

WIN WITHOUT WAR



Progressive Foreign Policy Debrief

Intel for Advocacy

TOPLINE TAKEAWAYS

- *Mike Pompeo's confirmation hearing was a disaster ... for Mike Pompeo.*
- *As Trump ponders a strike on Syria, we should remember that only diplomacy will end the war.*

ONE POMPEO, TWO POMPEOS, THREE POMPEOS, FOUR ...

If we've learned anything about Mike Pompeo over the last year, it's that he tries to hide who he really is when interviewing with the U.S. Senate for jobs in the Trump administration.

During his confirmation hearing last year to become Trump's CIA Director, Pompeo charmed the Senate Intelligence Committee and assured them that his warmongering, anti-gay, and extreme anti-Muslim views were either misinterpreted or a thing of the past. After the Senate bought his pitch and ultimately confirmed him, [he carried on as the old Mike Pompeo](#) everyone was worried about.

The same was true during his confirmation hearing yesterday to become Secretary of State. Time after time, senators (mostly of the Democratic variety) questioned him about his aversion to diplomacy, associations with Muslim hating extremists, and efforts to undermine diversity at the CIA, and each time Pompeo either dodged or contradicted himself. For example:

- There's "no one who understands the power of diplomacy" more than him, Pompeo said yesterday. So why has he done [nothing but undermine diplomacy](#) with Iran?
- Pompeo also acknowledged yesterday that he's "seen no evidence" that Iran is cheating on the nuclear deal. Yet as the Agency's chief, he's been [dismissive](#) of CIA assessments that Iran is complying.
- "I am not advocating for regime change" in North Korea, he also said. Then why did he [say last year](#) he's "hopeful we will find a way to separate that regime from this system?"
- Pompeo refused yesterday to say whether he supported a first strike attack on North Korea, but earlier this year he [indicated](#) that it would be a viable option to present to the president.

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- Pompeo said yesterday that Iran “wasn’t racing” to build a nuclear weapon before the nuclear deal, suggesting that pulling out of the agreement now wouldn’t be all that big of a deal. But that’s not [what he was saying](#) before the Iran deal was reached.
- Pompeo claimed yesterday that his record of treating Muslims with respect has been “exquisite.” Then why have so [many media outlets recently written about Pompeo’s anti-Muslim bigotry](#)? And during yesterday’s hearing, why did he [refuse to denounce](#) anti-Muslim extremists Frank Gaffney and Brigitte Gabriel, and why would he not apologize to Muslim leaders who denounced terror attacks when he previously claimed they didn’t?
- Pompeo said yesterday that “history will reflect” that he has championed human rights. Yet the [record shows a long history](#) of combating gay and women’s reproductive rights. Even during yesterday’s hearing, he [refused](#) to say whether he believes being gay is a perversion.
- “I will work to achieve diversity,” he said. But his record on promoting diversity at CIA [is not so good](#).
- When asked about his past claim that it would take just “2,000 sorties” to wipe out Iran’s nuclear program, Pompeo replied: “I don’t think that’s what I said” ([he did](#)). Yet just about an hour or so later, when asked about it again, he answered the question as if he had said it.
- Pompeo said yesterday that torture is illegal. He [said last year](#) that he’s open to waterboarding.

Seeming to recognize the sea of inconsistency in Pompeo’s testimony yesterday, Senate Foreign Relations Committee Ranking Member Sen. Bob Menendez asked in a [3 minute speech](#) at the close of the hearing: “The Pompeo I hear today? Much more different than some of the Pompeo of the past. And so I’m trying to figure out which is the one is going to act if he gets confirmed as the Secretary of State.”

Indeed, to round out his day of contradiction, at the end of the hearing, despite his [long history](#) of climate change denial, Pompeo assured the panel that he’s now a believer in climate change. There is “a human component to that,” he conceded ([as predicted](#)). But just like during his hearing to become CIA Director, it’s probably a safe bet that he was just telling the Senate Foreign Relations Committee what he thought they wanted to hear.

THE ‘WAR CABINET’ AND REINFORCING TRUMP’S WORST INSTINCTS

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In addition his troubling statements about the Iran nuclear deal and his refusal to rule out war with North Korea, Pompeo yesterday all but assured the committee that Trump won't be coming to Congress for authorization to strike against Bashar al-Assad in Syria and [could think of no limiting factor](#) on the president's powers to wage war.

Indeed, after spending the day questioning and listening to Pompeo, SFRC member Sen. Jeff Merkley [concluded](#): "A vote for Mr. Pompeo is a vote for Trump's War Cabinet, and for that reason, I will fiercely oppose his nomination."

And finally, Pompeo refused to comment on anything related to special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation into Russia's 2016 election meddling and the Trump campaign's possible collusion. Not only did he [refuse to say](#) whether that investigation is an attack on America, as Trump had said, but Pompeo also said he [would not resign](#) if Trump fires Mueller, suggesting that loyalty to Trump may supercede any sense of providing a check on Trump's worst impulses.

OTHER RESOURCES

- Win Without War [statement](#) on Pompeo's hearing and a [breakdown](#) on where senators stand.
- VoteVets teamed up with MoveOn.org on a [video](#) calling on senators to oppose Pompeo.
- [Statement](#) on more than 180 national organizations calling on the Senate to block Pompeo.
- MUST WATCH: These [two videos](#) of Sen. Cory Booker confronting Pompeo on his anti-gay and anti-Muslim views.
- TAKE ACTION: [Microsite](#) pushing calls to senate offices to oppose Pompeo.

[TRUMP'S ATTACK ON SYRIA MAY BE IMMINENT](#)

As Trump continues to consider whether to strike Syria in response to the chemical weapons attack on a rebel held area just outside Damascus last weekend, America's allies France and Britain seem to be [gearing up](#) for a fight, just as Trump's Defense Secretary James Mattis appears to be holding up a caution [sign](#).

Win Without War, CREDO, and MoveOn released a [statement](#) this week urging against more war in Syria and calling for a diplomatic resolution to the conflict.

Watch Win Without War Policy Director Kate Kizer discuss Syria on i24 News [here](#).

MESSAGING

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War in Syria is the problem, not the solution

- The latest chemical attack in Syria underscores the long-standing and ongoing human suffering in Syria that has been occurring beyond the use of illegal weapons.
- Adding fuel to the fire with more military action will do nothing to solve the conflicts in Syria.
 - It's clear now that Donald Trump's missile attack last year in response to a chemical weapons attack neither hastened the war nor prevented future attacks.
 - Launching airstrikes against the Syrian regime would be purely political, unconstitutional, and have no effect on the calculus of Assad or effect the course of the war.
- The international community needs to come together to end this horrific war and use all available international accountability mechanisms at its disposal to bring true justice to the victims of Syria's war crimes.
- Creative, sustained, genuine diplomacy is the only way to truly resolve this conflict and prevent further chemical weapons attacks.
 - The Trump administration has been largely absent on pushing for a comprehensive political settlement to the conflict.
 - The reality is that Trump has actually ramped up war making in Syria and the wider Middle East with little disregard for the costs to civilians.
- Congress must exert its sole constitutional authority to authorize the use of force in Syria and do everything in its power to prevent Trump from unilaterally launching unauthorized military strikes.

BURIED LEDES

MORE WASTE: The Pentagon [spent \\$60 million](#) on a power station in Afghanistan **that doesn't work**.

LESS TRANSPARENCY: The Pentagon strips numbers of U.S. troops serving overseas from its quarterly [reports](#).

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Don't shoot unarmed Palestinian protesters. Progressive Members of Congress [send a message to the Israeli military](#) and “strongly reject” Israeli Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman’s claim that “there are no innocent people in the Gaza Strip.”

Inside the killing rooms of [Mosul](#).

ICYMI: The New York Times [sorted](#) through **thousands of documents abandoned by ISIS fighters.**

Trump is giving signs that he'll pull out of the Iran deal. That would be a [bad idea](#).

“South Korean [officials are](#) **wary about Trump’s appointment of Bolton.**” Same.

Talks with North Korea [may come down](#) to **what the definition of “denuclearization” is.**

The U.S. Senate [seems to be considering](#) **giving Trump MORE authority to wage war** around the world.

And finally, come on guys, **maybe wait to see if he gets confirmed** before [picking up the phone](#).