



Romney Says He Wouldn't Need Approval of Congress to Attack Iran

Appearing with Bob Schieffer on Sunday's *Face the Nation*, Republican presidential candidate and "presumptive nominee" Mitt Romney [said that if he is elected in November, he would not need congressional approval to start a war with Iran.](#)

Specifically, Romney said:

I can assure you if I'm president, the Iranians will have no question but that I will be willing to take military action if necessary to prevent them from becoming a nuclear threat to the world. I don't believe at this stage, therefore, if I'm president that we need to have a war powers approval or special authorization for military force. The president has that capacity now. I understand that some in the Senate for instance have written letters to the president indicating you should know that a containment strategy is unacceptable. We cannot survive a course of action which would include a nuclear Iran, and we must be willing to take any and all actions.



Republicans, particularly those occupying the conservative corner of that big tent, may question how Romney's stance differs significantly from that of President Obama, who famously exercised these imagined "war powers" to initiate military action in Yemen, Libya, and likely Syria.

In his [Six-Month Report of the 2012 War Powers Resolution](#), President Obama informed Congress that the United States, acting under the ostensible authority of the United Nations, NATO, and the Authorization for the Use of Military Force, is currently conducting military operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen, Somalia, Republic of South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, Uganda, Egypt, and Kosovo.

American military intervention in every one of these foreign conflicts came about by order of the president without a congressional declaration of war, in direct violation of the separation of powers and enumeration thereof in the Constitution.

Apparently, a President Romney would retain his predecessor's predilection for ignoring the Constitution and usurping powers that are not his.

This theory is not some politically motivated assertion by Romney's rivals or an operative of the Obama



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reelection campaign. As [Daniel Larson explained in the American Conservative](#):

These are not statements that Romney's critics are putting into his mouth. No one is speculating about what Romney's position on Iran might be, and no one is imputing views to him that he doesn't claim to hold. He is telling the public plainly that he believes the United States cannot survive a containment policy directed against Iran. It is fair to conclude from this that Romney is delusional (or is pretending to be delusional) and cannot be entrusted with the responsibilities of the Presidency.

Larson continued:

Romney obviously does not believe war is a last resort, and he clearly doesn't believe that the Congress has anything to say about attacking Iran. According to Romney, it is something that the president could do tomorrow if he believed it necessary. The Constitution is completely irrelevant to Romney, and so is the consent of the American people expressed through its representatives. No one should have any illusions about how Romney would conduct foreign policy if he is elected.

Curiously, it is [one of Romney's newest supporters](#) that once spoke out eloquently and inspiringly against the sort of dictatorial presidency that Romney is promising to perpetuate. On [the floor of the Senate, Senator Rand Paul \(R-Ky.\) said](#):

Our Founding Fathers were quite concerned about giving the power to declare war to the Executive. They were quite concerned that the Executive could become like a king. Many in this body cannot get boots on ground fast enough in a variety of places, from Syria to Libya to Iran. We don't just send boots to war. We send our young Americans to war. Our young men and women, our soldiers, deserve thoughtful debate. Before sending our young men and women into combat, we should have a mature and thoughtful debate over the ramifications of and over the authorization of war and over the motives of the war. James Madison wrote that the Constitution supposes what history demonstrates. That the Executive is the branch most interested in war and most prone to it. The Constitution, therefore, with studied care vested that power in the Legislature.

Friends of freedom are hopeful that Senator Paul's endorsement of Mitt Romney has not cost him his dedication to the Constitution or his opposition to the unconstitutional exercise of "war powers" on the part of the occupant of the White House regardless of the letter after his name.

Photo: In this April 11, 2012, file photo, former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney speaks in Warwick, R.I., where he said he wants the United States to get much tougher with Iran and end what a top adviser calls the "mother may I" foreign policy of President Barack Obama: AP Images



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