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Mobilization Against War and Occupation is a coalition of over 50 endorsing organizations and also individual members, most of which are working class organizations, student groups, grassroots organizations, and ethnic communities. This is including Indigenous activists and groups from the third world as well as women, youth and elder fighters for social justice and against war and occupation. We are the people in struggle because we are people that suffer at the hands of imperialism. We have the energy, drive and will for change because it is in our interest to make this change in order to create a better world for all of humanity!

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MAWO #81 Created by: Azza Rojbi, Ali Yerevani, Tamara Hansen & Alison Bodine

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# WHY IS CANADA ARMING SAUDI ARABIA'S WAR IN YEMEN?



By: Azza Rojbi

<https://3zza.medium.com>

We probably all know March 26, 2021 marked six years of this criminal and devastating war on Yemen. Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and their coalition started this military intervention in Yemen under the guise of restoring what they called legitimacy and stability. When we look today at Yemen, we don't see this so-called legitimacy or stability. All they have brought to Yemen is death and destruction. And it's important also to say that from day one, the United States government and its imperialist allies, including Canada, have provided political, technical, military and training support to Saudi Arabia and other countries in this coalition. Of course, there are the billions of dollars of arms sales and those billions of dollars of arms sales were not to build Yemen, but to destroy it.

There is no way that Saudi Arabia or the UAE could have started this war alone. In fact, they started this war on behalf of the United States.

The U.S. Basically has outsourced its dirty work to Saudi Arabia. The Saudi-led military intervention in Yemen is an imperialist war for domination and hegemony in the region. I want to develop more on this and for that, I want us to go back to the map that Shireen shared earlier on today and to think back of Yemen's position on the map. Yemen's coast borders the Bab-el-Mandeb strait, a narrow, very strategic waterway between the Horn of Africa and the Middle East. As Shireen perfectly showed us and explained using the map about the importance of oil.

I want to expand here and go beyond oil. The strait is one of the most active and vital

maritime shipping routes in the world. This strategic location is vital for the United States and their imperialist allies to expand their military and economic hegemony over the Middle East and North Africa region, as well as the East African region.

As I mentioned earlier on, Saudi Arabia and the UAE are basically doing the dirty work of imperialists in the region, and they also get to have a piece of the cake. As well, taking over Yemen is to complete this strategy of imperialist countries encircling Iran to isolate Iran and put Iran in a complete defensive position.

I want to refer to an article by the Brookings Institution, it's an important and a very pro United States think tank based in Washington, D.C. They published an article

on May 28, 2021, titled. "Saudi Arabia and the UAE consolidating strategic positions in Yemen's east and islands". This article talks about the different strategic bases and outposts that Saudi Arabia and the

UAE have built and continue to build in different strategic coastal locations in Yemen. The article also refers to the recent satellite imagery that you might have seen circulating in social media, they're showing a military base that the UAE is building on the island of Mayun, also located in the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, as I've mentioned, a very strategic location.

The actions by Saudi Arabia and the UAE and their war on Yemen perfectly fits into the agenda of imperialists. The United States and its allies are using war and occupation to control the Middle East region and the

*Continued on page 3*





# SOME SIMPLE RULES TO UNDERSTAND CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY

By: *Yves Engler*  
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I’m often asked what determines Canadian foreign policy, but there is no cookie-cutter framework to make sense of the subject.

Instead, there are broad principles. The first is principle rarely determines policy. Two major forces drive decisions: 1) support for empire and 2) Canadian corporate interests. But racism, ethnic lobbies and public pressure may also influence some decisions.

The essence of our foreign policy is best illustrated by the why and when this country has gone to war.

Canada has never deployed significant numbers of troops abroad primarily to help girls attend school, defeat colonialism, defend human rights and democracy, defeat fascism, or any other of the aims stated by militarists and their propaganda allies. That includes both world wars and major UN peacekeeping missions, some of which had relatively positive results (defeating Hitler and Egypt in 1956). Instead, “our” military has always been used to extend and defend the British and then the American empires.

Ottawa, however, actively backs fascist, far right groups in many places. The reason differs slightly in each instance, but the far right is generally willing to do the bidding of corporate and imperial forces even if it wrecks their own society.

Ottawa has helped establish numerous alliances to pursue and legitimate imperial policies. The 2017 Venezuela-focused Lima Group, 2004 Haiti Core Group and 1949 North Atlantic Treaty Organization are clear examples. While they prefer the cover offered by international alliances and multinational institutions, Canadian officials are not principled on the matter. When needed they pursue belligerent aims in concert with the US (for example, the 2014 bombing of Iraq/Syria).

Aid is principally a geopolitical tool. Often tied to military intervention, from fighting in Vietnam to Afghanistan Ottawa has long followed a ‘wherever Canadian or US troops kill Canada provides aid’ principle.

The more impoverished a nation, the greater the gap is likely to be between what Canadian officials say and do. The primary explanation for the politicians’ ability to tell bigger lies is that power generally defines what is considered reality. So, the bigger the power imbalance between Canada and another country the greater Ottawa’s ability to distort its activities.

Politicians invoke high-minded rhetoric to market their pro-imperial or corporate policy. The current government says it supports the international rules-based order and feminist foreign policy while repeatedly violating international law and selling weapons to the highly patriarchal Saudi monarchy. The Harper government crowed about its “principled” foreign policy and refusal to “go along to get along”, which was little more than a way to justify its isolation on international climate negotiations and Palestinian rights. During his first few years as prime minister Harper boasted about not “selling out” to China on human rights while working assiduously to support abusive Canadian mining companies the world over. Paul Martin promoted the Responsibility to Protect doctrine, which was cited to justify a coup in Haiti that left thousands dead.

That illustrates the one “sure thing” when it comes to foreign policy: government officials, politicians, business leaders, generals and the mainstream media are always willing, even eager, to concoct fine sounding justifications for what is, at its core, the self-interest of those who benefit from empire, capitalism and war.

To repeat, since each circumstance is unique, there is no simple formula for predicting Canadian foreign policy. But there are two good rules to follow that will help you understand what’s truly going on. First, always question politicians’ high-minded rhetoric. Second, look for the corporate and imperial influences that are really driving policy. Do these two things and you’ll be a step ahead of most people in understanding the reality of Canadian foreign policy.

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Western Indian Ocean region, to consolidate their military and economic hegemony against Iran, China and Russia.

Yemen is a land of rich history and ancient civilization, and I want to say thank you to all our Yemeni speakers today for sharing some of your memories from growing up in beautiful cities like Sanaa. Yemen is full of diversity, is full of a complex culture and resilient people. The potential of an independent, democratic and powerful Yemen with this very strategic location in the MENA region is a threat to the interests of the United States, European imperialists and, of course, their puppet regimes such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE and others in the Gulf region.

The goal of the Saudi-led war and destruction on Yemen is basically to smash the democratic aspiration of the Yemeni people and their aspirations for an independent, unified and strong country. By destroying and dividing Yemen, they turn it into a weak puppet government that’s always dependent on Western imperialist countries like others in the region. They are doing to Yemen the same thing they have been doing to Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Syria, Iran, Venezuela and Cuba, just to name a few.

In this new era of war and occupation, which started with the occupation of Afghanistan in 2001, the U.S. and other imperialists have imposed wars, occupations, sanctions, blockades, to break the will of sovereign nations and force any independent countries to accept their imperialist dictated plans and domination.

And of course, it’s important to go back to Canada. Canada has been a very faithful companion of the United States in their wars and occupations across the Middle East and North Africa region. And today Canada continues to be complicit in fueling the U.S. Saudi-led war on Yemen. Actually, Saudi Arabia has been the largest non-US buyer of Canadian-made military goods for four consecutive years, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019. And I expect it will be the same for 2020 and 2021.

Basically, this government in Canada is making billions and billions off the Saudi-led war on Yemen. Canada is absolutely complicit in this war, in the destruction, in the killings and the death of tens of thousands of people in Yemen. I also want to point out another link, a direct link that Canada has to the Saudi-led bombing campaign.

CAE Inc, which is a Montreal-based Canadian company, is known for training fighter jets and drone pilots. The “Canada’s National Observer” news publication reported in 2018 in an article that CAE “has trained U.S. pilots who refuelled Saudi fighter jets in mid-air during bombing raids” ... “CAE has also trained drone pilots from the United Arab Emirates, whose drones have been deployed in Yemen. “This is a clear indication of Canada’s direct link to the bombing on Yemen by Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia can no longer hide the horrific destruction and humanitarian crisis it caused in Yemen and for this last part of my talk. I want to share my screen to share with all of you some pictures from different actions taking place around the world against this war. As you can see on the screen, those are just some of the pictures that show the overwhelming sentiment of people in Canada, in the United States and around the

world against the war on Yemen.

We saw this at the successful Global Day of Action against the war on Yemen on January 25, 2021. Tens of thousands of people from 28 countries joined the online virtual rally and the 30+ protests on the streets around the world including in New York and California, here in Vancouver, in Hamilton, in Toronto, in London, in Halifax and other cities. People around Canada and the world took to the street and came together on January 25 to say no to the war on Yemen.

This coming together of anti-war activists and peace-loving people from across the globe to stand against this horrific war on Yemen is very, very inspiring. I also want to say that some of us that have been working together to help organize the webinar today are here as a reflection of the success of that International Day of action, where we were able to connect with each other and work together.

The International Day of Action and the work of tireless anti-war activists around the world is helping to build a network of groups and individuals here in Canada, in the United States and around the world that are committed to continue working together to oppose the horrific and atrocious war on Yemen. A lot of the events against the war on Yemen that took place in the last few months were inspired by the success and those connections that were made at the International Day of Action.

We need to continue building on this momentum, continue educating, organizing, taking to the streets, and mobilizing against this horrific war on Yemen. Coordinated and consistent local and international actions and campaigns, either online or in person are vital and important to keep the pressure on our respective imperialist governments to end the war.

Here in Canada, we need to continue raising the issue of Yemen among working and oppressed people, students, political groups, labour unions, civil society organizations, and mobilize all peace-loving people to put pressure on their MP and prime minister, Justin Trudeau’s Liberal government to end Canada’s arms sales to Saudi Arabia.

Actions could go from a car caravan to a protest to making a banner marking the deaths of civilians by Saudi Arabia in Yemen, or to delivering a letter to your MP to say that you’re demanding the end of this horrific war on Yemen.

We stand with the people of Yemen. They have been suffering for way too long. This war has been going for way too long. The Yemeni people are living under this brutal and criminal blockade and illegal war. We must demand an immediate end to this war, the complete lifting of the inhuman blockade on Yemen and that all foreign troops and mercenaries leave Yemen immediately.

The self-determination and sovereignty of Yemen needs to be respected. The future of Yemen needs to be decided and built by the Yemeni people, not by foreign mercenaries, not by other countries, fuelling with weapons and money. Against all odds, I’m very confident that we will win.

*Azza Rojbi, author of the book “U.S. & Saudi War on the People of Yemen”, and executive member of Mobilization Against War & Occupation (MAWO) gave this talk during a webinar hosted by the #CanadaStopArmingSaudi campaign.*

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