

at ordinary income rates in those brackets. Rich hedge fund managers should not be paying a lower tax rate than their secretaries because much of the income of the hedge fund manager is capital gains and dividends.

According to Citizens for Tax Justice, the Fairness in Taxation Act will raise more than \$78.9 billion if enacted in 2011, allowing us to avoid the harsh cuts that will hurt the middle class. This is an idea that Americans support. In a recent poll, 81 percent of respondents supported placing a surtax on Federal income for those who make more than \$1 million per year in order to reduce the deficit.

Passing the Fairness in Taxation Act will allow us to stop the war on the middle class, restore fiscal integrity and fairness, and fund initiatives that reflect our American values and goals.

RECOGNIZING GUS MACHADO FORD FOR RECEIVING THE FORD MOTOR COMPANY PRESIDENT'S AWARD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate a constituent of my south Florida community, Gus Machado of Gus Machado Ford, for receiving the Ford Motor Company's President's Award. The President's Award is a prestigious honor and is awarded to less than 10 percent of all dealers nationwide. It recognizes Gus Machado Ford for exceeding customer expectations in every department.

Customer satisfaction is more important than ever during these tough economic times. Its loyal and supportive customer base has allowed Machado Ford to prosper where others have seen their markets shrink. Certainly, in the past year and a half, we have sadly witnessed many dealers close up shop, and it has been a very difficult period for car dealers nationwide; but Gus has not only survived but has flourished. I applaud Gus Machado Ford for making the interests of customers its number one priority.

To further recognize his contribution to our south Florida neighborhoods, two outstanding individuals, Remedios and Fausto Diaz-Oliver, will acknowledge the significant aid that Gus has provided to others with a community event this Sunday. Gus may be best known for his outstanding company, but his hand in helping those less fortunate in our south Florida area is admirable.

In 1985, Gus organized the first golf shootout at the Doral Golf Resort. With all proceeds going to the American Cancer Society, the charity event was so successful that his shootout has become an annual event.

Along with his golf event, Gus is also founder of two additional charity events. He is the founder of the first

PGA Tour Senior Golf Classic in Miami at Key Biscayne, which donates to the American Cancer Society and to the United Way. He is also the founder of the Gus Machado Classic Charity Golf Tournament, which has raised over half a million dollars for cancer research.

In 2008, to better serve the community through his charitable contributions, he created the Gus Machado Family Foundation. Every year, the foundation celebrates the Gus Machado Community and Back to School Fair on the grounds of his car dealership. The event provides hundreds of children with backpacks full of school supplies. Along with the generous donations of school materials that the foundation supplies to our children, it also offers immunizations and ID cards for kids in conjunction with different State and local government agencies during the back-to-school community fair.

As a contributor to over 30 charitable organizations, few in our community have impacted south Florida as much as Gus has. Again, congratulations to Gus Machado for his recent commendation and for his leadership to our community.

RETIREMENT OF ERVIN HIGGS

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Ervin Higgs on his well-deserved retirement after 46 years of public service in the Florida Keys. Ervin's long and distinguished career was marked by a solid 35 years as property appraiser of Monroe County, otherwise known as the Keys. In his service to the Keys, Ervin has borne witness to the unique and profound changes that have taken place in our Keys community. His commitment to excellence has truly allowed him to shape the lives of countless Conchs.

It is sad to see such a fine and dedicated public servant retiring, but those who follow in his footsteps will truly have much to establish. There are few greater rewards than the satisfaction of serving one's community, and I thank Ervin so very much for having embraced this most noble of endeavors with such high principles.

Congratulations to Ervin on his retirement, and I wish him all the best on this new chapter of his life.

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LIBYA: THERE SHOULD HAVE BEEN A VOTE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, a little over a week ago, the executive branch launched U.S. military force against yet another Middle Eastern country. This time it is oil-rich Libya. U.S. naval and air forces attacked Libyan military installations across that country, wiping out air defenses, intelligence systems, tanks, and also apparently is now targeting that nation's ground forces.

Under what policy is the executive branch operating without a vote of Congress in expending millions of defense dollars and State dollars on offensive action taken inside a nation that did nothing provocative toward the United States. In fact, last year, Libya was even a recipient of U.S. foreign aid. The President's justification for this action was that it was not an act of war but, rather, a humanitarian mission to prevent a catastrophe that would have resulted from Libya's military forces under the command of Libyan President Muammar Qadhafi from taking the civilian center of Benghazi.

Our President says he did not act alone, as French, British, Canadian, and other Western NATO members participated in these attacks. The President informed Congress that future operations will be handled by NATO. Well, who exactly decided all of this? Not Congress. If this is not an act of war, as F-16s fly over and bomb and U.S. naval forces shell, what is it?

The President has further said he authorized this military action to enforce U.N. Security Council Resolution 1973; yet on that resolution, many nations who normally are U.S. allies abstained from the vote, such as India, Brazil, and Germany.

The President said he sought the permission of the Arab League before taking action. But in fact it was 3 days into the bombing when the press reported the Arab League said it had "no objection" to the bombing. So where in these operations have been the Arab League's planes and soldiers? And I might ask, where is the African Union's engagement? Why are they silent?

It appears the administration consulted key allies from oil-dependent Europe, like the French, who dropped the first bombs, and the British. But the President didn't bother to ask Congress. We live in very strange and dangerous times. The administration says it made a couple of phone calls to Members of Congress serving in the leadership. Well, who exactly were they? And then the administration set up an after-the-fact briefing for Members of Congress in the Capitol Visitor Center. None of these gestures meet the spirit or letter of the law under our Constitution relating to military engagement abroad.

Yes, protest movements seem to be springing up across Africa and the Middle East, and we witness some Libyan rebels—though we really don't know exactly who they are or who is funding them—take to the streets to demand reform and an end to the Qadhafi government's grip on power. But we also see troops very loyal to the Qadhafi regime who are fighting to maintain that regime.

So why is America taking a military role in an internal civil conflict without a vote of Congress on behalf of the American people whose sons and daughters are engaged in these operations? Should we not be clear and vote

on whom it is we are supporting, for how long, and through what legal means?

I and the entire world watched with horror the news reports of Qadhafi's troops attacking civilians, including shutting off food, water, and fuel, shelling cities and towns, and targeting innocent people for killing. Those responsible for these crimes must face justice for what they have done. But please tell me, where across that region do we not have dictators in charge of nations? Is America to intervene everywhere there is an uprising?

Libya is certainly not the only African country facing a humanitarian crisis. We have all but ignored the situation in Côte d'Ivoire which has already displaced approximately 500,000 people, with triple the population of Libya. The crisis in Côte d'Ivoire would dwarf the violence in Libya. Would the President's logic extend there? Or what about the Congo? Or Sudan? Is it America's new 21st century Monroe Doctrine to now intervene militarily under the guise of humanitarian aid wherever a President chooses?

The crisis in Libya was several weeks old when the President chose to take action. Surely there was time to seek congressional approval. I am highly concerned that this military intervention took the familiar pattern of launching attacks just when Congress left town to go back to our districts for a week, thus silencing our voices in Congress even more as this floor was shut down. How premeditated and how irresponsible I believe the current course of events to be.

I have sent an official letter to the Obama administration asking under what U.S. legal authority U.S. forces have been engaging in Libya. As a member of the Defense Subcommittee, I fully expect a matter of this nature would have been brought up before us. It never was.

Moreover, what have the operations cost to date? And from which accounts are funds being taken? The Department of Defense claims it cannot create a civil works employment program to employ our returning U.S. Iraqi and Afghani veterans when they come home here, yet it finds money for this excursion.

Mr. Speaker, there should have been a vote on the use of force outside our borders, not a notice after the fact. Anyone who is following the news has seen the reports of protest and unrest in multiple nations. Mr. Speaker, on the operations in Libya, there should have been a vote here.

Does this Administration, like the last one, believe that it has the authority to take military action wherever it chooses in the Middle East? Could the President's same rationale extend to Yemen? Or Lebanon? What about Syria? How would the Administration respond to a similar situation in Iran? Or Pakistan? The list goes on.

The simultaneous commitment of U.S. military force in multiple countries is a serious matter. And the Administration needs to be re-

buked for its failure to appropriately engage Congress.

Not only is Congress a co-equal branch. Congress and Congress alone has the Constitutional authority to commit the Republic in such matters. F-16's, Harpoon missiles, Apache helicopters, are all weapons of war not humanitarian assistance. And who exactly are the rebels we are favoring in this Libya incursion, and where is their funding and weapons coming from? Which interests do they represent? Mr. Speaker, on the operations in Libya, there should have been a vote here.

GETTING OUT OF AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, a couple of weeks ago, we had the opportunity to vote to bring our troops home from Afghanistan. It was Mr. KUCINICH's resolution that many of us hoped that my party would have joined. We only had eight Republicans vote to bring our troops home this year from Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, what is so ironic, we sit on this floor and we debate cutting the budget, doing this and that, and yet we are supporting a corrupt leader named Karzai in Afghanistan.

In fact, I want to share with the people that a former Marine general is my confidential adviser. I don't have permission to use his name. I could, I guess, but I don't have his permission. This is what he said in a recent email to me:

"What do we say to the mother and father, the wife, of the last soldier or marine killed to support a corrupt government and corrupt leader in a war that can't be won?"

Let me share with you, Mr. Speaker, a couple of comments from the leader of Afghanistan, President Karzai, on March 12, 2011, in The New York Times:

"I request that NATO and America should stop these operations on our soil," he said. "This war is not on our soil. If this war is against terror, then this war is not here" because there is no terrorism here on our soil.

Karzai further stated, on December 8, 2010, in a meeting with Petraeus and Eikenberry, that he now has three main enemies: the Taliban, the United States, and the international community. He said, "If I had to choose sides today, I'd choose the Taliban."

This is the leader of a country where our young men and women are going and getting killed and losing their legs and their arms. It makes no sense, Mr. Speaker.

According to a Washington Post/ABC News poll on March 15 of this year, 73 percent of Americans no longer think the war in Afghanistan is worth fighting. Mr. Speaker, 73 percent of the American people say the war in Afghanistan is not worth fighting.

I was very disappointed when Secretary Gates recently spoke to the Armed Services Committee, which I

serve on, and I would like to read his quote because we are going to be there until about 2014 or 2015 unless this Congress demands that we start bringing our troops home. This is his quote:

"That is why we believe that, beginning in fiscal year 2015, the U.S. can, with minimal risk, begin reducing Army active duty end strength by 27,000 and the Marine Corps by somewhere between 15,000 and 20,000. These projections assume that the number of troops in Afghanistan would be significantly reduced by the end of 2014, in accordance with the President's strategy."

Mr. Speaker, we are going to be there until 2014 or maybe even 2015.

I also would like to show this poster. This was in the Greensboro, North Carolina, paper called the News & Record on February 27, 2011. There's a flag-draped coffin coming off a plane, Mr. Speaker, and the paper in Mr. HOWARD COBLE's district said, "Get out." Get out of Afghanistan before it's too late. And it's a black hole with no end to it.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to read from a letter from a marine down in my district, Camp Lejeune in Jacksonville, North Carolina. He served 31 years and retired as a colonel in the United States Marine Corps.

"I urge you to make contact with all of the current and newly elected men and women to Congress and ask them to end this war and bring our young men and women home. If any of my comments will assist in this effort, you are welcome to use them and my name," Dennis G. Adams, Lieutenant Colonel, Retired, United States Marine Corps.

Mr. Speaker, before I close, yesterday, with Congresswoman SUE MYRICK, I went to Walter Reed Hospital to visit the young soldiers and marines who have lost their legs, their arms. Two of them that we saw, Mr. Speaker, have no body parts below their waist. No body parts below their waist. And here we are supporting a corrupt leader of a nation that, quite frankly, will never be a nation. It is a country.

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It is not a nation. It never will have a national government. Why are we wasting \$7 billion a month in Afghanistan, and our young men and women are coming back with broken bodies?

Mr. Speaker, it is time to get out of Afghanistan. I close by asking God to please bless our men and women in uniform. I ask God to please bless the families of our men and women in uniform. I ask God, in his loving arms, to hold the families who've given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq.

I ask God to bless the House and Senate that we will do what is right in the eyes of God. And I will ask God to please bless the President, that he will do what is right in the eyes of God.

And I will say three times, God, please, God, please, God, please continue to bless America.