

WIN WITHOUT WAR



Progressive Foreign Policy Debrief

Intel for Advocacy

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SL: Who needs schools and daycares?

TRUMP'S UNCONSTITUTIONAL POWER GRAB: STEALING MONEY FOR HIS RACIST & UNNECESSARY BORDER WALL

“We’re going to do a wall; we’re going to have a big, fat beautiful door on the wall,” Donald Trump [said](#) during a Republican primary debate back when it was kind of funny that Donald Trump was running for president. He then added, “I will pay for it by subverting the U.S. Constitution, ignoring the will of Congress, and taking money appropriated for [hurricane disaster relief](#) and [schools and daycares for military families](#).”

Of course we all know that’s not how Trump said he would finance the wall proposal (“[Mexico's going to pay for it and they will be happy to](#)”), but that’s exactly how it has played out.

Indeed, as expected, Mexico told Trump to get lost, and Congress wasn’t interested in funding Trump’s wall either. So our aspiring authoritarian leader then decided to declare a (nonexistent) national emergency, which allows the president to use money already appropriated for military projects to quickly address it without a time consuming congressional process.

Congress actually voted to cancel Trump’s emergency declaration, but it couldn’t muster the votes needed to override the president’s veto. So without funding and with nobody’s blessing, Trump has invoked a fake emergency to [steal nearly \\$4 billion from the U.S. military](#) for the sole purpose of placating his base, and we’re now in a full-blown Constitutional crisis. Trump even threw some of his Republican national emergency supporters [under the bus](#) by taking funding from military projects in their states.

HOW SHOULD PROGRESSIVES RESPOND?

While it’s tempting to out-hawk Trump and complain that the Pentagon won’t be able to defend us anymore (although just imagine the right-wing freak out if President Obama had, for example, taken defense funds from a U.S. territory [well within range of North Korean missiles](#)), the reality is that the Defense Department has too much money to begin with. **Our quibble isn’t necessarily where Trump is getting his money from, it’s how he’s doing it.** Here’s what progressives should be saying (and not saying) instead:

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DO: make the connection between the emergency declaration and the president's clearly anti-immigrant racism and authoritarian tendencies.

- In the same year Donald Trump has labeled Members of Congress treasonous and ramped-up his deportation force against immigrant families, this is another example that **Trump is more interested in harming our communities and turning the United States into an authoritarian banana republic** than finding any real solutions to our nation's broken and inhumane immigration system.
- Trump's end-run around Congress in declaring a fake emergency to build his unnecessary, racist wall **is a danger to our democracy and the constitutional separation of powers.**

DON'T: cry poverty at the Pentagon or use this opportunity to talk about military readiness and the need to replenish the Pentagon's coffers.

- The Pentagon's budget will exceed last year's level of \$716 billion while non-immigration-related domestic programs vie for funding from an ever-shrinking pot.
- The truth is that with \$700+ billion for the Pentagon this year, it easily found \$3.6 billion in funds to support Trump's wall.
- Any "readiness crisis" touted to justify increased Pentagon spending **is the consequence of the United States military's post-9/11 overextension**, the Pentagon's inability to spend its enormous budget wisely, and corporate greed to line the pockets of defense industry CEOs — not a lack of funding.

Congress can also work to rein in the president's powers on these issues by passing [the Article One Act](#), which would in essence help prevent presidents from declaring emergencies for political purposes by requiring congressional approval for national emergency declarations.

You can find more messaging and resources about Trump's dangerous, wasteful, and immoral power grab [here](#).

BURIED LEDES

The Trump administration [wants](#) to prevent nearly all people fleeing war, persecution, and famine from entering the United States.

["I'm writing with good news."](#) That's how the Trump administration's top Iran policy guy Brian Hook **started off an email to a tanker captain attempting to bribe him into diverting Iranian oil.**

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This [story](#) of how Dutch intelligence made Stuxnet possible “**harkens back to a time when there was still extensive cooperation and strong, multilateral agreement** among the U.S. and its allies about how to deal with the Iranian nuclear program.”

In this New York Times Magazine [deep dive](#) into “the secret history of the push to strike Iran” we [learn](#) that **the CIA accurately predicted the crisis that would ensue** after Trump withdrew from the Iran nuclear deal.

For example, as one Iran expert recently [noted](#), “assertive Iranian activity in the Persian Gulf such as sabotage or seizure of foreign tankers **has gone up, not down, since the start of the administration’s pressure campaign.**”

A new UN report [found](#) **the U.S., Britain, and France may be complicit in potential war crimes in Yemen.**

In case you weren’t sure whether the Trump administration is **serious about resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict**, [this piece of news will probably convince you.](#)

Two U.S. senators [remind us this week](#) that “[t]he lungs of the world are still on fire in the **Amazon rainforests**, and American citizens and policymakers cannot let this climate catastrophe continue unabated.”

Here are [some](#) **pro-diplomacy, pro-peace principles to guide presidential campaigns on North Korea.**

An Egyptian company is creating social media campaigns to support authoritarian rules in at least nine Middle Eastern and North African countries.

The U.S. has not formally declared war in Somalia, nor has Congress approved any military action there, [but](#) “**US intervention in Somalia has rapidly expanded under the Trump Administration.**”

And finally, he’s back! **Our friend and former White House something-or-other Sebastian Gorka has a new gig.** For just about 20 bucks, [this Gorka-approved fish oil](#) is all yours. Good luck, Seb!