



Written by [Gary Benoit](#) on November 14, 2008

## War Without End, Amen

White House Press Secretary Dana Perino didn't deny the charges in a press conference that day, issuing instead a "no comment" statement that has become emblematic of an administration that is obsessed with secrecy.

One would think that such an order would hardly be necessary, as by 2004 President Bush was [already bragging to his fellow Republicans](#) that "more than three-quarters of al-Qaeda's key members and associates have been detained or killed."



At the time, Americans were repeatedly told by the president and his party that the reason Iraq was the frontline in the so-called "War on Terror" was because we were drawing all the terrorists from the Middle East to Iraq to [fight them there before they came here](#). Iraq was basically a giant terrorist mosquito magnet, the Bush administration essentially argued.

If nearly all the terrorists were gathering in Iraq (and later slaughtered by the "surge"), as we had been told, why then did president make war upon as many as 15 to 20 new countries?

A more important issue to consider is that the executive order was issued unconstitutionally and without approval of Congress, as required by [Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution](#).

The 2001 [Authorization for Use of Military Force](#) only allowed the president to "use all necessary and appropriate force against those nations, organizations, or persons he determines planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001." The act of Congress only allowed the president to go after those who had actually participated in the planning for the September 11 attacks, not to go after any person across the Middle East who he didn't like.

The "[Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002](#)" was even more limited. It restricted the president to "use the Armed Forces of the United States as he determines to be necessary and appropriate in order to defend the national security of the United States against the continuing threat posed by Iraq" and enforce United Nations Security Resolutions against Iraq.

It was limited to the territory of Iraq, and Saddam Hussein's state.

There was never any congressional authorization of force against any other nation.

The *New York Times* story is troubling, and what it says should be investigated by Congress. Military operations within other nations are literally acts of war against those countries, and acts of war are strictly the province of Congress under the U.S. Constitution.





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