

WIN WITHOUT WAR



Progressive Foreign Policy Debrief

Intel for Advocacy

CONGRESS IS REASSERTING ITS WAR MAKING AUTHORITY

While the press was mostly focused on this week's shiny faux-controversy contrived by Republicans and their allies, the United States House of Representatives made history, voting to end the U.S.'s unauthorized military involvement in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates' intervention in Yemen.

Here are the big takeaways from the vote:

1. **This vote was historic and unprecedented.** The House has now joined the Senate, which passed a similar measure in December and will soon take it up again, in marking the first time in U.S. history both chambers used the 1973 War Powers Act to end U.S. participation in an unauthorized war.
2. **Congress is beginning to reassert its war making authority.** For nearly two-decades, the legislative branch has acquiesced to three separate administrations expanding the post-9/11 wars with no end in sight. With a Senate vote on a similar measure upcoming, it's likely that Congress will soon speak with one voice to rein in the White House.
3. **Activism works.** When congressional champions like Sen. Chris Murphy and Rep. Ted Lieu began sounding the alarm years ago about the then-Obama administration's support for the military intervention against the Houthis in Yemen, their calls largely fell on deaf ears. But as the American people became aware of the humanitarian disaster that was unfolding and public pressure mounted, the rest of Congress moved too.

MORE ON THE ACTIVISM: A BIG WIN FOR PROGRESSIVES

Rep. Ro Khanna, the lead sponsor of the House resolution, [said](#) the result was “the culmination of several years of legislative efforts to end our involvement in the Saudi war in Yemen. I’m encouraged by the direction people are pushing our party to take on foreign policy, promoting restraint and human rights and with the sense they want Congress to play a much larger role.”

It's true that some lawmakers may have voted for the resolution, in part, as a rebuke to Donald Trump's reckless foreign policy more generally, or because of how he has mishandled the murder of Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi. But the reality is, as Rep. Khanna referenced, **we**

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wouldn't be here without the hundreds of thousands of activists working with Congressional allies over the last several years to push Congress toward ending the war.

Win Without War, together with organizations across the ideological spectrum, generated hundreds of thousands of actions calling on Congress to end the war. We met with Members of Congress and/or their staffs hundreds of times and held briefings to educate them on the war's horrors and the humanitarian crisis. We wrote countless op-eds, statements, tweets, and Facebook posts, organized sign-on letters, and worked with journalists and editors to shine a light on this issue so that Americans across the country had the tools they needed to push Congress to act. Indeed, a few years ago, most Americans (including Members of Congress) had no idea what was going on in Yemen or that the United States was complicit in enabling a humanitarian disaster. But, as Americans slowly became aware of the United States' shameful role in the conflict, they have been unequivocal in their opposition to their government participating in and fueling this war. Indeed, last November, a rare (if previously non-existent) [survey on the issue](#) found that nearly 60 percent of Americans opposed our involvement and wanted Congress to prohibit arms sales for the conflict.

The result of this week's vote shows that our activism works and that together we can shirk special interests and **democratize our foreign policy**.

OUR WORK ISN'T DONE

The resolution now moves to the Senate. In December, seven Senate Republicans joined the Democratic Caucus to [pass a similar resolution](#) in a 56 to 41 [vote](#). And while the Senate's makeup has since been altered slightly for the 116th Congress, aides involved in pushing the resolution are [optimistic](#) it will still pass, setting up Trump for the first veto of his presidency.

Meanwhile, Trump is ignoring Congress's demand that he submit a report determining who is responsible for killing Khashoggi (I mean [we all know](#) who's responsible) and Republicans [aren't happy about it](#). The administration's attempts to push our involvement in Yemen under the rug continued as it also [blew off a different legal requirement](#) to determine if Saudi Arabia and the UAE are preventing civilian harm in Yemen. Vetoing the war powers resolution, which Trump has indeed threatened to do, would only reinforce the fact that Trump will do anything in his power to continue to provide the Saudis and UAE a [blank check](#) to act with impunity and risks angering Republicans even more.

In the weeks ahead, you'll be hearing more from us on this issue, and we hope you'll join us in this fight to finally put an end to this catastrophic war and humanitarian disaster.

BURIED LEDES

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Here's our [statement](#) on **Trump's national fake-emergency power grab**. We're ready to hit streets in emergency protests MONDAY, a mass outcry defending immigrants and democracy. Click [here](#) for more information.

Did Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu say he wants to go to war with Iran? It [certainly seems like](#) he said he wanted to go to war with Iran.

On the other side of that coin, it's [probably a good time](#) for folks to **start talking about how we rejoin the Iran nuclear agreement once Donald Trump is gone**.

Did you hear that Rep. Ilhan Omar tweeted the thing about the thing? Well we've cut through the cacophony of faux-outrage to [share](#) a few pieces that we think [most accurately describe what's going on](#) and [how](#) the right-wing pro-Israel lobby [operates](#).

"If I could respond." ... "It wasn't a question." Someone [call 9-1-1 'cause](#) war criminal and current U.S. special envoy for Venezuela, **Elliott Abrams needs an ambulance**.

In other Elliott Abrams news, [watch](#) as **Abrams refuses to rule out military intervention in Venezuela** and side steps a direct question as to whether Trump will seek congressional approval (as would be required by the Constitution).

Sen. Bob Menendez has **opened an inquiry into Trump's handling of the Khashoggi murder**, [saying](#) that his actions exacerbate the fear "that this administration continues to hide something when it comes to the murder of Mr. Khashoggi."

[One year after](#) the Parkland massacre, "**student reporters set out to measure the void left in homes and classrooms** that have lost young people to the pull of a trigger."

The Justice Department is investigating an American defense company for bribing the Iraqi government in exchange for lucrative contracts in a corruption scandal that one official said may have "[directly contributed to the rise of ISIS](#)."

Rep. Barbara Lee -- the only member of Congress to vote against the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force -- [introduced a bill to repeal it this week](#). Check out 1A's [segment this week](#) on just how global the U.S. global "war on terror" is.

The reach of Donald Trump's Muslim ban is [wide and deep](#). It's **preventing a British man born in London, but who visited Somalia as a child, from entering the United States**.

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Check out this long, [wild read](#) about **former Israeli Mossad agents who have also been working to influence American elections.**

And finally, [take a look at](#) **Liz Cheney's mildly insane rant about the Green New Deal:** They're gonna ban the military and we'll all have to travel the country on bikes!