

Exhibit 46

April 2015 Burr Statement



Key Republicans defend use of drones



Greg Nash

By Martin Matishak - 04/23/15 01:29 PM EDT

Several lawmakers defended the U.S.'s use of drones, saying the killing of two hostages doesn't reflect a problem with the program.

The lawmakers argued the administration and Congress should examine how these strikes ended up killing unintended targets but said it should not lead the U.S. to pull back on the use of drones.

President Obama **acknowledged Thursday** that a drone strike in January killed Warren Weinstein, an American held by al Qaeda since 2011, and Italian national Giovanni Lo Porto, a hostage since 2012.

The attack also killed Ahmed Farouq, an American who was an al Qaeda leader, according to the White House. A separate strike the same month killed Adam Gadahn, an American who served as a prominent spokesman for the terror group.

The incident that killed the hostages "does not bring into question the use of drones; you bring into question the proper use of drones. But no one — no one — believes you can't use drones anymore. That'd be crazy," Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John McCain (R-Ariz.) told reporters.

However, there should "absolutely" be an examination of the strike, he said.

"Whenever something like this happens, you have to have a review of the operations and what went into the decisions and all that. There has to be a review of it," McCain said.

Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman Richard Burr (R-N.C.) said the panel provides "extensive oversight" of drone efforts.

"We always go back and look at any counterterrorism action that we take, and we will do it in great detail on this one," he said, noting the committee had already taken a second look at the January operation.

Burr added there are "consequences to war. When you look at our experience with collateral damage, it's minimal."

Sen. Tim Kaine (D-Va.), a member of the Senate Armed Services and Foreign Relations panels, said America's drone policy has not been overly aggressive.

"Drones can be a technology that can be very effective, and they tend to reduce — they don't eliminate — reduce the possibility of unacceptable risks to others," Kaine said.

He described drones as a "good technology" but took issue with the breadth of the 2001 authorization for the use of military force that allowed the operation against al Qaeda forces to occur.

"When you have an AUMF that doesn't have [geographic] limitation, temporal limitation, then that's what creates the controversy," Kaine told reporters. "I don't think it's the drones themselves."

Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) said he has "no problem at all with anything that happened, other than my deepest sympathies for those who were held by al Qaeda that became collateral damage."

"We're at war. Whether you drop a bomb from an airplane and you hit a collateral damage, it's not different than if you use a drone," he added.

But when al Qaeda “does what they do, they put innocent people at risk, so you can’t stop the war. You can’t stop the drone program because of this,” said Graham, a possible 2016 presidential contender.

“They can look and see what went wrong, but I am not for stopping this program. The drone program has been a good tactical weapon in the war on terror, and I am all for keeping it,” he said.

Updated at 5:14 p.m.

TAGS: Richard Burr, John McCain, Lindsey Graham, Tim Kaine

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