I thank the

gentleman from California, our ranking

member on Foreign Affairs, for the

time.

Madam Speaker, this is a very tough

call, a tough set of circumstances.

There is much complexity here with

the convergence of war and diplomacy

and geopolitics and allied relations.

What is clear, however, is that the

President has not communicated effectively

with the United States Congress,

nor has he sought this body’s authorization

for the undertaking in Libya.

Let’s have a brief history lesson here,

though: Some in this body called for

unilateral action against Libya just 3

months ago. That was appropriately resisted

by this administration until

other nations, particularly the British

and the French, were willing to put up

their own assets and give structure to

a NATO coalition.

However, now U.S. actions, in an important

allied effort to save Libyan civilians

from imminent slaughter, have

clearly moved beyond the scope of humanitarian

relief and stabilization efforts.

With that said, an abrupt and imminent

cut-off of U.S. participation in

Libya causes numerous complications

and would be highly disruptive. Yet we

should not creep, we must not creep toward

opening up a third front in Libya,

which is the root cause of this debate.

The general framework for intervention

without express congressional authorization

has precedent and some

parallels within the last 30 years. Let’s

look at Lebanon in 1982, Panama in

1989, Bosnia in 1995, and Kosova in 1999.

All of these interventions had various

levels of controversy, particularly the

one in Lebanon; but they were undertaken

by Presidents of the United

States.

The Boehner resolution, considered

before this one, gives the President a

small window of time to better make

his case. If the President cannot, Congress

can assert its authority and disapprove.

Raising principled questions about

war powers is a laudable goal, and I do

want to commend the gentleman from

Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) for his leadership

in this important debate. It would not

have happened without him.

However, I think we should move forward

very carefully. Speaker

BOEHNER’s resolution pushes the President

for answers but stops short of requesting

congressional authorization

or abrupt withdrawal of U.S. participation

in the Libya mission. If this approach

is unfruitful, we can then exercise

further options.