

# The Resistance Is a Deep-State Trojan Horse. “The New AUMF Allows the U.S. President to Unilaterally Declare war Anywhere in the World”

## Part I

By [Helen Buyniski](#)

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Region: [USA](#)  
Theme: [History](#)

*The validity of the US political system hinges on the perceived legitimacy of its voting process. Even in 2018’s hyper-partisan climate, faith in the possibility of change through voting stops Americans from burning Washington down and tearing out the throats of the political class. Yet each election cycle brings more proof that these contests are neither free nor fair, despite our vaunted self-image as the pinnacle of democratic perfection.*

***Bush v. Gore, Sanders v. Clinton**, and all the little anomalies in between have cast a shadow over the American democratic process.*

*Public trust in the political and media establishment is at an all-time low, yet neither group has grasped the need to evolve or perish. Instead, it is the military-intelligence axis, cloaked in Resistance camouflage, plotting an unprecedented power grab while the old guard is at its weakest. What’s left of American democracy is on the chopping block and the Deep State is poised to infiltrate the elected state.*

Trump’s election win shocked Democratic and progressive voters out of their Obama-era complacency, **alerting them to their own party’s duplicity** even as they began to realize how far right that party had drifted over the preceding eight years. Support for the Democratic Party among millennials has actually declined 9% since the 2016 election, and it’s not because the Republicans’ message is so compelling. While the percentage of millennials who support the Democrats declined from 53% to 46%, support for Republicans remained constant at 28%. Many of those 9% said they would rather stay home on election day. How are Democrats failing so thoroughly to connect with voters when all predictions point to a “blue wave” of midterm victories?

The 2016 election taught a generation of activists that the Democratic party did not care about their vote. **Bernie Sanders** supporters saw their candidate systematically silenced, sidelined, suppressed, mocked – and finally, when he seemed poised to win the nomination against all odds, cheated. It is no surprise that many were unable to heed the tepid calls for Party unity that followed, even when those calls came from Sanders himself. Responding to a lawsuit filed by DNC donors and Sanders supporters, lawyers for the Party claimed it had no contractual obligation to consider voters’ input in choosing a candidate – that Party leadership could choose the winner in the proverbial smoke-filled back room if they wanted – and that the DNC charter, which mandates the Chairperson “exercise impartiality and even handedness as between the Presidential candidate and campaigns,” was just a “[political promise](#)” and therefore nonbinding.

In the intervening two years, the DNC could have made an effort to mend fences. Even if party leadership couldn't agree to do away with the undemocratic superdelegate structure, a sincere apology campaign would have gone a long way – disillusioned liberals, after all, have nowhere to go, absent a viable third party. But the DNC continues to shun progressive candidates, throwing its weight behind lukewarm “centrists” indistinguishable from their Republican opponents in the race to take back control of Congress despite [poll](#) after [poll](#) suggesting voters are moving to the left.

In Texas' 7th district, the DCCC published opposition research to smear [Laura Moser](#), a progressive writer in a three-way primary contest against a Goldman Sachs banker and a corporate lawyer. In Colorado, Democratic Whip **Steny Hoyer** was caught on tape pressuring **Levi Tillemann** to drop out of the 6th District primary, explaining that while “staying out of primaries sounds small-D democratic, very intellectual, and very interesting,” the DCCC had already chosen to support corporate lawyer and Iraq veteran [Jason Crow](#). House Majority Leader **Nancy Pelosi** defended the mafiaesque intimidation, chastising Tillemann for recording the phone call without Hoyer's permission.

Hoyer is a fitting mouthpiece for big-money Democrats, having begun his House career as a protégé of then-DCCC chair **Tony Coelho**, whose signature accomplishment was transforming the DCCC from a common people's party into a corporate lobbyist's paradise. Coelho instituted the fundraising practice of selling access to Democratic leaders at a Party “[Speaker's Club](#),” where donors who pledged \$5000 and up could bend the ear of committee chairmen, Party leaders, and other club members. The Speaker's Club seems quaint in the post-Citizens United era, but in 1983 the campaign finance arms race had only just begun. Hoyer has also pioneered the exploitation of fundraising [loopholes](#) like bundling and leadership PACs to become the top donor to fellow House Democrats.

After **Juanita Perez Williams** tanked in her 2017 bid for mayor of Syracuse, losing even her own neighborhood to an independent candidate in the heavily Democratic city, the DCCC flew her to Washington to discuss running for New York's 24th Congressional district against the Republican incumbent. She initially declined, even donating to [Dana Balter](#), whom four local Democratic committees were backing for the seat, then jumped into the race at the last minute, claiming a “political mentor” had changed her mind. Perez Williams criticized Balter for failing to attract support from national Democratic leaders and donors, pointing to her Republican opponent's comparatively massive war chest as proof she would not be able to compete in the general election, and secured an added chunk of campaign dollars with her inclusion in the DCCC's Red to Blue swing-seat program. Syracuse Democrats seethed as their grassroots organizing was ignored.

The DCCC increased its primary involvement in 2006, promoting corporate moderates over progressive candidates with the rationale that centrists were more likely to beat Republicans in the general election. Instead, many of the Party's anointed candidates lost the general, while some progressives won without DCCC support. 2016, too, saw big losses by moderates at the polls, handing tripartite control of the government to the Republican Party. Democrats have lost over 1000 state legislature seats since Obama's election in 2008, a downward spiral that continued in 2016 despite record fundraising numbers. Last year saw the DNC defiantly packing its leadership ranks with lobbyists and deep-pocketed donors, ensuring another crop of [superdelegates](#) out of touch with rank-and-file voters. But they seem determined not to learn from their mistakes, doubling down on a failed strategy. That is, if these are mistakes at all, and not deliberate Party suicide.

Viewing Democrats' electoral losses as failure assumes winning elections is their goal, but the primary process seems geared more toward enriching the party's network of approved [political consultants](#). Prospective candidates are given the "rolodex test," challenged to raise \$250,000 from the contacts on their phone before the DCCC will even consider backing them. They are told to spend four hours a day fundraising and then turn over 75% of that money to the DCCC's chosen campaign consultants (a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) ironically refers to these as "professional staff and consultants who can help execute a winning campaign in the 2018 General Election"). Primary campaigns must focus on "highlighting our shared values as Democrats and holding Republicans accountable." Running within this uninspired paradigm turns the Democrats into the Party of No - they actually field-tested the [slogan](#) "I mean, have you seen the other guys?" for the midterms.

Bullying voters to the polls by portraying Trump as Hitler 2.0 didn't work in 2016 and will not work in 2018, but the party refuses to take a clear stand *for* anything. The official 2018 platform, "[A Better Deal](#)," is a Clintonesque hodgepodge of compromises sure to inspire strong feelings in no one. Too populist for Wall Street and too moderate for progressives, it includes a new regulatory agency to curb skyrocketing prescription drug prices, a new federal office devoted to policing monopolistic corporate behavior, and 10 million jobs created through tax-credit alchemy. Like rats deserting a sinking ship, individual Democratic candidates have recognized the necessity of distancing themselves from their party's albatross of a message and many are running on platforms of their own design. While the DNC heeds the stay-the-course advice of hedge funder **Steve Rattner**, who considers Medicare-for-all a fringe notion despite polls indicating that two-thirds of Democrats support it, progressives are running on everything from free public college tuition to a new 9/11 investigation.

### **Abandon Your Principles, All Ye Who Enter Here**

Senate Minority Leader **Chuck Schumer** pledged to lead the anti-Trump crusade after 2016, but he joined [ninety-two percent](#) of Democratic senators in failing to condemn the president's illegal missile strike in Syria last month. A few piped up with weak legalistic objections, reprimanding the president for neglecting to get congressional authorization for the strikes, but the total lack of moral condemnation suggested they would have gladly granted such authorization. Only **Edward Markey** (D-MA), **Christopher Murphy** (D-CT), and **Kristen Gillibrand** (D-NY) (along with **Bernie Sanders**, once more an Independent) stood with US and international law against the bombing. **Elizabeth Warren** and **Kamala Harris**, two supposed stalwarts of the Resistance, revealed themselves as utter political invertebrates with their refusal to stand up to the president.

# One Hundred Seventh Congress of the United States of America

AT THE FIRST SESSION

*Begun and held at the City of Washington on Wednesday,  
the third day of January, two thousand and one*

## Joint Resolution

To authorize the use of United States Armed Forces against those responsible  
for the recent attacks launched against the United States.

Whereas, on September 11, 2001, acts of treacherous violence were  
committed against the United States and its citizens; and  
Whereas, such acts render it both necessary and appropriate that  
the United States exercise its rights to self-defense and to protect  
United States citizens both at home and abroad; and  
Whereas, in light of the threat to the national security and foreign  
policy of the United States posed by these grave acts of violence;  
and  
Whereas, such acts continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary  
threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United  
States; and  
Whereas, the President has authority under the Constitution to  
take action to deter and prevent acts of international terrorism  
against the United States: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the  
United States of America in Congress assembled,*

### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This joint resolution may be cited as the "Authorization for  
Use of Military Force".

2001 AUMF (Source: GovTrack)

The lack of resistance from the Resistance is even more troubling in the context of the **new Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF)** bill proposed by **Senators Bob Corker** (R-TN) and **Tim Kaine** (D-VA). The previous AUMF, signed in the wake of 9/11, has been extended year after year via increasingly tortuous links between the locations and entities initially authorized for military engagement and our current "enemies." Current military engagements bear little resemblance to those authorized in the 2001 and 2002 AUMFs but Congress had been reluctant to attempt a rewrite until now, lest they deprive the president of his beloved war powers.



Source: Common Dreams

The **new AUMF** allows the president to unilaterally declare war anywhere in the world, against any non-nation-state group, without Congressional approval. It is an unprecedented and unconstitutional expansion of executive power. Under Article I of the Constitution, a Congressional majority and presidential approval are required to legally go to war. Past presidents got around that problem by calling their war a "police action" (Korean War) or using a false flag attack to justify a temporary use of military force that was then

extended both temporally and geographically (Vietnam/Cambodia/Laos, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Yemen) or just shooting first and asking questions later (Syria). Trump will no longer have to even pretend to seek Congressional approval, since blocking a presidential declaration of war would require a veto-proof two-thirds majority in a Congress that can barely agree on bills to fund itself.

One would expect the Resistance to be up in arms about the idea of giving unprecedented war powers to a president they so vehemently oppose, but the silence so far has spoken volumes. **Barbara Lee** and **Jeff Merkley** are the only Senate Democrats to publicly oppose the bill, joined by **Rand Paul** on the Republican side. After seventeen years of constant war, have the other Senators forgotten what it's like to say no to blowing something up? If this is Resistance, I'd hate to see Acquiescence.

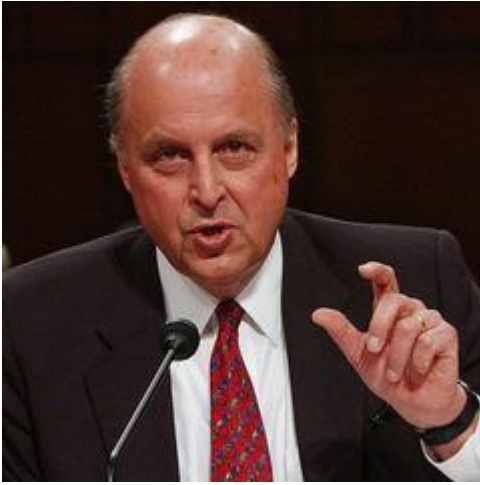
The Israeli Knesset recently passed a similar resolution allowing **Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu** to declare war "in [extreme circumstances](#)" with the approval of his Defense Minister. Netanyahu celebrated the vote by fearmongering about Iran's "secret nuclear program," a figment of his imagination, in a thinly-veiled bid to Trump to pull out of the Iranian nuclear deal (JCPOA). Given the close relationship between the two countries - Senators Corker and Kaine, like everyone else in Congress, had to sign what amounts to a [loyalty oath](#) to Israel in order to access campaign funds - it is not a coincidence that both nations are giving their leaders unprecedented war-making powers at this time. The clouds of war are gathering over Iran as Trump nixes the JCPOA and Netanyahu plays target practice on Syrian air bases.

It was not Obama, King of the Drones, who taught the Democrats to stop worrying and love the bomb. Clinton's "humanitarian bombing" of Yugoslavia sent that country back to the stone age under the guise of saving the poor Albanians from genocidal maniac [Slobodan Milosevic](#). Only Milosevic wasn't the monster the media claimed, the Kosovo Liberation Army had been designated a terrorist group until the CIA opted to start funding them, and Milosevic was eventually exonerated of war crimes charges. Clinton's war crimes are often overlooked in the shadow of Bush's, but those looking to the Democratic Resistance to stand up to the military-industrial complex would do well to remember that not since Carter has a Democratic president made it through his tenure without starting a war - and Carter only lasted one term.

## **Death Squad Caucus**

The 2018 campaign introduced a more virulent strain of political operator into the Democratic machine, one with no ideological connection to the Party but which nevertheless has the full backing of its leadership. Fifty-seven [intelligence agency](#) veterans - more than in any election in US history - are running for Democratic Congressional seats, hoping to capitalize on the anticipated "blue wave" of Democratic voters turning out to register their dissatisfaction with Trump. The DCCC specifically sought out candidates with Deep State backgrounds for its "[Red to Blue](#)" program, running military-intelligence [candidates](#) in 10 of the 22 House seats that comprise the program. Party leaders actively recruited such candidates and enthusiastically fund them. The Deep State Democrats make no effort to conceal their pasts, now that decades of positive media portrayals and war-on-terror propaganda have convinced voters they are the good guys. Indeed, the CIA's reputational transformation from reviled rogue agency and illegal infiltrator of left-wing groups to patriotic feeder group for the nominally Left Democratic Party is surely the public relations coup of the century.





**Elissa Slotkin**, CIA vet and former top aide to John “[Death Squad](#)” Negroponte (image on the right), the [war criminal](#) responsible for thousands of civilian deaths during Reagan’s Central American regime-change wars of the 1980s, is running for Michigan’s 8th Congressional District, challenging the Republican incumbent. Slotkin moved to Michigan last May, two months before launching her [candidacy](#). Her candidate page checks all the boxes – union endorsements, middle-of-the-road platitudes, an endorsement from **Joe Biden (!)**, with the obligatory line about how “the game feels rigged by politicians in Washington, who seem to care more about the interests of big donors and corporations, [sic] than the very people they represent.” As Senior Assistant to Negroponte when he was Director of National Intelligence under Bush, Slotkin would have been present when Negroponte was forming and training anti-insurgent death squads in Iraq. Surely this experience gives her extensive insight on how to fight for affordable healthcare for the people of Michigan.

Slotkin is just one of many candidates linked to Iraq war crimes. **Jeff Beals**, running for New York’s 19th District Congressional seat, has tried to obfuscate his ties not only to Iraqi death squads, but also to the Clinton political machine. Beals’ campaign manager is Bennett Ratliff, a “longtime friend and ally of [Hillary Clinton](#),” who worked with the then-Secretary of State in her attempt to legitimize the 2009 coup against democratically-elected Honduran president **Manuel Zelaya**. Beals has downplayed Ratliff’s role in his campaign, calling himself a “Bernie democrat” and shunning traditional big-money fundraising in order to paint himself as a grassroots candidate. Beals was involved in the initial effort to set up a US-friendly puppet regime in Iraq in 2005 under **Nour al-Maliki**, who presided over an explosion in sectarian insurgency and the rise of ISIS. When he first arrived in Iraq, Beals came under the wing of Deputy Ambassador to Iraq **Robert Ford**, helping recruit Iraqi death squads under the direction of Ambassador...**John Negroponte**. 2018 might as well be called the Year of the Death Squad Democrats. Yet to hear Beals tell it, he was part of an effort to “help [the US] find a way out” of Iraq. In 2005. Must have gotten turned around somewhere in Najaf.

If Death Squad Beals doesn’t float your aircraft carrier, there’s another spook running in New York’s 19th. **Patrick Ryan** served two tours as an Army [intelligence officer](#) in Iraq, coordinating counterterrorism and counterinsurgency in Mosul, which soon became Iraq’s first ISIS stronghold when Iraqi security forces inexplicably fled the advancing militants in June 2014, leaving their weapons (and \$500 million in cash) behind. Back in civilian life, Ryan worked with Berico Technologies on a plan for a “real-time surveillance operation of left-wing groups and labor unions” in collaboration with HBGary Federal and [Palantir](#)

[Technologies](#). HBGary famously collapsed after hacker group LulzSec released company emails detailing the extent of that surveillance [operation](#), which had been commissioned by the US [Chamber of Commerce](#). Ryan later worked for data analytics firm Dataminr, which received funding from [InQTel](#), the CIA's venture capital firm, and provided law enforcement with real-time social media updates from activists via proprietary access to Twitter's "firehose". While Ryan isn't insulting voters' intelligence by running as a progressive, the fact that he and Beals have the two wings of the Democratic party staked out is disturbing.

WSWS has compiled a [complete](#) and [detailed list](#) of all the CIA candidates. If Democrats win the 24 seats necessary to reclaim the House, spook-slate candidates will hold the balance of power among freshman representatives. No platform plank is too bizarre for an intel plant's platform – State Department operative [Tom Malinowski](#) would "work to keep American a force for good in the world, aligned with countries that share our belief in human rights, not with the dictators Trump prefers" – presumably the Jersey House hopeful knows that the US government provides military assistance to over three-quarters of the world's [dictatorships](#), and will just pick and choose his preferred repressive regimes to avoid "aligning" (what does that mean, exactly?) with countries favored by Trump.

Resistance groups are pushing voters to flip the House at all costs – to vote the Party, not the candidate – but early intervention in these primaries is essential lest the general election force yet another matching pair of red and blue evils down our throats. Congress is supposed to provide the checks and balances on Deep State power – when it becomes another tentacle of the intelligence services, there is no turning back. Power grabbed by these agencies is not voluntarily relinquished.

### **Alienating Their Audience; Spending Their Money**

Last month, DNC Chair **Tom Perez** filed a lawsuit against the Trump campaign, WikiLeaks, and the country of Russia, alleging they colluded to influence the 2016 election. This pointless temper tantrum of a suit reflects Democratic establishment anger that the Mueller investigation has come up all but empty, yielding 13 indictments against Russian nationals for penny-ante crimes like identity theft and wire fraud but tacitly admitting there is no evidence of the promised collusion. The House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence concurred in its [report](#), finding no evidence the campaign "colluded, coordinated or conspired" with the Russian government. Case closed? Not for Perez. Confronted with the writing on the wall, he has merely painted over it.

The text of the suit is overtly melodramatic ("[No one is above the law!](#)"), indulging in legally indefensible leaps of logic in its tortured attempt at proving the DNC's case. Though there is still no proof the Russian government was responsible for the DNC email leak, Perez holds them (and WikiLeaks, and the Trump campaign) responsible for the results anyway, claiming the leak was part of a campaign to "undermine public faith in the US democratic process, denigrate secretary Clinton, and harm her electability and potential presidency." Certainly the emails helped undermine faith in elections and hurt Clinton's electability, but only because they presented voters with indisputable evidence that the DNC primary had been rigged in Clinton's favor. The leaks undermined "the party's ability to achieve unity" and "rally members around their shared values" because they demonstrated that the Party did not share voters' values!

Adding insult to injury, the suit describes the content of the hacked emails as "trade secrets" and claims that because their publication harmed the DNC's "business,"

compensation is in order. Leaking is now “economic espionage.” They even tack on copyright law violations. The whole package spits in the face of the First Amendment, once more demonstrating that the DNC does not share the values of the rank and file voters, who value [freedom of the press](#) - and who are embarrassed by the DNC’s need to relitigate the lost election. The lawyer who filed the DNC suit is a partner in the Securities Litigation and Investor Protection practice at [Cohen Milstein](#), where he focuses on recovering money for investors in mortgage-backed securities. How this joke suit stacks up to bad mortgage investments is unclear, but perhaps he is a sort of legalistic St. Christopher, patron solicitor of lost causes.

CNN’s Gloria Borger was the first to accuse Perez of pulling a fundraising stunt, which he denies, and indeed the legal costs inherent in such a sprawling and bizarre lawsuit would cancel out any sympathy donations. Instead, the purpose of the filing seems to be to keep the specter of collusion in the headlines a little longer. Never mind that it’s splintering the party unity the DNC supposedly values so highly, with **Sen. Claire McCaskill** (D-MO) and **Rep. Jackie Speier** (D-CA) publicly expressing misgivings, or that voters are sick of Russiagate - a [Harvard-Harris poll](#) conducted *last June* revealed 73% of voters were concerned that Mueller’s probe was distracting Congress from more important issues. [Another poll](#) released earlier this month shows the promised “blue wave” of Democratic turnout losing momentum, with voters left cold by candidates’ apparent disinterest in the economic issues that actually affect their lives.

Since 2016, the RNC has [out-fundraised](#) the DNC by more than 2:1. While individual Democratic campaigns and party committees have seen their fundraising numbers soar, the DNC’s refusal to conduct an “autopsy” of the 2016 debacle or offer a clear plan for winning in the midterms has turned off longtime donors. Broke and desperate, the Party is asking members to contribute or raise [\\$1000 each](#), a request it never made in the past. The resulting vicious cycle sees the DNC hemorrhaging money, manpower, and voter support. To burden the cash-strapped organization with a massive lawsuit is nothing short of suicidal.

The DNC declined to examine the reasons for its 2016 loss, preferring instead to blame Russian meddling with a soupçon of misogyny. California Progressive Caucus Chair **Karen Bernal** and DNC delegate **Norman Solomon** conducted their own [autopsy](#) and found that the Party had prioritized wooing Republicans and independents over connecting with its base, especially youth, people of color, and the working class; the absence of a strong economic justice message, as well as Clinton’s hawkishness, also turned voters off, as did the Party’s failure to address its own undemocratic procedures as revealed in the leaked emails. The autopsy concluded the Party must do away with the superdelegate process; distance itself from Wall Street, corporate interests, and the military-industrial complex; and focus on programs addressing economic and social justice. All signs would indicate that Perez and the DNC have not actually read the autopsy. The Party is poised to repeat the blunders that cost it so much in 2016. No political organization could be so stupid - meaning this is a deliberate strategy.

The DNC’s seemingly inept response to the 2016 debacle may be the first step in a corporate raid on the Party by Deep State interests. “Order out of chaos” is the modus operandi of US intelligence, and DNC leadership couldn’t have done a better job of tanking the Party’s value, driving away donors, voters and even candidates with its focus on bland corporate-friendly messaging amid an activist political climate. The CIA then plays the corporate raider (or [parasitic wasp](#), depending on your tastes), taking over the empty shell of the Party and filling it with its own operatives. Once in control, the Deep State can evict



the remnants of the DNC's stubborn progressive contingent and wrench the Overton Window irreversibly to the right. Many progressives already criticize the Democratic party for being nearly indistinguishable from the GOP. With its anti-war faction all but wiped out already under Obama and Clinton, the two parties have never been closer to complete overlap. The rise of the Deep State Democrats will lead to a total eclipse of democracy. This coup must be blocked at all costs.

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