

# Congress Asserts Its Power; Will Impeachment Come Next?

by Nancy Spannaus and Jeffrey Steinberg

July 29—With its overwhelming vote on July 25 to reassert the unique constitutional power of Congress, not the President, to decide whether the nation should go to war, the U.S. Congress delivered a decisive repudiation of British puppet President Barack Obama. The historic vote of 370 to 40 on House Concurrent Resolution 105 simply stated that “the president shall not deploy or maintain United States Armed Forces in a sustained combat role in Iraq without specific statutory authorization for such use.”

The resounding bipartisan vote was taken after an hour-long debate, in which lead sponsors Reps. James McGovern (D-Mass.), Walter Jones (R-N.C.), and Barbara Lee (D-Calif.), among others, stressed its significance as a return to a constitutional principle which has been consistently violated by Presidents from both parties. The principle is enshrined in Article I, Section 8, and is specified in the enabling legislation known as the War Powers Act, which HCR 105 cites.

The situation is now ripe for Congress to reassert its constitutional responsibility in other crucial areas, including the economy, by taking immediate action to reinstate the Glass-Steagall law, and the American System of economics as a whole, as Lyndon LaRouche demanded in his [“Four New Laws To Save the U.S.A. Now!”](#)

It’s obvious that there was a “complete breakdown” in the ability of Obama and his British sponsors to con-

trol the situation, commented LaRouche. “They couldn’t hold it together.”

But the way is open, and it is urgent, for the Congress to assert its constitutional obligation to *impeach* Obama, and to carry out a “full sweep of an honest system of financial management among nations,” LaRouche continued. “The world does not have to be run the way it has been run heretofore. The world can be run on a fair basis for the improvement of the productive powers of labor in every nation. That’s what we have to shoot for.”

In fact, the seed crystal for such a new international system was established with the recent meeting of the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) in Brazil, which, in solidarity with the nations of South America, launched a project based on rejecting the current usurious financial system, and replacing it with one providing credit for high-technology development projects, based on increasing energy-flux density, development of thermonuclear fusion power, and cooperation among sovereign nations.

Both the passage of HCR 105 and the launching of the BRICS project, which involves nations representing nearly half of humanity, have been virtually blacked out of the “mainstream” (read, sewer) U.S. media. “Why has there been almost no media coverage of this?” LaRouche demanded in relation to HCR 105. “Why is Obama just sitting back there like a dumb louse and taking the blows that are administered to him with-



*Rep. Walter Jones (R-N.C.), a sponsor of the resolution demanding that Congress abide by the Constitution, addresses the House of Representatives on July 25, before the resolution passed overwhelmingly.*

out response? Why is Obama hiding? Why is he just taking the blows, and not even attempting to defend his honor in terms of what he's doing? Obama has been exposed as a faker."

Thus, the way is wide open for Congress to act.

Senior Washington sources confirmed LaRouche's evaluation of the magnitude and portent of Obama's defeat, reporting that there is now a complete repudiation of Obama's foreign and national security policies by Republicans and Democrats alike. This has been building for some time, but it finally exploded around the HCR 105 vote, as it well could have on *any* issue involving the national interest, as distinct from partisan politics. "There is zero trust in the President," one source stated. "The climate for passage of Glass-Steagall is greater now than at any point since repeal, and this will accelerate as Members of Congress return to their districts to campaign and get an earful about the disastrous conditions facing a majority of their constituents."

### **A Cumulative Impact**

Since Obama's re-election in November 2012, his Presidency has been under the gun of one scandal and policy failure after another. The cumulative impact of these scandals has now reached a point where the issue of Obama's removal from office—first raised by

Lyndon LaRouche in April 2009—is on the minds of a growing majority of citizens and legislators.

A poll this week showed that 64% of Americans believe that the Internal Revenue Service is lying about the missing e-mails from former IRS official Lois Lerner, who is at the center of the scandal involving the targeting of tax-exempt conservative groups by the IRS.

The Benghazi scandal, highlighted by the recently published book *Blood Feud* by journalist Edward Klein, puts President Obama personally in the middle of lying to Congress and the American people. According to Klein's account, President Obama called then-

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton at 10 p.m. on the night of Sept. 11, 2012, as the attacks on the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were still underway, and ordered her to put out a false press statement, blaming the assault—in which four Americans were killed including Ambassador Christopher Stevens—on "spontaneous" protesters angered at a defamatory video about the Prophet Mohammed. By that time, top Administration officials, including Clinton and Obama, knew that the attack was a premeditated, heavily armed assault by an al-Qaeda-affiliated group, Ansar al-Sharia.

Add in the National Security Agency's illegal spying, the President's unconstitutional orders to murder American citizens without due process, the spying on journalists, and the continuing rule by Executive decree, usurping the powers of Congress, and the preconditions are in place for a bipartisan impeachment proceeding in the House of Representatives.

### **Executive Paralysis**

A leading Washington source added that both Democrats and Republicans are fed up with the fact that the President has not only failed to consult with or inform Congress about plans for dealing with the Iraq and Syria crises and the meteoric rise of the Islamic State (formerly ISIS); he has failed to make any policy decisions or take any actions whatsoever.

The source cited the recent emergency evacuation of American diplomats from the U.S. Embassy in Tripoli, Libya. "It was a policy failure at the top, not an intelligence failure," he asserted. The White House had been provided with a detailed intelligence assessment of the growing crisis in Libya and the danger to American diplomatic personnel. The warnings were delivered weeks ago, yet there was no action from the White House until the situation reached a point of desperation, where American fighter planes and drones had to be deployed to provide air cover as American personnel fled Tripoli in a caravan of armored cars.

Another source noted that Iraq's Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki had begged President Obama, personally, in March, to launch air strikes against ISIS bases, prior to the group taking control over much of northern Iraq and declaring an Islamic State. President Obama took no action, and when public criticism surfaced, the White House claimed that it had never received a "formal" request from the Iraqi government.

The source leveled another harsh warning about the disarray at the Obama White House. He noted that one of the most important things for any President,

particularly going into the end phase of his second term in office, is to retain the loyalty of his closest aides and advisors. In the Obama case, he is an absolute failure.

The source cited the case of Dr. Susan Rice, who was dispatched by Obama while still at the United Nations to deliver the lying account of the Benghazi attack days after it occurred. She was more recently sent out to also make a fool of herself around the case of Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl, the American soldier captured by the Taliban and released in exchange for five Taliban fighters held at Guantanamo Bay. Rice dutifully went on national television to tout the "successful" freeing of Bergdahl, when the entire affair was a violation of the law (Congress should have been informed 30 days in advance of the prisoner swap), and proved to be a political fiasco as well, when details of Bergdahl's record surfaced and it turned out that the five Taliban leaders were among the most "high valued" prisoners in U.S. custody.

The list of blunders, abuses of trust and indecisions goes on and on, the source emphasized.

### Demonizing Putin and Provoking War

President Obama has also gone out of his way to demonize Russian President Vladimir Putin. Obama is being used by his British sponsors to create the conditions for a new Cold War, which could easily erupt into a hot war, even a thermonuclear confrontation. From the standpoint of Obama's inner circle of advisors, it makes sense for Obama to demonize his Russian counterpart in an effort to divert attention away from his own plunging approval ratings. While Putin is enjoying unprecedented popular support, estimated in a recent Russian poll at over 82%, Obama's approval rating is in the mid-30s percentile on a very good day.

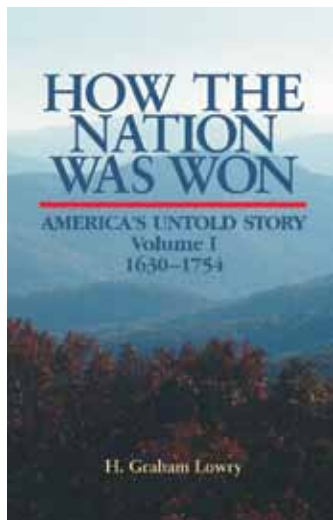
This kind of geopolitical demonizing is a very very dangerous thing to be doing, particularly when the Ukrainian government is engaging in a vicious bombing campaign against pro-Russian populations in the east of the country, and NATO is promoting a new "containment" deployment into Central Europe, bordering on Russia.

The fact that the Obama Presidency is in a state of free fall does not minimize the war danger. In fact, it adds an element of desperation that can drive the world to the brink of general war. Obama's meltdown coincides with a looming breakdown of the trans-Atlantic financial system, a breakdown that will impel the Brit-

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ish to seek war as an alternative to an orderly restructuring. Now that the BRICS group of nations has raised the issue of a new financial architecture, the prospect for such a change is vastly improved.

## The Next Steps

If the United States were to align with the BRICS initiative—starting with the reinstatement of Glass-Steagall—the war danger could be eliminated, along with the system of the Anglo-Dutch empire. Obama’s removal from office by constitutional means would be another crucial step towards the war-avoidance so urgently needed at this time. The HCR 105 vote in the House of Representatives is a big move in the right direction.

As one source noted, the broad support for Glass-Steagall in the population makes it a natural next step for bipartisan action to reinstate constitutional government. There are bipartisan bills in the House and the Senate, HR 129 and S 1282, which could, and must, easily be put on the floor and voted up. Such a move is urgent both to save the United States from the next impending crash, and to initiate the process of implementing the Four Laws program of LaRouche, which is necessary to rebuild the U.S. and world economy.

# House: Obama Must Seek Our Okay for War

*The following are excerpts taken from the Congressional Record of the debate in the House of Representatives on removing U.S. Armed Forces from Iraq, House Concurrent Resolution 105. The debate took place July 25, 2014. The resolution, backed by the leadership of both parties, passed with the support of 180 Republicans and 190 Democrats. Subheads have been added.*

**Rep. Ed Royce:** ...As the Department of Defense testified this week, these small teams are “armed for self-defense, but do not have an offensive mission.” It was noted, these teams are not unlike the missions being carried out by U.S. forces around the world. U.S. forces currently maintain these types of troops in

more than 70 countries, in Africa, the Americas, and Asia.

Now, if the President did decide to take more aggressive action in Iraq, Members on both sides of the aisle would be deeply split. Some don’t see any role for the U.S. military. Others believe we should be more active in this region, believing that our absence has contributed to a vacuum that is churning the entire region.

But where I think all Members can agree is that if the President of the United States ordered U.S. Armed Forces into sustained combat in Iraq, then he should be coming to Congress to seek an explicit statutory authorization and the backing of this body.

That is the text before us today: The President shall not deploy or maintain United States Armed Forces in a sustained combat role in Iraq without specific statutory authorization for such use enacted after the date of the adoption of this concurrent resolution.

At the same time, this text preserves the flexibility the President may need to respond to the rapidly evolving national security in order to protect our Embassy, to conduct search and rescue, or target an al Qaeda-type terrorist who poses an imminent threat to the United States, among other things.

Nothing in this text impacts the War Powers Resolution which, of course, requires the President to withdraw U.S. forces from hostilities within 60 to 90 days after introduction, absent an authorization from Congress.

The gentleman from Massachusetts brings a critical issue to the House floor: the use of force by U.S. Armed Forces, and the appropriate role for the Congress in that decision. Any military officer will tell you that the support of the people is critical to the success of a sustained combat operation. As the representative body, that responsibility falls to us. It is an obligation that I know all of my colleagues take seriously, and it is why I expect overwhelming passage of this motion this morning.

## We Have Abdicated Our Responsibility

**Rep. Walter Jones:** Madam Speaker, I am pleased that the House is debating H. Con. Res. 105. I want to thank the Republican leadership for working with Mr. Jim McGovern, Barbara Lee, and myself and our staffs to get this language so that we could debate it today.

As James Madison said: “The power to declare war, including the power of judging the causes of war, is fully and exclusively vested in the legislature.”

Unfortunately, we in Congress have for too long abdicated our constitutional responsibility to authorize the use of military force.

This began, for me personally, with my vote for the 2002 Authorization for the Use of Military Force Against Iraq, which is one of the biggest regrets during my tenure of Congress in voting for that.

With that vote, we gave up our constitutional authority on one of the most important decisions a Member of Congress can make: the decision to send American men and women into war to possibly die.

Madam Speaker, it is my hope that one day, we in Congress will repeal the 2001 and the 2002 AUMF. Until that time comes, I believe that today represents a strong step toward reclaiming the constitutional power that we each have and are entrusted with, to make decisions about going to war or declaring war.

I cannot emphasize enough that no decision is more important for a Member of Congress than a vote to send young men and women to fight and to die for our country.

The main text of this resolution is simple. The President shall not deploy or maintain United States Armed Forces in a sustained combat role in Iraq without specific statutory authorization.

Madam Speaker, this is what Madison meant when he said, “The power to declare war, including the power of judging the causes of war, is fully and exclusively vested in the legislature.”

**The Speaker pro tempore:** The time of the gentleman has expired.

**Royce:** I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

**Jones:** The legislature is us, the Congress. This is a monumental step toward reclaiming our constitutional authority.

In closing, I want to thank Representatives McGovern and Lee and all my friends in both parties who have fought with me for the right of Congress to declare war. For years, we have been calling for a debate on the floor of the House with regard to the use of our military.

I also want to thank Chairman Royce and Ranking Member Engel and their staffs for this opportunity today.

May God continue to bless our troops, their families, and may God continue to bless America. . . .

**Jim McGovern:** . . . Madam Speaker, this resolution is quite straightforward. It requires an authorization

from Congress, should the President determine that the United States should escalate its military presence in Iraq.

It does not change the President’s existing authorities to protect and ensure the security of U.S. diplomatic facilities and personnel, and it does not alter the requirements of the War Powers Resolution.

This resolution makes one clear statement: if the President decides we should further involve our military in Iraq, he needs to work with Congress to authorize it. I don’t know how Congress would respond and vote on such a request. For the record, I want to state in the strongest possible way that I think it would be a grave mistake for the United States to reengage militarily in Iraq.

I want to make clear that the intent of this resolution is not to criticize President Obama. I believe him when he says that he has no intention of significantly expanding our military presence in Iraq, and so far, in each of the three recent deployments to Iraq that he has announced, the President rightfully and formally informed Congress consistent with the War Powers Resolution.

Nor is this the intent to criticize the Republican leadership—rather, the intent of this resolution is to begin to reestablish Congress’ rightful role, under article I, section 8 of the Constitution, when it comes to matters of war and peace.

I believe there is broad bipartisan and growing concern that over the past several decades, Congress has ceded far too much of its power to the executive branch. It has happened under Democratic and Republican Presidents. It has happened under Democratic and Republican control of the House and Senate. It is not really a partisan issue. It is an institutional one. We simply haven’t done our job.

My concern all along is that Congress has not lived up to its constitutional responsibilities to debate and authorize the introduction of U.S. forces where they are engaged in roles related to combat.

So while this resolution clearly puts the President on notice, it also reinforces the institutional role of Congress in matters of war and peace.

Madam Speaker, the time to debate our reengagement in Iraq—should it come to that—is before we are caught in the heat of the moment, not when the first body bags come home, not when the first bombs start to fall, not when the worst-case scenario is playing out on our TV screens.

The time to debate Iraq is when we can weigh the pros and cons of action, the pros and cons of supporting the violent and sectarian policies of the Maliki government or whatever government is cobbled together should Maliki be forced to step down.

So I urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution to ensure that further deployment of U.S. troops in Iraq receives the careful debate and authorization it deserves. We owe at least that much to our men and women in uniform and their families, and we owe at least that much to our democracy and democratic institutions.

### **Wars Have Unintended Consequences**

**Thomas Massie:** . . .Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 105. Article I, section 8, clause 11 of the U.S. Constitution gives the sole power to declare war to Congress, not the President.

The situation in Iraq is deteriorating as we speak. ISIS, a group of violent fundamentalist Islamic thugs, is terrorizing the people of Iraq and destroying the ancient culture of Mosul.

Some have called for the U.S. to interfere once again, but if we are to do so and to send our brave men and women into harm's way overseas, we must honor the Constitution. Congress must authorize any such military action. It would be illegal for the President to do so alone.

Any future military action in Iraq would constitute a new war, with new enemies—ISIS—and would require a new congressional authorization. The President cannot use the 2002 authorization for the use of force in Iraq to justify any new action.

It is important for those who are quick to rush into another war to remember that wars often have unintended consequences. Iraq is a prime example.

In a recent article in *The Telegraph*, historian Dr. Tim Stanley pointed out that prior to the 2003 Iraq war, there were 1.5 million Christians in Iraq. Today, there are only 400,000.

As Dr. Stanley writes, "The lesson is: either leave other countries alone or, if you must intervene, do so with consistency and resilience. The consequences of going in, messing things up, and then quitting with a weary shrug are terrible for those left behind."

If we are going to go to war, we must follow the Constitution, have Congress declare it, and fight to win. Anything else is illegal, unconstitutional, and likely to lead to unintended, horrific consequences. That is why

I support H. Con. Res. 105, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

**Barbara Lee:** . . .This resolution simply prohibits the President to deploy armed services or to engage in combat operations in Iraq without specific debate and authorization from Congress, but this resolution also seeks to reclaim a fundamental congressional responsibility, the constitutionally protected right for Congress to debate and to determine when this country enters into war.

I also am personally concerned about mission creep. We hear many of the same voices who championed the unnecessary war in Iraq, once again, beating the drum for a renewed war in Iraq today.

Last month, President Obama announced that 300 personnel would be sent to Iraq, including intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance support, supported by attack helicopters and drones. A few days later, he announced another 200 personnel were soon to be deployed. There are promises to send many additional Hellfire air-to-surface missiles.

Now, I, too, believe President Obama does not intend to send ground troops to Iraq, but we need to make sure that Congress reasserts its constitutional responsibility on this grave issue.

After more than a decade at war in Iraq and Afghanistan, with thousands of United States lives and billions of dollars lost, the need for Congress to reclaim its war-making powers is more critical than ever.

Let me remind you, it was this absence of full debate that led to Congress passing the overly broad 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force in the wake of 9/11. This law has been used to justify everything from the war in Afghanistan, warrantless domestic and international surveillance, holding prisoners indefinitely in Guantanamo, and conducting drone strikes in countries that we are not at war with.

I couldn't vote for that resolution because I have always believed that such consequences are grave for the United States national security interests unless we fully debate these issues and, of course, to our standing in the world. We did not debate that resolution any more than 1 hour, and I have continued to attempt to repeal and address the problematic actions justified under this law ever since.

On July 16, Congressmen McGovern, Jones, Rigell, myself, and others—over 100 Members of Congress from both parties wrote a letter—and we signed that letter—to President Obama to come to Congress for an

authorization before any military escalation in Iraq, exactly what this resolution would do. I will insert the letter into the RECORD.

### **Letter to the President**

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, July 02, 2014.  
President BARACK OBAMA,  
The White House,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: We join you and with those in the international community who are expressing grave concern over the rise in sectarian violence in Iraq over the last days and weeks. The consequences of this development are particularly troubling given the extraordinary loss of American lives and expenditure of funds over ten years that was claimed to be necessary to bring democracy, stability and a respect for human rights to Iraq.

We support your restraint to date in resisting the calls for a quick and easy military intervention, and for your commitment not to send combat troops back to Iraq. We also appreciate your acknowledgement that this conflict requires a political solution, and that military action alone cannot successfully lead to a resolution.

We do not believe intervention could be either quick or easy. And, we doubt it would be effective in meeting either humanitarian or strategic goals, and that it could very well be counter-productive. This is a moment for urgent consultations and engagement with all parties in the region who could bring about a cease fire and launch a dialogue that could lead to a reconciliation of the conflict.

Any solution to this complex crisis can only be achieved through a political settlement, and only if the process and outcome is inclusive of all segments of the Iraqi population anything short of that cannot successfully bring stability to Iraq or the region.

As you consider options for U.S. intervention, we write to urge respect for the constitutional requirements for using force abroad. The Constitution vests in Congress the power and responsibility to authorize offensive military action abroad. The use of military force in Iraq is something the Congress should fully debate and authorize. Members of Congress must consider all the facts and alternatives before we can deter-

mine whether military action would contribute to ending this most recent violence, create a climate for political stability, and protect civilians from greater harm.

We stand ready to work with you to this end.

Sincerely, Barbara Lee; Sam Farr; James P. Moran; Janice Hahn; Peter A. DeFazio; Henry C. Hank Johnson, Jr.; Michael M. Honda; Scott E. Rigell; Chellie Pingree; Betty McCollum; John Garamendi; James P. McGovern; Richard M. Nolan; Beto O'Rourke, Members of Congress. Katherine Clark; Zoe Lofgren; Earl Blumenauer; George Miller; Anna G. Eshoo; Julia Brownley; Hakeem S. Jeffries; Chris Gibson; Jackie Speier; John J. Duncan, Jr.; Judy Chu; Robert C. Bobby Scott; Alan Grayson; James A. Himes, Members of Congress. Michael H. Michaud; John B. Larson; Mark Pocan; Reid J. Ribble; Frank Pallone, Jr.; Karen Bass; Maxine Waters; John Conyers, Jr.; Walter B. Jones; Peter Welch; Jared Huffman; John P. Sarbanes; Ed Pastor; Grace F. Napolitano, Members of Congress. Alcee L. Hastings; John Lewis; Jose'; E. Serrano; Nydia M. Vala'zquez; Louise McIntosh Slaughter; Andre Carson; Gloria Negrete McLeod; Jim McDermott; Keith Ellison; Lloyd Doggett; Rush Holt; Bobby L. Rush; Emanuel Cleaver; Bennie G. Thompson, Members of Congress. Lois Capps; Kurt Schrader; Jerrold Nadler; Mark Takano; Collin C. Peterson; Ann McLane Kuster; Justin Amash; Charles B. Rangel; Raul M. Grijalva; Niki Tsongas; Kathy Castor; Michael E. Capuano; Yvette D. Clarke; Matt Salmon; Kyrsten Sinema; Donald M. Payne, Jr.; Lois Frankel; Rosa L. DeLauro; Richard E. Neal; Eleanor Holmes Norton; Alan S. Lowenthal; Stephen F. Lynch, Members of Congress. Paul Broun; Cheri Bustos; Marcy Kaptur; Sheila Jackson Lee; John Tierney; Henry Waxman; James R. Langevin; Thomas Massie; Carolyn B. Maloney; Tony Ca'rdenas; Steve Cohen; Howard Coble; Donna F. Edwards; David Cicilline, Members of Congress. Ann Kirkpatrick; Donna Christensen; William Pascrell; Luis V. Gutie' rrez; Robin L. Kelly; Marcia L. Fudge; Dave Loebsack; Paul D. Tonko; Mike Doyle; Jan Schakowsky; Chaka Fattah; Suzanne Bonamici; Joseph P. Kennedy, III; William R. Keating, Members of Congress.

### **No Military Solution in Iraq**

**Barbara Lee:** Also, let me remind you that last month, we debated the Defense Appropriations bill. Over 150 bipartisan Members supported my amendment that would have prohibited funds from being used

to conduct combat operations in Iraq. This resolution, which is bipartisan, merely requires the President to come to Congress, should he decide to engage in an escalated combat role in Iraq. The reality is, though, there is no military solution in Iraq. This is a sectarian war with longstanding roots that were enflamed when we invaded Iraq in 2003. Any lasting solution must be political and take into account all sides. The change Iraq needs must come from Iraqis rejecting violence in favor of a peaceful democracy and respect for the rights of all citizens.

Madam Speaker, the American people agree. After more than a decade of war, thousands of American lives lost, and billions of dollars spent, the American people are rightfully weary. Before we put our brave servicemen and -women in harms way again, Congress should carry out its constitutional responsibility and vote on whether or not to get militarily involved in Iraq.

**Colleen Hanabusa:** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Massachusetts for yielding.

I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 105 having already taken action on this issue that has every American gravely concerned. I opposed our involvement in Iraq in 2002. I opposed it last month, and I oppose it today.

While I intend to support the resolution at hand, I believe we should have required the President to recall any troops that are not in Iraq strictly for diplomatic security. This was the original version of this resolution. Notwithstanding, it is very significant that this House of Representatives will probably pass overwhelmingly this resolution that takes a very firm stand that Congress should be authorizing any further military action in Iraq. We owe it to the people of this Nation.

Let's be clear. The President invoked the War Powers Act under the guise of protecting our embassy. There are now nearly 1,000 U.S. troops in harm's way—Apache helicopters and drones, just to name a few—and we are taking sides in a sectarian civil war. Let's not forget that that is what we are doing.

Congress must reject a new war in Iraq. I urge my colleagues to demand further action and to take further action to withdraw our troops now before our men and women in uniform are again asked to pay too high a price for our inaction.

**Rush Holt:** . . . The topic of limiting our future military involvement in Iraq deserves more than 1 hour. It deserves an entire legislative day to discuss this resolution and the larger question: the issue of the war-making powers of Congress. The history of our involvement in Iraq and exactly how we came to this point is of paramount importance in understanding why it is vital that the House pass this resolution. But since time is limited, let me come to the point: no more American soldiers should kill or be killed in Iraq to redeem our past mistakes.

The United States has spent years and billions of dollars trying to rebuild Iraq's armed forces, to no end. Sending 300 or 3,000 or 30,000 advisers to Iraq would be a pointless exercise when the Iraqi Army continues to melt away in the face of rebels.

Unless the Iraqi Government can inspire confidence in Kurds, Sunni, and Shia that it is a fair, legitimate government concerned with the welfare of all Iraqis, no amount of money or American advisers will save it. We have already lost more than 4,000 Americans in one war in Iraq. Let's not invoke the insidious and fallacious argument that our previous heavy investment justifies further heavy investment.

Had America not waged an unnecessary war in Iraq starting in 2003, there would be no need for us to debate this resolution now. Like so many misguided military interventions in our history, America's misguided war with Iraq unleashed forces that we cannot now control. We should not compound that error by squandering more lives and money in Iraq.

I hope we can have, beyond this moment now, a fuller debate of the warmaking powers of Congress. I hope, as Representative Lee said a few moments ago, that we can have a debate on the repeal of the Authorization for Use of Military Force that was the excuse for much military, paramilitary, and domestic intrusive activities in this country.

## **We Are Going To Respect the Constitution**

**McGovern:** Madam Speaker, I insert in the RECORD a letter from 33 national organizations in support of this resolution. . . . Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Regarding the term sustained combat role, this resolution specifically states that nothing in this language supersedes the War Powers Resolution. The War Powers Resolution lays out very clear timeframes, beyond which we should consider troops to be de-



ployed for a sustained period. Combat role implies the many roles that our troops might be engaged in or supporting combat operations in Iraq. I think, however, that this resolution is based on the President and the Congress acting in good faith and working together to authorize any deeper involvement in the ongoing conflict in Iraq.

I want to again acknowledge that this is an important resolution, and this is an important moment for this institution. We have bipartisan collaboration on this language. We have bipartisan agreement that we ought not to give up our constitutional responsibilities when it comes to declaring war or getting into wars. . . . But I also know from history that there is such a thing called the slippery slope and there are events that happened that sometimes overtake peoples original positions, and then we find ourselves in a situation that we did not expect to be in. What we are saying here is that, if, in fact, the President, for whatever reason, decides to escalate our military involvement, Congress needs to debate it and Congress needs to authorize it. It is that simple.

This resolution is not as strong as some of us would want it to be, and it is not as weak as some would want it to be. This represents a compromise. I also think it is important to point out that every once in a while this place works; and I think this is one of the moments where we can point to that the Congress is working, and we are working on an issue that I think is of incredible importance.

Madam Speaker, I will just close by saying, like so many of my colleagues here, I have been to countless funerals of soldiers who have been killed not only in Iraq but in Afghanistan. I have talked to parents, I have talked to brothers and sisters, and I have talked to grandparents during very difficult times when they have lost a loved one. It is important that we recognize that going to war, deploying our troops in hostilities, is a big deal. We ought to be very clear that this is important and that we ought not to go down that road lightly. I am grateful that this resolution makes it clear that we are going to debate these issues, that we are going to authorize these issues, and that we are going to respect the Constitution. . . .

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