

Against “America’s Forever Wars”

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4 WHEREAS, the United States government wages endless wars under the pretext of the
5 “war on terror”—described in a *New York Times* editorial of October 23, 2017 as
6 “America’s Forever Wars,”¹ and

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8 WHEREAS, the primary agenda of these wars is to further the interests of U.S.
9 corporations² and the ruling elite with the consequence of lower investments in public
10 services like health care, education and environmental protection, and

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12 WHEREAS, the United States historically has pursued a foreign policy motivated by the
13 aim of controlling resources, markets and labor, starting with territorial expansion
14 (Manifest Destiny, the dispossession of indigeneous populations and the seizure of
15 Mexican lands); through the annexation of Pacific and Caribbean islands; to the military
16 occupation of countries like Haiti and Nicaragua, a policy which the U.S. continued in
17 Afghanistan and Iraq; and to the arming of friendly authoritarian regimes like Pinochet in
18 Chile and Suharto in Indonesia, which continues today with regimes like Egypt, Saudi
19 Arabia, and the Philippines; and

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21 WHEREAS, imperialist wars have historically depended on racism, from the genocide in
22 the Americas and the African slave trade, through the wars for control of key areas in
23 Indochina and Latin America, to today’s mass bombing and displacement of populations
24 in the Middle East;³ and

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26 WHEREAS, U.S. workers, aware of the harms war causes to our fellow-workers at home
27 and abroad, have in the past opposed it and helped force the U.S. to withdraw, as in the
28 movement against the war in Vietnam; and

¹ This *Times* editorial also points to the far-flung U.S. empire of military bases, with troops deployed “in at least 172 countries and territories.”

² International financial institutions like the WTO and trade pacts like NAFTA, the IMF, the World Bank facilitate super-exploitation of reserves of low-wage labor; and unequal exchange of resources and commodities. Military force backs up current economic and political forms of big-power coercion, as in the U.S., NATO and allied attacks on Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya, with their rich resources. Both allies and rivals of the U.S. are building up their militaries for the ‘Great Game.’ See David Harvey (*The New Imperialism*), Samir Amin, John Smith, Jayati Ghosh, Michael Klare, Utsa Patnaik, Alfred McCoy and many other scholars. McCoy’s 2017 book *In the Shadows of the American Century* explores this new landscape of domination in a multipolar world. The duty of workers everywhere is to oppose imperialist domination and the wars that enforce it.

³ For the use of racist ideology to justify imperialism and sometimes win workers to support it, see the work of W.E.B. Du Bois, Mahmoud Mamdani, and Gerald Horne.

30 WHEREAS, more recently U.S. unions, in spite of the pressures on unions to support
31 these wars, have taken antiwar actions such as the AFT vote at its 2006 convention for
32 immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq, and the AFL-CIO 2017 convention
33 resolution on war and militarism;⁴ and

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35 WHEREAS, there is an urgent need to prevent an impending global war between the
36 major powers by stopping the “resource wars”⁵ now being played out across the world to
37 control supplies of oil and strategic minerals, wars that could be started at flash points
38 like the Korean peninsula, the Middle East, the South China Sea, and the European
39 borders of Russia;⁶

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41 **RESOLVED, that the AFT condemn “America’s forever wars” on the pretext of a**
42 **“war on terror,” and be it further**

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44 **RESOLVED, that as a union of educators, the AFT raise awareness on the domestic**
45 **costs of the nation’s wars impacting investments in labor and public services, and**
46 **fostering racial divisiveness; and be it further**

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48 **RESOLVED, that the AFT support antiwar groups in exposing and by opposing the**
49 **policy behind these endless wars, through curricula, teach-ins, articles, conferences,**
50 **protests, rallies, sit-ins and other forms of action.**

⁴ <https://aflcio.org/resolutions/resolution-50-war-not-answer>

⁵ Michael Klare’s term, since become standard, notably for the oil wars justified by the Carter Doctrine of U.S. intervention to protect oil interests. Carter’s advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski laid out this strategy in *The Grand Chessboard*.

⁶ See John Pilger’s documentary *The Coming War with China* and articles by U.S. strategic planners. Rather than supporting the “patriotic gore” of one’s “own side” in such a conflict, workers in all countries will gain by uniting to oppose global war.