I thank the gentleman

for yielding.

Madam Speaker, the gentleman from

Virginia earlier said that the Kucinich

resolution would tie the President’s

hands. Yes, it would. The whole point

of the Constitution is to tie the President’s

hands. The President, not this

particular President, any President,

must not have the power to commit

this country to war on his own authority

without the concurrence of Congress.

That is the point of the Constitution.

George Washington said the Constitution

vests the power of declaring

war in Congress. Therefore, no offensive

expedition can be undertaken until

they shall have deliberated upon the

subject and authorized such a measure.

Abraham Lincoln said they—meaning

the Framers—resolved to so frame the

Constitution that no one man should

hold the power of bringing this oppression—

meaning war—upon us. And

that’s what this really does.

Now, over the last 60 years since

World War II, during the Cold War,

power has flowed to the President—

again, Presidents in general. The exigencies

of time when bombers were

over the Pole, or we thought bombers

were over the Pole, you couldn’t call

Congress into session. And Congress, in

effect, surrendered much power to the

Presidency.

Korea was an undeclared war and

should not have happened that way.

Vietnam, Congress was fooled. They

called the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution

the ‘‘functional equivalent of a declaration

of war’’ which Congress would

not have voted had they known what

was in store or what they were voting

on, or that it was going to be cited as

a declaration of war.

The issue before us is not consultation

with Congress; it is not a lack of

information to Congress. It’s the fact

that Congress must act, and that is

why the Boehner resolution is beside

the point.

Now, in the past, there was a good

reason. There was time, there were

emergencies. But here, Secretary Gates

said there was no threat to the national

security of the United States.

We had time to negotiate with the

Arab League, we had time to go to the

U.N., and there was time to go to Congress

and ask for an authorization of

military war.

The President gave us his reasons for

going into Libya. Not everyone agrees

with those. But the question is not the

wisdom of the war in Libya; it is enforcing

the Constitution. And if we

pass the Kucinich resolution, the President

would have 15 days to come before

us and ask us to authorize the use of

force, if that is necessary.