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Wyoming legislators: Liz Cheney should stop carping at Trump for rejecting endless war

by State Reps. Jared Olsen and Tyler Lindholm

President Trump in June chose not to respond to Iran's downing of an unmanned U.S. drone with a strike that military advisers told him might kill hundreds of Iranians, inviting escalation that would increase the risk to American military personnel in the region.

This month, the President announced his consideration of a peace agreement that could lead to withdrawal of our nearly two decade-long troop presence in Afghanistan.

On both occasions, among those most critical of the President's actions was our own Congresswoman Liz Cheney.

President Trump's "failure to respond to this kind of direct provocation that we've seen now from

the Iranians ... could in fact be a very serious mistake," Cheney told a national radio audience in June. "I think it's very important for all of our decision makers to recognize that weakness is provocative ... and that failing to respond is potentially far more dangerous here in the message that the Iranians will take from that."

More recently, she complained that adoption of the peace agreement Trump is pursuing would be "conceding defeat to al Qaeda."

In each case, we respectfully but strongly disagree. We urge Cheney to stop publicly criticizing our Republican commander-in-chief and seemingly pushing the U.S. toward yet another endless war in the

Middle East, where the men and women of America's armed forces have already been deployed and dying in Afghanistan and Iraq for a generation.

President Trump's eradication of ISIS has removed any doubt of his willingness to act strongly, firmly, and decisively with American military might when appropriate.

Rather than rush to a microphone to publicly criticize Trump's judgment as mistaken, weak, defeatist, and even potentially dangerous, she should be giving our demonstrably strong commander-

in-chief the benefit of the doubt, if he shows reasoned and measured restraint based on the intelligence and military options he has before him, and if he moves to bring our troops home.

The last thing the American people, our troops, and veterans want is another endless war, and most Americans want ones we're in now to end.

Last month, Military.com published the results of a Pew Research Center poll of 1,284 U.S. veterans, which found that 64 percent said the Iraq war "was not worth fighting," while 58 percent said the same about Afghanistan.

Pew also polled 1,087 American civilians to compare findings. More than 60 percent shared veterans' sentiments about Iraq, and

59 percent agreed regarding Afghanistan. Only 36 percent of the general public said U.S. involvement in Syria has been worthwhile."

Notably, 57 percent of veterans told Pew they approve of President Trump's performance as commander-in-chief. Remember the words he delivered in this year's State of the Union Address:

"Great nations do not fight endless wars... Our troops have fought with unmatched valor, and thanks to their bravery, we are now able to pursue a political solution to this long and bloody conflict... After two decades of war, the hour has come to at least try for peace... Now, as we work with our allies to destroy the remnants of ISIS, it is time to give our brave warriors a warm welcome home."

After two decades, U.S. taxpayers and military families are tired of financing and policing other people's wars, at the price of American blood and trillions of our tax dollars. Rep. Cheney should stop attacking the President when he acts — consistent with those sentiments — to do what he said he'd do: end America's endless wars.

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