

A Peek Behind the Curtain of Current Crises

I just got this memo from the Secretary of Defense's office. It says we're going to attack and destroy the governments of seven countries in five years. We're going to start with Iraq and then we're going to move to Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, and Iran. —Wesley Clark, former NATO Supreme Allied Commander of Europe, quoting what a Pentagon official told him shortly after 9/11 (excerpt from Clark's speech to the Commonwealth Club of California, October 3, 2007)

It's evident that the plans Clark spoke of has been moving forward. But the scheming predates 2001. War planners are opportunistic in search of casus belli, or crisis (which they may have created in the first place). A few examples of the legacy of war that the Trump administration has already continued, or appears likely to:

Syria: Once again horrific chemical attacks on Syrian children have been ascribed to an “evil dictator” who is defying logic and “attacking his own people”. Forgotten is the fact that blame for a similar incident in 2013 in Ghouta was refuted. Ron Paul, now with his Institute for Peace and Prosperity, asks, “Does anyone believe that on the eve of the peace talks, just after the White House said the Syrian people should choose their own leaders, that Assad would launch a gas attack? We're back to the same old lies that got us into Iraq. Do we never learn to question propaganda?” Certainly the weapons manufacturers don't. On April 7, *Fortune* magazine reported that Syrian airstrikes added “nearly \$5 billion to missile makers stock value”. Raytheon's 59 Tomahawk missiles, which were used in the strike, went up 2.5%. The whole weapons industry has seen its stock skyrocket with the \$50 billion-plus increase in the 2018 Defense Department budget.

Yemen: Oxfam reports that nearly seven million people have been knowingly pushed to the brink of starvation and 70% of the population requires food aid. On April 8, 2017, Gareth Porter (“The U.S. Provided Cover for the Saudi Starvation Project in Yemen”, Truth Out, truth-out.org) wrote: “The Saudi coalition has pursued a war strategy of maximizing pressure on the Houthi resistance by destroying agricultural, health and transportation infrastructure and by choking off access to food and fuel for most of Yemen's population. The United States has enabled the Saudis to pursue that strategy by refueling the Saudi-led coalition planes bombing Yemen and selling the bombs. Equally important, however, the U.S. has provided the political-diplomatic cover that the Saudis need to carry out this ruthless endeavor without massive international blowback.”

Somalia The Bureau of Investigative Journalism in its “Somalia Report 2001-2016,” states: “The Pentagon's Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) is the lead agency in the covert ‘war on terror’ in Somalia, although the CIA also has a strong regional presence. The U.S. has been carrying out extensive covert military operations inside Somalia since 2001” and “JSOC has its own fleet of armed Reaper drones, which are flown from various bases in the region.” Corporate media may attribute instability to the famine that's devastating the country but, as in Syria, military actions wreak havoc on a country. The UN reported in April that more than half of the population—6.2 million people require humanitarian and protection assistance, nearly three million are at risk of famine.

Drone Warfare: Micah Zenko, Council on Foreign Relations analyst, reported that President Obama had approved 542 drone strikes, killing an estimated 3,797 people. Due to human rights pressure, he was more restrained toward the end of his presidency. Since his inauguration, Trump has increased the percentage of drone strikes, approving at least 36 in 45 days.

Don't despair! Do something! There is no denying that powerful forces are causing enormous harm in the world. Action is the best anecdote. Join the peace movement and show how powerful we are together.

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