Upholding America’s Ethics in a Time of Drone Warfare

Dear Senator,

In this world where technological advances constantly occur, nations’ governments and militaries are modified frequently in order to keep up with changing tactics. In late 2001, the United States began using unmanned combat aerial vehicles (armed drones) as a pawn in international warfare because they had many positive aspects. This strategy also has flaws, as seen in the al-Awlaki mission where the father-son pair never received due process of law as required by the constitution. This override of the judicial system made by the President illuminates the controversy of security versus personal liberty in warfare. We call for an investigation into the legality of the actions of the President and suggest the creation of a committee to assess the variables involved in international drone warfare in order to prevent unjust prosecution and an accumulation of collateral damage.

We ask you to call for an investigation into the president’s previous actions regarding the use of drones due to the infringement upon Constitutional rights of American citizens. Each citizen is entitled to trial by jury and right to legal counsel. The president’s decision to use a drone disregarded these ideals by superseding the justice system. This decision affected sixteen-year old, Abdulrahman al-Awlaki who was assassinated alongside his father. Even though Abdulrahman was known to be completely innocent and separated from his father’s illegal actions, he suffered as collateral damage to a US drone strike. Furthermore, this senseless tragedy goes against American ethics, which include peaceful resolution and legal justice for all. We believe that the president was legally at fault in his decision to assassinate al-Awlaki due to his neglect of basic Constitutional rights. Because of this, an investigation needs to be instigated.

We suggest that the National Security Council form a subcommittee in order to account for varying perspectives on morality, justice, and ethics. This committee will be targeted toward deciding the morality needed create a comprehensive, ethical strategy, which will still achieve the optimal result of a mission. The committee will question factors including the effect of our drone strike on other nations, the immediacy of the threat, the possibility of another way to achieve the same goal, the possibility to save innocent lives, and ways to prevent collateral damage caused by the drone. This intense questioning will result in strategies and missions that agree with American moral standards and can be performed legally.

As a result of the many infringements upon the rights of American citizens and the use of drones in foreign military campaigns, we once again call for an investigation of the President’s decision and the creation of a National Security Council sub-committee dedicated to the ethics of drone warfare. Though the news-caster in *Robocop* clearly favors security over ethics when he questions, “What is more important than the safety of the American people?” many American citizens do not feel the same. We value the moral aspects and civil liberties of the democratic system over simple security. These liberties are provided by the constitution and we demand that our foreign policy reflects these rights held dear by the nation. And so, Senator, we ask you to keep in mind the views and opinions of your constituents, especially on heavy moral issues, when voting on Capitol Hill. Thank you for your attention,

Sincerely,

Concerned Citizens