



Written by [Thomas R. Eddlem](#) on February 18, 2010

Obama “Wouldn’t Rule Out” War Against Iran, Spokesman Says

Americans received yet another confirmation on February 16 that President Obama has taken on the mantle of his war-mongering predecessor with a statement by Press Secretary Robert Gibbs saying he “wouldn’t rule out” war against Iran.

Asked by a reporter in his daily press briefing, “Do you rule out military consequences?” against Iran, Gibbs [responded](#):

I wouldn’t rule out anything. Our focus has been on the process of engagement. The Iranians have at virtually every turn either ignored or disregarded that engagement, demonstrating to the world that its nuclear program is not of the means and type that they have tried to convince others that it’s for; that as a result of that, not living up to their responsibilities, that consequences will follow. And that’s what the President, the P5-plus-1, have been involved in. And, again, the letter that’s gone to the IAEA from the French, the Russians, and the Americans I think outline a united position in dealing with Iran.” [Emphasis added.]



Gibbs made no reference to going to Congress first to seek approval of a military strike, and there’s no evidence that Obama sought congressional approval for U.S. military strikes in recent months against Pakistan and Yemen. Thus, there’s no reason to believe he’d go to Congress to begin America’s fifth war in the Middle East.

Under the U.S. Constitution, the Congress — not the President — has sole power over war. [Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution](#) gives Congress all of the war powers, stating unequivocally the following powers to be solely given to Congress:

Congress shall have the power ... To define and punish Piracies and Felonies committed on the high Seas, and Offences against the Law of Nations; To declare War, grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal, and make Rules concerning Captures on Land and Water; To raise and support Armies, but no Appropriation of Money to that Use shall be for a longer Term than two Years; To provide



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and maintain a Navy;

To make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces; To provide for calling forth the Militia to execute the Laws of the Union, suppress Insurrections and repel Invasions.

Meanwhile, Obama's spokesmen have turned up the rhetorical war against Iran. "We see that the government of Iran, the Supreme Leader, the President, the Parliament, is being supplanted and that Iran is moving toward a military dictatorship," Secretary of State Hillary Clinton [told](#) students in a televised photo-op in Doha, Qatar, earlier this week.

But the reality is that the United States government is the one moving toward dictatorship. While Iran was a full-fledged military dictatorship under the Shah and Ayatollah Khomeini, the current government has allowed some — admittedly tepid — liberalization and competitive elections. Meanwhile, the United States government has increasingly ignored constitutional restraints that place the war powers solidly in the legislative branch of government.

Photo of Robert Gibbs: AP Images



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