



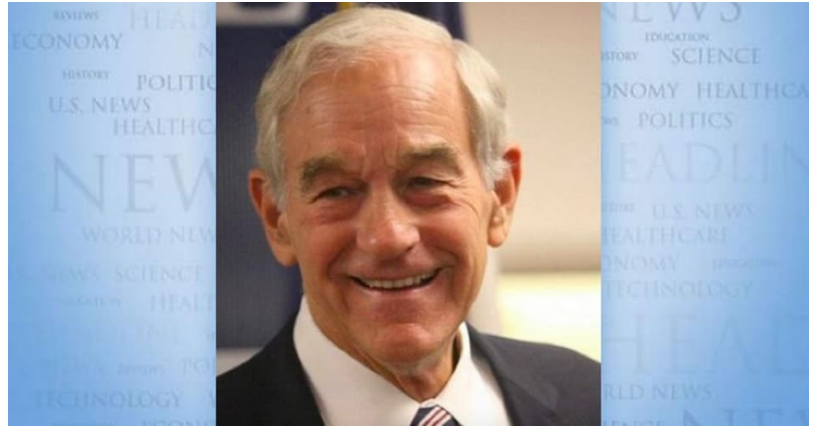
Written by [Ron Paul](#) on December 14, 2020

## Congress Again Proves That the Business of Washington Is War

Libertarian educator Tom Woods famously quipped that “no matter who you vote for you end up with John McCain.”

Unfortunately Woods was proven right for about the thousandth time this past week, as Washington again showed us that it is all about war.

First, we learned that if Joe Biden ends up in the White House next month he intends to put a deep state member of the military-industrial complex in charge of the Pentagon. General Lloyd Austin will be only the second Defense Secretary in decades to require a special Senate waiver to serve in that position. Gen. James Mattis under President Trump also needed a waiver, as he had been out of the military less than the required seven years before becoming Defense Secretary.



Ron Paul

But the revolving door between active military service and civilian leadership of the Pentagon is perhaps less troubling than the revolving door between the military-industrial complex and leadership of the Defense Department.

As the first African-American to take charge of the Pentagon, the Austin pick is celebrated as a great victory for “diversity.” However, if we move beyond the color of a person’s skin, Biden’s selection is not all that diverse. Gen. Austin was head of the US Central Command under an Obama Administration that launched a brutal war on Libya under false pretenses and pursued a regime-change policy in Syria that involved arming and training jihadists. Upon retirement, as is all too common with military leaders, he cashed in on his service with a position on the board of military contractor Raytheon.

Austin will be “business as usual” for Washington’s warmongers and the military contractors who make a fortune inventing endless conflicts overseas.

Then things went from bad to worse, as the yearly monstrosity called the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) was passed with an amendment severely restricting the US president’s ability to remove troops from Afghanistan and Europe. Offered by neoconservative Congresswoman Liz Cheney, daughter of the warmongering Dick Cheney, the amendment all but guarantees that America’s longest war in history will continue pointlessly onward.

A coalition of warmongering Democrats and Republicans have been furious with President Trump for his last minute effort to draw troops down from Afghanistan and elsewhere, and they appear to have a veto-proof majority to tie the president’s hands.



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Congress has for decades believed that the president can go to war whenever or wherever he pleases without a declaration, but if the president dares attempt to end a war their belief in a “unitary executive” is thrown out the window. What hypocrisy.

The Constitution is clear that the president is the commander in chief of the military and as such should have the authority to move troops as he sees fit. The Founders understood that 535 Members of Congress trying to micromanage troops on the battlefield is not a good idea.

Congress has it backward. It should be very difficult for a president to take the country to war and easy for that war to be ended.

Time after time, the “peace” candidate usually wins the election. But no matter how sick the American people are of endless war, the war machine finds a way to keep chugging along. What will it take to return to a policy of peace and prosperity?

*Ron Paul is a former U.S. congressman from Texas. This article originally appeared at the [Ron Paul Institute for Peace and Prosperity](#) and is reprinted here with permission.*



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