

# WIN WITHOUT WAR



## Progressive Foreign Policy Debrief

*Intel for Advocacy*

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### CONGRESS PUSHES BACK ON TRUMP'S ANTI-IMMIGRANT & ANTI-REFUGEE POLICIES

As our newsfeeds are inundated with the latest on Donald Trump's impending impeachment proceedings, we thought it might be an appropriate time to recognize that in addition to the president's attempted extortion of Ukraine, he is also perpetuating morally rotten foreign and immigration policies.

These include, but are certainly not limited to: the Muslim Ban; border militarization; dismantling the asylum system and imprisoning those seeking refuge and opportunity at our borders (including, of course, children); declaring a fake national emergency so he could get around those pesky separation of powers in the Constitution and build his racist border wall; and trying to zero-out the U.S. refugee resettlement program despite unprecedented levels of forced displacement around the world.

Fortunately, this week we saw some powerful push back from Congress. Dozens of Representatives, led by Rep. Raúl Grijalva (AZ-3), called for a formal investigation into Trump's illegal border troop deployment – a call which was echoed by more than 30 organizations across the progressive movement. The House also held the first ever hearing on Trump's Muslim Ban. And, once again, Congress passed legislation rejecting Trump's fake national emergency.

As the impeachment inquiry heats up, it will rightly dominate countless newscyles. Yet even as Congress debates removing Trump from office, we must remember that the President and his Administration will continue to pursue and implement these immoral policies while they remain in office. Indeed, just yesterday while our attention was [focused elsewhere](#), the Trump administration officially set an [unprecedentedly low](#) refugee resettlement level, forcibly slamming shut our nation's doors to those in need. (For more insights on this, see Win Without War's Herbert Scoville Jr. fellow Caroline Smith and Policy & Advocacy Program Manager Mariam Iskajyan's op-ed [here](#).)

Thankfully, Congress is beginning to show that they can walk and chew gum at the same time - or in this case provide much needed oversight on Trump's inhumane and racist policies even while they move forward with impeachment.

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## INVESTIGATING BORDER MILITARIZATION

Currently there are approximately [7,000 military service-members](#), including nearly 3,600 active-duty troops, at the U.S. southern border. These deployments mark an unprecedented militarization of the border, threaten fundamental laws and norms that seek to keep the U.S. military separate from domestic law enforcement, and serve as an extension of the Trump administration's mounting cruel and inhumane anti-immigrant and anti-asylum policies.

In response, a group of 34 House Members, led by Rep. Grijalva, sent a letter to the Defense Department this week, urging the Inspector General to investigate the misuse and politicization of U.S. military personnel and resources at the southern border, including potential Posse Comitatus Act and other legal violations.

"We are strongly concerned that President Trump's deployment of thousands of troops operating under dubious legal authorities and nebulous rules of engagement, is upending our democratic system and jeopardizing our communities," the members of Congress wrote.

The [letter](#) is supported by more than thirty national organizations representing tens of millions of Americans and a broad cross-section of communities across the United States. In addition, a group of ten national organizations, led by Daily Kos and Win Without War, launched a [public action](#) to echo demands for answers about Trump's militarization of the U.S. southern border. Read more in our joint statement with United We Dream and the Southern Border Communities Coalition [here](#).

## FIRST-EVER MUSLIM BAN HEARING

After nearly three years since the first iteration was issued, the Muslim Ban still stands — inflicting irreversible harm on Muslim, brown, and Black communities by dehumanizing millions of people on the basis of religion, separating families, [denying the sick](#) and elderly life-saving medical treatment, and depriving both young and old [access to education](#).

This week the House finally held the first ever hearing on the Muslim Ban signalling that at least some of Congress rejects this senseless, racist anti-immigrant policy. Rep. Ilhan Omar [challenged](#) one of the "experts," Andrew R. Arthur, on the panel pointing out he works for an organization, The Center for Immigration Studies, that is categorized as a [hate group](#) by the Southern Poverty Law Center.

Rep. Pramila Jayapal [refuted](#) claims that this isn't a "Muslim ban" because it includes North Korea and Venezuela by pointing out that all Venezuelans and 73 percent of North Koreans who apply to the waiver program are approved, whereas, for example, 1.3 percent of Iranians are approved.

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The Department of Homeland Security tried to assure the panel that all the countries in the ban are dangerous because they're not sending the U.S. important, reliable intelligence on nationals who travel to the U.S. Rep. Jerry Nadler challenged that claim by wondering, then, why Russia and China aren't included in the ban as intelligence from these two countries is also most likely unreliable.

One of the people directly impacted by the Muslim Ban, Ismail Alghazali, spoke to how the ban has kept him from his wife and children who are stuck in Yemen – where the U.S. continues to fuel multiple conflicts that have helped create the largest humanitarian crisis in the world. He has [not met](#) his youngest child in person thanks to the ban, and Alghazali reported the visa interview for his family lasted a mere 5 minutes before it was denied. He [told lawmakers](#) “I hope we will be together again.”

Every day, the Muslim Ban continues to serve as a poster child for this administration's cruel and unjust anti-Muslim agenda. Congress took the first, critical steps this week to recognizing those who have been unfairly affected by the Muslim Ban, and now must take further action by passing [the No Ban Act](#) (H.R.2214/S.1123) to repeal this unjust policy and prevent further bans in the future.

## **PASSAGE OF THE EMERGENCY DECLARATION VOTE**

As you'll recall, back in [February](#) Trump declared a fake state of emergency at the U.S. southern border so he could divert funds from the military to build his wall. Not only is this a blatant abuse of executive power and a violation of the constitutional separation of powers, but it also continues his administration's hardline anti-immigrant agenda, adding to a litany of human rights abuses.

The Commander-in-Chief is able to utilize certain, limited emergency powers only in times of a true national security crisis in order to protect the security of the American people, not to advance any personal political agenda. As such, the president's attempts to create a fictional security crisis—including by dehumanizing children and families seeking safety and asylum—at the southern border is nothing less than a show of bigotry, [contempt for democratic values](#), and disregard for actual issues impacting the health and safety of our communities.

This week, 54 [Senators](#) (including 11 Republicans) and [236 Representatives](#) (including 11 Republicans and 1 (former GOP) independent) passed a resolution to end the emergency declaration but, like back in February, did not reach veto-proof majorities. This sets up another Trump veto to continue funding his wall through a fake national emergency. For more, see our messaging guidance on Trump's fake emergency [here](#).

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But this vote, much like the Grijalva letter, Muslim Ban hearing, and the [bipartisan](#) and [public](#) outcry to Trump's gutting of the refugee resettlement program, shows how Congress is pushing back against attacks on our communities and rebuking Trump's immoral and racist anti-immigrant agenda.

## **BURIED LEDES**

A worrying [new report](#) indicates that **neo-Nazis have compiled a list of prominent (and not so prominent) Democrats, progressives, and activists who identify as Jewish** on the messaging app Telegram.

Disturbingly, some progressive U.S. Senators voted to confirm Gen. John Hyten to the second highest ranking position in the military, despite credible allegations of multiple sexual assaults that have not been transparently investigated – **sending a worrying message that sexual violence in the military will be rewarded with a promotion.** [We applaud those Senators who chose to #BelieveSurvivors.](#)

The U.S. has now signed three, truly horrible agreements to **send back asylum-seekers from the U.S. southern border to El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala, which would effectively dismantle the asylum system as we know it.**

**China appears to be successfully quashing criticism** of the [vast network of concentration camps](#) of Uighur Muslims.

[This account](#) of a New York Times journalist escaping Egypt highlights **how the U.S. government has turned its back on journalists around the world.**

WHO'S ON THE U.S. KILL LIST? **An American journalist remains on a U.S. "kill list"** after a judge [dismissed his complaint](#), which sought the evidence that would justify him being placed on such a list, after the Trump administration invoked the "state secrets" privilege.

Our failed foreign policy in Afghanistan [continued](#) this week as **U.S.-backed Afghan forces killed over 40 Afghan civilians at a wedding while reportedly trying to target nearby militants.**

NO BRAINER: **A no-war pact between India and Pakistan** "[offers](#) a stable and secure security framework that can enable [them] to develop more peaceful and constructive relations with confidence."

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Trump's Department of Education is [threatening](#) to cut funding to a Middle East studies program jointly run by UNC and Duke because, apparently, **there's just too much Iranian art being displayed**. (For more backstory on this issue see [here](#) and [here](#).)

**The NRA was a Russian foreign asset** ahead of the 2016 election, per a new [Senate Finance Committee investigation](#).

[Between 2008 and 2017](#), **60,000 American veterans committed suicide**. A separate [report](#) found that more than 500 active duty, reserve, and National Guard troops died by suicide in 2008.

Acting Director of National Intelligence's testimony on #UkraineGate this week [showed](#) **why Generals and Admirals should not become the head of civilian national security agencies**.

And finally, last weekend Americans [stormed Area 51](#) and, surprisingly, **did not find any aliens, but they did find an EDM concert** that sprung up instead.