Mr. Speaker, last night on the CNN national news the

anchor woman said that Congress did not question the costs of the

Kosovo-Serbia bombings, implying total support. That very morning,

however, the Congressional Quarterly had a headline that said,

``Congress Eyes Cost of U.S. Role in Kosovo.''

There probably is no question that this money will be approved.

However, it is simply wrong to imply that no Members of Congress

question these costs.

We are now being told that we will soon be asked to approve $4

billion for the costs of our air war. One estimate is that ground

troops and reconstruction costs could soon total $10 billion. This is

money that will have to be taken from other programs and from American

taxpayers, and if we have to stay in there to preserve the peace for

many years to come, the costs could just become unbelievable. Many

Members of Congress feel it was a horrible mistake to get into this

mess in the first place and that our bombings have made a bad situation

many times worse than if we had simply offered humanitarian aid.

CNN and much of our liberal national media may want a much bigger

role. The American people want out of there, the sooner the better.

Yesterday a Democratic Member of the House sat down next to me and

said, ``I don't know who these people are polling. Everyone in my

district is strongly opposed to this war.''

In just the past couple of days, Mr. Speaker, I have had similar

comments made to me from both Democratic and Republican Members of the

House from Missouri, Virginia, New York, Kentucky, Arizona, Maryland,

Alabama, California, North Carolina and Florida. I have not been

seeking these comments. I have been taking no formal survey. But

Members of the House have been telling me that their constituents are

almost totally opposed to this war in Serbia and Kosovo.

Our colleague, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. Ganske) was on the C-Span

Washington Journal yesterday morning. He said he had had over 1,000

people in town meetings over the recess and that when he asked how many

favored ground troops in Kosovo, only 10 people raised their hands.

Last Thursday morning this same question was asked on the leading

talk radio show in Knoxville. Only one call came in in favor of ground

troops, yet the national media has this drumbeat going for a bigger,

longer, more expensive war. Heaven help us if part of this is about

ratings, or so some of our leaders can prove how powerful they are, or

to leave some great legacy as world statesman.

I believe this is going to go down as one of the great

miscalculations in American history and certainly one of the most

expensive. We have turned NATO from a purely defensive organization

into an aggressor force for the first time in history, and one that has

attacked a sovereign nation for the first time in history.

With our bombings in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Sudan and now Serbia and

Kosovo, we are bombing nations which have not threatened us in any way,

which have not jeopardized our national security and where we have no

vital U.S. interests, and we are quickly turning people who would like

to be our friends into bitter enemies of the United States. We have

taken a bad situation and made it many times worse by our bombings and

have created a huge refugee crisis in the process, and all of this was

done by the President apparently against the advice of his top military

advisers and against the advice of the head of the CIA.

The Christian Science Monitor, the National Journal and many other

leading publications and columnists have pointed out that there are at

least 30 or 40 other conflicts, small wars, going on all over this

world right now, several far worse than Kosovo before we started

bombing. Our policy should have been, Mr. Speaker, and should be now:

humanitarian aid, yes; bombings and ground troops, no.

The U.S. was doing 68 percent of the bombing before General Clark

requested 300 more planes. If the majority in Congress wants to send

ground troops in and, I think, ignore their constituents in the

process, then let the Europeans lead for once. We do not have to carry

the entire burden. Those who wanted to expand NATO membership a few

months ago to bring in Poland and Czechoslovakia and Hungary should

call on those countries to supply troops. They have done nothing so

far, and it is obvious that NATO would not be doing all of this or any

of this were it not for U.S. insistence.

One of our leading columnists, Mr. Speaker, wrote a couple of days

ago these words:

``Three weeks into Bill Clinton's Balkan adventure, and America risks

a debacle. The human rights crisis in Kosovo has exploded into a

catastrophe. Slobodan Milosevic is being rallied around like some

Serbian Churchill, Montenegro and Macedonia

are destabilized, Russia is being swept by anti-American jingoism, and

U.S. troops may have to go marching into the big muddy. Such are the

fruits of Utopian crusades for global democracy.''

Mr. Speaker, several times over the last few days I have heard

reports on national networks saying that Members of Congress were

getting ``antsy'' about not committing ground troops to Kosovo. The

implication is that all of the Members of Congress want ground troops

in there immediately.

I believe it was a terrible mistake to start bombing in the first

place, and it certainly would be compounding a huge error to place many

thousands of ground troops in there now.

As many columnists have pointed out, the NATO bombings have made this

situation much worse than it ever would have been if we had simply

stayed out. The very liberal Washington Post Columnist, Richard Cohen,

wrote, ``I believe, though, that the NATO bombings have escalated and

accelerated the process. For some Kosovars, NATO has made things

worse.''

Pat M. Holt, a foreign affairs expert writing in the Christian

Science Monitor, wrote, ``The first few days of bombing have led to

more atrocities and to more refugees. It will be increasing the

instability which the bombing was supposed to prevent.''

Philip Gourevitch, writing in the April 12 New Yorker Magazine, said:

``Yet so far the air war against Yugoslavia has accomplished exactly

what the American-led alliance flew into combat to prevent: Our bombs

unified the Serbs in Yugoslavia, as never before, behind the defiance

of Milosevic; they spurred to a frenzy the `cleansing' of Kosovo's

ethnic Albanians by Milosevic's forces; they increased the likelihood

of the conflict's spilling over into Yugoslavia's south-Balkan

neighbors; and they hardened the hearts of much of the non-Western

World against us--not least in Russia, where passionate anti-

Americanism is increasing the prospects for the right-wing nationalists

of the Communist Party to win control of the Kremlin and its nuclear

arsenal in coming elections.''

Many conservative analysts have been very critical. Thomas Sowell

wrote: ``Already our military actions are being justified by the

argument that we are in there now and cannot pull out without a

devastating loss of credibility and influence in NATO and around the

world. In other words, we cannot get out because we have gotten in.

That kind of argument will be heard more and more if we get in deeper.

``Is the Vietnam War so long ago that no one remembers? We eventually

pulled out of Vietnam,'' Mr. Sowell wrote, ``under humiliating

conditions with a tarnished reputation around the world and with

internal divisiveness and bitterness that took years to heal. Bad as

this was, we could have pulled out earlier with no worse consequences

and with thousands more Americans coming back alive.''

Mr. Sowell asks, ``Why are we in the Balkans in the first place?

There seems to be no clear-cut answer.''

William Hyland, a former editor of Foreign Affairs Magazine, writing

in the Washington Post said, ``The President has put the country in a

virtually impossible position. We cannot escalate without grave risks.

If the President and NATO truly want to halt ethnic cleansing, then the

alliance will have to put in a large ground force or, at a minimum,

mount a credible threat to do so. A conventional war in the mountains

of Albania and Kosovo will quickly degenerate into a quagmire. On the

other hand, the United States and NATO cannot retreat without suffering

a national and international humiliation. \* \* \* the only alternative is

to revive international diplomacy.''

Mr. Hyland is correct, but unfortunately I am afraid that ground

troops in Kosovo would be much worse than a quagmire. Former Secretary

of State Lawrence Eagleberger was quoted on a national network last

week as saying that the Bush administration had closely analyzed the

situation in the Balkans in the early 1990s and had decided it was a

``swamp'' into which we should not go.

NATO was established as a purely defensive organization, not an

aggressor force. With the decreased threat from the former Soviet

Union, was NATO simply searching for a mission? Were some national

officials simply trying to prove that they are world statesmen or

trying to leave a legacy?

The United States has done 68 percent of the bombing thus far. This

whole episode, counting reconstruction and resettlement costs after we

bring Milosevic down, will cost us many billions.

If there have to be ground troops, let the Europeans take the lead.

Do not commit United States ground troops. Let the Europeans do

something. The U.S. has done too much already. Humanitarian aid, yes;

bombs and ground troops, no.