I thank Ranking Member

SMITH for yielding me the time.

I rise in support of this bill as well as

the prior resolution, as it’s better late

than never. Here again, with Libya,

Congress follows in the wake of a

major executive branch military action

absent congressional authorization.

I sent a letter to President Obama on

March 22 regarding what was then

called Operation Odyssey Dawn and

have never gotten an answer. When one

looks at the duration of U.S. military

engagements in the Middle East, north

Africa, and central Asia and what the

future might bring, these are the longest

wars and military actions in U.S.

history.

Our Nation has fallen into deep debt

directly connected to our expenditures

of over $1 trillion in the past decade on

wars that have not been paid for. Moreover,

creeping defense commitments in

that region and globally now consume

over half of the U.S. discretionary

budget annually. It is an astounding

predicament 20 years after the end of

the Cold War, as jobless Americans

question whether our Federal Government

even sees their plight.

We all know freedom is not free, but

it is largely the American people that

are bearing this military burden more

and more each year. What is most

striking is that other nations in the region

in which we are fighting are simply

not carrying anywhere near their

fair share of the load of boots on the

ground, nor have they measured up either

in terms of putting their treasuries

at risk. Unless an alliance of nations

in that region fight for freedom

themselves, they won’t own it, and we

can’t transfuse it.

Sadly, compared to the moral justification

for World War II, which historians

termed ‘‘America’s most just

foreign war,’’ our Nation in the current

period has drawn into resource wars in

farflung places that history is likely to

judge as morally indefensible.

The world is full of bad dictators, but

it always seems the dictators America

is most interested in are those that sit

atop huge oil reserves. Libya has the

world’s ninth largest oil reserves and

exports 1.5 million barrels a day.

I will be placing several articles in

the RECORD that document Western Europe’s

dependence, as well as Canada’s

reliance, on Libya’s oil investments

and the Libyan President’s threats to

nationalize those investments, which

even has affected China.

The West’s utter and growing reliance

on imported petroleum has twisted

our foreign policy and crippled our

domestic economy time and again.

As we import half of what we consume,

until Americans clearly see our

predicament, our Nation will keep repeating

these same mistakes.

Let us be clear on the nature of the

Libyan economy: 95 percent of its exports

are oil; 80 percent of its government

revenue derives from oil sales.

Oil represents 25 percent of Libya’s

GDP and its most important industry.

And Libya is Africa’s third largest oil

producer.

The major powers involved in this

military operation have vast pecuniary

interests at stake through the multinational

oil corporations that operate

in Libya, whether it is Italy, from

which operations are being staged, and

which gets 22 percent of its oil from

Libyan operations through firms like

Eni and Repsol, or Canada, whose

NATO General is leading operations,

while Canada’s second largest corporation,

Suncor Energy, has major oil operations

in Libya.

An article I am submitting

for the RECORD reports that

‘‘Seif al-Island Qadhafi, the son of

Colonel Qadhafi, warned that in the

event of a civil war, Libya’s oil wealth

would be burned.’’

One can see why the global powers

took note. In fact, China lifted 55,000 of

its oil workers out of Libya.

History will judge whether these resource

wars and selective dictator

deposals are justifiable. But the answer

for America is to invest here at home

and to restore America’s energy independence

and to extricate ourselves

from all these foreign oil involvements.