## 1AC- Plan

#### The United States federal government should substantially reduce Foreign Military Sales and Direct Commercial Sales of arms from the United States to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

## 1AC- Yemen Advantage

### \*\*\*Humanitarian Crisis\*\*\*

#### The first scenario is humanitarian crisis:

#### The Saudi coalition uses U.S. weapons to commit war crimes in Yemen. New arms sales will be used to directly kill thousands of civilians.

Larison 19 — Daniel Larison, Senior Editor at *The American Conservative*, holds a Ph.D. in History from the University of Chicago, 2019 (“Trump’s Bogus ‘Emergency’ to Arm the Saudis and Emiratis,” *The American Conservative*, May 23rd, Available Online at https://www.theamericanconservative.com/larison/trumps-bogus-emergency-to-arm-the-saudis-and-emiratis/, Accessed 06-11-2019)

Trump is preparing to make a bogus “emergency” declaration to get around Congressional opposition to further arms sales to Saudi Arabia and the UAE:¶ Meanwhile, the Trump administration is expected to declare an emergency under U.S. arms control laws amid the increased tensions with Iran, a step that would allow it to sidestep normal congressional review and rush billions of dollars in weapons to key Middle East allies, said current officials and people familiar with the matter.¶ The declaration is expected to come by week’s end, the officials said, allowing the U.S. to move ahead on sales to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.¶ The looming action is drawing opposition from U.S. lawmakers who previously have opposed weapons sales to Saudi Arabia and the U.A.E. because of how Washington’s Gulf allies are using the arms in Yemen, where the United Nations says thousands of civilians have been killed by airstrikes carried out by the Saudi-led military coalition.¶ “President Trump is only using this loophole because he knows Congress would disapprove of this sale,” said Sen. Chris Murphy (D., Conn.). “It sets an incredibly dangerous precedent that future presidents can use to sell weapons without a check from Congress.”¶ It goes without saying that there is no genuine emergency that requires the U.S. to rush more weapons to the two governments that are bombing and starving Yemen. Like the president’s other abuses of exceptions written into the laws, he is taking advantage of a provision that was supposed to be used only in extraordinary situations in order to circumvent Congressional opposition to his bankrupt policies. Because Congressional opposition to arming these regimes is stronger than ever, the Trump administration hopes to exploit any loophole it can find to keep funneling weapons to despotic clients as they continue to rain death and destruction on Yemeni civilians. Trump has been doing everything he can to ensure that nothing interrupts the flow of U.S.-made weapons to the war criminals in Riyadh and Abu Dhabi, and the upcoming “emergency” declaration is just the latest example of how far he will go to cater to these governments.¶ The rush to deliver more weapons to the Saudis and Emiratis comes on the heels of another blatant attack on civilians in Sanaa last week. The Saudi coalition bombed a residential area in one of the most densely packed parts of the capital. Dozens were injured, and at least six were killed. The New York Times reports on the continued Saudi coalition attacks on civilians and the U.S. role in supporting them, and it describes the casualties from the recent airstrike in Sanaa:¶ After five days of treatment in a shabby Yemeni hospital, Luai Sabri died on Tuesday. The 20-year-old had a cracked skull, a ruptured spleen and a damaged liver, according to a relative, injuries caused by a bomb that dropped from a warplane flown by the Saudi-led coalition.¶ The airstrike was part of a wave of bombings over the Yemeni capital, Sana, last Thursday that coincided with a spike in tensions between the United States — which supports the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen — and Iran — which backs the coalition’s enemies, the Houthi rebels.¶ It is practically guaranteed that the Saudis and Emiratis will use additional weapons sent to them by the U.S. to carry out attacks like this one. The coalition has frequently struck civilian targets not because of a lack of training or lack of precision weapons, but rather because their governments aren’t concerned about the civilian lives they take and they deliberately target non-military sites with regularity. Mohamad Bazzi explains:¶ Radhya al-Mutawakel, co-founder and leader of Mwatana for Human Rights, a Yemen-based organization, told the House subcommittee that the Saudis and their allies simply don’t care about protecting Yemeni civilians. “It’s not a matter of training. It’s a matter of accountability. They don’t care,” she said. “If they cared, they can make it much better, at least not to embarrass their allies.”¶ According to the Yemen Data Project, Saudi and UAE warplanes have conducted more than 19,500 air strikes on Yemen since the war began, an average of nearly 13 attacks per day. (About a third of these attacks are on military targets, while the rest are classified as nonmilitary targets or “unknown.”) The coalition has bombed schools, hospitals, markets, mosques, farms, factories, roads, bridges, power plants, water-treatment facilities, even a potato-chip factory.¶ To continue arming the Saudis and Emiratis at this point is to knowingly provide war criminals with the means to commit more war crimes against innocent civilians. The coalition’s appalling record of attacks on civilians is reason enough to halt all military assistance and support for the war on Yemen. The U.S. should have nothing to do with their campaign:¶ “Stronger levers to hold the coalition accountable are a fantastic idea,” said Kristine Beckerle of Mwatana, which has called on the United States to cut its support to the Saudi-led coalition. “But if your partner appears consistently unwilling to comply with international law, or to minimize harm to civilian life, then at some point you should not be partnering with them at all, as is clearly the case for Yemen.”¶ Members of Congress should fight Trump’s bogus “emergency” declaration, and there are already signs that Senate Democrats are getting ready to do just that. In addition to Chris Murphy, the ranking Democratic member of the Foreign Relations Committee, the generally hawkish Bob Menendez, has come out very strongly in opposition to Trump’s attempted end-run around Congress:¶ “The possible consequences of this will ultimately jeopardize the ability of the U.S. defense industry to export arms in a manner both expeditious and responsible,” he said. “I will pursue all appropriate legislative and other means to nullify these and any planned ongoing sales should the administration move forward in this manner.”¶ Trump already showed with his veto of S.J.Res. 7 that he has nothing but contempt for the Constitution and the Congress, and this bogus “emergency” confirms it. Congress needs to find a means to block Trump on this to keep a lawless executive in check and for the sake of the Yemeni civilians that the Saudi coalition will otherwise kill with these weapons.

#### Two hundred thirty-three thousand Yemenis (including one hundred forty thousand children) will die in 2019 unless the U.S. blocks arms sales to the coalition.

Bazzi 19 — Mohamad Bazzi, Associate Professor of Journalism at New York University, former Adjunct Senior Fellow for Middle East Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations, former Middle East Bureau Chief at *Newsday*, 2019 (“Trump wants to sell more weapons to Saudi Arabia. Congress must stop him,” *The Guardian*, June 8th, Available Online at <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/jun/08/saudi-arabia-trump-weapon-arms-sales-must-be-stopped>, Accessed 06-09-2019)

On the Friday before Memorial Day, when few Americans were paying attention, the Trump administration announced that it would circumvent Congress and sell $8bn in new weapons to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. It was Donald Trump’s latest attempt to give a blank check to two US allies leading a disastrous war in Yemen.¶ If Trump succeeds in getting around Congress, these weapons sales will prolong suffering in Yemen and eliminate one of the last levers that allowed the US to exert influence over Saudi and Emirati actions: the threat of Congress blocking arms deals.¶ On 5 June, a bipartisan group of senators said they would try to block the administration from going ahead with the sales by introducing 22 “resolutions of disapproval” – one for each of the deals cleared by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. The effort is led by two unlikely allies: Bob Menendez, a Democrat from New Jersey and frequent Trump critic, and Lindsey Graham, a Republican from South Carolina who is one of Trump’s biggest supporters.¶ The two senators agree on one thing: that Saudi Arabia should face more scrutiny of its actions in Yemen after Saudi agents murdered the journalist Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul in October. Since then, members of Congress have tried to force the Trump administration to reexamine its alliance with the kingdom – especially its relationship with Mohammed bin Salman, the brash and ruthless crown prince often considered an architect of the Yemen war. But Trump and his senior aides have made clear that they still support the prince and won’t try to isolate him, despite a CIA assessment that concluded, with “high confidence”, that Prince Mohammed ordered the killing of Khashoggi.¶ The senators’ effort, which includes seven co-sponsors, is yet another example of Congress trying to claw back its constitutional responsibilities. On 24 May, when Pompeo notified Congress that the administration would move ahead with the $8bn deals without congressional approval, he cited a rarely used provision of the Arms Export Control Act which allows the president to bypass Congress if he determines there is an emergency that impacts national security. Pompeo invoked the Trump administration’s favored bogeyman: an increased threat of “Iranian aggression”.¶ But over the past month the administration has inflated the threat posed by Iran to US troops and allies in the Middle East and several hawkish Trump aides, especially national security adviser John Bolton, have pushed for a new confrontation with Tehran. At Bolton’s request, the Pentagon updated plans to send as many as 120,000 troops to the Middle East. The administration is using similar scare tactics to justify its end-run around Congress to sell more weapons to Saudi Arabia and the UAE.¶ As Senator Chris Murphy, a Democrat from Connecticut and one of the earliest critics of US support for the Saudi-led war in Yemen, wrote on Twitter: “To state the obvious, there is no new emergency reason to sell bombs to Saudi Arabia to drop in Yemen. The Saudis [have] been dropping the bombs on civilians, so if there is an emergency, it’s a humanitarian emergency caused by the bombs we sell the Saudis.”¶ Trump’s supposed desire to end US involvement in foreign wars – in Syria and Afghanistan – clearly hasn’t superseded his wish to keep Saudi Arabia and the UAE happy and continuing to purchase American weapons. This willingness to prolong the suffering of millions of Yemenis also underlines the administration’s single-minded obsession with countering Iran. Trump and his advisers repeatedly try to justify a prolonged war in Yemen by blaming Iran and its support for the rebel Houthi militia. This narrative ignores the fact that the Houthis did not receive significant help from Iran before Saudi Arabia intervened in March 2015.¶ With the administration firmly behind its Saudi and Emirati allies, Congress offers the best hope to end the American role in a war that has triggered one of the world’s worst humanitarian crises. In early April, the House voted to cease military support for the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen, finally approving a bill to restrain presidential war powers that has taken years to pass both chambers of Congress. On 16 April, Trump vetoed the bill. Two weeks later, the bill’s supporters in the Senate tried to override the veto but fell short, 53-45. (It takes two-thirds of the Senate, or 67 votes, to override a presidential veto.) But the measure was still a turning point because it focused attention on the extent and unpopularity of military support for Saudi Arabia and its allies.¶ As the political jockeying unfolded in Washington, the United Nations Development Programme issued a report underscoring the extent of the humanitarian disaster being fueled by US weapons and logistical support. The report warned that the death toll in Yemen could rise to 233,000 [two hundred thirty-three thousand] by the end of 2019 – far higher than previous estimates. (The projection includes an estimate of 102,000 deaths from combat and 131,000 indirect deaths due to the lack of food, health crises like a cholera epidemic and damage to Yemen’s infrastructure.)¶ “The current conflict in Yemen is one of the greatest preventable disasters facing humanity,” the report said, adding that the conflict has turned into a “war on children”, with a Yemeni child dying every 12 minutes. The report estimated that 140,000 [one hundred forty thousand] of those killed by the end of 2019 would be children under the age of five.¶ Despite a majority of Congress voting to end support, American assistance to the Saudi-led war persists, thanks to Trump’s veto. In their latest effort to stop the weapons sales, congressional critics of the war will likely need to secure a veto-proof majority. It is a matter of moral and political urgency.

#### The U.S. has a moral obligation to end arms sales to the coalition — it is otherwise complicit in their ongoing war crimes.

Larison 18 — Daniel Larison, Senior Editor at *The American Conservative*, holds a Ph.D. in History from the University of Chicago, 2018 (“The U.S. Is Deeply Complicit in Saudi Coalition Crimes in Yemen,” *The American Conservative*, August 13th, Available Online at https://www.theamericanconservative.com/larison/the-u-s-is-deeply-complicit-in-saudi-coalition-crimes-in-yemen/, Accessed 06-11-2019)

When we remember that the U.S. has provided the Saudi coalition with arms, refueling, intelligence, and diplomatic cover so that they can wage their war on Yemen for more than three years, it is remarkable that U.S. officials try to keep up the pretense that our government is not involved in the conflict. The Pentagon is quick to remind us that their support is “limited” and “non-combat” in nature whenever the Saudi coalition kills civilians with U.S.-supplied weapons, but at the same time they are adamant that their “limited” support must never be cut off. When they assert that U.S. assistance helps limit civilian casualties (for which they provide no evidence), U.S. officials stress how vitally important that assistance is. When it comes to answering for coalition atrocities, they pretend that they have nothing to do with the fighting. If that excuse doesn’t work, they will shrug and claim not to know the extent of U.S. responsibility:¶ “We may never know if the munition [used] was one that the US sold to them,” Army Maj. Josh Jacques, a spokesperson for US Central Command, told me.¶ In fact, there is evidence that the bomb that destroyed the school bus in Thursday’s massacre was one that the U.S. sold to them:¶ This tweet, from respected Yemeni journalist Nasser Arrabyee, shows part of a 500-pound MK-82 bomb. It is manufactured in the United States and sold in large numbers to both Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.¶ The remnants of the US bombs that killed Yemen children in the latest US-Saudi massare and war crime of August 9th, 2018¶ In Saada north Yemen. pic.twitter.com/z8bvadwncG¶ — Nasser Arrabyee (@narrabyee) August 11, 2018¶ Continued military assistance to governments that have routinely struck civilian targets and killed thousands of people is abhorrent. When our government has reason to believe that the assistance it provides will be used to commit human rights abuses and war crimes, it is obligated to withhold that assistance. Pretending not to know how the coalition is using the weapons and fuel the U.S. provides them is not credible after more than three years of coalition atrocities against Yemeni civilians.¶ The reality is that the coalition relies on U.S. and British military assistance to wage their war and would not be able to continue it without that support. Bruce Riedel says as much here:¶ Bruce Riedel of the Brookings Institute: “if the United States of America and the United Kingdom tonight told King Salman that this war [on Yemen] has to end, it would end tomorrow because the Royal Saudi Air force cannot operate without American & British Support”. pic.twitter.com/XQTcLlNKJn¶ — Louis Allday (@Louis\_Allday) August 12, 2018¶ Mattis must know this, and this is why he has strenuously opposed any effort to curtail or end U.S. support for the war. Cutting off U.S. military assistance to the coalition would force those governments to halt their campaign, and the Trump administration has no desire to stop them. On the contrary, the administration has backed them to the hilt and refuses to hold them accountable even when they commit the most egregious war crimes, including the slaughter of dozens of children.¶ U.S. support for the Saudi coalition is essential to their war effort, and that makes our government deeply complicit in what the coalition does in Yemen.

#### The plan’s clear signal of U.S. disapproval would override other supportive Trump administration policies.

Spindel 19 — Jennifer Spindel, Assistant Professor in the Department of International and Area Studies and Associate Director of the Cyber Governance and Policy Center at the University of Oklahoma, former Pre-Doctoral Fellow at the Institute for Security and Conflict Studies at George Washington University, holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Minnesota, 2019 (“The Case For Suspending American Arms Sales To Saudi Arabia,” *War on the Rocks*, May 14th, Available Online at <https://warontherocks.com/2019/05/the-case-for-suspending-american-arms-sales-to-saudi-arabia/>, Accessed 06-07-2019)

Arms Embargos Are Signals and Can Build Coalitions¶ 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.

#### U.S. arms sales are the crucial enabler of the Saudi coalition’s continued operations — they guarantee that the quagmire deepens.

Riedel 19 — Bruce Riedel, Senior Fellow and Director of the Brookings Intelligence Project and Senior Fellow in the Center for Middle East Policy at The Brookings Institution, former Senior Advisor on South Asia and the Middle East on the National Security Council at the White House during the H.W. Bush, Clinton, W. Bush, and Obama Administrations, former Professor at the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, holds an M.A. in Medieval Islamic History from Harvard University, 2019 (“As the Saudis host international summitry, their Yemen problem isn’t going away,” The Brookings Institution, May 28th, Available Online at https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2019/05/28/as-the-saudis-host-international-summitry-their-yemen-problem-isnt-going-away/, Accessed 06-11-2019)

Saudi Arabia is preparing for three summits this week to rally Arab and Muslim opposition to Iran as tensions mount in the region. The summits won’t help the Saudis biggest problem: the quagmire in Yemen.¶ King Salman will chair summits of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Arab League on May 30 in Mecca and of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on May 31, also in Mecca. The choice of Mecca as the venue is designed to enhance the king’s claim to leadership by underscoring his role as the custodian of the two holy mosques of Mecca and Medina. The Saudis are investing considerable prestige in the summits.¶ The summits come after repeated assaults on the kingdom by the Zaydi Shia Houthi rebels in Yemen. The rebels used drones to attack the east-west pipeline that pumps oil from the Eastern Province to the Red Sea, and missiles to strike Saudi cities close to the Yemeni border. These attacks followed the sabotage of four ships in the Emirati port of Fujairah.¶ The Houthis say the stepped-up attacks are a response to the Saudis’ refusal to cease air strikes in Yemen after the Houthis withdrew from three ports on the Red Sea to allow more humanitarian aid in to the country. The Saudi backed President Mansour Abdu Rabbu Hadi has publicly accused the United Nations mediator of being pro-Houthi and biased toward the rebels. The Saudis blame Iran for the breakdown in peace talks and the escalating violence. The rebels insist, correctly, that they are independent of Tehran, but they are clearly coordinating closely with their Iranian ally.¶ The Saudi media is urging a tough line on Iran, hoping it will produce regime change in Tehran. Young Iranians are said to be ready to overthrow the government if sanctions continue to tighten, and military action ups the ante; but those claims aren’t credible. The Saudis are trumpeting Trump’s tweet that military action will lead to the official end of Iran.¶ If Iran wants to fight, that will be the official end of Iran. Never threaten the United States again!¶ — Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump)¶ May 19, 2019¶ The Saudis have even invited their bete noire, Qatar, to the summits. It’s unlikely that they intend to reconcile with Doha, but they are eager for the imagery of unity against Tehran. The king and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman are reluctant to admit that their quarantine of Qatar has badly splintered the Gulf Cooperation Council. Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan is coming to the OIC summit, primarily to advocate the Palestinians’ opposition to the Trump administration’s so-called deal of the century, he says.¶ Behind the summitry is a disastrous failure of decisionmaking that led to the intervention in Yemen in 2015; the signature initiative of the crown prince. Thanks to his leadership, Saudi cities and infrastructure are now targets for a once-ragged militia that has developed increasingly sophisticated drones and missiles with the help of Iran and Hezbollah. The war is the worst humanitarian catastrophe in the world.¶ The Trump administration’s decision to sell billions in arms to Riyadh without congressional approval will only encourage the crown prince to continue the quagmire. The Saudis are not more capable of winning the war with more munitions. The American support has singularly failed in four years to prevent the Saudis from bombing civilian targets or reducing the carnage of the war. Children are the most at risk and are paying a horrible cost.

### \*\*\*Middle East Stability\*\*\*

#### The second scenario is Middle East stability

#### Yemen conflict causes direct Saudi-Iran war and spills over to the entire Middle East

Moussalli 15 [Marc Moussalli is an independent political risk consultant. Previously, he worked for major financial institutions in London and Frankfurt. As Managing Director, he advised some of Europe’s largest institutional investors. He holds an MA in International Relations from the University of Leicester and a BA in Business Administration from DHBW Mannheim. Not just a proxy war: Yemen’s strategic importance. April 23, 2015. https://globalriskinsights.com/2015/04/not-just-a-proxy-war-yemens-strategic-importance/]

The situation in Yemen is not only dangerous for domestic reasons. A number of factors make the increasingly volatile situation in Yemen especially complex. There is a real risk of contagion throughout the Gulf region. Further regional escalation could cause major instability at best and armed conflict at worst. In any case, the consequences would be felt across the world. Recent escalation marks a shift in regional policy Several aspects highlighted by the recent escalation of the situation in Yemen stand out especially. To begin with, Yemen is yet another token in the increasing regional struggle for power between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Similar to the situation in Lebanon, Iraq and Syria, the conflict in Yemen resembles a proxy war being fought between the world’s dominant Sunni nation, Saudi Arabia, and its Shi’a adversary, Iran. In Yemen, the recent Saudi-led (and US-supported) airstrikes by a coalition of Sunni states to check the advance of the Shi’a Houthi rebels, allegedly backed by Iran, mark a new and dangerous level of escalation between the two regional heavyweights. So far, conflicts between the two powers remain restricted to the territory of client states. If, however, Iran were to enter the fighting on the side of the Houthis, a direct confrontation between Saudi Arabia and Iran could result. The airstrikes and the Sunni coalition also mark a sign of a risky foreign policy shift for the Wahhabi kingdom to what has been called a ‘post-American phase’. As America re-balances to the Asia-Pacific and withdraws from the Middle East, the House of Saud has become more focused on a self-reliant foreign policy. This shift first became apparent in 2011 when Saudi Arabia crushed a Shi’a revolt in neighboring Bahrain by leading Gulf Cooperation Council troops across the causeway. The latest Saudi assertiveness may be the effect of the young, influential defence minister, the newly-enthroned King Salman’s son Muhammad. It may also reflect Saudi anxieties over the atomic deal by the P5 + 1 with Iran. In any case, it highlights the seriousness with which Saudi Arabia views the advance of the Houthi rebels close to its own territory. Whether the airstrikes will defeat the Houthis or stabilize the situation in Yemen remains questionable and much will depend on whether Saudi Arabia can avoid being drawn in to a long and draining campaign. Global economic repercussions Economically, Yemen is important to the global flow of oil. In the resource-rich Arabian Peninsula, Yemen is only a minor player in the global oil business. Because of a lack of investment and continuing attacks on its infrastructure, Yemen’s oil production has decreased since 2001. (It just about produces 131,000 barrels of crude oil per day and its oil reserves are barely bigger than those of the United Kingdom.) Yet a major escalation of its conflict would have severe repercussions across global oil markets for geo-strategic reasons. Yemen is located adjacent to the Strait of Hormuz, the world’s most important energy choke-point, and to the Bab-el-Mandab Strait, which controls access to the Suez Canal. Disruptions of these seaborne supply routes to Asia and Europe, to which there few alternatives, would result in increased volatility in the oil price. If these transport routes are temporarily blocked, for instance by mines dropped in the narrow shipping lanes, the current global supply overhang could quickly diminish. Potential for deeper conflict Furthermore, Yemen’s inherent instability and its porous borders pose a direct threat to its neighbors Saudi Arabia and Oman. In a worst case scenario, Yemen’s situation could lead to disruptive spill over-effects in the whole Golf region. Yemen’s large population of over 26 million people is very poor (according to the UN, GDP per capita in 2012 was not even 1,400 USD). Sixty three percent of its people are under the age of 24. In addition, Yemen’s society is deeply influenced by ancient tribal loyalties. It is also divided between Sunni (65%) and Shia (35%) factions. Its remote mountains and desert plains have long been a safe haven for terrorists, especially al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), which controls much of the Hadramawt province. Yemen’s lawlessness could also be exploited by other Islamist extremists such as Islamic State (IS). IS has already claimed responsibility for the bombing of two Houthi mosques in Sana’a which resulted in more than 140 casualties. Whether this will prove as the ‘Middle East’s Franz Ferdinand Moment’ is for future historians to decide. The attacks nevertheless provided one possible pretext for the intensifying of the rebellion and the subsequent airstrikes. Without doubt, the situation in Yemen is highly complex and dangerously combustible, and Saudi-led airstrikes are not likely to produce a settlement. As recent history throughout the region has shown, military interventions rarely ever produce peaceful resolutions to entrenched conflicts, especially if religious undercurrents are involved. The international community has an interest to promote peaceful and diplomatic solutions which involve all relevant parties. This is especially true for Yemen. Otherwise, regional instability will continue to adversely affect investment and business sentiment, or worse, lead to full-blown armed conflict between the region’s major powers.

#### A broader Saudi-Iran conflict would escalate and lead to mutual retaliation between Iran and the US

Hughes 6/11/19 [Lindsay Hughes, Senior Research Analyst, Indian Ocean Research Programme, Future Directions International. Saudi Arabia vs. Iran: The Washington Factor. June 11, 2019. www.futuredirections.org.au/publication/saudi-arabia-vs-iran-the-washington-factor/]

Therein lies yet another danger. If an enraged Saudi Arabia, perceiving yet another attack on its assets as being carried out by Iran and knowing that it now has the backing of the summit attendees, were to launch an attack of its own on Iran, there could be little doubt that Tehran would authorise Hezbollah, the Houthi insurgents and other militant groups to attack Saudi, US and UAE assets. Those attacks could occur on Saudi or UAE territory, or against US targets in Syria, Iraq or Bahrain. Were that to occur, it is likely that President Trump would authorise retaliatory and amplified strikes against Iran, no matter his claim of not wanting to enter into another war in the region. If Iran were to be targeted, it is equally likely that it would initiate a regional conflagration. A bad situation could become decidedly worse, however, if China, Russia or both used the opportunity to draw the US further into another Middle East war and face enhanced losses by supplying Iran with weapons and other military technology. That situation would enable both to perceive how the United States would counter those weapons and technology, thus reducing the surprises that it could bring to bear in, say, the South China Sea or Ukraine. While such a situation is remote, it is not entirely impossible. Russia and China would follow the example that the United States established in arming Afghan fighters in their conflict against Russian forces from 1979.

#### Other great powers will get drawn in- the Middle East is a vital region to international security

Ostovar 18 [Afshon Ostovar is the author of Vanguard of the Imam: Religion, Politics, and Iran’s Revolutionary Guards and an assistant professor of national security affairs at the Naval Postgraduate School. The First Saudi-Iranian War Will Be an Even Fight. May 7, 2018. https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/05/07/the-first-saudi-iranian-war-will-be-an-even-fight/]

If a Saudi-Iran conflict were to occur in a vacuum, the war would not be about territory or regime change by force. Neither side can take the fight across the Persian Gulf, much less seize and hold strategic areas in adversarial territory. The conflict would be about inflicting damage to both punish the other side and compel it to cease hostile behavior. While the Saudis — with their superior air power, access to foreign military technology, and far greater wealth — might be better situated to endure such a conflict, if not impose greater costs on the Iranians, the Islamic Republic has less to lose and has shown an ability to withstand years of warfare against greater powers. However, it is unlikely that such a conflict would involve only those two parties and not grow to involve other states. Iran lacks state allies (except for Syria, of course, which is hardly a state now), but it does have a robust, transnational alliance with nonstate clients in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Yemen. Groups such as Lebanese Hezbollah or Asaib Ahl al-Haq in Iraq would almost certainly support Iran in such a conflict, including by targeting Saudi nationals in their own countries, but they couldn’t attack Saudi territory militarily with any degree of effectiveness. Saudi Arabia, however, has a strong alliance with Arab states (especially the United Arab Emirates and Jordan) and with the United States. Were such a conflict to occur, it is difficult to imagine that the United States would not become involved in one way or another in support of the Saudis. Although Iran could certainly raise the costs of American involvement by targeting U.S. naval vessels in the Persian Gulf directly or by targeting U.S. forces and nationals in other countries by proxy, Iran would have to balance such actions with the risk of drawing the United States into a more extensive war.

#### Now is a key time- escalation of the Yemen conflict is likely

Eisenstadt 18 [Michael Eisenstadt is the Kahn Fellow and director of The Washington Institute's Military and Security Studies Program, The Great Middle Eastern War of 2019, August 20, https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/the-great-middle-eastern-war-of-2019]

Israel also seems intent on avoiding war, though its actions show that it is willing to accept the risk of escalation to counter these emerging threats. Indeed, since 2013 it has carried out more than 130 strikes in Syria on arms shipments destined for Hezbollah, and since late 2017 it has expanded this “campaign between the wars” to target Iranian military facilities in Syria—without, thus far, sparking a wider confrontation. Complacency is, however, unwarranted. The two major Arab-Israeli confrontations of the recent past (Lebanon 2006, Gaza 2014) resulted from unintended escalation. The emerging dynamic between Israel, Iran, and the “axis of resistance” is a formula for a third major “accident,” and so deserves careful analysis. MULTIPLE ACTORS, FRONTS, AND DOMAINS The potential for yet another war—one of unprecedented scope and complexity—is an outcome of the Syrian civil war, which has enabled Iran to build a military infrastructure in Syria and to deploy its Shi’a “foreign legion” to Israel’s borders. War is now possible on multiple fronts and in far-flung theaters, fought on land, in the air, at sea, and in information and cyber domains by fighters from Hezbollah, Iran, Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and even Yemen. The widened scope of a possible war will create new military options for Iran and Hezbollah, and stretch Israeli capabilities to their limits. Hezbollah Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah said as much, though perhaps with some exaggeration, when he warned in June 2017 that “if an Israeli war is launched against Syria or Lebanon it is not known that the fighting will remain Lebanese-Israeli, or Syrian-Israeli,” and “this could open the way for thousands, even hundreds of thousands of fighters from all over the Arab and Islamic world to participate.” Likewise, IRGC Commander Mohammad Ali Jafari stated in November 2017 that, “The fate of the resistance front is interwoven and they all stand united, and if Israel attacks a part of it, the other component of the front will help it.” Such a war is most likely to occur as a result of unintended escalation, after another Iranian action against Israel from Syria, or after an Israeli strike in Lebanon or Syria (for example, against missile production facilities). It could start as a result of a U.S. and/or Israeli strike on Iran’s nuclear program. It might even come about as a result of a conflict that starts in the Gulf but that reaches Israel’s borders—perhaps as a result of Iranian diversionary moves (much as Saddam Hussein tried in 1991 to derail the U.S. military campaign to expel Iraqi forces from Kuwait by launching missiles at Israel).

#### Yemen primes the Middle East for nuclear escalation

Wojcik 5/10/19 [John Wojcik is Editor-in-Chief of People's World. He joined the staff as Labor Editor in May 2007 after working as a union meat cutter in northern New Jersey. There, he served as a shop steward, as a member of a UFCW contract negotiating committee, and as an activist in the union's campaign to win public support for Wal-Mart workers. In the 1970s and '80s he was a political action reporter for the Daily World, this newspaper's predecessor, and was active in electoral politics in Brooklyn, New York. Trump’s worst legacy may be a nuclear World War III. May 10, 2019. https://www.peoplesworld.org/article/trumps-worst-legacy-may-be-a-nuclear-world-war-iii/]

That proved to be a false hope, and now, largely because of Donald Trump, the clock is racing again to midnight. The atomic scientists say the cause is Trump’s pushing us closer to nuclear war and, of course, his total commitment to climate denialism. “Humanity faces two dire and simultaneous existential threats: nuclear weapons and climate change. The longer world leaders and citizens thoughtlessly inhabit this abnormal reality, the more likely it is that we will experience the unthinkable,” former California Gov. Jerry Brown said in a press release. Brown is on the group’s board of directors. The scary reality is that since this year’s Bulletin came out, the Trump administration, on the nuclear annihilation front alone, has made things even worse. America’s autocratic and despotic president didn’t stop with trashing the Paris Climate agreement early in his administration. He quickly moved to cancel the nuclear arms reduction accord with Iran despite overwhelming evidence that Iran was sticking to the deal. Against a backdrop of an unstable Middle East, including a genocidal war against the people of Yemen being waged by Saudi Arabia with U.S. backing, the region provides an excellent opportunity for the outbreak of nuclear war. Trump’s war hawk national security adviser, John Bolton, brags daily how no options are off the table when it comes to what the U.S. might do to Iran. He has publicly talked about the day he expects to celebrate in Tehran at the U.S. embassy building when the government there is overthrown. (That building is where the U.S. hostages were held during the Carter administration.)

## 1AC - Solvency

#### Cutting off arms sales would end the war in Yemen – only America can provide logistical support, and provides diplomatic cover for Saudi operations

Harb 3/1/19 [Ali Harb is a writer based in Washington, DC. He reports on US foreign policy, Arab-American issues, civil rights and politics. Saudi Arabia would end Yemen war without US support, experts say. March 1, 2019. https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/saudi-arabia-would-end-yemen-war-without-us-support-experts-say]

Ending American assistance to the Saudi-led coalition fighting in Yemen would curtail Riyadh's war efforts and hasten the end of what the United Nations describes as the world's worst humanitarian crisis, experts say. A push by US lawmakers to end support for the war once appeared largely symbolic, with only a few Democrats in the Republican-controlled Congress putting forward a proposal, but now legislators may be set to pass a measure that would halt US assistance to Saudi-led forces in Yemen. That would have a critical impact, said Robert Jordan, former US ambassador to Saudi Arabia in the early 2000s, who described US support as crucial to Riyadh's military capabilities. "If we suspend providing spare parts for their F-15s, their air force would be grounded in two weeks," Jordan told Middle East Eye last week. "So I think there is every prospect that, if that occurs, they will find it more appealing to go to the peace table and negotiate than they currently do." The proposed US legislation cleared the House of Representatives last month, and the Senate, which approved a similar motion late last year, is expected to vote on it again in the near future. The bill invokes the War Powers Resolution of 1973, which prohibits the involvement in a foreign conflict without congressional authorisation. President Donald Trump has vowed to veto the legislation, which would require a two-thirds majority in the Senate to override. 'Extremely important' Khalil Jahshan, executive director of the Arab Center Washington DC, said both Washington and Riyadh would like to downplay the impact of American involvement in Yemen, but the US role in the war remains "extremely important" logistically and politically. Beyond helping with military assistance, Washington provides "psychological and strategic cover" to Saudi war efforts, he said. "If it weren't for American support, if that were to be withdrawn in the future ... I think Saudi Arabia would feel compelled to end that war faster than they would like," Jahshan said.

#### The plan quickly shuts down the Saudi coalition’s air-to-ground strike capabilities for operations in Yemen. This ends the war and jumpstarts peace negotiations.

Goodman 18 — Ryan Goodman, Anne and Joel Ehrenkranz Professor of Law at New York University School of Law, Professor of Politics and Professor of Sociology at New York University, Founding Co-Editor-in-Chief of *Just Security*, Member of the Council on Foreign Relations, Member of the Advisory Committee on International Law at the U.S. Department of State, former Special Counsel to the General Counsel of the U.S. Department of Defense, former Rita E. Hauser Professor of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law at Harvard Law School, holds a Ph.D. in Sociology from Yale University and a J.D. from Yale Law School, 2018 (“Options for Congress to Respond to Saudi Transgressions: Here’s What Works according to Former Senior U.S. Officials,” *Just Security*, October 22nd, Available Online at <https://www.justsecurity.org/61172/effective-ineffective-congressional-responses-saudi-arabia-arm-sales-sanctions-khashoggi/>, Accessed 06-08-2019)

What are the more effective and less effective measures that the United States could pursue in response to recent actions by Saudi Arabia? I asked several experts, including former senior officials. Their views provide valuable perspectives on how to think about some of the challenges and tradeoffs with different approaches.¶ Among the important insights were statements that reveal potential weaknesses in current and proposed legislation, including: legislation that relies on executive branch certification as a condition for further congressional action, legislation that excessively relies on executive branch discretion in the implementation of sanctions, and legislation that focus on more symbolic than material forms of U.S. support for the Saudi war in Yemen. Another theme that several experts raised is to think not only about sanctions to penalize Saudi Arabia for wrongdoing or sanctions to encourage responsible behavior by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in the future, but to think more broadly about how to orient the U.S. relationship to Riyadh.¶ Purposes of new congressional action on Saudi Arabia¶ Despite lack of strong support from the White House, a bipartisan group in Congress seems poised to take action. Last year, an arms package to Saudi Arabia was almost blocked, missing by just 4 votes. In recent days, at least three Republican Senators who voted in favor of that arms sale—Senators Bob Corker (R-TN), Lindsey Graham (R-SC), and Marco Rubio (R-FL)—have come out strongly against Riyadh and in favor of substantive repercussions the Kingdom will likely face in light of Jamal Khashoggi’s death. Ten Republican Senators who voted for the 2017 arms sale including Corker, Graham, and Rubio, signed a letter to President Trump triggering the sanctions process against Saudi officials under the Global Magnitsy Act [John Barrasso (R-Wyo.), Jeff Flake (R-Ariz.), Cory Gardner (R-Colo.), Johnny Isakson (R-Ga.), Rob Portman (R-Ohio), Ron Johnson (R-Wis.), Jim Risch (R-Idaho)]. Also earlier this month, and over one week into the Khashoggi crisis, two other Republican Senators who had voted in favor of the 2017 arms sale—Senators Susan Collins (R-ME) and Jerry Moran (R-KS)—signed a bipartisan letter to Secretary of State Mike Pompeo challenging his recent certification that Saudi Arabia had taken sufficient steps to reduce civilian casualties to warrant the same continued U.S. support for the Saudi-coalition in Yemen.¶ The question now turns to what precise measures Congress should adopt in response to Saudi Arabia. The answer to that turns on the particular purposes in mind. Brian McKeon, former Under Secretary for Policy at the Department of Defense and now senior director at the Penn Biden Center for Diplomacy and Global Engagement, told me, “I think the question really is what is the goal. Is it to untie ourselves from the stain of the war in Yemen? Or to send a broader signal to the Kingdom that there’s a price to pay for their behavior in murdering Khashoggi and then lying to everyone about it? If the former, a statute, whether in an appropriations bill or otherwise, could readily bar some or all support for the conflict. And if the policy choice is that continuation of the war is a mistake, or at least US direct involvement, then I should think members would want to ban any continued support. It would need to be combined with more pressure on KSA and the UAE to get serious about a resolution of the conflict.”¶ All of these purposes may now be on the table. As the latest in a series of extremely wanton acts by the Saudi leadership, the killing of Khashoggi has triggered a significant reevaluation of the U.S. relationship with Riyadh. Depending on which set of purposes Congress has in mind, an issue is what legislative measures would be more or less likely to pressure Sadia Arabia to effectuate U.S. policy goals.¶ Menu of options¶ I focused my conversations with former U.S. officials and other experts on the following set of options:¶ 1. Bar future foreign military sales (FMS) relating to air-to-ground strike capabilities for operations in Yemen (e.g., precision-guided munitions)¶ 2. Suspend existing Direct Commercial Sales (DCS) licenses relating to air-to-ground strike capabilities for operations in Yemen (e.g., for maintenance and sustainment of fighter aircraft)¶ 3. Bar appropriations for in-flight refueling of Saudi aircraft conducting missions in Yemen¶ 4. Adopt targeted and mandatory financial sanctions of the senior-most Saudi officials.¶ 5. Push for Global Magnitsky Act sanctions¶ 6. Other options¶ This list does not include suspending U.S. support for defensive weapons systems, and none of the experts suggested placing such support on the list. One former official who supported measures to suspend arms sales specially highlighted the importance of maintaining U.S. support for defensive systems to protect Saudi Arabia from threats coming over its border from Houthi militants. “We should not suspend THAAD or sale of other weapons necessary to defend the KSA from missile/rocket attacks. And we should send a strong signal to Iran that any effort to exploit this moment will be met with a harsh response,” the former official said.¶ One recurring theme involved concerns about predicating any approach on executive branch certification, such as the State Department’s determination that Saudi Arabia met specified conditions. A former senior official told me, “I don’t like any approach that involves certification requirements, because this administration has shown it’s prepared to certify just about anything (other than the manifest Iranian compliance with the JCPOA).”¶ [Editor’s note: on the Secretary of Defense’s recent certification of Saudi Arabia and the UAE actions in the Yemen war, see Larry Lewis, “Grading the Pompeo Certification on Yemen War and Civilian Protection: Time for Serious Reconsideration,” and Ryan Goodman, “Annotation of Sec. Pompeo’s Certification of Yemen War: Civilian Casualties and the Saudi-Led Coalition.”]¶ Options 1-3¶ It is important to separate option 1 (includes blocking future arm sales) and option 2 (includes suspending maintenance and logistics for existing weapons systems), because the latter may have more immediate effects on Saudi offensive military operations in Yemen. In short, Riyadh would have no readily available substitute for maintaining and servicing existing American weapons systems. On Fox News Sunday, Senator Rand Paul said, “We have incredible leverage. … They can’t last a couple of months without parts and mechanics to help them run their air force.” National Review’s David French wrote:¶ “American F-15s comprise close to half the Saudi fighter force, and the Saudi variant of the F-15E Strike Eagle represents a substantial portion of the air force’s striking power….They can’t just waltz over to a different country and transform their armed forces — not without suffering enormous setbacks in readiness and effectiveness during a years-long transition. A fundamental reality of arms deals is that a major arms purchase essentially locks the purchasing nation in a dependent posture for training, spare parts, and technical upgrades.”¶ Threatening support for Saudi Arabia’s war machine can serve a variety of purposes.¶ First, such levers present a potentially significant stick and carrot for achieving policy goals that are broader than the Yemen war. As Senator Macro Rubio stated earlier this month on CNN’s State of the Union, “Arm sales are important, not because of the money, but because it also provides leverage over their future behavior….They will need our spare parts. They will need our training. And those are things we can use to influence their behavior.”¶ Options 1-3 can also help curtail Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman’s misadventures, if not his leadership of the Saudi government itself. Bruce Riedel, who served as senior adviser on South Asia and the Middle East to the last four presidents, explained in a recent essay, “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.” A former Obama official said as well, “The message needs to be that the relationship is being frozen unless MBS moves aside. What Yemen and the Gulf crisis and Khashoggi affair have clarified is that MBS has allows personal pique and vendettas to override any impulse to reform. He has made the region an even more dangerous place, and, left to his own devices, is very likely to drag us into regional conflict. So I would pursue 4 and 2, with the former underscoring our message that MBS needs to step aside, and the latter grounding their Air Force, to both add internal pressure on MBS and to pressure the Saudis to negotiate a resolution to Yemen.”¶ Options 1-3 can, indeed, serve purposes specific to the Yemen War, including distancing the United States from support for Saudi crimes and encouraging the Saudis and United Arab Emirates to finally bring the war to a close through political negotiations.¶ In a New Yorker Radio Hour interview with David Remnick back in March, Riedel explained, “The United States is not a direct party to the war, but we are an enabler of the war. If the United States decided today that it was going to cut off supplies, spare parts, munitions, intelligence, and everything else to the Royal Saudi Airforce, it would be grounded tomorrow.”¶ One former senior official suggested tying arm sales to different sets of purposes, “I think Congress should pause all FMS and end other support to the Saudi campaign in Yemen. Resumption of arms sales should be conditioned on Riyadh agreeing to a fully transparent international investigation into the Khashoggi incident, regular intelligence community assessments of Saudi efforts to reduce civilian casualties in Yemen, and a report from the administration outlining their strategy for addressing the humanitarian crisis in Yemen and producing a peaceful settlement.”¶ Another former senior official supported a clean break from U.S. support for the Yemen war rather than a piecemeal approach. “On Yemen, the best move would be to support the Khanna-Murphy War Powers resolution. A clean end to US military support for the Saudi-UAE war in Yemen is better than more targeted efforts to police that support (like the bar on in-flight refueling). Suspending existing DCS licenses and placing limits on future foreign military sales for things like air-to-ground strike capabilities would be a natural supplement to this approach,” the former official said.¶ Jeffrey Prescott, who served as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Iran, Iraq, Syria, and the Gulf States on the National Security Council and now a strategic consultant to the Penn Biden Center expressed a similar perspective, “My view is that the callous murder of Mr. Khashoggi — and the Trump administration’s clear impulse to sweep it under the rug — demonstrates how far the relationship with Saudi Arabia has gotten off track, and the need for serious consequences. As a start, we could use this moment to extricate ourselves from military involvement in the disastrous war in Yemen, a step that is long overdue. Ideally we would simultaneously help push for a diplomatic resolution of the conflict – necessary, not easy, and very unlikely given how little effort the Trump administration has put into serious diplomacy. But washing our hands of involvement in the war, even in the absence of a US diplomatic push, will still put pressure on UAE and Saudi to end the conflict.”¶ Professor Mohamad Bazzi, who is writing a book on proxy wars between Saudi Arabia and Iran, had a similar assessment of the effectiveness of suspending US military support as a means to effectuate a resolution to the conflict. Bazzi told me, “Together, actions 1, 2, and 3 (likely in that order of effectiveness) would go significantly beyond the Obama administration’s freeze on the sale of precision-guided munitions to Riyadh in late 2016. They would signal to the Saudis and Emiratis that US military assistance will now truly become contingent on progress in political negotiations. I suspect that’s the only way Saudi and UAE leaders can be convinced to pursue a political settlement, which the Trump administration agrees (at least rhetorically) is the path to ending this war.”¶ Notably, in my interviews with former U.S. officials, suspension of in-flight refueling (option 3) was generally considered a weak measure on its own, treated as a supplement or afterthought to other measures. That may be due to the percentage of Saudi aircraft that actually depend on such refueling and the Saudis’ ability to replace U.S. in-air refueling with other substitutes. Concerns about the utility of option 3 as a pressure point is especially important because it is the only measure that’s triggered by section 1290 of the McCain National Defense Authorization Act if the Secretary of State fails to certify that the Saudis are taking appropriate steps to reduce civilian casualties in Yemen.

#### The plan sends a signal to Saudi Arabia and other allies – overrides alt causes

Spindel 5/14/19 [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. THE CASE FOR SUSPENDING AMERICAN ARMS SALES TO SAUDI ARABIA. May 14, 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. Arms Embargos Are Signals and Can Build Coalitions 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.

## 2AC Humanitarian Crisis Extensions

### Yemen = H Crisis

#### The war in Yemen is the worst humanitarian crisis on the planet – it’s a war of attrition responsible for the deaths of thousands of civilians.

Michael **Horton 19** [Foreign Policy Analyst who has written for numerous publications, including Intelligence Review, West Point CTC Sentinel, The Economist, The National Interest, and the Christian Science Monitor], "Saudi Arabia is Losing the War in Yemen," American Conservative, 3-28-2019 https://www.theamericanconservative.com/articles/saudi-arabia-is-losing-the-war-in-yemen/

As the war in Yemen marks the end of its fourth year this week, it is clear that, **with the aid and complicity of the U**nited **S**tates and United Kingdom, **Saudi Arabia and the** United Arab Emirates (**UAE**) **have savaged an impoverished country**. Yemen’s infrastructure has been laid waste to, as has some of its most productive farmland. **The result has been the worst humanitarian crisis on the planet**. Yet despite this destruction, **Yemen has turned into Saudi Arabia’s Vietnam. Ditto for the UAE**. The two countries have sunk billions of dollars and countless troops and mercenaries into what has become a quagmire of catastrophic proportions. **What they had hoped would be a decisively quick war has turned into an albatross**, with the rest of the world now questioning their motivations and urging their Western helpmates to withdraw support immediately. The overt reason for Saudi and Emirati involvement is to defeat the Houthi rebels, a Zaidi Shia group with deep roots in Yemen. Yet this hasn’t been achieved. **The two Gulf States claim that the Houthis are proxies for Iran, but it has become increasingly clear that they are fiercely independent**, and while they receive limited aid from Tehran, they do not take orders. Saudi and Emirati leaders would do well to learn from Yemen’s 2,000-year history of draining the blood and coffers of imperial and lesser powers. **The Yemenis defeated the Romans, the Ottoman Turks twice, and evicted the British in 1967**. They also defeated the Egyptians who invaded in 1962. Much like the U.S. in Vietnam more than 40 years ago and more recently in Afghanistan, **the goliath invaders are fighting a war of attrition, bleeding their resources, and losing whatever moral and political authority they might have had in the process**. But were they ever being honest about their real intentions in Yemen? **Saudi Arabia and the UAE have armed and supported a mushrooming number of Yemeni militias and factions, some of which have ties to al-Qaeda**. These policies have purposefully turned Yemen into a patchwork of warring fiefdoms. This is because the covert purpose of the “intervention” has less to do with perceived Iranian influence than it does with securing access to Yemen’s strategic real estate and its natural resources. **Saudi Arabia and the UAE are engaged in a neo-colonial war for power, resources, and territory. The two countries**, which are increasingly in competition with one another, **are trying to carve Yemen up into spheres of influence**. Because it has a slightly more competent mercenary army, **the UAE has the lead over Saudi Arabia in this regard. It’s set up military bases throughout southern Yemen where it supports separatists of various stripes who want everything from an independent south Yemen to an Islamic emirate**. Not content with just occupying the mainland, the UAE has also established bases on the once pristine Yemeni island of Socotra—a UNESCO world heritage site—and the island of Perim. **Saudi Arabia is playing catch-up with its ally and is laying claim to the governorate of al-Mahra in eastern Yemen**. There, **Riyadh hopes to build a pipeline** that will allow it to bypass the Strait of Hormuz. However, as in other parts of Yemen, the people are fighting to stop what many view as a land grab by a foreign power. Residents of al-Mahra protested the construction of a Saudi-funded madrassa that would have undoubtedly used Saudi schoolbooks, the same schoolbooks that were used by the Islamic State. Residents are also blocking the construction of a Saudi military base. Both countries have much to learn from America’s costly misadventures after 9/11. **Despite fielding the world’s most capable armed forces and spending several trillion dollars, the U.S. failed to achieve its aims in Iraq or Afghanistan, a country that is in many respects similar to Yemen. In Iraq, the invasion destroyed much of that country and paved the way for the rise of the Islamic State, as well as driving Baghdad into Iran’s open arms**. In both nations, **new and deadlier strains of extremism grew out of the power vacuums that were created**. Saudis Find Out Hard Way: Yemen Is Another Graveyard of Empires **The war in Yemen will have similar results**. By continuing to fight the Houthis, **Saudi Arabia and the UAE are paradoxically strengthening their enemies and providing Iran with more fertile ground for its influence operations**. The Houthis are superb fighters, but have shown less competence with regard to governance. **The war and Saudi and Emirati airstrikes have enhanced the Houthis’ legitimacy by allowing them to do what they do best: fight**. It may be years before Yemen is a unified country with a functioning government again. In fact, **Yemen may never again be unified**. However, the UAE and Saudi Arabia are unlikely to ever see a return on their investment. Even a cursory reading of Yemen’s history would have told them this. And failing that, an examination of America’s failed wars should have dissuaded them from becoming involved in the first place. **Without sustained international pressure on Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Iran, the war in Yemen will continue for years to come**. All the while, **it will drain both the UAE and Saudi Arabia of billions of dollars, spawn new militant groups, and ironically provide Iran with more opportunities to expand its influence**. Most critically, **the war will continue to kill, maim, starve, and impoverish tens of thousands of Yemeni civilians**.

#### Reject geopolitical and economic justifications for U.S. arms sales that downplay the massive ongoing violence against millions of Yemenis.

Almutawakel and Alfaqih 18 — Radhya Almutawakel, Co-Founder and Leader of the Mwatana Organization for Human Rights—an independent Yemeni organization aiming to defend and protect human rights in Yemen, was has the first person to brief the UN Security Council on the humanitarian crisis in Yemen, and Abdulrasheed Alfaqih, Co-Founder and Leader of the Mwatana Organization for Human Rights—an independent Yemeni organization aiming to defend and protect human rights in Yemen, 2018 (“Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates Are Starving Yemenis to Death,” *Foreign Policy*, November 8th, Available Online at <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/11/08/saudi-arabia-and-the-united-arab-emirates-are-starving-yemenis-to-death-mbs-khashoggi-famine-yemen-blockade-houthis/>, Accessed 06-20-2019)

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. 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 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. 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 weapons allegedly make the war safer, however the empirical record shows our unwavering support greenlights atrocity. By the time your RFD is over 12 Yemeni children will have died

Foreign policy 10-9-18

(Lara Seligman is Foreign Policy's Pentagon correspondent 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.”

#### Support to the coalition has resulted in the deaths of more than 50,000 people from US supplied weapons and 85,000 children from the related famine and disease outbreaks.

Larry **Korb 19** [PhD, Senior Fellow @ Center for American Progress, former Assistant Secretary of Defense], "Ending Support for the War in Yemen," Real Clear Defense, 3-27-2019 https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2019/03/27/ending\_support\_for\_the\_war\_in\_yemen\_114290.html

Until last month, the main reason for the U.S. ending its support for the Saudi-UAE-led war against the Houthis in Yemen was the humanitarian catastrophe it was causing. **Since the Saudis began bombing Yemen** in March 2015, **more than 50,000 people have died, mostly from U.S.-supplied combat weapons; 14 million people—or about half the entire Yemeni population—are on the brink of famine; 85,000 children** under the age of five **have already died from hunger and disease; each week there are 10,000 new cases of cholera; and 22.2 million people—about three-quarters of the population—are in need of humanitarian aid**. In the summer of 2018, the Saudi coalition even bombed a school in the northern town of Dahyan, killing 54 people, including 44 children, and wounding dozens more. Seeing these horrible statistics, the Republican-controlled Senate, over strong opposition from the Trump administration, has twice taken the unprecedented steps of voting to end U.S. support for the Saudi-UAE coalition, first in December and then again this month. The House, controlled by the Republicans in December, refused to take up the measure. But now that the Democrats control the lower chamber, it is expected that it will vote overwhelmingly to support the Senate bill. It is doubtful that President Trump, who unabashedly supports the current regime in Saudi Arabia, will approve such a measure when it arrives on his desk. Not surprisingly, many members of the Trump administration and some in Congress believe that the U.S. should maintain its support for the Saudis because their intervention in Yemen aids our national security by preventing the Houthis, who receive aid from Iran, from gaining control of Yemen, and thus increasing Iran’s influence in the region. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY), called the recent Senate vote, “inappropriate and counter-productive.” While there is no doubt that the humanitarian devastation that has already happened is reason enough to end our support for the Saudi-led coalition, its opponents in Congress and the Administration must also heed two recent reports, which demonstrate convincingly that **in addition to using U.S. weapons to inflict incredible harm on civilians, much of the U.S.-supplied equipment is falling into the hands of unaccountable militias, many of whom are sworn enemies of the U.S., and to the Houthis themselves**. On February 5, 2019, CNN reported that “**Saudi Arabia and its coalition partners have transferred American-made weapons**, some very sophisticated, **to** Al Qaeda linked fighters, hardline Salafi militias, Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (**AQAP**), **and other factions engaging in war in Yemen**.” According to CNN, **the Saudis did this even though such practices violate the agreements that they have made with the U.S., which prohibit them from transferring U.S. weapons to such groups. These weapons include not just guns but anti-tank missiles, armored vehicles including mine-resistant armored vehicles (MRAPs), heat-seeking lasers and artillery, or, as President Trump calls them, “beautiful military equipment.”** **Not only do these groups inflict unspeakable damage on innocent civilians with these weapons, but we now know many of these weapons have also fallen into the hands of the Houthis**, who are the enemies of the coalition. As a result, **the Houthis can not only exploit their vulnerabilities, but also reverse engineer these weapons, making their weapons more lethal, and most disturbingly pass on these technologies to Iran itself, which the Trump administration considers the major threat to American interests in the region**. The CNN report was followed a day later by one from Amnesty International. It too demonstrated convincingly that **the UAE**, Saudi Arabia's primary partner in this conflict, **is "recklessly arming militias in Yemen with advanced weaponry supplied by the U.S.** and other states." According to Amnesty, **the UAE is** actually **transferring** such items as **armored vehicles, mortars, and machine guns to several unaccountable groups, many of whom are accused of war crimes**. Meanwhile, the Pentagon’s response to these reports has been to state that the U.S. has not authorized the Saudis nor the UAE to make such transfers and therefore cannot comment on any pending investigation. How did they not know? Willful ignorance of this magnitude must be called out. **These humanitarian and strategic concerns make it clear that the U.S. must immediately end all its military support for the Saudi-led war in Yemen and end all its arms sales to the Saudis and UAE**, as several of our NATO allies, including Denmark, Norway and the Netherlands have already done. **The longer we wait, the more our values and security will be compromised**, and the more lives of innocent Yemenis will be lost. And to what ends?

### US = Complicit

#### Blaming “both sides” for the violence absolves the coalition and its primary arms supplier of responsibility for ongoing war crimes — they’ve killed two-thirds of civilians.

Larison 19 — Daniel Larison, Senior Editor at *The American Conservative*, holds a Ph.D. in History from the University of Chicago, 2019 (“Saudi Coalition Bombing Causes 2/3 of Yemeni Civilian Casualties,” *The American Conservative*, June 18th, Available Online at https://www.theamericanconservative.com/larison/saudi-coalition-bombing-causes-2-3-of-yemeni-civilian-casualties/, Accessed 06-11-2019)

The Armed Conflict Location Eventa & Data (ACLED) Project released its latest findings on fatalities caused by the war on Yemen, and now that they have completed their assessment of all data from the first year of the war they conclude that more than 90,000 have been killed over the course of the last four years:

BREAKING: #YemenWar Death Toll Exceeds 90,000 According to New @ACLEDINFO Data for 2015

ACLED has now extended #Yemen coverage from the present back through 2015, capturing the full int'l intervention into the country's civil war. Press release here: https://t.co/GluwkQWLSZ pic.twitter.com/A0uPsp9Rh5

— Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (@ACLEDINFO) June 18, 2019

The death toll reported here does not account for preventable deaths caused by starvation and disease. As we know from other studies, even more Yemenis have died from these causes than have been killed by bombs and shells. The overall cost of the war is much higher than the 90,000+ figure reported by ACLED, and this new figure is significantly higher than previous casualty estimates. News stories frequently cited outdated numbers that dramatically understated how many had lost their lives because of the war. For years, the “official” death toll remained frozen at 10,000 years after it six or seven times as many people had been killed. Fortunately, that erroneous information has started to be replaced with more accurate assessments of the losses inflicted by the war.

Two-thirds of the civilian casualties included in this count were killed by Saudi coalition airstrikes:

New data from @ACLEDINFO shows at least 91,600 ppl have been killed in Yemen’s war since 2015. Airstrikes by the Saudi-led coalition account for 67% of civilians killed.

— Sune Engel Rasmussen (@SuneEngel) June 18, 2019

As ACLED’s summary states, the Saudi coalition is “the actor most responsible for civilian deaths.” In some parts of Yemen, Saudi coalition responsibility for civilian deaths is even higher than 67%. In those areas that have come under the heaviest and most indiscriminate bombing, the percentage of civilian casualties caused by Saudi coalition airstrikes rises to 75%, and these are the areas that account for most of the total number of civilian casualties for the entire country:

Living in Hodeidah, Taiz, and Sadah governorates has been extremely lethal for civilians. In each governorate more than 2,000 civilians have been killed since 2015 — combined making up more than half of all civilian fatalities reported in Yemen since 2015. More than 75% of the direct civilian fatalities in these governorates are caused by airstrikes from the Saudi-led coalition.

The U.S. shares in the responsibility for causing those thousands of civilian deaths through our government’s ongoing support for the war and the continued selling of U.S.-made weapons to Saudi coalition governments. The Trump administration is determined to continue making the U.S. an accomplice to future Saudi coalition war crimes with the decision to expedite arms sales to Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

### Moral Obligation

#### The US can force de-escalation, but must end arms sales to fulfill its moral commitments.

IRC 5-24 (International Rescue Committee (IRC); has been working in Yemen since 2012 and rapidly scaled our programming in 2015 to address greater humanitarian need caused by the conflict. While the ongoing conflict and restrictions of air and seaports create challenges to our operations, the IRC has maintained access to affected populations in and continues to provide life-saving healthcare, economic empowerment, women’s protection and empowerment, and education programming; 5-24-2019; "More weapons is the last thing that Yemen needs"; https://www.rescue.org/press-release/more-weapons-last-thing-yemen-needs; International Rescue Committee (IRC); accessed 7-3-2019; LR)

New York, NY, May 24, 2019 — The International Rescue Committee (IRC) is alarmed at the consequences for the war in Yemen of a potential new round of US arms sales to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates — reported today and contrary to recent Congressional resolutions. The rationale, timing, content and messaging of this decision threaten to add fuel to the fire of the war and consequent humanitarian crisis in Yemen. The country is already the world’s worst humanitarian crisis, driven by relentless and often lawless conflict that has pushed millions of Yemenis to the brink of famine. The international community, especially the United States, must use its full weight to encourage all parties to fulfill the commitments made to de-escalation of the conflict in order to end the suffering of the Yemeni people. David Miliband, President and CEO of the International Rescue Committee, stated, “The priority in Yemen today is more diplomacy not more weapons, more support for the UN sponsored, fragile peace process, not fuel for an arms race. The US has unique capacity to be a force for de-escalation of the conflict, and a halt to a failed war strategy. More weapons are the last thing that Yemen needs. Through actions and words now is the time for all parties to the conflict to be incentivized to change course not double down on a failed strategy. A new round of arms sales fails this test. All parties to the conflict have failed the Yemeni people. Civilian casualties continue to increase across the country. The Yemen Data Project recorded 131 civilian casualties last month alone, up from 100 in March. All while an uptick in fighting in Al Dhale’e, Yemen has forced the IRC to suspend critical programming, including education for out of school children, and relocate mobile health teams. At a time when cholera cases are resurging across the country, it is of utmost importance that IRC retains access and ability to continue operations of our life-saving cholera treatment centers as the fighting is impacting our ability to deliver medical supplies. US arms supplies have been central to the 19,000 Saudi and Emirati-led Coalition airstrikes since this brutal conflict began. That amounts to more than 100 strikes a day, every day, for four years. Last year, one third of these strikes hit non-military targets — killing civilians and damaging and destroying infrastructure that Yemenis rely on to survive. More weapons will translate into more suffering. The Administration should be using its regional and global relationships to ensure a long term stop to this barrage. Humanitarian agencies like the IRC are working in increasingly difficult and dangerous conditions to try to meet the growing needs of a desperate population, and will be facing an uphill struggle until the war ends. We urge Congress to act with the full scope of its authority to stop these sales”.

#### We have a moral imperative to stop arms sales to Saudi Arabia – US arms are contributing directly to mass starvation, death, and reversal of human development

Deen ’19 (Thalif, Director & Senior Editor, UN Bureau, Inter Press Service (IPS) news agency Thalif Deen has been covering the United Nations since the late 1970s, US & Western Arms in Yemen Conflict Signal Potential War Crime Charges, Inter Press Service News Agency, 4/26/19, http://www.ipsnews.net/2019/04/us-western-arms-yemen-conflict-signal-potential-war-crime-charges/)CN

“That’s why we have leverage over Saudi Arabia, not the other way around.” The next step, he argued, should be a suspension of arms sales until Saudi Arabia ends its war in Yemen, for that war has made the US complicit in mass starvation. The Times said last year that some US lawmakers worry that American weapons were being used to commit war crimes in Yemen—including the intentional or unintentional bombings of funerals, weddings, factories and other civilian infrastructure—triggering condemnation from the United Nations and human rights groups who also accuse the Houthis of violating humanitarian laws of war and peace. In its World Report 2017, Human Rights Watch said the Saudi Arabia-led coalition has carried out military operations, supported by the United States and United Kingdom, against Houthi forces and forces loyal to former President Ali Abdullah Saleh since March 2015. The coalition has unlawfully attacked homes, markets, hospitals, schools, civilian businesses, and mosques, the report said. “None of the forces in Yemen’s conflict seem to fear being held to account for violating the laws of war,” said Sarah Leah Whitson, Middle East director at Human Rights Watch. “UN members need to press the parties to end the slaughter and the suffering of civilians.” Besides Saudi Arabia, the original coalition included the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar (until 2017), Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Senegal and Sudan. In a report released last February, Amnesty International (AI) said the weapons for the coalition, primarily to Saudi Arabia and UAE, have come mostly from Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Czechia, France, Germany, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, the UK and the US. The London-based AI called on all states to stop supplying arms to all parties to the conflict in Yemen “until there is no longer a substantial risk that such equipment would be used to commit or facilitate serious violations of international humanitarian and human rights law.” The only four countries that have announced suspending arms transfers to the UAE were Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands and Norway, according to AI. Asked how dependent Saudi Arabia is on US arms, Wezeman told IPS that US is by far the largest arms supplier to Saudi Arabia. SIPRI estimates that in 2014-18, the USA accounted for 68% of Saudi arms imports followed by the UK at a distant 16 per cent. Several other European countries accounted for most of the rest. China played a small role and Russia had not yet established itself as arms supplier to Saudi Arabia. Asked about the current state of US arms sales to Saudi Arabia, Wezeman said the US supplies all types of weapons to Saudi. But most important in value of the weapons that have been or are to be delivered are F-15 combat aircraft with a full set of advanced arms and Patriot and THAAD air defence systems. But the list also includes M1A2 tanks, frigates, reconnaissance planes, light armoured vehicles, communication equipment, and basically anything needed to equip modern armed forces. What is important is that these weapons come with a service package. Though exact data is scarce, the companies supplying the equipment also supply vital maintenance and repair services, he noted. Compare with what happened in Iran in 1979, which also was highly dependent on US and UK arms, Tehran had to figure out by itself how to operate the equipment. Possibly the Iranians were better prepared and trained for that than Saudi Arabia is now, but they struggled to continue to use the US equipment in the war with Iraq and had to resort to importing inferior weapons from China and North Korea. It is very likely, said Wezeman, that Russia and China will happily step in and offer their weapons. However, it will take time before they can deliver large numbers of weapons and train the Saudi’s on new equipment based on different military doctrines. A full transition will probably take many years. There are several of other cases where states have shifted between different suppliers, with different levels of success, he pointed out. Warsaw pact countries moved to NATO weapons, over several decades. Venezuela switched from US equipment to Russian and Chinese over a period of roughly a decade. Citing conservative UN estimates, Ole Solvang, Policy Director at the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), told IPS some 17,700 civilians have been killed in the fighting in Yemen since 2015. An estimated 2,310 people have died from cholera according to the World Health Organisation (WHO), and 85,000 children under the age of five have died from starvation. Solvang said more bombs and weapons in Yemen will only mean more suffering and death. “By providing such extensive military and diplomatic support for one side of the conflict, the United States is deepening and prolonging a crisis that has immediate and severe consequences for Yemen— and civilians are paying the price,” he noted. Described as one of the world’s least developed countries (LDCs) and the poorest in the Arab world, Yemen continues to be devastated by a war with no end in sight. Meanwhile, the results of a study commissioned by the UN Development Program (UNDP), released last week, confirm the worst: the ongoing conflict has reversed Yemen’s human development by 21 years. The study warns of exponentially growing impacts of conflict on human development. It projects that if the war ends in 2022, development gains will have been set back by 26 years — almost a generation. If it continues through 2030, that setback will increase to four decades. “The long-term impacts of conflict are vast and place it among the most destructive conflicts since the end of the Cold War,” warns the report; and further deterioration of the situation “will add significantly to prolonged human suffering, ~~retard~~ harm human development in Yemen, and could further deteriorate regional stability.” “Human development has not just been interrupted. It has been reversed,” said UNDP Yemen Resident Representative, Auke Lootsma. “Even if there were to be peace tomorrow, it could take decades for Yemen to return to pre-conflict levels of development. This is a big loss for the people of Yemen.”

### At: Civilian Casualties Minimal

#### U.S. weapons will continue to be used to commit war crimes — they’re not minimizing civilian casualties.

Larison 18 — Daniel Larison, Senior Editor at *The American Conservative*, holds a Ph.D. in History from the University of Chicago, 2018 (“U.S. Arms Sales and the War on Yemen,” *The American Conservative*, December 26th, Available Online at <https://www.theamericanconservative.com/larison/u-s-arms-sales-and-the-war-on-yemen/>, Accessed 06-11-2019)

The New York Times has published a very good report on the role of U.S.-made arms and U.S.-provided assistance in the war on Yemen. This section merits a few comments:

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.

If policymakers used to assume that U.S.-made weapons would not be used by the clients that bought them, they no longer have the luxury of hiding behind that excuse. The Saudis and Emiratis have been using the planes, weapons, and ships they have acquired from U.S. manufacturers to massacre and starve civilians for more than three and a half years. Given their conduct in the war on Yemen, there should be an indefinite moratorium on selling weapons to the Saudis and Emiratis or any other member of the Saudi coalition. We know very well how these governments have used U.S.-made weapons, and we have to assume that they will continue to use them in the commission of war crimes now and in the future. Any future proposed arms sale to any of these governments has to be considered with the war on Yemen in mind.

### At: Plan Worsens Casualties

#### The coalition uses precision-guided weapons to intentionally target civilians.

Larison 19 — Daniel Larison, Senior Editor at *The American Conservative*, holds a Ph.D. in History from the University of Chicago, 2019 (“The Bogus ‘Emergency’ and the War on Yemen,” *The American Conservative*, June 12th, Available Online at https://www.theamericanconservative.com/larison/the-bogus-emergency-and-the-war-on-yemen/, Accessed 06-13-2019)

The “emergency” lie is tied up with the larger lie that is administration Yemen policy. They claim that providing the Saudis and the UAE with precision-guided weapons reduces the risk to civilians, but that ignores the fact that the Saudi coalition routinely launches attacks on civilian targets on purpose. Sending more weapons to governments that massacre civilians obviously cannot reduce the risk to civilians. It guarantees more civilian deaths. We know in advance that these weapons will be used to commit war crimes, and by trying to rush these weapons to the war criminals the Trump administration is giving a green light to more massacres, deepening U.S. complicity in these crimes, and announcing to the entire world that the administration’s support for the Saudi coalition is unconditional. The “emergency” is a lie in service to an evil cause, and all members of Congress should reject it.

#### The coalition is intentionally targeting civilians.

Hartung 19 — William D. Hartung, Director of the Arms and Security Project at the Center for International Policy, former Senior Research Fellow in the American Strategy Program at the New America Foundation, former Director of the Arms Trade Resource Center at the World Policy Institute, 2019 (“It’s Time To Stop Arms Sales To Saudi Arabia,” *LobeLog*—the Inter Press Service’s blog, May 15th, Available Online at <https://lobelog.com/its-time-to-stop-arms-sales-to-saudi-arabia/>, Accessed 06-07-2019)

With respect to the sales of precision-guided bombs—whose use has been documented in the widespread killings of civilians—the argument of choice has been that even more civilians would die in Saudi/UAE air strikes if the coalition were limited to “dumb” bombs that could not be targeted as accurately. This assertion is premised on the idea that Saudi Arabia and the UAE are making good faith efforts to avoid hitting civilians. The sheer volume of strikes on targets like hospitals, a school bus, funerals, factories, water treatment plants, and other civilian infrastructure puts the lie to this argument. Air strikes on civilians are not “mistakes.” They are part and parcel of the Saudi/UAE strategy to bomb Yemenis into submission and end the war on terms favorable to their coalition.

#### Empirically, sales of precision guided munitions increase civilian casualties.

Benowitz 19 — Brittany Benowitz, Chief Counsel at the Center for Human Rights at the American Bar Association, former Defense Advisor to a Senior Member of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, holds a J.D. from the Washington College of Law at American University, 2019 (“U.S. ‘Emergency’ Arms Sales to Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates,” Forum on the Arms Trade, May 23rd, Available Online at <https://www.forumarmstrade.org/ussaudimay2019.html>, Accessed 06-11-2019)

Further sales of weapons previously used in unlawful strikes, including in particular precision guided munitions, would violate the United States obligations under the Geneva Conventions and likely federal law. Eight of the ten strikes identified by UN experts as unlawful in 2017 involved precision guided munitions. Contrary to the misconception that these weapons reduce civilian casualties, the record shows that it was only after the Obama administration suspended their sale that the unlawful strikes on civilian casualties went down.

## 2AC Middle East Stability Extensions

### Arms = Yemen Escalation

#### Selling Saudi Arabia arms has only fueled the Yemen conflict and escalated Middle Eastern instability

Arias and Ujayli ’19 (Liza maria, Herbert Scoville Jr. Peace Fellow at Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), and Laila, Herbert Scoville Jr. Peace Fellow at Win Without War and Rhodes Scholar, Once Again, Trump Elevates Arms Sales Over Human Rights, Lobe Log, 5/30/19, https://lobelog.com/once-again-trump-elevates-arms-sales-over-human-rights/)CN

Last week, circumventing objections from legislators on both sides of the aisle, Donald Trump declared an emergency to expedite more than eight billion dollars worth of arms sales to Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and other countries. In doing so, Trump continues to place the interests of the Saudi government and arms contractors over the will of Congress, and in the process undermines the security of peoples in the Middle East, Saudis included. Lawmakers had previously delayed arms sales to the Saudi and Emirati monarchies on account of their coalition’s devastating military intervention in Yemen, which has resulted in the world’s largest humanitarian crisis and U.S. complicity in war crimes. The Saudi government in particular has drawn Congressional ire for its brutal murder of Washington Post contributor, and U.S. resident, Jamal Khashoggi. To complete the sale and bypass Congressional holds, the Trump administration was forced to utilize the emergency provision of the 1976 Arms Export Control Act (AECA) which allows the president to evade the mandatory 30-day congressional notification period for arms sales as long as he presents the security justification to Congress. In yet another step in the administration’s march to war with Iran, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo justified the administration’s decision by arguing that the arms sales would somehow “enhance Middle East stability” by helping Saudi Arabia and others to “counter” Iran. Unsurprisingly, his argument falls flat, particularly as the Trump administration careens towards what would be a regionally catastrophic war. Moreover, if stability in the Middle East is the goal, it’s absurd to assume that a country that has fueled a destabilizing war in Yemen can be its broker. The Trump administration’s work to prolong U.S. involvement in Yemen’s war and its sanctions campaign against Iran have been devastating to both Yemenis and Iranians. It should also go without saying that a war with Iran would not only undermine American interests, but also cause people in the region immeasurably more harm. And as panelists reminded attendees during an event in Washington DC last week on the Saudi government’s targeting of women’s rights activists, the Trump administration’s unwavering support of the Saudi government is not enhancing the security of Saudi citizens either.

### Escalation Now

#### It’s escalating now- Houthi attacks and Iranian asymmetric retaliation.

Behravesh, 6/22 (Maysam, PhDc, PoliSci@LundUniversity, 6-22-19, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/06/yemen-escalation-houthis-ramp-attacks-saudi-arabia-190622055136031.html>) BW

Over the past four years, since the beginning of Saudi-led military intervention in Yemen in March 2015, the conflict in the poorest Arab nation has gone through various phases, with calamitous consequences for Yemeni civilians. However, in recent weeks, Houthi attacks against military and civilian targets within Saudi territory have markedly escalated, which notably coincided with amplifying pressure from the United States and its allies on Iran, a key regional supporter of Yemen's Houthis. The surge in Houthi attacks may be aimed at showing the US and its allies that any conflict between them and Iran risks igniting a regional war, analysts told Al Jazeera. Others see the attacks as asymmetric retaliation against US regional allies by Tehran, which lacks the economic or diplomatic power to punish Washington in response to US-led sanctions and "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran.

#### Yemen conflict more likely to escalate than their disad

Khourt, PhD, 8-29-18

(Nabeel, Nonresident Senior Fellow, Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2018/08/29/the\_war\_in\_yemen\_playing\_with\_fire\_113750.html

It is worth reminding ourselves that the conflict has national, regional, and international aspects. Iran has become an issue at the regional and international levels, but it was not involved, and remains so to this day, in the internal Yemeni struggle for power. Internally, the now-defunct national dialogue of 2011-2012 never led to a firm handshake on a power-sharing agreement between principal domestic powers: the Houthis; the former ruling party, the General People’s Congress; the former opposition Islah party; and the Southern Movement or Hirak with all its components. Filling the void left by the late Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh’s ouster from power in 2012 remains the crux of the problem in Yemen. It is also the cornerstone of any overall peace plan for the country. A strong and sensible national figure has yet to appear and appeal to all militia and political leaders to gather for the purpose of hammering out a true national pact that would not only guarantee them a role in a future government, but also offer a compromise on their long-term policy fears, hopes, and preferences. To be sure, such national figures exist in and outside Yemen, but they would need international backing to propel them into the limelight and support their quest for national unity. With all due respect to the United Nations Special Envoy for Yemen, Martin Griffiths, his job belongs to a Yemeni not to an outsider, no matter how well intentioned. Regionally, one has to confront the two-ton bear (real or otherwise) sitting in the living room: Iran. Saudis have complained about Iran meddling in Yemen for the past decade. Ironically, Saleh—who allied with the Houthis in 2015, then later withdrew from that alliance, and was eventually assassinated by a Houthi sniper on December 4, 2017—did the same when he started the six-year war against the Houthis in 2004, insisting that Iran was behind the Houthi successes on the battlefield. In both cases, while I was at the U.S. Embassy in Sana‘a we searched for evidence of the wolf at the door and found nothing but empty slogans and precious few actual contacts. To be sure, that situation changed in 2010 when the Saudi air force intervened to help Saleh against the Houthis. Iran’s involvement increased again when the Saudi-led coalition launched a war to stop the Houthi advance on south Yemen after they took over Sana‘a in 2014. Just as with the wolf-at-the-door parable, Iran took an interest and started helping the Houthis, albeit not very effectively given the U.S. military presence in the Gulf. Regardless of the merits of the Iran argument, bugaboos have to be confronted since virtual and/or partially true fears can cause just as much insecurity and unpredictable responses as the real thing. Stoking those fears—as Israeli and U.S. hawks have been doing—is the last thing regional and international players should do. It’s a dangerous game anywhere, but particularly in the volatile Middle East. Iran and Saudi Arabia are the two regional super powers engaged in a cold war and competing for regional supremacy in the Gulf and beyond. Yemen is the one place where this cold war has actually stoked the flames of a hot war, and the dangers of an all-out conflagration are quite real.

### Yemen War !- Miscalc

#### Yemini instability causes arms racing and miscalculation in the region – causes cascading conflicts

Young, PhD, 17

(Karen E. Young; senior resident scholar at the Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington, former fellow @ Middle East Centre of the London School of Economics and Political Science, assistant professor of political science at the American University of Sharjah, PhD in political science from the City University of New York, an MA in political science from Columbia University, an MA in international economic relations from the Universidad Andina Simon Bolivar; War at Any Price: Domestic and Regional Economic Consequences of Yemen’s Civil War; Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington; May 25, 2017; https://agsiw.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Young\_War-at-Any-Price\_ONLINE.pdf)

The incidence of continued violence after civil war will put Yemen and its neighbors at risk of prolonged low-level insurgency, and the harboring of violent groups. Again, work by Collier, Hoefler, and Rohnerz demonstrates that once a country stumbles into civil war there is a danger of entering a cycle of conflict,41 or what prominent political economists call a violence trap, 42 particularly in states with very weak political institutions and lacking an inclusive national identity. As they argue, the principle legacy of a civil war is a grossly heightened risk of further civil war. For the Gulf Arab states, the risks brewing inside Yemen are very clear: In a young, unemployed, fractionalized society with access to arms and little access to public health services or education, conflict is sure to resurface. But it might be more compelling to consider the export of the conflict effects on neighboring countries’ domestic political and economic stability. The violence trap is not contained. Countries engaged in conflict tend to increase their military spending. The spending effect is contagious to neighboring states, even if they are at peace. Civil war tends to increase military expenditure by two percentage points of GDP, according to a World Bank study by Collier.43 It creates regional arms races in which governments dedicate spending to military purchases and expenses that might have otherwise gone to public health, infrastructure, or education. According to Anthony Cordesman, citing reports by the International Institute of Strategic Studies, Saudi Arabia spent $56.9 billion on defense in 2016, only $2 billion less than the total spent by Russia.44 Saudi Arabia’s military and security spending has decreased somewhat during the fiscal austerity measures of the last year, but remains extremely high by international standards at 8.9 percent of its GDP in 2016. In the current period of fiscal adjustment for the GCC states, this regional effect could have important consequences on fiscal policy. As cross-regional World Bank studies demonstrate, one of the strongest influences on individual state military expenditure is the expenditure of neighboring states.45 Even for neighboring states that are not directly involved in the conflict, this research suggests that by the end of the conflict and the return to “equilibrium” (rough estimates from studies above indicate at least after five years), the neighboring countries will have increased their military expenditure on average by 0.7 percentage points.46 There is a spatial cascade effect of military spending, especially for bordering states and even in states not directly engaged in conflict. The cascade spending, and the arms race it can spur, could lead to militarized regions primed for conflict and hypersensitive to threat. The experiential learning happening inside the Yemen conflict suggests that Emirati and Saudi threat perception has only heightened, along with their willingness to commit scarcer resources to defense.

#### Miscalculation makes US-Iran war likely – it escalates to draw in proxies

Goldenberg in 2019

(Ilan, Int’lSecurity&MiddleEast@Columbia, SeniorFellow&DirectorMiddleEastSecurity@CNAS, advises DOD, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/iran/2019-06-04/what-war-iran-would-look) BW

The bad news is that a war could still happen. Even if neither side wants to fight, miscalculation, missed signals, and the logic of escalation could conspire to turn even a minor clash into a regional conflagration—with devastating effects for Iran, the United States, and the Middle East. A conflict would most likely start with a small, deniable attack by Iran on a U.S.-related target. Iran’s leaders, in this scenario, decide that it is time to stand up to U.S. President Donald Trump. Shiite militias in Iraq with ties to Iran hit a U.S. military convoy in Iraq, killing a number of soldiers, or Iranian operatives attack another oil tanker in the Persian Gulf, this time causing an oil spill. Tehran knows from past experience that such attacks do not result in direct retaliation from Washington, provided they are somewhat deniable. Iranian proxies in Iraq, for example, killed roughly 600 American soldiers from 2003 to 2011, with few consequences for Iran. But this time is different. Following the Iranian attack, the Trump administration decides to strike at several military sites in Iran, just as it hit Syrian targets in 2017 and 2018 after the regime of President Bashar al-Assad used chemical weapons. Using air and naval assets already stationed in the Middle East, the United States strikes an Iranian port or hits a training camp for Iraqi Shiite fighters in Iran. Through public and private channels, the U.S. government communicates that it conducted a one-time strike to “reestablish deterrence” and that if Iran backs off, it will face no further consequences. Ideally, the Iranian leadership pulls back, and things end there. But what if Iran does not respond the way Assad did? After all, Assad was fighting for his very survival in a years-long civil war and knew better than to pull the United States any further into that fight. Iran’s leader has many more options than the beleaguered Syrian president did. The Islamic Republic can use proxy forces in Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen to attack the United States and its partners. It has an arsenal of ballistic missiles that can target U.S. bases in Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE. Its mines and land-based antiship missiles can wreak havoc in the Strait of Hormuz and drive up global oil prices. Iran has the capacity to shut down a significant portion of Saudi oil production with aggressive sabotage or cyberattacks, and with its paramilitary unit known as the Quds Force, Iran can attack U.S. targets around the globe. Between the United States and Iran there is a distinct potential for misunderstanding, not least when both actors are making decisions under time pressure, on the basis of uncertain information, and in a climate of deep mutual distrust. Iran may mistake a one-off strike by the United States as the beginning of a significant military campaign that requires an immediate and harsh response. The danger that the United States will send confusing signals to the Iranians is especially high given Trump’s tendency to go off on Twitter and the fact that his national security adviser has articulated a more hawkish agenda than his own. The two sides will also face an intense security dilemma, with each side’s defensive measures appearing aggressive to the other side. Suppose that during the crisis the United States decides to send aircraft carriers, battleships, bombers, and fighters to the region to defend itself and its allies. Iran’s military leaders might infer that Washington is gearing up for a bigger attack. Similarly, imagine that Iran decides to protect its missiles and mines from a preemptive U.S. strike by moving them out of storage and dispersing them. The United States might interpret such defensive measures as preparation for a dramatic escalation—and respond by carrying out the very preemptive strike that Iran sought to avoid. In one scenario, all these escalatory pressures set off a larger conflict. The United States sinks several Iranian ships and attacks a port and military training facilities. Iran drops mines and attacks U.S. ships in the Persian Gulf. Iranian proxies kill dozens of U.S. troops, aid workers, and diplomats in the region, and Iranian missiles strike U.S. bases in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, causing limited damage. At every turn, Iran tries to save face by showing resolve but stopping short of all-out war; Washington, intent on “reestablishing deterrence,” retaliates a little more aggressively each time. Before long, the two have tumbled into full-scale hostilities. At this point, the United States faces a choice: continue the tit-for-tat escalation or overwhelm the enemy and destroy as much of its military capabilities as possible, as the United States did during Operation Desert Storm against Iraq in 1991. The Pentagon recommends “going big” so as not to leave U.S. forces vulnerable to further Iranian attacks. Bolton and U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo support the plan. Trump agrees, seeing a large-scale assault as the only way to prevent humiliation. The United States sends some 120,000 troops to its bases in the Middle East, a figure approaching the 150,000 to 180,000 troops deployed to Iraq at any given point from 2003 to 2008. American aircraft attack conventional Iranian targets and much of Iran’s nuclear infrastructure in Natanz, Fordow, Arak, and Esfahan. For now, the military does not start a ground invasion or seek to topple the regime in Tehran, but ground forces are sent to the region, ready to invade if necessary. Iran’s military is soon overwhelmed, but not before mounting a powerful, all-out counterattack. It steps up mining and swarming small-boat attacks on U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf. Missile attacks, cyberattacks, and other acts of sabotage against Gulf oil facilities send global oil prices skyrocketing for weeks or months, perhaps to $150 or more per barrel. Iran launches as many missiles as it can at U.S. military bases. Many of the missiles miss, but some do not. Iran’s proxies target U.S. troops in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria, and Iranian-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen increase their rocket attacks against Saudi Arabia. Iran may even attempt terrorist attacks on U.S. embassies or military facilities around the globe—but will likely fail, as such attacks are difficult to execute successfully. Israel might get drawn into the conflict through clashes with Hezbollah, the Shiite militant group and political party in Lebanon. Iran has tremendous influence over Hezbollah and could potentially push the group to attack Israel using its arsenal of 130,000 rockets in an attempt to raise the costs of the conflict for the United States and one of its closest allies. Such an attack will likely overwhelm Israel’s Iron Dome missile defense system, leaving the Israelis with no choice but to invade Hezbollah’s strongholds in southern Lebanon and possibly southern Syria. What began as a U.S.-Iranian skirmish now engulfs the entire region, imposing not only devastating losses on Iran’s leadership and people but serious costs in blood and treasure for the United States, Israel, Lebanon, the Gulf states, and other regional players. Even once major military operations cease, the conflict will not be over. Iranian proxies are hard to eradicate through conventional battlefield tactics and will target U.S. forces and partners in the Middle East for years to come. U.S. air strikes would set back the Iranian nuclear program anywhere from 18 months to three years. But air strikes cannot destroy scientific know-how, and the conflict may push Iran to take the program further underground and build an actual nuclear weapon—a goal it has refrained from achieving thus far. Moreover, even if the United States goes into the conflict hoping only to weaken Iran militarily, it will soon face calls at home and from Jerusalem, Riyadh, and Abu Dhabi to overthrow the Islamic Republic. As a result, the United States may stumble into the kind of regime change operation it carried out in Iraq in 2003 and Libya in 2011—but this time on a much larger scale. Iran today has a population of 80 million, more than three times that of Iraq at the beginning of the Iraq war. The country’s topography is much more challenging than Iraq’s. The cost of an invasion would over time reach into the trillions of dollars. And consider for a moment the destabilizing effects of a refugee crisis stemming from a country with a population the size of Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria combined. The United States might instead try to engineer the collapse of the Islamic Republic without invading, as it tried in Iraq in the 1990s. But unlike many Middle Eastern countries that have grown unstable in recent years, Iran is not an artificial creation of European colonialism but a millennia-old civilization whose nationalism runs deep. Iranians are not likely to respond to a major war with the United States by blaming their own leadership and trying to overthrow it. Even if they did, the most likely result would be a transition from clerical rule to a military dictatorship headed by the powerful Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. In the worst case, internal collapse would lead to civil war, just as it has with several of Iran’s neighbors, potentially creating terrorist safe havens and enormous refugee flows. Even short of such worst-case scenarios, any war with Iran would tie down the United States in yet another Middle Eastern conflict for years to come. The war and its aftermath would likely cost hundreds of billions of dollars and hobble not just Trump but future U.S. presidents. Such a commitment would mean the end of the United States’ purported shift to great-power competition with Russia and China.

### ME War !

#### This draw in will result in full scale war between great powers- all countries are at risk

Saab 18 [Bilal Y. Saab is senior fellow and director of the Defense and Security Program at the Middle East Institute, and an adjunct assistant professor at Georgetown University, The coming Middle East missile arms race, https://thebulletin.org/2018/09/the-coming-middle-east-missile-arms-race/]

The main reason Riyadh and Abu Dhabi have yet to pursue ballistic missiles is that Washington has managed for years to convince them not to. The last thing the United States needs in the Middle East is an offensive missile race, which could quickly lead the antagonists into a deadly military confrontation that drags Washington and Moscow into war. Missiles are inherently destabilizing weapons because of their potential to quickly escalate conflicts. Their flight times can be very short, and new technologies are dramatically improving their accuracy and lethality. As if that were not scary enough, the nuclear future of the Middle East is also increasingly uncertain, now that the United States has withdrawn from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the deal that limited Iran’s nuclear development in exchange for sanctions relief. At the same time, at least half a dozen regional powers including Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, Egypt, Jordan, and Qatar see peaceful nuclear energy as a long-term solution to their fossil-fuel dependence. The growth of nuclear power generation in the region could exacerbate the risk of nuclear proliferation, as the same technologies and materials are required to develop both nuclear energy and nuclear weapons. Should Middle East civilian nuclear development become militarized, possession of fleets of offensive missiles—arguably the most effective delivery vehicle for nuclear warheads—could magnify the potential danger.

#### 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)

## 2AC Solvency Extensions

### Plan Solves Strikes

#### Logistically, the plan would immediately ground the coalition’s fighter aircraft.

Bridgeman 19 — Tess Bridgeman, Senior Editor at Just Security, Senior Fellow and Visiting Scholar at the Reiss Center on Law and Security at New York University School of Law, former Special Assistant to the President, Associate Counsel to the President, and Deputy Legal Adviser to the National Security Council, holds a D.Phil. in International Relations from Oxford University and a J.D. from New York University School of Law, 2019 (“Congress, Saudi Arabia, and the Conflict in Yemen: Where do We Go from Here?,” *Just Security*, February 12th, Available Online at <https://www.justsecurity.org/62560/congress-saudi-arabia-conflict-yemen-here/>, Accessed 06-11-2019)

If the new Congress is also serious about curbing U.S. participation in Yemen’s devastating civil war, it should include a provision explicitly cutting off specific forms of U.S. support — not just directing withdrawal from “hostilities” — in a must-pass vehicle. Congress has a number of very good options for doing so at its disposal. For example, two options, which could be combined for maximum impact, are (1) expressly prohibiting any further U.S. assistance or support, including intelligence sharing and logistics support activities, to any members of the Saudi-led coalition for the civil war in Yemen, and (2) as Ryan Goodman has explained, suspending Direct Commercial Sales licenses for maintenance and sustainment of fighter aircraft used in the Saudi coalition’s offensive operations in Yemen.¶ The first option would have the impact of ending the activities the U.S. is actually undertaking in support of the Saudi-led coalition. The second would create a strong incentive for the coalition to get serious about negotiations to end the conflict: it would have the impact of grounding the coalition’s fighter aircraft in short order, as they rely on maintenance and spare parts provided under U.S. licenses.¶ Members on both sides of the aisle have expressed outrage at Saudi Arabia’s leadership for the devastating impact of its air campaign in Yemen’s civil war and its silencing of critics through murder and disappearance. If Congress wants to ensure in practice that the United States cannot continue to support the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen and that the Trump administration holds Saudi leaders accountable, it has strong options available to do so.

### Plan Solves Ceasefire

#### Ending US arms support for Saudi efforts in Yemen can de-escalate and spark negotiations

Fenton-Harvey ‘19 [Jonathan Fenton-Harvey is a roaming journalist and researcher who focuses on conflict, international relations, and humanitarian issues within the Middle East and North Africa. He has particularly focused on the Yemen conflict, Libya and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) regional foreign policy. He has also studied history and Middle East studies at the University of Exeter, in the United Kingdom. “Will Yemen’s War Escalate Further?” LobeLog, 6-14-2019, https://lobelog.com/will-yemens-war-escalate-further/] 7-7-2019 //AT

The Houthi rebels’ attack on Saudi Arabia’s southwestern Abha International Airport, which injured 26 civilians and hospitalized eight, symbolizes heightening tensions in the four-year-long war in Yemen and the failure of the current peace talks. Just days before the attack, a Houthi spokesperson promised on Twitter that the faction would target Saudi and Emirati airports, in response to Saudi Arabia’s blockade of Sanaa airport. After the attack, the Houthis confirmed their previous claim that it was a response to Saudi Arabia’s suffocating policies on the country. Saudi Arabia presents the attack as an act of Iranian aggression. “In light of these terrorist and immoral transgressions by the Houthis, the coalition will take strict measures urgently and carefully to deter them,” Saudi Arabian Colonel Turki Al Maliki, the top spokesman for the coalition in Yemen, said on June 12. “The terrorist elements responsible for planning and carrying out this attack will be held accountable.” On Thursday, Riyadh had already pounded Sanaa as a response to the attack and vowed to confront the Houthis with “unwavering resolve.” As Saudi Arabia’s use of force continues, it will push the Houthis to further target Saudi territory. Although they can threaten southern territory, especially with the attack on Abha airport, the Houthis have limited experience in hitting precise targets at long-range, so it is unlikely that they will successfully take the fight deep into Saudi territory. For Riyadh however, the attack serves as a perfect justification to prolong their war efforts, destabilize and control Yemen, and empower their own ruling candidate. Furthermore, Saudi Arabia claims that previous Houthi missiles struck close to Mecca, which it presents as a threat to a key Islamic holy site. Though Houthis have received limited support from Iran, they are not an Iranian proxy and have other reasons for pursuing their goals. This narrative of “Iranian proxies” has been damaging to peace efforts. The UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Anwar Gargash has also argued that the Houthis are responsible for the violence and are also a proxy. The UAE, not Saudi Arabia, has already spearheaded the attack on Hodeidah and will likely further up pressure against the Houthis. According to reports of the Houthis advancing inside Saudi territory, the faction is directly threatening parts of the kingdom. As a result, Riyadh may feel compelled to take harsher action and not just target the Houthis with airstrikes. It has already imposed a harsh blockade on Yemen’s airports, along with multiple sea and land ports, and could now seek to impose harsher restrictions. Ultimately, Yemenis will suffer the most, especially as Saudi Arabia struggles to suppress the Houthis, who excel at fighting and navigating in Yemeni territory. The war has already restricted the flow of vital goods. Even when goods are available, Yemenis struggle to afford them due to high unemployment and inflation. With cholera once again spreading, Yemen’s humanitarian crisis, which the UN already calls the world’s worst, could deepen. Rather than scaling back support for Saudi Arabia because of its harmful role in Yemen, Donald Trump has embraced the narrative that the Houthis are an Iranian proxy and sold $8 billion of weapons to Riyadh in May, on top of America’s already vast support to the coalition. This comes amid congressional efforts to halt Washington’s support for the Yemen war. Congressional support for ending America’s participation in Saudi Arabia’s war could be a key factor in forcing Saudi Arabia to back away from Yemen and support peace negotiations, as the United States has leverage over the kingdom. Future peace talks must strongly address Saudi Arabia’s role which increasingly aggravates tensions, rather than just focusing on the Yemen war, to prevent the conflict deepening. Though responsible for numerous violations, the Houthis have seemingly kept their word and pulled back from the Hodeidah ports a month ago, according to the head of a UN mission patrolling the sites. If Saudi Arabia’s campaign ended, the Houthis could be more receptive to peace talks. Indeed, only by Saudi Arabia easing its blockade on Yemen could a peaceful solution become feasible in this complex, multi-faceted conflict.

#### The plan forces Saudi Arabia and Iran to the negotiating table without causing an oil crisis

Lang 19 [Johannes Lang, Harvard Political Review. Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the Failure of America’s Middle East Policy. March 6, 2019. https://harvardpolitics.com/columns-old/iran-saudi-arabia-and-the-failure-of-americas-middle-east-policy/]

There is no good reason, idealistic or realistic, for the divergence in U.S. foreign policy towards Saudi Arabia and Iran. The shale revolution has significantly reduced U.S. dependence on oil imports. Within only eight months in 2014, Saudi oil exports to the United States halved. Today, Washington has no reason to continue its commitment to an alliance that destroys America’s international credibility as a supporter of human rights. In an ideal world, the United States would not have to interact with regimes like Saudi Arabia’s or Iran’s. However, in order to defend its interests in the Middle East, America should engage with both without antagonizing either. From 1969 to 1979, the United States pursued a “two-pillar strategy” in the Middle East, relying on both Iran and Saudi Arabia to uphold order throughout the Middle East. Today, America should return to a similar balancing strategy. Without an American blank check, the Saudis will likely think twice before invading and bullying their neighboring countries and arming radical terrorists. At the same time, assuaging Iran’s fears about drastic American intervention might allow Iran to shift away from its continued reliance upon Hezbollah, Assad, and Shia militias in Iraq. By forcing Iran and Saudi Arabia to the negotiation table, Trump could bring an end to conflicts in Yemen and Syria and the Qatar blockade.

#### This is the only way to force the coalition to take seriously the U.S.’s demands for a ceasefire.

Larison 18 — Daniel Larison, Senior Editor at *The American Conservative*, holds a Ph.D. in History from the University of Chicago, 2018 (“End U.S. Support for the War on Yemen Before It’s Too Late,” *The American Conservative*, November 5th, Available Online at https://www.theamericanconservative.com/larison/end-u-s-support-for-the-war-on-yemen-before-its-too-late/, Accessed 06-07-2019)

Bruce Riedel comments on the Saudi coalition’s escalation in the days following Mattis and Pompeo’s call for a ceasefire in 30 days:

Congress is ready to take action to curtail America’s involvement in the war after the midterms. A Democratic majority in the House would likely hold hearings on alleged Saudi war crimes and the murder of Khashoggi. The crown prince’s tarnished reputation will be in the docket.

But the Saudis have escalated their airstrikes on Sanaa and Hodeidah instead. The capital and the main port have been heavily pounded by the Saudi coalition since Pompeo and Mattis spoke.

It is likely that the Saudis and Emiratis don’t take the administration’s ceasefire demand seriously, and so far they have no reason to do so. There is no hint that Trump will withdraw support from the coalition if they refuse to comply with the demand, and administration officials have made such a habit of covering for coalition wrongdoing that the Saudis and Emiratis have to assume that they are not in any danger of losing the administration’s backing. The Soufan Center notes in its analysis of Pompeo and Mattis’ statements that both of the statements are toothless:

However, in both statements, there were no details as to how to bring the warring sides to the table, or how to restrain the Saudi bombing campaign. In fact, just after the U.S. tentatively called for a cease fire, Saudi jets pounded Sanaa with a series of air strikes, perhaps sending a message to Washington that Riyadh has its own timetable. The coalition also has moved thousands of troops into position for an expected push into the port city of Hodeida. It remains unclear whether the U.S. will actually pressure Saudi Arabia and the U.A.E. with any meaningful leverage beyond the statements supporting a cease fire.

Regardless, another month of intensified fighting in and around Hodeidah threatens the lives of millions of Yemenis who depend on the port for their food supply. Even if the ceasefire demand is genuine and the coalition eventually takes it seriously, there could be irreparable harm done to the civilian population before a ceasefire takes effect. If the administration is trying to buy time for the coalition, it is time that millions and millions of starving Yemenis can’t afford to waste.

If the Saudis and Emiratis take for granted that they still have the administration’s full support, nothing less than cutting off all U.S. military assistance and halting all arms sales will get the message through to them that they no longer have a blank check from Washington. Since the administration is still unwilling to do that, Congress has to do it for them. The House should pass H.Con.Res. 138 and the Senate should pass S.J.Res. 54 to put an end to U.S. involvement. Congress has to act to end our involvement and pressure the Saudi coalition to stop the war, because we know the administration will almost certainly do nothing.

### Plan Ends War

#### The plan would force the coalition to withdraw from Yemen.

Hartung 19 — William D. Hartung, Director of the Arms and Security Project at the Center for International Policy, former Senior Research Fellow in the American Strategy Program at the New America Foundation, former Director of the Arms Trade Resource Center at the World Policy Institute, 2019 (“It’s Time To Stop Arms Sales To Saudi Arabia,” *LobeLog*—the Inter Press Service’s blog, May 15th, Available Online at <https://lobelog.com/its-time-to-stop-arms-sales-to-saudi-arabia/>, Accessed 06-07-2019)

For starters, Congress should work to close off the other main avenue of U.S. support for the Saudi-led coalition—the sale of bombs, combat aircraft, armored vehicles, attack helicopters, and other equipment to Saudi Arabia and the UAE, the two primary perpetrators of the humanitarian crisis in Yemen. According to statistics from the Security Assistance Monitor, the United States has offered over $68 billion in weaponry to those two nations since the start of the current Yemen conflict in March 2015. As Bruce Riedel of the Brookings Institution has noted, these U.S.-supplied systems are the backbone of the Saudi military, and without those weapons and related maintenance and support they could not sustain their intervention in Yemen.

#### Ending arms sales prevents the coalition from continuing the war in the short- and long-terms.

Reisener 19 — Matthew Reisener, Program Associate at the Center for the National Interest, 2019 (“America Must Question Ally Actions in Yemen,” *The National Interest*, February 23rd, Available Online at https://nationalinterest.org/print/blog/middle-east-watch/america-must-question-ally-actions-yemen-45112, Accessed 06-24-2019)

Ending American support for the coalition and threatening to suspend arms sales to its leading members would force Saudi Arabia and the UAE to end or dramatically reduce their military operations in Yemen. “The Saudi military is heavily dependent on U.S. weapons and support, and could not operate effectively without them,” according to a report from the Center for International Policy. Additionally, while the UAE’s offensive is largely ground-based and relies more on the daily cooperation of mercenaries than it does the United States, America can still influence Emirati policy due to the UAE’s strong reliance on American arms sales.

Saudi Arabia and the UAE depend broadly on American military support to guarantee their regional security and would be far more likely to begrudgingly comply with American demands than risk alienating their most important ally. If nothing else, ending weapon sales would drastically disrupt their ability to conduct military operations in the short-term while putting at risk the supply of weapons they need on to continue the war in the long-term.

#### The symbolic impact of the plan causes the coalition to change its strategy.

Spindel 19 — Jennifer Spindel, Assistant Professor in the Department of International and Area Studies and Associate Director of the Cyber Governance and Policy Center at the University of Oklahoma, former Pre-Doctoral Fellow at the Institute for Security and Conflict Studies at George Washington University, holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Minnesota, 2019 (“The Case For Suspending American Arms Sales To Saudi Arabia,” *War on the Rocks*, May 14th, Available Online at <https://warontherocks.com/2019/05/the-case-for-suspending-american-arms-sales-to-saudi-arabia/>, Accessed 06-07-2019)

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.

#### The plan would make it impossible for the coalition to continue the war.

Larison 18 — Daniel Larison, Senior Editor at *The American Conservative*, holds a Ph.D. in History from the University of Chicago, 2018 (“Congress Should Cut Off All Support to Saudi Arabia,” *The American Conservative*, October 11th, Available Online at https://www.theamericanconservative.com/larison/congress-should-cut-off-all-support-to-saudi-arabia/, Accessed 06-07-2019)

Bruce Riedel makes the case for blocking arms sales and cutting off military assistance to Saudi Arabia:

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.

Congress now has the power to make a serious decision, halting arms sales and the logistics train for the kingdom in the wake of the reported murder of Saudi critic Jamal Khashoggi in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, Turkey last week. The outrageous attack on Jamal deserves serious reaction, and given Trump’s dereliction of duty on the matter, it is up to Congress to act. The president may try to override a Senate arms stand-down but it would be a painful setback for the prince.

Congress ought to have cut off military support and arms sales to the Saudis long ago, and they should certainly do so now. This would not only send a clear message to Riyadh that the blank check this administration has given them is no more, but it would also make it practically impossible for the Saudis to continue bombing Yemeni civilians. As Riedel says, “The Royal Saudi Air Force (RSAF) is entirely dependent on American and British support for its air fleet of F-15 fighter jets, Apache helicopters, and Tornado aircraft. If either Washington or London halts the flow of logistics, the RSAF will be grounded.” Supporters of the war on Yemen often say that U.S. military assistance is “modest” or “limited” as a way of minimizing our government’s role, but they usually neglect to mention how critical it is to the coalition’s operations. If the U.S. withdrew support from the Saudi coalition, they would not be able to continue their war and would have to come to terms with the reality of failure. The longer that the U.S. keeps propping up their war effort, the longer the war drags on needlessly and the more Yemeni civilians suffer and die for no good reason.

Halting arms sales and ending support for the war are the right things to do for the U.S. and for Yemen, and they will show the crown prince that there are some significant consequences to his reckless and destructive behavior.

### Plan Solves Coalitions

#### The plan provides political cover for allies like France and the UK to join the embargo — increasing pressure on the coalition.

Spindel 19 — Jennifer Spindel, Assistant Professor in the Department of International and Area Studies and Associate Director of the Cyber Governance and Policy Center at the University of Oklahoma, former Pre-Doctoral Fellow at the Institute for Security and Conflict Studies at George Washington University, holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Minnesota, 2019 (“The Case For Suspending American Arms Sales To Saudi Arabia,” *War on the Rocks*, May 14th, Available Online at <https://warontherocks.com/2019/05/the-case-for-suspending-american-arms-sales-to-saudi-arabia/>, Accessed 06-07-2019)

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.

#### Ending arms sales would force the coalition to change its strategy and cease its combat operations.

Riedel 18 — Bruce Riedel, Senior Fellow and Director of the Brookings Intelligence Project and Senior Fellow in the Center for Middle East Policy at The Brookings Institution, former Senior Advisor on South Asia and the Middle East on the National Security Council at the White House during the H.W. Bush, Clinton, W. Bush, and Obama Administrations, former Professor at the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, holds an M.A. in Medieval Islamic History from Harvard University, 2018 (“After Khashoggi, US arms sales to the Saudis are essential leverage,” The Brookings Institution, October 10th, Available Online at <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2018/10/10/after-khashoggi-us-arms-sales-to-the-saudis-are-essential-leverage/>, Accessed 06-11-2019)

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.

Avenging Khashoggi

Congress now has the power to make a serious decision, halting arms sales and the logistics train for the kingdom in the wake of the reported murder of Saudi critic Jamal Khashoggi in the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul Turkey last week. The outrageous attack on Jamal deserves serious reaction, and given Trump’s dereliction of duty on the matter, it is up to Congress to act. The president may try to override a Senate arms stand-down but it would be a painful setback for the prince.

### Now is key

#### Immediate action is needed to block sales already in the pipeline.

Hartung 19 — William D. Hartung, Director of the Arms and Security Project at the Center for International Policy, former Senior Research Fellow in the American Strategy Program at the New America Foundation, former Director of the Arms Trade Resource Center at the World Policy Institute, 2019 (“Trump’s ‘Emergency’ Sale To Saudi Arabia Must Not Stand,” *LobeLog*—the Inter Press Service’s blog, May 24th, Available Online at https://lobelog.com/trumps-emergency-sale-to-saudi-arabia-must-not-stand/, Accessed 06-07-2019)

The problem with Trump’s arms sales policy towards Saudi Arabia isn’t how much he’s been selling, but the nature of the deals. Early in his term he reversed an Obama administration suspension of a deal for precision-guided bombs to Saudi Arabia, and now he is trying to push through another sale by undermining the right of Congress to scrutinize such sales.¶ Sen. Menendez has pledged to use “legislative and other means to nullify these and any planned ongoing sales.” Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL) has called the emergency maneuver “a big mistake,” and Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC) has said he would “not do business with Saudi Arabia until we have a better reckoning” of the role of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi. Congressional opponents are mulling the best way to block the deal, and time is of the essence.¶ One option would be to push legislation to block the transfer, sale, or authorization for license of bombs and other offensive weapons to the Saudi regime. Crucially, such a measure would stop bomb sales already in the pipeline. The time to act is now.

### At: Supplier Shift

#### No Supplier Shift — it would take a decade *even if* Russia or China agreed.

Hartung 19 — William D. Hartung, Director of the Arms and Security Project at the Center for International Policy, former Senior Research Fellow in the American Strategy Program at the New America Foundation, former Director of the Arms Trade Resource Center at the World Policy Institute, 2019 (“It’s Time To Stop Arms Sales To Saudi Arabia,” *LobeLog*—the Inter Press Service’s blog, May 15th, Available Online at <https://lobelog.com/its-time-to-stop-arms-sales-to-saudi-arabia/>, Accessed 06-07-2019)

Another popular argument for continuing arms sales to Saudi Arabia and the UAE is “if we don’t do it, somebody else will.” But the United States and its European allies supply the Saudi air force and the majority of the arsenals of both Saudi Arabia and the UAE. The Saudi and UAE militaries could not turn on a dime and seek Russian or Chinese systems to substitute for any cutoff of U.S. weaponry and support. It would take a decade or more for these nations to end their dependence on U.S. arms. A few deals with Moscow or Beijing would have limited impact on Saudi and UAE military capabilities, if Russia and China were even willing to supply arms to two nations that are responsible for the world’s worst humanitarian catastrophe, with the international opprobrium that would accompany any decision to do so.

#### Case Outweighs — even if Saudi Arabia can eventually transition to other suppliers, the plan ensures a valuable break in hostilities.

Spindel 19 — Jennifer Spindel, Assistant Professor in the Department of International and Area Studies and Associate Director of the Cyber Governance and Policy Center at the University of Oklahoma, former Pre-Doctoral Fellow at the Institute for Security and Conflict Studies at George Washington University, holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Minnesota, 2019 (“The Case For Suspending American Arms Sales To Saudi Arabia,” *War on the Rocks*, May 14th, Available Online at <https://warontherocks.com/2019/05/the-case-for-suspending-american-arms-sales-to-saudi-arabia/>, Accessed 06-07-2019)

The Difficulty of Stopping Atrocities

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.

#### Even if they could shift, it would take years.

Larison 19 — Daniel Larison, Senior Editor at *The American Conservative*, holds a Ph.D. in History from the University of Chicago, 2019 (“The Real Emergency Is in Yemen,” *The American Conservative*, June 13th, Available Online at https://www.theamericanconservative.com/larison/the-real-emergency-is-in-yemen/, Accessed 06-13-2019)

The New York Times reports on the Trump administration’s ridiculous excuses for the bogus arms sale “emergency”:

A senior State Department official on Wednesday defended the Trump administration’s use of an emergency declaration to push through arms sales to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, telling a hostile House committee that holding back the weapons would have offered an opening to commercial rivals in China and Russia.

The Trump administration has trotted out this lame excuse for continuing to arm Saudi Arabia and the UAE as they wreck and starve Yemen, but it is not credible. Supposing that Saudi Arabia and the UAE wanted to start buying more of their weapons and weapons systems from Russia and China, it would take many years to switch from the U.S.-made hardware that they have been buying for decades. There is no danger that an interruption in the supply of U.S. arms to the Saudis and Emiratis would lead them to radically overhaul their militaries in the foreseeable future. There is absolutely no reason why these arms sales need to be rushed through without Congressional review, and the administration officials sent to Congress to repeat this nonsense have to know that.