Mr. Speaker, the

sounds we are hearing and the signals

we are seeing from the administration

remind me of the months leading up to

the invasion of Iraq. For all those supporters

of the President who claimed 6

years ago that military intervention in

Iraq would be the U.S.’s last option, we

now know the war was the first, preordained

and only option of the administration.

They just had to cook the

books to make the American people believe

otherwise.

America has paid a very steep price:

America has lost lives; Iraqis have lost

lives; $1 trillion lost; American moral

leadership in the world lost. And we

cannot afford to let this administration

do it again with a military strike

against Iran before the President and

Vice President leave office in January.

The news of late is deeply troubling,

and we have a responsibility to remind

the Americans of the administration’s

penchant to conduct diplomacy with

bullets and bombs.

I believe the people have the right to

know and the right to demand this administration,

and the Republican ticket

for the Presidency, declare there be

no military strike against Iran by U.S.

forces or on our behalf by a U.S. ally

like Israel unless the Congress votes

for it.

My concerns come directly out of the

reporting by credible, mainstream

international news organizations that

have built their reputation on credibility.

I enter into the RECORD a September

1 story from the Jerusalem Post. The

headline is: ‘‘Dutch intel: U.S. to strike

Iran in coming weeks.’’

I also enter into the RECORD the August

29 Jerusalem Post story entitled,

‘‘Israel reaches strategic decision not

to let Iran go nuclear.’’

These and other news stories should

remind us that this administration remains

in office for several months but

years ago forfeited their trust with the

American people over the Iraq War.

What is especially worrisome to me

is that the administration has shifted

the Iraq war to the air in an effort to

make it an antiseptic war that might

be more acceptable to the American

people. We’re grateful that U.S. casualties

in Iraq are down significantly, but

when a war should never have been

started, every single casualty is a price

too high.

And today, the U.S. is an unwelcome

occupier, and the administration is ignoring

the wishes of the elected Iraqi

Government to set a date to leave. Instead,

the White House is trying to run

their country and continue this war.

Bombs falling from 30,000 feet have

the same devastating impact on innocent

Iraq civilians as bullets and bombs

at street level. We just don’t hear

about it much in the American news

media. But I hear about it from people

in the Middle East who wonder if we

will ever leave Iraq and worry that an

antiseptic aerial war will be used

against Iran.

Where once we stood tall on the

moral high ground, now decent people

the world over question our motives,

our resolve, and our moral leadership.

They fear, and so do I, that this administration

will make the calculation

that as long as we drop bombs from

30,000 feet, or fire cruise missiles from

300 miles offshore, the American people

can be misled into another war. We

must not let that happen.

The current leadership in Iran has

few, if any, friends in this House today,

and I am not one of them. But we cannot

solve every challenge that confronts

us with military confrontation.

And we cannot meet other challenges

when our moral high ground has turned

into the shifting sands during this administration.

When Russia invades Georgia, who in

the world is going to listen to the rhetoric

of a U.S. President who invaded

Iraq?

When Iraq says set a timetable to

leave and this President says no, who

in the world is going to listen to a

President who says Iraq is a sovereign

Nation?

And when this administration says

they aren’t planning a military strike

against Iran, why would anyone in the

world believe it when the fine print

says all the options are still on the

table?

Instead of occupying Iraq, the U.S.

should be occupying the moral high

ground, and we can start by stopping

any effort to use force against Iran.

Let’s do it today before it’s too late.

We need, Mr. Speaker, a vote before we

do anything against Iran.