



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on October 21, 2019

Amash Critical of Trump Decision to Move U.S. Troops From Syria to Iraq

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Constitutionalist noninterventionists who were delighted with President Trump's October 6 announcement that U.S. troops would be withdrawn from the Syria-Turkey border — and the president's tweet, "it is time for us to get out of these ridiculous endless wars" — were dismayed to learn on October 20 that all of the roughly 1,000 U.S. troops leaving northeastern Syria will move to western Iraq.



Upon learning of this decision, Representative Justin Amash (I-Mich.) speaking on NBC's *Meet The Press*, immediately criticized it, saying: "Trump's words: Bring them home. Trump's action: Send them to Iraq."

This news came from Defense Secretary Mark Esper, who told reporters aboard a U.S. military aircraft enroute to Afghanistan that more than 700 U.S. troops would be moved to Iraq and will not return to the United States anytime soon.

Amash was interviewed by Chuck Todd, the moderator of *Meet The Press*, who first asked the congressman about his views on the decision to remove the troops from Syria. Amash said, in part:

I don't think we should have been in Syria without congressional approval. We never had congressional approval for the mission. I think the president should have withdrawn troops long ago. But when you withdraw troops, you have to plan ahead of time how to handle it. And he could have prepared in advance for the obvious consequences. He certainly knew what Turkey would do.

Amash continued:

[The president is] moving troops back into Iraq. He's moving other troops into Saudi Arabia. And he's using our forces almost as mercenaries, the paid mercenaries who are going to go in and, as long as Saudi Arabia pays us some money, it's good to go. What happened to the American people having their voices heard through their representatives in Congress? We should make those decisions in Congress. And, frankly, we've been in the Middle East for way too long. We've been in Afghanistan for obviously way too long, and we should bring people home.

In an October 17 column, former Representative Ron Paul, who, like Amash, has been a solid noninterventionist for years, defended Trump's decision to remove U.S. troops from Syria against "Washington" (interventionists from both parties) — critics who claimed that Trump was abandoning our Kurdish "allies," concluding: "The best way to help the Kurds and everyone else in the region is to



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just come home.”

As we write, Paul has not yet commented on the decision to transfer U.S. troops from Syria to Iraq, but his past statements indicate that he would disapprove of such a move. In last week’s column, Paul wrote that the Washington interventionist establishment, “does not understand that sending U.S. troops into another country without the proper authority is not a stabilizing factor, but a de-stabilizing factor. I have argued that were the U.S. to leave Syria (and the rest of the Middle East) the countries of the region would find a way to solve their own problems.”

Photo: AP Images

Warren Mass has served The New American since its launch in 1985 in several capacities, including marketing, editing, and writing. Since retiring from the staff several years ago, he has been a regular contributor to the magazine. Warren writes from Texas and can be reached at wmass@thenewamerican.com.

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