Madam Speaker, I think the President

erred in not following the War Powers

Act in the spirit of the Constitution.

He should have asked us. If he had, I

would have said ‘‘no’’ then, and I say

‘‘no’’ now.

Let me disagree with those of my colleagues

who have talked about what a

terrible man Qadhafi is as a reason for

the United States to be spending our

money there. Yes, he’s a thug who

ought to be removed, but it cannot be

that America has to be the 911 for the

world and that we are the ones who

have to respond everywhere every

time.

I heard one of my colleagues on the

other side say, Well, the Europeans are

there. Let’s not poke them in the eye.

Poke them in the eye? We have for

years, since the beginning of NATO,

been subsidizing them so that they

have military budgets less than half of

ours as a percentage of their GDP, so

that they can do better than us in

health care and better in competitiveness

and every other way.

Yes, he should be opposed. There are

European nations, developed, wealthy

nations just across the Mediterranean.

Why do they have to have America

come nearly 4,000 miles to do it?

And it’s not just Libya. This is defining.

Are we going to go forward with a

situation in which America undertakes

to defend everybody in the world everywhere,

even when they are not greatly

threatened, as is the case with NATO

or with missile defenses against nonexistent

missile threats from Iran, or

do we say that we will bear our fair

share but not more? We have got to

stop subsidizing the rest of the world,

particularly now.

And when members from the Appropriations

Committee come up and tell

us, You’ve got to go do this, but let’s

cut police in Massachusetts, let’s cut

housing in Ohio, let’s cut transportation

in California, we cannot reduce

our deficit in a way that allows us to

maintain any concern for the quality

of life here if we continue to spend

money promiscuously all over the

world.

By the way, let’s go beyond that.

We’re not just talking about Libya.

What about the paradox of Afghanistan,

where we will spend $100 billion a

year to be told by the President of Afghanistan

that he doesn’t like what

we’re doing. Fine, let him have it. Stop

forcing him to take our $100 billion a

year.