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## Lack of Goals, Debate Fuel Opposition to Obama's Libya War

Posted By Jason Ditz

March 24, 2011

For the Obama Administration Libya is, it seems, just another war. Officials within the administration continue to speak in the same vagaries and sloganeering about the “new” war that they have been about Iraq and Afghanistan, and don't really seem to understand the growing opposition.

White House Press Secretary Jay Carney even went so far as to suggest that the opponents of the war are “[perhaps driven by politics](#)” and insisted that certain members of Congress had received a secret briefing on the war on March 14, 3 days before the UN vote and 5 days before the US bombs started falling on Tripoli.

The fervent belief that no one could sincerely object to a massive new war being launched in the dead of the night and after Congress went into recess speaks to a certain viewpoint which has been all-too-common among recent administrations, and some of the old-hand Senators who are used to cheering a war before they find out the reason or the goals are, predictably, out on the talk show circuit loudly championing the attacks. This is what the administration expects of Congress, and anything else is disconcerting.

But the opposition [spans both parties](#) and, particularly [in the House of Representatives](#) is broad, much broader than the opposition to either Iraq and Afghanistan. There is anger about the costs of yet another [open-ended war](#). There is anger about the Obama Administration still refusing to

make public what the goals of the attack are. Mostly there is anger that Congress was never even asked to authorize the attack, or even to approve one of those vague resolutions that give him something resembling a pretext.

There is no pretext beyond the UN passing a resolution authorizing a no-fly zone (and the Arab League proponents of that are already up in arms that “no-fly zone” became massive missile attacks in a single night), and from the comments of US and NATO officials over the past several days there are no clear goals beyond the extremely near term and [nothing resembling an exit strategy](#).

President Obama is surely used to the American public opposing his assorted wars, but the Congressional opposition is something very new. At the moment officials seem to believe they can shrug it off, but as this war drags on, resolutions to defund it will inevitably crop up. When that happens, Congress may, for the first time in a long time, assert itself in the nation’s warmaking beyond being a rubber stamp.