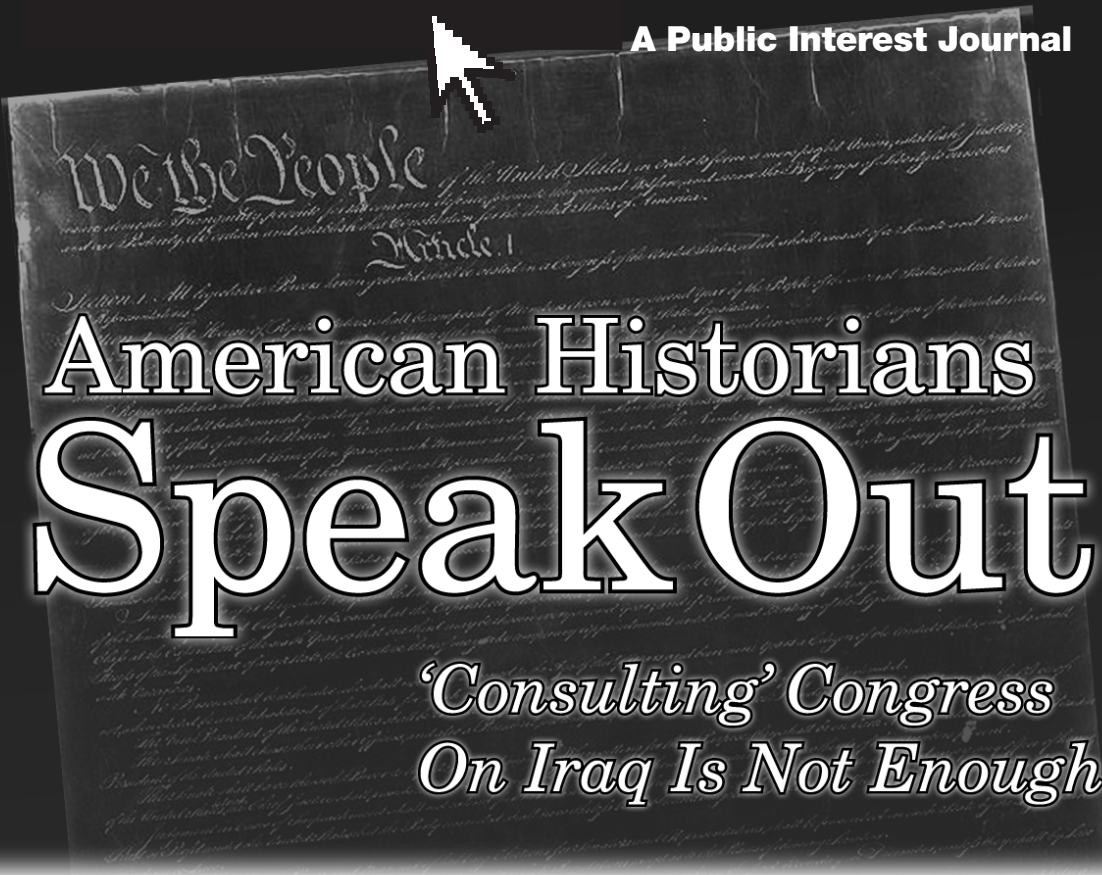


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# American Historians Speak Out

## 'Consulting' Congress On Iraq Is Not Enough

*A Message From Historians Joyce Appleby and Ellen Carol DuBois.*

**The nation stands on the verge of war with Iraq and American historians are speaking out: Consultation with Congress is not enough. A congressional resolution authorizing military action falls short. *The Constitution is clear – Congress must debate and vote on whether to declare war on Iraq.***

Over 1,200 historians have signed our petition to that effect. At noon today, Sept. 17, Constitution Day, we are delivering our petition to Congress.

**"We ask our senators and representatives to do this,"** the petition reads in part, **"because Congress has not asserted its authority to declare war for over half a century, leaving the president solely in control of war powers to the detriment of our democracy and in clear violation of the Constitution."**

Petition signatories include: **Sanford Levinson** of the University of Texas; **Jack Rakove**, Stanford University; **David Beito**, University of Alabama; **David DeLeon**, Howard University; **Melani McAlister**, George Washington University; **David Levering Lewis**, Rutgers University; and **Teresa Meade** of Union College. Read the complete list at [www.HistoryNewsNetwork.org](http://www.HistoryNewsNetwork.org).

The Constitution is not a document to be selectively observed. The Founding Fathers balanced the president's power as commander-in-

chief against the authority of the people's representatives to commit the nation to war. **There is no ambiguity of original intent here.**

A preemptive attack on Iraq is not like invading Grenada or Panama. The stakes are much higher. A resolution that is less than a declaration of war might satisfy people who think Congress should have a say, but it would not satisfy the Constitution.

Either Saddam Hussein has pursued a path that requires us to wage war against him, or he has not. Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution is not about police actions or interventions or conflicts – it is about WAR.

**If we must consider the untested doctrine of preemptive war, let us rely on the well-tested Constitution to guide our decision. That course alone can give legitimacy to the initiative.**

*Adapted from "American Historians Speak Out" by Joyce Appleby and Ellen Carol DuBois of UCLA. Read the complete essay at [www.TomPaine.com](http://www.TomPaine.com)... Text of the historian's petition... and "Unilateral Preventive War: Illegitimate and Immoral" by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.*

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