



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on July 12, 2015

Lindsey Graham's Foreign Policy Plan: More War

If you've had enough of undeclared war and 
America playing the role of world police, you
would not want to read about Lindsey
Graham's foreign policy platform.

In a speech given July 8 at the globalist think tank Atlantic Council, the senator and Republican presidential hopeful revealed his plan to deploy more U.S. troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, put boots on the ground in Syria, and send defensive weapons to Ukraine. In Iraq specifically, he would ramp up ground forces from about 3,500 to about 10,000, "which would include a Special Forces component that would be focused on decapitating the leadership of the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS), he said," the Atlantic Council reported.

Given the number of shots Graham takes at President Obama in his speech, it's curious that this goal sounds so much like him. Here's President Obama's comments from the G7 conference regarding combatting ISIS: "The U.S. is going to continue to ramp up training and assistance." Then, later, during a June 10 press conference, an Obama administration spokesman said, "We'll add an additional 450 troops at this one site. This will bring our total up to 3,550 authorized across Iraq."

So, if Lindsey Graham or a like-minded Republican were to become the standard-bearer for the GOP in 2016, then ramping up the U.S. presence in the Middle East sounds like a go no matter which party occupies the White House in January 2017.

Graham generally confined his criticism to President Obama and fellow White House contender Hillary Clinton — with one repeated exception. After describing the president as weak in the "eyes of the Iranians," he claimed that "“Everybody running, except Rand Paul, could get a better deal with the Iranians.”"

Paul is unique among his fellow Republican presidential candidates in advocating a reduction in the interventionism that has been the dominant foreign policy for decades. This constitutionally sound position is pilloried by Graham, who admitted: "To those on the Republican side who want us to become fortress America, I am your worst choice."

In this same vein, Graham took another shot at Paul, calling the Kentucky senator "the one voice in the Republican Party that I think has been weaker on national security than President Obama."

Paul's campaign website sets out his vision for future U.S. military engagement overseas:

I believe that one of the primary functions of the Federal Government is national security. As a Senator, one of the most important votes I could make is on a declaration of war. As Commander-in-Chief, the importance of this decision would not be overlooked. If the military action is justified and there is no other course of action, I would follow the Constitution and seek Congressional approval before sending our brave men and women into harm's way.

The Founding Fathers understood the seriousness of war and thus included in our Constitution a provision stating that only Congress can declare war. We must maintain this important check and balance and the decision to wage war should not be taken lightly.

It seems, then, that Graham is correct when he says that compared to Rand Paul, his plans for the U.S. military represents a "very clear and different path."



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One thing never referenced by Graham in all his bellicose bloviating is the Constitution. That particular oversight is nothing new for Graham, who frequently reveals himself to be an enemy of enumerated powers and due process. A couple of examples of such statements are in order.

Regarding NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden, Graham wanted the U.S. military to “follow him to the ends of the earth.”

In 2011, during debate on the National Defense Authorization Act’s (NDAA) denial of some of the most fundamental elements of that right, during a debate on the Senate floor, Graham said of those accused of aiding terror, “Shut up, you don’t get a lawyer.”

Other positions favored by Graham that clash with his oath of office to the Constitution include:

- Arming Syrian rebels with known ties to Al-Qaeda;
- Approving the National Security Agency’s continuing surveillance of innocent Americans;
- Calling for the use of drones to target American citizens;
- Sending substantial aid to Egypt;
- Subordinating American sovereignty to the United Nations;
- Continuing to send billions to foreign governments worldwide;
- Confirming President Obama’s Supreme Court nominees;
- Favoring billion-dollar bank bailouts;
- Infringing on the Second Amendment; and
- Advocating amnesty for illegal aliens.

While all of these acts give pause to any conscientious constitutionalist-minded American considering voting for Lindsey Graham, perhaps the most dangerous of his strategies is that of expanding the presence of American combat troops around the globe.

The Founding Fathers warned us about those who would claim to promote war as a means of achieving peace.

Writing in 1795, James Madison declared: “Of all the enemies to public liberty war is, perhaps, the most to be dreaded, because it comprises and develops the germ of every other.... No nation could preserve its freedom in the midst of continual warfare.”

Sounding as if he were describing Lindsey Graham himself, Thomas Jefferson expressed his opinion about those who would commit the United States to fight wars in which they had no true interest and which would be the result not of cool and rational deliberation, but rather an expression of the executive’s anger or martial zeal:

Peace ... has been our principle, peace is our interest, and peace has saved to the world this only plant of free and rational government now existing in it.... However, therefore, we may have been reproached for pursuing our Quaker system, time will affix the stamp of wisdom on it, and the happiness and prosperity of our citizens will attest its merit. And this, I believe, is the only legitimate object of government and the first duty of governors, and not the slaughter of men and devastation of the countries placed under their care in pursuit of a fantastic honor unallied to virtue or happiness; or in gratification of the angry passions or the pride of administrators excited by



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personal incidents in which their citizens have no concern.

Comparing Graham's foreign policy plans with the admonitions of our Founding Fathers, it seems that should the South Carolina senator be elected president, the American people can count on at least four more years of unconstitutional, undeclared, unending wars.

Finally, consider that, regarding the number of U.S. troops currently in Iraq, Graham claims there are "too few to do what we need to do."

U.S. military intervention in Iraq and elsewhere, together with the conversion of the CIA into the president's personal paramilitary strike force, threaten to continue corroding American liberty and eviscerating the Bill of Rights. It was, after all, the "War on Terror" that gave us the Patriot Act, the statutory justification for the creation of the most expansive and sophisticated surveillance apparatus in the world. The NSA monitors and stores billions of phone calls, e-mails, and cellphone location records every day, all without a warrant or probable cause as mandated by the Fourth Amendment.

It is not an exaggeration to say that because of politicians such as Lindsey Graham, being "secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures" is something that the next generation of Americans will never know — unless of course such unconstitutional and liberty-eroding policies are firmly rejected.

Photo of Sen. Lindsey Graham: AP Images



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