Mr. Speaker, I rise with deep concern that on

this very day 4 years ago, our Nation inaugurated a conflict, an

unnecessary war, a war of choice, not a necessity.

The most comprehensive intelligence we have, the National

Intelligence Estimate and the latest Pentagon report, tells us that

Iraq had descended into a state of civil war. Over 3,000 Americans have

died, and hundreds of thousands, some even say up to 1 million citizens

of Iraq, have lost their lives in this unnecessary conflict.

And while we are telling our veterans of this war, the elderly, the

poor, and the sick that there is no room in the budget for them, the

American people have spent over $400 billion on a failed policy. We

cannot do more of the same. Mr. Speaker, violence begets violence. It

does not lead to peace.

President John F. Kennedy once said, ``Those who make peaceful

revolution impossible will make violent revolution inevitable.'' My

greatest fear is that the young people of Iraq and of the Middle East

will never forget this war. My greatest fear is they will grow up

hating our children and our children's children for what we have done.

Mr. Speaker, the Bible is right. Even a great nation can reap what it

sows.

Nothing troubles me more than to see the young faces of these

soldiers who have been led to their death.

Some are only 18, 19, 21, 22, 23. It is painful; it is so painful to

watch. Sometimes I feel like crying and crying out loud at what we are

doing as a Nation and what this administration is doing in our name.

Our children do not deserve to die as pawns in a civil war.

They do not deserve to pay with their lives for the mistakes of this

administration. They never had a chance.

When I was their age, when I was 23 years old, I was leading the

Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, soon to speak in Washington

on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, but then we were involved in a

nonviolent revolution to transform the soul of America, to create a

beloved community.

Forty years ago, I was there in New York City in Riverside Church

when Martin Luther King, Jr., gave one of the most powerful speeches he

ever made against the war in Vietnam. If he could speak today, he would

say this Nation needs a revolution of values that exposes the truth

that war does not work. If he could speak today, he would say that war

is obsolete as a tool of our foreign policy.

He would say there is nothing keeping us from changing our national

priority so that the pursuit of peace can take precedence over the

pursuit of war.

He would say we must remove the causes of chaos, injustice, poverty

and insecurity that are breeding grounds for terrorism. This is the way

towards peace.

As a Nation, can we hear the words of Gandhi, so simple, so true,

that it is either nonviolence or nonexistence? Can we hear the words of

Martin Luther King, Jr., saying that we must learn to live together as

brothers and sisters or perish as fools?

Tonight I must make it plain and clear that as a human being, as a

citizen of the world, as a citizen of America, as a Member of Congress,

as an individual committed to a world at peace with itself, I will not

and I cannot in good conscience vote for another dollar or another dime

to support this war.