed Groups Are Greatest

Threat to Iraq. This is in the

Bloomberg News April 9, 2008. ‘‘The socalled

‘special groups,’ which are funded,

trained and armed by Iran, played a

‘destructive role’ in the recent clashes

between extremist militias and Iraqi

Government forces in Basra and Baghdad,

Petraeus said. ‘Iran has fueled the

violence in a particularly damaging

way,’ he told the House Armed Services

Committee today in Washington, his

second day of testimony to lawmakers.

‘Unchecked, the ‘special groups’ pose

the greatest long-term threat to the viability

of a Democratic Iraq.’’

Again, that was the Bloomberg News,

April 9, 2008.

Another headline, the Voice of America,

April 2, 2008, Israel to Redistribute

Gas Masks Amid Fears of War with

Iran.

‘‘Israel’s security Cabinet has decided

to redistribute gas masks to the entire

population amid fears of a nonconventional

war with Iran. The last distribution

was just before the U.S. invasion

of Iraq 4 years ago.’’

Another headline in the New York

Times, April 12, 2008. The headline

reads, Iran Fighting Proxy War in Iraq,

U.S. Envoy Says.

‘‘Iran is engaging in a proxy war with

the United States in Iraq, adopting tactics

similar to those it has used to

back fighters in Lebanon, the United

States ambassador to Iraq said Friday.

While Bush administration officials

have long denounced what they have

described as Iran’s meddling in Iraq,

Mr. Crocker’s language was unusually

strong from Mr. Bush down, administration

officials this week have been

turning up the volume on Iran.’’

A further sign that the U.S. may be

headed for war is Admiral Fallon’s resignation.

In the aftermath of the disastrous

invasion of Iraq, there has been

discussion within media and in the

military that senior military officers

should have resigned when they knew

the White House to be heading to a

reckless war in Iraq.

Some are speculating that the recent

retirement of Admiral Fallon is a direct

result of his steadfast opposition

to war with Iran. He even made his disagreements

with the administration

public before his retirement.

In a now-famous profile that Admiral

Fallon agreed to do for Esquire magazine,

he was characterized as the only

man standing between war with Iran.

Let me read an excerpt from that article.

This was Esquire magazine, March 11,

2008. The title is ‘‘The Man Between

War and Peace.’’ The article goes on to

say that if in the dying light of the

Bush administration, we go to war

with Iran, it will all come down to one

man. If we do not go to war with Iran,

it will all come down to one, that same

man. So while Admiral Fallon’s boss,

President George W. Bush, regularly

trash-talks his way to world war III

and his administration casually casts

Iranian President Mahmoud

Ahmadinejad as this century’s Hitler, a

crown it has awarded once before, to

deadly effect, it’s left to Fallon, and

apparently Fallon alone, to argue that,

as he told al Jazeera last fall, this constant

drumbeat of conflict is not helpful

and not useful.

Another sign that the U.S. may be

thinking about war is the offensive

against the Mahdi Army. Moqtada al

Sadr has promised full-scale attacks on

America’s interests in Iraq in the event

of strikes on Iran. As commander of

the multinational force in Iraq, General

David Petraeus still presides as

the commander of the Iraqi security

forces as well. Any operation against

the Mahdi Army would have been authorized

by him. What motivation did

the United States have in fueling a violent

confrontation with the powerful

militia at a time when al Sadr had declared

a truce and the progress of the

surge was being reported to Congress?

One explanation is that recent operations

against al Sadr’s militia, the

Mahdi Army, may have been meant to

neutralize possible resistance inside of

Iraq in the event of a strike on Iran.

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The following five reasons are taken

verbatim from an article in U.S. News

and World Report that was published

on March 5th entitled ‘‘Six Signs the

U.S. May Be Headed For War in Iran.’’

Before I go into the five reasons that

I have taken verbatim from this article

in U.S. News and World Report, I am

going to recognize the Congresswoman

from Oakland, California, BARBARA

LEE, who is cochair of the Progressive

Caucus. She is one of the co-founders of

the Out of Iraq Caucus. She has been

consistent in her resistance to this war

in Iraq.

She is an organizer. She is a constant

speaker on the speaking engagement

circuit, speaking with groups and organizations

all over this country who

want to hear from BARBARA LEE about

what is going on in Congress.

The question she is most confronted

with is when will this Congress end the

war and bring our soldiers home? What

are you going to do about a President

who is ignoring the will of the people

and ignoring the will of Congress in

their attempts to resist the continued

funding of the war? Every weekend,

somewhere in this country, BARBARA

LEE is attempting to answer those

questions and engage the American

citizens about what is happening here.

I yield to BARBARA LEE.

Thank you very much,

I am so pleased and proud to have been

joined by my colleagues here this

evening to sound the alarm. Let me say

that again, we are sounding the alarm.

We are opening up the debate. We are

raising the questions. We are challenging

this administration on the

issue of war with Iran.

We are saying, Mr. President, we

have watched, we have listened, and we

have learned. We are smarter people

when we hear talk about war, when we

hear accusations being made. When we

hear a march to war we now recognize

it for what it is. It is a given that we

have this knowledge that we have acquired

since we have been here since

the start of the war with Iraq. We do

not intend to sit idly by without opening

up the discussion, without making

the challenge, without raising the

questions.

As I said, prior to the opening lines

of the presentation that was just given

by Congresswoman BARBARA LEE, there

were signs of war that have been identified,

not only by some of the experts

that we have been talking to, but by

those who have been writing and

watching what has been going on.

As I mentioned before, there is talk,

and there are news articles.

U.S. News & World Report, published

on March 11, title, ‘‘6 Signs the U.S.

May Be Headed for War in Iran.’’ Let

me repeat that, U.S. News & World Report

published on March 11 titled ‘‘6

Signs the U.S. May Be Headed for War

in Iran.’’

Warships off of Lebanon, with the

Army fully engaged in Iraq, much the

contingency planning for possible military

action has fallen to the Navy,

which has looked at the use of carrierbased

war planes and sea launch missiles

as the weapons to destroy Iran’s

air defenses and nuclear infrastructure.

‘‘Two U.S. warships took up positions

off Lebanon earlier this month, replacing

the USS Cole. The deployment was

said to signal U.S. concern over the political

stalemate in Lebanon and the

influence of Syria in that country. But

the United States also would want its

warships in the eastern Mediterranean

in the event of military action against

Iran to keep Iranian ally Syria in

check and to help provide air cover to

Israel against Iranian missile reprisals.

One of the newly deployed ships, the

USS Ross, is an Aegis guided missile

destroyer, a top system missile defense

against air attacks.’’

This article goes on to talk about

‘‘Vice President Cheney’s peace trip:

Cheney, who is seen as a leading hawk

on Iran, is going on what is described

as a Mid East trip to try to give a boost

to stalled Israeli-Palestinian peace

talks. But he has also scheduled two

other stops: One, Oman, is a key military

and ally and logistics hub for military

operations in the Persian Gulf. It

also faces Iran across the narrow, vital

Strait of Hormuz, the vulnerable oil

transit choke point into and out of the

Persian Gulf that Iran has threatened

to blockade in the event of war. Cheney

is also going to Saudi Arabia, whose

support would be sought before any

military action given its ability to increase

oil supplies, if Iran’s oil is cut

off. Back in March, 2002, Cheney made

a high-profile Mid East trip to Saudi

Arabia and other nations that officials

said at the time was about diplomacy

to Iraq and not war, which began a

year later.’’

Vice President CHENEY has been on

that trip, as we pretty well know,

based on the advanced intelligence revealed

by this very, very well-placed

article.

They go on to talk about the Israeli

air strike on Syria.

Israel’s air strike deep in Syria last

October was reported to have targeted

a nuclear-related facility, but details

have remained sketchy, and some experts

have been skeptical that Syria

had a covert nuclear program.

An alternative scenario floating in

Israel and Lebanon is that the real purpose

of the strike was to force Syria to

switch on the targeted electronics for

newly received Russian anti-aircraft

defenses. The location of the strike is

seen as on a likely flight path to Iran.

That is also crossing the friendly Kurdish-

controlled northern Iraq. Knowing

the electronic signatures of the defensive

systems is necessary to reduce the

risk for warplanes heading to targets

in Iran.

They go on to give the other identification

markers that should be

watched and should be vetted.

Israeli comments. Israeli President

Shimon Peres said earlier this month

that Israel will not consider unilateral

action to stop Iran from getting a nuclear

bomb. In the past, though, Israeli

officials have quite consistently said

that they are prepared to act alone if

that becomes necessary to ensure that

Iran does not cross a nuclear weapons

threshold. Was Peres speaking for himself,

or has President Bush given the

Israelis an assurance that they won’t

have to act alone?

Israel’s war with Hezbollah. While

this seems a bit old, Israel’s July 2006

war in Lebanon against Iranian-backed

Hezbollah forces was seen at the time

as a step that Israel would want to

take if it anticipated a clash with Iran.

The radical Shiite group is seen not

only as a threat on its own, but also as

a possible Iranian surrogate force in

the event of war with Iran. So it was

important for Israel to push Hezbollah

forces back from their positions on

Lebanon’s border with Israel and to do

enough damage to Hezbollah’s Iranian supplied

arsenals to reduce its capabilities.

Since then, Hezbollah has been

able to rearm through a United Nations

force that polices a border buffer

zone in southern Lebanon.

So as you can see, there is quite a bit

of reason to be concerned about the administration’s

saber-rattling towards

Iran. There is no way to prove their intentions,

and I hope we are wrong, but

we really can’t afford to be wrong.

Another encounter like in January

between the U.S. Navy and an Iranian

speedboat could be used as an excuse

for retaliation similar to the Gulf of

Tonkin incident that began the Vietnam

War. The White House would simply

claim that we were ‘‘provoked’’ and

were defending ourselves.

I would like to stop at this time and

yield time to the gentlelady from

Houston, Texas, who has been consistent

in her work with the Out-of-

Iraq Caucus in an attempt to bring our

soldiers home. It is with great pleasure

that I yield to Congresswoman JACKSON-

LEE.

Thank you very much

to both SHEILA JACKSON-LEE and BARBARA

LEE for, again, their constant and

consistent struggle working in this

House against the war.

Mr. Speaker, and Members, press reports

have given us some indications of

the thrust of current White House directed

planning. The strike would be

against Iranian terrorist facilities, the

Revolutionary Guard units and/or nuclear

production facilities, a limited

air strike operation with the objective

of changing Iranian behavior. Those

who argue for the strike are saying

there will be very few U.S. casualties

and very few Iranian civilian casualties.

Nevertheless, we all know that

U.S. strikes against Iran would be disastrous.

Middle East experts generally agree

that Iran would respond to a U.S.

strike by attacking U.S. and Israeli interests

throughout the region and possibly

globally. These strikes would lead

to a greater Middle East war, including

greater loss of life, financial burden,

over stretch of our military and worse.

We’re sounding the alarm this

evening and we are sending a message

to the President of the United States of

America and to the Vice President,

particularly now to the Vice President,

who, when he was reminded by an ABC

News reporter that the recent polls

show that two-thirds of Americans say

the fight in Iraq is not worth it, his response,

‘‘and so?’’

Well, Mr. Vice President, our ‘‘and

so’’ to you tonight is, and so the American

people do not want us to continue

this war in Iraq and to air strike in

Iran. We’re sounding the alarm. And I

will yield time to the gentleman who

just left the Speaker’s seat to complete

this colloquy that we’ve had here this

evening.