

The Six Basic Principles of Government

The Constitution of the United States is built on six basic principles of government. The Framers of the Constitution drew on their knowledge and experience to craft a document that serves as "the supreme law of the land." The descriptions at the beginning of each unit will help you see how these six principles—and the Constitution itself—have proved an enduring yet flexible guide for governing the nation for over 200 years.



POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY

The Preamble to the Constitution begins with this bold phrase: "We the people . . ." These words announce that in the United States, the people establish government and give it its power. The people are sovereign. Since the government receives its power from the people, it can govern only with their consent.



LIMITED GOVERNMENT

Because the people are the source of government power, the government has only as much authority as the people give it. Much of the Constitution, in fact, consists of specific limitations on government power. Limited government means that neither the government itself nor any government official is "above the law" and can overstep these constitutional bounds.



SEPARATION OF POWERS

Government power is not only limited; it is also divided. The Constitution assigns specific powers to each of the three branches: the legislative (Congress), the executive (President), and the judicial (federal courts). This separation of powers is intended to prevent misuse of power by one branch of government.



CHECKS AND BALANCES

The system of checks and balances extends the restrictions established by the separation of powers. Each branch of government has the built-in authority and responsibility to restrain the power of the other two branches. This system makes government less efficient but also prevents tyranny by one branch of government.



JUDICIAL REVIEW

Who decides whether an act of government oversteps the limits placed on it by the Constitution? Historically, the judges in the federal courts have made the decisions. The principle of judicial review was established early in the history of the nation. It means that federal courts have the power to review government acts and to nullify, or cancel, any that are unconstitutional, or violate a provision of the Constitution.



FEDERALISM

A federal system divides power between a central government and smaller, local governments. This sharing of power is intended to ensure that the central government is powerful enough to be effective, yet not so powerful as to threaten States or citizens. It also allows individual States to deal with local problems at the local level—so long as their actions are constitutional.

ACTIVITY TWO ARTICLES

Appeals court questions Obama healthcare lawsuit

Tue, May 10 2011

By Jeremy Pelofsky and Lisa Lambert



RICHMOND, Virginia (Reuters) - An appeals court on Tuesday sharply questioned whether the state of Virginia could challenge President Barack Obama's signature healthcare law, which requires Americans to buy insurance in a bid to slow healthcare costs.

The Obama administration is trying to save the individual mandate after a Virginia federal judge agreed with the state it was unconstitutional and struck down that part of the law.

The Obama administration has vigorously defended the measure, set to go into effect in 2014. The president's Republican opponents are expected to make the issue a theme during his re-election bid by arguing it is a costly and unnecessary government expansion.

Virginia passed a law barring the federal government from making its citizens buy insurance and sued to strike down the federal law. That prompted tough questions by a three-judge panel of the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals Tuesday about whether states could pass a law to buck a federal mandate.

"A state could challenge any federal statute in court as long as the state passed a law?" asked Judge Diana Motz. All three judges hearing the case were appointed by Democrats, including two by Obama.

Another judge, Andre Davis, who was appointed by Obama, questioned whether it would open the floodgates to states challenging all sorts of laws, including the Social Security retirement program and sending troops off to war.

Lawyers for Virginia countered that it was well within the state's rights, arguing that the healthcare law threatened its sovereignty and that the state legislation was an attempt to protect its citizens.

"The flip side is that a state can't sue ever," Duncan Getchell, solicitor general for Virginia, told Motz, who was appointed by former President Bill Clinton. "I don't know why it's a low trick to pass a law."

OTHER CHALLENGES

The case is the first to reach oral arguments at the appeals court level, and experts have said a ruling -- expected in months -- could influence other pending challenges to the law, including a June 8 hearing by another appeals court.

The law passed by a narrow Democratic majority last year was a major victory for Obama, one that the Republican Party is working to undo in the courts, statehouses and Congress.

The Obama administration's top appellate lawyer, acting U.S. Solicitor General Neal Katyal, told the appeals court that permitting Virginia's lawsuit would inject the states into the federal courts over "abstract political disputes."

So far, two federal judges have struck down the so-called individual mandate, while several others have upheld it, including one challenge by Liberty University in Virginia which was founded by conservative evangelical Jerry Falwell.

The school appealed and the court also heard arguments in that case. They centered on whether Congress exceeded its authority by imposing a purchase mandate or whether lawmakers were simply regulating how they paid for healthcare.

"This is quintessentially economic," said Katyal, noting that at some point all Americans receive healthcare services and that the law was merely regulating when they paid. The penalty for not buying insurance is imposed on tax returns.

A lawyer for Liberty University argued that the mandate "goes far beyond the outer limits" of the U.S. Constitution because it tries to regulate economic inactivity -- a conscious decision by Americans not to buy insurance.

"They want to be left alone," lawyer Mathew Staver told the appeals court.

Judge Davis countered that people who do not have health insurance can be hit by accidents and illnesses.

"Is it your submission that Congress has no power to address, in the aggregate, what we know happens every day in this country?" he asked.

More than 50 million people in the United States do not have health insurance, and nearly 2 million of the uninsured are hospitalized each year, according to a report released on Tuesday by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The three judges kept close counsel on which way they were leaning in that case but questioned both sides vigorously.

The 11th Circuit Court of Appeals on June 8 will weigh the administration's appeal to a decision that struck down the entire healthcare law as sought by 26 states. The Supreme Court could hear one of the legal challenges as early as this year.

(Editing by Vicki Allen and Mohammad Zargham)

FEMA and Federal Partners Support Missouri, Midwest States in Response to Tornadoes and Severe Storms

Washington, DC – The Federal Emergency Management Agency and its federal partners are working closely with state and local officials in Missouri and the other states impacted by the deadly tornadoes and severe storms that struck the Midwest on Saturday and Sunday.

At the direction of President Obama, FEMA this morning added the two Missouri counties impacted by tornadoes, Jasper and Newton, to an ongoing disaster declaration the states received for recent storms, which means that tornado survivors can now apply for disaster assistance with FEMA.

FEMA has already deployed staff on the ground to Missouri to help state officials with coordination and other needs as they continue their response. Earlier this morning, President Obama and Secretary Napolitano both called Missouri Governor Jay Nixon to express that all of the families of Joplin affected by the severe tornadoes are in their thoughts and prayers and reiterate this administration's commitment to assisting the state and Missouri residents.

At the President's request, FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate will travel to Missouri to ensure that the states has all the support it needs, and today FEMA Deputy Administrator Rich Serino will also travel to Joplin to tour the damages and meet with state and local officials. More details on Fugate's trip will be released later today.

Interest Groups

SECTION 1

THE NATURE OF INTEREST GROUPS

TEXT SUMMARY

An **interest group** is a private organization whose members share views. It tries to promote its interests by influencing **public policy**, or the goals a government sets and the actions it takes to meet them. Interest groups work at the federal, State, and local levels. (*lobbying*)

Interest groups and political parties both exist for political purposes, but their goals differ. Political parties care mostly about *who* takes part in government, while interest groups care mostly about *what* the government does—especially on certain issues.

The role of interest groups in politics is controversial. In their favor, they stimulate interest in **public affairs**, or issues that concern the people at large. They offer people a chance to participate in

politics and find others who may not live near them but who do share their views. They often provide useful information to the government, while also keeping close tabs on it. Since they compete with one another, interest groups often limit each other's extremes.

Interest groups are criticized for having more influence than they deserve based on the worth of their causes or the number of people they represent. It can be hard to tell how many people an interest group represents. Some interest groups do not represent the views of all the people for whom they claim to speak. Finally, some interest groups do engage in dishonest behavior.

THE BIG IDEA

Interest groups offer Americans an important means of influencing U.S. public policy.

GRAPHIC SUMMARY: Are Interest Groups Good or Bad?

Interest Groups	
Positives	Negative
1. help stimulate interest in public affairs	1. can have more influence than they deserve
2. are based on shared views, not shared geography	2. difficult to figure out how many people they represent
3. provide information to government	3. some do not represent the views of all the people for whom they claim to speak
4. keep tabs on government	4. some engage in dishonest behavior
5. can limit each other's extremes	

The political power of interest groups is viewed both positively and negatively.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is an interest group?

2. **Chart Skills** Name two positive contributions of interest groups.

SECTION 3

MONEY AND ELECTIONS

TEXT SUMMARY

Money plays a key role in politics, but it presents serious problems to democratic governments. The amount of money spent in races varies, but presidential campaigns collect and spend the most.

Parties and their candidates draw their money from two basic sources. Most campaign money comes from private sources, including individuals, families, candidates themselves, and **political action committees (PACs)**. PACs are the political arms of special-interest groups. Presidential candidates receive public **subsidies**, which are grants of money from federal and/or State treasuries.

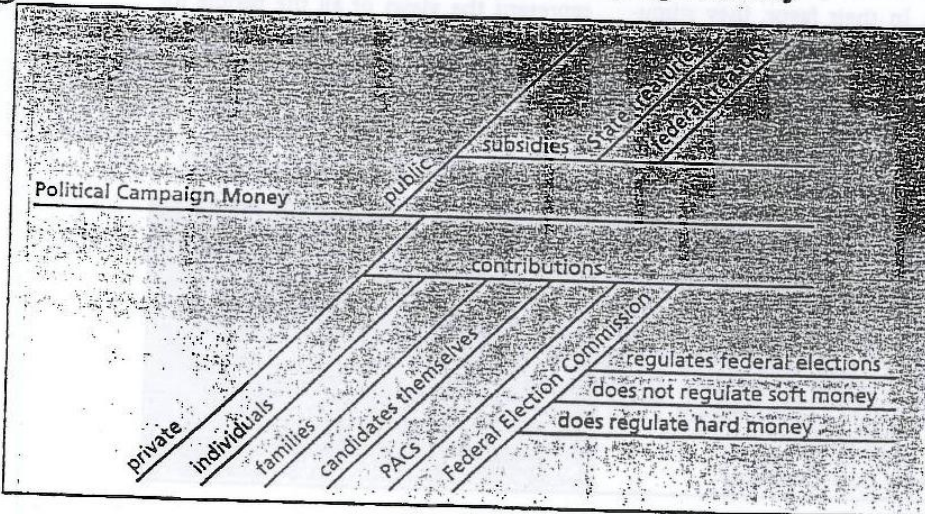
Federal campaign laws are administered by the Federal Election Commission

(FEC). These laws apply only to presidential and congressional elections. They require timely disclosure of campaign finance data and limit campaign contributions. Loopholes in campaign finance laws allow candidates to avoid some rules. For instance, federal law neither limits nor requires the reporting of **soft money**, or money given to State and local party organizations for such "party-building activities" as voter registration or party mailings and advertisements. Money that is subject to reporting requirements and amount limits is called **hard money**.

THE BIG IDEA

Excessive campaign money, needed to win elections, is a resource that poses a variety of problems, is regulated in today's elections.

GRAPHIC SUMMARY: Political Campaign Money



Campaign money comes from both public and private sources and is regulated by the Federal Election Commission.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Is hard money or soft money subject to reporting requirements?
2. **Diagram Skills** Who gives public subsidies to campaigns?

ACTIVITY THREE ARTICLES

GOP presidential candidates rush to secure big donors

By Dan Eggen and T.W. Farnam,

Published: May 31

The rapidly shifting landscape in the GOP presidential race has set off a scramble for big donors among Mitt Romney and other established candidates, each of them rushing to secure high-dollar commitments in an attempt to fend off emerging rivals, according to senior campaign officials and fundraisers.

The moves follow the departure of Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels and other potential contenders with strong ties to GOP powerbrokers, who are now casting about for new candidates to support. Operatives for Romney, the presumptive front-runner, and declared candidate Tim Pawlenty have been busy contacting major Daniels supporters and other uncommitted donors in recent days in hopes of securing crucial financial commitments for the months ahead, according to sources close to the talks.

A third possible candidate with strong establishment credentials, former Utah governor and China ambassador Jon Huntsman Jr., kicked off a fundraising trip through California last week in hopes of drumming up support for his own presidential bid. Huntsman also met in Maine with former president George H.W. Bush, who has granted audiences with several top candidates seeking help from the Bush family and its far-flung network of supporters.

The developments signal a new phase in the unsettled GOP presidential contest, after recent announcements by Daniels, former Arkansas governor Mike Huckabee and Mississippi Gov. Haley Barbour that they would not seek the nomination. At the same time, a trio of insurgents — former senator Rick Santorum (Penn.), Rep. Michele Bachmann (Minn.) and former Alaska governor Sarah Palin — are jumping into the race or, in Palin's case, sending fresh signals of a possible run.

The push for donors by Romney and Pawlenty is aimed in part at discouraging these emerging hopefuls, who have shown the ability to raise money in the past but whose financial prospects in the 2012 race are less clear. The candidates also are seeking to demonstrate their ability to take on President Obama, whose campaign is poised to meet or exceed the \$750 million he raised in 2008.

The May 22 departure of Daniels, in particular, has set off a frenzy to line up support among the Indiana governor's influential circle of friends, many of whom know him from his time as

budget director in the George W. Bush administration. Dozens of “Pioneers,” “Rangers” and other prominent Bush bundlers have remained uncommitted for 2012.

The Daniels effect

Romney backers say Daniels’s decision is especially beneficial to Romney, a former Massachusetts governor and equity fund manager who shares close ties to many of the same corporate executives and Wall Street investors who would have been attracted to Daniels. Romney in recent years has raised nearly half of his money from the financial sector.

“We very much expect a number of Daniels’s supporters to come Romney’s way,” said Emil Henry Jr., a Bush-era Treasury Department official who is helping lead Romney’s fundraising efforts.

This early fundraising period also poses a crucial test for Pawlenty, a former Minnesota governor who so far has struggled to gather the financial resources needed to face Romney in a long primary fight. In a major fundraiser in Minneapolis last month, Pawlenty took in about \$800,000; Romney, by contrast, raised \$10.25 million in a single day during a telethon fundraiser in Las Vegas.

Greg Slayton, a former Bush fundraiser and Bermuda ambassador who supports Pawlenty, said the Daniels decision “is a turning point” for Pawlenty, who formally announced his candidacy May 23 and is poised to attract donors unhappy with Romney’s prospects.

“You’ve got 50 percent of Republican donors, maybe 40 percent, who a month ago were saying, ‘Just hold on, I’m waiting to see if Haley runs or Huckabee runs or Daniels runs,’” said Slayton, a former venture capitalist who teaches at New Hampshire’s Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth. “But now those guys aren’t running. The race now is very clear.”

Rick Hohlt, a Washington lobbyist and veteran GOP fundraiser, is one Daniels supporter who is getting a lot of sudden attention. The day after Daniels’s departure, Hohlt said, he got phone calls from Vin Weber, the former congressman who is now a Pawlenty adviser, and Spencer Zwick, Romney’s national finance chairman.

It wasn’t the first time that he’d heard from them. Zwick even invited Hohlt to New Hampshire to spend a day with Romney about two years ago.

“The Romney operation has been very, very, very aggressive and very sophisticated for a long time,” Hohlt said. “Where Pawlenty is out there trying to build it, Romney’s already built it.”

Hohlt said he hasn’t made up his mind on whom to support, partly because he hasn’t gotten to know Pawlenty. “You’re obviously making an investment in that person as far as their success, so you have to make some judgment about who would go the distance,” Hohlt said. “At the same time, you want to have someone who believes in some of the same policies.”

Changing lineup

The fundraising surge comes amid a rapidly shifting cast of characters in the race: Santorum and Romney plan to formally enter the race in coming days, while Bachmann will clarify her plans. Meanwhile, Palin, whose chances had seemed to fade in recent months, has suddenly reignited speculation with the release of a promotional movie about her Alaska political career and the launch of a bus tour that began in Washington on Sunday.

As for fundraising, the precise outlines of the GOP money contest remain unclear; the first major disclosure reports aren't due until July.

But so many major GOP donors still sitting on the sidelines underscores the uncertainty surrounding this year's Republican field. Many party insiders have made little secret of their unhappiness with the current crop of candidates, including Romney and Pawlenty, while much of the public debate has been dominated by the temporary Donald Trump candidacy, Newt Gingrich's jewelry purchases and other sideshows.

"A lot of us are disappointed that it's not a Haley or a Mitch," said one Republican fundraiser from California, who spoke on the condition of anonymity in order to talk freely. "We don't need a flashy candidate to beat Obama. We need someone who is plain, simple-talking, and maybe that's Pawlenty."

On the other hand, this fundraiser said, "the problem with Pawlenty is that people don't know who he is."

Obama, Democrats Set \$60 Million Fundraising Goal For June

By KEN THOMAS 06/ 1/11 07:39 PM ET

WASHINGTON -- President Barack Obama's key fundraisers are being asked to raise \$60 million for the president's re-election campaign and the Democratic Party by the end of June.

Two people familiar with the fundraising goal said it was part of a presentation in Chicago on Wednesday to top Democratic fundraisers. The two spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the private meeting publicly.

Obama raised \$750 million in 2008 and his advisers have privately told donors that they hope to match the amount or exceed it. Some estimates say the 2012 re-election campaign could pull in \$1 billion.

A major donor involved in the re-election campaign's fundraising said most of the \$60 million had already been raised. The donor spoke on condition of anonymity because that person was not authorized to speak publicly.

Obama is expected to headline fundraisers in Miami, Washington, D.C., New York and Philadelphia before the end of the fundraising quarter on June 30, people familiar with the events said. First lady Michele Obama is expected to hold fundraisers in California in June, they said.

Obama launched his re-election campaign in April and has headlined several fundraisers around the country, with some of the proceeds divided between the Democratic National Committee and his re-election campaign.

In April, the DNC collected \$12.4 million, with about \$7 million going to the Obama Victory Fund, a joint fundraising account by the DNC and Obama's campaign. At Victory Fund events, the first \$5,000 on a donor's contribution goes to the presidential campaign and the remainder goes to the DNC, up to a maximum of \$30,800 a year.

The campaign is also focusing on low-dollar fundraising. Obama campaign manager Jim Messina told supporters Wednesday that the campaign's "most committed supporters" would match contributions by first-time donors of \$5 or more. He said the small donations would be "an explicit rejection of the money-for-influence game that paralyzes our politics."

Associated Press writer Beth Fouhy in New York contributed to this report.

ACTIVITY FOUR ARTICLES



- MIDDLE EAST NEWS - MARCH 22, 2011, 9:58 A.M. ET

Obama Letter to Congress on Libya Sparks Protests

By EVAN PEREZ

WASHINGTON—President Barack Obama Monday formally notified Congress the U.S. had begun military attacks on Libya, prompting complaints from lawmakers that the president waged war without congressional consent, appearing to contradict his own previous position.

Presidents over the decades have conducted military operations without prior congressional approval, including Harry Truman in Korea, George H.W. Bush in Iraq and and President Bill Clinton in Serbia. Congress in 1991 approved the Iraq military action, five months after Mr. Bush deployed forces to the region in response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. The military action in Libya, which Congress wasn't asked to approve, irked lawmakers.

Sen. Jim Webb, (D., Va.) said in an interview Monday with MSNBC, "We have not had a debate and I know that there was some justification put into place because of concern for civilian casualties, but this isn't the way that our system is supposed to work."

House Democrats held a conference call over the weekend to discuss Libya, and support among lawmakers was mixed, a congressional aide said. Frustration appears to be coming from rank-and-file lawmakers left out of Mr. Obama's Libya briefing to committee chairmen Friday.

In 2007, Mr. Obama, then a presidential candidate, said, "The President does not have power under the Constitution to unilaterally authorize a military attack in a situation that does not involve stopping an actual or imminent threat to the nation."

The White House said the president's actions don't contradict his earlier views, noting that the president met with a bipartisan group of lawmakers regarding Libya before any action took place.

A senior administration official said that the 2007 comment envisioned "an invasion like we saw in Iraq. A mission of this kind, which is time-limited, well-defined, and discrete, clearly falls within the President's constitutional authority."

Justice Department legal opinions support the president's power to order limited military action, according to administration lawyers, and the White House appears to be using the legal guidelines in stating the nature, duration and scope of the Libyan operation.

"As the President told the country, the US military operation in Libya will be limited in duration and scope, and conducted in partnership with an international coalition. It is aimed at preventing an imminent humanitarian catastrophe that directly implicates the national security and foreign policy interests of the United States," said Tommy Vietor, a White House spokesman.

Mr. Obama's notification letter does not satisfy the constitutional requirement that Congress approve military action, says Lou Fisher, former researcher with the Congressional Research Service and an expert on war powers. Mr. Fisher also raised objections to Mr. Obama citing United Nations authorization in his letter.

"It's impossible for Congress to take its war powers and give it to the U.N.," Mr. Fisher said. "Other than defensive actions—and there's no defensive actions here—this has to be done by Congress."

The president, with his letter, appeared to meet the requirements of the 1973 War Powers Resolution, which says only that in cases where the president doesn't seek prior approval from lawmakers, the president must notify Congress within 48 hours of committing armed forces to military action and puts a 60 day deadline on such actions.

House Speaker John Boehner doesn't believe the president always needs congressional approval to go take military action, a spokesman for the Ohio Republican said. However, "members of Congress from both parties, as well as the American people, are demanding the administration do a better job answering some basic questions about the scope and purpose of our mission in Libya, America's role, and how it will be achieved," said the spokesman, Brendan Buck.

Michigan Republican Mike Rogers, chairman of the House Intelligence committee, who was part of a group of lawmakers who met with the president before the Libya action, offered his support after the meeting. Mr. Rogers said: "Bipartisan Congressional leaders met with the President at the White House today to hear his plan, and I like what I heard. It is in America's strategic interest to support regional stability, and to prevent the use or diversion of Libya's large chemical weapons stockpile while allowing those who aspire to be free a chance to have their legitimate grievances heard."

—Siobhan Hughes contributed to this article.

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House debates resolutions on US military role in Libya, president's authority

House weighs resolutions on US role in Libya

By DONNA CASSATA | ASSOCIATED PRESS | Jun 3, 2011 11:39 AM

Republicans and Democrats scolded President Barack Obama on Friday for dispatching U.S. forces against Libya without getting congressional approval as the House moved toward approval of a resolution demanding a rationale for the mission.

Nearly three months after Obama launched air strikes against Moammar Gadhafi's forces, the House held the first significant debate on the conflict as it considered two resolutions _ one by anti-war Rep. Dennis Kucinich to end U.S. involvement in the NATO-led operation and another by Speaker John Boehner insisting on information on the scope of the operation and its costs within 14 days.

The GOP leadership hastily pulled together the Boehner resolution amid concerns in both parties that the Kucinich measure was gaining ground. The House is likely to approve the Boehner measure that chastises Obama for failing to provide Congress with a "compelling rationale" for the Libya operation.

The Senate had no plans to consider the measure, which would allow the U.S. to continue to remain engaged in the mission and would have no impact on the logistical and intelligence support the Americans have been providing.

Boehner said too many questions remained unanswered.

"Today's debate on Libya is the first step and clearly there's information that we want from the administration that we asked for in this resolution and it's information that we expect to get," the Ohio Republican told reporters. "But there isn't any question in my mind that Congress is going to take further action in the weeks to come."

The White House pushed back against both resolutions, with spokesman Josh Earnest calling them "unnecessary and unhelpful."

Earnest insisted that the administration has been consulting with Congress since before Obama ordered air strikes.

"It is the view of this administration that we've acted in accordance with the war powers act because of these regular consultations," Earnest said aboard Air Force One en route to Toledo, Ohio.

But lawmakers faulted the commander in chief for ignoring both Congress' constitutional authority to declare war and the 1973 War Powers Resolution that requires congressional authorization within 60 days of military action. That deadline expired last month.

"Shall the president, like the King of England, be a dictator on foreign policy?" asked Rep. Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y. "The authors of the Constitution said we don't trust kings."

Republicans and Democrats have been frustrated with Obama's treatment of Congress, particularly the level of consultation and details on the scope of the Libyan mission and its costs.

"What did he do, send a tweet to the chairman of the Armed Services and Intelligence committees?" Rep. Phil Gingrey, R-Ga., asked mockingly.

Obama ordered air strikes in March to back Libyan rebels battling Gadhafi's regime after limited consultation with Congress. More recently, the United States has operated in a support role as the standoff continues between Gadhafi's forces and the rebels.

The president has argued that he acted to prevent a massacre in the rebel stronghold of Benghazi, and he had the backing of several lawmakers, including Sen. John McCain of Arizona, the ranking Republican on the Armed Services Committee.

Initially, the military operation was largely constituted of U.S., British and French naval and air attacks, with the United States taking the lead. NATO took charge at the end of March and U.S. forces now play a support role that includes aerial refueling of NATO warplanes and intelligence, and surveillance and reconnaissance work. The U.S. also flies unmanned drones over Libya.

Obama said when he ordered U.S. forces to support the mission that there would be no American ground troops. Although no U.S. military forces are present, The Associated Press and other news

organizations have reported that the CIA has paramilitary officers operating alongside rebel forces in the North African nation.