Mr.

Speaker, many of us had an opportunity

to be in our districts over the

last couple of days and to engage our

constituents on what might have been

the most momentous debate and decision

that this Congress would make, at

least in the early part of the 21st century,

and that was debate we engaged

in last week on the question of going to

war with Iraq. All of us acknowledged

that we came to this floor and expressed

our viewpoints as we thought

was best for the American people.

Over the weekend, of course, an enormous

tragedy occurred in Indonesia.

Americans are missing. Some lost their

lives. But one of my constituents asked

the question that I think is so very important

that we raise again today:

What about peace and the ability to be

able to have that as a clarion call? Why

is that so shameful that we as Americans,

the most privileged and the most

powerful, cannot raise the question of

what about peace? What about discussions

of peace and reconciliation?

Helen Thomas, one of the press persons

at the White House, pressed that

question to Ari Fleischer. Of course,

there was not an answer. Yes, there is

terrorism of which we have the world

supporting our efforts against terrorism.

But why can this Nation not,

as it has done in the past, in the tradition

of Jimmy Carter who won the

Nobel Peace Prize, likewise begin a discussion

of world peace, speaking to our

allies and enemies as well, as my constituent

asked the question, why not

peace? Why is there shame in bringing

that to the forefront of the American

public so that even as we fight the

issue of terrorism, we can stand aside

from this question of war, allowing the

U.N. inspectors to go in?

Why not peace? Why not a discussion?