Mr. Speaker, when

the President of the United States

went to the United Nations Security

Council to urge intervention in the

Libyan civil war, he frankly missed a

stop. He should have come here first,

and this Congress should have debated

the wisdom or lack thereof of that effort.

Knowing what I know about this,

had that debate taken place here, I

would be one who would have voted

against authorizing the use of force

here because I do not believe we have a

vital national security interest in the

Libyan civil war.

I am going to oppose this resolution,

however, because I think that two constitutional

wrongs do not make a

right. Again, I believe the President

should have come here and sought the

authorization of this Congress before

he initiated these hostilities, and they

are hostilities. But when we have people

at risk, when we have lives on the

line, I think this resolution raises a

practical and a constitutional problem.

The practical problem, the gentleman

from Washington (Mr. DICKS) alluded

to a few minutes ago, and I can think

of another variation. If a NATO ally is

sending people into Libya on an intelligence-

gathering function and asks us

to provide air cover for that function,

is that an intelligence operation or

isn’t it? I don’t know, there’s a good argument

on either side, but it’s an adjudication

that I don’t think a U.S. commander

in the field ought to have to

make. I think it’s a practical confusion

that does not serve us well when people

are at risk.

Then, secondly, just as the President

has the obligation, I believe, to seek

approval of this body and the other one

before he initiates hostilities, he also

has the responsibility to conduct those

affairs once they begin. Our role is to

oversee and fund or not fund such activities,

but it is not to interfere with

them. I think this is an impractical interference;

so I’m going to vote ‘‘no.’’