

Foreign Policy Experts Urge House Republicans to Support U.S. Operations in Libya

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Editorial Note by Tanya Cariina Hsu:

I have been following the new PNAC group since the day they launched. Every day I check their progress, and sure enough they're re-emerging from their cocoon, as expected.

Here then is their new Open Letter to the current US president, on the necessity of a continued war in Libya. (A repeat of their push for action against Saddam Hussein, with Clinton in 1998; that document – oft cited as the neocon 21st century manifesto, can be seen here: <http://www.newamericancentury.org/iraqclintonletter.htm>).

Note the signatories. (Cheney's daughter this time.)

-Tanya Cariina Hsu

June 21, 2011

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Thirty-nine former U.S. government officials and foreign policy experts expressed concern today about news reports that Congress may consider cutting funds for U.S. military involvement in the NATO-led operation against Libyan dictator Muammar al-Qaddafi's regime.

In a letter officially released this morning, the group wrote: "The United States should be leading in this effort, not trailing behind our allies. We should be doing more to help the Libyan opposition, which deserves our support. We should not be allowing ourselves to be held hostage to U.N. Security Council resolutions and irresolute allies."

The group called on the United States to "see this effort in Libya through to its conclusion," adding: "The problem is not that the President has done too much, however, but that he has done too little to achieve the goal of removing Qaddafi from power." They urged Members of Congress to fully support U.S. military involvement in Libya and exhibit "moral leadership despite political pressures to do otherwise."

Signatories of the letter include Elliott Abrams, Liz Cheney, Eric Edelman, Robert Kagan, William Kristol, Karl Rove, Dan Senor, Paul Wolfowitz, and R. James Woolsey. The full text of the letter and list of signatories are below. For additional information, please contact Robert Zarate at rzarate@foreignpolicyi.org or 202-296-3322

An Open Letter to House Republicans

We thank you for your leadership as Congress exercises its Constitutional responsibilities on the issue of America's military actions in Libya. We are gravely concerned, however, by news reports that Congress may consider reducing or cutting funding for U.S. involvement in the NATO-led military operations against the oppressive regime of Libyan dictator Muammar al-Qaddafi. Such a decision would be an abdication of our responsibilities as an ally and as the leader of the Western alliance. It would result in the perpetuation in power of a ruthless dictator who has ordered terrorist attacks on the United States in the past, has pursued nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, and who can be expected to return to these activities should he survive. To cut off funding for current efforts would, in short, be profoundly contrary to American interests.

We share the concerns of many in Congress about the way in which the Obama administration has conducted and justified this operation. The problem is not that the President has done too much, however, but that he has done too little to achieve the goal of removing Qaddafi from power. The United States should be leading in this effort, not trailing behind our allies. We should be doing more to help the Libyan opposition, which deserves our support. We should not be allowing ourselves to be held hostage to U.N. Security Council resolutions and irresolute allies.

What would be even worse, however, would be for the United States to become one of those irresolute allies. The United States must see this effort in Libya through to its conclusion.

Success is profoundly in our interests and in keeping with our principles as a nation. The success of NATO's operations will influence how other Middle Eastern regimes respond to the demands of their people for more political rights and freedoms. For the United States and NATO to be defeated by Muammar al-Qaddafi would suggest that American leadership and resolution were now gravely in doubt—a conclusion that would undermine American influence and embolden our nation's enemies.

In Speaker Boehner's June 14, 2011, letter to President Obama, he wrote that he believes "in the moral leadership our country can and should exhibit, especially during such a transformational time in the Middle East." We share that belief, and feel that now is the time for Congress to exhibit that moral leadership despite political pressures to do otherwise.

Sincerely,

Elliott Abrams
Bruce Pitcairn Jackson
Danielle Pletka

Gary Bauer
Ash Jain
John Podhoretz

Max Boot
Frederick Kagan
Stephen G. Rademaker

Ellen Bork
Robert Kagan
Karl Rove

Scott Carpenter
Lawrence Kaplan
Randy Scheunemann

Liz Cheney
William Kristol
Gary Schmitt

Seth Cropsey
Robert Lieber
Dan Senor

Thomas Donnelly
Tod Lindberg
Michael Singh

Eric Edelman
Michael Makovsky
Henry D. Sokolski

Jamie Fly
Ann Marlowe
Marc Thiessen

Reuel Marc Gerecht
Clifford D. May
Kenneth Weinstein

John Hannah
Joshua Muravchik
Paul Wolfowitz

William Inboden
Martin Peretz
R. James Woolsey

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