Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague, the

gentlewoman from California (Ms. Harman), for yielding me this time and

giving me the opportunity to be heard this afternoon.

I stand here representing the 11th Congressional District of Ohio. In

the Iraqi war, I lost two of my constituents. I read to my colleagues

now the statements of the father of one of those constituents, and this

is from an article in the Cleveland Plain Dealer:

``The soldier's father feels betrayed. On March 17, the President

told the country intelligence gathered by this and other governments

leaves no doubt that the Iraq regime continues to possess and conceal

some of the most lethal weapons ever devised. A week later, Private

Brandon Sloan, 19, was killed in Iraq. On Sunday, February 8, Brandon's

father heard the President hedge about Saddam Hussein: `We thought he

had weapons. He had the capacity to make a weapon.'

``The Reverend Tandy Sloan believes there is a key difference between

having no doubt a country possesses weapons of mass destruction and

having the ability to make them. A minister, he calls that difference

the eighth commandment: `Thou shalt not bear false witness.' It bothers

him deeply that the President apparently has no regrets for overstating

the danger for weapons of mass destruction that do not appear to exist.

Sloan says, `At least we admit we were wrong. I want the President to

say that mistakes were made that cost lives.'

``It has been almost a year since that Sunday night knock on the door

when military uniforms brought news that Brandon was missing. Days

later, Sloan learned that his son was dead. Months later a brigadier

general told him what happened to the 507th Company, made famous by

Jessica Lynch. `He basically told us the military goofed,' Sloan said.

`The President wanted a hard, fast hit,' the general said. Brandon's

unit, hauling trucks, water, tools and gear, couldn't move fast enough

to keep up with the other units, so they left it behind.

``Sloan said, `You let my son down. My son did not sign on to be left

behind.' ''

I stand here on behalf of the parents of private Brandon Sloan and

other young people killed across this country. Let us not politicize

whether or not we are safer without Saddam Hussein or not safer. Let us

celebrate the young people who lost their lives in this war and let us

move forward to make the United States a safer Nation.