

House reasserts war powers in Yemen vote

By LISA MASCARO
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AP Photo/Hani Mohammed

Tribesmen loyal to Houthi rebels show their support for ongoing peace talks in Sanaa, Yemen.

WASHINGTON — Asserting congressional authority over war-making powers, the House passed a resolution Wednesday that would force the administration to withdraw U.S. troops from involvement in Yemen, in a rebuke of President Donald Trump's alliance with the Saudi-led coalition behind the military intervention.

Lawmakers in both parties are increasingly uneasy over the humanitarian crisis in Yemen and skeptical of the U.S. partnership with that coalition, especially in light of Saudi Arabia's role in the killing of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi, a critic of the royal family.

Passage would mark the first time Congress has relied on the decades-old War Powers Resolution to halt military intervention. It also would set up a potential confrontation with the White House, which has threatened a veto. The House voted 248-177 to approve the measure, sending it to the Senate, where a similar resolution passed last year.

"We have helped create, and worsen, the world's largest humanitarian crisis," said Rep. Barbara Lee, D-Calif., during the debate. "Our involvement in this war, quite frankly, is shameful."

The chairman of the House Foreign Relations Committee, Rep. Eliot Engel, D-N.Y., said the vote represents "Congress reclaiming its role in foreign policy."

Senate approval would set up a showdown with the administration — a veto would be Trump's first — over the president's shifting approach on foreign policy.

Lawmakers are quick to point out that Trump wants to withdraw troops from the wars in Syria and Afghani-

stan as part of his "America First" approach, but he has shown less interest in limiting the U.S. role in Yemen.

The White House says the House resolution is "flawed" because U.S. troops are not directly involved in military action in Yemen, where the coalition is fighting the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels in a conflict largely seen as a proxy war involving the Mideast's dominant regional players.

Since 2015, the administration says, the U.S. has provided support to the coalition, including intelligence and,

until recently, aerial refueling, but it has not had forces involved in "hostilities."

Congress has not invoked the War Power Resolution, which requires approval of military actions, since it was enacted in 1973. Lawmakers approved more sweeping authorizations for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan that some argue are being used too broadly for other military actions.

Newly emboldened Democrats in the House, eager to confront Trump on foreign policy, and Republicans in both chambers have shown

a willingness to put a legislative check on the president's agenda.

In the House, 18 Republicans, including members of the GOP's libertarian-leaning wing and Trump allies in the conservative Freedom Caucus, joined Democrats in passing the Yemen measure.

Rep. Ro Khanna, D-Calif., who drafted the legislation, said there's an emerging bipartisan alliance that's skeptical of military intervention without congressional oversight.

"It's not just about Yemen. It's about the Congress taking a stand and every future president having to think twice about whether to authorize a military intervention without congressional approval," Khanna said in an interview.

The Senate version is from independent Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont and backed by Utah Republican Sen. Mike Lee.

Before Wednesday's vote, the House overwhelmingly agreed to add an amendment offered by Republicans who are seeking to expose emerging Democratic divisions over support for Israel.

The amendment reaffirms the U.S. commitment "to combat anti-Semitism around the world" and says it's in the national security interest to oppose boy-

cotts of Israel. That's a reference to the Boycott, Divest and Sanction movement that has gained support of some lawmakers.

First-term Rep. Ilhan Omar, D-Minn., one of the Muslim-American women elected to Congress, came under criticism this week for her comments against the Israel lobbying organization AIPAC that raised anti-Semitic stereotypes. She later apologized.

The House added another GOP amendment that would allow continued intelligence sharing, which drew fire from the American Civil Liberties Union. The ACLU warned it gives the president broad authority to provide the Saudis and others with U.S. intelligence information about Yemen, and the group said the package, overall, is now weaker than originally proposed.

Now the Yemen measure goes to the Senate, where a similar resolution on removing U.S. involvement in the war was approved with Republican support late last year.

At the time, Congress was eager to send a message to both the president and the Saudis after the October murder of the U.S.-based journalist Khashoggi at the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul.

WORLD IN BRIEF

Associated Press

Amazon, in stunning reversal, dumps NYC as new HQ site

NEW YORK — Amazon will not build a new headquarters in New York City, a stunning reversal to an ambitious plan that would have brought an estimated 25,000 jobs to the city.

The online retailer faced fierce opposition from some New York politicians who were unhappy with the nearly \$3 billion in tax incentives Amazon was promised. Along with thousands of jobs, the Seattle company had planned to spend \$2.5 billion building its new offices.

"We are disappointed to have reached this conclusion — we love New York," the company said in a blog post, adding that it already has 5,000 employees in the city and plans to grow those teams.

It was a serious blow to Gov. Andrew Cuomo and Mayor Bill de Blasio, who lobbied intensely to land the campus within city limits.

Amazon said it does not plan to look for another location at this time, and will continue with plans to build offices in Arlington, Virginia, and Nashville, Tennessee. The Arlington campus was expected to be the same size as the New York one, with 25,000 employees. The Nashville office is expected to have 5,000 employees.

Moment of silence held for 17 killed in Florida a year ago

PARKLAND, Fla. — Hundreds of thousands of students and adults across

Florida and beyond bowed their heads in a moment of silence today to mark the first anniversary of the shooting rampage at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland that left 17 people dead.

"It's a permanent sore spot," said Fort Lauderdale High School junior Jake Lynch. "Forever, me going forward, I'll feel this day, and this time and those names. It reminds me of where I want the world to be. ... From suffering better things come out."

The massacre on Feb. 14, 2018, inflamed the national debate over guns, turned young people into political activists and gave rise to some of the biggest youth demonstrations since the Vietnam era.

Many Stoneman Douglas students skipped school. For some it was too emotional; others did not want to be in the spotlight.

Sophomore Julia Brighton would not go inside, instead placing flowers at the outdoor memorial. She said she suffered with nightmares for months. Staying outside "felt like it would be a better experience for me instead of being at school and putting myself through that," she said.

FBI official McCabe feared Russia probe would end after Comey fired

WASHINGTON — Former FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe said in an interview aired today that he worried that investigations into President Donald Trump's ties to Russia and possible

obstruction of justice would be shut down after Trump fired FBI Director James Comey.

According to CBS, which conducted the interview, McCabe said Justice Department officials discussed bringing the Cabinet together to consider using the Constitution's 25th Amendment to remove Trump from office.

McCabe, a frequent target of Trump's ire, described in the interview with CBS' "60 Minutes" that he was greatly alarmed by the possibility that the president "might have won the White House with the aid of the government of Russia."

He said he assembled his investigators the day after his boss, Comey, was fired to discuss how to keep the investigations moving forward in the event he was fired or reassigned.

McCabe was fired from the FBI last year after the Justice Department inspector general concluded that he had lied during an internal investigation into a news media disclosure.

The allegations, which McCabe has denied, have been referred for investigation to the U.S. Attorney's office in Washington. McCabe blasted his firing as part of the Trump administration's "war on the FBI" and special counsel Robert Mueller's ongoing investigation.

Trump responded on Twitter today to news reports of the interview, saying, "Disgraced FBI Acting Director Andrew McCabe pretends to be a 'poor little Angel' when in fact he was a big part of the Crooked Hillary Scandal & the Russia Hoax — a puppet for Leakin' James Comey. I.G. report on McCabe was devastating."

Judge finds Manafort lied to investigators in Russia probe

WASHINGTON — Former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort intentionally lied to investigators and a federal grand jury in the special counsel's Russia probe, a judge has ruled.

U.S. District Judge Amy Berman Jackson's decision was another loss for Manafort, a once-wealthy political consultant who rose to lead Donald Trump's 2016 campaign and now faces years in prison in two criminal cases brought in special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation.

The four-page ruling hurts Manafort's chance of receiving a reduced sentence, though Jackson said she would decide the exact impact during his sentencing next month. It also resolves a dispute that had provided new insight into how Mueller views Manafort's actions as part of the broader probe of Russian election interference and any possible coordination with Trump associates.

Prosecutors have made clear that they remain deeply interested in Manafort's interactions with a man the FBI says has ties to Russian intelligence. But it's unclear exactly what has drawn their attention and whether it relates to election interference because much of the dispute has played out in secret court hearings and blacked out court filings.

Manafort's sentencing is set for March 13. He faces up to five years in prison on two felony charges stemming from illegal lobbying he performed on behalf of Ukrainian political interests.

THE DAILY ASTORIAN



SCHEDULE

Evening listings THURSDAY

A detailed TV schedule table for Thursday evening, listing various channels (A, L, 6 PM, 6:30, 7 PM, 7:30, 8 PM, 8:30, 9 PM, 9:30, 10 PM, 10:30, 11 PM, 11:30) and their respective programs such as Jeopardy!, The Tonight Show, The Bachelor, etc.