Mr. Speaker, the

America I envision seeks world unity

instead of unilateralism. It gains its

power through being the first to help,

not the first to strike. It extends itself

to the peoples of the world to lift their

burden. It is an America which, when

asked for help, dispenses bread instead

of bombs, medical assistance instead of

missiles, and food instead of fissile materials.

There is a role for America in the

world. It is in working with the community

of nations to achieve the security

of all nations. It is in restoring the

promise of the nonproliferation treaty

to lead the way to get rid of all nuclear

weapons. It is through strengthening

and abiding by international treaties.

It is in assuring control and eventual

elimination of chemical and biological

weapons and land mines. It is in protecting

our global climate.

America can help protect the world.

America can help save the world. But

America cannot control the world, nor

should we want to do so.

Yet our administration would project

American power for the purpose of

domination. Their national security

doctrines call for America to strike

anywhere it pleases and to be the first

to use nuclear weapons.

Our Nation is now poised to go to all out

war against Iraq. Iraq has not committed

any act of aggression against

the United States. Iraq was not responsible

for 9/11. No credible evidence exists

linking Iraq to Al Qaeda’s role in 9/

11. Iraq as not responsible for the anthrax

attack on our Nation. The United

Nations has yet to establish that Iraq

has usable weapons of mass destruction.

There is no intelligence that Iraq

has the ability to strike at the United

States. According to the CIA, Iraq has

no intention to attack America, but

will defend itself if attacked.

Why then is our Nation prepared to

send 300,000 of our young men and

women into house-to-house combat in

the streets of Baghdad? Why is our Nation

prepared to spend $200 billion or

more of our hard-earned tax dollars for

the destruction of Iraq?

Why is our Nation preparing to use

the most powerful military machine in

history to wage an assault on the people

of Iraq, to destroy their houses and

buildings, to wipe out their water and

electrical systems, and to block their

access to food and medical supplies?

There is no answer that can separate

itself from oil economics, profit requirements

of arms trade, or distorted

notions of empire building.

War with Iraq is wrong. But if war is

prosecuted further in Iraq, we must be

prepared to advance the cause of peace

in this country. We must be prepared

to stand up, to speak out, to organize,

to march, to demand an end to the war,

or to demand an end to an administration

which insists on war.

It is urgent we oppose this war. It

will dominate our Nation’s priorities.

It will threaten Social Security and

Medicare and block a prescription drug

benefit for the elderly. It will stop

America from providing jobs for all,

health care for all, education for all.

There are some who believe that it is

unpatriotic to challenge the administration

on the war. They believe it is

politically wiser to debate the economy.

But how can one reasonably separate

war from the budget, war from the

economy, war from America’s ability

to meet the needs of the people of this

Nation?

The administration’s own top economic

adviser said the war would cost

up to $200 billion. Our Federal budget is

already close to huge tax cuts for the

wealthy. Remember when we had a

budget surplus?

Each time the administration talks

about war, fear is created and when

fear goes up, the market goes down.

War will mean a sharp increase in oil

prices, which will hurt jobs in manufacturing

and transportation. One economic

study with a worst-case scenario

puts the cost of an all-out war plus

long-term occupation of Iraq at $1.6

trillion.

We cannot separate war from the

economy. We cannot separate war from

America’s ability to meet the needs of

her own people here at home.

We need to ask the questions: Why

does America have hundreds of billions

to ruin the health and take the lives of

innocent people in Iraq but no money

to provide health care for all Americans?

Would why America spend hundreds

of billions to retire Saddam Hussein,

but no money to protect the retirement

security of its own people?

Why does America have money to blow

up bridges over the Euphrates River in

Iraq, but no money to build bridges

over the Cuyahoga River in Cleveland,

Ohio?

The path America must take is one

of peace that leads to prosperity. It is

one which understands that creating a

structure of peace ensures that economic

structures can be sound, affirmative

of human needs and restorative of

human values.

This is the dream of a Department of

Peace to making nonviolence an organizing

principle in our society, making

the work of Dr. Martin Luther King,

Jr., a reality, and working to make war

itself a thing of the past. It is the ethic

of peace building which will cause us to

take down weapons from the heavens

and work to create a heaven on Earth.

Peace and prosperity shall be as two

pillars in a newly rebuilt America

which provides for the economic and

Social Security of its own people as a

cause of nationhood and for the economic

and social progress of people of

other lands as a cause of brotherhood.

This confirmation of the purpose of

Nation was the dream of Franklin Roosevelt

and the New Deal, Lyndon Johnson

and the Great Society, and John F.

Kennedy and the New Frontier. This

shall continue to be our dream in the

days ahead, that no matter the darkness,

we shall hold up the light of

America’s higher purpose which calls

to us across the ages from Washington,

Jefferson and Adams, through Lincoln

to the present day. Our Nation has a

higher calling.