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The Saudi Slaughter in Yemen

By Adil E. Shamoo
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Although the Saudis have promised a high-level committee to investigate civilian deaths from their airstrikes in Yemen, they continue to strike civilian targets with countless deaths and destructions.

For instance, among those recently killed in an airstrike on an abandon cement factory were “people in parked cars, a grocery store owner, a pharmacist and shoppers.” The nationalist insurgents, the Houthis, have also unfortunately contributed to the increased casualties as they try to repel the invaders and defeat the local groups opposed to them.

The civil war in Yemen, compounded by the Saudi invasion, has so far displaced 2.3 million people. It has left 5,700 dead, among them 2,500 civilians. Two thirds of the deaths have resulted from airstrikes. And 82% of the population requires assistance and medical supplies. The United States fears that 14.4 million Yemenis are at risk of “severe hunger.”

To add to the misery of the Yemeni people, the United States just approved the sale of weapons to the Saudis worth \$1.3 billion. Among the weaponry are air-to-ground ordinances that included 22,000 bombs. From 2010 to 2014, the United States sold \$90 billion worth of weapons to Saudi Arabia. Initially, among the U.S. weapons sold to the Saudis were the internationally banned cluster bombs.

The Saudis have feared Yemen for a long time. They worry that the Houthis and their allies will destabilize the Saudi regime and export revolutionary zeal to the Saudi people. The fear of losing their power is why the Saudi royals, with the help of the majority Sunni regimes in the Gulf, launched an air and ground war against Yemen. Riyadh hopes to reinstate the former government of President Abd-Rabbu Mansoor Hadi and make Yemen a satellite country of Saudi Arabia. Facing an onslaught by the highly equipped Saudi forces with American help, the Houthis were obliged to ally with the unsavory former president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, to defend Yemen. Although calls for talks have gone nowhere, a new effort is underway to hold negotiations in Europe under the auspices of the UN.

The Saudis have made the poorly supported claim that they are fighting a proxy war with Iran in Yemen. Unfortunately, the Obama administration parrots these lies in its official statements, which the major media then repeat. The Saudis and the Gulf States have conjured up Iranian's involvement in order to justify their war on Yemen. In the meantime, al-Qaeda is deepening its roots and widening its reach in and around the country.

US support for the Saudi regime has continued despite the invasion and the resulting humanitarian disaster. The United States provides the Saudis with intelligence and helps to enforce the current naval blockade. Moreover, in January, Secretary John Kerry said, "We have as solid a relationship, as clear an alliance, and as strong a friendship with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as we ever had, and nothing has changed." Kerry's level of support for the Saudis contrasts sharply with the US claims of supporting freedom, democracy, and human rights worldwide.

Yemen is one of the poorest countries in the world. The Saudis and the Gulf states are some of the richest countries in the world. And yet the Saudis, the Gulf States, and the United States are destroying Yemen, which had been a potential outpost of democracy in the region. Again, the United States derailed a potential democracy to serve a totalitarian regime, the Saudi Arabia.

The United States bears the moral and legal responsibility for facilitating a potential genocide in Yemen that results from the current war and the population's lack of food, basic health, and sanitation. The United States keeps wondering why the people of the region continue to harbor the worst terrorists. The reason lies in part because the United States has chosen alliances with dictators for the sake of oil and the stability of corrupt regimes.