

The Starvation of Yemen and the Saudis' 'Cynical P.R. Exercise'

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Global Research, March 07, 2018

[The American Conservative](#) 1 March 2018

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

Aid groups once again [denounce](#) the Saudi "aid" efforts in Yemen as nothing more than a "cynical P.R. exercise":

At the centre of accusations levelled against the British and US-backed strategy is the claim that, despite Saudi Arabia's promise to open the key port of Hodeidah - a city of 400,000 largely controlled by Houthi rebels and closest to the areas of direst need - the plan actually perpetuates the Saudi choke on imports there.

The Saudi-led coalition has been using its blockade to try to starve Yemen into submission for almost three years now. They keep commercial imports out of Hodeidah because they want to strangle the areas of the country that continue to resist them, and they don't care if that leads to mass starvation. It should not come as a shock to anyone that their plan to "help" Yemenis is an attempt to distract attention from what they continue to do to the civilian population. The Saudis and their allies are not the least bit interested in alleviating the terrible conditions in Yemen, but they want to appear as if they are so that their Western patrons don't face as much political pressure to end support for the war. No one should be fooled into believing that the Saudi-led coalition's "humanitarian" plan is anything more than a fig leaf to cover the horrifying reality of what they have done and what they continue to do to the people of Yemen.

The report continues:

Critics have highlighted the plan's almost total failure to address the key demand that Saudi open the ports of Hodeidah and Saleef to commercial traffic and aid shipments. Agencies say this is required to relieve the threat of starvation in the large areas controlled by Houthi rebels.

There are also concerns about a section of the Saudi plan suggesting further strengthening of the existing UN arms inspection regime, designed to prevent what Saudi claims are Iranian arms shipments to the Houthis. Critics say such checks would further slow traffic through ports.

"The Saudi humanitarian support package is rather like a torturer following a session of pain-inducing activity bringing his victim a cup of coffee," said Andrew Mitchell, the Tory MP and former international development secretary [bold mine-DL].

When Mohammed bin Salman comes to the U.S. later this month, he needs to be confronted about the grave crimes that his government and its allies are committing against the civilian

population of Yemen.

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