



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on January 17, 2013

Without Congress, Obama Administration Joins War in Mali

Without permission from Congress or any constitutional authority to do so, the Obama administration pledged again this week to continue supporting the [United Nations-approved](#) war on rebels in Mali currently [being led by the new socialist government of France](#). Analysts say the move puts the U.S. government even closer to being openly drawn into yet another unconstitutional war that will undoubtedly have far-reaching implications — especially the potential for [more deadly anti-American “blowback.”](#)



Defense Secretary Leon Panetta (pictured) told reporters that the Obama administration was plotting to provide air support and logistics for the French military campaign, which began openly over the weekend with aerial bombing campaigns of rebel targets. While [claiming](#) that putting American boots on the ground was not being considered “at this time,” the defense chief admitted that the U.S. government would be continuing to help the war effort in multiple ways.

Over a thousand troops from France are already deployed on the ground. Reinforcements are [arriving](#), meanwhile, as French soldiers clash with rebels armed with [weapons acquired from the recent UN-approved “regime change” war on Libya](#) that was unconstitutionally supported by the Obama administration. African regimes in the region are also providing increasing support for the war effort in Mali.

“This morning there are 1,400 French soldiers on Malian soil,” [noted](#) French Defense Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian, who [recently said](#) the U.S. and British governments had promised to help bring France’s former colony back under control of the unelected regime in the capital. “There was combat yesterday, on the ground and from the air. There was more overnight and it is continuing at this moment.”

According to news reports, the U.S. government has been helping since even before the French assault actually started, waging its terror war in Mali for years before providing “intelligence” and other support to France more recently. “What we have promised them is that we would work with them, to cooperate with them, to provide whatever assistance we can to try to help them in that effort,” Panetta [said](#) this week.

The defense chief, of course, has come under severe criticism for [claiming in front of Congress](#) that self-styled international “authorities” like the UN and NATO could order American troops into battle and that lawmakers might be informed later. It remains unclear where the Obama administration believes it found the authority to help wage the current war on ragtag African rebels in Mali. However, the UN Security Council voted last month to [“authorize” an international invasion of the country](#) in support of the dubious regime operating out of the capital city of Bamako.

Instead of Congress or the Constitution, Panetta believes he needs to consult with attorneys to get around petty legal obstacles to more unconstitutional war, but he seems confident they will approve.



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“Lawyers basically have to review these issues to make sure they feel comfortable that we have the legal basis for what we’re being requested to do,” he [told](#) the *Washington Post*, which noted that no direct assistance could be provided to the Malian regime because it seized power in a coup. “And I understand the need for that.”

Meanwhile, Obama’s mass-murdering drones are already flying over Mali, too, and [may begin a killing spree](#) in the not-too-distant future to support the war effort as well, officials said. U.S. military planes may be arriving in the North African nation soon as well, according to news reports citing government authorities.

American air transportation and in-flight refueling assistance are also options being reviewed by the administration, which seems to be under the false impression that it can legitimately involve U.S. forces in any conflict worldwide without so much as even telling Congress. The Constitution, of course, gives Congress the sole authority to declare war.

The Obama administration and the French government have become notorious for supporting certain Islamic extremists and even self-described al-Qaeda leaders around the world — with crucial backing of [hardcore Islamist “rebels”](#) in Syria and Libya against secular tyrants being just the most recent examples. However, despite that track record, the socialist government in France and the U.S. administration, with cover from the UN, both claim to be waging war in Mali to stop Islamic extremism.

Defense chief Panetta, for example, told reporters on Monday that the president was concerned about militant groups like al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) — one of the [primary beneficiaries of Obama’s unlawful war on Libya](#). “We’re concerned that any time Al Qaeda establishes a base of operations, while they might not have any immediate plans for attacks in the United States and in Europe, that ultimately that still remains their objective,” he was quoted as [saying](#) by the *New York Times*. “We have to take steps now to make sure that AQIM does not get that kind of traction.”

The Obama administration has already spent hundreds of millions in Mali and neighboring countries as part of its global terror war. Ironically, perhaps, early last year, a coup against the nation’s elected government [led by U.S.-trained military officers](#) paved the way for rebels in the north to declare independence — the same rebels, armed with weapons from Obama’s war on Libya, who now supposedly must be fought with American resources.

Panetta, though, tried to make it seem like everything was in order. “When they began offensive operations to actually take on some cities, it was clear to France and to all of us that could not be allowed to continue, and that’s the reason France has engaged and it’s the reason we’re providing cooperation to them,” he claimed. “The fact is we have made a commitment that Al Qaeda is not going to find any place to hide.” Except [Libya](#) and [Syria](#), apparently.

In reality, the conflict in Mali has little to do with al-Qaeda, some of whose leaders were [openly supported, armed and trained by Western powers](#) as recently as last year. Instead, the rebellion in the north that eventually declared independence from the central government was led by nomadic Tuareg tribesmen who have been seeking a homeland of their own after generations of oppression at the hands of North African tyrants — some of whom have been heavily backed by the U.S. government.

It appears that the independence-minded rebels joined forces with an assortment of hardcore Islamic organizations to fight the dubious central government in the south, [currently controlled by U.S.-trained military coup leaders and widely perceived as illegitimate](#). Reports of human rights abuses were seized upon by the UN, Western powers, and an assortment of African governments and dictators to demand



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the surrender of northern rebels to the regime in Bamako — hence the UN’s purported “authorization” of an international military invasion.

Instead of trying to rein in Obama’s lawless wars, some top Republicans in Congress are actually encouraging him to keep it up. “The vast area of northern Mali gives these al Qaeda-linked militants space to operate, and the weapons flowing out of Libya makes them deadly,” [claimed](#) Rep. Ed Royce (R-Calif.), chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. “This cancer could not go unaddressed.”

Other cancers like the tragic effects of interventionist U.S. foreign policy, a Congress that refuses to do its job, and a lawless president who thinks he can fight wars wherever and whenever he wants, however, will not likely be addressed anytime soon. Instead, it appears that the bipartisan establishment will seek to “address” the problems sparked by its previous interventions in North Africa, which will almost certainly lead to more cancers to address down the line — probably deadly ones.

If the U.S. government wants to risk American lives and spend taxpayer money participating in yet another far-flung war, critics say the least it should do is seek a formal declaration of war from Congress. But considering the \$16 trillion publicly acknowledged debt, American involvement in multiple other unwinnable wars, and the fact that even U.S. officials admit the conflict in Mali poses no threat to U.S. security, lawmakers would be wise to refuse.

Photo of Defense Secretary Leon Panetta in Italy addressing U.S. troops about Mali conflict: AP Images

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