

# After US-Backed Bombing Sparks Famine in Yemen, US Media Insists ‘US Not the Problem’

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

Theme: [Media Disinformation](#), [Military](#), [Military and WMD](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

***Washington Post** deputy editorial page editor Jackson Diehl took a massive, human rights-violating catastrophe—the US-assisted Saudi [bombing of Yemen for the past two-and-a-half years](#), and the massive famine it’s caused—and somehow turned it into a write-up on how good and noble the United States is. The Washington Post whitewashed the US’s role in the crisis and turned Saudi Arabia’s primary defender in the Senate, Lindsey Graham, into an unsung hero—a true masterwork in public relations reality inversion.*

Diehl framed the topic as something both public and media have ignored, insisting, “No One Is Paying Attention to the Worst Humanitarian Crisis Since World War II” ([6/25/17](#)). This is a bold rhetorical gambit, not least because Diehl himself hasn’t made Yemen a topic of an article since the bombing first began in February 2015. “No one’s noticing this thing I just noticed” is a great way to frame oneself as a moral visionary, without the arduous work of ideological coherence.

Not only does Diehl ignore the US’s role in supplying [arms](#), giving [logistical supporting](#) and even facilitating [torture](#) on behalf of Saudi Arabia and its allies in Yemen (a complicity so deep the US State Department itself [warned the US could be liable for war crimes](#)), he actually writes,

“the United States is not the problem here.”

In fact, he paints the US as a lone moral voice:

Notwithstanding the anti-foreign aid posture of the Trump administration, the United States is not the problem here. By early June, [Washington had pledged nearly \\$1.2 billion in relief](#) to the four countries [meaning Yemen and South Sudan, Somalia and Nigeria, also facing famine], including a supplement of \$329 million announced on May 24. There’s more coming, thanks to a bipartisan coalition in Congress, spearheaded by Republican Sen. Lindsey O. Graham, that inserted \$990 million for famine relief into this year’s budget.

Painting Graham as the savior of Yemen—when, more than any other US politician, he [defends](#) and [advocates](#) on behalf of the country bombing Yemen—is uniquely perverse and craven. The article continued like a State Department press release:

But Graham and other key legislators have already made clear that [cuts to foreign aid] won’t happen. “For all the chaos,” Beasley told me, “Democrats

and Republicans still come together for hungry children.”

If “Democrats and Republicans” want to “come together for hungry children,” then why did [48 Republicans and five Democrats block a vote](#) two weeks ago to cut off arms to Saudi Arabia, which is currently bombing those children? (An estimated [10,000 civilians](#) have been killed in the US-backed airstrikes, in a country where [50 percent](#) of the population is under 16.)

If Trump is supposed to be the savior of besieged Yemeni children, why not mention Trump’s [recent lovefest](#) with the Saudi regime that’s killing them? One is left to ask what moral universe Diehl occupies where the US can act as both arsonist and someone bringing a couple of blankets to the fire victims, and get fawning credit for the latter.

But then Diehl has a long history of taking the worst, most violent excesses of US empire and suggesting they are, in fact, good. In 2011 ([10/9/11](#)), he wrote that

the Arab Spring, in short, is making the invasion of Iraq look more worthy — and necessary — than it did a year ago. Before another year has passed, Syrians may well find themselves wishing that it had happened to them.

And, as FAIR ([12/23/14](#)) noted at the time, Diehl also completely rewrote 70 years of US/Soviet relations and bilateral talks to uphold his weird, fringe position that the US shouldn’t directly engage with Cuba. His M.O. is clear, and his shame seemingly nonexistent.

Omitting US’s responsibility for the carnage in Yemen, while a journalistic crime in its own right, is par for course with most media (**FAIR.org**, [2/23/17](#)). Diehl takes it one step further: Under the pretext of feigning outrage over a very real famine, Diehl attempts to recast the US not as one of the disaster’s primary drivers, but as the only country that can save the day; a noble, moral beacon in a sea of unseemly Arabs.

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*Featured image: Rubble from airstrikes in Yemen (Source: FAIR)*

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