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Northampton man leads call for an inquiry into Bush acts

By THE DAILY HAMPSHIRE GAZETTE
Staff Writer

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A political group founded by a Northampton resident is spearheading a drive to hold members of the Bush administration accountable for authorizing torture and illegal wiretapping.

Tim Carpenter, national director of Progressive Democrats of America, said he believes there is "tons of support" for a call to appoint a special prosecutor to examine possible illegal activity by the former president.

"Between what has happened with the wiretapping and Iraq war ... people are pushing for accountability," Carpenter said. "What we're lacking is the will of Congress to hold the administration accountable."

The PDA, founded in 2004, was one of 40 groups to have endorsed a letter drafted by The Robert Jackson Steering Committee requesting that an inquiry determine whether former officials be prosecuted.

"We urge Attorney General Eric Holder to appoint a non-partisan independent Special Counsel to immediately commence a prosecutorial investigation into the most serious alleged crimes of" members of the Bush administration, namely former President George W. Bush and former Vice President Richard Cheney, the letter said.

Asked whether any of the officials would ever be called to account, Carpenter said he believes public support is broad.

"There's a group of committed Americans that is not going to stop until there is justice," he said. "We remain ever hopeful."

Carpenter said if Americans fail to hold the former president accountable now, future presidents could act irresponsibly.

"We see no need for these prosecutions to be extraordinarily lengthy or costly, and no need to wait for the recommendations of a panel or #truth' commission when substantial evidence of the crimes is already in the public domain," the letter states.

Carpenter said he believes President Barack Obama will eventually call for an investigation of the previous administration, because that is what the majority of the country wants.

"We need to let (Obama) know that this is what a majority of Americans want," he said. "We think we have his ear, and now we need to show him how much support we have."

Carpenter has worked as a social and political activist for more than 30 years, according to the group's Web site, **www.pdamerica.org**.

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