



YEAR IN REVIEW  
IMPACT OF WAR LECTURE SERIES

COMMERCIAL



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## WELCOME

The decision of whether or not to go to war is, without question, one of the most important decisions a nation ever makes. The weightiness of this decision is precisely why our nation's founders placed the decision-making authority related to war, as well as the oversight of military actions, squarely within the legislative body's responsibilities. The decision is too important, and produces too many unintended consequences, to be left in the hands of one person, the executive.

Thomas Jefferson was unequivocal that it was Congress "alone" that holds the power to authorize war. In his 1805 message to Congress, President Jefferson remarked, "Considering that Congress alone is constitutionally invested with the

power of changing our condition from peace to war, I have thought it my duty to await their authority for using force in any degree which could be avoided."

That our nation's founders wanted Congress to possess this exclusive power is clear. But why? The reasons behind their rationale are as important as the conclusions they drew.

One of the primary reasons the founders chose to locate the power to declare war in the legislative branch is that, as James Madison pointed out, "the History of all Governments demonstrates that the Executive is the branch of power most interested in war, and most prone to it. [The Constitution]



has accordingly with studied care vested the question of war to the Legislature.”

This idea that the executive is more prone to go to war has been proven correct over the last century in American history. While members of Congress must answer directly to voters about a vote cast to authorize a war, the president is removed from such political accountability.

Despite the Constitution’s well-crafted safeguards on war-making, we have seen Congress intentionally abdicate its responsibility to authorize and oversee military actions, choosing, instead, to take the politically easy route of passively watching as the executive branch has usurped all war-related authorization, oversight, and administration.

The question of whether or not to go to war is closely related to another key question: What is the

impact of war? War has a profound effect on all aspects of society, and it is imperative that Congress always consider those effects and the broader impact of war.

One of the casualties of Congress’ routine decision to turn a blind eye as the executive branch has expanded its power and authority in this area is that we no longer have congressional oversight of the impact and ill effects of war. On Capitol Hill, there is virtually no debate, no discussion, and, significantly, no investigative oversight of the impact of war.

Today, the United States has more than 1.3 million men and women on active duty in the military, and nearly a half-million are stationed around the globe. Our service members deserve to know that Congress is actively overseeing our military engagements. The bottom line is that if these engagements are worth risking our troops’ lives, they are worth a vote in Congress.

In abdicating its authority and responsibility to oversee war, Congress has failed the American people. The Committee for Responsible Foreign Policy seeks to fill the void on Capitol Hill by encouraging Congress to reclaim its constitutional duty to oversee war.

The following pages highlight our programmatic work to raise awareness in Washington, DC, throughout 2019. Our monthly lecture series illuminated the different effects of war, from the dire impact on global religious liberty, to the negative impact on the U.S. economy, to the impact on military readiness and more.

We embrace the opportunity to impact the conversation again in throughout the coming year.

In peace and liberty,

**George D. O’Neill, Jr. and  
The Committee for Responsible  
Foreign Policy**

## OUR MISSION

The Committee for Responsible Foreign Policy believes that the United States must pursue a realistic and restrained foreign policy. Foundational to responsible and thoughtful foreign policy is the need for congressional consent for all acts of war. Too often, Congress has taken a backseat in directing military actions, acquiescing to the President. The Constitution spells out in Article I that the authority to authorize war comes exclusively from Congress.

➤ [Learn more at ResponsibleForeignPolicy.org](https://ResponsibleForeignPolicy.org)



## OUR FOUNDER



**George D. O'Neill, Jr.** is the founder and president of The Committee for Responsible Foreign Policy, a 501(c)(4) non-profit organization dedicated to pursuing a more restrained foreign policy. Mr. O'Neill's interests in

promoting a restrained foreign policy and encouraging Congress to exert its constitutional responsibility to oversee war form the foundation of the organization's programmatic and educational work.

Mr. O'Neill has been an outspoken advocate for U.S. veterans and has written extensively about the moral imperative to bring U.S. troops home, rather than engaging in endless and undefined military interventions across the globe. In support of that mission, he founded Come Home America and also published a collection of essays on this topic in the book [ComeHomeAmerica.us](http://ComeHomeAmerica.us).

A noted writer, Mr. O'Neill has published articles on nearly every aspect of war and peace. His book, *The Impact of War*, addresses a variety of consequences of

the endless wars. He is also the author of a forthcoming book on the fall of the Berlin Wall, which combines photographs of his trip to Berlin in 1989 as the wall was opened. He is engaged in a reassessment of the flawed rationales, propaganda, and provocations in support of the Cold Wars, and how that tradition of deceit has perpetuated our post-Cold War failed military interventions.

He currently serves on the board of the magazine *The American Conservative*, and plays an active role in the publication's foreign policy work.

An artist by trade, he has created numerous sculptures that have been showcased in art galleries across the United States and Italy. His photographs on a range of subjects have been published and featured in various publications.

Mr. O'Neill is also active in family mining, agriculture, and real estate businesses. A father of five adult children, Mr. O'Neill lives in Lake Wales, Florida, with his wife, Erica.

## ***THE IMPACT OF WAR***



In 2019, George D. O'Neill, Jr. and The Committee for Responsible Foreign Policy released *The Impact of War*, a compilation of our events and themes exploring the various effects of the endless and unauthorized wars.

➔ Available for purchase on: [amazon](#)



## 2019 LECTURE SERIES

Our 2019 monthly lecture series illuminated the different effects of war, from the dire impact on global religious liberty, to the negative impact on the U.S. economy, to the impact on military readiness, among other topics:

### POLITICAL SYSTEM



### WOMEN AND FAMILIES



### SERVICEMEMBERS



### THE PRESIDENCY



### RELIGIOUS FREEDOM



### FEDERAL BUDGET



### SEPARATION OF POWERS





## January

### **The Impact of War as It Corrupts Our Political Process**

*Left:* Speaker Dr. Ben Freeman, Director of Foreign Influence Transparency Initiative Center for International Policy, delivers keynote address.

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## February

### **The Intellectual Forces Driving War**

*Right:* Speaker Paul Gottfried, Raffensperger Professor of Humanities Emeritus at Elizabethtown College, delivers keynote address.





## March

### **The Impact of War on Women**

*Right:* Speaker Kristina Arriaga, President of the Oxford Society for Law and Religion, delivers keynote address.

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## April

### **The Future of War Powers**

*Left:* In April, we hosted an event on Capitol Hill with special guest speaker Senator Rand Paul, and panelists Congressmen Ken Buck, Andy Biggs, and Thomas Massie. The conference explored the important topic of the future of the war powers issue, while addressing the war in Afghanistan and the ways Congress can reassert its war powers authority.





## May

### **The Impact of War on Servicemembers**

*Left:* Speaker Major Danny Sjursen, US Army (Retired), delivers keynote address.

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## July

### **The Impact of War on Religious Freedom**

*Right:* In July, we hosted our annual “Impact of War on Religious Freedom” conference at the Museum of the Bible. The keynote speaker was former Senator Rick Santorum, and the panelists discussed various devastating consequences of war on freedom of religion.







## September

### **The Impact of War on the Presidency**

*Right:* Speaker Ivan Eland, Director of the Independent Institute's Center on Peace & Liberty, delivers keynote address.

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## October

### **Reforming FARA Laws to End the Forever Wars**

*Left:* Congressmen Matt Gaetz (FL) and Ken Buck (CO) spoke about the importance of creative solutions to end the forever wars. Dr. Ben Freeman delivered a talk about how FARA laws can be reformed in that effort.





## November

### **The Impact of War on Military Families**

*Left:* At this conference, we explored the negative consequences of the endless wars on marriages and parents.

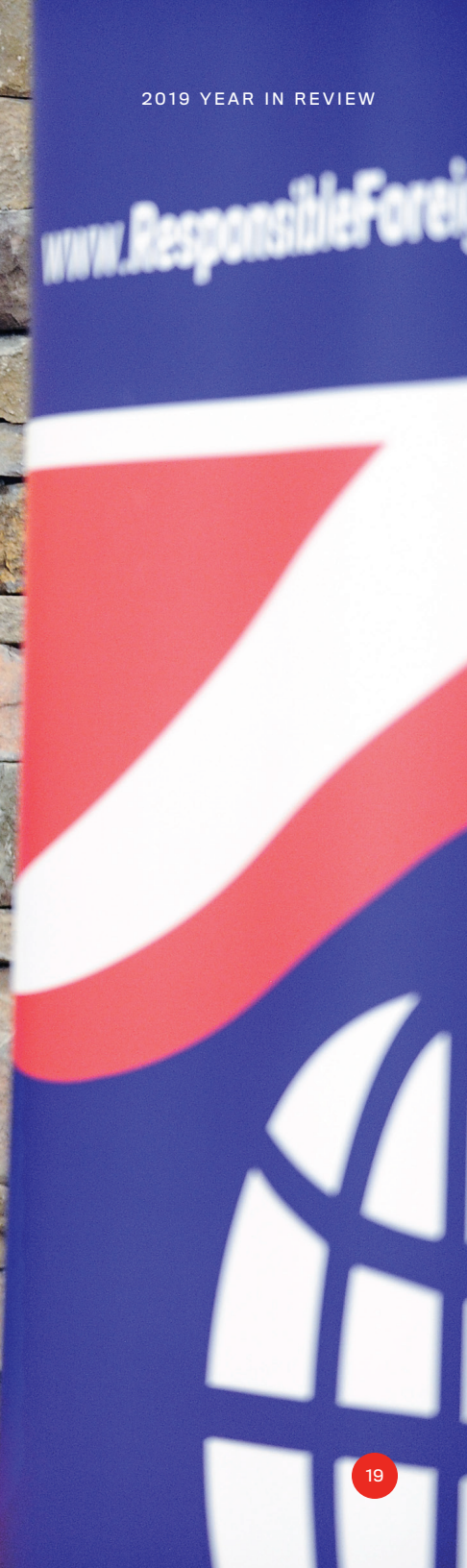
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## December

### **The Moral and Financial Impacts of Endless Wars**

*Right:* Speaker Stacey Washington, syndicated radio host, delivers keynote address.

[www.ResponsibleForeign](http://www.ResponsibleForeign)





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