

POSITION PAPER

GOING TO WAR

THE WARs IN IRAQ and AFGHANISTAN

By: John W. Wallace

I believe that the United States should never invade another country without a formal "Declaration of War", nor should the United States commit American military forces to enforce any mandate of the United Nations or any other non-elected international organization.

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution clearly states that "The Congress shall have Power...To declare War," but no Congress has declared war in over 68 years. The U.S. Congress did not declare war on Korea, Vietnam, Grenada, Lebanon, Somalia, Haiti, Panama, Serbia, Bosnia, Iraq (twice) or Afghanistan. Since World War II, over 65,000 U.S. military personnel have died in undeclared wars. All of these wars were military actions pursued with a U.N. mandate. The last time Congress declared war was on December 8, 1941, the day after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. Congress has passed authorizations; they've passed resolutions and they've passed military budget amendments, but they haven't declared war.

Going to War without a formal "Declaration of War" allows Congress to evade its own responsibility for war. Did members of congress really vote for war? Or did they merely vote to authorize some form of coercive actions? There's no reason the American people should have to guess about this. If any president wants to go to war, he or she should get a "Declaration of War." Not an "authorization of force" months before the fact, but a formal "Declaration of War" a few days or weeks before an invasion. Not only is that what the constitution requires, but it also means that members of Congress can no longer be evasive about what their vote really meant. After all, a "Declaration of War" can hardly be misinterpreted.

Going to War without a formal "Declaration of War" makes a mockery of the constitution. If a "Declaration of War" wasn't required for these previously identified conflicts, then Congress' constitutional authority is meaningless. That clause of the constitution might as well not exist.

Going to War without a formal "Declaration of War" gives a president a blank check. Once our troops are in the field, no Congress can afford to withhold its support. The reality is that if presidents are allowed to commit large numbers of troops on their own authority, there are essentially no limits to what they can do.

Regardless of where members of Congress currently stand, before our invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, both political parties agreed that there was some justification, however flawed, for invading these countries.

Whether Americans believe that the initial invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan were justified or not, the fact remains that American Forces are currently fighting and dying on foreign soil as part of the War on Terror based on an “authorization of force” from the United States Congress. Now that we are in Iraq and Afghanistan, we need to make sure the U.S. military has the resources to finish the job.

If we were to pull out prematurely and allow Radical Islamic Terrorists to take control of Iraq and Afghanistan, I believe there would be a profound ripple effect not only in Iraq, Afghanistan, but throughout the Middle East and the world. If we abandon the people of Iraq and Afghanistan:

- It will be a great victory for Radical Islamic Terrorists and the most dangerous ideology in the world today that routinely engages in mass murder of innocent people.
- Hundreds of thousands of moderate Iraqis and Afghans will be slaughtered like animals.
- It will mean the end of a moderate form of Islam for the foreseeable future. If America surrenders to them because the Radical Islamic Terrorists murder fellow Muslims and killed almost 4,000 American soldiers in four years -- who in the Muslim world will stand up to them?
- No one will trust America's commitment for the foreseeable future.
- Iraq will turn into a far more potent terror base than Afghanistan could ever be, ruled by supporters of Radical Islamic Terrorist movements like Al Qaeda.
- Surrounding moderate Arab regimes will likely be overthrown by a combination of an emboldened Iran and a Radical Islamist Iraq that regards moderate Arabs and Muslims as loathsome as Americans and Jews.
- The American military will suffer a crisis of morale that it will not soon overcome, defeated not by the Radical Islamic Terrorist enemy in the Middle East, but by the American Left and the Media.
- And the followers of Radical Islam, who have murdered their fellow Muslims throughout the world for not being true believers, will now be able to focus their full attention on murdering Americans here at home.

Although America must always reserve the right to defend herself against attack, we must never invade another country without a formal “Declaration of War”, nor should the United States commit American military forces to enforce any mandate of the United Nations or any other non-elected international organization.

For more information about John W. Wallace, or to find out about his positions on other issues, please go to: www.TeaPartyRep.com