

WIN WITHOUT WAR



Progressive Foreign Policy Debrief

Intel for Advocacy

[BIPARTISAN MAJORITIES IN CONGRESS TELL TRUMP ENOUGH IS ENOUGH IN YEMEN](#)

The United States Congress made history this week. The House passed S.J.Res.7 on Thursday mandating the withdrawal of U.S. forces from the disastrous Saudi/UAE-led military intervention against Houthi rebels in Yemen. For the first time ever since the 1973 War Powers Act became law, bipartisan majorities in both the House and Senate voted to end U.S. involvement in an unauthorized conflict.

HOW IT HAPPENED

We wouldn't be here without years of [work and dedication](#) from both congressional champions and the activism from millions of Americans across the country (the history of which [we explained](#) after the Senate vote on Yemen last December). Shortly after the House vote on Thursday, Win Without War Policy Director Kate Kizer and Advocacy Director Erica Fein [explained](#) the power of activism on this issue, and Director Stephen Miles neatly summarized the journey [to the New York Times](#):

“When we started talking with folks about doing this, they basically laughed it off,” said Stephen Miles, the director of Win Without War, an advocacy coalition that lobbied for the resolution. “**They said it wouldn't happen; Congress doesn't ever invoke the War Powers Act.** It was a really long arduous process of education.”

WHAT IT MEANS

Not only are we one step closer to ending this conflict, Congress voting to end the war in Yemen also carries wider implications for U.S. foreign policy:

1. **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. Now that Congress has canceled the White House's blank check in Yemen, we can build on that momentum to finally repeal the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF), which authorized the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan but has been used since to justify subsequent and unrelated wars around

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the world.

- 2. There is no longer unwavering U.S. support for the Saudi monarchy.** Ten years ago, maybe even one year ago, it would have been unheard of for the U.S. Congress to buck Saudi Arabia on pretty much anything. While the murder of Washington Post columnist and U.S. resident Jamal Khashoggi is partly responsible, the fact is that support for ending the U.S. role in this conflict began well before Khashoggi's murder, largely due to Saudi-UAE atrocities like using starvation as a weapon of war, deliberately targeting civilians, including bombing a school bus full of children, and [recruiting child soldiers](#).
- 3. U.S. foreign policy making is no longer the jurisdiction of the powerful few and well-connected.** With our activism, [we showed](#) how U.S. foreign policy can be democratized. Saudi Arabia and the UAE's lobbyists mobilized in a big way to defeat these votes on Yemen, but their efforts fell far short, in large part because of [a mass grassroots activist mobilization](#) over the last few years pushing Congress to act.

WHAT'S NEXT

Discussions have already begun on how to move forward. Here are a few options:

- 1. Pressure the White House to sign the bill.** Of course Trump has talked a big game in terms of wanting to end our endless wars. Now he has the opportunity to show the world that he'll not only follow through on those promises, but also demonstrate that he's not as beholden to the Saudi monarchy as his record suggests.
- 2. Build support for Congress to override Trump's veto.** Trump's fealty to the Saudi and UAE regimes will be clearer more than ever should he veto this bill. Congress is already concerned by the Trump administration's servitude to Saudi Arabia and the UAE. A veto will not only add fuel to the fire, but also it would represent a direct attack on Congress' role as a co-equal branch of government and its sole authority to decide when, where, and how the United States goes to war. Overriding his veto is as much about protecting the separation of powers in our government as it is about ending the U.S. role in the war in Yemen.
- 3. Congress can pass legislation cutting off U.S. assistance to the Saudi/UAE-led coalition.** Via the National Defense Authorization Act or the Defense Department appropriations bill, Congress can cut funds for refueling, intelligence sharing, targeting assistance, weapons sales, and all other support to the members of the coalition in order to make clear the United States Congress will end U.S. involvement even if Trump

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refuses to do so.

We're not optimistic that Trump will sign the bill, given that, as we said in our [statement](#), he “has essentially **turned the United States into a client state of the murderous and corrupt whims of the Saudi and Emirati governments.**” But as we also said, “we and the millions of Americans who oppose our role in this conflict will not quit in the face of a veto. We will use every legislative opportunity to finally end U.S. military assistance and put this war to an end.”

BURIED LEDES

CREDO Action, Indivisible, MoveOn, and Win Without War signed a [joint statement](#) this week [condemning](#) a proposal from House Democrats **that would throw a gargantuan amount of money at the Pentagon.**

House progressives seem to agree. “We can’t support ending foreign wars one day, **then provide those wars the very funding they need,**” Rep. Ro Khanna [tweeted](#).

John Bolton’s role in sabotaging talks with North Korea over its nuclear weapons program is coming [into clearer focus](#), just as news broke this week that career U.S. officials may have [denied him a security clearance](#).

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu **admitted this week that most of the Israeli security establishment supported the Iran nuclear deal**, proving [once again](#) that opposition to the JCPOA has always been about bad-faith politics.

Meanwhile, [Iran deal opponents](#) are **busy trying to make withdrawal from the JCPOA permanent** and sowing strife inside Iran by provoking crackdowns on Iranian workers.

Team Trump is lying when it says it is trying to help Venezuelan citizens escape the political, economic, and public health crises there. Here’s [how Congress can step in](#).

Also this week, experts [urged](#) the United Nations **to declare “a full-scale humanitarian emergency in Venezuela** after the ‘utter collapse’ of the health system.”

“American military adventurism and [massive spending](#) **undermines middle-class prosperity and makes the world less free and secure.**”

A new report not only confirms that **Trump’s claims of creating American jobs by selling weapons abroad is false**, [but also](#) that “American defense companies are increasingly sending jobs overseas while helping other countries expand their capacity to build weapons systems.”

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China has [essentially](#) **turned one of its cities into an open-air prison**. “Children are interrogated. Neighbors become informants. Mosques are monitored. Cameras are everywhere.”

Ploughshares Fund [released a report](#) this week on a new vision for gender and national security. “To create a world where all people and the planet are safe and free from nuclear threats, **it’s imperative we harness the insight and experience the entire security field has to offer** by working toward greater inclusivity and representation.”

And finally, have you ever wondered what would happen if **all the world’s nuclear weapons were put in a huge pile and detonated at once**? [It’s not frightening at all.](#)