

Forever Wars vs. Armageddon

The call for the U.S. to end military involvements is often made in order to advocate for new wars against more powerful countries. It appears that the only choices are forever wars or the end of the world.

By [Ann Garrison](#)

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While the world's attention is focused on the US proxy war with Russia in Ukraine, 900 US troops continue to occupy Syria, as they have [since 2017](#), and 2,000 remain stationed in Iraq, 20 years after the US attacked, overthrew its government, and hung its president. Around 500 have been in Somalia since Biden [redeployed them](#) in June 2022.

On March 8, the House and Senate Foreign Relations Committees [voted for resolutions](#) to repeal the 1991 and 2002 Authorizations of Military Force (AUMFs) against Iraq, but that was hardly a victory for the antiwar community because US troops remain with the acquiescence of the current Iraqi government, and even so, it's not clear that the House and Senate will pass the resolutions.

Also on March 8, the House voted down [House Concurrent Resolution 21](#) to withdraw all US troops from Syria within 180 days in accordance with the 1973 War Powers Act, which states that US armed forces cannot be sent to war unless Congress declares war or unless a national emergency is created by attack on the US.

The resolution's advocates argued that the [Authorization for the Use of Military Force](#) passed 22 years ago, after 9/11, does not legally justify ongoing US wars. Opponents of the resolution argued that ISIS remains a threat and the 22-year-old AUMF is still legally valid.

According to the ["Costs of War Project"](#) at Brown University, the US has invoked the post-09/11 AUMF as the legal basis for air strikes and operations in eight countries, detention in 1 (Guantanamo, Cuba), and support for "counter terrorism partners" in 13.

Resolution 21

In the debate preceding the vote on Resolution 21, no one mentioned the military industrial motive for continuing the war, but South Carolina Republican Joe Wilson did note that

withdrawal would mean losing the [Al-Omar oil field](#), the largest in Syria and the site of the largest US base there. Of course, Wilson didn't say that would mean returning Syria's oil to Syria. He said, "Upon withdrawal terrorists will also have unfettered access to the Omar oil field."

No one pointed out that Article 2(4) of the UN Charter prohibits "the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state," making the US occupation an international crime, because US officials don't talk about that. International law is for other nations to obey.

Florida Republican Matt Gaetz explained why he had introduced the resolution:

"Most Americans don't know a single Syrian. And so people watching this debate might wonder how has it come to be that Syria has become the great platform of great power competition in the world. It begins in 2011, during the Arab Spring, when Assad, who is undeniably a madman, and a despot, opens fire on his own people protesting. Then part of the Syrian army defects, they engage in warfare against Assad, and all of a sudden, they've got a whole lot of weapons and money being sent from the rich Gulf monarchies through Jordan, in Syria.

"So Iran is not just going to watch this Assad's their ally, they activate Hezbollah, they then invade Syria. So now you've got Jordan, the Gulf monarchies, Iran, but wait, Russia is pitching their vision of the world as a regime preservation force, whether you're Maduro or Assad, so they get involved, and what do they get for their time, a warm water port in the eastern Mediterranean.

"So we've got Russia, the Gulf monarchies. Israel starts to get worried about Hezbollah and Iran. So Israel cuts a deal with Russia to keep Iran out of southern Syria. And if it doesn't get any worse than that. Now, all of a sudden, you've got the Kurds who declare war on Syria. And it makes it a little messy, that the Kurds are also in conflict with Turkey, which is a NATO ally.

"And then somehow, the United States in 2015 says, 'You know what, we need to get involved in this mess in Syria.' And since we've been there, we have seen Americans die, we've seen 10s of billions of dollars wasted.

And what is hilarious about the 2001 AUMF that the neoconservatives wave around like some permission slip for every neoconservative fantasy of turning an Arabian desert into a Jeffersonian democracy, is that that very 2001 AUMF would justify attacking the people that we're fighting against, and the people we're funding, because both have ties to al Qaeda, and of course, the 2001 AUMF dealt with al Qaeda, all this talk about a reemergence of ISIS.

"I would encourage my colleagues to go read the Inspector General's report of the last quarter that indicates that ISIS is not a threat to the homeland. And with the Turks conducting operations in Syria, against ISIS, with Assad and Russia having every incentive to create pressure on ISIS. I do not believe that what stands between a caliphate and not a caliphate are the 900 Americans who have been sent to this hellscape with no definition of victory, with no clear objective, and purely existing as a vestige to the regime change failed foreign policies of multiple former presidents."

Gaetz introduced the 2016 LA Times article headlined, "[In Syria militias armed by the Pentagon, fight those armed by the CIA.](#)"

Montana Democrat, Ryan Zinke, responded that we have to fight ISIS in Syria, or fight them in the streets here:

"But there is no doubt that Syria also remains a center for radical Islamic forces and terrorism, like ISIS, like PKK. These are organizations that will never stop ever. They are committed to destroy this nation and our allies, and we should be aware of their objectives. Lastly, the hard truth is this. Either we fight him in Syria, or we'll fight them here, either we fight and defeat them in Syria, or we'll fight in the streets of our nation."

Gaetz's argument for withdrawal was hardly ideal, but his response to Zinke was apt:

"My patriotic colleague, Mr. Zinke of Montana gave up the game when he said ISIS will never be gone. So presumably the position of those holding that viewpoint is that we have to stay in Syria forever, maybe make it the 51st state."

In the most disturbing and ominous moment of the hearing, Florida Republican Anna Polina said we need all the troops we've got to go up against China:

"We need to be focusing on his bigger issues like China. Make no mistake if we take China at their word, a peer to peer fight is coming, and it will require 100% of our military."

In other words, we have to get out of all these "forever wars" to prepare for Armageddon. That sentiment was confirmed in a report in the military publication Task and Purpose headlined, "[Military buying more missiles and other weapons to fight China, Russia.](#)"

The House ultimately voted the resolution down 103 to 321, with 47 Republicans voting yes, 171 no, while 56 Democrats voted yes, 150 no, and 11 congresspersons did not vote. The Democrats' [House Progressive Caucus](#) reportedly endorsed a yes vote, but the caucus claims 101 members, so barely more than half, at best, actually voted for the resolution.

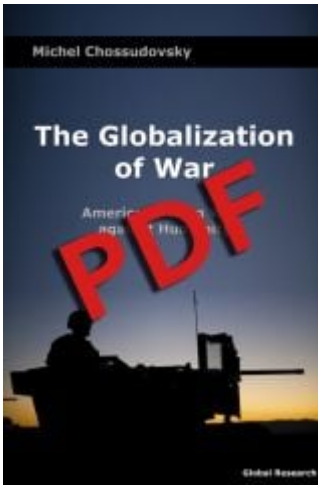
Some resistance to some US wars is better than none, but in Congress, for now, that's as good as it gets.

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[The Globalization of War: America's "Long War" against Humanity](#)

Michel Chossudovsky

The "globalization of war" is a hegemonic project. Major military and covert intelligence operations are being undertaken simultaneously in the Middle East, Eastern Europe, sub-Saharan Africa, Central Asia and the Far East. The U.S. military agenda combines both major theater operations as well as covert actions geared towards destabilizing sovereign states.

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