

Walter Jones and the Vote to End US War on Yemen

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In a fitting legacy for my friend Walter Jones, Jr. who passed away last week, the US House made history by voting in favor of H.J.Res. 37, a resolution "Directing the removal of United States Armed Forces from hostilities in the Republic of Yemen that have not been authorized by Congress." As George O'Neill wrote in the American Conservative magazine this week, the historic 248-177 victory for a bill demanding the end of the US participation in the nearly five year Saudi war of aggression "reflects how many hearts and minds were influenced by the late Congressman's tireless efforts."

Walter Jones did not care who controlled Congress. He was happy to join forces with any Member to end the senseless US global military empire, which sends thousands of young men and women off to patrol foreign borders, overthrow foreign governments, and needlessly put themselves at risk in missions that have nothing to do with the safety and security of the United States.

US participation in the Saudi war on Yemen is a classic example of the abuse of the US military that made Walter Jones most angry. When the Saudis decided in 2015 that they wanted their puppet to be Yemen's president, they launched a brutal and inhuman war that many call the worst humanitarian disaster of our time. Millions face starvation as Saudi bombs and US sanctions combine to create a hell on earth that is unrelated in any way to US national security.

Why this ongoing support for Saudi death and destruction in Yemen? Washington's neocons have successfully promoted the lie that the Saudi attack on Yemen is all about preventing Iran from gaining more strength in the Middle East. Ironically it was the neocon-backed US attack on Iraq in 2003 that provided the biggest boost for Iranian influence in the region. Now, after Iraq's "liberation," Baghdad's ties to Tehran are closer than ever.

Meanwhile, who exactly are we supporting in Yemen? Even CNN, normally a big backer of US military actions overseas, has noticed something funny about US participation in the Saudi war on Yemen. As a CNN investigation found this month, "Saudi Arabia and its coalition partners have transferred American-made weapons to al Qaeda-linked fighters, hardline Salafi militias, and other factions waging war in Yemen, in violation of their agreements with the United States." Does that sound like we are on the side of the "good guys" in this battle? We are helping the Saudis arm al-Qaeda? Is this really a smart move?

So we should be encouraged that Walter Jones' legacy is being honored in the House vote to end the US participation in the Yemen war. While US "humanitarian" aid is being used as a weapon for regime change in Venezuela, the warmongers in Washington have never lifted a

finger to help those suffering from a real genocide in Yemen.

If the Yemen War Powers resolution passes the Senate, which is likely, Congress will have provoked the first veto from President Trump. Such a veto should not discourage us. Even the strongest army cannot stop an idea whose time has come. Ending senseless US wars is an idea whose time has come. We can thank Walter Jones for his role in making it so.

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