

Mr. President: Say No to War of Choice with Iran

"It's not prudent at this point to decide to attack Iran...I think it would be premature to exclusively decide that the time for a military option was upon us...A strike at this time would be destabilizing and wouldn't achieve [Israel's] long-term objectives."

-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin Dempsey

"...the United States would obviously be blamed and we could possibly be the target of retaliation from Iran, striking our ships, striking our military bases. ... I think that the consequence could be that we would have an escalation that would take place that would not only involve many lives, but I think could consume the Middle East in a confrontation and a conflict that we would regret."

-Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta

"A military solution, as far as I am concerned...it will bring together a divided nation. It will make them absolutely committed to obtaining nuclear weapons. And they will just go deeper and more covert. The only long-term solution in avoiding an Iranian nuclear weapons capability is for the Iranians to decide it is not in their interest. Everything else is a short-term solution."

-Former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates

"...what happens if another preemptive attack by the West, the U.S. and Israel, they fire up the streets and now we got problems. Just tell me how to deal with all that, okay? ... Because, eventually, if you follow this all the way down, eventually I'm putting boots on the ground somewhere. And like I tell my friends, if you like Iraq and Afghanistan, you'll love Iran."

-Former CENTCOM Commander General Anthony Zinni (ret.)

"No strike, however effective, will be in and of itself decisive. ... We haven't had a contact with Iran since 1979. Even in the darkest days of the Cold War, we had links to the Soviet Union. We are not talking to Iran so we don't understand each other. If something happens it's virtually assured that we won't get it right - that there will be miscalculations - which would be extremely dangerous in that part of the world."

-Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Michael Mullen (ret.)

Dear Mr. President,

The U.S. military is the most formidable military force on earth. But not every challenge has a military solution.

Unless we or an ally is attacked, war should be the option of last resort. Our brave servicemen and women expect you to exhaust all diplomatic and peaceful options before you send them into harm's way.

Preventing a nuclear armed Iran is rightfully your priority and your red line. Fortunately, diplomacy has not been exhausted and peaceful solutions are still possible.

Military action at this stage is not only unnecessary, it is dangerous -- for the United States and for Israel. We urge you to resist the pressure for a war of choice with Iran.

Sincerely,

Major General Paul Eaton (USA, Ret.)

Tom Fingar, Fmr. Deputy Director of National Intelligence for Analysis

Lt. General Robert G. Gard, Jr. (USA, Ret.)

General Joseph Hoar (USMC, Ret.)

Brigadier General John H. Johns, PhD (USA, Ret.)

Major General Rudolph Ostovich III (USA, Ret.)

Paul Pillar, Fmr. National Intelligence Officer for the Near East and South Asia

Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson (USA, Ret.)