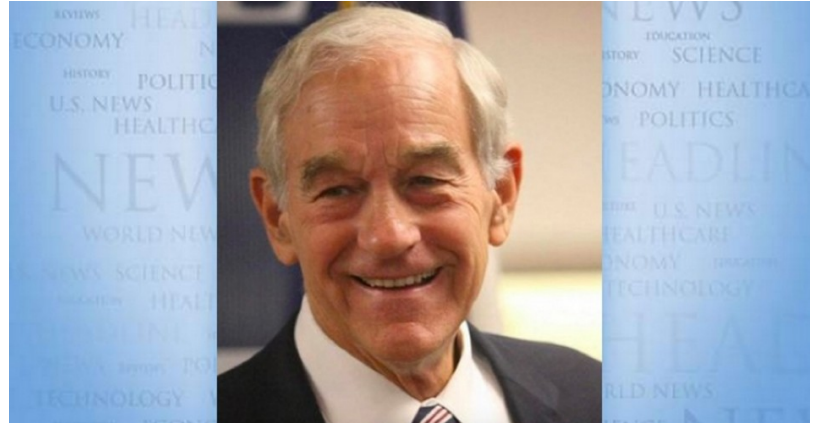




Written by [Ron Paul](#) on December 24, 2018

Troops Out of Syria and Afghanistan? That's a Good Start!

We all had a big shock when, seemingly out of the blue, President Trump announced that he was removing US troops from Syria and would draw down half of the remaining US troops in Afghanistan. The president told us the troops were in Syria to fight ISIS and with ISIS nearly gone the Syrians and their allies could finish the job.



All of a sudden the Trump haters who for two years had been telling us that the president was dangerous because he might get us in a war, were telling us that the president is dangerous because he was getting us out of a war! These are the same people who have been complaining about the president's historic efforts to help move toward peace with North Korea.

There was more than a little hypocrisy among the “never Trump” resistance over the president's announcement. Many of the talking heads and politicians who attacked George W. Bush's wars, then were silent for President Obama's wars, are now attacking President Trump for actually taking steps to end some wars. It just goes to show that for many who make their living from politics and the military-industrial complex, there are seldom any real principles involved.

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Among the neoconservatives, Sen. Lindsey Graham's reaction was pretty typical. Though it seems Sen. Graham is never bothered when presidents violate the Constitution to take the US into another war without authorization, he cannot tolerate it when a president follows the Constitution and removes US troops from wars they have no business being involved in. Sen. Graham is now threatening to hold Congressional hearings in attempt to reverse the President's decision to remove troops from Syria.

Neoconservatives are among the strongest proponents of the idea that as a “unitary executive,” the president should not be encumbered by things like the Constitution when it comes to war-making. Now all of a sudden when a president uses his actual Constitutional authority to remove troops from a war zone the neocons demand Congressional meddling to weaken the president. They get it wrong on both fronts! The president does have Constitutional authority to move US troops and to remove US troops; Congress has the power and the obligation to declare war and the power of the purse to end wars.

Most of the Washington establishment — especially the “resistance” liberals and the neocons — are complaining that by removing US troops from these two war zones President Trump has gone too far. I would disagree with them. I call President Trump's announcement a good start. Americans are tired of being the world's policemen. The United States does not “lose influence” by declining to get involved in disputes oceans away. We lose influence by spending more on the military than most of the rest of the world combined and meddling where we are not wanted. We will lose a whole lot more influence when their crazy spending makes us bankrupt. Is that what they want?



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We should pay attention to Washington's wild reaction to Trump's announcement. The vested interests do not want us to have any kind of "peace dividend" because they have become so rich on the "war dividend." Meanwhile the middle class is getting poorer and we're all less safe. Let's hope President Trump continues these moves to restore sanity in our foreign policy. That would really make America great again!

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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