I thank the gentleman

for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R.

2278.

My colleague has set forth a responsible

plan that would effectively limit

the United States’ role in Libya. This

bill would allow U.S. forces to continue

to conduct search and rescue missions,

aerial refueling, intelligence, surveillance

and reconnaissance, and provide

operational planning assistance.

Mr. Speaker, this is what NATO has

told us would allow them to continue

to carry out the mission. These are

very critical functions. That is all that

they have asked us to do as we move

forward. And it helps the President be

truthful in saying that we’re not engaged

in hostile actions.

This bill would clearly end funding

for all other military missions in

Libya. Of particular concern to many

Members is the United States’ continued

engagement in strike and suppression

of enemy air defense missions. The

President has repeatedly stated that

the U.S. is not engaged in hostilities

and that congressional authorization is

not necessary to continue our role in

this operation.

I share with many of my colleagues

the view that firing a missile at a target

in a foreign nation does indeed constitute

hostile action. This disagreement

is at the root of the issue at

hand. H.R. 2278 would put an end to

that debate by explicitly defining the

congressionally authorized scope of the

U.S. military mission in Libya.

The administration has yet to

present Congress and the American

people with a clear strategic objective

for our involvement in Libya. Furthermore,

to date we have not been informed

of a specific end goal under

which the U.S. military operations

would cease. This threatens the effectiveness

of our mission and can soon

create an unjustifiable strain on our

military while they remain engaged in

two other theaters of operation critical

to our national security interest.

I urge my colleagues to join me in

support of this bill.

Reclaiming my time,

my good friend from Washington, there

are a lot of things that would make me

feel better. If we could go back and

start this whole thing over, there are a

lot of things that would make me feel

better. But the President has said

we’re not engaged in hostilities. And I

think we would agree that when we’re

firing missiles, when we are having

missions with our fighter planes suppressing

ground fire, I believe that

would be—most of us agree that that is

hostile.

The NATO people, we met with the

military from Great Britain. They told

us what we have in here would allow

them to continue successfully their

missions.

I urge my colleagues to join me in

support of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in

opposition to the bill, and I yield myself

such time as I may consume.

The President’s initial justification

for our military intervention in Libya

was that it was necessary to prevent

the massacre of Libyan civilians by

government forces in Benghazi, and

that this would be strictly a humanitarian

mission.

As I noted back in March, deploying

American warriors to protect civilians

from a brutal dictator is a noble cause.

Yet I also expressed my reservations at

the time because I feared that the mission

could result in a protracted stalemate.

Although the President promised

the American people that our involvement

would be limited, a matter of

weeks, not months, we find ourselves

past the 3-month mark with no end in

sight.

This bill would authorize operations

for up to a year. We’re currently engaged

in a war that is vital to our national

security. In Afghanistan we’re

fighting extremists who sheltered the

terrorist organization that killed 3,000

Americans on September 11, and would

again provide them with a sanctuary if

given the chance. We’re in the process

of consolidating our victory in Iraq and

still have 50,000 troops there in harm’s

way.

Indeed, a clear strategic vision is required

to make any military intervention

successful. Since this operation

began, the connection between strategic

ends and operational means has

been lacking. Consequently, unless the

NATO mission departs from its original

mandate, it appears that our only recourse

is to hope that Qadhafi will voluntarily

leave his country. I cannot

support a long-term commitment of

U.S. forces to hostilities when success

is based on hope.

Furthermore, the President failed to

seek congressional authorization for

this operation on the flimsiest of legal

rationale. It’s not appropriate for this

body to cover his lapse with a blanket

authorization.

I therefore urge my colleagues to

vote ‘‘no’’ on this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Just for the record,

Mr. Speaker, the original mission was

not to get Qadhafi. The original mission,

as explained by the President,

was to help, for humanitarian purposes,

those civilians that Qadhafi was

threatening.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to my

friend and colleague, the gentleman

from Ohio