disabilities. She initiated a self-therapy, water-oriented rehabilitation program for herself. After many months, she was able to walk again without crutches and braces.

This personal triumph inspired Evelyn to open her backyard swimming pool to disabled children. After several weeks, the news of Evelyn's invitation spread. Parents, schools, and doctors were bringing children 5 and 6 days a week. As the numbers grew, Evelyn knew that she would have to expand beyond the limitations of her modest pool.

With the support of community and civic leaders, Evelyn founded the Cerritos Communities Pool for the Handicapped, Inc.—a nonprofit corporation, now known as the California Pools for the Handicapped, Inc. Today, her organization is an internationally respected leader in aquatic rehabilitation and still maintains its original goals: to heal and comfort those in need, to never turn anyone away, and to never charge for any service.

For Evelyn, there has been no separation between her personal and professional dedication to the disabled. In addition to her commitment to no-cost aquatic rehabilitation therapy, Evelyn adopted 4 disabled children and served as foster mother for 12 more.

Evelyn's concern, commitment, and courage are exceptional. Her ability to take a personal tragedy and turn it into a personal triumph that has benefited thousands stands a model for all. Her life shows what wonderful things can be accomplished when one person seeks to make a personal tragedy into a triumph.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON S. 1124, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 1996

SPEECH OF

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 24, 1996

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise to urge my colleagues to oppose the fiscal year 1996 Department of Defense [DOD] authorization bill conference report. There are many reasons to defeat this conference report. One of the worst provisions contained in this bill would lead to the immediate discharge of the 1,049 service members infected with HIV, the virus that causes aids.

The Department opposes this provision and does not believe that service members with HIV present a deployment problem. The DOD believes that members with HIV should be treated as any other service members with chronic, possibly fatal, medical conditions, and remain on active duty until such time as they cannot perform their duties.

This provision is discriminatory because it treats people with HIV differently from the way people with other chronic diseases are treated.

Current policy concerning service members who are not eligible for worldwide deployment, such as those with HIV, are sufficient. Service members become ineligible for worldwide deployment due to a number of medical reasons, such as diabetes, asthma, heart disease, cancer, and pregnancy. They still perform very significant duties but are restricted in overseas travel to remain close to adequate medical services.

It is inappropriate to single out individuals with HIV disease for discharge from the Armed Services and in so doing, treat these individuals differently than the military treats other productive service members with chronic illnesses.

The current policy has been in place since the Reagan administration and received the support of senior military officials. The policy is the product of serious analysis and deliberation by the Pentagon of the impact of individuals with HIV disease on military readiness. The Clinton administration has only moved to continue these policies, demonstrating bipartisan support for this approach.

The presence of HIV-infected service members in the military does not adversely affect combat readiness or efficiency. These troops are still physically capable and are valuable to the Armed Services. Adopting this conference report would endorse unacceptable discrimination.

RESIGNATION OF SERGEI KOVALEV

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 30, 1996

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I call the attention of my colleagues to one of several deeply disappointing developments in Russia. Deputy Sergei Kovalev, our colleague in the Russian Parliament and longtime human rights activist, resigned his post as head of President Yeltsin's human rights commission earlier this week. Well known to anyone who has followed the course of human rights and democratic development in Russia, Mr. Kovalev was a political prisoner under the Communist regime and he has been highly critical of the Yeltsin government's policies in Chechnya. During the first weeks of the Russian attack on Grozny, the Chechnya capital, Mr. Kovalev bravely travelled to the region to see the facts for himself. For his efforts to stop the killing and terrorizing of both Chechens and Russians, he was roundly condemned and even threatened by fervent Russian nationalists.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Kovalev's resignation comes at a time when President Yeltsin appears to be casting off the last of his democratic orientation and throwing in his lot with rapid nationalists, allegedly reformed Communists, and cabinet cronies. Though he talks a reform line, President Yeltsin's actions demonstrate otherwise. In his resignation letter, Sergei Kovalev charges that President Yeltsin's government is "trying to run the country in a direction completely contrary to the one proclaimed in August 1991." This is a very disturbing course for Russia, for its neighbors, and for the entire world.

I urge President Yeltsin to return to the path of reform as the only genuine guarantee of peace and justice for Russian people, and Mr. Speaker, I trust the administration is using every appropriate opportunity to make that point to Mr. Yeltsin and his associates.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to have included in the RECORD Sergei Kovalev's letter of resignation to President Yeltsin.

The text of the letter follows, as reprinted in the January 29, 1996 Washington Post.

THE CASE AGAINST YELTSIN

(By Sergei Kovalev)

(From a letter of resignation sent Jan. 24 to Russian President Boris Yelstin by Sergei Kovalev, who had been chairman of the president's human rights commission since October 1993.)

For the past six years I have considered it my duty to promote in every way possible the policy that can fairly be called the "democratic transformation of Russia" notwithstanding many reservations. For a long time that policy was closely linked with your name. You were the head of a country on the road to democracy, and at first, you were even considered the leader of the democrats. As long as you remained headed in that direction, I considered myself your ally, or, in those instances when you departed from the overall course or drastically allowed the tempo of advance, a member of the loyal opposition.

Russia's road to freedom never promised to be easy. Many difficulties were obvious from the very beginning. Many others cropped up unexpectedly. To overcome them, all of us—the government, society, each individual—had to make complicated and sometimes tragic decisions. The main things the country expected from you were the will to make changes and honesty. Especially honesty. In electing you, Russia saw not only a politician ready to demolish the former state structure, but a person who was sincerely trying to change himself, his views, his prejudges and his habits of rule. You convinced many—myself included—that humane and democratic values could become the foundation of your life, your work and your policies. We weren't blind. We saw the typical traits of a Communist Party secretary preserved in your behavior. But all Russia, like a man striving to overcome a serious defect, was struggling with itself. We understood you even when we did not love you.

In recent years, however, even though you continue to proclaim your undying devotion to democratic ideals, you have it first slowly, and then more and more abruptly, changed the course of government policy. Now your government is trying to turn the country in a direction completely contrary to the one proclaimed in August 1991. . . .

Beginning in late 1993 if not even earlier, you have consistently taken decisions which—instead of strengthening the rule of law in a democratic society—have revived the blunt and inhuman might of a state machine that stands above justice, law and the individual. . . .

During the tragic days of the fall of 1993 [when Yeltsin dissolved the Supreme Soviet], I decided to stand by you despite my serious inner doubts. I don't deny my responsibility for that support. I believed that the use of force was a tragic necessity given the imminent threat of civil war. Even then I understood that the events of October might encourage the top leaders to perceive force as a convenient and familiar instrument for resolving political problems. But I hoped for a different outcome, that by overcoming the crisis of legitimacy and creating a basis for the rule of law in Russia, the president and the government would do everything possible for our country's peaceful and free development. To a very great extent, the outcome depended on you, Boris Nikolaevich. I believed that you would choose the second path. I was wrong.

The 1993 Constitution confers enormous powers on the president, but it also places enormous responsibilities on him to be the guarantor of the rights and liberties of citizens, to safeguard their security and to protect law and order in the country. How have you discharged these duties? How have you fulfilled your responsibilities?