Mr. Speaker, I would just like to remind my good

friend, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. Hoyer) that it was 4 years ago

that the President of the United States also promised a group of

assembled Congressmen and Senators over at the White House that the

Bosnian operation would last 1 year. Today we find ourselves 4 years

and $10 billion into a quagmire, still engaged in a Balkan civil war.

It is all too clear that this administration does not understand what

they are getting into. While the gentleman reminds us of lessons

learned in 1938 with Chamberlain, I would recommend we also look at

1948. That was the year that Tito told the Soviet Union to get out of

the Balkans three short years after the beginning of Soviet control.

The Soviet Union got out, because they understood better than us the

six century civil war that continues to rage on.

This administration does not understand the delicate dynamics of this

Balkan civil war. We have a Secretary of State who had guaranteed on

public television that this was going to be a short, clean war. We have

a President, mirroring what LBJ did in the 1960s, actually selecting

targets in this civil war. They do not understand what they are getting

into, and before we accelerate, like the gentleman from Ohio (Mr.

Kasich) said, we better take a long, hard look at what we are doing.

This is constitutionally and practically correct, and as a member of

the Committee on Armed Services, I support it wholeheartedly.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say to the gentleman

from Massachusetts I agree with him with the need for consistency, and

I will consistently be opposing this action and will vote against it,

and for several reasons.

First of all, we had the minority leader talk earlier today about how

this was, quote, the first affirmative action by NATO. What he is

saying is actually this is a radical extreme departure in the history

of NATO, the first time they have attacked on the offensive instead of

being defensive. This is an extreme radical departure for NATO, make no

mistake of it, and guess who is paying for that extremism and

radicalism? It will be the men and women who are in my district, who

are in five military bases, whose sons and daughters go to the public

schools of my children. It is very easy to play fast and lose with

military tradition, very easy to make an extreme radical departure for

the first time in 50 years of a defensive alliance, but that is

happening in this situation.

We also see the ghosts of LBJ rising like from the mist of the

Potomac where we have a President who is selecting bombing targets in a

war. We have Madeleine Albright going on television, on PBS, declaring

early on that this was going to be a short, clean, tidy war.

These people do not know what they have gotten into. It is a 610-

year-old ethnic war, civil war, religious war, and, yes, Milosevic is a

murderer. He has murdered according to the New York Times 3700 people.

But I see the selective outrage up here. I hear nothing about those

that want to support the KLA who were murderous. I hear nothing about

the 60

million killed in China over the past 50 years. I hear nothing about

the 2 million killed in Sudan. Of course there is an oil pipeline that

Occidental Petroleum wanted to get through Sudan, so I heard no moral

outrage then. I hear no moral outrage about the 1 million people

slaughtered in Rwanda. Of course they are not the same color as a lot

of us.

I mean let us not go here and beat our chests in moral self-righteous

indignation if we are not willing to apply the same test to every

region that we want to start wars in.

I will oppose it.

In response to some reckless words from the

gentleman from California (Mr. Lantos) first of all, they were not

crocodile tears. It was my resolution that passed on Sudan last year.

My colleague can ask the gentlewoman from California (Ms. Pelosi) or

anybody else, that I have been on the forefront for human rights in

China, and I challenge my colleague to check the Congressional Record

over the past year and-a-half or 2 years. If anybody has spoken out

more on human rights than myself, I would like my colleague to let me

know.

Mr. Speaker, it is so easy for other people to come

up and say we should stifle our voices and not speak our minds, when

people in my district from five military bases in my district are the

ones that will be dying over there.

The very children of those troops that will be dying are the ones

that go to public school with my children. The wives and husbands of

the troops that will be dying are the ones that go to church with me

every week. The ones that will be dying over there are the ones that I

see every day in and out, five military bases, probably more active

duty people in my district than anybody.

So let us not get up here and be self-righteous and talk about how we

do not support the troops. This is about supporting the troops. If we

think the President's policy is wrong-headed, do not tell me we do not

have the right to come to this floor and talk about our concerns.

We have grave concerns. We need to sit back and look at the policy,

refocus, and decide what is best not only for the world, not only for

this country, but for the troops that we are sending in harm's way.