I yield myself 1

minute.

Members will be asked to vote on two

resolutions, H. Con. Res 51, and a resolution

offered by Speaker BOEHNER, H.

Res. 292, both of which address U.S.

military involvement in Libya.

I do not believe that H. Res. 292 is at

odds with H. Con. Res. 51, but it’s not

a substitute for the resolution that Mr.

BURTON and others have worked on. It’s

imperative that Members clearly understand

this, because the consequence

of voting for one—that’s the Speaker of

the House resolution—and not the

other, H. Con. Res 51, ends up being an

endorsement of unconstitutional action

that was taken by the White

House.

So how does Congress deal with the

failure of any President to adhere to

the Constitution? If Congress does not

challenge a President’s dismissal of the

clear meaning of article I, section 8,

then we will have tacitly endorsed a

President’s violation of the Constitution

and guaranteed the perpetuation

of future constitutional transgressions.

A mild rebuke alone of the usurpation

of a constitutionally mandated war

power is insufficient to defend the Constitution.

Many of us want to support our

President, but the President has ignored

Congress’ assertion of the war

powers by failing to obey the War Powers

Resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

I yield myself 1

minute.

There are those who may hesitate to

support my resolution because of the

supposed negative impact it will have

on the NATO mission and on our image

in the eyes of our NATO allies.

In the weeks leading up to the war,

the administration had time to consult

with the Arab League, the United Nations,

and the African Union, but apparently

had no time to come to this

Congress for approval. If our image in

the eyes of NATO is a reason to stay in

Libya, the administration should not

have committed the U.S. to a war of

choice without consulting with Congress

for an action that was so far outside

that which is allowed by the War

Powers Resolution.

Far more damaging is a Congress

that ends up being more concerned

with our image in the eyes of NATO

than our fulfillment of our constitutional

responsibilities and the continued

usurpation of the war power by the

executive. Our loyalty to NATO and to

our President, regardless of party affiliation,

does not trump our loyalty to

the United States Constitution.

I want to thank all

Members on both sides of the aisle who

have participated in this important

constitutional debate.

What does it mean to defend the Constitution?

Well, if you know that Congress

very clearly has the power to declare

war, if you believe the President

violated the Constitution in this regard,

then you cannot come to any

conclusion other than to say that we

stand up and defend the Constitution

by voting for H. Con. Res. 51.

Let us also defend the Founding Fathers

and the doctrine of separation of

powers. Let us defend the doctrine of

checks and balances. Let us defend the

institution of the Congress of the

United States. And as we stand here,

having taken an oath to defend the

Constitution, this, my friends, is our

moment to stand up for that oath, to

act in defense of the Constitution.

I urge a ‘‘yes’’ vote on H. Con. Res.

51. I ask Members on both sides of the

aisle, who I know are ready to step forward

in this moment, to join me.

Thank you very much.

I thank the gentleman

from California for yielding.

In defense of Mr. BURTON’s description

of U.S. involvement already in

Libya, I would like to have entered

into the RECORD an article from the

Guardian U.K., dated May 22, which

talks about the United States having

50 percent of the ships, 50 percent of

the planes, 66 percent of the personnel,

93 percent of the cruise missiles.

I just want to say briefly, Madam

Speaker, that this article was written

about 10 days ago. If it’s true, it points

out that we’ve undertaken a huge mission

through the United States in the

name of NATO—now, without coming

to the Congress, and that’s what we’re

debating, of course. Yet if, on the other

hand, the information that the administration

has communicated as of late

to the Congress suggests a lighter footprint,

then there should be no difficulty

in pulling out of Libya in 15

days. If there is, we need to start asking

questions about how deeply enmeshed

we are if our participation is

truly no boots on the ground.