

AMSPECBLOG

Lying About Libya?

By Doug Bandow on 5.24.11 @ 9:31AM

President Barack Obama has gone to war in Libya without requesting a declaration of war from Congress. But he said he would abide by the War Powers Resolution. However, his 60 day grace period for bombing ended on Friday.

No worries, the president decided that the war was so small, so tiny, so itty-bitty that it didn't even count. He told Congress not to worry. Libya didn't even matter any more. Reported ABC News:

In an effort to satisfy those arguing he needs to seek congressional authorization to continue US military activity in accordance with the War Powers Resolution, President Obama wrote a letter to congressional leaders this afternoon suggesting that the role is now so "limited" he does not need to seek congressional approval.

"Since April 4," the president wrote, "U.S. participation has consisted of: (1) non-kinetic support to the NATO-led operation, including intelligence, logistical support, and search and rescue assistance; (2) aircraft that have assisted in the suppression and destruction of air defenses in support of the no-fly zone; and (3) since April 23, precision strikes by unmanned aerial vehicles against a limited set of clearly defined targets in support of the NATO-led coalition's efforts."

But then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton went to Europe ahead of the president to lobby other nations to do more in Libya. When questioned about America's contribution, she emphasized how big it was. America still conducts a quarter of the raids! Reports the Associated Press:

Clinton also defended the contribution of the U.S. - which handed control of the mission to NATO in late March - following questions over Obama's commitment.

"Even today, the United States continues to fly 25 percent of all sorties, we continue to provide the majority of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance assets," Clinton said.

Well, which is it?

If I was in a more negative mood I would suggest that either the president or the secretary of state was lying. But that is such a harsh word. It appears one of them is, er, "misinformed." But which one?

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