I thank the

gentleman for yielding.

Somebody said a while ago we ought

to be supporting the Arab Spring because

there are movements toward democracy

over there. We went into

Libya to help in a humanitarian effort

and get rid of Muammar Qadhafi, but

who are we supporting? Nobody at the

White House has come down here and

said we’re supporting this group of people.

We don’t know if it’s the Muslim

Brotherhood, we don’t know if it’s al

Qaeda—now we do know there are al

Qaeda operatives that came from Afghanistan

fighting with the rebels in

Libya; are we supporting al Qaeda? Are

we supporting the Muslim Brotherhood?

The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt

has opened up the border—or the Government

of Egypt, whatever that is

right now—has opened up the border

between Egypt and Gaza, which provides

a mechanism for weapons to get

into Gaza to fire on Israel.

So before we start supporting a rebel

movement and going after somebody

like Qadhafi, we ought to find out who

we’re for. We’re spending billions of

dollars before this is over in a war

where we don’t even know who we’re

supporting, and it’s in violation of the

War Powers Act and the Constitution.

This is something we should not be

doing.

The President should have come

down here and made his case. He

should have said what our goals are. He

should have said who we’re supporting

and why we’re supporting them. We are

in a war against terrorism. We may

very well end up with terrorists controlling

Libya and Egypt, and that is a

tinderbox that we don’t want. We get

about 35 percent of our energy from

that part of the world, and if all hell

breaks loose because we’ve gone with

the wrong guys, we’ve got a real problem

in this country economically. And

the President ought to be thinking

about all that and making his case to

the Congress in accordance with the

Constitution and the War Powers Act

before he does it.

I thank the

gentleman for yielding.

I’ve heard a number of people say,

well, the Constitution does give the

President latitude, but during the

Nixon administration Congress passed

the War Powers Act, and then when the

President vetoed it, Congress overrode

his veto, and so the War Powers Act became

law. Now whether or not you believe

it’s constitutional, it has never

been tested in the courts, and so it’s

the law. And the law says, as well as

the Constitution, at least this is what

most of the people who have looked at

the Constitution believe is what it

stands for, the Constitution and the

War Powers Act say the President cannot

do what he did without the support

and approval of Congress. Now he’s gotten

us into the war in Libya and it is,

in effect, our war.

People say, well, no, it’s NATO. Well,

we are providing over 8,000 of the military

personnel on the ships and in the

air. The majority of the flights that

are taking place where they’re doing

the bombing are done by our airmen

and our aircraft. Over 90 percent of the

missiles that are being used at over a

million dollars per copy are American

missiles. This is going to cost billions

of dollars. If this were to pass and we

were to stay there for over a year, you

could count on it costing $2 billion or

$3 billion.

My colleague from Arkansas just a

few minutes ago talked about us being

broke. The American people know, if

Congress doesn’t, that we’re $1.5 trillion

short this year, and we’re $14 trillion

in debt. We’re printing money that

our kids are going to have to deal with

because they’re going to have to pay

for the debt down the road. Some of us

will pay if we live long enough, but our

kids are certainly going to inherit the

debt. And so we’re adding to the debt

by going into a war we shouldn’t be in

and without the approval of the Congress

in accordance with the War Powers

Act and the Constitution.

Now my big concern is—and I’m

going to talk on the other bill that is

coming up later on—not just Libya. My

big concern is this President, unless we

send a very strong message to him,

may take us into Syria. There’s humanitarian

problems in Syria right

now, and the reason they went into

Libya, they said, was because of the

humanitarian problems. He talked to

the French, the English, the NATO,

United Nations and the Arab League

for about 2 weeks before we went into

Libya, but he didn’t have time to talk

to the Congress who appropriates the

money and authorizes this stuff. He’s

the Commander in Chief once we go to

war, but he needs the authority from

Congress to go into it, and he didn’t do

it.

There are a lot of wars of opportunity.

The President could go into

Syria. He could go into the Ivory

Coast.

There are a

lot of places we could go to war if we

choose to do it. There’s humanitarian

problems around the world. But unless

it’s a threat to the United States or an

attack on the United States, the President

does not have the authority to do

what he did without the support and

approval of Congress.

President Bush came to Congress before

he went into Iraq. President Bush

came to Congress before he went into

Afghanistan, and that’s as it should be.

This President should not overstep his

boundaries. And what I wish we would

do, which would exceed the legislation

we’re going to be talking about today,

is to pass legislation to cut off all

funds for Libya. I know it would not

pass the Senate, but it sure would send

a signal to the President and the White

House that we’re not going to allow

him to go into war without the approval

of the American people and the

approval of Congress.