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# Middle East Stability 1AC

## Inherency

The Trump Administration used an emergency declaration to bypass Congressional oversight on weapons sales to Saudi Arabia. Oswald, 19 [Rachel Oswald is a foreign policy reporter for CQNow and a contributor to Roll Call. “Democrats spar with State official over arms sales maneuver,” 12 June 2019, <https://www.rollcall.com/news/congress/democrats-spar-with-state-official-over-arms-sales-maneuver>]

A senior State Department official on Wednesday appeared to blame Democrats for the administration’s decision last month to declare a state of emergency over Iran to avoid congressional review of billions of dollars of weapon sales to Arab Gulf states. R. Clarke Cooper, assistant secretary of State for political-military affairs, attributed the emergency order to holds placed in spring 2018 by Senate Foreign Relations ranking member Robert Menendez on $2 billion in proposed precision-guided missile sales to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Menendez, D-N.J., placed the holds in response to the many civilian casualties in the Yemen civil war, in which the two Gulf nations are fighting against Iranian-backed Houthi insurgents. The holds were broken with the emergency declaration. “Yes, the protracted process did contribute to the conditions that necessitated an emergency,” Cooper testified at a House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing examining the rationale for the May emergency declaration. Menendez’s holds were not legally binding but part of a longstanding bipartisan tradition between the executive branch and lawmakers for resolving concerns about weapon exports before they are formally announced and put before Congress for review under the Arms Export Control Act. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo cited the emergency declaration as justification to avoid an otherwise mandatory 30-day review period under the arms export law. The $2 billion in missile sales were combined with other weapon systems to form a 22-component $8.1 billion package. Democrats used the hearing to roundly castigate the Trump administration’s rationale for declaring an emergency, alternately characterizing it as “phony” and “bogus.” They accused Cooper and other State Department officials, including Pompeo, of trying to circumvent lawful congressional oversight. “It’s a little hard to believe that we’re supposed to take your complete disregard for the congressional review process as an indication that you value congressional engagement,” Rep. David Cicilline, said to Cooper, who was involved in the decision on the emergency declaration. “This is gas-lighting. Your claiming you’re ignoring this provision is your way of affirming the role Congress plays. That’s an absurdity.” Rep. Abigail Spanberger chided Cooper for his complaints that Democrats were drawing out the arms sale review process. “You’ve referred multiple times to a protracted process and I would just remind you, sir, that the protracted process you are bemoaning is, in fact, the constitutional process that we as members of Congress have a responsibility to exercise when we are selling our weapon systems that are this lethal to countries abroad,” the Virginia Democrat said. Menendez also responded in a statement to CQ Roll Call. “Disdain for law and process is not an excuse to break it,” he said. “It’s also not an excuse to create a fake emergency, mislead Congress, and rush weapons into Saudi hands without assurances that they won’t be used to kill civilians.” After Saudi dissident journalist and Virginia resident Jamal Khashoggi was assassinated by Saudi government agents in Turkey last October, Menendez’s office said the State Department effectively ended substantive engagement over the human rights concerns raised around the proposed weapon sales. “Clearly, the secretary of State decided that he couldn’t answer those concerns substantively or persuasively, and so concocted an emergency so he wouldn’t have to do so,” said Menendez spokesman Juan Pachon. “You have to give Mr. Cooper points for creativity in how he tries to defend the indefensible.”

Some are pushing for a review of arms sales after US weapons have been found in possession of some Al-Qaeda fighters; due diligence is needed. Vittori, 19 [Jodi Vittori is a nonresident scholar in the Democracy, Conflict, and Governance Program. She is an expert on the linkages of corruption, state fragility, illicit finance, and U.S. national security. She is also the U.S. research and policy manager for Transparency International’s Defense and Security Program and an adjunct professor at Georgetown University. Prior to joining Transparency International, Vittori was a senior policy adviser for Global Witness, where she managed educational and advocacy activities on linkages between corruption and national security. Prior to that, Vittori served in the U.S. Air Force, advancing to the rank of lieutenant colonel; her overseas service included Afghanistan, Iraq, South Korea, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain, and she was assigned to NATO’s only counter-corruption task force. She was an assistant professor and military faculty at the U.S. Air Force Academy and the National Defense University. Vittori has published on conflict finance and illicit financial flows and she is the author of the book Terrorist Financing and Resourcing and a co-author of the handbook Corruption Threats and International Missions: Practical Guidance for Leaders. She is a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy and received her PhD in International Studies from the University of Denver. “American Weapons in the Wrong Hands,” 19 February 2019, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/02/19/american-weapons-in-wrong-hands-pub-78408>]

Earlier this month, a CNN investigation provided further evidence that U.S. military equipment has been transferred from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to a variety of militias, including some linked to al-Qaeda. Given the additional scrutiny of U.S.-Saudi relations since the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, recent U.S. Senate and House resolutions on arms sales to Saudi Arabia, and ongoing Saudi and Emirati tensions with neighbor Qatar, now is the time for a full-scale review of U.S. arms sales to the Gulf region. There are clear rules against arms transfers to third parties. There are also end-use monitoring requirements for U.S. arms exports, but these checks are hardly universal. Given that at least some of the equipment found in militia hands can be tied to U.S. arms sales, the Department of Defense, State Department, and Commerce Department are clearly not adequately monitoring sales. (Which U.S. agency is responsible for end-use checks depends on the type of sale conducted.) The United States is the largest arms supplier to Saudi Arabia and the UAE, two lucrative customers of the U.S. defense industry. Saudi Arabia was the largest importer of U.S. arms, having purchased $112 billion in weapons from 2013 through 2017. The UAE was the second-largest importer of U.S. arms in the same time span. Since 2009, over $27 billion in weapons have been offered to the UAE in thirty-two separate deals under the Pentagon’s Foreign Military Sales program. These arms sales continue, despite both countries’ history of diverting arms to favored militias. Saudi Arabia has been purchasing weapons from third parties to pass on to allied governments and groups at least since the 1970s, sometimes on behalf of the U.S. government. Transparency International’s Government Defense Anti-Corruption Index ranks Saudi Arabia and the UAE in its high-risk category for corruption, with Saudi Arabia receiving a score of zero out of four (zero being the worst) and the UAE receiving a score of one for lacking a well-scrutinized process for arms export decisions that aligns with international protocols. The CNN investigation comes as Congress ramps up its opposition to U.S. support for the Saudi-led coalition. Former U.S. president Barack Obama’s administration only reluctantly agreed to support the Saudi-led coalition as it went on the offense in 2015, seeing it as an unwinnable proxy war against Iran. Obama had put restrictions on arms sales and intelligence cooperation with the coalition in 2016, but President Donald Trump’s administration lifted those restrictions in March 2017, just prior to Trump’s overseas visit to Saudi Arabia. Saudi human rights abuses in Yemen using U.S. weapons, such as the airstrike on a school bus in August 2018 that killed forty children, and the murder of Khashoggi have shocked the U.S. public and Congress. In the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018, Congress required the departments of Defense and State to certify that the Saudi-led coalition was doing all it could to prevent civilian casualties; the State Department failed to provide that justification when it was due earlier this month. In December, the Senate approved a measure to end arms shipments to Saudi Arabia, despite the Trump administration’s strong opposition to the bill. The measure did not have enough votes to override a presidential veto, but senators have promised to introduce an even tougher bill in 2019. Last week, the House also passed a measure to end U.S. assistance to the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen, but again without enough votes to override an expected presidential veto. The Trump administration continues to approve arms shipments to the Saudi coalition. In 2018 alone, the United States directly sold $4.4 billion in arms to Saudi Arabia, and the administration approved the latest sale of Patriot missile upgrades in December. Tens of billions of dollars in deals with Saudi Arabia remain in the pipeline as well, awaiting approvals as part of the controversial, alleged May 2017 $110 billion arms deal with Saudi Arabia. The Trump administration has shown little inclination to loosen its close ties with Saudi Arabia and the UAE despite the death of Khashoggi or the conduct of the war in Yemen. The monarchs of Saudi Arabia and the UAE can conduct these proxy operations and divert equipment with no oversight and almost no input from their own citizens. Both countries are absolute monarchies, and their legislative bodies are advisory and contain only regime-approved members. Both countries also stamp out any free press and most independent civil society. Information on defense policies, including the war in Yemen, is kept secret by the monarchs and their inner circles. Most available information on Saudi and Emirati coalition operations and weapons transfers comes from external parties, such as U.S. government weapons sales notifications, news organizations, and human rights organizations.

## Plan

**Thus the plan: The United States federal government, through an act of Congress, should pass H.R. 7080 and switch to an up vote when authorizing arms sales.**

## Solvency

Passage of HR 7080 would grant Congress broad oversight power and would close the loophole in the AECA that allows for “emergency” declarations to justify arms sales. Mahanty & Eikenberry, 18 [Daniel R. Mahanty (@danmahanty) is the director of the U.S. program at the Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC). Prior to joining CIVIC, Dan spent 16 years at the U.S. Department of State. In 2012, he created and led the Office of Security and Human Rights in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor. In this role, he oversaw efforts to integrate human rights in U.S. security assistance and arms sales, advance the prevention of recruitment and use of child soldiers, and promote policies related to protecting civilians in conflict. Dan holds a Masters from Georgetown in U.S. National Security Policy and a Bachelors in Economics from George Mason University. He is a Colin L. Powell Fellow, a term member of the Council on Foreign Relations, a Truman National Security Fellow, and served on the board of advisors for the NGO, “Women LEAD Nepal”. Eric Eikenberry (@YemenPeaceNews) is the director of policy & advocacy at the Yemen Peace Project, which seeks to foster a more peaceful and constructive U.S. foreign policy towards Yemen. “How the “Arms Sales Oversight Act” Could Prevent American Arms from Contributing to the Next Overseas Crisis,” 5 December 2018, <https://www.justsecurity.org/61719/arms-sales-oversight-act-prevent-american-arms-contributing-overseas-crisis/>]

The debate over U.S. complicity in Yemen’s humanitarian catastrophe is coming to a head in the Senate, with a series of votes on the Sanders-Lee-Murphy war powers resolution. But beyond this immediate measure, other members of Congress are planning to increase their long-term leverage over weapons sales to problematic security partners. Foremost among them, Representatives Ted Lieu (D-Calif.) and Jim McGovern (D-Mass.) recently introduced House Resolution 7080, the “Arms Sale Oversight Act,” to little fanfare. The bill’s unassuming title and procedural focus should not escape the attention of conventional arms control advocates. If passed, H.R. 7080 would expand Congress’s constricted ability to vote down damaging arms sales and mark a first step toward preventing the United States from exacerbating the human cost of conflict. The legislation would reform Section 36 of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA) to ensure that any supportive representative can move to discharge a joint resolution of disapproval against a proposed arms sale ten days following its introduction if the presiding committee fails to report it. Win the vote in the House, pass the same joint resolution in the Senate (or vice versa), and Congress has successfully exercised its primary legal means of immediately barring a harmful transfer (whether or not the White House agrees). The measure could dramatically reshape congressional authorities over arms exports. Currently, due to a separate AECA provision, only senators are guaranteed a vote on a joint resolution of disapproval. Absent H.R. 7080’s proposed reform, corresponding House resolutions will remain “highly privileged”—which means that those seeking to stop a transfer at present can only secure a vote only if leadership acquiesces. This inter-chamber imbalance not only robs representatives of a vote in determining U.S. foreign policy, but also diminishes the efforts of conventional arms control advocates in the Senate. Because joint legislation from the House is unlikely to see the floor, Senate efforts can be reduced to signaling opposition to, rather than truly shutting down, an administration’s proposed sale. By correcting this imbalance, H.R. 7080 will open another avenue to ending U.S. enabling of other governments’ gross violations of international humanitarian and human rights laws. Nowhere is this avenue more needed than for Yemen’s internationalized civil war. There, parties to the conflict routinely conduct indiscriminate attacks on civilians and have created a humanitarian crisis that has pushed millions to the brink of starvation. Yet, it is Saudi Arabia and the UAE, using U.S.-manufactured weapons and logistical support, that have caused the majority of the conflict’s recorded civilian casualties. Causing further concern, a new documentary aired by Deutsche Welle, presents credible evidence that the coalition states have diverted U.S.-manufactured armored vehicles to unaccountable non-state militias. Admittedly, the Senate has rarely made a serious attempt to block an arms sale by resolution of disapproval, but support for exercising greater Congressional oversight over arms sales seems to be on the rise. And even when a resolution of disapproval fails to pass, mere consideration of the legislation can send clear signals to the executive branch and recipient countries alike, and can stimulate valuable policy debate.

The effective embargo, implemented by the aff, would signal to the world our disdain for the Yemeni war and would allow us to hold Saudi Arabia accountable. Spindel, 19 [Jennifer Spindel is an assistant professor of international security at the University of Oklahoma, and the Associate Director of the Cyber Governance and Policy Center. You can follow her on Twitter: @jsspindel. “The Case for Suspending American Arms Sales to Saudi Arabia,” 14 May 2019, <https://warontherocks.com/2019/05/the-case-for-suspending-american-arms-sales-to-saudi-arabia/>]

Arms embargos are often dismissed as symbolic, and therefore ineffective. But just because something is symbolic, doesn’t mean that it won’t have an effect. A U.S. arms embargo against Saudi Arabia would be a clear signal of American disproval of Saudi actions in Yemen, and would be an equally important signal to Washington’s allies, who are left wondering if the United States is ambivalent or uninterested in the growing Yemeni humanitarian catastrophe. By continuing to provide weapons, President Donald Trump tacitly endorses Saudi policies. This signal is strengthened by Trump’s recent veto of the resolution that called for an end to U.S. support for the war in Yemen. While Trump justified the veto by saying that the resolution was a “dangerous attempt to weaken my constitutional authorities,” statements from Congressional representatives show they are aware of the powerful signals sent by arms sales. Sen. Tim Kaine said that the veto “shows the world [Trump] is determined to keep aiding a Saudi-backed war that has killed thousands of civilians and pushed millions more to the brink of starvation.” An arms embargo against Saudi Arabia would be a signal both to leaders of that country, and other states, that the United States does not endorse Saudi actions. Those arguing against a ban are correct on one point: Embargos as blunt force instruments of coercion are rarely effective. But arms embargos are effective as signals of political dissatisfaction, and serve an important communication role in international politics.

By switching to an approval, instead of a disapproval model, Congress will be given an effective check on executive ability to sell weapons. Ford, 19 [Matt Ford is a staff writer at The New Republic. “A Farewell to Arms Deals,” 11 June 2019, <https://newrepublic.com/article/154160/trump-arms-deals-executive-power-democrats-congress>]

Part of the problem stems from INS v. Chadha, a Supreme Court decision handed down decades ago. It’s an unusual case. After Jagdish Rai Chadha’s student visa expired in 1972, U.S. immigration officials let the Kenyan-born South Asian man stay in the country because of dangerous racial tensions in Kenya. In 1975, however, the House of Representatives overrode that determination, effectively ordering Chadha and five other foreign nationals to be deported. He filed a lawsuit to challenge a provision of U.S. immigration law that granted each chamber of Congress that power. In a landmark 7–2 ruling in 1983, the Supreme Court sided with Chadha and effectively struck down the legislative veto. Chief Justice Warren Burger, writing for the majority, said that the provision in question was “essentially legislative in purpose and effect.” As a result, it violated the Constitution’s bicameralism requirement by allowing one chamber of Congress to undertake a legislative act on its own. More importantly, the court ruled that such vetoes violate the Constitution’s requirement that all legislation be presented to the president for his signature or veto. Justice Byron White took the rare step of reading his dissent from the bench, signaling his deep disapproval of the court’s decision. “Today’s decision strikes down in one fell swoop provisions in more laws enacted by Congress than the court has cumulatively invalidated in its history,” he wrote. He argued that his colleagues had insisted on a separation of powers far stricter than what the Framers had envisioned, one ill-suited for the modern era of the administrative state. “To be sure, the President may have preferred unrestricted power,” White wrote, “but that could be precisely why Congress thought it essential to retain a check on the exercise of delegated authority.” What would happen next? White wrote that without the legislative veto, lawmakers faced a “Hobson’s choice.” Congress could write narrow laws that delegated little authority, “leaving itself with a hopeless task of writing laws with the requisite specificity to cover endless special circumstances across the entire policy landscape.” Or it could “abdicate its lawmaking function to the Executive Branch and independent agencies” by writing broad laws for civil servants to flesh out later. “To choose the former leaves major national problems unresolved; to opt for the latter risks unaccountable policymaking by those not elected to fill that role,” White wrote. Lawmakers quickly realized how the court’s decision would reshape their relations with the White House. Among them was Delaware Senator Joe Biden, then a junior member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and now a presidential candidate. He pointed to two areas where the justices had upended years of compromise between the two branches: U.S. military involvement under the War Powers Resolution, and arms sales to foreign governments. “The Supreme Court’s decision has shattered a careful and workable accommodation between Congress and the Executive, a development that, in my opinion, threatens our ability to fashion a foreign policy that is consistent, coherent, and safe,” he wrote in a 1984 Syracuse Law Review article. For arms sales, Biden’s solution was to invert the legal mechanism in question. Rather than giving Congress an opportunity to stop each sale before it took effect, his bill would have required the White House to seek affirmative support from lawmakers first. “Under a joint resolution of approval, of course, a sale cannot go through until it is approved by both houses and signed by the President,” he wrote. “That can take up a lot of Senate and House time, but it is the only way for Congress to retain the same degree of control we had over arms sales before Chadha.” This maneuver would remove the mathematical disadvantage faced by lawmakers: the president’s veto power. “Under a joint resolution of disapproval, Congress can get its way only if it has enough votes to override a presidential veto,” Biden explained. “So instead of needing fifty-one senators’ votes to defeat an arms sale we would need sixty-seven, plus two-thirds of the House of Representatives.” In other words, so long as the president can muster the support of one-third of one chamber of Congress, lawmakers are generally powerless to halt controversial arms sales to foreign powers.

## The Advantage: Middle East Stability

For years the US has been selling arms to Saudi Arabia while they have been giving these weapons to terrorist groups as incentives to do the Saudi’s bidding; this harms stability in the Middle East. Hunter, 19 [Jack Hunter (@jackhunter74) is a contributor to the Washington Examiner's Beltway Confidential blog. He is the former political editor of Rare.us and co-authored the 2011 book The Tea Party Goes to Washington with Sen. Rand Paul. “Rand Paul said US weapons would end up in terrorists' hands. You should have listened to Rand Paul,” 5 February 2019, <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/rand-paul-said-us-weapons-would-end-up-in-terrorists-hands-you-should-have-listened-to-rand-paul>]

At The American Conservative’s annual foreign policy conference in October, Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., said, "If you ask me who’s the worst at spreading hatred and trying to engender terrorism around the world, it’s Saudi Arabia hands down." Paul was comparing Saudi Arabia to Iran in terms of which country should be considered more a threat to U.S. interests in the Middle East. The senator has warned for years that sending American military aid to alleged allies abroad could end up in terrorists’ hands, which has happened repeatedly. On Monday, we learned it’s been happening again. CNN reported that Saudi Arabia has been giving American-made weapons to groups linked to al Qaeda. The Saudis have been using weapon sales to gain leverage in the ongoing war in Yemen. In August, the Washington Post reported, “New Associated Press reporting from Yemen has laid bare the fact that the UAE and Saudi Arabia have been busy cutting ‘secret deals with al-Qaida fighters, paying some to leave key cities and towns and letting others retreat with weapons, equipment and wads of looted cash … hundreds more were recruited to join the coalition itself.’” Now CNN reveals this is happening with American weapons. Why wouldn’t this happen? Anyone could have predicted it. After all, Saudi Arabia is America’s number one weapons customer. The weapons and equipment CNN learned are in al Qaeda’s possession were sold by the U.S. during the Obama administration, though sales continue under President Trump. Paul has long been one of the most vociferous opponents of sending U.S. weapons to Saudi Arabia under both Democratic and Republican administrations, a position reinforced in the minds of many in the wake of the killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi in October. Paul also led the fight in 2013 against arming Syrian rebels with U.S. weapons, worrying they could end up in the hands of al Qaeda. Guess what? That’s what happened. Maj. Anas Ibrahim Obaid even told Fox News that he gave American weapons and trucks directly to al Qaeda. Paul worried that weapons the U.S. gave to Libyan rebels in 2011 to topple dictator Moammar Gadhafi could end up being used by terrorists. That’s exactly what happened when the weapons ended up in Syria. “Extremist fighters, some of them aligned with Al Qaeda, have the money to buy the newly arrived stock, and many rebels are willing to sell,” the New York Times reported in 2013. For at least eight years now, the U.S. has found ways to inadvertently fund the group that attacked the U.S. on Sept. 11. Paul recalled this history on the Senate floor Monday in a speech opposing an amendment condemning President Trump’s planned troop withdrawal from Syria and Afghanistan. “We’ve given [Middle East allies] trillions of dollars, the uniforms, the weapons, everything has been ours,” Paul said. “But every time we say we have to be involved there are unintended consequences.” “In Syria we gave arms to people who were radical extremists,” the senator said. “We gave arms to people who were actually allied with al Qaeda.” “At one point in time it was said that ISIS had a billion dollars worth of Humvees that were U.S.” Paul added. Lest we forget, the U.S. has not just been funding al Qaeda indirectly, but also the Islamic State. “The arms that were coming out of Libya, that Hillary Clinton supported bringing those arms, they were going to the wrong people,” Paul continued. “We were taking one set of bad people and giving them to another set of bad people.” “Maybe sometimes there isn’t a lesser of two evils?” he concluded. When will the U.S. stop this destructive habit? How many times do weapons sent abroad have to end up in terrorist hands before leaders rethink these policies? Perhaps Washington politicians fond of restricting gun sales should start with themselves.

The US and Saudi Arabia have used their weapons sales to increase influence in Syria; this has only helped to embolden ISIS. O’Connor, 18 [Tom O’Connor is a staff writer for Newsweek. “How Did ISIS Get Its Weapons? Europe Wants to Limit U.S. and Saudi Arabia Arms Sales Because Guns Went to Militant Group,” 14 November 2018, <https://www.newsweek.com/europe-limit-us-saudi-weapons-sales-went-isis-1215758>]

The European Union's top legislative body has issued a call to control arms exports in order to avoid perpetuating human rights abuses and allowing weapons to fall into the wrong hands. The European Parliament warned that "member states have systematically failed to apply" EU rules when selling arms abroad, and called for "a mechanism to enforce sanctions on EU members that break the rules," according to a press release issued Wednesday. The document cited specific examples of taking measures to cut weapons exports to Saudi Arabia and the United States in order to ensure they were not acquired by banned organizations such as the Islamic State militant group, commonly known as ISIS or Daesh. The document quoted parliamentarians as saying they were "shocked at the amount of EU-made weapons and ammunition found in the hands of Da'esh, in Syria and Iraq." The lawmakers highlighted EU protocols designed to prevent arms intended for a legitimate customer from then being transferred to a restricted one, but called out Bulgaria and Romania specifically for not adhering to them. Due to the risks associated with such sales, the lawmakers said member states should "refuse similar transfer in the future, notably to the US and Saudi Arabia." The U.S. and Saudi Arabia have garnered criticism for their support of groups fighting to overthrow Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in the wake of a 2011 rebel and jihadi uprising. As the opposition made gains in the early years of the war, ISIS arose out of a post-U.S. invasion Sunni Muslim insurgency in neighboring Iraq and came to control up to half of both countries at its height in 2014. That same year, the U.S. formed a coalition to battle ISIS in Iraq and Syria. ISIS's rapid takeover, however, was assisted by U.S. weapons looted from government forces in Iraq and from Syrian fighters that either were defeated or absorbed by the militant group. In December, the U.K.-based Conflict Armament Research released a report that accused the U.S. and Saudi Arabia of intentionally violating EU rules by purchasing "large numbers" of European arms and ammunition and then quietly diverting them to nonstate actors in Syria without telling the suppliers. These sales were reportedly made possible through deals between Eastern European members of the EU, as well as the U.S. and Saudi Arabia, both of whom "supplied most of this material without authorization, apparently to Syrian opposition forces," the 2017 report found. It added: "Supplies of material into the Syrian conflict from foreign parties—notably the United States and Saudi Arabia—have indirectly allowed IS to obtain substantial quantities of anti-armor ammunition."

**Scenario 1 is Sea Lane Traffic**

**Proximity to vital sea-lanes makes escalation likely- ship attacks draw in foreign powers**

**Vaughan and Henderson, 17** (Cmdr. Jeremy Vaughan, U.S. Navy, is a Federal Executive Fellow at The Washington Institute who has completed multiple deployments to the Persian Gulf. Simon Henderson is the Institute's Baker Fellow and director of its Gulf and Energy Policy Program. <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/bab-al-mandab-shipping-chokepoint-under-threat> 3-1)

On February 9, the U.S. Office of Naval Intelligence issued an alert warning commercial vessels about the risk of mines in the Bab al-Mandab Strait: "The U.S. Government has reason to believe in late January, mines were laid by Houthi rebels in Yemeni territorial waters in the Red Sea close to the mouth of Mocha harbor." The alert follows a number of other troubling incidents in the strategic waterway over the past few months. Saudi and Emirati naval vessels have been attacked while trying to enforce a blockade on the Iranian-supported Houthi rebels who control large parts of Yemen. And last October, patrolling U.S. Navy ships were targeted as well. Diplomatic efforts to end Yemen's civil war appear to be getting nowhere, and the fighting on land is largely deadlocked, though forces loyal to the internationally recognized government of President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi recently captured Mocha port near the Bab al-Mandab. Iran's motives for helping the Houthis are unclear but have the effect of challenging Saudi Arabia, which views the fighting as a proxy war. More incidents at sea, especially involving civilian shipping, could further **internationalize the conflict and spur other actors to intervene.** In terms of capability and tradition, the leadership role in any such effort to safeguard freedom of passage would necessarily be taken by the U.S. Navy. A KEY CHOKEPOINT In a 2014 web post describing heavily transited oil chokepoints in the Middle East and elsewhere, the U.S. Energy Information Administration noted that blocking such waterways, even temporarily, "can lead to **substantial increases in total energy costs** and world energy prices." The Bab al-Mandab, which controls access to the Red Sea and the southern end of the Suez Canal, **is particularly crucial at present because of Egypt's reliance on imported liquefied natural gas to maintain its electricity supplies**. One LNG tanker destined for Egypt transits the strait each week. If passage were impeded, those shipments -- and all other vessels heading to Egypt and the Mediterranean Sea -- would have no alternative but to make the long voyage around the southern tip of Africa. The Bab al-Mandab is around ten miles wide at its narrowest point, where the Yemeni island of Perim protrudes into the waterway toward Eritrea and Djibouti. Under an international traffic separation scheme, northbound international shipping uses a two-mile-wide lane on the Arabian side just west of Perim, while southbound traffic uses a similar lane on the African side. Separated by just over a mile of water, the two lanes work well for international traffic but are ignored by smaller local ships and fishing vessels. More than sixty commercial ships transit the strait every day, and several passenger cruise liners use the route as well. THE THREATS Houthi rebels have attacked warships in or near the strait on at least four occasions since last fall. On October 1, antishipping cruise missiles fired from the Houthi-controlled coastline severely damaged the Swift, an Emirati-operated troop landing and logistics ship. In the following weeks, the destroyer USS Mason successfully defended itself against three similar attacks. The U.S. Navy launched a Tomahawk missile strike to knock out coastal radar sites that may have provided targeting information for the attacks. No further antishipping missile attacks have been reported since then, but radar sites can be rebuilt, and the Houthis' stores of such missiles have not been destroyed, so the threat remains. Additional threats have emerged in the past few weeks and may already be affecting international shipping patterns. The recent U.S. government warning about mines in the Bab al-Mandab advised ships to transit the strait only during daylight. Moored mines have a notorious tendency to break free of their tethers and could ramp up the risk to all ships in the area. Another new threat surfaced when a Saudi frigate was attacked off the Houthi-controlled port of Hodeida on January 30. Initially thought to be a suicide speedboat, the attacker is now assumed to have been a remote-controlled drone craft similar to the type Iranian smugglers employ to pick up contraband from Oman's Musandam Peninsula in the Strait of Hormuz, a Persian Gulf chokepoint. The UAE also has such craft (which it uses for target practice), so it is conceivable that the attack was conducted by a lost Emirati boat recovered by Iran. U.S. warships transiting the Strait of Hormuz are routinely harassed by small boats from Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy (IRGCN), but weaponized speedboat drones, known in the military as unmanned surface vehicles (USVs), change the danger profile into a credible threat. An attacking USV must be disabled at distance from a warship's hull, a task that could prove exceptionally difficult during a swarming attack by multiple boats. Furthermore, Iran's familiarity with explosively formed penetrators (EFPs) means that such technology may soon be seen at sea. Fortunately, the difficulty in remotely placing such a narrowly focused explosive against a target's hull mitigates some of the risk; this could explain why the January 30 attack seemed to result in such minor damage, assuming an EFP was on board. Even so, an EFP-laden USV that gets through a ship's defenses could sink it.

**Conflict would escalate to global nuclear war. Steinbach, 18** (John, 6-30, https://www.globalresearch.ca/israeli-weapons-of-mass-destruction-a-threat-to-peace-israel-s-nuclear-arsenal/4365)

Meanwhile,.the existence of an arsenal of mass destruction in such an unstable region in turn has serious implications for future arms control and disarmament negotiations, and even the threat of nuclear war. **Seymour Hersh warns**, “Should war break out in the Middle East again or should any Arab.nation fire missiles against Israel, as the Iraqis did, a nuclear escalation, once unthinkable except as a last resort would now be a **strong** probability.”(41) and Ezar Weissman, Israel’s current President said “The nuclear issue is gaining momentum(and the) next war will not be conventional. (42) Russia and before it the Soviet Union has long been a major(ifnot.the major) target of Israeli nukes. It is widely reported that .the principal purpose of Jonathan Pollard’s spying for Israel was to furnish satellite images of Soviet targets and other super sensitive data relating to U.S. nuclear targeting strategy. (43) (Since launching its own satellite in 1988, Israel no longer needs U S. spy secrets.) Israeli nukes aimed at the Russian heartland seriously complicate disarmament and arms control negotiations and, at the very least, the unilateral possession of nuclear weapons by Israel is enormously destabilizing. and dramatically lowers the threshold for their actual use if not for all **out nuclear war.** In the words of Mark Gaffney, “... if the familar pattern(Israel refining its weapons of mass destruction with U.S. complicity) is not reversed, soon- for whatever reason- the deepening Middle East conflict could **trigger** a world **conflagration.”** (44)

**Scenario 2 is Saudi Aggression**

**Arms sales embolden Saudi Arabia, causing them to escalate proxy wars. Bazzi, 17** [Mohamad, Currently Writing a Book on Iran Saudi Proxy Wars (“How Trump Is Inflaming the Middle East’s Proxy Wars” <https://www.thenation.com/article/the-trump-administration-could-provoke-yet-another-mideast-war/>)]

Aside from his virtually unqualified rhetorical support for Saudi Arabia, Trump announced a package of weapons sales to the kingdom that will total nearly $110 billion over 10 years. Trump and his top aides—especially his son-in-law and senior adviser Jared Kushner, who took a lead role in negotiating parts of the agreement—were quick to claim credit for a massive arms deal that would boost the US economy. But many of the weapons that the Saudis want to buy—including dozens of advanced F-15 fighter jets, Apache attack helicopters, Patriot missile-defense systems, thousands of bombs and other munitions, and hundreds of armored vehicles—were already approved by the Obama administration. From 2009 to 2016, Obama authorized a record $115 billion in military sales to Saudi Arabia, far more than any previous administration. (Of that total, US and Saudi officials inked formal deals worth about $58 billion, and Washington delivered $14 billion worth of weaponry from 2009 to 2015.) With such a large influx of US weapons and Trump’s uncritical support, the emboldened Saudi leadership now sees itself as perfectly aligned with Washington against Iran—and even against a longtime US ally like Qatar, which, in the Saudi view, has been too cozy with Iran. Iran and Saudi Arabia have been fighting a cold war since the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran—and their struggle has only intensified over the past decade. While the conflict is partly rooted in the Sunni-Shiite schism within Islam, it is mainly a struggle for political dominance of the Middle East between Shiite-led Iran and Sunni-led Saudi Arabia. This series of proxy battles—in **Iraq**, **Syria**, **Yemen**, **Lebanon**, and **Bahrain**—has shaped the Middle East since the Bush administration invaded Iraq in 2003. The House of Saud rests its legitimacy—and its claim of leadership over the wider Muslim world—on the fact that the kingdom is the home of Islam’s two holiest cities, Mecca and Medina, where the religion was founded. Like his predecessors, King Salman has adopted the title of “Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques,” a reminder of his rule over Islam’s most sacred shrines. This gives the Sauds great convening power in the Muslim world. Because the Saudi regime controls access to the annual hajj—the pilgrimage to Mecca that every pious Muslim must perform at least once in a lifetime—Salman was able to call so many Muslim leaders to Saudi Arabia for Trump’s speech on relatively short notice. These leaders want to stay in the king’s good graces, both to maintain access to hajj visas for their citizens and also because the Sauds dole out money to favored allies. The Sauds, and the Wahhabi clerics who support them, construe political legitimacy on the Islamic concept that Muslims owe obedience to their ruler, as long as he can properly apply Islamic law. This view does not tolerate public dissent or demands for reform. The Sauds also want to associate Islam with its original Arab identity, even though Arabs have been a minority within the religion for centuries. Far more Muslims now live in Asia than in the Arab world—and states like Indonesia and Malaysia offer a more tolerant conception of the faith than the Saudis. The Saud dynasty views itself as the rightful leader of the Muslim world, a claim Tehran has challenged for decades. While the Saud dynasty views itself as the rightful leader of the Muslim world, Iran has challenged that leadership for decades. Iran’s 1979 Islamic Revolution brought to power a group of clerics led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, who vowed to export his rebellion throughout the Muslim world—starting with Saudi Arabia and other Sunni Arab states. Although Saudi Arabia has a Sunni majority, its rulers fear Iran’s potential influence over a sizable and sometimes restive Shiite minority, which is concentrated in the Eastern Province, where most of the kingdom’s oil reserves lie. When Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein invaded Iran in 1980, Saudi Arabia and other Sunni Arab states provided money and support, hoping that Saddam would weaken Iran and force Khomeini and the clerics out of power. (The United States and most Western powers also supported Iraq, selling it weapons and providing intelligence support.) But the Iran-Iraq War dragged on for eight years, killing about 1 million people and crippling both countries. The Saudi-Iranian rivalry continued throughout the 1980s, easing slightly in the 1990s after Saddam invaded neighboring Kuwait and threatened to march into Saudi Arabia. Washington sent half a million troops to the kingdom, using it as a base from which to drive the Iraqis out of Kuwait in 1991. The Saudi-Iranian relationship thawed for nearly decade. But after the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, the traditional centers of power in the Arab world—Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and other Gulf states—became more nervous about Iran’s growing influence: its nuclear ambitions, its sway over the fledgling Iraqi government, its support for Islamist groups like Hamas and Hezbollah, and its alliance with Assad’s regime in Syria. The conflict with Iran intensified after the Arab uprisings of 2011 when the House of Saud tried to choke off revolutionary momentum in the region. Saudi leaders tended to view all Shiite politicians and factions in the Muslim world as agents of Iran—and they attached an Iranian connection, whether real or imagined, to virtually any regional security issue. After the wave of popular protests forced out dictators in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and eventually Yemen, the Sauds were worried about the revolts spreading to the kingdom. Aside from their anger toward Iran, the Sauds were also enraged by Qatar’s support for the revolutions in Tunisia, Libya, and especially Egypt, where Qatar became a primary backer of the Muslim Brotherhood, which in 2012 won the first free elections in Egypt’s modern history. (Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates later backed an Egyptian military coup, in July 2013, against the government of President Mohamed Morsi, a Brotherhood leader.) The Sauds were already irritated at Qatar for pursuing an independent foreign policy and trying to increase its influence after the regional turmoil unleashed by the US invasion of Iraq. And, like other Arab monarchs and autocrats, the Sauds disdained Qatar’s Al Jazeera satellite network, which was critical of the monarchies and supported the uprisings in 2011. The House of Saud became especially nervous when the Arab revolutions spread to Bahrain, a Shiite-majority country ruled by a Sunni monarchy only 16 miles from Saudi Arabia’s heavily Shiite Eastern Province. The Sauds accused Iran of supporting the Bahrain uprising and in March 2011 sent more than 1,000 troops to help crush the pro-democracy movement there. Saudi Arabia also steered the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council, which was created in 1981 partly to counter Iran, to begin discussions on offering membership to Jordan and Morocco. The two non-Gulf, non-oil-producing Sunni monarchies were invited to join in April 2014, although the process has since stalled. It’s all part of the Saudi-led effort to build a stronger bulwark against Iran. In January 2015, King Abdullah died, after 20 years in power, and was succeeded by his brother Salman, the 79-year-old crown prince who had served as the longtime governor of Riyadh. Instead of relying on US military intervention and battling Iran through proxies and checkbook diplomacy, as his predecessor had done, the new king and his advisers quickly pursued a more aggressive foreign policy: He launched a war against Houthi rebels in Yemen after only two months in power. Salman also appointed his then-29-year-old son as defense minister (and deputy crown prince, making him second-in-line to the throne, after Crown Prince Mohammed bin Nayef) to oversee the Yemen campaign. Yemen, which is rapidly becoming one of the bloodier arenas in the Saudi-Iranian proxy war, is a complex conflict with a shifting set of alliances. The Saudis and their Sunni Arab partners want to restore Yemeni President Abdu Rabbu Mansour Hadi, a Sunni, to power. The Houthis, who belong to a sect of Shiite Islam called Zaydis, are allied with former President Ali Abdullah Saleh, a longtime dictator who was ousted from power after the Arab uprisings spread to Yemen. Once a Saudi client, Saleh was replaced by Hadi in 2012 under a deal brokered by Riyadh. The Houthis are also allies of Iran, but while the Saudis are quick to label them as Iranian proxies, it’s unclear how much support they actually receive from Tehran. (By comparison, Iran is far more heavily invested in Syria, where it has sent billions of dollars in aid and thousands of troops and Shiite volunteers to fight alongside Assad’s regime.) After two years, Saudi Arabia is bogged down in the Yemen conflict, which by some estimates costs up to $200 million a day. Despite intensive air strikes and a naval blockade, the Saudis and their allies still have not been able to dislodge the Houthis from Yemen’s capital, Sanaa. But the House of Saud—and especially Mohammed bin Salman, the brash 31-year-old deputy crown prince, who has amassed tremendous power under his father’s reign—is reluctant to abandon the war. In the regional proxy conflict, the Saudis view a peace deal with the Houthis as a victory for Iran. Since he took office, Trump has changed his position on many foreign-policy questions. But he’s been consistent on one topic: He and his advisers consider Iran the greatest threat to US interests in the Middle East, and the world’s biggest state sponsor of terrorism. And Trump has surrounded himself with senior officials who view Iran in the same light, including Defense Secretary James Mattis and National Security Adviser H.R. McMaster. Both men commanded US troops in Iraq, and both fought Iranian proxies. Trump’s confrontation with Iran began in his early days in office. On January 29, Iran tested a medium-range ballistic missile—a trial that Iranian officials insisted did not violate a United Nations Security Council resolution that calls on Tehran to refrain from testing weapons that can carry nuclear warheads. But Trump and his advisers jumped on the episode to show that they will take a more aggressive approach. On February 1, Trump’s then–National Security Adviser Michael Flynn declared, “As of today, we are officially putting Iran on notice.” Two days later, the administration imposed new sanctions on 25 people and entities involved in developing Iran’s missile program or helping to support groups that Washington has designated as terrorist organizations. Hours before imposing the sanctions, Trump fired off a series of provocative tweets, including one that warned: “Iran is playing with fire—they don’t appreciate how ‘kind’ President Obama was to them. Not me!” Despite Trump’s tough rhetoric, his administration needs Iran’s cooperation in the military campaign against ISIS. These comments set the framework for the pro-Saudi tilt in US policy and aggressive posture toward Iran. But despite Trump’s tough rhetoric, his administration needs Iran’s cooperation in the military campaign against ISIS, in both Syria and Iraq. Facing ground offensives by local forces backed by US air strikes, the group has suffered significant defeats over the past year, especially in Iraq. ISIS is on the verge of being completely expelled from the northern city of Mosul by Iraqi forces. And in Syria, US-allied rebels have besieged the eastern city of Raqqa, the capital of ISIS’s self-proclaimed caliphate. Iran has a vested interest in fighting ISIS, especially because of the danger it poses to Tehran’s allies in Iraq. After the US invasion ousted Saddam Hussein from power, the Bush administration helped install a Shiite government for the first time in Iraq’s modern history. As US troops got bogged down in fighting an insurgency and containing a civil war, Iran extended its influence over all of Iraq’s major Shiite factions. (Iran helped prolong the civil war by arming and training numerous Shiite militias that targeted American troops and Iraq’s Sunni community.) For the Iranian regime, Iraq provides strategic depth against Saudi Arabia and other Sunni Arab states. Tehran also wants to ensure that Iraq does not pose an existential threat to Iranian interests, as Saddam did when he invaded Iran in 1980. After ISIS militants captured large swaths of northern Iraq in June 2014, including Mosul, Iran helped train and equip tens of thousands of volunteers who joined largely Shiite militias that worked alongside the Iraqi security forces. With a weakened Iraqi military, the militias proved crucial in stopping the Sunni jihadists’ initial advance in 2014. Today, some Iraqi military units work closely with US commanders, especially in the campaign to oust ISIS from Mosul. But Iran still exerts influence over the Popular Mobilization Units, the coalition of militias that is now under the Iraqi government’s control. On April 18, the State Department certified to Congress that Iran was complying with its obligations under the 2015 nuclear agreement. But the next day, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson lashed out at Tehran in a hastily organized press conference, claiming that the nuclear deal “fails to achieve the objective of a non-nuclear Iran.” He then listed Iran’s destabilizing activities in the Middle East and the threat they pose to US interests. He said Trump’s National Security Council would conduct a 90-day review of the nuclear deal, after which it could decide to back away from the agreement or to impose new sanctions on Iran. “The Trump administration has no intention of passing the buck to a future administration on Iran,” Tillerson said. “The evidence is clear. Iran’s provocative actions threaten the United States, the region, and the world.” These threats foreshadowed Trump’s speech in Riyadh—and the administration’s decision to explicitly take Saudi Arabia’s side in an unpredictable and destructive proxy war with Iran. The newly emboldened Saudi leadership has shown—with its war in Yemen and, more recently, its campaign to isolate Qatar—that **it can miscalculate and overreach**. Without a US administration willing to restrain Saudi ambitions, the proxy war will get worse.

**Saudi-Iran conflict escalation causes a US-Russia war. Simpson, 17** [Emile, Former British Army Officer (“This Is How Great-Power Wars Get Started” <https://foreignpolicy.com/2017/06/21/this-is-how-great-power-wars-get-started/>)]

Are the U.S. and Russia being sucked into war in the Middle East, and if so, how can escalation be averted? The present political dynamics in the Middle East are unsettled and kaleidoscopic. But in the interests of brevity, leaving aside smaller players, and before we think about the role of the United States and Russia, the basic configurations of power in the region since the 2011 Arab Spring can be simplified in terms of five loose groupings. First, a grouping of Sunni monarchies (Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, and Bahrain); Arab secular nationalists (Egypt since President Abdel Fatteh el-Sisi took over in 2013, Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia); and Gen. Khalifa Haftar’s faction in eastern Libya. Second, a grouping of Turkey; Qatar; and Muslim Brotherhood affiliates such as Hamas in Gaza, Egypt under President Morsi before 2013, and the internationally-recognized Libyan government based in the western part of that country. Third, a grouping of Iran and its Shiite allies, including Iraq (at least among key factions of the Baghdad government), the Assad regime in Syria, and Hezbollah in Lebanon. Fourth, the collection of various Sunni jihadi networks, including the Islamic State, various al Qaeda affiliates, and any number of smaller factions. Fifth, there is Israel, which does not fit into any of the above, but is most closely aligned with members of the first grouping. Three key stories since the 2011 Arab Spring broadly explain how the United States and Russia fit into these dynamics, and why these two great powers are being dragged into confrontation in the Middle East. The first story is the tension between human rights and stability. Initially motivated by humanitarian impulse, the United States and its Western allies achieved regime change in Libya and attempted it in Syria, by backing rebels in each case. These rebellions rapidly became infected by radical Islamists, giving Russia the opportunity, not unreasonably, to claim that, in the interest of preventing Islamist chaos, it was backing strongmen on the opposite side (Haftar in Libya and Assad in Syria). Egypt is a similar case. Russia took advantage of the Obama administration’s aversion to the Sisi regime’s human rights abuses following the overthrow of Muslim Brotherhood rule to increase Russian influence in Cairo, as exemplified by Egypt’s current diplomatic support for the Russian intervention in Syria. The second story is the 2015 Iran nuclear deal brokered by the Obama administration, and reluctantly accepted by the Trump administration, whose advocates claimed that it was the best way to stop Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon without the resort to force. Russia joined sanctions against Iran, but since they were lifted, Moscow has developed warmer relations with Tehran, as exemplified by the way it acted as a key broker between Saudi Arabia and Iran to set up the November 2016 OPEC agreement. By contrast with Moscow, the Trump administration has taken a hard-line stance toward Tehran. It has various motives for that shift: Iranian missile testing since the deal was signed; Iranian support for Shiite militia groups in Iraq, Syria, Yemen, and Lebanon; and a belief that traditional U.S. allies such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Israel are in need of greater support (notwithstanding that many Israelis supported the nuclear deal). The third story is the role that radical Sunni Islamist networks now play in the region, enabled by social media and other online tools that facilitate networking. One simply cannot explain the speed and scale at which the Islamic State formed, for example, without that network effect. These fluid jihadi networks have proved effective in exploiting tears in the fabric of order in fragile states, and then governing captured ground, predominantly in areas with Sunni majority populations, above all in western Iraq, northern Syria, and southern Yemen. When one puts these three stories together, we see the nexus of the current U.S.- Russia standoff in Syria.When one puts these three stories together, we see the nexus of the current U.S.- Russia standoff in Syria. At the center of the nexus is the fact that while the U.S.-led coalition has done a good job of beating back the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, the policy goal under both the Obama and Trump administrations has only been negatively defined as the defeat of the Islamic State. Neither administration has set out a positive vision for who will govern territory cleared of the Islamic State. In other words, the U.S. has a military strategy without a political counterpart — and the more the Islamic State’s territorial control has been squeezed, the more evident the absence of U.S. political strategy has become. Enter the Trump administration, which in keeping with its broader hard-line stance toward Iran, has been consistently clear about who it does not want to govern r-captured ground, namely, Iran-backed Shiite militias, who form a large part both of Assad’s ground forces and indeed Baghdad’s. Hence the Trump administration has taken the view that both Sunni jihadi groups and Shiite militias should be grouped under the same category of radical Islamic terrorism. Consistent with this, it has stepped up action against Shiite paramilitary groups in Syria. Furthermore, the administration’s hard-line attitude, conveyed by Trump in his visit to Riyadh in May, encouraged the blockade of Qatar by Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain, and Egypt, on the basis of alleged Qatari support for Iranian proxies. But the glaring absence of a U.S. positive political vision in the Middle East has left its negatively defined anti-Islamic State and anti-Iranian goals untethered, which has generated regional confusion. Imagine a sheepdog who is good at barking, but has little sense of direction: The Middle East is now in the position of its harried flock. Even the administration itself seemed confused about how to respond to the implications of its own strategy, as was clear from its plainly contradictory signals on the Qatar crisis: While President Trump initially enthusiastically endorsed the blockade of Qatar in public, his national security team sought to de-escalate it behind the scenes, and this calmer line seems to be prevailing. So, what does Washington positively want? Who knows.So, what does Washington positively want? Who knows. Although the most likely outcome of the Qatar crisis at this point is a U.S. brokered de-escalation, it is likely that a jilted Doha will subsequently look to become less dependent on the United States by building up existing relations with Turkey, which already has a base in Doha; Russia, which already has strong commercial links with the emirate (Qatar owns a large stake in Rosneft, for example); and Iran, with whom it needs good relations given the need to cooperate over the shared exploitation of natural gas fields in the Persian Gulf. The limits of having no positive political strategy are also evident in Iraq and Syria. In Iraq, the United States military has effectively helped clear ground for Iranian Shiite militias to backfill, which contradicts the administration’s anti-Iranian position. The only real alternative is to support a greater governance role for Kurdish groups, potentially as part of an enlarged independent Kurdish state. But so far, the U.S. position has been to support the unity of Iraq. In Syria, the situation is more complex, because unlike the Iraqi Kurds, who have reasonably good relations with Ankara, the Turkish government is vehemently opposed to any kind of independent Kurdish state in northern Syria. But the U.S.-led coalition overwhelmingly relies on Kurdish ground forces in Syria, and they hold most of the ground cleared from the Islamic State. Does the United States support a Kurdish state in northern Syria? We don’t know. Has it provided any alternative to a Kurdish state in northern Syria? No. Is the territory still legally part of Syria? Yes. Unsurprisingly, there is serious confusion on the ground, which has produced the U.S.-Russian escalation we see today. So back to the original question: Are we are headed toward a great-power conflict in the middle east? In my view, until the U.S. presents a positive political strategy, we will continue to have direct clashes between **Russian-supported Shiite militias and U.S. forces**, which may well produce an **accident** in which either Russia shoots down a U.S. plane or vice versa. Even then, I think that neither Washington nor Moscow would rationally want a conventional fight. But conflict dynamics are never wholly rational; far from it. Violence can generate new emotional pressures in conflict and spin out of control in a direction nobody anticipated. Besides the risk of escalation with Russia, the more the United States starts directly attacking Shiite militias, the more likely the Iranian nuclear deal will completely break down. This would reopen the possibility of a U.S. war with Iran. Even before that point, Iran would likely react to counter the United States in the region by exerting much more aggressive influence over Baghdad. The nightmare scenario would be an Iranian puppet like ex-Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki getting back into power and issuing a demand for U.S. forces to leave Iraq, which would put Washington in a vexed position of either accepting or returning to direct rule. To avoid escalations of this sort, the Trump administration should now lay out a positively defined political vision for the Middle East, which would accompany and tether its negatively defined anti-Islamic State and anti-Iranian goals. At this time, the fundamental part of this vision must be a clear U.S. position on the future of Kurdish-held areas in Iraq and Syria.

**Accidents with Russia cause nuclear war. Arbatov, 17** [Alexey Arbatov is the head of the Center for International Security at the Primakov National Research Institute of World Economy and International Relations. (“Beyond the Nuclear Threshold: Russia, NATO, and Nuclear First Use” https://www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Beyond-the-Nuclear-Threshold.pdf)]

It is worthy of note that the latest versions of the Russian Military Doctrine of December 2014 and the U.S. Nuclear Posture of 2010 have only two principal differences. One is that the U.S. is apparently willing to defend its allies with the use of nuclear weapons, if they are attacked by overwhelming conventional forces, whereas Russia does not provide such assurance. The other is that Russia is ready to use nuclear arms if facing the prospect of defeat by large-scale conventional aggression, while the United States for obvious reasons does not envision such a contingency. As for hypothetical NATO-Russia conflict, which at present should be of primary concern, there are three conceivable causes of nuclear first use: 1. The “traditional” scenario of using tactical nuclear weapons as an escalation from a conventional conflict to prevent one’s imminent defeat. 2. Nuclear use due to an accident or provocation. 3. Reaction to attacks by an enemy’s conventional weapons against one’s nuclear forces and their C3I systems (which may be defined by a term “**entanglement**”). In today’s world, there are two trends aggravating the danger of first use. One is the tense standoff between Russian and U.S./NATO armed forces over Ukraine, and in the Baltic, Black Sea, and Arctic regions, as well as a lack of cooperation in parallel military operations in Syria. To some extent, similar conflict might erupt between China and the U.S. or its allies in the Western Pacific over Taiwan and disputed islands and the jurisdiction of territorial seas. The second trend is the development of new weaponry, C3I systems and operational concepts, which erode the traditional delineation between nuclear and conventional arms, between offensive and defensive systems, and between a local conflict and a regional—or even global—war. Escalation of local conflict One of the great paradoxes of today is that the level of armed forces concentrated on both sides of NATO-Russia common border is much lower than 25 years ago,1 but the risk of armed conflict is much higher. This is due to several factors. In the absence of mutually recognized dividing lines, “quasi-frozen” conflicts in Ukraine, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Moldova could **suddenly erupt** and draw Poland, the Baltic states, Turkey, and Romania - together with the rest of NATO - into a military clash with Russia. Discarding the fears of its weaker neighbors, Russia considers NATO expansion to its borders to be inherently unlawful and threatening. Although the present scale of the alliance deployment is modest, these forces are considered only a forward echelon of NATO’s altogether superior conventional military power, which may be promptly redeployed from the rest of Europe and across the Atlantic from the United States. The next war might thus take place much closer to Russia’s heartland than envisioned 40- 50 years ago, which makes Moscow’s fears and stakes in a potential conflict much higher. To demonstrate its resolve and toughness Russia is challenging NATO near its territory, where Russian conventional forces are naturally superior. Even in peacetime, large-scale military exercises of Russian and NATO armed forces close to each other create a threat of collisions and accidents between ships and aircraft with an accompanying risk of escalation. Such a chain reaction might be hard to stop: the Kremlin is keen to prove that the weakness of the 1990s will never return, while the White House is determined to demonstrate that it remains the “toughest guy on the block”. In the present state of confrontation, a direct military conflict between Russia and NATO in Eastern Europe, the Baltic or the Black seas would provoke an early use of nuclear arms by any side which consider defeat otherwise unavoidable. This risk is exacerbated by the fact that tactical nuclear and conventional systems are **co-located** at the bases of general purpose forces and employ dual-purpose launchers and delivery vehicles of the Navy, Air Force, and ground forces. Should the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF)2 collapse, and deployment of new medium and shorter range missiles in Europe by either or both sides become a reality, the prospect of early nuclear use and a consequential prompt escalation of nuclear strikes from theater to strategic level would be much more probable. The way to deal with the above-mentioned dangers requires making several moves: The first is to apply a more concerted effort to peacefully settle Europe’s ongoing conflicts, above all in Ukraine and Moldova. If the Minsk agreements are not implemented, two years since their conclusion, they should be supplemented with effective enforcement mechanisms. Secondly, the INF Treaty must be preserved and mutual accusatiounites of non-compliance should be addressed and removed through diplomacy. Thirdly, the scale of military exercises of Russia and NATO should be reduced on a mutual basis and separated geographically. Confidence-building and transparency measures (Vienna Document, Open Skies Treaty) should be expanded and the U.S.-Soviet accident voidance conventions (of 1972 and 1989) should be enhanced and put on a NATO-Russia footing. Finally, an agreement should be reached to halt the military buildup on both sides of the NATO-Russian border at the present level, with the intention to reduce force deployments in the future. **Accidents** As reliable as negative control systems are (e.g. the prevention of unauthorized nuclear use), accidents are possible, even between the U.S. and Russia. A frightening example of things going terribly wrong was provided by the 1995 accident involving the launch of a Norwegian geodesic rocket, which was taken for a Trident 2 missile, triggering the Russian early warning system. The event was urgently reported to the president, the “Cheget” system was activated, and Boris Yeltsin, as he said later, for several minutes held his finger “on the nuclear button” – until the incident was settled. But what if the event had been in fact an unauthorized single launch of Trident-2, or a French SLBM? Would it have started a massive exchange of nuclear strikes and a global catastrophe? To complicate the picture further, a growing number of nations will in the near and medium term acquire sea-based ballistic and cruise missiles and hypersonic boost-glide weapons with variable trajectories, which would make accidents or provocations more likely and the process of identifying an attacker less certain. The avoidance of nuclear war by miscalculation or provocation should be the top priority for the U.S. and Russia in spite of the tensions in their relations, or rather precisely because of such tensions.

# Human Rights 1AC

## Inherency

The Trump Administration used an emergency declaration to bypass Congressional oversight on weapons sales to Saudi Arabia. Oswald, 19 [Rachel Oswald is a foreign policy reporter for CQNow and a contributor to Roll Call. “Democrats spar with State official over arms sales maneuver,” 12 June 2019, <https://www.rollcall.com/news/congress/democrats-spar-with-state-official-over-arms-sales-maneuver>]

A senior State Department official on Wednesday appeared to blame Democrats for the administration’s decision last month to declare a state of emergency over Iran to avoid congressional review of billions of dollars of weapon sales to Arab Gulf states. R. Clarke Cooper, assistant secretary of State for political-military affairs, attributed the emergency order to holds placed in spring 2018 by Senate Foreign Relations ranking member Robert Menendez on $2 billion in proposed precision-guided missile sales to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Menendez, D-N.J., placed the holds in response to the many civilian casualties in the Yemen civil war, in which the two Gulf nations are fighting against Iranian-backed Houthi insurgents. The holds were broken with the emergency declaration. “Yes, the protracted process did contribute to the conditions that necessitated an emergency,” Cooper testified at a House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing examining the rationale for the May emergency declaration. Menendez’s holds were not legally binding but part of a longstanding bipartisan tradition between the executive branch and lawmakers for resolving concerns about weapon exports before they are formally announced and put before Congress for review under the Arms Export Control Act. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo cited the emergency declaration as justification to avoid an otherwise mandatory 30-day review period under the arms export law. The $2 billion in missile sales were combined with other weapon systems to form a 22-component $8.1 billion package. Democrats used the hearing to roundly castigate the Trump administration’s rationale for declaring an emergency, alternately characterizing it as “phony” and “bogus.” They accused Cooper and other State Department officials, including Pompeo, of trying to circumvent lawful congressional oversight. “It’s a little hard to believe that we’re supposed to take your complete disregard for the congressional review process as an indication that you value congressional engagement,” Rep. David Cicilline, said to Cooper, who was involved in the decision on the emergency declaration. “This is gas-lighting. Your claiming you’re ignoring this provision is your way of affirming the role Congress plays. That’s an absurdity.” Rep. Abigail Spanberger chided Cooper for his complaints that Democrats were drawing out the arms sale review process. “You’ve referred multiple times to a protracted process and I would just remind you, sir, that the protracted process you are bemoaning is, in fact, the constitutional process that we as members of Congress have a responsibility to exercise when we are selling our weapon systems that are this lethal to countries abroad,” the Virginia Democrat said. Menendez also responded in a statement to CQ Roll Call. “Disdain for law and process is not an excuse to break it,” he said. “It’s also not an excuse to create a fake emergency, mislead Congress, and rush weapons into Saudi hands without assurances that they won’t be used to kill civilians.” After Saudi dissident journalist and Virginia resident Jamal Khashoggi was assassinated by Saudi government agents in Turkey last October, Menendez’s office said the State Department effectively ended substantive engagement over the human rights concerns raised around the proposed weapon sales. “Clearly, the secretary of State decided that he couldn’t answer those concerns substantively or persuasively, and so concocted an emergency so he wouldn’t have to do so,” said Menendez spokesman Juan Pachon. “You have to give Mr. Cooper points for creativity in how he tries to defend the indefensible.”

Some are pushing for a review of arms sales after US weapons have been found in possession of some Al-Qaeda fighters; due diligence is needed. Vittori, 19 [Jodi Vittori is a nonresident scholar in the Democracy, Conflict, and Governance Program. She is an expert on the linkages of corruption, state fragility, illicit finance, and U.S. national security. She is also the U.S. research and policy manager for Transparency International’s Defense and Security Program and an adjunct professor at Georgetown University. Prior to joining Transparency International, Vittori was a senior policy adviser for Global Witness, where she managed educational and advocacy activities on linkages between corruption and national security. Prior to that, Vittori served in the U.S. Air Force, advancing to the rank of lieutenant colonel; her overseas service included Afghanistan, Iraq, South Korea, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain, and she was assigned to NATO’s only counter-corruption task force. She was an assistant professor and military faculty at the U.S. Air Force Academy and the National Defense University. Vittori has published on conflict finance and illicit financial flows and she is the author of the book Terrorist Financing and Resourcing and a co-author of the handbook Corruption Threats and International Missions: Practical Guidance for Leaders. She is a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy and received her PhD in International Studies from the University of Denver. “American Weapons in the Wrong Hands,” 19 February 2019, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/02/19/american-weapons-in-wrong-hands-pub-78408>]

Earlier this month, a CNN investigation provided further evidence that U.S. military equipment has been transferred from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to a variety of militias, including some linked to al-Qaeda. Given the additional scrutiny of U.S.-Saudi relations since the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, recent U.S. Senate and House resolutions on arms sales to Saudi Arabia, and ongoing Saudi and Emirati tensions with neighbor Qatar, now is the time for a full-scale review of U.S. arms sales to the Gulf region. There are clear rules against arms transfers to third parties. There are also end-use monitoring requirements for U.S. arms exports, but these checks are hardly universal. Given that at least some of the equipment found in militia hands can be tied to U.S. arms sales, the Department of Defense, State Department, and Commerce Department are clearly not adequately monitoring sales. (Which U.S. agency is responsible for end-use checks depends on the type of sale conducted.) The United States is the largest arms supplier to Saudi Arabia and the UAE, two lucrative customers of the U.S. defense industry. Saudi Arabia was the largest importer of U.S. arms, having purchased $112 billion in weapons from 2013 through 2017. The UAE was the second-largest importer of U.S. arms in the same time span. Since 2009, over $27 billion in weapons have been offered to the UAE in thirty-two separate deals under the Pentagon’s Foreign Military Sales program. These arms sales continue, despite both countries’ history of diverting arms to favored militias. Saudi Arabia has been purchasing weapons from third parties to pass on to allied governments and groups at least since the 1970s, sometimes on behalf of the U.S. government. Transparency International’s Government Defense Anti-Corruption Index ranks Saudi Arabia and the UAE in its high-risk category for corruption, with Saudi Arabia receiving a score of zero out of four (zero being the worst) and the UAE receiving a score of one for lacking a well-scrutinized process for arms export decisions that aligns with international protocols. The CNN investigation comes as Congress ramps up its opposition to U.S. support for the Saudi-led coalition. Former U.S. president Barack Obama’s administration only reluctantly agreed to support the Saudi-led coalition as it went on the offense in 2015, seeing it as an unwinnable proxy war against Iran. Obama had put restrictions on arms sales and intelligence cooperation with the coalition in 2016, but President Donald Trump’s administration lifted those restrictions in March 2017, just prior to Trump’s overseas visit to Saudi Arabia. Saudi human rights abuses in Yemen using U.S. weapons, such as the airstrike on a school bus in August 2018 that killed forty children, and the murder of Khashoggi have shocked the U.S. public and Congress. In the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018, Congress required the departments of Defense and State to certify that the Saudi-led coalition was doing all it could to prevent civilian casualties; the State Department failed to provide that justification when it was due earlier this month. In December, the Senate approved a measure to end arms shipments to Saudi Arabia, despite the Trump administration’s strong opposition to the bill. The measure did not have enough votes to override a presidential veto, but senators have promised to introduce an even tougher bill in 2019. Last week, the House also passed a measure to end U.S. assistance to the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen, but again without enough votes to override an expected presidential veto. The Trump administration continues to approve arms shipments to the Saudi coalition. In 2018 alone, the United States directly sold $4.4 billion in arms to Saudi Arabia, and the administration approved the latest sale of Patriot missile upgrades in December. Tens of billions of dollars in deals with Saudi Arabia remain in the pipeline as well, awaiting approvals as part of the controversial, alleged May 2017 $110 billion arms deal with Saudi Arabia. The Trump administration has shown little inclination to loosen its close ties with Saudi Arabia and the UAE despite the death of Khashoggi or the conduct of the war in Yemen. The monarchs of Saudi Arabia and the UAE can conduct these proxy operations and divert equipment with no oversight and almost no input from their own citizens. Both countries are absolute monarchies, and their legislative bodies are advisory and contain only regime-approved members. Both countries also stamp out any free press and most independent civil society. Information on defense policies, including the war in Yemen, is kept secret by the monarchs and their inner circles. Most available information on Saudi and Emirati coalition operations and weapons transfers comes from external parties, such as U.S. government weapons sales notifications, news organizations, and human rights organizations.

## Plan

**Thus the plan: The United States federal government, through an act of Congress, should pass H.R. 7080 and switch to an up vote when authorizing arms sales.**

## Solvency

Passage of HR 7080 would grant Congress broad oversight power and would close the loophole in the AECA that allows for “emergency” declarations to justify arms sales. Mahanty & Eikenberry, 18 [Daniel R. Mahanty (@danmahanty) is the director of the U.S. program at the Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC). Prior to joining CIVIC, Dan spent 16 years at the U.S. Department of State. In 2012, he created and led the Office of Security and Human Rights in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor. In this role, he oversaw efforts to integrate human rights in U.S. security assistance and arms sales, advance the prevention of recruitment and use of child soldiers, and promote policies related to protecting civilians in conflict. Dan holds a Masters from Georgetown in U.S. National Security Policy and a Bachelors in Economics from George Mason University. He is a Colin L. Powell Fellow, a term member of the Council on Foreign Relations, a Truman National Security Fellow, and served on the board of advisors for the NGO, “Women LEAD Nepal”. Eric Eikenberry (@YemenPeaceNews) is the director of policy & advocacy at the Yemen Peace Project, which seeks to foster a more peaceful and constructive U.S. foreign policy towards Yemen. “How the “Arms Sales Oversight Act” Could Prevent American Arms from Contributing to the Next Overseas Crisis,” 5 December 2018, <https://www.justsecurity.org/61719/arms-sales-oversight-act-prevent-american-arms-contributing-overseas-crisis/>]

The debate over U.S. complicity in Yemen’s humanitarian catastrophe is coming to a head in the Senate, with a series of votes on the Sanders-Lee-Murphy war powers resolution. But beyond this immediate measure, other members of Congress are planning to increase their long-term leverage over weapons sales to problematic security partners. Foremost among them, Representatives Ted Lieu (D-Calif.) and Jim McGovern (D-Mass.) recently introduced House Resolution 7080, the “Arms Sale Oversight Act,” to little fanfare. The bill’s unassuming title and procedural focus should not escape the attention of conventional arms control advocates. If passed, H.R. 7080 would expand Congress’s constricted ability to vote down damaging arms sales and mark a first step toward preventing the United States from exacerbating the human cost of conflict. The legislation would reform Section 36 of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA) to ensure that any supportive representative can move to discharge a joint resolution of disapproval against a proposed arms sale ten days following its introduction if the presiding committee fails to report it. Win the vote in the House, pass the same joint resolution in the Senate (or vice versa), and Congress has successfully exercised its primary legal means of immediately barring a harmful transfer (whether or not the White House agrees). The measure could dramatically reshape congressional authorities over arms exports. Currently, due to a separate AECA provision, only senators are guaranteed a vote on a joint resolution of disapproval. Absent H.R. 7080’s proposed reform, corresponding House resolutions will remain “highly privileged”—which means that those seeking to stop a transfer at present can only secure a vote only if leadership acquiesces. This inter-chamber imbalance not only robs representatives of a vote in determining U.S. foreign policy, but also diminishes the efforts of conventional arms control advocates in the Senate. Because joint legislation from the House is unlikely to see the floor, Senate efforts can be reduced to signaling opposition to, rather than truly shutting down, an administration’s proposed sale. By correcting this imbalance, H.R. 7080 will open another avenue to ending U.S. enabling of other governments’ gross violations of international humanitarian and human rights laws. Nowhere is this avenue more needed than for Yemen’s internationalized civil war. There, parties to the conflict routinely conduct indiscriminate attacks on civilians and have created a humanitarian crisis that has pushed millions to the brink of starvation. Yet, it is Saudi Arabia and the UAE, using U.S.-manufactured weapons and logistical support, that have caused the majority of the conflict’s recorded civilian casualties. Causing further concern, a new documentary aired by Deutsche Welle, presents credible evidence that the coalition states have diverted U.S.-manufactured armored vehicles to unaccountable non-state militias. Admittedly, the Senate has rarely made a serious attempt to block an arms sale by resolution of disapproval, but support for exercising greater Congressional oversight over arms sales seems to be on the rise. And even when a resolution of disapproval fails to pass, mere consideration of the legislation can send clear signals to the executive branch and recipient countries alike, and can stimulate valuable policy debate. While S.J. Res. 39, a 2016 effort to block tank sales to Saudi Arabia, mustered 27 votes, S.J. Res. 42, a June 2017 measure to freeze a sale of precision-guided munitions to Saudi Arabia, garnered 47. The administration has not moved forward with a further sale of as many as 120,000 precision munitions to both Saudi Arabia and the UAE due to Senate opposition; the weapons’ traceable serial numbers, as damning as “made in the USA” stickers, could embroil the United States in further strikes on buses, hospitals, and homes. While the threat of unicameral opposition has worked for now, the reforms advanced by H.R. 7080 would further increase the chances for debate on arms sales in the Congress, and create a more efficient path for the House and Senate to indefinitely arrest a sale. Had the procedures outlined in H.R. 7080 been in place in June 2017, H.J. Res. 102 (the House companion to S.J. Res. 42), could have forced a vote on a motion to discharge instead of dying quietly in committee, creating a debate that, as it did on the Senate side, swayed moderate offices against the sale and focused a news cycle on U.S. complicity in Saudi-led coalition attacks on civilians.

The effective embargo, implemented by the aff, would signal to the world our disdain for the Yemeni war and would allow us to hold Saudi Arabia accountable. Spindel, 19 [Jennifer Spindel is an assistant professor of international security at the University of Oklahoma, and the Associate Director of the Cyber Governance and Policy Center. You can follow her on Twitter: @jsspindel. “The Case for Suspending American Arms Sales to Saudi Arabia,” 14 May 2019, <https://warontherocks.com/2019/05/the-case-for-suspending-american-arms-sales-to-saudi-arabia/>]

Arms embargos are often dismissed as symbolic, and therefore ineffective. But just because something is symbolic, doesn’t mean that it won’t have an effect. A U.S. arms embargo against Saudi Arabia would be a clear signal of American disproval of Saudi actions in Yemen, and would be an equally important signal to Washington’s allies, who are left wondering if the United States is ambivalent or uninterested in the growing Yemeni humanitarian catastrophe. By continuing to provide weapons, President Donald Trump tacitly endorses Saudi policies. This signal is strengthened by Trump’s recent veto of the resolution that called for an end to U.S. support for the war in Yemen. While Trump justified the veto by saying that the resolution was a “dangerous attempt to weaken my constitutional authorities,” statements from Congressional representatives show they are aware of the powerful signals sent by arms sales. Sen. Tim Kaine said that the veto “shows the world [Trump] is determined to keep aiding a Saudi-backed war that has killed thousands of civilians and pushed millions more to the brink of starvation.” An arms embargo against Saudi Arabia would be a signal both to leaders of that country, and other states, that the United States does not endorse Saudi actions. Those arguing against a ban are correct on one point: Embargos as blunt force instruments of coercion are rarely effective. But arms embargos are effective as signals of political dissatisfaction, and serve an important communication role in international politics.

By switching to an approval, instead of a disapproval model, Congress will be given an effective check on executive ability to sell weapons. Ford, 19 [Matt Ford is a staff writer at The New Republic. “A Farewell to Arms Deals,” 11 June 2019, <https://newrepublic.com/article/154160/trump-arms-deals-executive-power-democrats-congress>]

Part of the problem stems from INS v. Chadha, a Supreme Court decision handed down decades ago. It’s an unusual case. After Jagdish Rai Chadha’s student visa expired in 1972, U.S. immigration officials let the Kenyan-born South Asian man stay in the country because of dangerous racial tensions in Kenya. In 1975, however, the House of Representatives overrode that determination, effectively ordering Chadha and five other foreign nationals to be deported. He filed a lawsuit to challenge a provision of U.S. immigration law that granted each chamber of Congress that power. In a landmark 7–2 ruling in 1983, the Supreme Court sided with Chadha and effectively struck down the legislative veto. Chief Justice Warren Burger, writing for the majority, said that the provision in question was “essentially legislative in purpose and effect.” As a result, it violated the Constitution’s bicameralism requirement by allowing one chamber of Congress to undertake a legislative act on its own. More importantly, the court ruled that such vetoes violate the Constitution’s requirement that all legislation be presented to the president for his signature or veto. Justice Byron White took the rare step of reading his dissent from the bench, signaling his deep disapproval of the court’s decision. “Today’s decision strikes down in one fell swoop provisions in more laws enacted by Congress than the court has cumulatively invalidated in its history,” he wrote. He argued that his colleagues had insisted on a separation of powers far stricter than what the Framers had envisioned, one ill-suited for the modern era of the administrative state. “To be sure, the President may have preferred unrestricted power,” White wrote, “but that could be precisely why Congress thought it essential to retain a check on the exercise of delegated authority.” What would happen next? White wrote that without the legislative veto, lawmakers faced a “Hobson’s choice.” Congress could write narrow laws that delegated little authority, “leaving itself with a hopeless task of writing laws with the requisite specificity to cover endless special circumstances across the entire policy landscape.” Or it could “abdicate its lawmaking function to the Executive Branch and independent agencies” by writing broad laws for civil servants to flesh out later. “To choose the former leaves major national problems unresolved; to opt for the latter risks unaccountable policymaking by those not elected to fill that role,” White wrote. Lawmakers quickly realized how the court’s decision would reshape their relations with the White House. Among them was Delaware Senator Joe Biden, then a junior member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and now a presidential candidate. He pointed to two areas where the justices had upended years of compromise between the two branches: U.S. military involvement under the War Powers Resolution, and arms sales to foreign governments. “The Supreme Court’s decision has shattered a careful and workable accommodation between Congress and the Executive, a development that, in my opinion, threatens our ability to fashion a foreign policy that is consistent, coherent, and safe,” he wrote in a 1984 Syracuse Law Review article. For arms sales, Biden’s solution was to invert the legal mechanism in question. Rather than giving Congress an opportunity to stop each sale before it took effect, his bill would have required the White House to seek affirmative support from lawmakers first. “Under a joint resolution of approval, of course, a sale cannot go through until it is approved by both houses and signed by the President,” he wrote. “That can take up a lot of Senate and House time, but it is the only way for Congress to retain the same degree of control we had over arms sales before Chadha.” This maneuver would remove the mathematical disadvantage faced by lawmakers: the president’s veto power. “Under a joint resolution of disapproval, Congress can get its way only if it has enough votes to override a presidential veto,” Biden explained. “So instead of needing fifty-one senators’ votes to defeat an arms sale we would need sixty-seven, plus two-thirds of the House of Representatives.” In other words, so long as the president can muster the support of one-third of one chamber of Congress, lawmakers are generally powerless to halt controversial arms sales to foreign powers.

## The Advantage: Human Rights

Yemen is the world’s worst humanitarian crisis because the US continues to sell arms to Saudi Arabia. Aljamra, 19 [Helal Aljamra is a Yemeni journalist, graduated from Sana'a University, Media Faculty in 2008 and has worked in the Yemeni press since 2007. He worked as an editor for the Yemeni newspaper Al-Nida. In 2010 he was appointed Editor-in-Chief of the same newspaper. He co-founded the Yemeni Parliamentary Observatory and worked as a press editor for the Al Marsad website in 2009. He carried out numerous investigations and worked on the enforced disappearance cases during the Yemeni wars (Saada war 2009-2010), which provoked great reactions as well as press inquiries about Yemeni prisons and abuses. He was awarded the second best news article Award at the 12th session of a competition organized by the Center for Arab Women for Training and Research «Kawther», based in Tunisia in 2014. Participated in a number of specialized training courses in the field of journalism as well as the preparation and conducting of investigations. He holds a Master's Degree in Political Communication from the Higher Institute of Media and Communication in Rabat in 2018. “How U.S. Relations with Saudi Arabia Are Prolonging the War in Yemen,” 9 January 2019, <https://insidearabia.com/us-saudi-arabia-war-yemen/>]

The Yemeni people have tried to appeal to the international community to intervene in the conflict in Yemen for years with little success. Despite the words of the UN Secretary General himself and numerous reports published by international organizations describing the war in Yemen as the “world’s worst humanitarian crisis,” the response from the international community has been sparse. Why are the cries of the Yemeni people falling on deaf ears? The answer may lie in the multi-billion dollar arms and trade deals that many countries already have and continue to sign with Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Since the beginning of the Saudi-UAE-led military intervention in Yemen in 2015, the West has provided political and logistical support, intelligence, and weapons to fuel the war. Since assuming control of Saudi Arabia’s Ministry of Defense and thus the de facto rule of Saudi Arabia in 2015, MbS has bolstered the kingdom’s relationships with countries such as the U.S., Britain, and France through long-term arms deals. Currently, Saudi Arabia is the top arms importer in the Arab region. Despite strong opposition by several international human rights organizations and activists in the West, most of the proposed arms deals have progressed without impediment. Arms sales to the Middle East, Asia, and Oceania (comprised of Australia and the nearby islands in the Pacific Ocean) have increased dramatically in the past ten years. “Saudi Arabia was the world’s second-largest arms importer, with arms imports increasing by 225 percent [between 2013 and 2017], compared with 2008 to 2012.” The kingdom is followed by Egypt and the UAE, according to a report published by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. World superpowers’ perspectives of the conflict in Yemen directly correlate with the volume of weapons they export to Saudi Arabia and the UAE. The most steadfast supporters of the Saudi-UAE-driven war appear to be the countries that benefit most from the arms sales and subsidies they receive from the two countries. “In 2013 to 2017, 61 percent of [Saudi] arms imports came from the USA and 23 percent from the UK. Deliveries during this period included 78 combat aircrafts, 72 combat helicopters, 328 tanks, and about 4,000 other armored vehicles,” according to the report. U.S. arms exports to Saudi Arabia alone reached more than $43 billion between 2015 and 2017. Recently, Riyadh has consistently tried to use generous military and trade deals to buy the world’s silence—the most notorious perhaps being the deal that President Trump signed with King Salman in mid-May 2017. This deal included several military, defense, and commercial cooperation agreements; described as “the deal of the century,” the agreements are valued at a total of $460 billion.

**Arming authoritarian regimes, like Saudi Arabia, makes us responsible for the violence they carry out. Rovera, 15** (Donatella Rovera is the senior crisis response advisor for Amnesty International. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/08/26/the-human-carnage-of-saudi-arabias-war-in-yemen/>, 8-26)

The Houthis and their allies are the declared targets of the coalition’s 5-month-old air campaign. In reality, however, it is civilians like little Rahma and her family who all too often pay the price of this war. Hundreds have been killed in such strikes while asleep in their homes, when going about their daily activities, or in the very places where they had sought refuge from the conflict. The United States, meanwhile, has provided the weapons that have made many of these killings possible. The conflict has worsened an already dire humanitarian situation in the Middle East’s poorest country. Prior to the conflict, more than half of Yemen’s population was in need of some humanitarian assistance. That number has now increased to more than 80 percent, while a coalition-imposed blockade on commercial imports remains in place in much of the country and the ability of international aid agencies to deliver desperately needed supplies continues to be hindered by the conflict. The damage inflicted by a coalition airstrike last week on the port of the northwestern city of Hudaydah, the only point of entry for humanitarian aid to the north of the country, is only the latest example. The situation is poised to deteriorate further: The U.N. World Food Program warned last week of the possibility of famine in Yemen for millions, mostly women and children. Bombs dropped by the Saudi-led air campaign have all too often landed on civilians, contributing to this humanitarian disaster. In the ruins of the Musaab bin Omar school, the meager possessions of the families who were sheltering there included a few children’s clothes, blankets, and cooking pots. I found no sign of any military activity that could have made the site a military target. But I did see the remains of the weapon used in the attack — a fin from a U.S.-designed MK80 general-purpose bomb, similar to those found at many other locations of coalition strikes. This was far from the only instance where U.S. weapons killed Yemeni civilians. In the nearby village of Waht, another coalition airstrike killed 11 worshipers in a mosque two days earlier. There, too, bewildered survivors and families of the victims asked why they had been targeted. One of the two bombs dropped on the mosque failed to explode and was still mostly intact when I visited the site. It was a U.S.-manufactured MK82 general-purpose bomb, fitted with a fusing system also of U.S. manufacture. The 500-pound bomb was stamped “explosive bomb” and “tritonal” — the latter a designation indicating the type of explosive it contains. Mistakes in the identification of targets and in the execution of attacks can and do happen in wars. In such cases, it is incumbent on the responsible parties to promptly take the necessary corrective action to avoid the recurrence of the same mistakes. But there is no sign that this is occurring in Yemen: Five months since the onset of the coalition airstrike campaign, innocent civilians continue to be killed and maimed every day, raising serious concerns about an apparent disregard for civilian life and for fundamental principles of international humanitarian law. **Strikes that are carried out in the knowledge that they will cause civilian casualties are disproportionate or indiscriminate and constitute war crimes**. While the United States is not formally part of the Saudi-led coalition, it is **assisting the coalition** air campaign by providing intelligence and aerial refueling facilities to coalition bomber jets. The sum total of its assistance to the coalition makes the United States **partly responsible for civilian casualties** resulting from unlawful attacks. Washington has also long been a key supplier of military equipment to Saudi Arabia and other members of the coalition, providing them with the weapons that they are now unleashing in Yemen. Regardless of when the weapons used by coalition forces in Yemen were acquired — whether before or since the start of the air campaign — the countries that supplied the weapons have a responsibility to ensure that they are not used to commit violations of international law. **The poisonous legacy of these U.S.-made weapons will plague Yemen for years to come**. In Inshur, a village near the northern city of Saada, I found a field full of U.S.-made BLU-97 cluster submunitions — small bombs the size of a soda can that are contained in cluster bombs. Many lie in the field, still unexploded and posing a high risk for unsuspecting local residents, farmers, and animal herders who may step on them or pick them up, unaware of the danger. In one of the city’s hospitals, I met a 13-year-old boy who stepped on one of the unexploded cluster bombs in Inshur, causing it to explode. It smashed several bones in his foot. Cluster bombs were banned by an international convention in 2008. But in the 1990s, the United States sold the type of cluster bombs now littering the fields of Inshur to Saudi Arabia. Each of these cluster bombs contains up to 200 small bombs, which are dispersed by the bomb’s explosion over a large area. However, many of these smaller bombs often do not explode on impact, leaving a lethal legacy for years to come. Coalition airstrikes have been particularly intense in the north of the country, notably in and around Saada, a Houthi stronghold that is home to some 50,000 people. When I visited the city in July, I was shocked by the extent of the destruction: Saada now lies in ruin, with most of the population displaced and private homes, shops, markets, and public buildings reduced to rubble in relentless and often indiscriminate air bombardments. A coalition spokesman said in May that the entire city of Saada was considered a military target, in breach of international humanitarian law, which demands that belligerents distinguish between civilians and military targets at all times. International law is clearly being violated in Saada and the surrounding villages. A series of coalition strikes on a village in Sabr, near Saada, killed at least 50 civilians, most of them children, and injured nine others in the afternoon of June 3.

**Civilian casualties from strikes or famine are *entirely preventable* but entail massive suffering. Noack, 18** (Rick Noack, 11-21-18, Sciences Po Paris, BA; Johns Hopkins University, Aitchison Public Service Fellowship in Government; King's College London, MA in terrorism, security and society, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2018/11/21/children-have-starved-death-during-saudi-led-intervention-yemen-says-new-report/?utm_term=.b026eca4ad1c>)

More than 85,000 children may have died of hunger since Saudi Arabia intervened in the war in Yemen three years ago, according to Save the Children, an international NGO. “For every child killed by bombs and bullets, dozens are starving to death and it’s **entirely preventable**,” said Tamer Kirolos, Save the Children’s country director in Yemen. With only a few hospitals still operational, the nongovernmental organization says that the human toll of the conflict **cannot be fully captured** by simply relying on official numbers. Instead, the charity used historical mortality rates and United Nations data on Yemeni malnutrition to estimate that more than 25,000, or 20 to 30 percent of all acutely malnourished children, have died every year since April 2015. The estimates, the NGO said, may still be lower than the actual number of deaths. “Children who die in this way **suffer immensely** as their vital organ functions slow down and eventually stop. Their immune systems are so weak they are more prone to infections, with some too frail to even cry,” said Save the Children representative Kirolos. “Parents are having to witness their children wasting away, unable to do anything about it,” he said. According to the United Nations, half the Yemeni population suffers from famine. The United States has remained largely silent on the war, even when Saudi Arabia enacted a blockade on its borders with Yemen last November. Since then, human rights groups have struggled to supply some of the most malnourished areas in the country with food and drinking water. About 90 percent of the country is considered to be desert or arid and the Yemeni government heavily relied on food imports before the conflict. What began as a rebellion by the country’s Shiite-majority Houthi rebels during the Arab Spring has turned into a bigger confrontation between Saudi Arabia and its archrival Iran, which supports the Houthis. Saudi Arabia has received support from eight other Arab states that are also opposed to Iran’s influence. U.S. officials long argued that the involvement of Iran has made it impossible to end the conflict, but criticism of that assessment has mounted as the conflict became the world’s largest humanitarian crisis. Western nations have remained careful in calibrating their responses, to neither disgruntle the wealthy and investment-eager Saudi leadership nor domestic human rights supporters. Germany, for instance, reduced its arms equipment sales to Saudi Arabia and vowed to stop them completely, but approved new sales earlier this year. (Those sales have now been stopped amid the killing of Washington Post contributing columnist Khashoggi). In the United States, **Trump has put Saudi investments and arms purchases first**, even as members of his administration have pressured the Saudis to stop the Yemeni conflict. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo both said in October that the war should come to an end. The United States exports more arms to Saudi Arabia than any other country.

**US support for Saudi Arabia places millions at risk-prioritize reducing material violence over geostrategic chess. Almutawakel and Alfaqih, 18** (Almutawakel & Alfaqih, Award winning Human Rights Activists, 11-8-18, Radhya Almutawakel is a co-founder and leader of Mwatana Organization for Human Rights, which recently received the Roger Baldwin Medal of Liberty, a biennial prize awarded by U.S.-based Human Rights First. @ Abdulrasheed Alfaqih is a co-founder and leader of Mwatana Organization for Human Rights, which recently received the Roger Baldwin Medal of Liberty, a biennial prize awarded by U.S.-based Human Rights First. https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/11/08/saudi-arabia-and-the-united-arab-emirates-are-starving-yemenis-to-death-mbs-khashoggi-famine-yemen-blockade-houthis/)

Jamal Khashoggi was but the latest victim of a **reckless arrogance** that has become the hallmark of Saudi Arabia’s foreign policy. Yemenis were saddened, but not surprised, at the extent of the brutality exhibited in Khashoggi’s killing, because our country has been living through this same Saudi brutality for almost four years. As human rights advocates working in Yemen, we are intimately familiar with the violence, the killing of innocents, and the shredding of international norms that have been the hallmarks of Saudi Arabia’s military intervention in our country. For nearly four years, Saudi Arabia has led a coalition, along with the United Arab Emirates, that has cynically and viciously bombarded Yemen’s cities, blockaded Yemen’s ports, and prevented humanitarian aid from reaching millions in need. According to the Yemen Data Project, **Saudi and Emirati aircraft have conducted over 18,500 air raids** on Yemen since the war began—an average of over 14 attacks every day for over 1,300 days. They have bombed schools, hospitals, homes, markets, factories, roads, farms, and even historical sites. Tens of thousands of civilians, including thousands of children, have been killed or maimed by Saudi airstrikes. But the Saudis and Emiratis **couldn’t continue** their bombing campaign in Yemen **without U.S. military support**.Saudis and Emiratis couldn’t continue their bombing campaign in Yemen without U.S. military support. American planes refuel Saudi aircraft en route to their targets, and Saudi and Emirati pilots drop bombs made in the United States and the United Kingdom onto Yemeni homes and schools Nevertheless, U.S. attention to the war in Yemen has been largely confined to **brief spats of outrage** over particularly dramatic attacks, like the August school bus bombing that killed dozens of children. Saudi crimes in Yemen are not limited to regular and intentional bombing of civilians in violation of international humanitarian law. By escalating the war and destroying essential civilian infrastructure, Saudi Arabia is also responsible for the tens of thousands of Yemeni civilians who have died from preventable disease and starvation brought on by the war. The United Nations concluded that blockades have had “devastating effects on the civilian population” in Yemen, as Saudi and Emirati airstrikes have targeted Yemen’s food production and distribution, including the agricultural sector and the fishing industry. Meanwhile, the collapse of Yemen’s currency due to the war has prevented millions of civilians from purchasing the food that exists in markets. Food prices have skyrocketed, but civil servants haven’t received regular salaries in two years. **Yemenis are being starved to death on purpose,** with starvation of civilians used by Saudi Arabia as a weapon of war. Three-quarters of Yemen’s population—over 22 million men, women, and children—are currently dependent on international aid and protection. The U.N. warned in September that Yemen soon will reach a “tipping point,” beyond which it will be **impossible to avoid massive civilian deaths**. Over 8 million people are currently on the verge of starvation, a figure likely to rise to 14 million—half of the country—by the end of 2018Over 8 million people are currently on the verge of starvation, a figure likely to rise to 14 million—half of the country—by the end of 2018 if the fighting does not subside, import obstructions are not removed, and the currency is not stabilized. To be clear, there is no party in this war is without blood on its hands; our organization, Mwatana, has documented violations against civilians by all parties to the conflict in Yemen, not only Saudi Arabia. The Houthis have killed and injured hundreds of civilians through their use of landmines and indiscriminate shelling, while militias backed by the United Arab Emirates, Yemeni government-backed militias, and Houthi militias have arbitrarily detained, forcibly disappeared, and tortured civilians. **But the de facto immunity** that the international community has given Saudi Arabia through its **silence prevents real justice** for violations by all sides. The people of the Middle East have long and bitter experience with international double standards when it comes to human rights, as purported champions of universal rights in the West regularly ignore grave violations by their allies in the region, from the former shah of Iran to Saddam Hussein to Saudi Arabia’s current crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman. This double standard was on display during the crown prince’s recent tour of world capitals and Silicon Valley, where he was generally praised as a “reformer,” and media figures recited his vision for Saudi Arabia in the year 2030 without asking what will be left of Yemen by the year 2020 if the war continues. Similarly, this double standard is on display when Western policymakers downplay Saudi and Emirati violations of Yemenis’ human rights by claiming that a close partnership with Riyadh is needed to prevent perceived Iranian threats to the international community, without asking **whether that same community is also endangered** by Saudi Arabia’s daily violations of basic international norms. And yes, there is a double standard in the wall-to-wall coverage of Khashoggi’s horrific murder, when the daily murder of Yemenis by Saudi Arabia and other parties to the conflict in Yemen hardly merits mention. Those in the United States and elsewhere who are incensed by Khashoggi’s murder must summon similar moral clarity and **condemn Saudi Arabia’s daily killing of innocents** in Yemen.Those in the United States and elsewhere who are incensed by Khashoggi’s murder must summon similar moral clarity and condemn Saudi Arabia’s daily killing of innocents in Yemen. If Saudi violations are to be genuinely curtailed, Khashoggi’s killing must mark the beginning, not the end, of accountability for Saudi crimes. Khashoggi’s death has been reduced to a single data point, rather than being seen as the result **of subverting universal values** in favor of geopolitics or business interests. Reversing course—**ending U.S. military support for the Saudi-Emirati intervention** in Yemen and supporting U.N.-led peace efforts and the reopening of Yemen’s air and sea ports—can still **save millions of lives.** If U.S. lawmakers had spoken up and taken action on Yemen years ago, when Saudi Arabia’s rampant violations were already well known, thousands of Yemeni civilians who since then have been killed by airstrikes or starvation **would still be alive today**—and perhaps Jamal Khashoggi would be, too.

**The exacerbation of war by the Saudi coalition independently puts 8 million at the risk of starvation**

**OXFAM ’17** [OXFAM briefing note, December 2017, “MISSILES AND FOOD Yemen’s man-made food security crisis”]

1 ON THE BRINK OF FAMINE At the end of 2017, **Yemen faces the world’s largest food security emergency**. 12 More than two-and-a-half years after the escalation of the conflict in March 2015, **the effects of war, destruction, malnutrition and disease have left 21.7 million people in need of humanitarian or protection assistance**; of these, **10.8 million are in acute need.**13 In less than six months, **the number of people in need has risen by one million**; **16 million people do not have access to clean water and sanitation**,14 **and 17.8 million Yemenis – 66% of the population – do not know where their next meal is coming from.** **The number of Yemenis who are severely food insecure and facing a high risk of starvation now stands at 8.4 million**.15 In IPC phases, 16 this is the equivalent to phase 4 (emergency); that is, one step away from famine (IPC phase 5). **Nothing has been done to prevent Yemen from spiralling into an even deeper food crisis. If nothing is done immediately, thousands of people will die, even before famine is declared**. **The likelihood of famine has intensified significantly since Yemen’s borders were closed by the Saudi- and Emirati-led coalition** in November 2017. **This is largely due to Yemen’s dependency on food and fuel imports**. **As the Middle East’s poorest country, Yemen struggled with food insecurity in some areas long before the escalation of the conflict** in March 2015, and had a national global acute malnutrition (GAM) rate of 12.7% as of August 2014.18 GAM rates indicate the nutritional status of a population and are used to determine the severity of a humanitarian crisis. By the end of 2017, GAM rates in Yemen had increased significantly as a result of the war. In five governorates, 19 GAM rates rose above the global emergency threshold of 15% according to the Nutrition Cluster, 20 and in some locations within these governorates, even doubled, reaching 31%. 21 Even more worrying, severe acute malnutrition (SAM) rates have peaked. An estimated 15% of children under the age of five are acutely malnourished, including 462,000 children suffering from SAM, which constitutes an increase by a staggering 200% since 2014. 22 Rates of stunting have risen to 47%. 2 WOMEN, THE FIRST TO SKIP MEALS Yemeni women face one of the world’s greatest gender-based disparities, according to a worldwide study on the gender gap. 25 This imbalance clearly holds in terms of food security and nutrition, where women in Yemen suffer disproportionately. Women are often the first to skip meals or eat smaller portions so that the family ration goes further. Early marriage, already a dire problem in Yemen, has increased again since the escalation of the conflict. Girls as young as eight or 10 years old are married off to reduce the number of family members to feed, but also as a source of income in order to feed the rest of the family and pay off debts. 26 Higher levels of education are strongly correlated with higher nutritional status, yet only 29% of women in Yemen are literate, compared with 70% of men. 27 Consequently, one-quarter of Yemeni women between the ages of 15 and 49 are acutely malnourished. Malnourished women are in turn at increased risk of giving birth to malnourished babies, 28 indicating the correlation between gender inequality and malnutrition. 2 **WHY IS FAMINE LOOMING**? **Yemen’s food crisis is a direct, man-made result of the war. Imposed difficulties in importing food; the destruction of civilian infrastructure; a cash crisis; an entire year of unpaid public salaries; periods of siege and de facto blockades had left Yemenis without the means and processes to access basic staple food, even before the closure of key entry points** for food in early November 2017. Furthermore, **the effects of the war have led to an increase in basic food prices of up to an average 30%,** 29 **due to the costly delays of importing goods through Hodeidah port and the imposition of road taxes throughout the country**. At the same time, **the population has less and less access to cash and paid work. This has led to a vicious cycle as increasing numbers of people descend into food insecurity.** NEAR TOTAL DEPENDENCE ON FOOD IMPORTS **As a food-deficient country, Yemen has always relied on importing food.** Even before the crisis, 90% of Yemen’s food was imported, including 90% of wheat and 100% of rice, which are the country’s staple foods. **The escalation of the conflict has caused major disruption to the food pipeline to and within the country** through the imposition of inspection mechanisms, the partial destruction of infrastructure and dramatically increased costs due to delays and road taxes. **With the escalation of the conflict, the control over ports and entry points into Yemen means control over three crucial elements entering Yemen: revenues, fuel and food imports**. Shortly after the escalation of the conflict in 2015, the Houthi/Saleh alliance had brought under their control Sana’a airport, the sea ports of Hodeidah, Saleef and Mokha, and the land ports with Saudi Arabia, al-Tuwal (in Hajjah governorate) and al-Wadi’a (in Hadramawt). Based on figures from the Yemen Customs Authority in 2013, these ports together account for 61% of customs revenue. By October 2017, the Hadi-government had regained control over Mokha and al-Wadi’a. It also controls Aden port (al-Mualla and the Aden Free Zone), the land port with Oman, Shahen, and the port of Mukalla. These ports together accounted for 40% of customs revenue pre-war. The Houthi/Saleh alliance still controls Hodeidah and Saleef sea ports and Sana’a airport (the latter has been closed since August 2016 for all commercial flights) which accounted for 47% of customs revenue. Al-Tuwal, which used to be the most important land port with one-third of Yemeni exports passing through it, is no longer operating due to destruction by airstrikes and ongoing clashes.30 The vast majority of food is imported through the sea ports of Hodeidah, Saleef, and Aden. The former two ports received around 85% of all wheat grain imports in 2016. **The total storage capacity of Hodeidah port equals 62% of the country’s total storage capacity. The port’s milling capacity accounts for 51% of the national capacity. Given the infrastructure at the different ports and partial destruction as a result of the war, none of the sea or land ports can substitute for another: the closure of any of these entry points has a direct negative impact on the availability of food in the country**.31 This also means that **while Aden port is indispensable for food imports into Yemen, it cannot substitute for the ports of Hodeidah and Saleef**. In addition, the **physical storage and milling capacity in Hodeidah cannot be relocated: with the closure of the port, the majority of Yemen’s total capacity to store and mill wheat grain cannot be used and over 60% of the country’s wheat imports are no longer entering the country**. The two open land ports of al-Wadi’a and Shahen are not a viable alternative. Between 2014 and 2016, only 0.06% of wheat grain and 2.68% of rice was imported via land ports. **Given that importers are located in the sea ports, and importing via land means getting clearance from a number of transit countries, goods transported through the land ports adds to costs and makes goods a lot more expensive**. Only already milled wheat flour is brought in in slightly larger quantities via land ports: 16.59% through Shahen and 0.64% via al-Wadi’a. However, of the three staple commodities (wheat grain, rice and flour), imports entering Yemen via land amounted to only 1.16% of the total imports of those commodities between 2014 and 2016, with the rest coming through sea ports.

**Morality demands we confront food inequality even in the face of annihilation. Watson, 77** (Richard, Professor of Philosophy at Washington University, World Hunger and Moral Obligation, p. 118-119)

These arguments are morally spurious. That food sufficient for well-nourished survival is the equal right of every human individual or nation is a specification of the higher principle that everyone has equal right to the necessities of life. The moral stress of the principle of equity is primarily on equal sharing, and only secondarily on what is being shared. The higher moral principle is of human equity per se. Consequently, the moral action is to **distribute all food equally, whatever the consequences**. This is the hard line apparently drawn by such moralists as Immanuel Kant and Noam Chomsky—but then, morality is hard. The conclusion may be unreasonable (impractical and irrational in conventional terms), but it is obviously moral. Nor should anyone purport surprise; it has always been understood that the claims of morality—if taken seriously—**supersede those of conflicting reason**. One may even have to sacrifice one’s life or one’s nation to be moral in situations where practical behavior would preserve it. For example, if a prisoner of war undergoing torture is to be a (perhaps dead) patriot even when reason tells him that collaboration will hurt no one, he remains silent. Similarly, if one is to be moral, one distributes available food in equal shares (**even if everyone then dies**). That an action is necessary to save one’s life is **no excuse** for behaving unpatriotically or immorally if one wishes to be a patriot or moral. No principle of morality absolves one of behaving immorally simply to save one’s life or nation. There is a strict analogy here between adhering to moral principles for the sake of being moral, and adhering to Christian principles for the sake of being Christian. The moral world contains pits and lions, but one looks always to the highest light. The ultimate test always harks to the highest principle—recant or die—and it is pathetic to profess morality if one quits when the going gets rough. I have put aside many questions of detail—such as the mechanical problems of distributing food—because detail does not alter the stark conclusion. If every human life is equal in value, then the equal distribution of the necessities of life is an extremely high, if not the highest, moral duty. It is at least high enough to override the excuse that by doing it one would lose one’s life. But many people cannot accept the view that one must distribute equally even in f the nation collapses or all people die. If everyone dies, then there will be no realm of morality. Practically speaking, sheer survival comes first. One can adhere to the principle of equity only if one exists. So it is rational to suppose that the principle of survival is morally higher than the principle of equity. And though one might not be able to argue for unequal distribution of food to save a nation—for nations can come and go—one might well argue that unequal distribution is necessary for the survival of the human species. That is, some large group—say one-third of present world population—should be at least well-nourished for human survival. However, from **an individual standpoint,** the human species—like the nation—is of **no moral relevance**. From a naturalistic standpoint, survival does come first; from a moralistic standpoint—as indicated above—survival may have to be sacrificed. In the milieu of morality, it is **immaterial whether or not the human species survives as a result of individual behavior**.

# Inherency

## Emergency Declaration

The Trump Administration used an emergency declaration to bypass Congressional oversight on weapons sales to Saudi Arabia. Oswald, 19 [Rachel Oswald is a foreign policy reporter for CQNow and a contributor to Roll Call. “Democrats spar with State official over arms sales maneuver,” 12 June 2019, <https://www.rollcall.com/news/congress/democrats-spar-with-state-official-over-arms-sales-maneuver>]

A senior State Department official on Wednesday appeared to blame Democrats for the administration’s decision last month to declare a state of emergency over Iran to avoid congressional review of billions of dollars of weapon sales to Arab Gulf states. R. Clarke Cooper, assistant secretary of State for political-military affairs, attributed the emergency order to holds placed in spring 2018 by Senate Foreign Relations ranking member Robert Menendez on $2 billion in proposed precision-guided missile sales to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Menendez, D-N.J., placed the holds in response to the many civilian casualties in the Yemen civil war, in which the two Gulf nations are fighting against Iranian-backed Houthi insurgents. The holds were broken with the emergency declaration. “Yes, the protracted process did contribute to the conditions that necessitated an emergency,” Cooper testified at a House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing examining the rationale for the May emergency declaration. Menendez’s holds were not legally binding but part of a longstanding bipartisan tradition between the executive branch and lawmakers for resolving concerns about weapon exports before they are formally announced and put before Congress for review under the Arms Export Control Act. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo cited the emergency declaration as justification to avoid an otherwise mandatory 30-day review period under the arms export law. The $2 billion in missile sales were combined with other weapon systems to form a 22-component $8.1 billion package. Democrats used the hearing to roundly castigate the Trump administration’s rationale for declaring an emergency, alternately characterizing it as “phony” and “bogus.” They accused Cooper and other State Department officials, including Pompeo, of trying to circumvent lawful congressional oversight. “It’s a little hard to believe that we’re supposed to take your complete disregard for the congressional review process as an indication that you value congressional engagement,” Rep. David Cicilline, said to Cooper, who was involved in the decision on the emergency declaration. “This is gas-lighting. Your claiming you’re ignoring this provision is your way of affirming the role Congress plays. That’s an absurdity.” Rep. Abigail Spanberger chided Cooper for his complaints that Democrats were drawing out the arms sale review process. “You’ve referred multiple times to a protracted process and I would just remind you, sir, that the protracted process you are bemoaning is, in fact, the constitutional process that we as members of Congress have a responsibility to exercise when we are selling our weapon systems that are this lethal to countries abroad,” the Virginia Democrat said. Menendez also responded in a statement to CQ Roll Call. “Disdain for law and process is not an excuse to break it,” he said. “It’s also not an excuse to create a fake emergency, mislead Congress, and rush weapons into Saudi hands without assurances that they won’t be used to kill civilians.” After Saudi dissident journalist and Virginia resident Jamal Khashoggi was assassinated by Saudi government agents in Turkey last October, Menendez’s office said the State Department effectively ended substantive engagement over the human rights concerns raised around the proposed weapon sales. “Clearly, the secretary of State decided that he couldn’t answer those concerns substantively or persuasively, and so concocted an emergency so he wouldn’t have to do so,” said Menendez spokesman Juan Pachon. “You have to give Mr. Cooper points for creativity in how he tries to defend the indefensible.”

## Weapons Given to Militias

Militias, in Yemen against civilians, have used weapons sold exclusively to Saudi Arabia. Elbagir et. al, 19 [Nima Elbagir is a Sudanese journalist and an award-winning international television correspondent. Elbagir joined CNN as a London-based international correspondent. In 2008, she picked up two Foreign Press Association Awards - TV News Story of the Year and Broadcast Journalist of the Year. Salma Abdelaziz covers the Middle East for CNN. Mohamed Abo El Gheit covers the Middle East for CNN. Laura Smith-Spark covers mostly Europe, Middle East and Africa news for CNN Digital in London. “Exclusive Report

Sold to an ally, lost to an enemy,” 5 February 2019, <https://www.cnn.com/interactive/2019/02/middleeast/yemen-lost-us-arms/>]

Hodeidah, Yemen (CNN) – Saudi Arabia and its coalition partners have transferred American-made weapons to al Qaeda-linked fighters, hardline Salafi militias, and other factions waging war in Yemen, in violation of their agreements with the United States, a CNN investigation has found. The weapons have also made their way into the hands of Iranian-backed rebels battling the coalition for control of the country, exposing some of America's sensitive military technology to Tehran and potentially endangering the lives of US troops in other conflict zones. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, its main partner in the war, have used the US-manufactured weapons as a form of currency to buy the loyalties of militias or tribes, bolster chosen armed actors, and influence the complex political landscape, according to local commanders on the ground and analysts who spoke to CNN. By handing off this military equipment to third parties, the Saudi-led coalition is breaking the terms of its arms sales with the US, according to the Department of Defense. After CNN presented its findings, a US defense official confirmed there was an ongoing investigation into the issue. The revelations raise fresh questions about whether the US has lost control over a key ally presiding over one of the most horrific wars of the past decade, and whether Saudi Arabia is responsible enough to be allowed to continue buying the sophisticated arms and fighting hardware. Previous CNN investigations established that US-made weapons were used in a series of deadly Saudi coalition attacks that killed dozens of civilians, many of them children. The developments also come as Congress, outraged with Riyadh over the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi last year, considers whether to force an end to the Trump administration's support for the Saudi coalition, which relies on American weapons to conduct its war. In 2015, Riyadh launched a coalition to oust Iranian-supported Houthi rebels from the country's capital and reinstate the internationally recognized government of President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi. The war split the country in two, and with it came the weapons -- not just guns, but anti-tank missiles, armored vehicles, heat-seeking lasers and artillery -- all flooding into an unruly and complex state. Since then, some of America's "beautiful military equipment," as US President Donald Trump once called it, has been passed on, sold, stolen or abandoned in Yemen's state of chaos, where murky alliances and fractured politics mean little hope for any system of accountability or tracking. Some terror groups have gained from the influx of US arms, with the barrier of entry to advanced weaponry now lowered by the laws of supply and demand. Militia leaders have had ample opportunity to obtain military hardware in exchange for the [people] ~~man~~power to fight the Houthi militias. Arms dealers have flourished, with traders offering to buy or sell anything, from a US-manufactured rifle to a tank, to the highest bidder. And Iran's proxies have captured American weapons they can exploit for vulnerabilities or reverse-engineer for native production.

## Need a Review Process

Some are pushing for a review of arms sales after US weapons have been found in possession of some Al-Qaeda fighters; due diligence is needed. Vittori, 19 [Jodi Vittori is a nonresident scholar in the Democracy, Conflict, and Governance Program. She is an expert on the linkages of corruption, state fragility, illicit finance, and U.S. national security. She is also the U.S. research and policy manager for Transparency International’s Defense and Security Program and an adjunct professor at Georgetown University. Prior to joining Transparency International, Vittori was a senior policy adviser for Global Witness, where she managed educational and advocacy activities on linkages between corruption and national security. Prior to that, Vittori served in the U.S. Air Force, advancing to the rank of lieutenant colonel; her overseas service included Afghanistan, Iraq, South Korea, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain, and she was assigned to NATO’s only counter-corruption task force. She was an assistant professor and military faculty at the U.S. Air Force Academy and the National Defense University. Vittori has published on conflict finance and illicit financial flows and she is the author of the book Terrorist Financing and Resourcing and a co-author of the handbook Corruption Threats and International Missions: Practical Guidance for Leaders. She is a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy and received her PhD in International Studies from the University of Denver. “American Weapons in the Wrong Hands,” 19 February 2019, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/02/19/american-weapons-in-wrong-hands-pub-78408>]

Earlier this month, a CNN investigation provided further evidence that U.S. military equipment has been transferred from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to a variety of militias, including some linked to al-Qaeda. Given the additional scrutiny of U.S.-Saudi relations since the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, recent U.S. Senate and House resolutions on arms sales to Saudi Arabia, and ongoing Saudi and Emirati tensions with neighbor Qatar, now is the time for a full-scale review of U.S. arms sales to the Gulf region. There are clear rules against arms transfers to third parties. There are also end-use monitoring requirements for U.S. arms exports, but these checks are hardly universal. Given that at least some of the equipment found in militia hands can be tied to U.S. arms sales, the Department of Defense, State Department, and Commerce Department are clearly not adequately monitoring sales. (Which U.S. agency is responsible for end-use checks depends on the type of sale conducted.) The United States is the largest arms supplier to Saudi Arabia and the UAE, two lucrative customers of the U.S. defense industry. Saudi Arabia was the largest importer of U.S. arms, having purchased $112 billion in weapons from 2013 through 2017. The UAE was the second-largest importer of U.S. arms in the same time span. Since 2009, over $27 billion in weapons have been offered to the UAE in thirty-two separate deals under the Pentagon’s Foreign Military Sales program. These arms sales continue, despite both countries’ history of diverting arms to favored militias. Saudi Arabia has been purchasing weapons from third parties to pass on to allied governments and groups at least since the 1970s, sometimes on behalf of the U.S. government. Transparency International’s Government Defense Anti-Corruption Index ranks Saudi Arabia and the UAE in its high-risk category for corruption, with Saudi Arabia receiving a score of zero out of four (zero being the worst) and the UAE receiving a score of one for lacking a well-scrutinized process for arms export decisions that aligns with international protocols. The CNN investigation comes as Congress ramps up its opposition to U.S. support for the Saudi-led coalition. Former U.S. president Barack Obama’s administration only reluctantly agreed to support the Saudi-led coalition as it went on the offense in 2015, seeing it as an unwinnable proxy war against Iran. Obama had put restrictions on arms sales and intelligence cooperation with the coalition in 2016, but President Donald Trump’s administration lifted those restrictions in March 2017, just prior to Trump’s overseas visit to Saudi Arabia. Saudi human rights abuses in Yemen using U.S. weapons, such as the airstrike on a school bus in August 2018 that killed forty children, and the murder of Khashoggi have shocked the U.S. public and Congress. In the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018, Congress required the departments of Defense and State to certify that the Saudi-led coalition was doing all it could to prevent civilian casualties; the State Department failed to provide that justification when it was due earlier this month. In December, the Senate approved a measure to end arms shipments to Saudi Arabia, despite the Trump administration’s strong opposition to the bill. The measure did not have enough votes to override a presidential veto, but senators have promised to introduce an even tougher bill in 2019. Last week, the House also passed a measure to end U.S. assistance to the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen, but again without enough votes to override an expected presidential veto. The Trump administration continues to approve arms shipments to the Saudi coalition. In 2018 alone, the United States directly sold $4.4 billion in arms to Saudi Arabia, and the administration approved the latest sale of Patriot missile upgrades in December. Tens of billions of dollars in deals with Saudi Arabia remain in the pipeline as well, awaiting approvals as part of the controversial, alleged May 2017 $110 billion arms deal with Saudi Arabia. The Trump administration has shown little inclination to loosen its close ties with Saudi Arabia and the UAE despite the death of Khashoggi or the conduct of the war in Yemen. The monarchs of Saudi Arabia and the UAE can conduct these proxy operations and divert equipment with no oversight and almost no input from their own citizens. Both countries are absolute monarchies, and their legislative bodies are advisory and contain only regime-approved members. Both countries also stamp out any free press and most independent civil society. Information on defense policies, including the war in Yemen, is kept secret by the monarchs and their inner circles. Most available information on Saudi and Emirati coalition operations and weapons transfers comes from external parties, such as U.S. government weapons sales notifications, news organizations, and human rights organizations. Given the lack of effective Saudi and Emirati citizen or parliamentary oversight on the conduct of the war in Yemen and associated weapons transfers, it is crucial that the United States and other arms-exporting nations conduct additional due diligence and put controls on any exports to Saudi Arabia and the UAE. The CNN investigation demonstrates that the stringent due diligence and accountability that should be required for such sales has not been conducted. As the Trump administration continues to approve arms sales, an emboldened Congress inches ever closer—often across partisan lines—to cutting off those very same sales.

## Saudi Arabia = US’s biggest customer

Saudi Arabia is America’s biggest arms buyer; these weapons were used to bomb a schoolbus full of children. Ivanova, 18 [Irina Ivanova is a news editor for CBS MoneyWatch. Topics she covers include economics, economic justice, housing, real estate, work and labor law, consumer privacy, retail, personal finance. “Saudi Arabia is America's No. 1 weapons customer,” 12 October 2018, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/saudi-arabia-is-the-top-buyer-of-u-s-weapons/>]

The U.S. remains the world's largest weapons exporter, a position it has held since the late 1990s. Our biggest customer? Saudi Arabia. That business reality came to the forefront this week in President Donald Trump's refusal to crack down on the kingdom whose royal rulers have been accused of murdering a Saudi-born, U.S.-based dissident journalist who disappeared after entering the Saudi consulate in Istanbul. The U.S. sold a total of $55.6 billion of weapons worldwide in the fiscal year that ended Sept. 30 — up 33 percent from the previous fiscal year, and a near record. In 2017, the U.S. cleared some $18 billion in new Saudi arms deals. Mr. Trump has dismissed the idea of suspending weapons sales to Saudi Arabia to punish its crown prince, Mohammad bin Salman, for any involvement in the alleged murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi. "I don't like the concept of stopping an investment of $110 billion into the United States," Mr. Trump said this week. Last year in May, President Trump used his first foreign trip as an occasion to visit the kingdom and sign an arms deal advertised as $110 billion — a figure experts have since disputed as inflated, since it was not based on actual, signed contracts and included at least $23 billion previously approved by the Obama administration, according to Defense One. But even before that announcement, Saudi Arabia was by far the U.S.' largest arms client, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. Over the five years ending in 2017, nearly one-fifth of American weapons exports went to Saudi Arabia, SIPRI reports. Overall, half went to the Middle East and North Africa. In the 2017 calendar year alone, some $18 billion in new Saudi arms deals were cleared by the U.S. Bombs away The current White House has shifted the type of weapons exports the U.S. favors. Prior to this year, aircraft was the largest component of U.S. arms sales, according to the Security Assistance Monitor. Under the first year of the Trump administration, sales of bombs and missiles dominated. That year, the U.S. sold Saudi Arabia $298 million worth of Paveway laser-guided missiles, $98 million in ammunition for various types of firearms and $95 million worth of programmable bomb systems. A recent attack on a school bus in Yemen that killed dozens of children was carried out with a bomb the U.S. sold to Saudi Arabia, CNN has reported. Just this year, the State Department has approved sales to Saudi Arabia of $670 million worth of BGM-71 TOWs, a type of anti-tank missile, $1.3 billion worth of medium self-propelled Howitzers and at least $600 million in "maintenance support services."

## Other Countries stopped selling to Saudi Arabia

**In response to civilian casualties the world is reducing military aid to the Saudi led coalition in Yemen-US aid is vital to the war effort. Dewan, 18**(Angela, Dewan 11-23-18, Senior Producer, https://www.cnn.com/2018/11/22/middleeast/arms-exports-saudi-arabia-intl/index.html)

A number of countries have restricted arms sales to Saudi Arabia since the kingdom began airstrikes on Yemen in 2015, in a war that the UN describes as the world's worst man-made humanitarian disaster. Calls for more restrictions on arms exports have been growing, **particularly in Europe**, since the killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi consulate in Turkey last month. US President Donald Trump, however, has repeatedly pointed to the US' **lucrative arms deals** with the Saudis as a reason to stand by the kingdom. Denmark and Finland on Thursday became the latest countries to suspend new arms deals with Saudi Arabia. Denmark's Foreign Ministry said it was freezing new deals over both Khashoggi and Yemen, while the Finnish Foreign Ministry mentioned only Yemen. Finland also banned new arms sales to the United Arab Emirates, which is part of the Saudi-led coalition in the conflict. Their announcements came just two days after Germany said it was stopping all arms transfers to the kingdom. Denmark and Finland are not major suppliers of weapons to Saudi Arabia, but Germany certainly is. It had already suspended new arms deals to Saudi Arabia, but on Monday it widened that ban to include the transfers of weapons on existing orders as well. So where is Saudi Arabia getting its weapons from? Arms deals are often done in secret or with little publicity. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) tries to track deals involving major weapons, and a database of Saudi imports from the last decade shows the United States as the **biggest supplier**, followed by the United Kingdom, France, Spain and then Germany. But a lot of exporters still selling to the Saudis have **dramatically decreased their supply** in recent years. The United Kingdom, for example, transferred arms worth an estimated $843 million in 2016 but almost halved that value to $436 million last year, according to SIPRI. (The database uses values constant with 1990 prices to eliminate currency fluctuations and inflation.) French exports of major weapons to Saudi Arabia were worth $174 million in 2015 but dropped to $91 million in 2016 and $27 million last year. The value of Spanish exports also dramatically decreased in that time period, but the Spanish government confirmed this year it would go ahead with arms deals it had previously suggested it would freeze, bowing to pressure from Spanish manufacturers, according to reports. US dwarfs other exporters Despite these decreases, the overall value of Saudi weapons imports actually increased by 38% between 2016 and 2017. That was **almost entirely because of a huge uptick** in transfers from the United States, which almost doubled its exports in terms of value from $1.8 billion to $3.4 billion in that time. Germany also multiplied its exports from $14 million to $105 million, although it is expected to be much lower this year following its suspension. Overall, **no country comes close to the United States in major weapons supply.** Over the past five years, for example, the US accounted for 61% of major arms sales to the Saudis. The UK was a distant second, with a 23% share, while France, in third place, was a mere 4%. In a statement on Tuesday, Trump said that canceling major arms contracts with the Saudis would be foolish, and that "Russia and China would be the enormous beneficiaries" if the US halted its sales. China supplies a negligible amount of major weaponry to Saudi Arabia, SIPRI data shows, but it is on the increase. **Russia supplies so little it is not included in the organization's database.** "Russia has tried hard in the past 10 to 15 years to get into the large Saudi arms market, but it has not been very successful. Saudi Arabia has acquired Russian rifles and may have bought s ome other items, but such deals have been very small," said Pieter Wezeman, a senior researcher with SIPRI's arms transfers and military expenditure program. "China has made some more substantial inroads into the Saudi arms market, in particular selling armed drones," Wezeman said. "The details are shady and we may very well have underestimated China's role as an arms exporter to Saudi Arabia. But China doesn't come anywhere near the USA, UK or even France as arms suppliers. Still, the important point here is that Saudi Arabia has explored the possibility of diversifying its supplier base."

# Solvency

## Pass H.R. 7080

Passage of HR 7080 would grant Congress broad oversight power and would close the loophole in the AECA that allows for “emergency” declarations to justify arms sales. Mahanty & Eikenberry, 18 [Daniel R. Mahanty (@danmahanty) is the director of the U.S. program at the Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC). Prior to joining CIVIC, Dan spent 16 years at the U.S. Department of State. In 2012, he created and led the Office of Security and Human Rights in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor. In this role, he oversaw efforts to integrate human rights in U.S. security assistance and arms sales, advance the prevention of recruitment and use of child soldiers, and promote policies related to protecting civilians in conflict. Dan holds a Masters from Georgetown in U.S. National Security Policy and a Bachelors in Economics from George Mason University. He is a Colin L. Powell Fellow, a term member of the Council on Foreign Relations, a Truman National Security Fellow, and served on the board of advisors for the NGO, “Women LEAD Nepal”. Eric Eikenberry (@YemenPeaceNews) is the director of policy & advocacy at the Yemen Peace Project, which seeks to foster a more peaceful and constructive U.S. foreign policy towards Yemen. “How the “Arms Sales Oversight Act” Could Prevent American Arms from Contributing to the Next Overseas Crisis,” 5 December 2018, <https://www.justsecurity.org/61719/arms-sales-oversight-act-prevent-american-arms-contributing-overseas-crisis/>]

The debate over U.S. complicity in Yemen’s humanitarian catastrophe is coming to a head in the Senate, with a series of votes on the Sanders-Lee-Murphy war powers resolution. But beyond this immediate measure, other members of Congress are planning to increase their long-term leverage over weapons sales to problematic security partners. Foremost among them, Representatives Ted Lieu (D-Calif.) and Jim McGovern (D-Mass.) recently introduced House Resolution 7080, the “Arms Sale Oversight Act,” to little fanfare. The bill’s unassuming title and procedural focus should not escape the attention of conventional arms control advocates. If passed, H.R. 7080 would expand Congress’s constricted ability to vote down damaging arms sales and mark a first step toward preventing the United States from exacerbating the human cost of conflict. The legislation would reform Section 36 of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA) to ensure that any supportive representative can move to discharge a joint resolution of disapproval against a proposed arms sale ten days following its introduction if the presiding committee fails to report it. Win the vote in the House, pass the same joint resolution in the Senate (or vice versa), and Congress has successfully exercised its primary legal means of immediately barring a harmful transfer (whether or not the White House agrees). The measure could dramatically reshape congressional authorities over arms exports. Currently, due to a separate AECA provision, only senators are guaranteed a vote on a joint resolution of disapproval. Absent H.R. 7080’s proposed reform, corresponding House resolutions will remain “highly privileged”—which means that those seeking to stop a transfer at present can only secure a vote only if leadership acquiesces. This inter-chamber imbalance not only robs representatives of a vote in determining U.S. foreign policy, but also diminishes the efforts of conventional arms control advocates in the Senate. Because joint legislation from the House is unlikely to see the floor, Senate efforts can be reduced to signaling opposition to, rather than truly shutting down, an administration’s proposed sale. By correcting this imbalance, H.R. 7080 will open another avenue to ending U.S. enabling of other governments’ gross violations of international humanitarian and human rights laws. Nowhere is this avenue more needed than for Yemen’s internationalized civil war. There, parties to the conflict routinely conduct indiscriminate attacks on civilians and have created a humanitarian crisis that has pushed millions to the brink of starvation. Yet, it is Saudi Arabia and the UAE, using U.S.-manufactured weapons and logistical support, that have caused the majority of the conflict’s recorded civilian casualties. Causing further concern, a new documentary aired by Deutsche Welle, presents credible evidence that the coalition states have diverted U.S.-manufactured armored vehicles to unaccountable non-state militias. Admittedly, the Senate has rarely made a serious attempt to block an arms sale by resolution of disapproval, but support for exercising greater Congressional oversight over arms sales seems to be on the rise. And even when a resolution of disapproval fails to pass, mere consideration of the legislation can send clear signals to the executive branch and recipient countries alike, and can stimulate valuable policy debate. While S.J. Res. 39, a 2016 effort to block tank sales to Saudi Arabia, mustered 27 votes, S.J. Res. 42, a June 2017 measure to freeze a sale of precision-guided munitions to Saudi Arabia, garnered 47. The administration has not moved forward with a further sale of as many as 120,000 precision munitions to both Saudi Arabia and the UAE due to Senate opposition; the weapons’ traceable serial numbers, as damning as “made in the USA” stickers, could embroil the United States in further strikes on buses, hospitals, and homes. While the threat of unicameral opposition has worked for now, the reforms advanced by H.R. 7080 would further increase the chances for debate on arms sales in the Congress, and create a more efficient path for the House and Senate to indefinitely arrest a sale. Had the procedures outlined in H.R. 7080 been in place in June 2017, H.J. Res. 102 (the House companion to S.J. Res. 42), could have forced a vote on a motion to discharge instead of dying quietly in committee, creating a debate that, as it did on the Senate side, swayed moderate offices against the sale and focused a news cycle on U.S. complicity in Saudi-led coalition attacks on civilians.

HR 7080 is key to stop the Yemeni crisis and also prevent future instances while providing a check on the executive’s authority to sell arms. Mahanty & Eikenberry, 18 [Daniel R. Mahanty (@danmahanty) is the director of the U.S. program at the Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC). Prior to joining CIVIC, Dan spent 16 years at the U.S. Department of State. In 2012, he created and led the Office of Security and Human Rights in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor. In this role, he oversaw efforts to integrate human rights in U.S. security assistance and arms sales, advance the prevention of recruitment and use of child soldiers, and promote policies related to protecting civilians in conflict. Dan holds a Masters from Georgetown in U.S. National Security Policy and a Bachelors in Economics from George Mason University. He is a Colin L. Powell Fellow, a term member of the Council on Foreign Relations, a Truman National Security Fellow, and served on the board of advisors for the NGO, “Women LEAD Nepal”. Eric Eikenberry (@YemenPeaceNews) is the director of policy & advocacy at the Yemen Peace Project, which seeks to foster a more peaceful and constructive U.S. foreign policy towards Yemen. “How the “Arms Sales Oversight Act” Could Prevent American Arms from Contributing to the Next Overseas Crisis,” 5 December 2018, <https://www.justsecurity.org/61719/arms-sales-oversight-act-prevent-american-arms-contributing-overseas-crisis/>]

While the most recent and egregious example, Yemen is not the only case where enhanced Congressional oversight is necessary to add reasonable constraints to the arms sales process. By some credible estimates, the United States sells arms, including bombs and missiles, to at least 62 countries that are an active party to a conflict. Some countries to whom the United States sells arms, such as Bahrain and Egypt, have demonstrated a consistent pattern of human rights violations; others present a very clear risk of misuse or diversion, or even the potential for mass atrocities. And some countries with lower levels of capacity simply require a greater degree of due diligence to ensure equipment can be used appropriately. If H.R. 7080 makes it more likely that Congress could exercise more meaningful oversight in even a handful of these cases, the risk of U.S. complicity in human rights abuses or the next humanitarian disaster, wherever it is, could be meaningfully diminished – and at minimal opportunity cost. H.R. 7080 does not have to become law this Congress to have an impact – advocates should view it as an organizing tool around which to rally, and that could ease the way to reforms small and large which can check the executive’s nearly unfettered prerogative to sell weapons to any regime, regardless of their crimes. To begin, H.R. 7080 does not have to pass for next year’s House to respect its provisions as an intra-chamber rule: regardless of eventual passage, Democratic leadership should open this procedural path to the floor for joint resolutions of disapproval as a matter of course. Furthermore, if H.R. 7080 is reintroduced in the 116thCongress, it should be resurfaced alongside a host of measures to strengthen Congress’s hand in overall arms export policy. These can include requiring detailed and unclassified answers from the departments of State and Defense concerning the likelihood that a sale of certain items will exacerbate armed conflict or spur an arms race (theoretically a judgment the executive already makes under AECA) and outlining robust processes for monitoring the way weapons’ are used among recipients with a history of rights violations or violations of the laws of armed conflict, and those for which the indicators suggest a high risk of future violations. Congress should also consider lowering notification thresholds, so that members can vet arms sales valued at less than $50 million. The time is also long past for Congress to unequivocally clarify that the Leahy Law applies to Foreign Military Sales (FMS) and Direct Commercial Sales (DCS), thereby prohibiting State and Defense from permitting the transfer or maintenance of defense articles to security forces that have committed unconscionable human rights violations with impunity. There is no simple trick to ending the devastation yielded by the war and intervention in Yemen, which has directly killed at least 57,000, contributed to the further deaths of tens of thousands of children per year from preventable causes, and threatened 14 million with famine. Yet without a congressional freeze on weapons to the coalition states, there will never be enough political space for peace negotiations to take root. So long as short-term profit motive driving executive branch arms sales policy supersedes a reasonable modicum of self-restraint, the Congress, and H.R. 7080 present the best opportunity to limit the risk that American weapons will be involved in – or aggravate – both Yemen’s catastrophe and the next humanitarian crisis.

## Key to hold S.A. accountable

The effective embargo, implemented by the aff, would signal to the world our disdain for the Yemeni war and would allow us to hold Saudi Arabia accountable. Spindel, 19 [Jennifer Spindel is an assistant professor of international security at the University of Oklahoma, and the Associate Director of the Cyber Governance and Policy Center. You can follow her on Twitter: @jsspindel. “The Case for Suspending American Arms Sales to Saudi Arabia,” 14 May 2019, <https://warontherocks.com/2019/05/the-case-for-suspending-american-arms-sales-to-saudi-arabia/>]

Arms embargos are often dismissed as symbolic, and therefore ineffective. But just because something is symbolic, doesn’t mean that it won’t have an effect. A U.S. arms embargo against Saudi Arabia would be a clear signal of American disproval of Saudi actions in Yemen, and would be an equally important signal to Washington’s allies, who are left wondering if the United States is ambivalent or uninterested in the growing Yemeni humanitarian catastrophe. By continuing to provide weapons, President Donald Trump tacitly endorses Saudi policies. This signal is strengthened by Trump’s recent veto of the resolution that called for an end to U.S. support for the war in Yemen. While Trump justified the veto by saying that the resolution was a “dangerous attempt to weaken my constitutional authorities,” statements from Congressional representatives show they are aware of the powerful signals sent by arms sales. Sen. Tim Kaine said that the veto “shows the world [Trump] is determined to keep aiding a Saudi-backed war that has killed thousands of civilians and pushed millions more to the brink of starvation.” An arms embargo against Saudi Arabia would be a signal both to leaders of that country, and other states, that the United States does not endorse Saudi actions. Those arguing against a ban are correct on one point: Embargos as blunt force instruments of coercion are rarely effective. But arms embargos are effective as signals of political dissatisfaction, and serve an important communication role in international politics.

## Key to Coalition Building

Aff is key to build coalitions that would help rein in Saudi actions; forces them to rethink their strategic goals. Spindel, 19 [Jennifer Spindel is an assistant professor of international security at the University of Oklahoma, and the Associate Director of the Cyber Governance and Policy Center. You can follow her on Twitter: @jsspindel. “The Case for Suspending American Arms Sales to Saudi Arabia,” 14 May 2019, <https://warontherocks.com/2019/05/the-case-for-suspending-american-arms-sales-to-saudi-arabia/>]

Policymakers and scholars agree that arms embargoes are not effective “sticks” in international politics. Rarely do states cave when faced with punishment in the form of an embargo. But even if an arms embargo isn’t a direct tool of coercion, an embargo would be an important political signal. There are at least two reasons for the United States to seriously consider an arms embargo against Saudi Arabia. First, arms sales are signals that cut through the noise of the international system. Cutting off arms transfers is a common way that states express their dissatisfaction with others and try to influence behavior. As Lawrence Freedman observed in 1978, “refusing to sell arms is a major political act. It appears as a calculated insult, reflecting on the stability, trust, and credit-worthiness, or technical competence of the would-be recipient.” Yet this crucial point seems to have been lost in the current policy debate about whether or not the United States should continue selling arms to Saudi Arabia. My research shows that stopping arms transfers or denying requests is an effective way to signal dissatisfaction and causes the would-be recipient to re-think their behavior. Take, for example, the U.S. relationship with Israel in the 1960s. The United States sold Israel Hawk surface-to-surface missiles in 1962, M-48 Patton tanks in 1964 and 1965, and A-4E Skyhawk bombers in 1966. Israeli leaders understood that these transfers signaled a close U.S.-Israeli relationship. As diplomat Abba Eban wrote, the arms transfers were “a development of tremendous political value.” Even against this backdrop of close ties and significant arms sales, Israeli leaders were extremely sensitive to arms transfer denials. In April and May 1967, the United States denied Israeli requests for armored personnel carriers and fighter jets. Approving the transfers would have signaled support, and likely emboldened Israel, as tensions were growing in the region. Israeli leaders believed these transfer denials overruled prior signals and demonstrated that the United States was not willing to be a close political ally for Israel. Eban described Israel as “isolated,” and the head of Israel’s intelligence service said that the arms transfer denials made it clear that “in Israel, there existed certain misperceptions [about the United States].” If arms transfer denials could have such a significant effect on Israeli thinking — keeping in mind that there was a close and significant political relationship between the US and Israel — imagine what a transfer denial would mean for U.S.-Saudi relations. Like Israel, Saudi Arabia would have to re-think its impression that it has political support and approval from the United States. We can, and should, ask whether or not withdrawal of U.S. support would affect Saudi behavior, but it’s important that this question not get overlooked in the current debate. Because arms transfers (and denials) are powerful signals, they can have an effect even before a transfer is actually completed. This suggests that even the announcement of an embargo against Saudi Arabia could have an effect. Take, for example, Taiwan’s recent request for a fleet of new fighter jets. As reports mounted that Trump had given “tacit approval” to a deal for F-16 jets, China’s protests increased. The United States has not sold advanced fighter jets to Taiwan since 1992, partially out of fear of angering China, which views Taiwan as a renegade province. Even if the deal for F-16s is formally approved, Taiwan is unlikely to see the jets until at least 2021, and the balance of power between China and Taiwan would not change. As one researcher observed, the sale would be a “huge shock” for Beijing, “But it would be more of a political shock than a military shock. It would be, ‘Oh, the U.S. doesn’t care how we feel.’ It would be more of a symbolic or emotional issue.” Yet China’s immediate, negative reaction to even the announcement of a potential deal shows how powerful arms transfer signals can be. If this same logic is applied to an arms embargo against Saudi Arabia, an arms embargo would signal that Saudi Arabia does not have the support of the United States. This signal would be an important first step in changing Saudi behavior because it would override other statements and actions the United States has sent that indicate support. And Trump has given Saudi Arabia a number of positive signals: He called Saudi Arabia a “great ally” and dismissed reports that that the Saudi government was involved in the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi. He has expressed interested in selling nuclear power plants and technology to Saudi Arabia. And he has repeatedly claimed that he has made a $110 billion arms deal with Saudi Arabia (he hasn’t). With these clear signals of support, why should Saudi Arabia alter its behavior based on resolutions that come out of the House or Senate, which are likely to be vetoed by Trump, anyway? An arms embargo would be a clear and unambiguous signal that the United States disproves of Saudi actions in Yemen. The second reason for supporting an embargo concerns U.S. allies and the logistical difficulties of making an embargo have an effect. One of the reasons embargoes have little material impact is because they require cooperation among weapons exporting states. A ban on sales from one country will have little effect if the target of the embargo can seek arms elsewhere. Germany, instituted an arms ban against Riyadh in November 2018, and German leaders have pressured other European states to stop selling arms to the Saudis. Germany understands the importance of the embargo as a political signal: as a representative of the German Green Party explained, “The re-start of arms exports to Saudi Arabia would be a fatal foreign policy signal and would contribute to the continued destabilization of the Middle East.” But the German embargo has had minimal effect because Saudi Arabia can get arms elsewhere. According to the 2019 Military Balance, most of Saudi Arabia’s equipment is American or French in origin, such as the M1A2 Abrams and AMX-30 tanks, Apache and Dauphin helicopters, and F-15C/D fighter jets. Saudi Arabia has some equipment manufactured wholly or in part in Germany, such as the Eurofighter Typhoon and the Tornado ground attack craft, but these weapons are a small portion of its complete arsenal. A U.S. embargo would send an important signal to the allies who also supply Saudi Arabia, allowing them to explain participation in the embargo to their own domestic constituencies. This is especially important for countries like France, Germany, and the United Kingdom, that need to export arms to keep their own production lines running. While the research shows that sustaining an arms embargo is often the most difficult step, embargoes can restrain sending states’ arms exports. Even if a U.S. embargo won’t have a direct effect on Saudi Arabia on its own, an embargo is important for building coalitions for a more expansive embargo that could affect Saudi behavior.

## Congress is key

By switching to an approval, instead of a disapproval model, Congress will be given an effective check on executive ability to sell weapons. Ford, 19 [Matt Ford is a staff writer at The New Republic. “A Farewell to Arms Deals,” 11 June 2019, <https://newrepublic.com/article/154160/trump-arms-deals-executive-power-democrats-congress>]

Part of the problem stems from INS v. Chadha, a Supreme Court decision handed down decades ago. It’s an unusual case. After Jagdish Rai Chadha’s student visa expired in 1972, U.S. immigration officials let the Kenyan-born South Asian man stay in the country because of dangerous racial tensions in Kenya. In 1975, however, the House of Representatives overrode that determination, effectively ordering Chadha and five other foreign nationals to be deported. He filed a lawsuit to challenge a provision of U.S. immigration law that granted each chamber of Congress that power. In a landmark 7–2 ruling in 1983, the Supreme Court sided with Chadha and effectively struck down the legislative veto. Chief Justice Warren Burger, writing for the majority, said that the provision in question was “essentially legislative in purpose and effect.” As a result, it violated the Constitution’s bicameralism requirement by allowing one chamber of Congress to undertake a legislative act on its own. More importantly, the court ruled that such vetoes violate the Constitution’s requirement that all legislation be presented to the president for his signature or veto. Justice Byron White took the rare step of reading his dissent from the bench, signaling his deep disapproval of the court’s decision. “Today’s decision strikes down in one fell swoop provisions in more laws enacted by Congress than the court has cumulatively invalidated in its history,” he wrote. He argued that his colleagues had insisted on a separation of powers far stricter than what the Framers had envisioned, one ill-suited for the modern era of the administrative state. “To be sure, the President may have preferred unrestricted power,” White wrote, “but that could be precisely why Congress thought it essential to retain a check on the exercise of delegated authority.” What would happen next? White wrote that without the legislative veto, lawmakers faced a “Hobson’s choice.” Congress could write narrow laws that delegated little authority, “leaving itself with a hopeless task of writing laws with the requisite specificity to cover endless special circumstances across the entire policy landscape.” Or it could “abdicate its lawmaking function to the Executive Branch and independent agencies” by writing broad laws for civil servants to flesh out later. “To choose the former leaves major national problems unresolved; to opt for the latter risks unaccountable policymaking by those not elected to fill that role,” White wrote. Lawmakers quickly realized how the court’s decision would reshape their relations with the White House. Among them was Delaware Senator Joe Biden, then a junior member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and now a presidential candidate. He pointed to two areas where the justices had upended years of compromise between the two branches: U.S. military involvement under the War Powers Resolution, and arms sales to foreign governments. “The Supreme Court’s decision has shattered a careful and workable accommodation between Congress and the Executive, a development that, in my opinion, threatens our ability to fashion a foreign policy that is consistent, coherent, and safe,” he wrote in a 1984 Syracuse Law Review article. For arms sales, Biden’s solution was to invert the legal mechanism in question. Rather than giving Congress an opportunity to stop each sale before it took effect, his bill would have required the White House to seek affirmative support from lawmakers first. “Under a joint resolution of approval, of course, a sale cannot go through until it is approved by both houses and signed by the President,” he wrote. “That can take up a lot of Senate and House time, but it is the only way for Congress to retain the same degree of control we had over arms sales before Chadha.” This maneuver would remove the mathematical disadvantage faced by lawmakers: the president’s veto power. “Under a joint resolution of disapproval, Congress can get its way only if it has enough votes to override a presidential veto,” Biden explained. “So instead of needing fifty-one senators’ votes to defeat an arms sale we would need sixty-seven, plus two-thirds of the House of Representatives.” In other words, so long as the president can muster the support of one-third of one chamber of Congress, lawmakers are generally powerless to halt controversial arms sales to foreign powers.

**The plan solves by requiring congress to approve all arms deals, not just disapprove. This spurs meaningful scrutiny and risk assessment. Thrall & Dorminey, 18** – A. Trevor Thrall is an associate professor at the Schar School of Policy and Government at George Mason University and a senior fellow at the Cato Institute. Caroline Dorminey is a policy analyst at the Cato Institute. (“Risky Business The Role of Arms Sales in U.S. Foreign Policy”, March 13, 2018 | Number 836)

Amend the AECA to Require Congressional Approval for All Arms Sales—Finally, we recommend that the AECA be amended to require congressional approval for all arms sales. The current law is designed to make arms sales easy by making it difficult for Congress to block them. **Blocking a sale requires a majority vote in both houses of Congress**, with such votes typically cropping up inconveniently in the middle of other, more-pressing issues on the legislative agenda. Congress has exerted little or no influence over arms sales and has allowed the executive branch near-complete autonomy. Requiring a congressional vote to approve arms sales, on the other hand, would subject arms deals to much more intense scrutiny than has traditionally been the case, and blocking misguided arms sales would be much easier. Requiring a separate piece of legislation to approve each arms deal, not simply requiring a resolution against, would encourage deliberations about the strategic benefits of any proposed deal.

Congress is needed to restrict international arms sales. Allan, 19 [Elizabeth Allan is a first-year student at Yale Law School. She holds Bachelor’s degrees in International Affairs and Arabic from the University of Georgia and an MPhil in Modern Middle Eastern Studies from the University of Oxford, where she studied as a Rhodes Scholar. She has also worked as a consultant in the Middle East and West Africa. “The Yemen Resolution and the Historical U.S.-Saudi Security Relationship,” 25 April 2019, https://www.lawfareblog.com/yemen-resolution-and-historical-us-saudi-security-relationship]

As this history demonstrates, the fact that Congress and the president are at odds over U.S. security policy toward Saudi Arabia is not a new development in the U.S.-Saudi relationship. In the current dispute, Congress is leveraging several old tools for influencing security policy—including opposition to arms sales under the AECA and restrictions on foreign assistance—and previously unused tools, such as the War Powers Resolution. Congress’s specific objections to the U.S.-Saudi security relationship reflect contemporary concerns over the humanitarian crisis in Yemen. Beyond Yemen, however, several structural factors complicate traditional pillars of the U.S.-Saudi security alliance, including concerns that Saudi Arabia’s actions are undermining regional security, growing scrutiny of Saudi Arabia’s internal politics (for example, its human rights track record), and the U.S.’s increased capacity to produce domestic oil (although Saudi Arabia remains important to global energy markets). Those in support of continuing the relationship emphasize that, although the Saudi-U.S. partnership is far from perfect, it has strategic benefits, particularly in counterterrorism, opposition to Iran, and maintenance of regional stability against a more chaotic alternative. Ultimately, congressional supporters and skeptics must cooperate with the executive branch to change U.S. security strategy, and the Trump administration has consistently indicated that it has no intention of turning away from the U.S.-Saudi alliance. As long as this remains administration policy, Congress may use various legislative tools to chip away at U.S. security support for the kingdom—but there is unlikely to be a fundamental realignment in the U.S.-Saudi security relationship.

## Morality

Cutting off arms is the only moral response to war in Yemen. Mohamed and Shaif, 16(Rasha Mohamed is Amnesty International’s Yemen researcher. Follow her on Twitter at: @RashaMoh2. Rawan Shaif is a freelance journalist covering Yemen. https://foreignpolicy.com/2016/03/25/civilian-casualties-war-crimes-saudi-arabia-yemen-war/)

These gruesome scenes are just two examples of the horrors that Yemen has seen since the Saudi-led military coalition launched its air campaign in March 2015. On one side of this war is the Houthi armed group, often referred to as the “Popular Committees,” which is supported by armed groups loyal to former Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh and parts of the army. On the other side is the military coalition led by Saudi Arabia and allied forces on the ground, usually referred to as muqawama, or the “resistance,” fighting on behalf of Hadi and his government. The Houthis and their allies — armed groups loyal to Saleh — are the declared targets of the coalition’s 1-year-old air campaign. In reality, however, it is the civilians, such as Basrallah and Rubaid, and their children, who are predominantly the victims of this protracted war. Hundreds of civilians have been killed in airstrikes while asleep in their homes, when going about their daily activities, or in the very places where they had sought refuge from the conflict. The United States, Britain, and others, meanwhile, have continued to supply a steady stream of weaponry and logistical support to Saudi Arabia and its coalition. One year on, it still remains unclear who is winning the war. Saudi Arabia and its coalition partners claim to have regained control of more than 80 percent of the country, but the Houthis remain in control of the key strongholds of Sanaa, Ibb, and Taiz. Moreover, armed groups such as al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and the Islamic State are gaining ground and support in the south and southeast parts of the country, taking advantage of the security vacuum to consolidate their power. One thing is clear: Yemeni civilians are losing the most. This wanton disregard for the lives of civilians continues unabated... At approximately 11:30 a.m. on March 15, the market in Khamees, a town in northern Yemen, was destroyed in two apparent airstrikes by the Saudi-led coalition, claiming the lives of 106 civilians, including 24 children. One man, Hasan Masafi, who spoke to us over the phone, couldn’t even grieve his 18-year-old son’s death because he couldn’t locate his whole body. “We were only able to find his right leg,” he said. The facts speak for themselves, and evidence of violations of international humanitarian law cannot be dismissed as mere hearsay, as the British government has attempted to do with U.N. reports. Amnesty International and other organizations have presented compelling evidence over the past year that indicates all parties to the Yemen conflict have committed war crimes. But some countries do not want to see the evidence that is staring them in the face. **Flooding the region with arms is akin to adding fuel to the fire**. Attacks like the one on Khamees market have become the norm for civilians in Yemen. More than 3,000 civilians have been killed during the conflict, according to the United Nations. Thousands of others have been injured, more than 2.5 million have been displaced, and 83 percent of Yemenis are reliant on humanitarian assistance. There is barely a single corner of Yemen or a single soul that hasn’t in some way been touched and scarred by this war. The Saudi-led coalition’s response to reports of civilians unlawfully killed — and homes, schools, and infrastructure destroyed — has been to constantly repeat the mantra that “only military targets are hit by airstrikes.” The situation on the ground tells a very different story. With each unlawful coalition airstrike, it becomes more evident that Saudi Arabia and other coalition members either **do not care about** respecting international humanitarian law or are **incapable of adhering** to its fundamental rules. And yet, Britain, the United States, and France continue to authorize lucrative arms deals with the Saudi-led coalition — apparently without batting an eyelash. Since November 2013, the U.S. Defense Department has authorized more than $35.7 billion in major arms deals to Saudi Arabia.Since November 2013, the U.S. Defense Department has authorized more than $35.7 billion in major arms deals to Saudi Arabia. This includes the announcement of a $1.29 billion U.S. arms sale to Saudi Arabia in November 2015 that will supply Riyadh with 18,440 bombs and 1,500 warheads. Meanwhile, during his time in office, British Prime Minister David Cameron has overseen the sale of more than $9 billion worth of weaponry to Saudi Arabia, including nearly $4 billion since airstrikes on Yemen began, according to the Campaign Against Arms Trade, a London-based NGO. Regardless of when the weapons used by coalition forces in Yemen were acquired — whether before or since the start of the air campaign — the countries that supplied them have a responsibility to ensure that they are not facilitating violations of international law. While the relentless coalition airstrikes account for most of the civilian deaths in the conflict, civilians also find themselves increasingly trapped in the crossfire between Houthi and anti-Houthi armed groups, with each side supported by different units of the now-divided armed forces. A case in point is the southern city of Taiz, which has suffered restrictions on movement of food and medical supplies since at least November. Attacks continue to maim and kill civilians, including children. When Amnesty International visited the city in July 2015, we witnessed the irresponsible conduct of fighters firsthand and documented 30 ground attacks, which led to more than 100 casualties. One of those victims was 12-year-old Ayham Anees, who was killed in an apparent Houthi mortar attack in May. Munther Mohamed, Anees’s uncle, described rushing to the scene after hearing children’s screams following the attack. “I also saw my nephew Ayham, whose head had separated from his body,” he said. “I had told the children to play in the middle of the alley because it was the safest place, but it was not.” The crisis in Taiz has only gotten worse in recent days. While the Houthis have been partially pushed out of the city center, they still maintain control of the majority of the governorate. Where the Houthis have been forced to retreat, they have laid landmines — internationally banned weapons that have already claimed dozens of civilian lives. Last week, the spokesman for the Saudi-led coalition announced that operations are nearing their end in Yemen. What that means in practice is not yet clear, as airstrikes continue to pound the country. But accountability doesn’t take a back seat just because military operations may be winding down. It’s time to bring these crimes against civilians to an end. With peace talks expected to take place in Kuwait on April 18, all parties must prioritize several crucial conditions: protecting the long-term interests of ordinary Yemenis, ensuring an end to the horrors of the past year, and guaranteeing that those responsible will be held accountable. All those civilian lives lost as a result of violations won’t be forgotten, even if this chapter of war closes. It’s too late for the children of Salah Basrallah. But **there’s no excuse not to do the right thing now**. States should act immediately to ensure that **none of Yemen’s warring parties** is supplied — either directly or indirectly — with weapons, munitions, military equipment, or technology that **would be used in any furtherance of the conflict**. And they must do everything in their power to ensure there is an independent international investigation into violations by all sides aimed at ensuring justice and reparation — for Salah Basrallah and the thousands of other victims of this deadly war.

## Sends Signal To Allies

**The plan sends a signal to allies that US support must be earned encouraging moderation- this stabilizes the region, oil prices, reduces terrorism and proliferation. Walt, 18** (Stephen Walt PhD, IR@Harvard, 1-16 https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/01/16/the-islamic-republic-of-hysteria-iran-middle-east-trump/)

Fortunately, no state inside or outside the Middle East was then — or is today — in a position to control it. As a result, the United States does not have to do much to maintain a regional balance of power. Instead of giving Saudi Arabia or Israel **a blank check to counter some mythical Iranian hegemon**, Washington should seek more **balanced relations** with all states in the region, Iran included. This more equitable approach would facilitate cooperation on issues where U.S. and Iranian interests align, such as **Afghanistan**. The prospect of better relations with the United States would give Tehran an **incentive to moderate its behavior**. Past U.S. efforts to isolate the clerical regime **encouraged it to play a spoiler’s role** instead, with some degree of success. This approach would also **discourage America’s present allies** from taking U**.S. support for granted** and encourage them **to do more to retain its favor**. America’s current regional allies (and their domestic lobbies) would surely protest vehemently if Washington stopped backing them to the hilt and sought even a modest détente with Iran. But that is ultimately their problem, not America’s. **Excessive U.S. support encourages allies to behave recklessly,** as Israel does when it expands illegal settlements and as Saudi Arabia is doing with its military campaign in Yemen, its diplomatic squabble with Qatar, and its bungled attempt to reshape politics inside Lebanon. **If U.S. allies understood that Washington was talking to everyone**, however, they would have more reason to **listen to America’s advice** lest it **curtail its support and look elsewhere**. **Having many options is the ultimate source of leverage**. Playing balance-of-power politics in the Middle East does not require Washington to abandon its current allies completely or tilt toward Tehran. Rather, it means using U.S. power to maintain a rough balance, discourage overt efforts to alter the status quo, and prevent any state from dominating the region while helping local powers resolve their differences. **Lowering the temperature** in this way would **safeguard access to oil**, **dampen desire in the region for weapons of mass destruction**, and give these states less reason to **fund extremists and other proxies.**

## Status Quo Policy Outdated

**Military aid is an outdated model- it doesn’t give the US influence or leverage. Walsh & Schmitt, 18** [Walsh, Cairo Bureau chief, and Schmitt, national security writer, 12-25-18 (Declan and Eric, https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/25/world/middleeast/yemen-us-saudi-civilian-war.html]

For decades, the United States sold tens of billions of dollars in arms to Saudi Arabia on an unspoken premise: that they would rarely be used. The Saudis amassed the world’s third-largest fleet of F-15 jets, after the United States and Israel, but their pilots almost never saw action. They shot down two Iranian jets over the Persian Gulf in 1984, two Iraqi warplanes during the 1991 gulf war and they conducted a handful of bombing raids along the border with Yemen in 2009. The United States had similar expectations for its arms sales to other Persian Gulf countries. “There was a belief that these countries wouldn’t end up using this equipment, and we were just selling them expensive paperweights,” said Andrew Miller, a former State Department official now with the Project on Middle East Democracy. Then came Prince Mohammed bin Salman. When the prince, then the Saudi defense minister, sent fighter jets to Yemen in March 2015, Pentagon officials were flustered to receive just 48 hours notice of the first strikes against Houthi rebels, two former senior American officials said. American officials were persuaded by Saudi assurances the campaign would be over in weeks. But as the weeks turned to years, and the prospect of victory receded, the Americans found themselves backing a military campaign that was exacting **a steep civilian toll**, largely as a result of Saudi and Emirati airstrikes. American military officials posted to the coalition war room in Riyadh noticed that inexperienced Saudi pilots flew at high altitudes to avoid enemy fire, military officials said. The tactic reduced the risk to the pilots but transferred it to civilians, who were exposed to less accurate bombings. Coalition planners misidentified targets and their pilots struck them at the wrong time — destroying a vehicle as it passed through a crowded bazaar, for instance, instead of waiting until it reached an open road. The coalition routinely ignored a no-strike list — drawn up by the United States Central Command and the United Nations — **of hospitals, schools and other places where civilians gathered.** At times, coalition officers **subverted their own** chain of command. In one instance, a devastating strike that killed 155 people in a funeral hall was ordered by a junior officer who countermanded an order from a more senior officer, a State Department official said. The Americans offered help. The State Department financed an investigative body to review errant airstrikes and propose corrective action. Pentagon lawyers trained Saudi officers in the laws of war. Military officers suggested putting gun cameras on Saudi and Emiratis warplanes to see how strikes were being conducted. The coalition balked. In June 2017, American officials extracted new promises of safeguards, including stricter rules of engagement and an expansion of the no-strike list to about 33,000 targets — provisions that allowed the secretary of state, then Rex W. Tillerson, to win support in Congress for the sale of more than $510 million in precision-guided munitions to the kingdom. But **those measures seemed to make little difference**. Just over a year later, in August 2018, a coalition airstrike killed at least 40 boys on a packed school bus in northern Yemen. Still, American leaders insisted **they need to keep helping** the Saudi coalition. America’s role in the war was “absolutely essential” to safeguard civilians, the general in charge of Central Command, Gen. Joseph L. Votel, told a charged Senate hearing in March. “I think this does give us the best opportunity to address these concerns,” he said.

## Stopping Sales Solves

**Stopping arms sales solves**

**Riedel ’18** [Bruce Riedel is a senior fellow and director of the Brookings Intelligence Project, part of the Brookings Center for 21st Century Security and Intelligence. In addition, Riedel serves as a senior fellow in the Center for Middle East Policy. He retired in 2006 after 30 years of service at the Central Intelligence Agency, including postings overseas. He was a senior advisor on South Asia and the Middle East to the last four presidents of the United States in the staff of the National Security Council at the White House. He was also deputy assistant secretary of defense for the Near East and South Asia at the Pentagon and a senior advisor at the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in Brussels, 10/10/18, “After Khashoggi, US arms sales to the Saudis are essential leverage,” Brooking Institute]

Eighteen months ago, Donald Trump visited Saudi Arabia and said he had concluded $110 billion dollars in arms sales with the kingdom. It was fake news then and it’s still fake news today. The Saudis have not concluded a single major arms deal with Washington on Trump’s watch. Nonetheless, **the U.S. arms relationship with the kingdom is the most important leverage Washington has as it contemplates reacting to the alleged murder of Jamal Khashoggi**. FOLLOW THE MONEY In June 2017, after the president’s visit to Riyadh—his first official foreign travel—we published a Brookings blog post detailing that his claims to have sold $110 billion in weapons were spurious. Other media outlets subsequently came to the same conclusion. When Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman visited the White House this year, the president indirectly confirmed that non-deal by chiding the prince for spending only “peanuts” on arms from America. **The Saudis have continued to buy spare parts, munitions, and technical support for the enormous amount of American equipment they have bought from previous administrations**. **The Royal Saudi Air Force (RSAF) is entirely dependent on American** and British **support for its air fleet of F15 fighter jets, Apache helicopters, and Tornado aircraft. If** either **Washington** or London **halts the flow of logistics, the RSAF will be grounded**. **The Saudi army and the Saudi Arabian National Guard are similarly dependent on foreigners** (the Saudi Arabian National Guard is heavily dependent on Canada). **The same is also true for the Saudis allies like Bahrain.** Under President Obama, Saudi Arabia spent well over $110 billion in U.S. weapons, including for aircraft, helicopters, and air defense missiles. These deals were the largest in American history. Saudi commentators routinely decried Obama for failing to protect Saudi interests, but the kingdom loved his arms deals. But the kingdom has not bought any new arms platform during the Trump administration. Only one has even been seriously discussed: A $15 billion deal for THAAD, terminal high altitude area defense missiles, has gotten the most attention and preliminary approval from Congress, but the Saudis let pass a September deadline for the deal with Lockheed Martin. **The Saudis certainly need more air defenses with the pro-Iran Zaydi Shiite Houthi rebels in Yemen firing ballistic missiles at Saudi cities. The three and a half year-old Saudi war in Yemen is hugely expensive.** There are no public figures from the Saudi government about the war’s costs, but a conservative estimate would be at least $50 billion per year. **Maintenance costs for aircraft and warships go up dramatically when they are constantly in combat operations. The Royal Saudi Navy has been blockading Yemen for over 40 months. The RSAF has conducted thousands of air strikes.** The war is draining the kingdom’s coffers. And **responsibility for the war is on Mohammed bin Salman**, who as defense minister has driven Riyadh into this quagmire. **Shaking the arms relationship is by far the most important way to clip his wings**.

## Forces a Cease Fire

**Plan would force a cease fire**

**Bruton ’18** [F. Brinley Bruton, 11/5/18, “The U.S. wants the Yemen war to end. Will it stop selling arms to Saudi Arabia?,” NBC News]

**Washington supports Saudi Arabia** and its ally, the United Arab Emirates**, through billions in arms sales**. It also refuels their jets mid-air, provides training and shares intelligence. So **if the U.S. wants to try to force the Saudis' hands, it has leverage**. **The best way to force the Saudis to change their ways is to stop sending weapons**, **according to Human Rights Watch’s Yemen researcher Kristine Beckerle**. “You’ve gotten so many violations already over the past three and a half years, so what Pompeo and Mattis should be doing is saying, ‘These are the benchmarks. We’re going to hold up weapons sales until you actually fulfill these tasks,’" she said, referring to the apparent bombing of civilian sites by the coalition. **American arms deliveries to the Saudis reached $5.5 billion last year**, up from $1.7 billion in 2009, according to the U.K.-based Campaign Against Arms Trade which compiled the figures using Department of Defense statistics. **The U.S. government agreed to sell more than $79 billion in arms to Riyadh** over that period. **In a May 2017 stop in Saudi Arabia — his first trip abroad as president — Donald Trump announced $110 billion in immediate sales of U.S. arms and equipment, with $350 billion in additional deals over the next 10 years.** While it is unclear how much of Trump's announcement covered deals that had already been unveiled, **the president has touted such arms sales to the Saudis in an effort to explain the importance of the relationship with the kingdom**. American officials have also been keen to focus on what they say is the country's key role on combating terrorism and fighting Iranian influence throughout the region. Andrew Smith of the Campaign Against Arms Trade said last week's calls for a cease-fire by Mattis and Pompeo were long overdue. "**Over the last three and a half years Saudi-led forces have inflicted a terrible humanitarian catastrophe on Yemen**," he said. "**We hope that the current pressure can serve as a turning point. For far too long, arms-dealing governments have prioritized arms company profits over the rights and lives of Yemeni people**." Over the summer, lawmakers included a provision in a defense bill requiring the administration to certify Saudi Arabia and its allies were trying to reduce civilian casualties in Yemen. In August, the coalition bombed a school bus carrying children, killing dozens. The deadly strike prompted international outrage. Weeks later, Pompeo certified to Congress that Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates were working to reduce civilian casualties in Yemen — a legal requirement to allow U.S. aircraft to refuel the countries’ warplanes. Saudi officials have not commented on last week's comments by Mattis and Pompeo. But there are signs that the U.S. is bringing pressure to bear on Riyadh. On Wednesday, a group of Republican senators pressed the administration to cut off civilian nuclear talks with Saudi Arabia. A day later, the State Department confirmed **senior U.S. officials have been in talks with both sides of the Yemen conflict** and said that **"the climate is right" for negotiations to end the war.**

# Human Rights Adv

## Violate Arms Trade Treaty

In violation of the Arms Trade Treaty, the US has been selling arms to Saudi Arabia; these weapons have ben used for human rights violations in Yemen. Aljamra, 19 [Helal Aljamra is a Yemeni journalist, graduated from Sana'a University, Media Faculty in 2008 and has worked in the Yemeni press since 2007. He worked as an editor for the Yemeni newspaper Al-Nida. In 2010 he was appointed Editor-in-Chief of the same newspaper. He co-founded the Yemeni Parliamentary Observatory and worked as a press editor for the Al Marsad website in 2009. He carried out numerous investigations and worked on the enforced disappearance cases during the Yemeni wars (Saada war 2009-2010), which provoked great reactions as well as press inquiries about Yemeni prisons and abuses. He was awarded the second best news article Award at the 12th session of a competition organized by the Center for Arab Women for Training and Research «Kawther», based in Tunisia in 2014. Participated in a number of specialized training courses in the field of journalism as well as the preparation and conducting of investigations. He holds a Master's Degree in Political Communication from the Higher Institute of Media and Communication in Rabat in 2018. “How U.S. Relations with Saudi Arabia Are Prolonging the War in Yemen,” 9 January 2019, <https://insidearabia.com/us-saudi-arabia-war-yemen/>]

Washington’s relations with the countries in the Arabian Gulf are complicated, but its relationship with Saudi Arabia, in particular, is markedly more intricate. While the relationship between the two countries is not a relationship of equals, both countries rely on each other to some degree, and both are loath to admit it. However, U.S.-Saudi relations have shifted under the Trump administration and the de facto leadership of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MbS). Business as Usual for U.S.-Saudi Relations? Although it seems that Saudi Arabia has effectively been able to buy both President Trump’s silence and support with multi-billion dollar arms deals thus far, recent statements from the U.S. president have indicated that Washington may not be catering to Riyadh’s every whim. In early October, President Trump told King Salman that “he would not last in power ‘for two weeks’ without the backing of the U.S. military.” At a rally in West Virginia, President Trump asked rhetorically why the U.S. continues to subsidize the militaries of wealthy nations such as Saudi Arabia, Japan, and South Korea. His confident assurance that these countries should be paying the U.S. for protection shows that issues of diplomacy and human rights are mere cold business transactions to the American Commander-in-Chief. Nevertheless, military protection is not the only form of U.S. defense that Riyadh risks losing if it continues to act recklessly on a national, regional, and international level. The kingdom could lose the impunity that it enjoys thanks to American support. Can Saudi Arabia afford to jeopardize itself in this manner, especially with its increasingly problematic human rights track record and the ongoing investigation into the murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi? The U.S. has been supporting and protecting the Saudi-UAE-led coalition since the beginning of its military intervention in Yemen three and a half years ago. Despite the devastating loss of human life caused by coalition airstrikes, the administration continues to support the Saudi-UAE-led military intervention and claims that U.S. supervision of these airstrikes is reducing the likelihood of “mistakes”—this notwithstanding the Senate’s recent vote under the War Powers Resolution to curb presidential power to wage this war. United Nations (UN) experts published a report in September that accused all parties to the conflict in Yemen of being responsible for human rights violations that could potentially amount to war crimes. Notwithstanding these findings, the U.S., Britain, Germany, France, and other countries continue to sell weapons to Yemen’s warring parties. “There is extensive evidence that irresponsible arms flows to the [Saudi Arabia-UAE-led] coalition have resulted in enormous harm to Yemeni civilians. But this has not deterred the USA, the UK and other states, including France, Spain, and Italy, from continuing transfers of billions of dollars worth of such arms,” Amnesty International reported. In addition to killing thousands of innocent Yemeni civilians, these arms sales also make a mockery of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), a multilateral treaty that seeks to reduce human suffering and safeguard global peace by regulating the international trade of conventional weapons. Since coming into force on December 24, 2014, 96 states have ratified the treaty and another 130 have signed it without ratifying it. While the U.S. is a signatory of the treaty, the US Senate has yet to ratify it. Saudi Arabia has yet to do either. President Trump’s consistent disregard of human rights concerns in his foreign policy decisions has, in the view of many, enabled the rise of the Saudi kingdom’s tyrannical crown prince. Ironically, however, the U.S. president’s enthusiasm for strengthening relations with Riyadh has not prevented him from taking every opportunity to exploit Saudi Arabia’s weaknesses publically, extort lower oil prices from the kingdom, and coerce its leadership to pay for Washington’s silence.

## Yemeni Humanitarian Crisis

Yemen is the world’s worst humanitarian crisis because the US continues to sell arms to Saudi Arabia. Aljamra, 19 [Helal Aljamra is a Yemeni journalist, graduated from Sana'a University, Media Faculty in 2008 and has worked in the Yemeni press since 2007. He worked as an editor for the Yemeni newspaper Al-Nida. In 2010 he was appointed Editor-in-Chief of the same newspaper. He co-founded the Yemeni Parliamentary Observatory and worked as a press editor for the Al Marsad website in 2009. He carried out numerous investigations and worked on the enforced disappearance cases during the Yemeni wars (Saada war 2009-2010), which provoked great reactions as well as press inquiries about Yemeni prisons and abuses. He was awarded the second best news article Award at the 12th session of a competition organized by the Center for Arab Women for Training and Research «Kawther», based in Tunisia in 2014. Participated in a number of specialized training courses in the field of journalism as well as the preparation and conducting of investigations. He holds a Master's Degree in Political Communication from the Higher Institute of Media and Communication in Rabat in 2018. “How U.S. Relations with Saudi Arabia Are Prolonging the War in Yemen,” 9 January 2019, <https://insidearabia.com/us-saudi-arabia-war-yemen/>]

The Yemeni people have tried to appeal to the international community to intervene in the conflict in Yemen for years with little success. Despite the words of the UN Secretary General himself and numerous reports published by international organizations describing the war in Yemen as the “world’s worst humanitarian crisis,” the response from the international community has been sparse. Why are the cries of the Yemeni people falling on deaf ears? The answer may lie in the multi-billion dollar arms and trade deals that many countries already have and continue to sign with Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Since the beginning of the Saudi-UAE-led military intervention in Yemen in 2015, the West has provided political and logistical support, intelligence, and weapons to fuel the war. Since assuming control of Saudi Arabia’s Ministry of Defense and thus the de facto rule of Saudi Arabia in 2015, MbS has bolstered the kingdom’s relationships with countries such as the U.S., Britain, and France through long-term arms deals. Currently, Saudi Arabia is the top arms importer in the Arab region. Despite strong opposition by several international human rights organizations and activists in the West, most of the proposed arms deals have progressed without impediment. Arms sales to the Middle East, Asia, and Oceania (comprised of Australia and the nearby islands in the Pacific Ocean) have increased dramatically in the past ten years. “Saudi Arabia was the world’s second-largest arms importer, with arms imports increasing by 225 percent [between 2013 and 2017], compared with 2008 to 2012.” The kingdom is followed by Egypt and the UAE, according to a report published by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. World superpowers’ perspectives of the conflict in Yemen directly correlate with the volume of weapons they export to Saudi Arabia and the UAE. The most steadfast supporters of the Saudi-UAE-driven war appear to be the countries that benefit most from the arms sales and subsidies they receive from the two countries. “In 2013 to 2017, 61 percent of [Saudi] arms imports came from the USA and 23 percent from the UK. Deliveries during this period included 78 combat aircrafts, 72 combat helicopters, 328 tanks, and about 4,000 other armored vehicles,” according to the report. U.S. arms exports to Saudi Arabia alone reached more than $43 billion between 2015 and 2017. Recently, Riyadh has consistently tried to use generous military and trade deals to buy the world’s silence—the most notorious perhaps being the deal that President Trump signed with King Salman in mid-May 2017. This deal included several military, defense, and commercial cooperation agreements; described as “the deal of the century,” the agreements are valued at a total of $460 billion.

## Khashoggi

Trump would rather make money selling arms to Saudi Arabia instead of punishing them for their role in the Khashoggi killing. Macias, 18 [Amanda Macias covers national security, defense industry and the intelligence community for CNBC. She joined CNBC's Washington bureau in 2018 and is based in the Pentagon. “Saudi Arabia is the top US weapons buyer – but it doesn’t spend as much as Trump boasts,” 15 October 2018, <https://www.cnbc.com/2018/10/15/saudi-arabia-top-us-weapons-buyer-but-doesnt-spend-as-much-as-trump-boasts.html>]

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump has been hesitant to jeopardize U.S. arms deals with Saudi Arabia even as outrage grows over the disappearance of journalist and Saudi royal family critic Jamal Khashoggi. Saudi Arabia is America’s No. 1 weapons buyer. Between 2013 and 2017, Riyadh accounted for 18 percent of total U.S. arms sales or about $9 billion, according to a report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. But a closer look reveals that the sales aren’t quite as big as Trump has boasted. The president recently praised Riyadh’s ambitions to buy $110 billion worth of U.S.-made arms. But that money hasn’t come through yet, according to State Department or Defense Security Cooperation Agency announcements. The president has cited the importance of the nations’ relationship, pushing back on potentially slapping retaliatory sanctions on Saudi Arabia over Khashoggi’s fate. Saudi Arabia’s oil-rich monarchy is one of America’s most crucial strategic partners in the Middle East and a significant patron of U.S. defense companies. “I tell you what I don’t want to do,” Trump said to CBS’ “60 Minutes” on Sunday, when asked about blocking arms sales to Riyadh. “Boeing, Lockheed, Raytheon, all these [companies]. I don’t want to hurt jobs. I don’t want to lose an order like that. There are other ways of punishing, to use a word that’s a pretty harsh word, but it’s true.” Last week, Trump told reporters that he was disinterested in stopping a Saudi Arabian “investment of $110 billion into the United States,” despite tensions over Khashoggi’s disappearance. “I know [senators are] talking about different kinds of sanctions, but [Saudi Arabia is] spending $110 billion on military equipment and on things that create jobs,” Trump said Thursday. “I don’t like the concept of stopping an investment of $110 billion into the United States.”

## US Support is counterproductive

**US support allegedly makes the war safer, however the empirical record shows our unwavering support greenlights atrocity. By the time your RFD is over 6 Yemeni children will have been killed. Seligman, 18** (Lara Seligman is Foreign Policy's Pentagon correspondent, Seligman 10-9-18, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/10/09/starvation-and-child-soldiers-in-yemen/>)

In health centers across Yemen, children are weighed and measured for signs of severe malnutrition. At checkpoints from Sanaa to the port city of Hodeida, child soldiers stand guard, knowing full well it is American bombs that are falling from the skies. These were some of the scenes that David Miliband, the president of the International Rescue Committee (IRC), witnessed during a September visit to Yemen, where a civil war has raged since 2015. “There is undue risk being posed to civilians because of the fact that this is a war being conducted from 20,000 feet,” Miliband said in an interview with Foreign Policy. “The excesses of the Houthis do not excuse the flouting of international humanitarian norms.” Yemen’s infrastructure and civilian population have been decimated by the war between Houthi rebels and the Yemeni government, backed by a Saudi-led and U.S. military-supported coalition of Gulf states. With 22 million civilians in need of humanitarian aid and nearly 10 million facing famine by the end of the year, Yemen has been called the world’s worst humanitarian crisis. More than half the population does not have access to drinking water, and according to UNICEF, a child in Yemen **dies every 10 minutes** from illness and starvation. Miliband, who is also a former member of the British Parliament, arrived in Yemen soon after the most violent month this year for civilians and one of the deadliest since the Saudi-led coalition intervened in 2015. In total, 450 civilians were killed in the first nine days of August, and many more are at risk of dying of starvation or preventable conditions, he said. Illness is also a significant threat, Miliband stressed. Yemenis lived through the worst cholera outbreak in modern history last year, with more than 1 million cases (over half of which were children). While the mass outbreak was stemmed, the cases of cholera have tripled in Hodeida since the coalition launched its offensive in June, according to reports. “When the war has been going on for so long, three and a half years, with no real movement in the front line, you realize that the so-called stalemate is far from static—it is actually imposing enormous human suffering,” Miliband said. The IRC has one of the largest humanitarian operations in Yemen and has been able to reach 1 million people across the country with about 800 staff working in both Houthi- and government-controlled areas. Miliband’s staff is training Yemenis to provide essential services. “It’s really important to understand that aid workers are local people,” Miliband said. “We are hiring in vast bulk Yemenis and local people, and we train them, and they then have local intelligence, the local credibility, the local consent to be able to do their work.” But the blockade of Hodeida, where 70 to 80 percent of Yemen’s commercial and humanitarian imports enter the country, means that aid workers do not have enough medicine, fuel, or essential items to do their work. Not only does the blockade obstruct access to food and medicine, but it also means that the cost of fuel is skyrocketing, making it vastly more difficult for IRC staff to travel around the country. Meanwhile, humanitarian workers have had a hard time obtaining the necessary permits required to pass safely through checkpoints due to bureaucratic red tape. Of course, the workers themselves also face violence on both sides of the conflict. During his trip, Miliband heard from staff members about the risk of being targeted by missile strikes or setting off land mines. The violence in Yemen poses political dangers as well, Miliband stressed. As the conflict metastasizes, radical militant groups, such as al Qaeda and the Islamic State, have been **“thriving on the chaos**,” he said. While U.S. involvement aims to reduce Iranian influence, Tehran is actually **becoming more influential**, he added. Miliband called on the international community to agree to an immediate cease-fire. The next step, he said, is to allow the flow of humanitarian aid through Hodeida and open Sanaa’s airport to commercial traffic. To halt further economic collapse, Miliband urged that salaries be paid to the 1.2 million civil servants providing life-saving assistance across the country. “I’m a great believer in the philosophy that when you are in a hole, you should stop digging,” Miliband said. “The war strategy that is being pursued is digging a deeper hole rather than helping us out of it.” While the humanitarian effort can lessen the number of those dying, Miliband stressed that **only “effective politics” could stop the killing**. He pointed to a “complete lack of military progress,” noting that after 18,000 bombing raids since 2015, which caused 75 percent of the war’s civilian casualties, the Houthis still control 70 percent of the country. But diplomatic efforts hit a snag recently, when Houthi representatives failed to show up to the first meeting in Geneva convened by the U.N. special envoy for Yemen, Martin Griffiths. Miliband urged all sides in the conflict to engage in the peace process. He also called on the U.S. government to **end its support for the Saudi-led coalition and take a more forceful approach to halting the violence**. He disputed the claim that the coalition is doing everything possible to minimize civilian casualties. This argument “obviously sits askance with the reality on the ground,” he said. **The United States has more leverage than it claims**, he added. “Everything we know about the U.S. stance is that it **does make a difference because the actors in the drama do look to the U.S. for actions or restraints**,” Miliband said. “The great danger is the Yemeni conflict becomes a terrible stain on the U.S. reputation.”

## Prioritize Violence

**US support for Saudi Arabia places millions at risk-prioritize reducing material violence over geostrategic chess. Almutawakel and Alfaqih, 18** (Almutawakel & Alfaqih, Award winning Human Rights Activists, 11-8-18, Radhya Almutawakel is a co-founder and leader of Mwatana Organization for Human Rights, which recently received the Roger Baldwin Medal of Liberty, a biennial prize awarded by U.S.-based Human Rights First. @ Abdulrasheed Alfaqih is a co-founder and leader of Mwatana Organization for Human Rights, which recently received the Roger Baldwin Medal of Liberty, a biennial prize awarded by U.S.-based Human Rights First. https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/11/08/saudi-arabia-and-the-united-arab-emirates-are-starving-yemenis-to-death-mbs-khashoggi-famine-yemen-blockade-houthis/)

Jamal Khashoggi was but the latest victim of a **reckless arrogance** that has become the hallmark of Saudi Arabia’s foreign policy. Yemenis were saddened, but not surprised, at the extent of the brutality exhibited in Khashoggi’s killing, because our country has been living through this same Saudi brutality for almost four years. As human rights advocates working in Yemen, we are intimately familiar with the violence, the killing of innocents, and the shredding of international norms that have been the hallmarks of Saudi Arabia’s military intervention in our country. For nearly four years, Saudi Arabia has led a coalition, along with the United Arab Emirates, that has cynically and viciously bombarded Yemen’s cities, blockaded Yemen’s ports, and prevented humanitarian aid from reaching millions in need. According to the Yemen Data Project, **Saudi and Emirati aircraft have conducted over 18,500 air raids** on Yemen since the war began—an average of over 14 attacks every day for over 1,300 days. They have bombed schools, hospitals, homes, markets, factories, roads, farms, and even historical sites. Tens of thousands of civilians, including thousands of children, have been killed or maimed by Saudi airstrikes. But the Saudis and Emiratis **couldn’t continue** their bombing campaign in Yemen **without U.S. military support**.Saudis and Emiratis couldn’t continue their bombing campaign in Yemen without U.S. military support. American planes refuel Saudi aircraft en route to their targets, and Saudi and Emirati pilots drop bombs made in the United States and the United Kingdom onto Yemeni homes and schools Nevertheless, U.S. attention to the war in Yemen has been largely confined to **brief spats of outrage** over particularly dramatic attacks, like the August school bus bombing that killed dozens of children. Saudi crimes in Yemen are not limited to regular and intentional bombing of civilians in violation of international humanitarian law. By escalating the war and destroying essential civilian infrastructure, Saudi Arabia is also responsible for the tens of thousands of Yemeni civilians who have died from preventable disease and starvation brought on by the war. The United Nations concluded that blockades have had “devastating effects on the civilian population” in Yemen, as Saudi and Emirati airstrikes have targeted Yemen’s food production and distribution, including the agricultural sector and the fishing industry. Meanwhile, the collapse of Yemen’s currency due to the war has prevented millions of civilians from purchasing the food that exists in markets. Food prices have skyrocketed, but civil servants haven’t received regular salaries in two years. **Yemenis are being starved to death on purpose,** with starvation of civilians used by Saudi Arabia as a weapon of war. Three-quarters of Yemen’s population—over 22 million men, women, and children—are currently dependent on international aid and protection. The U.N. warned in September that Yemen soon will reach a “tipping point,” beyond which it will be **impossible to avoid massive civilian deaths**. Over 8 million people are currently on the verge of starvation, a figure likely to rise to 14 million—half of the country—by the end of 2018Over 8 million people are currently on the verge of starvation, a figure likely to rise to 14 million—half of the country—by the end of 2018 if the fighting does not subside, import obstructions are not removed, and the currency is not stabilized. To be clear, there is no party in this war is without blood on its hands; our organization, Mwatana, has documented violations against civilians by all parties to the conflict in Yemen, not only Saudi Arabia. The Houthis have killed and injured hundreds of civilians through their use of landmines and indiscriminate shelling, while militias backed by the United Arab Emirates, Yemeni government-backed militias, and Houthi militias have arbitrarily detained, forcibly disappeared, and tortured civilians. **But the de facto immunity** that the international community has given Saudi Arabia through its **silence prevents real justice** for violations by all sides. The people of the Middle East have long and bitter experience with international double standards when it comes to human rights, as purported champions of universal rights in the West regularly ignore grave violations by their allies in the region, from the former shah of Iran to Saddam Hussein to Saudi Arabia’s current crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman. This double standard was on display during the crown prince’s recent tour of world capitals and Silicon Valley, where he was generally praised as a “reformer,” and media figures recited his vision for Saudi Arabia in the year 2030 without asking what will be left of Yemen by the year 2020 if the war continues. Similarly, this double standard is on display when Western policymakers downplay Saudi and Emirati violations of Yemenis’ human rights by claiming that a close partnership with Riyadh is needed to prevent perceived Iranian threats to the international community, without asking **whether that same community is also endangered** by Saudi Arabia’s daily violations of basic international norms. And yes, there is a double standard in the wall-to-wall coverage of Khashoggi’s horrific murder, when the daily murder of Yemenis by Saudi Arabia and other parties to the conflict in Yemen hardly merits mention. Those in the United States and elsewhere who are incensed by Khashoggi’s murder must summon similar moral clarity and **condemn Saudi Arabia’s daily killing of innocents** in Yemen.Those in the United States and elsewhere who are incensed by Khashoggi’s murder must summon similar moral clarity and condemn Saudi Arabia’s daily killing of innocents in Yemen. If Saudi violations are to be genuinely curtailed, Khashoggi’s killing must mark the beginning, not the end, of accountability for Saudi crimes. Khashoggi’s death has been reduced to a single data point, rather than being seen as the result **of subverting universal values** in favor of geopolitics or business interests. Reversing course—**ending U.S. military support for the Saudi-Emirati intervention** in Yemen and supporting U.N.-led peace efforts and the reopening of Yemen’s air and sea ports—can still **save millions of lives.** If U.S. lawmakers had spoken up and taken action on Yemen years ago, when Saudi Arabia’s rampant violations were already well known, thousands of Yemeni civilians who since then have been killed by airstrikes or starvation **would still be alive today**—and perhaps Jamal Khashoggi would be, too.

## US is culpable

**Arming authoritarian regimes, like Saudi Arabia, makes us responsible for the violence they carry out. Rovera, 15** (Donatella Rovera is the senior crisis response advisor for Amnesty International. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/08/26/the-human-carnage-of-saudi-arabias-war-in-yemen/>, 8-26)

The Houthis and their allies are the declared targets of the coalition’s 5-month-old air campaign. In reality, however, it is civilians like little Rahma and her family who all too often pay the price of this war. Hundreds have been killed in such strikes while asleep in their homes, when going about their daily activities, or in the very places where they had sought refuge from the conflict. The United States, meanwhile, has provided the weapons that have made many of these killings possible. The conflict has worsened an already dire humanitarian situation in the Middle East’s poorest country. Prior to the conflict, more than half of Yemen’s population was in need of some humanitarian assistance. That number has now increased to more than 80 percent, while a coalition-imposed blockade on commercial imports remains in place in much of the country and the ability of international aid agencies to deliver desperately needed supplies continues to be hindered by the conflict. The damage inflicted by a coalition airstrike last week on the port of the northwestern city of Hudaydah, the only point of entry for humanitarian aid to the north of the country, is only the latest example. The situation is poised to deteriorate further: The U.N. World Food Program warned last week of the possibility of famine in Yemen for millions, mostly women and children. Bombs dropped by the Saudi-led air campaign have all too often landed on civilians, contributing to this humanitarian disaster. In the ruins of the Musaab bin Omar school, the meager possessions of the families who were sheltering there included a few children’s clothes, blankets, and cooking pots. I found no sign of any military activity that could have made the site a military target. But I did see the remains of the weapon used in the attack — a fin from a U.S.-designed MK80 general-purpose bomb, similar to those found at many other locations of coalition strikes. This was far from the only instance where U.S. weapons killed Yemeni civilians. In the nearby village of Waht, another coalition airstrike killed 11 worshipers in a mosque two days earlier. There, too, bewildered survivors and families of the victims asked why they had been targeted. One of the two bombs dropped on the mosque failed to explode and was still mostly intact when I visited the site. It was a U.S.-manufactured MK82 general-purpose bomb, fitted with a fusing system also of U.S. manufacture. The 500-pound bomb was stamped “explosive bomb” and “tritonal” — the latter a designation indicating the type of explosive it contains. Mistakes in the identification of targets and in the execution of attacks can and do happen in wars. In such cases, it is incumbent on the responsible parties to promptly take the necessary corrective action to avoid the recurrence of the same mistakes. But there is no sign that this is occurring in Yemen: Five months since the onset of the coalition airstrike campaign, innocent civilians continue to be killed and maimed every day, raising serious concerns about an apparent disregard for civilian life and for fundamental principles of international humanitarian law. **Strikes that are carried out in the knowledge that they will cause civilian casualties are disproportionate or indiscriminate and constitute war crimes**. While the United States is not formally part of the Saudi-led coalition, it is **assisting the coalition** air campaign by providing intelligence and aerial refueling facilities to coalition bomber jets. The sum total of its assistance to the coalition makes the United States **partly responsible for civilian casualties** resulting from unlawful attacks. Washington has also long been a key supplier of military equipment to Saudi Arabia and other members of the coalition, providing them with the weapons that they are now unleashing in Yemen. Regardless of when the weapons used by coalition forces in Yemen were acquired — whether before or since the start of the air campaign — the countries that supplied the weapons have a responsibility to ensure that they are not used to commit violations of international law. **The poisonous legacy of these U.S.-made weapons will plague Yemen for years to come**. In Inshur, a village near the northern city of Saada, I found a field full of U.S.-made BLU-97 cluster submunitions — small bombs the size of a soda can that are contained in cluster bombs. Many lie in the field, still unexploded and posing a high risk for unsuspecting local residents, farmers, and animal herders who may step on them or pick them up, unaware of the danger. In one of the city’s hospitals, I met a 13-year-old boy who stepped on one of the unexploded cluster bombs in Inshur, causing it to explode. It smashed several bones in his foot. Cluster bombs were banned by an international convention in 2008. But in the 1990s, the United States sold the type of cluster bombs now littering the fields of Inshur to Saudi Arabia. Each of these cluster bombs contains up to 200 small bombs, which are dispersed by the bomb’s explosion over a large area. However, many of these smaller bombs often do not explode on impact, leaving a lethal legacy for years to come. Coalition airstrikes have been particularly intense in the north of the country, notably in and around Saada, a Houthi stronghold that is home to some 50,000 people. When I visited the city in July, I was shocked by the extent of the destruction: Saada now lies in ruin, with most of the population displaced and private homes, shops, markets, and public buildings reduced to rubble in relentless and often indiscriminate air bombardments. A coalition spokesman said in May that the entire city of Saada was considered a military target, in breach of international humanitarian law, which demands that belligerents distinguish between civilians and military targets at all times. International law is clearly being violated in Saada and the surrounding villages. A series of coalition strikes on a village in Sabr, near Saada, killed at least 50 civilians, most of them children, and injured nine others in the afternoon of June 3. Half of the village was completely destroyed. Surviving villagers showed me the piles of rubble which used to be their homes. Ghalib Dhaifallah, a father of four, who lost his 11-year-old son Moaz and 27 other relatives in the attack, told me the boy had been playing with his cousins in the center of the village, at the precise point of impact of one of the airstrikes. “We dug for days looking for the bodies; we recognized some body parts from the clothing only,” he told me.

## Mass Suffering

**Civilian casualties from strikes or famine are *entirely preventable* but entail massive suffering. Noack, 18** (Rick Noack, 11-21-18, Sciences Po Paris, BA; Johns Hopkins University, Aitchison Public Service Fellowship in Government; King's College London, MA in terrorism, security and society, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2018/11/21/children-have-starved-death-during-saudi-led-intervention-yemen-says-new-report/?utm_term=.b026eca4ad1c>)

More than 85,000 children may have died of hunger since Saudi Arabia intervened in the war in Yemen three years ago, according to Save the Children, an international NGO. “For every child killed by bombs and bullets, dozens are starving to death and it’s **entirely preventable**,” said Tamer Kirolos, Save the Children’s country director in Yemen. With only a few hospitals still operational, the nongovernmental organization says that the human toll of the conflict **cannot be fully captured** by simply relying on official numbers. Instead, the charity used historical mortality rates and United Nations data on Yemeni malnutrition to estimate that more than 25,000, or 20 to 30 percent of all acutely malnourished children, have died every year since April 2015. The estimates, the NGO said, may still be lower than the actual number of deaths. “Children who die in this way **suffer immensely** as their vital organ functions slow down and eventually stop. Their immune systems are so weak they are more prone to infections, with some too frail to even cry,” said Save the Children representative Kirolos. “Parents are having to witness their children wasting away, unable to do anything about it,” he said. According to the United Nations, half the Yemeni population suffers from famine. The United States has remained largely silent on the war, even when Saudi Arabia enacted a blockade on its borders with Yemen last November. Since then, human rights groups have struggled to supply some of the most malnourished areas in the country with food and drinking water. About 90 percent of the country is considered to be desert or arid and the Yemeni government heavily relied on food imports before the conflict. What began as a rebellion by the country’s Shiite-majority Houthi rebels during the Arab Spring has turned into a bigger confrontation between Saudi Arabia and its archrival Iran, which supports the Houthis. Saudi Arabia has received support from eight other Arab states that are also opposed to Iran’s influence. U.S. officials long argued that the involvement of Iran has made it impossible to end the conflict, but criticism of that assessment has mounted as the conflict became the world’s largest humanitarian crisis. Western nations have remained careful in calibrating their responses, to neither disgruntle the wealthy and investment-eager Saudi leadership nor domestic human rights supporters. Germany, for instance, reduced its arms equipment sales to Saudi Arabia and vowed to stop them completely, but approved new sales earlier this year. (Those sales have now been stopped amid the killing of Washington Post contributing columnist Khashoggi). In the United States, **Trump has put Saudi investments and arms purchases first**, even as members of his administration have pressured the Saudis to stop the Yemeni conflict. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo both said in October that the war should come to an end. The United States exports more arms to Saudi Arabia than any other country.

**US arms sales are the only thing supporting Saudi Arabia’s campaign in Yemen – causes mass deaths to hundreds of thousands of civilians**

**Bazzi ’18** [Mohamad Bazzi is an associate professor of journalism at New York University and the former Middle East bureau chief at Newsday, “The United States Could End the War in Yemen If It Wanted To,” The Atlantic, 9/30/18]

**In his speech to the United Nations General Assembly** this week, President Donald **Trump signaled to Saudi Arabia that he would avoid criticizing its destabilizing actions in the Middle East**. Instead, **he blamed only Iran**, the kingdom’s regional rival, for funding “havoc and slaughter.” Trump praised Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) for pledging billions in aid and “pursuing multiple avenues to ending Yemen’s horrible, horrific civil war.” **He failed to mention that Yemen’s current conflict escalated dramatically in early 2015, when Saudi Arabia led a coalition of Arab countries to intervene in the war. That war has long since devolved into a humanitarian catastrophe**. The United Nations stopped counting its civilian death toll two years ago, when it hit 10,000. An independent estimate by the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project, which tracks conflicts worldwide, found that **nearly 50,000 people**, including combatants, **died between January 2016 and July 2018. The war has also left more than 22 million people—75 percent of the population of Yemen, already one of the poorest countries in the world—in need of humanitarian aid.** As public anger over America’s role in the Saudi-led war against the Houthi rebels in Yemen has grown, **Congress has slowly tried to exert pressure on America’s longtime allies to reduce civilian casualties**. Last month, a bipartisan group of lawmakers included a provision in the defense-spending bill requiring the Trump administration to certify that Saudi Arabia and the UAE are taking “demonstrable actions” to avoid harming civilians and making a “good faith” effort to reach a political settlement to end the war. Congress required the administration to make this certification a prerequisite for the Pentagon to continue providing military assistance to the coalition. This **assistance**, much of which began under the Obama administration, **includes** the mid-air refueling of Saudi and Emirati jets, intelligence assistance, and **billions of dollars worth of missiles, bombs, and spare parts for the Saudi air force.** On September 12, Secretary of State Mike **Pompeo assured Congress that the coalition was trying to minimize civilian casualties** and enable deliveries of humanitarian aid to Yemen**. Yet his claim contradicted virtually every other independent assessment of the war**, **including a recent report by a group of United Nations experts and several Human Rights Watch investigations that alleged the coalition had committed war crimes**. Meanwhile, in a memo Pompeo sent to Congress, he noted another reason for continued U.S. support for the coalition: containing Iran and its influence on the Houthis. Like the Saudis and Emiratis, the Trump administration sees in the Houthis the same sort of threat as other Iranian-backed groups such as Hezbollah, which has sent thousands of fighters to help Bashar al-Assad’s regime in Syria. In late August, the U.S. Mission to the United Nations tweeted a photo that had circulated in the Arab press of a meeting in Beirut between the Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah and Houthi officials. U.S. officials claimed it showed “the nature of the regional terrorist threat,” and added: “Iranian proxies in Lebanon & Yemen pose major dangers to peace & stability in the entire Middle East.” But beyond recent missile attacks on Saudi Arabia—in retaliation for Saudi air strikes—the Houthis have displayed little regional ambition. Ironically, as the war drags on, the Houthis will grow more dependent on support from Iran and its allies. By accepting the coalition’s cosmetic attempts to minimize civilian casualties, **the Trump administration is signaling to Saudi and Emirati leaders its apparent belief that a clear military victory in Yemen remains possible.** And **as long as the coalition believes it can crush the Houthis, there’s little incentive for it to negotiate. Trump, then, has bought into Saudi Arabia’s zero-sum calculation: that a military win in Yemen for the kingdom and its allies would be a defeat for Iran, while a negotiated settlement with the Houthis would be a victory for Tehran**. Blinded by its obsession with Iran**, the Trump administration is perpetuating an unwinnable war and undermining the likelihood of a political settlement**. This current phase of the conflict in Yemen began in September 2014, when the Houthis, a group of Shia rebels allied with Yemen’s ousted dictator Ali Abdullah Saleh, forced most of President Abdu Rabbu Mansour Hadi’s government to flee to Saudi Arabia, and threatened to take over much of the country. In 2015, the Saudi-led coalition went to war in Yemen to restore Hadi to power and roll back the Houthis. Since then, despite thousands of air strikes and an air and naval blockade at a cost of some $5 to $6 billion a month for Riyadh, the Saudi-led alliance failed to dislodge the Houthis from the capital, Sanaa. **While the Saudis are quick to blame Iran for the war, several researchers, including Thomas Juneau, a professor at the University of Ottawa and a former analyst at Canada’s Department of National Defense, have shown that the Houthis did not receive significant support from Tehran before the Saudi intervention in 2015**. Iran has stepped up military assistance to the Houthis since the war, and Hezbollah has begun sending military advisers to train the Yemeni rebels. But the costs of this assistance fall far short of those incurred by Saudi Arabia and its allies. For Iran, the Yemen conflict is a low-cost way to bleed its regional rival. **The Saudis and Emiratis have largely ignored international criticism of civilian deaths and appeals for a political settlement**—**and the Trump administration’s latest signal of support shows that strategy is working**. Investigations by the UN and other bodies have found both the Houthis and the Saudi-led coalition responsible for potential war crimes. But **air strikes by the Saudis** and their allies “**have caused most of the documented civilian casualties**,” **the UN concluded in a report last month**. On August 9, the Saudi coalition bombed a school bus in the northern town of Dahyan, killing 54 people, 44 of them children, and wounding dozens, according to Yemeni health officials. For weeks, the coalition defended the airstrike, but on September 1—with the deadline looming for the Trump administration to certify Saudi and UAE efforts to reduce civilian casualties—the coalition admitted that the bombing was a mistake and that it would “hold those who committed mistakes” accountable. U.S. officials seized on that statement as evidence that the Saudi coalition is willing to change its behavior. But for three and a half years now, there has been “little evidence of any attempt by parties to the conflict to minimize civilian casualties,” said Kamel Jendoubi, the chair of the UN investigation team that documented war crimes. **The Trump administration has shown little interest in using arms deals as leverage for a political settlement, or to force the Saudis to take concerns about civilian deaths more seriously.** In March 2017, **Trump reversed a decision by the Obama administration to suspend the sale of more than $500 million in laser-guided bombs and other munitions to the Saudi military**. As more members of Congress expressed criticism of Saudi actions in Yemen, the Senate narrowly approved that sale. After the Houthis fired ballistic missiles at several Saudi cities in late 2017, the Trump administration again escalated U.S. involvement in the war. The New York Times broke the news that the Pentagon had secretly dispatched U.S. special forces to the Saudi-Yemen border to help the Saudi military locate and destroy Houthi missile sites. Frustrated by the deepening U.S. role, two dozen members of the House introduced a resolution this week invoking the 1973 War Powers Act, arguing that Congress never authorized American support for the Saudi coalition and instructing Trump to withdraw U.S. forces. **Saudi and Emirati leaders want a clear-cut victory in their regional rivalry with Iran, and they have been emboldened by the Trump administration’s unconditional support to stall negotiations**. A recent UN effort to hold peace talks between the Houthis, Hadi’s government, and the Saudi-led coalition collapsed in early September, after the Houthi delegation did not show up in Geneva. Houthi leaders said the Saudis, who control Yemen’s airspace, would not guarantee their safe travel. Days later, **Yemeni forces loyal to the Saudi-UAE alliance launched a new offensive aimed at forcing the Houthis out of Hodeidah port**, which is **the major conduit for humanitarian aid in Yemen**. **UN officials warn that a prolonged battle for the port and its surroundings could lead to the death of 250,000 people, mainly from mass starvation.** After the Trump administration’s endorsement this month**, the Saudi-UAE alliance has even less incentive to prevent civilian casualties and new humanitarian disasters.** **Saudi Arabia and its allies are more likely to accept a peace process if it is clear that the United States won’t support an open-ended war in Yemen and won’t provide the military assistance required to keep the war apparatus going.** But Trump has shown little sign of pressuring his Saudi and Emirati allies, least of all over Yemen. **The only realistic check left is in Congress**, where more voices are asking why the world’s most powerful country is helping to perpetuate the world’s worst humanitarian crisis.

## Arms Worsen the Conflict

**Arm Sales uniquely worsen the conflict**

**Bazzi ’18** [Mohamad Bazzi is a journalism professor at New York University. He is writing a book on the proxy wars between Saudi Arabia and Iran, 6/11/18, The Guardian, “The war in Yemen is disastrous. America is only making things worse,” <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/jun/11/trump-yemen-saudi-arabi-war-us-involvement-worsening-crisis>]

Donald **Trump is quietly escalating America’s role in the Saudi-led war on Yemen**, disregarding the huge humanitarian toll and voices in Congress that are trying to rein in the Pentagon’s involvement. Trump administration officials are considering a request from Saudi Arabia and its ally, the United Arab Emirates, for direct US military help to retake Yemen’s main port from Houthi rebels. **The Hodeidah port is a major conduit for humanitarian aid in Yemen, and a prolonged battle could be catastrophic for millions of civilians who depend on already limited aid.** With little public attention or debate**, the president has already expanded US military assistance to his Saudi and UAE allies** – **in ways that are prolonging the Yemen war and increasing civilian suffering**. Soon after **Trump** took office in early 2017, his administration **reversed a decision by** former president Barack **Obama to suspend the sale of over $500m in laser-guided bombs and other munitions to the Saudi military, over concerns about civilian deaths in Yemen**. The US Senate narrowly approved that sale, in a vote of 53 to 47, almost handing Trump an embarrassing defeat. In late 2017, after the Houthis fired ballistic missiles at several Saudi cities, the Pentagon secretly sent US special forces to the Saudi-Yemen border, to help the Saudi military locate and destroy Houthi missile sites. While US troops did not cross into Yemen to directly fight Yemen’s rebels, the clandestine mission escalated US participation in a war that has dragged on since Saudi Arabia and its allies began bombing the Houthis in March 2015. **The war has killed at least 10,000 Yemenis and left more than 22 million people –three-quarters of Yemen’s population – in need of humanitarian aid**. At least 8 million Yemenis are on the brink of famine, and 1 million are infected with cholera. The increased US military support for Saudi actions in Yemen is part of a larger policy shift by Trump and his top advisers since he took office, in which Trump voices constant support for Saudi Arabia and perpetual criticism of its regional rival, Iran. The transformation was solidified during Trump’s visit to the kingdom in May 2017, which he chose as the first stop on his maiden foreign trip as president. Saudi leaders gave Trump a grandiose welcome: they filled the streets of Riyadh with billboards of Trump and the Saudi King Salman; organized extravagant receptions and sword dances; and awarded Trump the kingdom’s highest honor, a gold medallion named after the founding monarch. **The Saudi campaign to seduce Trump worked**. Since then, Trump has offered virtually unqualified support for Saudi leaders, especially the young and ambitious crown prince Mohammed bin Salman, who is the architect of the disastrous war in Yemen. By blatantly taking sides, **Trump exacerbated the proxy war between Iran and Saudi Arabia, and inflamed sectarian conflict in the region**. During his visit to Riyadh, **Trump announced a series of weapons sales to the kingdom that will total nearly $110bn over 10 years**. Trump, along with Jared Kushner, his son-in-law and senior adviser, who played a major role in negotiating parts of the agreement, were quick to claim credit for a massive arms deal that would boost the US economy. But many of the weapons that the Saudis plan to buy – including dozens of F-15 fighter jets, Patriot missile-defense systems, Apache attack helicopters, hundreds of armored vehicles and thousands of bombs and missiles – were already approved by Obama. From 2009 to 2016, **the Obama administration authorized a record $115bn in military sales to Saudi Arabia**, far more than any previous administration. Of that total, **US and Saudi officials signed formal deals worth about $58bn, and Washington delivered $14bn worth of weaponry. Much of that weaponry is being used in Yemen**, with US technical support. In October 2016**, warplanes from the Saudi-led coalition bombed a community hall in Yemen’s capital, Sana’a, where mourners had gathered for a funeral, killing at least 140 people and wounding hundreds.** After that attack – the deadliest since Saudi Arabia launched its war – the **Obama administration** pledged to conduct “an immediate **review**” of its logistical support for the Saudi coalition. But that **review led to minor changes: the US withdrew a handful of personnel from Saudi Arabia** and suspended the sale of some munitions. Toward the end of the Obama administration, some American officials worried that **US support to the Saudis** – especially intelligence assistance in identifying targets and mid-air refueling for Saudi aircraft – **would make the United States a co-belligerent in the war under international law**. That means **Washington could be implicated in war crimes and US personnel could, in theory, be exposed to international prosecution**. In 2015, as the civilian death toll rose in Yemen, US officials debated internally for months about whether to go ahead with arms sales to Saud Arabia. But these concerns evaporated after Trump took office. Like much of his chaotic foreign policy, **Trump is escalating US military involvement in Yemen without pushing for a political settlement to the Saudi-led war. His total support for Saudi Arabia and its allies is making the world’s worst humanitarian crisis even more severe.**

**These arms are used specifically against civilians**

**Malsin ’17** [Jared Malsin, 5/22/17, Time, <http://time.com/4787797/donald-trump-yemen-saudi-arabia-arms-deal/>]

When President Donald **Trump closed a nearly $110 billion arms deal with Saudi Arabia** on Saturday, his deputies’ spirits soared. Policy advisor Jared Kushner high-fived National Security Advisor H.R. McMaster as he entered the room where they held talks with Saudi officials. Aide Gary Cohn told pool reporters **the deals represented “a lot of money**. Big dollars. Big dollars.” **The weapons sale was one of the largest in history, totaling close to $110 billion worth of tanks, artillery, radar systems, armored personnel carriers, and Blackhawk helicopters. The package also included ships, patrol boats, Patriot missiles, and THAAD missile defense systems. Much of that military hardware will likely be pressed into service in the Saudi fight against its neighbor Yemen, where more than 10,000 people have been killed over more than two years of heavy airstrikes and fighting.** This puts the U.S. in a precarious ethical position, say human rights groups and former U.S. officials. **The Saudi-led airstrike campaign has hit numerous schools, hospitals, factories, and other civilian targets, leading to well-documented allegations of war crimes by human rights organizations**. **The war has also pushed much of the country to the brink of starvation, with more than 17 million people facing famine**, according to the U.N. “There’s a humanitarian aspect that tends to be ignored. This is something that will come back to bite the Saudis as well, and by implication the Americans, because we’re the ones providing the bombs and bullets,” says Robert Jordan, the former U.S. ambassador to Saudi Arabia appointed by George W. Bush. “The implication is not necessarily that these are war crimes, but it is a stain on the reputation of both the Saudis and potentially the Americans to continue this kind of bloodshed with indiscriminate attacks on civilian populations,” he tells TIME in a phone interview. Far from Washington and the ever-expanding investigation into Trump’s relations with Russia, the president trumpeted the weapons deal as a step that will boost Saudi security and the American economy. The agreement was exactly the sort of decisive, business-oriented deal on which Trump bases his personal brand. But in this case, **the deal** also **further entangles the United States in a political and humanitarian crisis that threatens to spiral out of control.** Read more: In Speech on Islam, Trump Strikes a More Moderate Tone **Saudi Arabia**, the UAE, and a coalition of predominantly Arab states **launched a military intervention in Yemen in 2015 in order to drive back Houthi rebels who seized the capital and forced the recognized government to flee.** Saudi officials say the campaign is also intended to combat the expanding influence of Iran, which they accuse of supporting the rebels. The Houthis, representing a Zaydi-Shiite minority concentrated in Yemen’s north, are also allied with the forces of Yemen’s former president Ali Abdullah Saleh, who was forced out following mass protests during the region-wide Arab uprisings of 2011. Under the Obama administration, **the United States supported the bombing campaign from the beginning, including providing tanker aircraft to refuel Saudi coalition jets in midair.** As civilian deaths mounted, Obama scaled back support in 2016, halting the sale of cluster bombs and also halting a $400 million transfer of precision guided missiles, citing what one U.S. official called “systemic, endemic” problems with how the Saudi military chose targets in Yemen. Rights advocates criticized Obama’s decision to stop the deliveries of some weapons as an inadequate gesture. But **Trump’s surge in weapons dispenses with any pretense of American disapproval for the conduct of the campaign in Yemen.**

## Mass Starvation

**The exacerbation of war by the Saudi coalition independently puts 8 million at the risk of starvation**

**OXFAM ’17** [OXFAM briefing note, December 2017, “MISSILES AND FOOD Yemen’s man-made food security crisis”]

1 ON THE BRINK OF FAMINE At the end of 2017, **Yemen faces the world’s largest food security emergency**. 12 More than two-and-a-half years after the escalation of the conflict in March 2015, **the effects of war, destruction, malnutrition and disease have left 21.7 million people in need of humanitarian or protection assistance**; of these, **10.8 million are in acute need.**13 In less than six months, **the number of people in need has risen by one million**; **16 million people do not have access to clean water and sanitation**,14 **and 17.8 million Yemenis – 66% of the population – do not know where their next meal is coming from.** **The number of Yemenis who are severely food insecure and facing a high risk of starvation now stands at 8.4 million**.15 In IPC phases, 16 this is the equivalent to phase 4 (emergency); that is, one step away from famine (IPC phase 5). **Nothing has been done to prevent Yemen from spiralling into an even deeper food crisis. If nothing is done immediately, thousands of people will die, even before famine is declared**. **The likelihood of famine has intensified significantly since Yemen’s borders were closed by the Saudi- and Emirati-led coalition** in November 2017. **This is largely due to Yemen’s dependency on food and fuel imports**. **As the Middle East’s poorest country, Yemen struggled with food insecurity in some areas long before the escalation of the conflict** in March 2015, and had a national global acute malnutrition (GAM) rate of 12.7% as of August 2014.18 GAM rates indicate the nutritional status of a population and are used to determine the severity of a humanitarian crisis. By the end of 2017, GAM rates in Yemen had increased significantly as a result of the war. In five governorates, 19 GAM rates rose above the global emergency threshold of 15% according to the Nutrition Cluster, 20 and in some locations within these governorates, even doubled, reaching 31%. 21 Even more worrying, severe acute malnutrition (SAM) rates have peaked. An estimated 15% of children under the age of five are acutely malnourished, including 462,000 children suffering from SAM, which constitutes an increase by a staggering 200% since 2014. 22 Rates of stunting have risen to 47%. 2 WOMEN, THE FIRST TO SKIP MEALS Yemeni women face one of the world’s greatest gender-based disparities, according to a worldwide study on the gender gap. 25 This imbalance clearly holds in terms of food security and nutrition, where women in Yemen suffer disproportionately. Women are often the first to skip meals or eat smaller portions so that the family ration goes further. Early marriage, already a dire problem in Yemen, has increased again since the escalation of the conflict. Girls as young as eight or 10 years old are married off to reduce the number of family members to feed, but also as a source of income in order to feed the rest of the family and pay off debts. 26 Higher levels of education are strongly correlated with higher nutritional status, yet only 29% of women in Yemen are literate, compared with 70% of men. 27 Consequently, one-quarter of Yemeni women between the ages of 15 and 49 are acutely malnourished. Malnourished women are in turn at increased risk of giving birth to malnourished babies, 28 indicating the correlation between gender inequality and malnutrition. 2 **WHY IS FAMINE LOOMING**? **Yemen’s food crisis is a direct, man-made result of the war. Imposed difficulties in importing food; the destruction of civilian infrastructure; a cash crisis; an entire year of unpaid public salaries; periods of siege and de facto blockades had left Yemenis without the means and processes to access basic staple food, even before the closure of key entry points** for food in early November 2017. Furthermore, **the effects of the war have led to an increase in basic food prices of up to an average 30%,** 29 **due to the costly delays of importing goods through Hodeidah port and the imposition of road taxes throughout the country**. At the same time, **the population has less and less access to cash and paid work. This has led to a vicious cycle as increasing numbers of people descend into food insecurity.** NEAR TOTAL DEPENDENCE ON FOOD IMPORTS **As a food-deficient country, Yemen has always relied on importing food.** Even before the crisis, 90% of Yemen’s food was imported, including 90% of wheat and 100% of rice, which are the country’s staple foods. **The escalation of the conflict has caused major disruption to the food pipeline to and within the country** through the imposition of inspection mechanisms, the partial destruction of infrastructure and dramatically increased costs due to delays and road taxes. **With the escalation of the conflict, the control over ports and entry points into Yemen means control over three crucial elements entering Yemen: revenues, fuel and food imports**. Shortly after the escalation of the conflict in 2015, the Houthi/Saleh alliance had brought under their control Sana’a airport, the sea ports of Hodeidah, Saleef and Mokha, and the land ports with Saudi Arabia, al-Tuwal (in Hajjah governorate) and al-Wadi’a (in Hadramawt). Based on figures from the Yemen Customs Authority in 2013, these ports together account for 61% of customs revenue. By October 2017, the Hadi-government had regained control over Mokha and al-Wadi’a. It also controls Aden port (al-Mualla and the Aden Free Zone), the land port with Oman, Shahen, and the port of Mukalla. These ports together accounted for 40% of customs revenue pre-war. The Houthi/Saleh alliance still controls Hodeidah and Saleef sea ports and Sana’a airport (the latter has been closed since August 2016 for all commercial flights) which accounted for 47% of customs revenue. Al-Tuwal, which used to be the most important land port with one-third of Yemeni exports passing through it, is no longer operating due to destruction by airstrikes and ongoing clashes.30 The vast majority of food is imported through the sea ports of Hodeidah, Saleef, and Aden. The former two ports received around 85% of all wheat grain imports in 2016. **The total storage capacity of Hodeidah port equals 62% of the country’s total storage capacity. The port’s milling capacity accounts for 51% of the national capacity. Given the infrastructure at the different ports and partial destruction as a result of the war, none of the sea or land ports can substitute for another: the closure of any of these entry points has a direct negative impact on the availability of food in the country**.31 This also means that **while Aden port is indispensable for food imports into Yemen, it cannot substitute for the ports of Hodeidah and Saleef**. In addition, the **physical storage and milling capacity in Hodeidah cannot be relocated: with the closure of the port, the majority of Yemen’s total capacity to store and mill wheat grain cannot be used and over 60% of the country’s wheat imports are no longer entering the country**. The two open land ports of al-Wadi’a and Shahen are not a viable alternative. Between 2014 and 2016, only 0.06% of wheat grain and 2.68% of rice was imported via land ports. **Given that importers are located in the sea ports, and importing via land means getting clearance from a number of transit countries, goods transported through the land ports adds to costs and makes goods a lot more expensive**. Only already milled wheat flour is brought in in slightly larger quantities via land ports: 16.59% through Shahen and 0.64% via al-Wadi’a. However, of the three staple commodities (wheat grain, rice and flour), imports entering Yemen via land amounted to only 1.16% of the total imports of those commodities between 2014 and 2016, with the rest coming through sea ports.

# ME Stability Adv

## Saudi drives ME militarization

Saudi militarization is fueling the militarization trend in the Middle East. Wezeman, 18 [Pieter D. Wezeman is a Senior Researcher with the SIPRI Arms Transfers and Military Expenditure Programme. His area of research is the global production and proliferation of conventional arms with a special focus on military expenditure and arms procurement in and arms transfers to the Middle East and Africa. He also monitors multilateral arms embargoes and maintains the SIPRI database on that issue. “Saudi Arabia, armaments and conflict in the Middle East,” 14 December 2018, <https://www.sipri.org/commentary/topical-backgrounder/2018/saudi-arabia-armaments-and-conflict-middle-east>]

Throughout the Middle East, many governments have placed a heavy emphasis on military force as a central tool for pursuing their political agendas and foreign policy aims and for dealing with perceived threats internally and abroad. Many states in the region have used their militaries in violent conflicts that have led to widespread destruction and hampered economic development. Militarization in the region is at a high level, as demonstrated by the fact that several states have steeply increased their arms imports in the past 10 years and that, in 2017, 7 of the 10 countries in the world with the highest military burden were in the Middle East. This topical backgrounder puts a spotlight on armament developments in Saudi Arabia, the country with the highest levels of military spending and arms imports in the Middle East. It aims to contribute to the efforts by SIPRI to gain a better understanding of the impact of militarization on security, conflict, peace and development in the region. Saudi Arabia's military involvement in conflicts in the Middle East Since the spring of 2015, Saudi Arabia has been leading a coalition of states in a military intervention against rebel forces in Yemen. The intervention has involved airstrikes, ground operations and an aerial and naval blockade of Yemen. Instead of a quick victory or resolution to the conflict, fighting has continued and the warring parties have been accused of violations of international humanitarian law. United Nations bodies and non-governmental organizations have accused Saudi Arabia of widespread and systematic attacks on civilian targets. The conflict in Yemen has caused tens of thousands of casualties and the situation there is currently considered to be the worst humanitarian crisis in the world. The fighting—and the blockade in particular—has disrupted imports of food, fuel and medical supplies. Saudi Arabia is also militarily involved in other conflicts—such as providing support for rebel groups in Syria, attempting to use military assistance to gain influence in Lebanon and fighting Shiite minority groups in the eastern province of Saudi Arabia. Although the various conflicts throughout the Middle East are complex, it is widely believed that they can be at least partly explained by regional power struggles (such as those between Saudi Arabia and Iran, and Saudi Arabia and Qatar) or involving Israel, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and the United States. Further proxy wars similar to those in Syria or Yemen—or even a direct confrontation between Saudi Arabia and its allies, and Iran and its allies—remain a possibility. The high level of militarization in Saudi Arabia requires analysis to understand how this contributes to the country’s ability and inclination to become militarily involved in regional conflicts and tensions.

## Saudi wants to be a regional hegemon

Saudi Arabia is using arms sales to establish themselves as a regional hegemon; they are gauging their effectiveness based on what happens in Yemen. Wezeman, 18 [Pieter D. Wezeman is a Senior Researcher with the SIPRI Arms Transfers and Military Expenditure Programme. His area of research is the global production and proliferation of conventional arms with a special focus on military expenditure and arms procurement in and arms transfers to the Middle East and Africa. He also monitors multilateral arms embargoes and maintains the SIPRI database on that issue. “Saudi Arabia, armaments and conflict in the Middle East,” 14 December 2018, <https://www.sipri.org/commentary/topical-backgrounder/2018/saudi-arabia-armaments-and-conflict-middle-east>]

Similar discussions about restricting arms sales to Saudi Arabia have been ongoing in the USA. However, the administration of US President Donald J. Trump decided not to go down this path, arguing that arms supplies are important for sustaining relations between the USA and Saudi Arabia; the US Administration sees Saudi Arabia as playing a crucial role in maintaining security in the Middle East as a bulwark against terrorism and as a key player in countering Iranian influence. In addition, Trump has argued that arms sales to Saudi Arabia are a major source of export revenue and involve a significant number of jobs. Whereas the security-related arguments are difficult to quantify, the economic arguments have been heavily criticized as inflated. For example, according to US Government sources the value of deliveries of military goods and services to Saudi Arabia peaked in 2017 at $6.2 billion, or 0.27 per cent of total goods and services exported by the USA in 2017. Conclusions Lack of transparency in military matters makes it difficult to determine the extent to which Saudi Arabia’s high levels of military spending and arms procurement are driven by defensive or offensive motives, military or prestige considerations, internal power play or the possibility for government officials to enrich themselves. However, it is clear that Saudi Arabia is no longer just stocking up on weapons. It is actually using them on a large scale in an offensive operation in Yemen. Preparations for the future use of armed force elsewhere should not be excluded as a motive for the continuing high level of militarization. Saudi Arabia might perceive its failure to win the war in Yemen as an indication of the limitations of its military arsenal. On the other hand, it could perceive the operations in Yemen as preventing a complete takeover of Yemen by allies of Iran, forcing the Houthi rebels to agree on negotiations and providing an opportunity for its armed forces to gain significant experience of warfare. Such perceptions combined with further arms acquisitions that enhance the reach and strike power of its armed forces may embolden the Saudi leadership to view the use of force as an increasingly central part of its foreign policy, regional power aspirations and responses to real or perceived threats from, among others, Iran, Qatar, or internal groups. As Yemen dramatically illustrates, there are major risks for national and regional security, stability, peace, development and the humanitarian situation that relate to militarized foreign and security policies in the Middle East. States should therefore reassess the possible short- and long-term consequences of their arms exports to Saudi Arabia, ensure that a questionable narrative of economic gain does not drive such arms sales and consider if and how arms supplies can have a role at all in conflict resolution in the Middle East.

## Saudi support fuels terror

Our constant support of Saudi Arabia, via arms sales, has helped embolden a number of terror groups in the region. Guyer, 19 [Jonathan Guyer is managing editor of The American Prospect. He has written for Foreign Policy, The New Yorker, Harper's, Le Monde diplomatique, and Rolling Stone. A former fellow of Harvard's Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, he is completing a book about political cartoons and comics in the Middle East. “Needed: A U.S. Policy on Saudi Arabia,” 18 March 2019, <https://prospect.org/article/needed-us-policy-on-saudi-arabia>]

From there, MBS exhibited a mastery of public relations, inoculating himself from future criticism by ingratiating himself with so-called thought leaders. But he didn’t hold out the hope of political reform other than on the role of women, which proved to be a brilliant feint that gulled such commentators as Thomas Friedman: His much-touted vision for the country was economic. On his first overseas trip as president, Donald Trump sword-danced and touched the enigmatic orb in Saudi Arabia. Ever since, Mohammed bin Salman’s destructive actions have accelerated. “Saudis see themselves as a mirror,” said Patterson, the former diplomat. “As long as they have the king (Donald Trump) and the crown prince (Jared Kushner)—they’re okay. They think with Trump in their corner they’ll be fine.” The story we didn’t hear at the time was the prince’s reputation as “Abu Rasasa,” which translates idiomatically as Mr. Bullet. As a threat, he had mailed a single bullet to a Saudi land registry official, as reported by The New Yorker’s Dexter Filkins. MBS’s coup, however, didn’t require a single bullet. To become crown prince, he sidelined heir apparent Mohammed bin Nayef, 59, the longtime security chief and epitome of the Saudi deep state. In June 2017, MBS had put him under house arrest and badmouthed him in the media as a pain pill–addicted has-been. “As the members of the royal family look at the crown prince’s behavior, they have to be asking the question, ‘Will the House of Saud survive 50 years of Mohammed bin Salman’s decision-making?’” Riedel, the former intelligence official, told me. “He Is a Saddam, Clearly” The brutality of MBS can no longer be overlooked. He has presided over the largest clampdown the kingdom has ever experienced. Many activists are in prison. Some have been tortured or sexually assaulted. And the Trump administration continues to enable him. Kushner, the president’s son-in-law and adviser, secretly traveled to Saudi Arabia in October 2017. A month later, Saudi kidnapped and blackmailed Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri. The U.S. didn’t speak up for the Lebanese head of state. A few days later, MBS held hostage dozens of princes, notably Prince Alwaleed bin Talal, among 400 businessmen in the Riyadh Ritz-Carlton, conducting what might be called the largest bank robbery in history. He had effectively neutered the country’s wealthiest. The only major impediments to his absolute power were activists, journalists, and religious leaders. “They are using legal means to kill people because they have different views, because they demand political change, because they demand liberties,” Abdullah Alaoudh, a law scholar at Georgetown University, told me. His father, the cleric Salman Alaoudh, was arrested in 2017. “Just imagine: They are seeking the death penalty against my father for holding similar views to Khashoggi.” Alaoudh described a “pattern of cracking down on dissent, irrespective of ideology,” including liberals, Shiites, and Sunnis. In early February, the deadline for the Global Magnitsky Act sanctions against Khashoggi’s killers passed. Under the act, which was passed in 2015, the president has expansive power to sanction foreign individuals who commit “gross violations” of human rights, like extrajudicial killings. The same week, a U.N. rapporteur called the Khashoggi affair “planned and perpetuated by officials” of Saudi Arabia. “Our leadership is a red line,” the kingdom wrote on social media with a threatening photo of the king and the crown prince. “We warn against any attempt to link Khashoggi’s crime to our leadership.” But in a kingdom where all decisions are taken by the micromanaging crown prince, the line was hardly plausible. Expect Congress to be increasingly aggressive in their condemnations. Eighteen Republicans crossed the aisle to pass a February 13 House resolution to stop aiding the Yemen war, invoking the rarely used War Powers Resolution. Further action might include holding back appropriations, blocking arms sales, and maybe passing sanctions targeting specific individuals in the Saudi government, making it difficult for them to travel to the U.S. “I think he is a Saddam, clearly,” a senior Senate aide told me. “We need to make clear to Saudi Arabia: Your relationship is not going to be what it potentially could be while you have someone like this at the top.” For Congress, the most urgent task at hand—and the most doable—is ending all support for the war in Yemen and investing in that country’s renewal. The crown prince’s rise is intimately tied to the grave humanitarian crisis he has perpetuated there, fueled by American weaponry and logistical support. Ending the Yemen war is a no-brainer given that the conflict is empowering al-Qaeda and ISIS, while exacerbating human tragedy that will lead a generation to hate America for selling its weapons to Saudi Arabia. Halting the war is an important goal unto itself, and it has the added knock-on effect of punishing Mohammed bin Salman.

For years the US has been selling arms to Saudi Arabia while they have been giving these weapons to terrorist groups as incentives to do the Saudi’s bidding; this harms stability in the Middle East. Hunter, 19 [Jack Hunter (@jackhunter74) is a contributor to the Washington Examiner's Beltway Confidential blog. He is the former political editor of Rare.us and co-authored the 2011 book The Tea Party Goes to Washington with Sen. Rand Paul. “Rand Paul said US weapons would end up in terrorists' hands. You should have listened to Rand Paul,” 5 February 2019, <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/rand-paul-said-us-weapons-would-end-up-in-terrorists-hands-you-should-have-listened-to-rand-paul>]

At The American Conservative’s annual foreign policy conference in October, Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., said, "If you ask me who’s the worst at spreading hatred and trying to engender terrorism around the world, it’s Saudi Arabia hands down." Paul was comparing Saudi Arabia to Iran in terms of which country should be considered more a threat to U.S. interests in the Middle East. The senator has warned for years that sending American military aid to alleged allies abroad could end up in terrorists’ hands, which has happened repeatedly. On Monday, we learned it’s been happening again. CNN reported that Saudi Arabia has been giving American-made weapons to groups linked to al Qaeda. The Saudis have been using weapon sales to gain leverage in the ongoing war in Yemen. In August, the Washington Post reported, “New Associated Press reporting from Yemen has laid bare the fact that the UAE and Saudi Arabia have been busy cutting ‘secret deals with al-Qaida fighters, paying some to leave key cities and towns and letting others retreat with weapons, equipment and wads of looted cash … hundreds more were recruited to join the coalition itself.’” Now CNN reveals this is happening with American weapons. Why wouldn’t this happen? Anyone could have predicted it. After all, Saudi Arabia is America’s number one weapons customer. The weapons and equipment CNN learned are in al Qaeda’s possession were sold by the U.S. during the Obama administration, though sales continue under President Trump. Paul has long been one of the most vociferous opponents of sending U.S. weapons to Saudi Arabia under both Democratic and Republican administrations, a position reinforced in the minds of many in the wake of the killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi in October. Paul also led the fight in 2013 against arming Syrian rebels with U.S. weapons, worrying they could end up in the hands of al Qaeda. Guess what? That’s what happened. Maj. Anas Ibrahim Obaid even told Fox News that he gave American weapons and trucks directly to al Qaeda. Paul worried that weapons the U.S. gave to Libyan rebels in 2011 to topple dictator Moammar Gadhafi could end up being used by terrorists. That’s exactly what happened when the weapons ended up in Syria. “Extremist fighters, some of them aligned with Al Qaeda, have the money to buy the newly arrived stock, and many rebels are willing to sell,” the New York Times reported in 2013. For at least eight years now, the U.S. has found ways to inadvertently fund the group that attacked the U.S. on Sept. 11. Paul recalled this history on the Senate floor Monday in a speech opposing an amendment condemning President Trump’s planned troop withdrawal from Syria and Afghanistan. “We’ve given [Middle East allies] trillions of dollars, the uniforms, the weapons, everything has been ours,” Paul said. “But every time we say we have to be involved there are unintended consequences.” “In Syria we gave arms to people who were radical extremists,” the senator said. “We gave arms to people who were actually allied with al Qaeda.” “At one point in time it was said that ISIS had a billion dollars worth of Humvees that were U.S.” Paul added. Lest we forget, the U.S. has not just been funding al Qaeda indirectly, but also the Islamic State. “The arms that were coming out of Libya, that Hillary Clinton supported bringing those arms, they were going to the wrong people,” Paul continued. “We were taking one set of bad people and giving them to another set of bad people.” “Maybe sometimes there isn’t a lesser of two evils?” he concluded. When will the U.S. stop this destructive habit? How many times do weapons sent abroad have to end up in terrorist hands before leaders rethink these policies? Perhaps Washington politicians fond of restricting gun sales should start with themselves.

## Syria and ISIS

The US and Saudi Arabia have used their weapons sales to increase influence in Syria; this has only helped to embolden ISIS. O’Connor, 18 [Tom O’Connor is a staff writer for Newsweek. “How Did ISIS Get Its Weapons? Europe Wants to Limit U.S. and Saudi Arabia Arms Sales Because Guns Went to Militant Group,” 14 November 2018, <https://www.newsweek.com/europe-limit-us-saudi-weapons-sales-went-isis-1215758>]

The European Union's top legislative body has issued a call to control arms exports in order to avoid perpetuating human rights abuses and allowing weapons to fall into the wrong hands. The European Parliament warned that "member states have systematically failed to apply" EU rules when selling arms abroad, and called for "a mechanism to enforce sanctions on EU members that break the rules," according to a press release issued Wednesday. The document cited specific examples of taking measures to cut weapons exports to Saudi Arabia and the United States in order to ensure they were not acquired by banned organizations such as the Islamic State militant group, commonly known as ISIS or Daesh. The document quoted parliamentarians as saying they were "shocked at the amount of EU-made weapons and ammunition found in the hands of Da'esh, in Syria and Iraq." The lawmakers highlighted EU protocols designed to prevent arms intended for a legitimate customer from then being transferred to a restricted one, but called out Bulgaria and Romania specifically for not adhering to them. Due to the risks associated with such sales, the lawmakers said member states should "refuse similar transfer in the future, notably to the US and Saudi Arabia." The U.S. and Saudi Arabia have garnered criticism for their support of groups fighting to overthrow Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in the wake of a 2011 rebel and jihadi uprising. As the opposition made gains in the early years of the war, ISIS arose out of a post-U.S. invasion Sunni Muslim insurgency in neighboring Iraq and came to control up to half of both countries at its height in 2014. That same year, the U.S. formed a coalition to battle ISIS in Iraq and Syria. ISIS's rapid takeover, however, was assisted by U.S. weapons looted from government forces in Iraq and from Syrian fighters that either were defeated or absorbed by the militant group. In December, the U.K.-based Conflict Armament Research released a report that accused the U.S. and Saudi Arabia of intentionally violating EU rules by purchasing "large numbers" of European arms and ammunition and then quietly diverting them to nonstate actors in Syria without telling the suppliers. These sales were reportedly made possible through deals between Eastern European members of the EU, as well as the U.S. and Saudi Arabia, both of whom "supplied most of this material without authorization, apparently to Syrian opposition forces," the 2017 report found. It added: "Supplies of material into the Syrian conflict from foreign parties—notably the United States and Saudi Arabia—have indirectly allowed IS to obtain substantial quantities of anti-armor ammunition."

## Sea Lane I/L

**Proximity to vital sea-lanes makes escalation likely- ship attacks draw in foreign powers**

**Vaughan and Henderson, 17** (Cmdr. Jeremy Vaughan, U.S. Navy, is a Federal Executive Fellow at The Washington Institute who has completed multiple deployments to the Persian Gulf. Simon Henderson is the Institute's Baker Fellow and director of its Gulf and Energy Policy Program. <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/bab-al-mandab-shipping-chokepoint-under-threat> 3-1)

On February 9, the U.S. Office of Naval Intelligence issued an alert warning commercial vessels about the risk of mines in the Bab al-Mandab Strait: "The U.S. Government has reason to believe in late January, mines were laid by Houthi rebels in Yemeni territorial waters in the Red Sea close to the mouth of Mocha harbor." The alert follows a number of other troubling incidents in the strategic waterway over the past few months. Saudi and Emirati naval vessels have been attacked while trying to enforce a blockade on the Iranian-supported Houthi rebels who control large parts of Yemen. And last October, patrolling U.S. Navy ships were targeted as well. Diplomatic efforts to end Yemen's civil war appear to be getting nowhere, and the fighting on land is largely deadlocked, though forces loyal to the internationally recognized government of President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi recently captured Mocha port near the Bab al-Mandab. Iran's motives for helping the Houthis are unclear but have the effect of challenging Saudi Arabia, which views the fighting as a proxy war. More incidents at sea, especially involving civilian shipping, could further **internationalize the conflict and spur other actors to intervene.** In terms of capability and tradition, the leadership role in any such effort to safeguard freedom of passage would necessarily be taken by the U.S. Navy. A KEY CHOKEPOINT In a 2014 web post describing heavily transited oil chokepoints in the Middle East and elsewhere, the U.S. Energy Information Administration noted that blocking such waterways, even temporarily, "can lead to **substantial increases in total energy costs** and world energy prices." The Bab al-Mandab, which controls access to the Red Sea and the southern end of the Suez Canal, **is particularly crucial at present because of Egypt's reliance on imported liquefied natural gas to maintain its electricity supplies**. One LNG tanker destined for Egypt transits the strait each week. If passage were impeded, those shipments -- and all other vessels heading to Egypt and the Mediterranean Sea -- would have no alternative but to make the long voyage around the southern tip of Africa. The Bab al-Mandab is around ten miles wide at its narrowest point, where the Yemeni island of Perim protrudes into the waterway toward Eritrea and Djibouti. Under an international traffic separation scheme, northbound international shipping uses a two-mile-wide lane on the Arabian side just west of Perim, while southbound traffic uses a similar lane on the African side. Separated by just over a mile of water, the two lanes work well for international traffic but are ignored by smaller local ships and fishing vessels. More than sixty commercial ships transit the strait every day, and several passenger cruise liners use the route as well. THE THREATS Houthi rebels have attacked warships in or near the strait on at least four occasions since last fall. On October 1, antishipping cruise missiles fired from the Houthi-controlled coastline severely damaged the Swift, an Emirati-operated troop landing and logistics ship. In the following weeks, the destroyer USS Mason successfully defended itself against three similar attacks. The U.S. Navy launched a Tomahawk missile strike to knock out coastal radar sites that may have provided targeting information for the attacks. No further antishipping missile attacks have been reported since then, but radar sites can be rebuilt, and the Houthis' stores of such missiles have not been destroyed, so the threat remains. Additional threats have emerged in the past few weeks and may already be affecting international shipping patterns. The recent U.S. government warning about mines in the Bab al-Mandab advised ships to transit the strait only during daylight. Moored mines have a notorious tendency to break free of their tethers and could ramp up the risk to all ships in the area. Another new threat surfaced when a Saudi frigate was attacked off the Houthi-controlled port of Hodeida on January 30. Initially thought to be a suicide speedboat, the attacker is now assumed to have been a remote-controlled drone craft similar to the type Iranian smugglers employ to pick up contraband from Oman's Musandam Peninsula in the Strait of Hormuz, a Persian Gulf chokepoint. The UAE also has such craft (which it uses for target practice), so it is conceivable that the attack was conducted by a lost Emirati boat recovered by Iran. U.S. warships transiting the Strait of Hormuz are routinely harassed by small boats from Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy (IRGCN), but weaponized speedboat drones, known in the military as unmanned surface vehicles (USVs), change the danger profile into a credible threat. An attacking USV must be disabled at distance from a warship's hull, a task that could prove exceptionally difficult during a swarming attack by multiple boats. Furthermore, Iran's familiarity with explosively formed penetrators (EFPs) means that such technology may soon be seen at sea. Fortunately, the difficulty in remotely placing such a narrowly focused explosive against a target's hull mitigates some of the risk; this could explain why the January 30 attack seemed to result in such minor damage, assuming an EFP was on board. Even so, an EFP-laden USV that gets through a ship's defenses could sink it.

**Conflict would escalate to global nuclear war. Steinbach, 18** (John, 6-30, https://www.globalresearch.ca/israeli-weapons-of-mass-destruction-a-threat-to-peace-israel-s-nuclear-arsenal/4365)

Meanwhile,.the existence of an arsenal of mass destruction in such an unstable region in turn has serious implications for future arms control and disarmament negotiations, and even the threat of nuclear war. **Seymour Hersh warns**, “Should war break out in the Middle East again or should any Arab.nation fire missiles against Israel, as the Iraqis did, a nuclear escalation, once unthinkable except as a last resort would now be a **strong** probability.”(41) and Ezar Weissman, Israel’s current President said “The nuclear issue is gaining momentum(and the) next war will not be conventional. (42) Russia and before it the Soviet Union has long been a major(ifnot.the major) target of Israeli nukes. It is widely reported that .the principal purpose of Jonathan Pollard’s spying for Israel was to furnish satellite images of Soviet targets and other super sensitive data relating to U.S. nuclear targeting strategy. (43) (Since launching its own satellite in 1988, Israel no longer needs U S. spy secrets.) Israeli nukes aimed at the Russian heartland seriously complicate disarmament and arms control negotiations and, at the very least, the unilateral possession of nuclear weapons by Israel is enormously destabilizing. and dramatically lowers the threshold for their actual use if not for all **out nuclear war.** In the words of Mark Gaffney, “... if the familar pattern(Israel refining its weapons of mass destruction with U.S. complicity) is not reversed, soon- for whatever reason- the deepening Middle East conflict could **trigger** a world **conflagration.”** (44)

# Framing

## Conjunctive Fallacies

**Be aware of the conjunctive fallacy. Each internal-link is misleading and reduces the probability of the next.**

**Piattelli, 96** – Dr. Massimo Piattelli-Palmarini, Professor of Cognitive Science, Linguistics, Psychology at Arizona State University, Doctorate in Physics at the University of Rome, Founder and Director of the Department of Cognitive Science at the Scientific Institute San Raffaele, Former Principal Research Scientist at the Center for Cognitive Science of MIT, Inevitable Illusions: How Mistakes of Reason Rule our Minds, p. 134-137

Here is deadly sin number 7 in its most blatant form, in that our **judgment of probability** allows itself to be influenced by **fictions**, including scenarios that we know to be the fruit of **pure invention**. I call this the Othello effect. You may remember that the lustful and thwarted Iago sets out to make Othello believe his beloved wife, Desdemona, is unfaithful to him. Iago makes up a scenario involving Desdemona’s handkerchief. This plausible but fallacious scenario convinces Othello of Desdemona’s betrayal, and in a fury of passion, Othello kills her. Such fictitious scenarios can be taken advantage of by any shrewd and unscrupulous Iago. But before we seek to save Desdemona, let us go back a few years to when Tversky and Kahneman **ran their experiment** on the Polish situation. Let’s imagine a much stranger possibility than the withdrawal of the U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union. **How likely do you think it is** that the **U**nited **S**tates might invade Poland? Here the chances are in the order of **one in a million or less**. But supposing we ask our **respondents to consider** the following sequence of events (you have to think yourself back into those times): Strikes in **Poland intensify**; crowds **are fired on**; Lech Walensa is **imprisoned**; the pope goes to Warsaw on a peace mission and is arrested; world public opinion is inflamed; the **U**nited **S**tates sends a **specialist force to free the Pope**… As the narrative unfolds one event is **linked with another**, making for a script that **seems plausible**—always admitting, of course, that each stage has really been **preceded by another**. In the end, don’t we think that the probability of a U.S. invasion is somewhat higher than one in a million? Here we **leave statistics** behind and enter the domain of **pure fiction**. Look a bit closer, and one can see that we are not yet out of the realm of cognitive science, for these questionaire-**experiments**, just like real life, have countless times shown us that a plausible and **well-told story** can lead us to hold as “objectively” probable events that, just minutes before, we would have considered **totally improbable**. The notorious “Protocols of Zion,” a pure fabrication of the czar’s anti-Semitic propaganda taken up by the Nazi regime raised an Anti-Semitic storm. It did little good to show that it was a pure invention. What the propagandists sought to do, in order to seize power, was to make **imaginatively presentable** the probability of a **worldwide Jewish conspiracy**, and in doing so they succeeded admirably, at least in the minds of those **uncritically committed to hatred**. I will not waste space on other instances, but limit myself to the purely cognitive aspects of the phenomenon. Offering **a “plausible” sequence** of events that are **causally linked** one to another has the effect of **immediately raising our estimate** of probability. It suffices that the links between these “events” should hold from one to **the next for our minds** to approach the final link in the chain. For, as we have seen, that which we can **readily imagine** is ipso facto **more probable**. Even if the probability of **the very first link** in this chain is very low, the fact is soon forgotten. Say “Let’s suppose that…” and we’re off, putting together **a series of consequences**, all of them **“plausible” enough**. I put “plausible” in quotation marks because true plausibility, in effect, depends wholly on that initial “Let’s suppose…” Once the first link in the chain of our script is “supposed,” then all the rest of the **links “hold” one to another**. Rationally speaking, however, and having regard to the calculation of probabilities, we are in **the domain** of what is known as **“compound probabilities,”**, or, more restrictively, “conditional probabilities.” (What is the likelihood that B will be true, supposing that A has to be true?) The probability of the **last link in the chain** being true is calculated on the basis of a series of conditional **probabilities being true**, and that in turn is obtained by **combining** the **probabilities** of each link in the chain, from **the first to the last**. Probabilities being, by their nature, less than one, the probability of the entire chain (or the last link) being true is **always** *and without exception* less probable than the probability of the least **probable link in the chain**. We fail to notice this **progressive attenuation** of probability. **The story takes over** from reality. The **last link seems ever truer** to our mind, and our **increased facility** in representing or imaging makes that last link **seem ever more probable**. The trick—which is **one of the oldest** in the book—is to find the narrative path by **which the last, and most implausible**, link can be **made imaginatively compelling**. My Othello effect depends on this perverse use of the imagination. If by chance one or two of the intervening links in this chain should come true, then poor Desdemona will indeed die. A narrative chain put together with art by some cunning Iago, and “resting” on a pair of **intermediate links** that come true (though only true for quite different reasons, and for reasons that no one may know), becomes **irresistible**. Poor us! The narrative then **becomes a**n **impregnable “logical”** demonstration. Iago can transform doubt into certainty. Iago is not acting in good faith, and Othello, truth to tell, is no Sherlock Holmes. A rational, rigorously deductive man, knows perfectly well that the deductive inferences Iago makes about Desdemona’s fidelity don’t amount to much. His “indications,” hints, and “proofs”could all be explained without the infidelity hypothesis. Bayes’ law, or for that matter any sensible use of compound probability calculations, can save Desdemona from a horrible and unjust fate. Instead, reinforced by our **cognitive illusions** and dark passions, by a **single imaginary chain** of “plausibilities,” and by a pair of intermediate links that for totally unrelated reasons are true, Desdemona’s tragic death is set into motion. The implausible becomes plausible, indeed certain. Give us **a little story**, a script, something born of our own imagination, and **our own natural tendencies**, cognitive or emotional, do the rest. Isn’t this really the deadliest of our deadly sins?

# AT: Case Arguments

## AT: China and/or Russia Fill In

China can’t fill the void the US would leave post plan; their weapons aren’t sophisticated enough. Zheng, 18 [Sarah Zheng joined the Post as a reporter in 2016. She graduated from Tufts University with a degree in international relations and film and media studies. She reports on China's foreign policy. “China may seek to boost ties with Saudi Arabia but it ‘can’t fill US arms sales gap’,” 17 October 2018, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/2168849/china-may-seek-boost-ties-saudi-arabia-it-cant-fill-us-arms>]

China may continue to engage more with Saudi Arabia if Washington imposes sanctions over the disappearance and presumed murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, but it cannot supplant US arms sales as President Donald Trump believes, analysts say. US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo arrived in Saudi Arabia on Tuesday as Washington weighs actions against Riyadh over the fate of Khashoggi, a US resident and vocal critic of the Saudi regime who vanished two weeks ago. But Trump has been reluctant to support sanctions, citing the impact to a US$110 billion arms deal he helped broker last year. “I don’t like the concept of stopping an investment of US$110 billion into the United States because you know what they’re going to do?” Trump told reporters last week. “They’re going to take that money and spend it in Russia or China or someplace else.” Saudi Arabia has long sought to diversify away from its reliance on the US and has increasingly stepped up its engagement with China, its largest trading partner with US$42.36 billion in bilateral trade in 2017. Last March, the two countries also signed US$65 billion worth of deals in areas ranging from energy to space technology. The Arab nation could turn to countries such as China and Russia to help fulfil its military needs if US sanctions were imposed, a step that would “create an economic disaster that would rock the entire world”, according to a widely cited opinion piece by the general manager of the Saudi-owned Al Arabiya news channel. In the editorial, Turki Aldakhil said Saudi Arabia – the world’s largest oil exporter – was considering more than 30 countermeasures to be taken against the US, including trading oil in yuan instead of the US dollar. But in the military realm, China’s arms exports to Saudi Arabia lag far behind those of the US and its European allies. Beijing exported only around US$20 million in arms last year compared to US$3.4 billion from Washington, according to data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, a Swedish think tank. Jamal Khashoggi fallout: how much damage can Saudi Arabia do to the global economy? Jonathan Fulton, assistant professor of political science at Zayed University in Abu Dhabi, said China had grown more serious in its regional arms relationships with Gulf states in recent years, with the potential to serve as a “wedge” as US-Saudi relations frayed. Along with Riyadh’s previous indications that it was willing to consider funding in yuan, increased arms sales would be a “natural progression” of their relationship, he said. “Part of the reason why [Saudi Arabia] is diversifying is there’s been so many kinds of structural changes in the relationship with the US,” Fulton said. “Another important part is just obviously the commercial relationship and economic relationship between these Gulf states and China, with these energy exports. We’re seeing a lot more engagement both ways.” But as evidence piles up that Saudi Arabia ordered Khashoggi’s assassination, which the government denies, the backlash is getting louder. A bipartisan group of US senators have pressured Trump to enact sanctions and key corporate sponsors have pulled out of the high-profile “Davos in the Desert” investment forum to be held in Riyadh this month. “I would expect to see some kind of … Saudi-led way to ease the tensions between the US and Riyadh because I don’t think they can afford to let the US relationship deteriorate,” Fulton said. Simone van Nieuwenhuizen, an Australia-based researcher of China-Middle East relations at the University of Technology Sydney, said China would be “extremely unlikely” to follow US sanctions if they were levelled against Saudi Arabia, but may not necessarily increase trade with the country either. “I think China is likely to keep a low profile on this issue and see how it plays out before directly addressing it,” she said. “While its technology is developing, China still lags behind the US in the sophistication and capability of its military equipment. It simply can’t fill the gap.” Robert Mason, director of the Middle East Studies Centre at the American University in Cairo, said China would not want to get involved at this stage to avoid further tensions with the Trump administration.

It would be near impossible for Saudi Arabia to switch to buying from Russia or China. Guyer, 19 [Jonathan Guyer is managing editor of The American Prospect. He has written for Foreign Policy, The New Yorker, Harper's, Le Monde diplomatique, and Rolling Stone. A former fellow of Harvard's Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, he is completing a book about political cartoons and comics in the Middle East. “Needed: A U.S. Policy on Saudi Arabia,” 18 March 2019, <https://prospect.org/article/needed-us-policy-on-saudi-arabia>]

Saudi money also flows to the U.S. in the form of weapons sales, to be sure, but the numbers cited by Trump have proved to be vastly exaggerated, with Trump’s purported $110 billion figure, touted in a March 2018 Oval Office meeting with MBS, shown to be mythical. Only about $4 billion or $5 billion in sales were signed since then, and much higher levels of sales were carried out under Obama. These days, even small-bore deals are getting unwelcome attention. Last year, $61 million worth of weapons made in New Hampshire were sent to Saudi by a company that didn’t want itself named publicly. Over the past decade, these types of deals—huge orders for weapons that were rarely used, certainly not on the battlefield—were a boon to American defense contractors. Congress enthusiastically supported them. But as images of the grievous attacks and humanitarian crisis in Yemen reach American televisions, this is starting to change. The Saudis, however, are dependent on expensive U.S. weapons platforms, and it will be difficult for them to begin buying weapons from Russia or China. Their weapons systems and aircraft squadrons are all American, and require almost constant American repairs. As a hardball tactic, Congress could try to pass laws that would effectively ground the Saudi air force. And the next administration could condition close military systems collaboration on Saudi behavior. There are other avenues of cooperation, and the Saudi government’s role as the custodian of two of three holiest mosques in the Islamic faith have made them important symbolic allies. But gone are the days when Saudis were great financiers of American foreign-policy adventurism, like funding the mujahideen in Afghanistan in the ’80s. The role of Saudi windfall oil profits and petrodollar “recycling,” which was so important to both U.S. banks and Third World oil-consuming countries in the 1980s and 1990s, is also long past. The human-rights agenda, so often touted as part of U.S. policy, has never held Saudi to much of a standard. Importantly, the Obama administration’s support for the 2011 Arab uprisings frightened the sclerotic Saudi leadership. Washington had sold out Mubarak, its partner of 30 years. “Clearly, we’ve given the Saudis a lesson,” Freeman told me. “We reinforced the thought that we can’t be depended on.”

## AT: You make it hard for MBS internally

MBS will face internal pressures regardless; aff has a responsibility to the US and not MBS. Guyer, 19 [Jonathan Guyer is managing editor of The American Prospect. He has written for Foreign Policy, The New Yorker, Harper's, Le Monde diplomatique, and Rolling Stone. A former fellow of Harvard's Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, he is completing a book about political cartoons and comics in the Middle East. “Needed: A U.S. Policy on Saudi Arabia,” 18 March 2019, <https://prospect.org/article/needed-us-policy-on-saudi-arabia>]

If Saudi Arabia is unwilling to reform on these three points, then perhaps it is time to raise first-order questions about why the U.S. military is so deeply ensconced in the Middle East and the long-term benefits of such inertia. Washington could begin by considering a path toward a constructive relationship with Iran. Containment of Tehran hasn’t worked, and a move toward rapprochement would theoretically provide the U.S. with more options. Over time, the U.S. might downgrade the Saudi relationship and pursue a new regional strategy, reducing the American military profile in the Persian Gulf, sharing the security burden with European and Asian allies, and perhaps even relocating the U.S. Fifth Fleet currently based in Bahrain. Threatening or carrying out a military pullback is risky, but so is supporting an autocrat increasingly at odds with his own people and bent on destabilizing the region. An alternative view is that meddling in Saudi affairs could backfire. The Saudi leadership will resent U.S. interference in the court, even among those concerned about MBS’s cruelty. But the perils of a cavalier crown prince increase whether the U.S. intervenes or not. Indeed, it’s the spectrum of American support for MBS across two administrations that has led to this entanglement. The U.S. has a responsibility, after coddling Saudi Arabia for decades, to take a firm line in containing further misadventures. If the U.S. doesn’t try the full tool kit of approaches, then it is condoning MBS’s wet work and assuring that worse is yet to come.

## AT: Saudi needs arms for protection

Saudi Arabia is the most well armed country in the Middle East; it’s not even close. Wezeman, 18 [Pieter D. Wezeman is a Senior Researcher with the SIPRI Arms Transfers and Military Expenditure Programme. His area of research is the global production and proliferation of conventional arms with a special focus on military expenditure and arms procurement in and arms transfers to the Middle East and Africa. He also monitors multilateral arms embargoes and maintains the SIPRI database on that issue. “Saudi Arabia, armaments and conflict in the Middle East,” 14 December 2018, <https://www.sipri.org/commentary/topical-backgrounder/2018/saudi-arabia-armaments-and-conflict-middle-east>]

The SIPRI arms transfers database yields a long list of arms imported by Saudi Arabia in the period 2013–2017. As these are generally advanced weapons, Saudi Arabia is the most well-armed country in the Gulf region in terms of its inventory of modern equipment. Only a few examples are necessary to illustrate the types of recently acquired weapons that are important to Saudi Arabia’s capability to wage war in Yemen while at the same time conducting internal military operations, maintaining a military capability at the border with Iraq, facing Iran militarily and contemplating the possibility of deploying its military in Syria. A combination of newly procured air force assets has increased the reach and strike power of the Saudi Arabian armed forces. The Royal Saudi Air Forces (RSAF) uses several types of combat aircraft, all of which have been used in the war in Yemen. During the 1990s, the USA supplied 72 F-15S. Starting in 2016, these began being replaced by 154 F-15SA, a heavily modernized version of the F-15S ordered from the USA in 2011. In addition, the USA continues to deliver large quantities of ordnance for these aircraft, such as SLAM-ER cruise missiles with a 280-kilometre range, and a variety of guided bombs that have been used in Yemen. The United Kingdom supplied Tornado combat aircraft in the 1990s, and 84 of these were upgraded in the period 2007–13 to enable them to carry new guided weapons, such as Storm Shadow cruise missiles which have a range of at least 250 kilometres. These and other guided weapons delivered by the UK have been used in Yemen since 2015, and deliveries are ongoing. The UK also delivered 72 Typhoon combat aircraft in 2009–17 and contract negotiations for 48 more were continuing in 2018. Saudi Arabia bases its long-range strike capability on aircraft, but it also maintains a secretive Strategic Missile Force equipped with a small arsenal of DF-3 ballistic missiles. These have a range of at least 2500 km and were supplied by China in 1988. There are indications that this force was modernized around 2010. A small fleet of tanker aircraft extends the range and increases the payload of Saudi Arabia’s combat aircraft. To supplement its existing tanker aircraft, six new A-330 MRTT built by the trans-European Airbus consortium were delivered from Spain between 2011 and 2015. The significance of this tanker fleet was highlighted when, in November 2018, Saudi Arabia stated that it no longer required aerial refuelling support from the USA for its operations in Yemen ‘because it could now handle it by itself’. Nonetheless, it remains uncertain just how independent the country really is in this regard. Sophisticated intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and command and control equipment is crucial to the Saudi Arabian military. Five E-3 airborne early warning and control (AEW&C) aircraft were acquired from the USA in the 1980s and are currently being extensively upgraded. In addition, Sweden supplied two Erieye AEW&C aircraft in 2014. At the same time, Saudi Arabia is improving its capability to defend against air and missile attacks. In 2014–17 it received 21 Patriot PAC-3 air defence systems from the USA, which have been used with mixed success to defend Riyadh and other places in Saudi Arabia against ballistic missiles fired by Houthi rebels from Yemen. In November 2018 Saudi Arabia signed an agreement with the USA to buy THAAD systems, the most advanced anti-missile system available. Together, the increasing reach of the RSAF combined with improved target acquisition capabilities and evolving air and missile defence systems widen the technological gap between the Saudi Arabian arsenal and that of its main rival, Iran. Saudi Arabia’s land and naval forces are also continuously being improved. In the period 2013–17, for example, the army and National Guard received over 3000 armoured vehicles from Austria, Canada, France, Georgia, South Africa, Turkey and the USA. Many of the vehicle types delivered in recent years have been highly visible in coverage of the war in Yemen. The Royal Saudi Naval Forces (RSNF), which play an important role in the blockade of Yemen, has initiated several major procurement projects in recent years, including orders for at least 33 patrol boats from Germany in 2014, two large patrol boats from France in 2015, 4 highly advanced frigates from the USA in 2017 and 5 corvettes from Spain in 2018. One aspect of Saudi Arabian military activities remains especially difficult to assess as reliable information is so scarce—the extent of the support it provides to its allies in the Middle East, often in competition with Iranian support to its allies. For example, there are strong indications that Saudi Arabia has supplied significant amounts of weaponry to rebel forces in Syria and to government forces or related armed groups in Yemen. These weapons come from existing Saudi Arabian stocks or have reportedly been procured specifically for this purpose from Bulgaria, Croatia and Serbia, among others.

## AT: Arms sales key to US Econ

Selling arms to Saudi Arabia will not have an impact on the US economy; multiple reasons. Campbell, 18 [Alexia Fernández Campbell is a Politics & Policy Reporter for Vox. “Trump says selling weapons to Saudi Arabia will create a lot of jobs. That’s not true.,” 20 November 2018, <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2018/10/17/17967510/trump-saudi-arabia-arms-sales-khashoggi>]

In May 2017, Trump made his first foreign trip to the Saudi capital of Riyadh, where he met with MBS, the kingdom’s new crown prince. Trump said he was brokering a $110 billion arms deal that would create “jobs, jobs, jobs.” Even though Trump had lifted the hold on the $500 bomb sale, some members of Congress tried to block it. They couldn’t. In June, the Senate narrowly approved the deal. Since then, the Saudi-led coalition has killed thousands of civilians with American-made bombs, including at least 40 children who were riding a school bus. The United Nations now considers the situation in Yemen “the world’s worst humanitarian crisis.” But instead of reprimanding MBS, Trump has continued to push for arms sales to the kingdom, touting the supposed economic benefits for the United States. When MBS visited the White House in March, Trump was effusive about it. He even held up a US map highlighting all the states that would get jobs from the arms deal with Saudi Arabia. The map stated that 40,000 jobs would be created, though the administration didn’t cite the source for that number (In recent days, Trump has thrown out even more ludicrous numbers). He doesn’t say where he got these estimates because no one knows exactly how many US jobs depend on arms sales. The federal government doesn’t keep data on that, and it doesn’t even break down how many total jobs are related to manufacturing military equipment. That’s because it’s a tiny fraction of the US labor force. Here’s what we do know: The private-sector defense industry directly employed a total of 355,500 in 2016, according to the most the recent estimates from the Aerospace Industries Association. That includes manufacturing jobs, but also every other job in the defense industry, even those who are supplying uniforms for soldiers. This entire group makes up less than 0.5 percent of the total US labor force. And their main client is the US military, not the Saudi military. About 153,800 American workers are directly involved in making commercial and military aircraft, according to the most recent industry employment numbers from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. But that includes workers who make passenger planes for commercial airlines, a much larger sector of the economy that those who make military jets and helicopters. But we can get pretty specific data on how many American workers are making bombs. That data is more clear-cut, and Saudi Arabia buys plenty of American bombs for its war in Yemen. Only about 7,666 workers were making bombs for the defense and law enforcement industries in 2016, and that includes explosives sold to the entire US military. It’s doubtful these jobs are entirely dependent on arms sales to Saudi Arabia. In short, the US economy does not need Saudi Arabia to keep buying bombs. (Besides, MBS wants all arms deals to include some production in the kingdom.)

## AT: Arms Sales key to US jobs

Arms sales have a very small impact on manufacturing. Campbell, 18 [Alexia Fernández Campbell is a Politics & Policy Reporter for Vox. “Trump says selling weapons to Saudi Arabia will create a lot of jobs. That’s not true.,” 20 November 2018, <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2018/10/17/17967510/trump-saudi-arabia-arms-sales-khashoggi>]

In the short term, selling weapons to Saudi Arabia may support some US factory jobs. But here’s the thing: Saudi Arabia plans to start manufacturing a lot of those weapons at home. Building up a local weapons manufacturing industry is part of the crown prince’s much-touted 2030 economic development plan, which is supposed to reduce the kingdom’s economic dependence on oil exports. Saudi Arabia expects half of all jobs created by weapons deals to be local jobs. Here’s what he says in an outline of the plan that the Saudi government has posted online: Localization will be achieved through direct investments and strategic partnerships with leading companies in this sector. These moves will transfer knowledge and technology, and build national expertise in the fields of manufacturing, maintenance, repair, research and development. We will also train our employees and establish more specialized and integrated industrial complexes. American defense contractors that sell a lot of military equipment to Saudi Arabia are on board. Raytheon, for example, is in the process of opening a subsidiary in Riyadh. Aside from shifting manufacturing jobs overseas, Saudi Arabia’s defense industry could eventually compete with the US defense industry. This focus would completely change the current economic relationship between both countries, according to Reuters. Since Trump took office, Saudi Arabia has signed about $14.5 billion in commitments to buy US weaponry. No contracts have actually been signed, so details are scarce. Items in the pipeline include bombs, missiles, tanks, and aircraft. But at least one involves manufacturing parts overseas, not in the United States. Now Congress is reportedly reviewing another proposed sale of 12,000 guided bombs to Saudi Arabia, according to Reuters. The Senate could cancel the sale if they can get enough votes, and some senators have suggested this as a form of sanctions in response to the Khashoggi case. Trump said that would be bad for American workers. But, once again, US workers don’t need Saudi Arabia.

## AT: They will modernize using other means

It would take a long time for Saudi Arabia to transition from a US backed weapons arsenal. Spindel, 19 [Jennifer Spindel is an assistant professor of international security at the University of Oklahoma, and the Associate Director of the Cyber Governance and Policy Center. You can follow her on Twitter: @jsspindel. “The Case for Suspending American Arms Sales to Saudi Arabia,” 14 May 2019, <https://warontherocks.com/2019/05/the-case-for-suspending-american-arms-sales-to-saudi-arabia/>]

Beyond signaling, we know U.S. arms sales often end up in the wrong hands, and have been used in Yemen. The Saudi-led war in Yemen has led to starvation conditions, caused thousands of civilian casualties, and has led to the displacement of millions of people. The United Nations estimates that 80 percent of Yemen’s population – 24 million people – require some form of humanitarian or protection assistance, and that the severity of the situation is increasing. Would an arms embargo create meaningful change in Yemen? An initial effect of an embargo is that Saudi Arabia would have to work harder to access war materiel. As Jonathan Caverley noted, more than 60 percent of Saudi Arabia’s arms delivered in the past five years came from the United States. Even if this percentage decreases over time, it will be costly for Saudi Arabia to transition to a primarily Russian- or Chinese-supplied military. Though Saudi Arabia might be willing to pay this cost, it would still have to pay, and take the time to transition to its new weapons systems. This would represent a brief break in hostilities that could facilitate the delivery of aid and assistance in Yemen. The United States could, in theory, impose stricter end-user controls on Saudi Arabia. This would have the advantage of keeping Saudi Arabia within the world of U.S. weapons systems, and might prevent it from diversifying its suppliers, which would ultimately weaken any leverage the United States might have. Longer-term, it would not be to America’s advantage if Saudi Arabia takes a lesson from Turkey, and starts courting Russia as a new arms supplier. It is difficult to enforce end-user controls, since, once a weapon is transferred, the recipient can use it however it wishes. It might also be the case that Saudi Arabia would object to stricter end-user controls, and would seek new suppliers as a result. An arms embargo will not be a panacea. But not doing something sets a problematic precedent, and allows the difficulty of coordinating an arms embargo outweigh the potential benefits of one. An embargo is unlikely to have an immediate effect on Saudi behavior, because an embargo would be a political signal, rather than a blunt instrument of coercion. It will take time for a multilateral embargo to emerge and be put into place, and the United States should work with its allies to help support their ability to participate in the embargo. Not acting, however, would continue to implicitly endorse Saudi behavior, and would make it more difficult for U.S. allies to believe that future threats of an embargo are credible.

## AT: Aff can’t solve

**Their arguments are a product of the Kingdom Industrial Complex. Hiatt et al, 18** [WaPo Editorial Board 10-24-18 <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/does-saudi-money-leave-room-for-an-honest-debate/2018/10/24/678654c2-d7bb-11e8-aeb7-ddcad4a0a54e_story.html?utm_term=.ecdabd07f4fe>]

WASHINGTON NEEDS to have a thorough debate about Saudi Arabia and whether the bilateral relationship as it now stands serves U.S. interests. That raises a difficult question: Is it possible to have an honest discussion when so many American experts are, in one way or another, **on the Saudi payroll?** Many countries spend heavily to influence Congress or U.S. public opinion, but the Saudi operation dwarfs most of them. In the decade after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, in which 15 of the 19 hijackers were Saudi nationals, the regime spent more than $100 million to rebuild its image here, according to Ben Freeman of the Center for International Policy. Last year alone it spent $27.3 million on lobbyists and consultants, according to public records; more than 200 people have registered as Saudi agents. Prominent Washington think tanks, including the Middle East Institute and the Center for Strategic and International Studies, have accepted millions in Saudi money; so have universities, museums and other cultural organizations. U.S. financial firms are brokering big deals for the Saudi government, which is effectively controlled by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. Members of Congress or journalists looking for expert advice on Saudi Arabia might typically turn to former ambassadors or former chiefs of the Pentagon’s Central Command. But a number of them are connected to those think tanks or financial firms. According to Mr. Freeman, lobbyists made nearly $400,000 in campaign contributions last year to Senate and House members they contacted on behalf of the Saudis; in 11 cases, the contributions were made on the same day as the contact. One of those lobbyists is Norm Coleman, a former Republican senator. He told The Post that “the relationship with Saudi Arabia is critically important, and its partnership in confronting the Iranian threat is critical for U.S. security.” That’s an oft-made and legitimate argument. But do those who hear it take into account the fact that Mr. Coleman is **paid to represent Saudi rather than U.S. interests**?

## AT: Europe fills in

**No Europe fill in – there’s a consensus. Noack, 18** (Rick, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2018/11/22/denmark-joins-germany-halting-arms-sales-saudi-arabia/?utm\_term=.56c1983e0134)

BERLIN — Denmark and Finland both announced Thursday that they would halt future arms exports to Saudi Arabia, following a similar decision by neighboring Germany earlier this month. The Danish and Finnish announcements come the same week President Trump backed Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, despite the CIA assessing that he ordered the killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi. Denmark’s ban includes goods that can be used both for military and civilian purposes but is still less expansive than the German measures, which also included sales that had already been approved. While the Nordic countries are tiny arms equipment exporters in comparison with bigger players such as the United States, Britain or France, their decision will probably exacerbate concerns within the European arms industry of a **growing anti-Saudi consensus** in the European Union and beyond.

# AT: Hegemony DA

## Heg Decline Inevitable

**Trump and his irrational policies are a symptom of heg decline, not the cause – constant involvement in the Middle East, mismanagement of the economy, income inequality, the decline of the middle class, and the rise of China are all impersonal alt causes the aff can’t solve for**

**Layne, 18**

[Christopher, 2018, International Affairs, “The US–Chinese power shift and the end of the Pax Americana”, p. 1-2, <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/images/ia/INTA94_1_6_249_Layne.pdf>, DMH]

Donald Trump’s election in November 2016 sent a shiver down the collective spines of the foreign policy elites on both sides of the Atlantic, which view him as a dire threat to the durability of the liberal, rules-based international order (LRBIO). The morning after the election, David E. Sanger of the New York Times argued that Trump’s victory ‘will plunge the United States into an era of unknowns that has little parallel in the nation’s 240-year history’.1 Fearing that Trump’s ‘America First’ policy would undo US security alliances in Europe and east Asia, the Washington Post columnist David Ignatius noted that ‘by putting America’s interests first so nakedly, he may push many US allies in Europe and Asia to make their own deals with a newly assertive Russia and a rising China’.2 Gideon Rachman, chief foreign affairs columnist for the Financial Times, worried that ‘Mr Trump’s proposed policies threaten to take an axe to the liberal world order that the US has supported and sustained since 1945’.3 The FT’s Philip Stephens stated that ‘“America First” promotes belligerent isolationism—an approach to international order rooted in power rather then a rule of law’. Indeed, Stephens asserted, Trump was ‘repudiating the basic organizing idea of the west: the notion that the world’s democracies can oversee a fair and inclusive rules-based system to underwrite global peace and security’.4 As I explain below, the LRBIO actually is the international order—the Pax Americana—that the United States constructed after the Second World War: it is now fraying, but Donald Trump is a symptom of this, not the cause. There are both internal and external factors that explain why the Pax Americana is under stress. Internally, income inequality, stagnant real incomes, the outsourcing of manufacturing jobs and slow productivity growth have hollowed out the middle class. These trends have hit the white working class especially hard, and their effect has been amplified by rapid demographic changes taking place in the United States. By artfully employing ‘dog whistle’6 tactics, Trump was able to capitalize on the concern among blue-collar voters about America’s changing national identity. The political blowback from these trends helped to fuel Trump’s victory—a triumph that can be viewed as a populist backlash against globalization’s effects, and against the elites—the ‘One Percent’—who are seen to have profited from it.7 Externally, the Pax Americana is imperilled by the shifting of the world’s economic—and geopolitical—centres of gravity from the Euro-Atlantic world to Asia, which presages the end of the West’s five centuries of global dominance. As Financial Times chief economic commentator Martin Wolf notes, this change really is ‘all about the rise of Asia, and, most importantly, China’.8 To be precise, rather than Donald Trump’s election, it is the big, impersonal forces of history— the relative decline of American power, and the emergence of a risen China—that explain why the Pax Americana’s days are numbered. For good measure, both the paralysing effects of the US political system’s polarization, and America’s own policies—the mismanagement of its economy that led to the Great Recession in 2008, and the ‘forever wars’ in which it has become entrapped in the Middle East and Afghanistan—have given these big, impersonal forces of history a powerful shove forward.9

**Economic and political changes make heg decline inevitable – Trump is just a symptom**

**Acharya,17**

(Amitav, 9-8-17, “After Liberal Hegemony: The Advent of a Multiplex World Order\*”, 272, <https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge> core/content/view/DBD581C139022B1745154175D2BEC639/S089267941700020Xa.pdf/after\_liberal\_hegemony\_the\_advent\_of \_a\_multiplex\_world\_order.pdf, accessed 7-11-18, J.B)

The domestic challenges to the liberal order led by Trump and his supporters could be overstated, however. After all, Hillary Clinton won a majority of the popular vote, and the Brexit referendum only passed by a slim margin. More importantly, however, the crisis of the liberal order has deeper roots, owing to long-term and structural changes in the global economy and politics. As such, Trump’s ascent to power is a consequence—not a cause—of the decline of the liberal order, especially of its failure to address the concerns of domestic constituents left behind by the global power shift. Given these factors, Trump is unlikely to reverse the decline of the liberal order even if he wanted to. Instead, he may well push it over the precipice.

**U.S. military heg decline is inevitable – emerging regional powers will form balancing coalitions to offset the military supremacy of the U.S. and promote multipolarity as a foreign policy objective**

**Ebert et al., 18**

[Hannes, Daniel Flemes, German Institute of Global and Area Studies Shumpeter Fellow, February 2018, Rising Powers Quarterly, “Rethinking Regional Leadership in the Global Disorder”, Volume 3, No. 1, p. 9, <http://risingpowersproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Rising-Powers-Quarterly-Volume-3-Issue-1.pdf>, accessed 7-8-18, DMH]

A crucial reason for the declining but enduring US hegemony in international relations is its military supremacy. Washington still accounts for more than half of for global defense expenditures. In conventional military terms the US will remain the dominant global power for a long time. From a Realist perspective a multipolar system could be the results from the emergence of balancing coalitions against the global system’s dominant power by regional powers who successfully achieved the position of the unipole in their regions (Wohlforth 1999, p.30). Linking this statement with the developing countries’ lack of power in the international system (measurable for instance in IMF voting power or permanent seats at the UN Security Council) multipolarisation becomes a priority foreign policy objective of developing states. In addition to forming balancing coalitions, these regional powers will likely seek to advance the transformation toward multipolarity by increasing their influence in international institutions. In particular, the governments of Southern states that have the capacity to build regional unipolarities,must be interested in finding an effective way to challenge the current international hierarchy and to transform themselves into power poles of a future multipolar system. One way to project significant global influence (decision-maker status) is by consolidation regional powerhood as a base for pursuing national interests in the multipolar order.

## Link Turn

Current policy of arms sales uniquely limits US hegemony; we are giving Iran access to info that can hurt us in Iraq and Afghanistan. Bollag, 19 [Uri Bollag is a Senior Breaking News Editor at The Jerusalem Post. “U.S. arms land in hands of terror groups in Yemen, incl. Iranians – report,” 5 February 2019, <https://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/US-arms-land-in-hands-of-terror-groups-in-Yemen-incl-Iranians-report-579738>]

Arms sold by the United States to Saudi Arabia have been passed on to extremist groups in Yemen and have even landed in the hands of Iranian-backed rebels, potentially exposing sensitive information to the Iranian regime, an investigative report by CNN revealed on Monday. The findings show that Saudi Arabia has violated US agreements about transferring such weapons. The weapons were transferred directly by the Saudi government and its coalition partners to groups waging war on its behalf to push the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels out of Yemen, which has been torn apart by the struggle for power since 2015. The investigation found that guns, anti-tank missiles, armored vehicles, heat-seeking lasers and artillery are all being traded on the black market in Yemen, with little accountability over who acquires these weapons. Among others, al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) now counts US-produced armored vehicles of the Oshkosh brand among its inventory. AQAP is considered a terrorist organization by the US, yet it fights alongside Saudi-backed militias in Yemen and belongs to the coalition-supported 35th Brigade of the Yemeni army. But Iranian-supported militias fighting the coalition have also captured some of the military hardware, giving Iranian intelligence the opportunity to gain sensitive information on US military technology. A member of the Preventative Security Force, a secret unit overseeing transfers of military technology to and from Tehran, confirmed to CNN that the Iranians have thoroughly inspected mine-resistant ambush-protected (MRAP) vehicles they had captured. This is particularly worrying to the US military because improvised explosive devices are the main cause of deaths of American troops in Afghanistan and Iraq. Taking into account the inability to track all of the equipment that has been transferred to Saudi Arabia, the findings raise questions about whether the US administration can trust the kingdom to handle such important weaponry after it has become evident that they are handing out these arms in return for loyalty and influence. American support for Saudi Arabia is at a recent low after the murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi last October caused outrage and led many voices inside Congress to call on US President Donald Trump to put an end to his friendly ties with the monarchy, a request the American president is not likely to heed. In the wake of the Khashoggi scandal, Trump said it would be foolish to cancel the multi-billion dollar arms deals with Saudi Arabia.

## No Heg War

**Empirics go aff – most qualified studies disprove hegemonic stability theories.**

**Fettweis 17** –Christopher J. Fettweis is an American political scientist and the Associate Professor of Political Science at Tulane University. “Unipolarity, Hegemony, and the New Peace, Security Studies” 26:3, 423-451; EG)

Even the most ardent supporters of the hegemonic-stability explanation do not contend that US influence extends equally to all corners of the globe. The United States has concentrated its policing in what George Kennan used to call “strong points,” or the most important parts of the world: Western Europe, the Pacific Rim, and Persian Gulf.64 By doing so, Washington may well have contributed more to great power peace than the overall global decline in warfare. If the former phenomenon contributed to the latter, by essentially providing a behavioral model for weaker states to emulate, then perhaps this lends some support to the hegemonic-stability case.65 During the Cold War, the United States played referee to a few intra-West squabbles, especially between Greece and Turkey, and provided Hobbesian reassurance to Germany’s nervous neighbors. **Other, equally plausible explanations exist for stability in the first world, including the presence of a common enemy, democracy, economic interdependence, general war aversion, etc**. The looming presence of the leviathan is certainly among these plausible explanations, but only inside the US sphere of influence. Bipolarity was bad for the nonaligned world, where Soviet and Western intervention routinely exacerbated local conflicts. Unipolarity has generally been much better, **but whether or not this was due to US action is again unclear.** Overall US interest in the affairs of the Global South has dropped markedly since the end of the Cold War, as has the level of violence in almost all regions. There is less US intervention in the political and military affairs of Latin America compared to any time in the twentieth century, for instance, and also less conflict. Warfare in Africa is at an all-time low, as is relative US interest outside of counterterrorism and security assistance.66 **Regional peace and stability exist where there is US active intervention, as well as where there is not**. No direct relationship seems to exist across regions. If intervention can be considered a function of direct and indirect activity, of both political and military action, a regional picture might look like what is outlined in Table 1. These assessments of conflict are by necessity relative, because there has not been a “high” level of conflict in any region outside the Middle East during the period of the New Peace. Putting aside for the moment that important caveat, some points become clear. The great powers of the world are clustered in the upper right quadrant, where US intervention has been high, but conflict levels low. **US intervention is imperfectly correlated with stability, however. Indeed, it is conceivable that the relatively high level of US interest and activity has made the security situation in the Persian Gulf and broader Middle East worse.** In recent years, substantial hard power investments (Somalia, Afghanistan, Iraq), moderate intervention (Libya), and reliance on diplomacy (Syria) have been equally ineffective in stabilizing states torn by conflict. While it is possible that the region is essentially unpacifiable and no amount of police work would bring peace to its people, it remains hard to make the case that the US presence has improved matters. **In this “strong point,” at least, US hegemony has failed to bring peace.** In much of the rest of the world, the United States has not been especially eager to enforce any particular rules. **Even rather incontrovertible evidence of genocide has not been enough to inspire action. Washington’s intervention choices have at best been erratic; Libya and Kosovo brought about action, but much more blood flowed uninterrupted in Rwanda, Darfur, Congo, Sri Lanka, and Syria.** The US record of peacemaking is not exactly a long uninterrupted string of successes. During the turn-of-the-century conventional war between Ethiopia and Eritrea, a highlevel US delegation containing former and future National Security Advisors (Anthony Lake and Susan Rice) made a half-dozen trips to the region, but was unable to prevent either the outbreak or recurrence of the conflict. Lake and his team shuttled back and forth between the capitals with some frequency, and President Clinton made repeated phone calls to the leaders of the respective countries, offering to hold peace talks in the United States, all to no avail.67 The war ended Table 1. Post-Cold War US intervention and violence by region. High Violence Low Violence High US Intervention Middle East Europe South and Central Asia Pacific Rim North America Low US Intervention Africa South America Former Soviet Union in late 2000 when Ethiopia essentially won, and it controls the disputed territory to this day. The Horn of Africa is hardly the only region where states are free to fight one another today without fear of serious US involvement. Since they are choosing not to do so with increasing frequency, something else is probably affecting their calculations. **Stability exists even in those places where the potential for intervention by the sheriff is minimal.** Hegemonic stability can only take credit for influencing those decisions that would have ended in war without the presence, whether physical or psychological, of the United States**. It seems hard to make the case that the relative peace that has descended on so many regions is primarily due to the kind of heavy hand of the neoconservative leviathan, or its lighter, more liberal cousin.** Something else appears to be at work.

**Decades of economic & military failures prove there’s no impact to US Hegemony.**

**Reich et. Al 17** – Simon Reich is a Professor in the Division of Global Affairs at Rutgers University. Richard Ned Ledbow is a Professor in the Department of War Studies at King’s College. James O. Freedman is President Emeritus of Dartmouth College. Published January 2017. Accessed 7/6/18. (“Influence and Hegemony: Shifting Patterns of Material and Social Power in World Politics,” *All Azimuth: A Journal of Foreign Policy and Peace* 6(1) pp. 17-47; EG)

US hegemony was a **short-lived** postwar phenomenon. Imre Latakos famously asserted that waning theories built auxiliary hypotheses when presented with important evidence with which they are irreconcilable.26 Liberals and realists appear to have been revising both history and theory through this means in an effort to substantiate their continued research program on American hegemony. Admittedly, they go through cycles where they assert, in the famous words of Samuel Huntington, either American “decline or renewal.” 27 Although this scholarship recognizes the cycles and challenges to American hegemony, there is little dissent from the view among these scholars that unipolarity continues unabated. Certainly, the political science and historical literatures are replete with warnings about imperial overstretch, ranging from Robert Gilpin’s seminal War and Change in World Politics to Paul Kennedy‘s historical tome The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers.28 Yet the debate appears to replay, dating from the 1980s, without a consensus being agreed about any terminative date. Robert Keohane for example, published his seminal book After Hegemony in 1984. Charles Kindleberger, who coined the term “stabilizer,” and on whose analysis liberals and realists are so reliant, declared American hegemony dead even earlier - by the end of the 1970s.29 Then the rise of Japan created the specter of a power transition. Yet the end of the Cold War and the implosion of Japan’s economy provided both liberals and realists with the opportunity to resurrect the notion of continued American hegemony. A brazen arrogance led to military adventurism in Iraq – what Richard Haass famously referred to as a war of choice.30 Most recently, the current debate over China clearly echoes that about Japan two decades ago, as less distinguished, anxiety-generating books with titles like Hegemon: China’s Plan to dominate Asia and the World clearly attest. Even these sensationalist books find their counterparts in mainstream academia, with titles like those of Aaron L. Freidberg’s, A Contest for Supremacy: China, America and the Struggle for Mastery in Asia.31 The content of the latter may be sober and reflective, but the answer is based on a **similar set of assumptions**: the US is hegemonic, it is in decline, and the key question is when the lines with China will cross, in the process of power transition. Yet liberals and realists are still today resolved to maintain a view of the US as hegemonic. Even now, approximately three decades after Kindleberger’s and Keohane’s declarations that hegemony had ended, Ikenberry describes the current crisis as one “of authority within the old hegemonic organization of liberal order, not a crisis in the deep principles of the order itself. It is a crisis of governance.” As a result, “the character of rule in world politics has been thrown into question.”32 Although American leadership is being challenged, the liberal international order remains resilient. “As an organizational logic of world politics,” it is, however, a victim of its own success suggests Ikenberry. A new bargain needs to be struck between the US and emergent actors. It will still rest on a unipolar distribution of power, and with it, “constituencies that support a continued -- if renegotiated -- American hegemonic role” within a liberal hegemonic order. Under such a new arrangement, the US would still qualify as a hegemon.33 Comparably, as evidence of the continued pervasiveness of comparable assumptions in the policy world, the introduction to a 2012 Rand report on the US’ global defense posture commissioned for the Air Force reflexively opened with declaration that the US is a global hegemon.34 **In influential scholarship and policy work, the myth thus lives on**. Part of the problem in evaluating this claim is that there appears to have been few systematic attempts to codify, operationalize and measure the six indicators of being a “**stabilizer**” that Kindleberger outlined in his original work, Simon Reich‘s 2015 study with Carla Norrlof being the exception.35 This omission has left many Liberals and Realists to claim America was a hegemon during the Cold War, when they were the dominant economy for at least a large part of that period, even though military power was clearly bipolar. It then allowed them to make the same claim after 1991 when military power was (and is) unipolar but the US clearly **no longer served** as the lender of **last resort or stabilizer**. A more dispassionate view suggests that **American hegemony was very short lived and quickly eroded**. By any serious economic measure, it **stopped serving as the world’s economic hegemon decades ago**. In 1944, the US GDP peaked at 35 percent of the world total, a figure that had dropped to 25 by 1960 and 20 percent by 1980.36 Today, by way of comparison, it has fluctuated in recent years at around 25%, never approximating its peak. The US ran **significant deficits** during the Viet Nam war and delinked the dollar from the gold standard in 1971.37 In the 1980s, the US ran up budget deficits and systematically reneged on its own liberal trading rules by introducing a variety of **tariffs and quotas** under the Reagan administration instead of bearing the costs of economic adjustments.38 Contemporary policymakers have done the same to China.39 More specific figures support this general picture. Until the end of the 1960s, the US current account balance ran at zero or a small surplus. That position dramatically eroded in the 1980s, and the US current account deficit peaked at 6% in 2006, just before the financial crisis.40 This took place at a time when there was a consistent decline in net US public and private savings.41 American policies had the effect of making the US government and consumers **increasingly reliant on foreign capital to finance their expenditures**. Over-expenditure by individual Americans and their government -- reflected in low personal savings rates coupled with increased government deficits -- became important causes of global imbalances.42 The growth in American **personal debt** has been unmistakable: from a peak of 14.6% in 1975, and an average of around 9% in the 1980s, the American net savings rate declined to around zero by the turn of the century. It reached a low of -0.5% in 2005, a statistic not seen since during the Great Depression in 1933.43 As savings plummeted, debt increased. By 2005, total U.S. household debt, including mortgage loans and consumer debt, stood at $11.4 trillion.44 A decade later, despite the salutary lessons of the Great Recession, it had increased $12.07 trillion.45 The US federal **budget deficit** grew in a similar fashion. Since the end of second Clinton Administration, the debt of the US government has increased annually. It went from $186.2bn inflation-adjusted dollars in 2002 to over $16.8 trillion by April of 2013.46 The National Clock then calculated a figure: an average of nearly $53,500 owed per citizen.47 It ballooned during the Obama administration.48 Figures for the US trade deficit are just as illuminating. According to the US Census Bureau, the US has run a **trade deficit** in goods and services every year since 1969, with the exception of 1973 and 1975. Comparable to the budget deficit, these figures have worsened over time and have also ballooned since the turn of the century, peaking in 2006 on the eve of the financial crisis.49 Liberals and realists thus consistently **ignore a wealth of economic data** in proclaiming American postwar hegemony. The **same is true in terms of its military capacity to achieve its foreign policy objectives**. Triumph over Germany and Italy in World War II, the invention and use of nuclear weapons to end the war with Japan, and America’s nuclear arsenal all consolidated Americans’ sense of themselves as hegemonic. The Cold War victory consolidated that view. Yet **military failures** like MacArthur’s push north in the Korean War, the Bay of Pigs Invasion, Vietnam, and more recently, failed interventions in Lebanon, Somalia, Afghanistan and Iraq, were reconceived of as “victories” (Korea), inconsequential (the Bay of Pigs) or part and parcel of strategies that were, or will be, successful in the longer-term. Bush “hawks,” for example, in revisionist fashion, hailed the Iraq invasion as the necessary prelude to the now-aborted Arab Spring years later, despite its unprecedented cost, while Afghanistan – America’s longest serving war – is reputed to have been a key component of a successful campaign to defeat al Qaeda.50 For all of America’s unprecedented military capacity, it is **hard to reconcile this long list of questionable military interventions with the dominance that unipolarity and hegemony implies**. Yet realists and liberals continue to apply these terms despite America’s failures to achieved its prescribed policy goals stretching back over the last five decades. More recently, liberals -- and to a lesser extent realists -- have convinced themselves that the role of this military is to ensure the global system’s stability. Often this has been inaccurate if stability is equated with the absence of war. If we calculate ‘war years’ as a simple function of each war multiplied by its longevity, **since 1945, the US has fought more war years than any other country in the world**, with the possible exception of the UK and France.51 A proportion of these wars have been justified by American policymakers as preventative interventions (such as the invasions of Iraq or Afghanistan) or humanitarian ones (such as the invasion of Grenada) and thus validated by a “just war” doctrine. Critics, however, claim it is hard to reconcile starting wars with maintaining stability, suggesting that these are merely a pretext for imperialism.52 Even more mainstream pillars of the establishment – such as Richard Haass, who served in the Bush White House and is currently president of the Council on Foreign Relations – have written approvingly at times of the idea of an imperial US foreign policy.53 Thus, **by either the measure of starting wars or of winning them, American military capacity cannot be equated with hegemony**. Its short preeminence has, nonetheless, been erringly rewritten as the longue durée. 4. Power versus Influence So why has the US, if it is so powerful, **failed to achieve its policy goals**? Proponents of American hegemony still **overwhelmingly rely on a materialist view of power**. As noted earlier, many liberals do note, en passant, the importance of norms and rules. Joseph Nye Jr. have gone much further in focusing on the significance of soft power, although the concept itself is impossible to operationalize and only obtusely linked to foreign policy choices.54 Yet material power is often neither fungible nor the basis for achieving desired foreign policy goals, claims substantiated by the failed American interventions spanning from Korea in the 1950s to Afghanistan and Iraq today. So many failures to explain outcomes or to achieve prescribed policy goals logically suggest that Liberals and Realists need to rethink their position on the significance of power. Conversely, constructivists have erred by focusing exclusively on what Barnett and Duval characterize as social forms of power: framing, argumentation and persuasion.55 We argue that **the concept of “influence,” rather than that of power, is key**. Influence is composed of two aspects: one is **material power**, defines as economic and military resources. The other is social, derived from **the legitimacy of the actor** and the linkage between the actor‘s claim and universalistic values and principles, promoted through processes of persuasion and argumentation.56 Some Constructivists have recognized that social and material forms of power are related.57 Peter Katzenstein, in recalling the perspective of Hedley Bull on the importance of norms, for example, states that “the international system is a society in which states, as a condition of their participation in the system, adhere to shared norms and rules in a variety of issue areas. Material power matters, but **within a framework of normative expectations** embedded in public and customary international law.” 58 Yet, in practice, Constructivists largely remain agnostic on the dynamics of the relationship between social and material power. They prefer to focus on the significance of social power in isolation from material power.59 We recognize different kinds of power and the diverse ways in which power might be translated into influence. In practice, material capabilities and power are related in indirect, complex and often problematic ways. Material capabilities are a principal source of power, but **critical choices must be made** about which capabilities to develop and how to use them. **The Cold War demonstrated the irrelevance of certain raw forms of power**. The USSR and US developed impressive nuclear arsenals and diverse delivery systems for them. These weapons were all but unusable. The principal purpose for which they were designed – all-out superpower war – would have constituted mutual, if not global, suicide. Intended to deter the other side, nuclear weapons and forward deployments of their delivery systems became a principal cause of superpower conflict and greatly extended the Cold War.60 In contrast to most IR theorists, we stress the **dynamic interaction between material and social forms of power**. Both state and non-state actors use combinations of material and social power in attempting to influence other actors in differing configurations and with differing degrees of success. In its most simple conception and formulation, countries can enjoy relatively high degrees of both forms of power and are thus relatively influential. The Federal Republic of Germany, for example, is a country that has established high degrees of material and social power in its post-Nazi process of rehabilitation. In global public opinion polls, it consistently scores among the most admired countries in the world and its economy is among the largest and most productive.61 While its military capacities are limited, they are consistent with the foreign policy objectives of German government. As a result, theGermans have become increasingly influential, within the European Union, beyond the Eastern borders of the EU, in a variety of multilateral forums, and even in the halls of power in Beijing, Moscow and Washington.62 Alternatively, Iran is an example of a country whose leadership lacks much by way of material or social power, which may in part explain its sustained efforts to develop a nuclear capability for a decade, even as its economy was ravaged by the effects of sanctions. Despite the conclusion of a nuclear agreement, Teheran’s comments and actions remain distrusted by all but a handful of allies (who themselves often lack credibility).63 In comparable global opinion polls, for example, it has consistently been regarded among the ranks of the more dangerous countries in the world although that sentiment has been mitigated in many countries by the signing of the agreement.64 The same is true of North Korea, an impoverished country that lacks even Iran’s oil.65 Other countries invariably link social and material power to different degrees and in different ways. Norway, for example, is a small country with significant social power because of its consistent, vocal and material support for civilian protection campaigns in multilateral forums. Yet it has a limited material capacity. Qatar is another country that clearly attempts to use its limited material and social resources in tandem to enhance its influence through judicious investment practices (such as buying major sports teams in France and Spain), providing aid and participating in multilateral alliances as it attempts to build legitimacy. The People’s Republic of China is an example of a country with growing material power (both military and economic). It seeks to use its economic power to generate influence through its investment in US Treasuries, European government bonds and African aid. Yet despite its efforts at Sinicization, its social power is relatively limited, given the distrust of many other countries in the region.66 Endemic to the concept of influence is a recognition that **legitimacy is foundational for social power**. Scholars working within America’s broadly defined hegemony research program either discount the importance of legitimacy (the most evident example being the work of structural realists such as Kenneth Waltz) or they **assume American legitimacy** and often declare it to be the case.67 Ikenberry, for example, proclaims that “American global authority was built on a Hobbesian contract -- that is, other countries, particularly in Western Europe and later in East Asia, handed the reins of power to Washington, just as Hobbes‘ individuals in the state of nature voluntarily construct and hand over power to the Leviathan.”68 An alternative formulation, and to our way of thinking, a more sophisticated one, conceives of **hegemony as the result of legitimacy as well as power**.69 Drawing on Gramsci, Roger Simon describes hegemony as a relation “not of domination by means of force, but of consent by means of political and ideological leadership.”70 Theorists differ about whether consent is a function of self-interest – it is better to bandwagon than oppose the dominant power – or legitimacy -- the hegemon protects and advances shared norms, values and policies.71 Realists **John Mearsheimer and Christopher Layne** emphasize material interests because they see power at the core of all international relations.72 Scholars who, in contrast, stress the normative aspects of hegemony note that great power and hegemonic status rest on the recognition of rights and duties and are therefore quasi-judicial categories. In practice, powerful states, like Russia, that have not met their responsibilities in the eyes of other actors and who transgressed international law through the annexation of Crimea, are often denied the standing and respect conferred by great power status.73 Persuasion is founded on the bedrock of legitimacy. Legitimacy is a long run, low cost, means of social control as compliance becomes habitual when values are internalized. Where an actor accepts a rule because it is **perceived as legitimate, that rule assumes an authoritative quality**. The rule is then in some sense hierarchically superior to the actor, and partly determinate of its behavior. Over time, it contributes to the actor’s definition of its own interests. An organization that is perceived as a legitimate rule maker has authority vis-à-vis its members. The character of power accordingly changes when it is exercised within a framework of legitimate relations and institutions. The concepts of power and legitimacy might be said to come together in the exercise of “authority.”74 Ancient Greeks understood this distinction well, describing what Realists (to a greater degree) and Liberals (to a lesser degree) think of as power as archē. In contrast, a combination of legitimacy and material capability was described as hegēmonia. Hēgemonia described an honorific status conferred on a leading power because of the services it has provided to the community. It confers a right to lead, based on the expectation that this leadership will continue to benefit the community as a whole. Hēgemonia represents a clientalist approach to politics: the powerful gain honor in return for providing practical benefits to the weak. The latter willingly accept their inferior status **in return for economic and security benefits** and the constraints such an arrangement imposes on the powerful. Attempts to translate power directly into influence rest on carrots and sticks. Such exercises, even when successful, consume resources and work only so long as the requisite bribes and threats are available and effective. More effective **influence rests on persuasion**, which manages to convince others that it is their interest to do what you want them to do. Persuasion depends on **shared values and accepted practices**, and when it works, helps to build common identities that can make cooperation and persuasion more likely in the future. Influence of this kind also benefits from material capabilities but is limited to shared goals and requires considerable political skills. Power is also relevant to influence of this kind. But it is most effective when enacted by **skilled leaders and diplomats, enabled by shared discourses**, used to advance policies that **build on precedent, and exploits existing penchants for cooperation and convinces others** that they are active contributors to these policies and their implementation. **America has sorely failed in several of these dimensions, raising the question of how power is reflected in the current global system**.