

## Carnage Unleashed: The 2018 Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF) "Will Amp Up War Everywhere"

American people should see death on their doorstep, given the global slaughter wrought in their name.

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As Congress pretends to restrain the already vast powers to wage war acceded to the executive branch we see further dereliction of duty resulting in shameful sorrows of empire and untold suffering abroad. A draft bill touted as reigning in the AUMF (authorization for use of military force) passed shortly after 9/11 in fact gives the executive branch an even greater blank check to wage war. In part, it allows the President to proclaim new enemies against whom any amount of force may be used, requiring two-thirds of Congress to reject that determination.

The Authorization for Use of Military Force of 2018 which was <u>released</u> (pdf) one week ago <u>in</u> <u>essence</u> "takes Congress's constitutional power to declare war, in which the president can only act when provided congressional authorization, and inverts it, by giving the president the ability to act unless a supermajority of Congress stops them.)

The proposed bill is bipartisan, sponsored by 3 Democrats and 3 Republicans, showing that the dereliction of constitutional duty is systemic to Congress. The military and executive thus essentially oversee themselves, an obviously perilous dynamic. In 1961, President Eisenhower warned of the growing and unwarranted influence of the military industrial complex. Today, American people should see death on their doorstep, given the global slaughter wrought in their name.

Endless war is the destruction of civil society. Yet, like the 2001 & 2002 AUMF's, the 2018 proposed bill has no time limit. Thus, America's longest wars continue and new wars are waged at the behest of war profiteers with apparent ease. Presidents fight wars if they are permitted. In 2016 the Congressional Research Service found that Bush and Obama used AUMF to justify the use of military force <u>37 times in 14 countries</u> (pdf). The decision to go to war is the most consequential decision a government can make. Today, that decision is made in the shadows, with little public scrutiny or debate.

Martin Luther King wrote 50 years ago (in 1968),

"We must put an end to war or war will put an end to mankind."

War today is illegitimate and unjustifiable whether applying the principles of Just War

Doctrine or moral philosophy (Kantian, Rawlsian, or utilitarian). The architects of the socalled global war on terror have sought to redefine war and the legal basis for fighting war. It is an obvious sham. We must do everything possible to resist this sordid agenda.

**Christopher Anders** of the ACLU predicts that the AUMF of 2018 will "amp up war everywhere." The war machine fueled by myopic greed and profit is built upon a fear factory of lies. We must ask ourselves: would we be so readily placated if there was a draft/military conscription? What does this reveal? What are we doing to stop senseless wars fought in our name? If we do nothing do we have blood on our hands? What should we be doing? What will we do?

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