I thank the gentleman

for yielding.

The previous speaker deludes himself,

and he is my friend, if he thinks

the message we send today goes only to

the President. The message will go to

all the world, the message will go to

Muammar Qadhafi, the message will go

to our NATO allies, the message will go

to every nation of the world that

America does not keep faith with its

allies.

As it happens, I said that in 1999

when Clinton sent troops to stop the

genocide in Bosnia, and he did so and

the authorization lost on this floor,

shamefully, 213–213, one of the darkest

days I have served in this institution.

Let us not repeat that mistake. Let us

not repeat that message to our NATO

allies, to our European allies, to all the

world, that America cannot be counted

on. At the same time, Congress was

voting to undermine their mission as

they flew to Kosova.

In recent months, people across the

Middle East have bravely stood to demand

that their government respect

their fundamental rights. I have stood

with the gentleman from Indiana on

behalf of human rights around the

world. The Libyan people, who have

been subject to the dictatorship of

Muammar Qadhafi, who has more

Americans’ blood on his hands than

any other person other than Osama bin

Laden in the last three decades, were

among those who insisted that enough

was enough. Qadhafi responded by

unleashing widespread violence and

threatening countless lives, publicly

promising to go ‘‘door to door’’ and kill

those who stood against him.

In response to this threat of Qadhafi’s

against those civilian people, the

European Union, the Arab League, the

United Nations Security Council, and a

unanimous NATO called for action to

protect Libyan civilians.

The United States is participating in

this action both in order to prevent

brutal attacks against civilians and in

order to stand by our allies.

President Obama has made clear

from the beginning that our allies

needed to take the leading role in

Libya. We can’t do it all, but that does

not mean we can’t support those who

choose and take the responsibility of

leading. NATO has done that, and to

this point the campaign against Qadhafi

has proven successful. His exports

of oil have ceased, he is running short

on funds, cabinet and military officials

continue to defect from his regime.

China has just hosted

the Libyan opposition in China, and

the opposition controls eastern Libya

and is making progress in the west. I

believe that the wrong decision today

will significantly compromise that

progress.

Qadhafi wrote us a letter in the last

debate just some weeks ago and

thanked the House of Representatives

for its debate. Is that the message we

want to send to Qadhafi? I think not. It

would put civilian lives at risk to withdraw.

It would potentially stall the

growing movements for democratization,

not just in Libya but across the

Middle East and, indeed, across the

world. And it would severely undermine

our NATO alliance, as we all

know. If we want our allies to stand by

us in our time of need in Afghanistan,

we have to stand by them in places like

Libya. We are either in an alliance or

we’re not.

I do believe that President Obama

could and should have done a better job

of consulting with Congress at the outset

of hostilities, and I do believe we

are involved in hostilities. But I believe

that we must, as a faithful ally

and defender of freedom, defeat the

Rooney resolution and support the

Hastings resolution. America ought to

do no less.