Subject: Kucinich to Colleagues: We Must Defend the Constitution of the United States
From: "Congressman Dennis Kucinich" <Kucinich.news@mail.house.gov>
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To: info@californiaskywatch.com

PRESS RELEASE

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Kucinich to Colleagues: We Must Defend the Constitution of the United States

NATO Does Not Declare U.S. War, Determine U.S. Policy

Washington D.C. (June 2, 2011) – As Congress sits poised to consider H. Con. Res. 51, Congressman Dennis Kucinich’s (D-OH) bill to end the war in Libya, Kucinich today sent the following letter to Members of Congress:

Dear Colleague:

Yesterday, NATO announced it would continue combat operations in Libya for at least another 90 days. NATO. The President went to NATO on Libya, not the U.S. Congress, as the Constitution requires. The U.S. has thus far provided 93% of the cruise missiles, 66% of the personnel, 50% of the ships and 50% of the planes at an estimated cost of up to $700 million and now NATO says the war will go another 90 days. Since when does NATO trump the Constitution of the United States? It is time, in the name of the people of the United States, that Congress insist that the President obey the Constitution and the statutes concerning war powers.

Last week, I introduced H.Con.Res.51, a bipartisan resolution that disapproves of
U.S. military operations in Libya and requires the President to withdraw U.S. Armed Forces from participation in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) mission in the country within 15 days after passage. I support my colleague Rep. Turner’s resolution which disapproves of U.S. military operations in Libya because I believe that it is the \textit{minimum} that Congress must do to challenge the unconstitutional war in Libya. Yet as the war in Libya surpasses the 60 day mark with no end in sight, it is clear that Congress must do more than just express its disapproval.

Article 1, Section 8 provides only Congress with the ability to declare war or authorize the use of military force. The War Powers Act allows a narrow exemption from the Constitutional requirement by allowing the President to take the U.S. to war without Congressional approval in the face of an “a national emergency created by attack upon the United States, its territories or possessions, or its armed forces.” We have now been involved in a war on Libya for over 72 days with no constitutionally required authorization for the use of military force or declaration of war.

The President recently submitted a letter to Congress about the war in Libya arguing that he was not required to come to Congress for authorization because the war is not really a war. Really.

While we may not all agree on the merits of military intervention in Libya, we can all agree that Congress must have the opportunity to have a full and ample debate on the commitment of U.S. Armed Forces to a war abroad. This institution cannot stand by idly as a war of choice with significant ramifications for our national and economic security is waged without Congress fulfilling its responsibilities under the Constitution. We must defend the Constitution of the United States.

Sincerely,
/s/
Dennis J. Kucinich
Member of Congress

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