

PM: The Rich Bombing and Starving Poor Yemen

by Polly Mann

Why in the world would this rich, rich country choose to help bomb one of the poorest countries on the face of the earth? A country in which children are starving to death—starving because the infrastructure of their country has been bombed and ports are blockaded?

Bombs have directly killed and injured far too many innocent people in Yemen, but starvation follows. Alex de Waal, the executive director of the World Peace Foundation, says: “The main culprits [of starvation in Africa and Yemen] are wars that result in the destruction of farms, livestock herds and markets, and ‘explicit’ decisions by the military to block humanitarian aid.” He says that today’s famines are caused by political decisions and famine has been revived as a weapon of war. (“The Nazis Used It, We Use It.” Vol. 39 No. 12 *London Review of Books*. June 2017).

In the case of Yemen specifically, de Waal says that nation [which used to import much of its food] is suffering because: “At Saudi insistence, backed by the U.S. and the UK, the UN Security Council imposed a blockade on Yemen and while there’s an exemption for food, the inspection procedures are slow and laborious.”

In addition to the inspection process, de Waal cites infrastructure damage from bombing as creating conditions in which unloading ships carrying aid and food is extremely difficult. Doesn’t that make the U.S. complicit when the entrance and/or unloading of ships carrying food, medicine, and other critical aid is impeded so that it results in starvation, and in addition it also has resulted in a preventable cholera epidemic of historic proportions? Even if and when food and medicine can get off ships, storage is imperiled due to destruction of Yemen’s electrical systems.

The reason given today for the U.S. helping to bomb Yemen (by making weapons sales, refueling Saudi bombers, and providing actionable intelligence for bombing) is that it is an enemy of Saudi Arabia and the U.S. government supports Saudi Arabia. A few Americans might approve of the action—those would be the congresspeople who support Saudi Arabia in a proxy war against Iran in which Iran is said to be supporting the rebellious Houthi ethnic group.

Recently, some members of Congress introduced a resolution to take back their authority from the overreaching executive branch, and pursuant to the War Powers Resolution, remove the U.S. Armed Forces from unauthorized hostilities in Yemen. Shamefully, others in Congress made sure that the resolution was nonbinding. As of this writing, it is undetermined what, if anything, will be the result of this legislation.

The other supporters of war on Yemen would be major stockholders in U.S. corporations that are manufacturing the arms sold to Saudi Arabia.

The British-based nonprofit called Save the Children has been working in Yemen since 1963. Yes, let's save the Yemeni children. We can start by stopping the bombings and the weapons sales and allow Yemen’s ports to be fully restored.

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