

# WIN WITHOUT WAR



## Progressive Foreign Policy Debrief

*Intel for Advocacy*

### TOPLINE TAKEAWAYS

- *Mike Pompeo facing historic, bipartisan opposition in the Senate.*
- *A new AUMF will essentially give the president a blank check to wage war wherever and whenever he or she wants.*
- *Trump lobbs missiles into Syria, blocks refugees, and declares “mission accomplished.”*

### MIKE POMPEO’S HISTORIC OPPOSITION

CIA Director Mike Pompeo’s confirmation as the next Secretary of State continues to face historic, bipartisan opposition as 27 Senators have announced they would vote against Pompeo, even before the nomination has made it to the Senate floor. While Sen. Heidi Heitkamp broke with Democrats declaring she would vote for Pompeo, it’s increasingly clear that Pompeo’s nomination in the U.S. Senate will require unprecedented parliamentary maneuvering to reach the finish line.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee will vote on Pompeo’s nomination next week, and it’s likely that he will lack the votes for a favorable recommendation to the Senate floor for the final vote.

“Never before in at least a century has a secretary of state nominee received an unfavorable recommendation from the Foreign Relations Committee,” a [report](#) from ABC News noted.

Rex Tillerson made history last year when he received 43 votes against his confirmation, and, as ABC adds, “It’s possible Pompeo will beat that record.” We also can’t help but point out that Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has a bit of a history with using extraordinary maneuvers to help confirm Trump nominees, and he may yet be getting ready to do so again.

### **BUT POMPEO’S CONFIRMATION IS NOT A DONE DEAL**

While Heitkamp’s vote doesn’t help, the campaign to block Pompeo is still on. In fact, there are still a few Republican senators who have expressed reservations about Pompeo.

Indeed, American Bridge is [targeting](#) ads at Sens. Jeff Flake of Arizona, Dean Heller of Nevada, and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska, and our friends at National Security Action [launched a big ad buy](#)

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this week directed at those same states. And Win Without War is itself advertising in Nevada and Maine as part of our 9 state digital ad-campaign to block Pompeo's nomination.

## WHAT IF POMPEO IS CONFIRMED?

Progressives [haven't been shy](#) about showing their displeasure with Heitkamp's decision, and it appears that she and any other Democrat offering support for Pompeo could be subject to [some accountability measures](#) from the progressive base.

But the real issue is concern about Pompeo [enabling the worst](#) in Trump and National Security Advisor John Bolton. In a must read [piece](#) this week in the New Yorker, Susan Glasser notes that with Tillerson out, and Pompeo in, Defense Secretary James Mattis appears to be the "last man standing" in the way of Trump and, well, more needless war.

Check out our breakdown of where senators stand on Pompeo [here](#).

## [AN AUTHORIZATION FOR FOREVER WAR EVERYWHERE](#)

There's no question that the 2001 and 2002 authorizations for the use of military force have been too broadly interpreted by three American presidents to justify and expand war against terrorists around the world. But a new AUMF introduced this week by Sens. Bob Corker and Tim Kaine not only fails to address these issues, but also in effect rolls back some of Congress's war powers.

## WHAT THE NEW AUMF PROPOSAL WOULD DO

1. Repeal the 2001 and 2002 AUMFs, passed to respond to the 9/11 attacks and invade Iraq, respectively.
2. Expand the president's authority to combat ISIS, Al Qaeda, the Taliban and/or "associated forces" wherever and whenever he or she decides.
3. Require the executive branch report to Congress within 48 hours when new theaters of war are opened. A veto-proof majority in Congress then has 60 days to remove that authority. Failure to get two-thirds in both chambers or no action means the new theatre of war is authorized.
4. Every four years, Congress will have the opportunity (within a 60 day window) to repeal, amend, or uphold the authorizations. If Congress takes no action (as it usually does), the AUMF remains in place.

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## WHY IT'S A BAD IDEA

Corker and Kaine claim their proposal is meant to reassert Congress's role in war-making. But the reality is that it not only codifies the broad interpretations of the 2001 and 2002 AUMFs, it also widens the president's power to expand these conflicts.

Elizabeth Goitein of the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU [explains](#) how the measure -- and its provision that the president report military action against new groups or in new territory -- actually upends Congress's power:

Of course, Congress doesn't need to give itself permission to pass a law. At any time in the past decade, for instance, legislators could have outlawed the use of military force against the Islamic State. The point is, they shouldn't have to. Under the Constitution, war may be declared by Congress alone. The Corker-Kaine bill would flip this constitutional power on its head, assigning the president the role of declaring war against a given enemy in a given place, **and leaving Congress only with the power to un-declare it.**

And even if some members of Congress want to repeal the president's authority to wage a new war, they would need a veto proof majority. You can probably guess how difficult it will be to get two-thirds of a (typically cowardly) U.S. Congress to stop a war.

What's more, Goitein observes, is that "while the bill would not authorize the president to add nation-states to the list, it would permit an easy runaround: by characterizing strikes on countries where terrorists operate — or like Iran, are designated as state sponsors of terrorism — as sanctioned attacks on terror groups."

So it's not out of the realm of possibility that folks like John Bolton and Mike Pompeo, should he be confirmed as Secretary of State, who have been itching for a fight with Iran to come up with creative, and legal, ways to do so under this new proposal.

The measure is already facing [strong bipartisan opposition](#).

## FURTHER RESOURCES

- Organizational statements: [Amnesty International](#), [FCNL](#), [Human Rights First](#), [POGO](#), and [Win Without War](#).
- VIDEO: What is an AUMF? [\[LINK\]](#)
- TAKE ACTION: "Don't Give Trump a Blank Check for Endless War." [\[LINK\]](#)
- "Don't Let Congress Give Trump a Blank Check to Declare Worldwide War," ACLU [\[LINK\]](#)

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- “Does Congress Really Think It’s Reasserting Its War Powers by Giving Them Away to Trump?,” Just Security [[LINK](#)]

## [TRUMP DROPPED 10 TIMES MORE BOMBS ON SYRIA IN ONE NIGHT THAN SYRIAN REFUGEES HE’S ADMITTED THIS YEAR](#)

Donald Trump’s “compassion for the victims of Syria’s brutal civil war does not extend to allowing them to enter the United States,” the Washington Post editorial board recently [observed](#).

Indeed, only [11 Syrian refugees](#) have been admitted into the U.S. this year, an appalling figure that has been overshadowed by the more than 118 missiles -- over ten times more --- Trump [illegally](#) fired on Syria in one night last week (even Defense Secretary Mattis [reportedly](#) thought Trump should get congressional authorization).

These drastically low numbers of Syrian refugees are a result of Trump’s campaign pledge of a “[Total and Complete Shutdown](#),” of Muslims entering the U.S., which has included multiple Muslim and refugee bans, appointments of anti-Muslim/refugee [bigots](#) filling his War Cabinet, and the [dismantling](#) of life-saving U.S. refugee programs and [resettlement goals](#).

Trump’s abandonment of Syrian refugees comes as the U.S. Supreme Court prepares to hear [oral arguments](#) next week on one of the Muslim ban iterations. MPower Change, CAIR, NILC and others will host a [rally in front of the Supreme Court](#) on the day of the hearing.

Meanwhile, Nikki Haley [embarrassingly](#) tried to justify the Muslim Ban recently by [claiming](#) Syrian refugees don’t want to come to the U.S. While that’s obviously an absurd claim, what’s also almost equally embarrassing is that the mainstream media is [seemingly more busy obsessing over Trump bombing Syria](#) than they are concerned about the humanity and life-threatening needs of the refugees that are escaping the war’s horrors.

While there are no easy answers for ending the human suffering and conflict in Syria, it is [morally wrong](#) for the U.S. to continue to slam its doors shut to refugees, while engaging in [illegal bombing](#) campaigns that risk wreaking further havoc in their country.

What’s more, the **U.S. has a black-and-white direct responsibility to help end the humanitarian and displacement crisis in Syria**, created in part by a continued U.S. air war that has caused significant civilian casualties, flooding of U.S.-supplied weapons and indefinite troop presence into the war, and lack of a committed diplomatic strategy.

**MORE RESOURCES:**

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- See Win Without War's full [statement](#) and [talking points](#), and [other organizational statements](#) in response to Trump's stikes last Friday.
- Members of Congress [speak out](#) against Trump's unconstitutional war in Syria.

## TAKE ACTION

- Trump's unauthorized war in Syria: [WWW](#), [Indivisible](#), and [CREDO](#)
- Endorse the #NoMuslimBanEVER campaign and find ways to take action [HERE](#)
- Call and ask Congress: [#WhereRTheRefugees](#).

## BURIED LEDES

“For the [first time](#) since the division of the peninsula, **the two Koreas on Friday set up and tested a direct phone line for their leaders.**”

After **Natalie Portman backed out of an awards ceremony in Israel**, [citing](#) “recent events,” an Israeli politician said he [wants to revoke](#) her Israeli citizenship. Israeli soldiers [shot](#) 96 more Palestinian protesters in Gaza today.

Five hundred -- 5-0-0 -- British, French, and German members of parliament [sent a letter](#) to their counterparts in the U.S. **urging them to fight to preserve the Iran nuclear deal.**

Meanwhile, our friends at [Diplomacy Works](#) **dismantle a case for pulling out of the Iran deal.**

Instead of [repeating baseless speculation](#), **maybe we should try to figure out what Iran really wants.**

Two [decades of war](#) have **eroded the morale of America's troops.**

Israeli intel [said](#) **Trump's strikes on Syria didn't do too much.**

The Trump/Bolton [plan](#) to stand up an Arab force in Syria **has a few problems.**

The Russians appear to be [expanding](#) their cyber ops, **including into private homes.**

And finally, “[Thanks Obama](#).” The **former president penned the tribute to the Parkland, FL students** fighting for gun control.