

Today I'm privileged to have Marjorie Cohn as a guest. Marjorie Cohn is professor emerita at Thomas Jefferson School of Law where she taught for 25 years. The former president of the National Lawyers Guild and criminal defense attorney is a legal scholar, political analyst and social critic who writes books and articles, makes media appearances and lectures throughout the world about human rights and U.S. foreign policy. She has testified before Congress and debated the legality of the war in Afghanistan at the prestigious Oxford Union. Cohn is a Huffington Post Contributor and she has provided commentary for CBS News, BBC, MSNBC, CNN, Fox News, NPR and Pacifica Radio. Welcome, Marjorie Cohn.

Marjorie: Thanks, Blase.

Blase: You have an update of an earlier book, Marjorie?

Marjorie: Yes, *Drones and Targeting Killing: Legal, Moral and Geopolitical Issues*. It just came out in an updated second edition published by Interlink.

Blase: Wonderful. Of course, that horrible history goes way back. Like so many things, it's not just a Trump issue. We sometimes think everything is about Trump. This was targeted murders, certainly went back through the Obama years. So we have a military industrial problem that won't go away even when Trump goes away.

Marjorie: That's true. Bush, of course, got us into two illegal and unnecessary wars that have killed millions of people. Obama continued those wars and now Trump continues those wars. Bush did use some drones; Obama took that to a new level, using drones in seven different countries, and Trump is continuing that policy and in fact used Tomahawk missiles in Syria, killing record numbers of civilians and now trying to expand or intending to expand our nuclear arsenal, which of course, you know, is not big enough to decimate all life on earth, I guess, according to Trump.

Blase: Well, we could have lost life on earth yesterday in Hawaii. We had an alert that seemed to make it clear that the nukes were on the way. Then after a period of time, they said, *oh, never mind*. That's happened time and time again. We've had red alerts and people were expecting Hawaii to go away and maybe the rest of the world, I don't know. We're here only by way of luck as a result of *nuclearism*, which goes way back to Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The clear and present danger is worse than ever, and we've just had a series of nuclear launch officers, these are military officers who were responsible for launching nuke, and they just came out in the final weeks of the election and sounded the alarm about Donald Trump's fitness to serve as commander and chief. Trump's judgement and indifference to expert advice are extremely dangerous. They wrote, "Trump should not be allowed to have his finger on the proverbial red button." That's coming from Grand Forks Airforce Base. Warren Air Force Base. My God, the military is begging us to save the planet. Any thoughts?

Marjorie: Well, yes. They know how dangerous it is, and how these mistakes can happen. The problem now is - and it's always been a problem; we've had many presidents who almost used nuclear weapons, including Nixon - that we're building up nuclear capability, and Obama did cut back on our nuclear arsenal somewhat although he put in motion a one trillion dollar program to improve - and I use that word advisedly - our nuclear arsenal. With Trump and his - and it's hard to come up with an adjective that embodies Trump, because people are calling him and racist and worse now based on his behavior - his lack of judgement and impulsiveness, his turning on a dime and going forward with strategies based on the last person he talked to - makes it much more dangerous when a mistake like Hawaii happens. It increases

the possibility of an over reaction. He wants to use nuclear weapons, as he has indicated, he said last October that he wanted a ten fold increase in nuclear weapons. His nuclear posture review reflects additional nuclear weapons and, very alarmingly, HR McMaster, his national security advisor, wants to pursue a bloody nose strategy in North Korea. You know, attack and give them a bloody nose, and hope they won't realiate. That's just insane, especially because North Korea also has a president who is unstable and narcissistic.

Fortunately, Rex Tillerson, the secretary of state, and James Mattis, Maddog Mattis, the secretary of defense, are trying to convince Trump not to strike North Korea with or without nuclear weapons. They're basically holding the reigns to keep Trump from doing that. You know, Trump, who has traded this war of words with Kim Jung-Un, I think alarmingly so, just said "I probably have a very good relationship with Kim Jung-Un. I am not a mental health professional, but Trump is really out of touch with reality. In fact, he has said in the last few months he's going to completely destroy North Korea, that North Korean threats would be met with fire and fury, a phrase that made its way in to Michael Wolff's explosive new book (no pun intended). More recently, he tweeted "I too have a nuclear button, but it is much bigger and more powerful than his. And my button works." So here you have a very juvenile comment - my ball is bigger than your ball on a playground, or some such childishness - but *we're talking about nuclear weapons here*. In fact, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention said it will sponsor a public meeting to cover planning a preparation efforts in the event of a nuclear attack. The fact that we're even discussing this is really beyond the pale.

Blase: It is, and this bloody nose idea is nothing but a step toward nuclear disaster. Did I see that many democrats were supporting this bloody nose idea? Didn't Nancy Pelosi say that we should send more troops to Korea? I mean, this is how it all starts, you know, we've been here before and it seems we're going in that direction again.

Marjorie: I don't want to beat up on Hillary Clinton and I would certainly vastly prefer her in the White House, but she was an incredible hawk. She talked about obliterating Iran. And of course, Obama was a hawk in his own right. She was even more hawkish. The Libyan fiasco and regime change, killing Gaddafi who did, by the way, give up his nuclear weapons (and Kim Jung-Un obviously sees what happens when you give up nuclear weapons)...he was taken out, which created a vacuum in Libya which Isis then move right in to fill. The hawkishness is not just, you know, a republican phenomenon, it crosses party lines as we've seen.

Blase: At least generals and officers who are in the silos are aware of the fact that they cannot follow an illegal order. And how anyone could consider an order to use nuclear weapons as a legal order - it would violate all military law and civilian law as well - rather than forbid the mass killing of civilians who have been the victims of our wars since WWII especially. So what we have here is what I think are illegal orders and as one of the veterans said, it's illegal to obey an illegal order.

Marjorie: You're absolutely right, Blase, and I wrote a piece in Truthout which went on to the Huffington Post and other blogs, called *The Duty to Disobey a Nuclear Launch Order*, and air force general John Heiten, the commander of the US strategic command, testified before congress that he would refuse to follow an illegal presidential order to carry out a nuclear attack. He's absolutely right. There is a legal duty to obey a lawful order; there's also a legal duty to disobey and unlawful order, and an order to use nuclear weapons (except possibly in an extreme circumstance of self-defense when the survival of the nation is at stake, according to the International Court of Justice) would be an unlawful order. This is from

the Code of Military Justice. It requires that all military personnel obey lawful orders, but the Nuremberg Principle and the Army Field Manual create a duty to *disobey unlawful orders*. A president can only use military force in self-defense or to forestall an imminent attack. The International Court of Justice, the World Court, said in 1996, that the *threat or use*, and note that it says threat, not just the use of nuclear weapons but a threat to use nuclear weapons (and Trump is threatening to use nuclear weapons), the ICJ said that the threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of international law applicable to armed conflict, and in particular the principles and rules of humanitarian law. But the court could not conclude definitively whether the threat or use of nuclear weapons would be lawful or unlawful in an extreme circumstance of self-defense in which the very survival of the state would be at stake.

Blase: Well, a threat is a crime. I mean - I am not free to threaten anyone, really, and I can be indicted for threatening an individual. Internationally we have a similar situation. But the threats are constant, and they are simply a step on the way to utter disaster, as far as I can see. It's a very critical moment. Tax time. People should be thinking about what they're paying taxes for. We have this wonderful organization, the National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee, which is sponsored by Anglican and many other churches. We have the Episcopal Peace Fellowship, Fellowship and Reconciliation, the Central Committee of the Menonites, the National Campaign for Peace Tax, Nonviolence International, Sojourners, and Voices for Creative Non-Violence. All are part and parcel of this movement of not paying war taxes. Could you imagine going to the bomb store and saying I'd like one 30,000 pound and 4,000 illegal cluster bombs. I'd like 6 million gallons of napalm and a hundred gallons of white phosphorus. That's what we are forced to waste our money on. I think of our forefathers. They weren't happy about such a state of affairs. They called it tyranny.

Marjorie: Yes, and master of war, the defense contractors - that's why we are building up this nuclear arsenal. Raytheon and Lockheed Martin and other big defense contractors are making a killing, literally, from these weapons. And not just nuclear weapons. All kinds of bombers. And the military budget continues to mushroom. In fact, congress just approved a military budget way beyond what Trump was even asking for. The increase was much higher. So when these people are getting rich, and they are lobbying members of congress, and these congressional representatives and senator are reliant for reelection on their contributions, they are going to vote to appropriate more and more money for the military.

Blase: Well, the vice president went to Afghanistan and said words right out of the Pentagon Papers. The opposition is growing. People are doing what the Hoover Institute at Stanford discovered after a hundred years of research, that if you mistreat people and tear open their homes and kill their children, they are going to respond. *What a surprise! They're going to fight back!* So he goes over there and says in Pentagon Paper fashion, "We're winning." And the troops did not agree. There was no big cheer. There were no "Hooray, we're winning!" They know what's going on. And we still have this constant lying, the kind of lying that blew Ellsberg away when he saw it. All the experts were saying we're not getting anywhere, we're in a black hole in Vietnam. And then the political people got off the plane and told the American people, We're Winning! Westmoreland only wanted 750,000 more troops. And we can't get beyond the beltway and its constant lying.

Marjorie: You're absolutely correct. I think it was General Smedley Butler who said war is a racket.

Blase: Also the title of a great book. The general wrote of all the ways he had been used by the banks to get money out of different countries. Abe Lincoln was shocked by the fact that people were getting rich of the Civil War. He said, my God, this scares me more than the war. The people making shoddy war materials were getting filthy rich off government contracts and the deaths of young people.

Marjorie: During WWI and WWII and the Korean War, congress levied what was called an "excess profits tax," because our leaders wisely decided then that no corporation should profit from war. And that has been proposed since, and it has never gone anywhere. I think that the defense contractors are so entrenched that that's not going to happen. But if there was an excess profits tax, it certainly could have some bearing on our policies. And I just found this statistic. Trump's national security strategy that he rolled out recently in a 55 page document. The theme is America First, but it really makes us more unpopular and vulnerable than ever. He is building ten new aircraft carriers worth 13 billion dollars each as a counterweight to China. And as I said, there's already a nuclear program to the tune of one trillion dollars over the next 30 years.

Blase: It would seem to me that war production should all be non-profit, everyone should get a salary but there should be zero profit in it. That would be great step toward peace. As I understand it, the wall is going to cost more than the aircraft carriers. There should be not one cent of profit in it. All sorts of non profit ventures have been successful. Our major health program in California, Kaiser, is a non-profit. People get paid a salary, and they are not receiving money from profit. It's been done before on many issues. It's not impossible. And we go ahead allowing people to profit off the death of our fine young people and so many innocents overseas. The latest figure we have is, between the end of WWII and the present, between 20 and 30 million people have been killed in US interventions.

If you list all the places we have invaded and try to justify that, well it can only be done by telling fairy tales of some kind. We continue the interventions. And frequently, our support is for dictatorships. The budding democracies like Bolivia that are trying to establish a democratic rule are the enemy, while our beloved friends in Saudi Arabia run one of the nastiest dictatorships on earth.

Marjorie: Speaking of Saudi Arabia, Trump secured a deal to sell Saudi Arabia weapons for 110 billion dollars. Trump's very proud of that. And of course Saudi Arabia is using those weapons to kill massive numbers of people in Yemen. 7-8 million Yemenis are one step away from starvation, according to the US humanitarian coordinator in Yemen. More than 80 percent of Yemenis lack food, fuel, water and healthcare. One million people have cholera. It's an outrage, and the US is facilitating it. FAIR did a study and found that MSNBC, which is the leading station that tells us in minute detail about the Russia investigation, and I'm not saying it's not an important investigation, but they didn't run a single segment devoted to Yemen during the second half of 2017, and they only aired one broadcast about the US-backed Saudi airstrikes in all of 2017. They never mentioned the cholera epidemic. All despite the fact that the US is playing a leading role that 33-month war that's devastating Yemen.

Blase: I have Ben Norton's report here; he is working with FAIR. He wrote the piece called *MSNBC Ignores Catastrophic US-Backed War in Yemen*. He writes:

According to a Nexis search of the network's broadcasts from January 1 to July 2, 2017, "Yemen," "Yemeni" or "Yemenis" were mentioned in 68 MSNBC segments—nearly all of which were related to the SEAL raid or the list of countries targeted by Trump's Muslim ban.

In the approximately six months from July 3 through the end of December, the words “Yemen,” “Yemeni” or “Yemenis” were only uttered in 14 segments. In most of these segments, Yemen was mentioned just once in passing.

In this same 181-day period in which **MSNBC** had no segments devoted specifically to Yemen, the terms “Russia,” “Russian” or “Russians” were mentioned in a staggering 693 broadcasts.

This is to say, in the latter half of 2017, **MSNBC** aired 49.5 times more—or 4,950 percent more—segments that spoke of Russia than segments that spoke of Yemen.

In fact, in the four days from December 26 to December 29 alone, **MSNBC** said “Russia,” “Russian” or “Russians” nearly 400 times in 23 separate broadcasts, on all of the network’s major shows, including **Hardball**, **All In**, **Rachel Maddow**, **The Last Word**, **Meet the Press Daily** and **The Beat**.

The day after Christmas featured an onslaught of Russia coverage. On December 26, the words “Russia,” “Russian” or “Russians” were uttered a staggering 156 times in the broadcasts from 5 pm EST to 11 pm. The following is the breakdown of the number of mentions of Russia:

- 33 times on **MTP Daily** at 5 pm
- 6 times on **The Beat** at 6 pm
- 30 times on **Hardball** at 7 pm
- 38 times on **All In** at 8 pm
- 40 times **Rachel Maddow** at 9 pm
- 9 times on **The Last Word** (with Ari Melber filling in for O’Donnell) at 10 pm

On this one day, **MSNBC** mentioned Russia almost twice as many times in six hours of coverage than it mentioned Yemen in all of 2017.

Passing References

While **MSNBC** did not have a segment devoted specifically to the war in Yemen other than Ari Melber’s lone July broadcast, the country was sporadically mentioned in passing.

Chris Hayes briefly acknowledged Yemen a few times, although he did not devote a segment to it. In the May 23 broadcast of **All In**, the host did point out, “We have been arming and supporting the Saudis as they pursue a proxy war in Yemen against Shia rebels, the Houthis.” Aside from the fact that the supposed Saudi/Iran proxy war in Yemen to which Hayes apparently alludes is a misleading talking point that has been fueled by the US government and intelligence agencies and obediently echoed by corporate media (**FAIR.org**, [7/25/17](#)), Hayes still did not recognize the US/Saudi coalition airstrikes that have killed thousands of civilians.

In a June 29 interview on **All In**, Palestinian-American activist Linda Sarsour additionally spoke out on behalf of “Yemeni refugees who are victims of a proxy war that we’re funding.” Hayes added, “Who are starving to death, because we’re essentially funding the Saudis to hold them under siege.” This was the rare moment in which **MSNBC** acknowledged the Saudi blockade of Yemen—but, again, no mention was made of the US-backed Saudi airstrikes that have killed thousands of Yemenis.

On July 5, Chris Hayes spoke using extreme euphemisms, stating, “Since taking office, the president has been swayed to take Saudi Arabia’s side in its dispute with Yemen.” Looking beyond the fact that “dispute” is an outrageous understatement for a brutal war that has led to the deaths of tens of thousands, Hayes failed to point out that former president Barack Obama, like Trump, staunchly supported Saudi Arabia as it bombed and besieged Yemen.

Rachel Maddow also again briefly mentioned the botched January US raid in Yemen in her broadcasts on April 7 and 24. So too did Hayes on October 16.

On **MTP Daily** on December 6, Chuck Todd similarly spoke of Yemen in passing, observing:

It is interesting, Tom, that the president seems to have these Gulf State allies. He is giving them basically carte blanche a little bit on what they’re doing in Yemen, is sort of looking the other way. But that is it. Aside from Ari Melber’s one-off July segment, in 2017 **MSNBC** had no other coverage of the US-backed war that has created the largest humanitarian catastrophe in the world.

Moreover, in all of 2017, **MSNBC** only aired one broadcast on the US-backed Saudi airstrikes that have killed thousands of Yemeni civilians. And it never mentioned the impoverished nation’s colossal cholera epidemic, which infected more than 1 million Yemenis in the [largest outbreak in recorded history](#).

That's not fake news. It's a denial of a terrible holocaust. A million people with cholera? My God. So we are very grateful to FAIR for the wonderful work that they continue to do - as well as to the people who demonstrated just this week in the office of Steny Hoyer in Washington DC. He's the house minority whip, and they want a commitment for a vote on legislation to end the US / Saudi war against Yemen. Many people, including our Nobel prize nominee, Kathy Kelly, were arrested there in his office trying to ask him to represent the people of the United States rather than some very corrupt corporations. So they get arrested. You get arrest for promoting peace, and you get praise for war. We're in big trouble. So we're proud of the movement that will not deny a current holocaust 80 years after the horrible holocaust of the

40s. We don't want to forget those horrors, but we don't want to ignore the horrors of today, either. This just seems to be so out of control.

Do you have any final thoughts?

Marjorie: Well, you mentioned the US interventions over the years and the propping up of dictators. I want to refer people to a book called *Addicted to War*. It's actually a comic book, an 8 and a half by 11 book, very well illustrated and and well documented and has been updated, and there's a Spanish language edition as well. But it talks about all the interventions that US government has conducted in other countries from the founding of the United States. Nearly all of them are tied to corporations. I don't think that's a coincidence. In the 70s and the 80s, the US was propping up vicious dictators and military leaders in Latin America who were torturing and killing and disappearing their people. Propping them up and teaching them how to torture at the School of the Americas, so they could defeat the communists and keep that region safe for corporate investment.

Blase: You know the history of that is so incredible. The book was written by a professor who thought he might hand it out among his student. And then we have the great peace maker, Frank Dorrell, who looked at it and asked to publish it more widely. Well, Frank has published over a half a million copies. It's gone all over the world. Addicted to war. We're so proud of his work. Joel Andreas, who wrote the book, was thinking as a professor trying to help his students, and Frank, who had a clear idea about how it could be distributed to people all over the country. The book is accurate. We addicted to war - not to healthcare or education or infrastructure. I do want to give great praise to Frank Dorrell for taking what was expected to sell a hundred copies and turning that number into 500,000. Thank you Marjorie Cohn for being with us today on World Focus.

Marjorie: Thank you, Blase.

You know, friends, we were talking about the National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee. It's very active at this time because of the taxes we're asked to pay to kill people. Innocent people. Civilians. Children. To use cholera epidemics against civilians, crimes that will be considered ghoulis *forever*. It's a terrible situation, the situation in Yemen, dire for so many. US / Saudi Arabia are relentlessly pursuing a military victory at the expense of a destitute populace. The bombing continues.

According to the US, hundreds of civilian non-combatants in five strikes have been killed from December to the present. This together with cholera. From March 2015 - the present, 15,000 air raids have struck Yemen, 31 percent of which targeted civilian sites and infrastructure. They report:

The Yemen Data Project has been collecting data on the war since day one, March 26, 2015.

They say the Saudi-led international coalition, backing the Yemen government, has carried out an average of 474 raids a month on Houthi rebels. An air raid refers to a single incident, which could comprise multiple airstrikes.

The report said: "Nearly one third of all air raids (31%) targeted non-military sites. These included 386 air raids targeted farms; 183 air raids targeted market places; 102 air raids targeted water and electricity sites; 62 air raids targeted food storage sites."

The northern governorate of Sa'ada was the most heavily targeted Yemeni governorate with 2996 air raids followed by 2432 in the governorate of Taiz.

The report said that the first half of December this year saw a “notable shift in targeting” with twice as many air raids on non-military targets as military targets.

Of a total of 270 raids, 46 targeted military sites while 98 targeted non-military sites including schools and homes.

The Saudi-led coalition is backed by the US and the UK with both nations having military personnel deployed in the Saudi command-and-control centre for coalition airstrikes.

Ross Greer MSP, external affairs spokesperson for the Scottish Greens, said: “While innocent people, including children, are being slaughtered by Saudi missiles, Scots will be shocked to know both our governments are involved. “The Tory government at Westminster has authorised billions of pounds of UK-made weapons to be sold to Saudi Arabia and the Scottish Government has given almost £100,000 in a single year to Raytheon, Saudi’s missile supplier.

Friends, these air attacks are evil. These killings are evil. World figures have urged the United States, France, Britain to stop stoking the flames of war in impoverished Yemen. This statement was signed by 355 high profile figures. It marked the 1000th day of the war. The signers included eight Nobel laureates, religious leaders, western law makers, rights defenders, as well as US congresswoman Barbara Lee.

“To prevent further catastrophe and famine, Yemen needs an immediate ceasefire; an end to all blockages on access for food, fuel and medical supplies; and investment in a new, inclusive peace process.

“If you don’t want the burden of the lives of thousands more Yemeni children on your hands, then the time to act is now. Yemen can’t wait any longer.”

The appeal also called on the UN Security Council to press Saudi Arabia and its ally the United Arab Emirates, the main pillars of the coalition, to end the war.

Additionally, four members of the house of representatives, Ted Lu, Jim McGovern, and republicans Steve Chavez and Randy Helerin address an empathetic letter to the Saudi and UAE ambassadors, reading in part: .

“Our countries have long been allies and partners, and it is with that history in mind that we write to raise a critical and urgent concern: put simply, the humanitarian status quo in Yemen cannot continue,” the lawmakers wrote in a letter Wednesday night to the Saudi and UAE ambassadors to the U.S. and obtained by The Hill.

“We implore your governments to immediately develop and implement a humanitarian plan of action that will end the blockade of Yemen, provide for humanitarian and commercial access to all of Yemen’s seaports, airports, and land crossings — including Hudaydah port, Sana’a airport, and other points of entry not under the Hadi government’s authority,” they wrote.

The letter also criticizes the coalition's prevaricating measures. On Wednesday, Saudi Arabia announced it would reopen the port of Hudaydah for 30 days to allow aid into Yemen.

They wrote in their letter that this is not enough. The size and pace of these gestures are not proportionate to the emergency on the ground,” they wrote. “The rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation in Yemen puts millions of civilian lives at risk of starvation and disease, and it also threatens regional stability and damages the long-term national security interests of our great nations.”

In addition to the immediate need to lift the blockade, the lawmakers asked Saudi Arabia and the UAE to facilitate the delivery and installation of four cranes for Hudaydah that the U.S. financed last year; eliminate restrictions on all ships bound for Hudaydah and other Yemeni ports that have been cleared by the U.N. Verification and Inspection Mechanism; allow both humanitarian and most commercial flights to the capital of Sanaa, except for Iranian air carriers and others with a track record of facilitating the movement of Iranian personnel; agree to the pre-positioning of a World Food Program vessel off Aden; and work with the international community to prevent the diversion of humanitarian assistance and associated commercial goods.

“Unless a humanitarian plan of action is implemented immediately — including ending restrictions on vessels carrying fuel and commercial goods that are essential to the humanitarian response,” they wrote, “millions of Yemeni civilians could die from famine.”

Friends, let's once again issue a public outcry on this matter. Civilians being killed - we can go through the months of November, December, January - and it's been continued killing, the worst cholera epidemic in history. This includes enforced starvation; the denial of medical care...and these are crimes in which the US is complicit, crimes that call to heaven for vengeance. Will we ever confront ourselves? After days of housecleaning, a defanged war powers act sailed through congress. In the house it was 366 to 30, and it acknowledged that there is no congressional authorization for the use of military force in Yemen's civil war. Our military participation is unlawful. They really have no an unlawful government, and that's gone on for a long time. Fighting unlawful wars. I saw it begin personally in Baghdad in 1990 and 91. A very peaceful people living in a dictatorship. But it was one of the most developed countries in the Arab world. And we saw people coming from all around the world to try to end the destruction of Baghdad in 1991.

Friends, this has been a long time, hasn't it? Twenty eight years of massacre of innocent people. And the people were really so friendly. If you arrive almost anywhere in the world, without weapons, without threats, without 30,000 pound bombs - well, you'll generally be very well received. It was new year's time 90 -91, and they wanted to celebrate the new year. They wanted to dance. And where were we dancing? In Babylon. They were very happy to be celebrating that day. Two weeks later, we killed them.

Now the Saudis are seeking seven billion dollars worth of precision guided munitions from Raytheon and Boeing. Congress has to okay that sale. Friends, as Marjorie Cohn and I discussed, there should be no profit in weapons manufacturing or war. People can draw a salary. No profit would mean peace, because there are people who have been driven mad by profit for centuries. If asked, your money or your life, they'd say their money means more to them than their lives. They are dead mentally.

The situation in Yemen has reached a point where it must not be continued in any way. Members of the Catholic Worker have been out protesting the bombing, along with others around the country. We're very proud of them. Throughout the year we've seen documented cases of unlawful attack by the Saudi / UAE /

US bombers, with weapons supplied by the US. They were warned repeatedly that the duration and persistence of attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure, which the weapons suppliers have knowledge of as well, and they are complicit and profittering from these war crimes. That should be obvious for everyone.

Counting hundreds of thousands dead doesn't seem to move people very much. Some 28 million people are food insecure in Yemen. They literally don't know where their next meal is coming from. 385,000 children under five already suffer severe acute malnutrition, which means they are starving. If they survive, they are likely to experience lifelong cognitive and development difficulties. Brian Terrell says, writing for Common Dreams:

For more than two years, Saudi/US bombing has targeted civilian infrastructure: Hospitals, schools, factories, markets, funerals, sea ports, electrical power stations and water treatment facilities. US drones strikes and incursions by US Special Forces into Yemen have killed civilians as well. Armed conflict has directly taken the lives of some 12,000 people, but that tragic number is greatly exceeded by the number of those who are dying from a combination of malnutrition and otherwise easily preventable ailments and diseases like respiratory infections, measles, and cholera, including more than 1,000 children each week. 20 million of Yemen's population of 28 million people are food insecure and few have access to clean drinking water. More than half of the hospitals in the country are not functioning.

Early in November, the already onerous blockade of Yemen's ports was made practically total, prompting the United Nations Under-Secretary for Humanitarian Affairs to warn that, unless the blockade of Yemen was fully lifted, "... there will be a famine in Yemen... It will be the largest famine the world has seen for many decades, with millions of victims."

We're dealing with this because groups like MSNBC don't feel this is fit to be on the air. We've had little coverage of this. Make not of this: 50 years after this was ends, some pundit is going to say, "oh, that was a tragic mistake." No, friends - this is no tragic mistake. This is a carefully planned massacre, a mass murder, a holocaust of innocent people.

Yemen suffered more air strikes in the first half of 2017 than in all of 2016. This is not going down; it's going up. So voices are being raised. Human Rights Watch and other humanitarian groups are complaining, but not enough. Well, we know about it, and we must be there to protest it and thank those who have just been protesting in Washington for this purpose. We're proud of the peace movement. It continues to tell the truth as the media itself babbles about what goes on inside the beltway - who talked to Mr. So and So today; etc. Stuff that is taking us absolutely nowhere and informing no one.

I want to thank you for joining us today on World Focus.

