# Sjostrom/Verska – Millard North Aff Elims

## Contention 1 – Yemen

#### The Daily Sabah indicated this week that:

Daily Sabah, 2-11-2019, "Child deaths reflect ongoing humanitarian crisis in Yemen," https://www.dailysabah.com/mideast/2019/02/11/child-deaths-reflect-ongoing-humanitarian-crisis-in-yemen, Date Accessed 2-14-2019 // JM

As the fragile truce still holds in Yemen, young victims have bared the brunt of years-long war. In yet another case of the ongoing humanitarian crisis in the war-torn country, newborn Yemeni conjoined twins, whose plight sparked a plea for urgent medical treatment overseas, died in Sanaa Saturday, the health ministry in Houthi-controlled Yemen said overnight. Doctors treating 2-week-old Abd al-Khaleq and Abd al-Rahim in the capital Sanaa had said the boys could not survive within Yemen's war-ravaged health system and needed to be taken abroad. In a statement carried by the Houthi-run Saba news, the health ministry said the deaths reflect the health and humanitarian situation Yemen's children are living through as a result of the war. Health services have collapsed as the conflict has ground on and most hospitals are not equipped to provide specialist treatment for rare conditions. Bringing patients out for treatment poses enormous logistical challenges. Mediators are pushing for the reopening of Sanaa international airport. But the airport in Houthi-controlled Sanaa has been closed to civilian flights since 2015 because the Saudi-led coalition has control over Yemeni airspace. Only U.N. planes can land there currently and re-opening the airport is a key aim of U.N.-led peace talks which began with negotiations in Stockholm in December. The Iranian-aligned Houthis and the Saudi-backed government agreed on a cease-fire to withdraw forces at peace talks following months of diplomacy. Fighting has largely abated in Hodeida, but progress on the withdrawal has been slow. Yemen lies beside the southern mouth of the Red Sea, one of the most important trade routes in the world for oil tankers. It has been wracked by conflict for the last five years when Shiite Houthi rebels overran much of the country. Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the former Saudi defense minister, and Saudi Arabia's allies launched Operation Decisive Storm in March 2015. Civilians have borne the brunt of the conflict. The last available U.N. figure for the civilian death toll was published in 2016 and stood at more than 10,000. The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, which tracks violence in Yemen, puts it at around 57,000 people.

#### Unfortunately, arms flowing in from the United States continue to prolong the conflict. CNN reports two weeks ago that

CNN/ Wlox, 2-5-2019, "US arms end up in wrong hands, including Iran’s, in Yemen’s civil war," http://www.wlox.com/2019/02/05/us-arms-end-up-wrong-hands-including-irans-yemens-civil-war/, Date Accessed 2-14-2019 // WS

American weapons sold to the Saudi-led coalition are in the hands of hardline militias, al Qaeda-linked groups, Iranian proxies and numerous other unchecked factions in Yemen’s civil war. A swamp of uneasy alliances has led to sensitive U.S. weaponry, sold legally, ending up in the wrong hands, arguably prolonging Yemen’s conflict and making Americans less safe. In an exclusive report, a CNN correspondent followed the trail of weapons made in America and lost to Yemen’s chaos. Yemen is split between warring factions, U.S. backed and Saudi-led in the country’s south, Iranian-backed Houthi militias in the north.

#### Leaving millions in need – Abedi quantifies earlier this month that:

Maham Abedi, 2-2-2019, "Yemen’s humanitarian crisis, explained in 2 charts," Global News, https://globalnews.ca/news/4915160/yemens-humanitarian-crisis-explainer/, Date Accessed 2-3-2019 // JM

[Yemen](https://globalnews.ca/tag/yemen/) is in the midst of the [world’s worst](https://news.un.org/en/focus/yemen) humanitarian crisis. The deaths, starvation, displacement and destruction of infrastructure caused by the conflict are not unknown. At least 10,000 people have been killed, according to the United Nations, while other estimates are much higher. More than 50,000 have been wounded. The images of bare children, bones poking through pale skin, are hard to look at. And yet, it’s difficult to comprehend the scale of devastation the violence has caused. The [Worldwide Threat Assessment report,](https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/2019-ATA-SFR---SSCI.pdf) recently released by the U.S. government, outlines some of the latest harrowing statistics coming out of Yemen. It lists humanitarian impacts such as famine and disease, predicting things will get worse in 2019. “The fighting has left more than 22-million people, or approximately 75 per cent of the population, in need of assistance, with millions of people at severe risk of famine by the UN definition — numbers that are likely to rise quickly if disruptions to aid access continue,” the report reads. Yemen was already the poorest country in the Arab world before a Saudi-led coalition went to war with Iran-allied rebels in March 2015 in a failed bid to drive them from the capital and much of the country’s north. The Saudi-led coalition has come under mounting international criticism for civilian casualties caused by airstrikes, the destruction of basic infrastructure and its blockade of key Yemeni ports, which are a lifeline for vital aid. The problem is worsened by reports that even if aid reaches Yemen, it is not going to those who need it most. A recent analysis by a coalition of global relief groups found that even with the food aid that is coming in, more than half of the population is not getting enough to eat — 15.9 million of Yemen’s 29-million people. In some parts of the country, fighting, roadblocks and bureaucratic obstacles have reduced the amount of aid getting in. In other areas, aid gets in but is lost or stolen before it gets to the hungriest families. Counting the number of people who have starved to death in Yemen is difficult, because of the challenges of getting into areas shaken by violence, and because starving people often officially die from diseases that prey on their weakened conditions. The numerous challenges are further complicated by the fact that hospitals, schools, and food-storage facilities have been targeted in the violence. According to charity Save the Children, more than half of the country’s health facilities are now closed or partially functioning. At the same time, Yemen is grappling with the worst cholera outbreak in the world, reportedly affecting well over one-million people. Then there are other illnesses, such as diphtheria, that are also more prominent. Statistics gathered by the United Nations and advocacy organizations paint an overwhelmingly dire situation. But there is much more to be told. Save the Children Canada CEO Bill Chambers explained to Global News that Yemen is the “perfect storm of humanitarian, protection and economic crises” — and they’re all fuelling each other. “Yemen’s children are in the eye of that storm and their prospects of survival are dwindling each day. Children are struggling to survive the triple threat of bombs, starvation and disease,” he said. An added challenge has been raising awareness about Yemen’s crisis and getting Canadians to truly care about those affected. Unlike other recent conflicts, like Syria for example, Yemen hasn’t generated the same outpouring of support — in Canada or in other parts of the world. Chambers said it’s a complex issue, but one that is gradually improving through increased media coverage and awareness campaigns. “The reality is that Canadians are generous, but their areas of support are related to where the media focuses its coverage — if the Canadian media isn’t covering the crisis, the Canadian public is not as engaged,” Chambers said. “The same is true with the Syria crisis – media coverage really has an impact on the public’s level of engagement.” Paul Slovic, a psychologist at the University of Oregon who researches people’s reaction to such conflicts explained when a problem is so large, people often don’t identify with it. Slovic called it the “singularity effect.” His research found that as the number of deaths in a conflict increase, fewer people pay attention. “The difference between no lives at risk and one is huge,” Slovic said. “But if I said that there were 87 people at risk… and then you realize it’s 88, you don’t feel any different about 88 than 87.”

#### As a result, the flow of life saving assistance to Yemen has been hamperd because existing aid routes are inaccessible because of conflict. [Jonaki Mehta](https://www.marketplace.org/people/jonaki-mehta) who indicates in 2018 that:

Sabri Ben-Achour and Jonaki Mehta. 12-06-2018. “As conflict continues in Yemen, getting aid to civilians is a challenge”, Market Place. <https://www.marketplace.org/2018/12/06/world/conflict-continues-yemen-getting-aid-civilians-challenge>, Date Accessed 2-4-19 //CM

In the midst of a devastating civil war, the people of Yemen are facing dire consequences, including [the world’s worst hunger crisis](https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000068917/download/?_ga=2.248278607.91679333.1544028520-387672324.1544028520), according to the Food Security Information Network. And the situation is only expected to get worse. According to Relief International, 22.7 million of the 27 million people in Yemen are reliant on humanitarian aid. But violence near ports makes it difficult for aid organizations to reach civilians, and those in remote locations are even harder to get to. Rama Hansraj is Relief International’s Yemen country director and joined host Sabri Ben-Achour via Skype from Sana’a, Yemen. They spoke about the situation on the ground, barriers to delivering aid, and utilizing cash as a form of relief. Below is an edited version of their conversation. What is the situation like on the ground? We are a bit alarmed at the dramatic deterioration of the situation over recent months in Yemen. There are millions of people whose lives are at risk of famine. To be precise, 22.7 million people are dependent on humanitarian aid right now, while the country's population is 27 million. Out of those, we’re seeing 400,000 children under the age of 5 suffering from acute malnutrition. And we have almost 2.3 million internally displaced people moving around the country. There’s an Integrated Phase Classification report on food security that is supposed to come out in a couple of weeks that should give good indicators of the actual situation on the ground, but it is deteriorating. How do you get aid to civilians in a war zone? It has been quite difficult for us to reach out to the neediest populations in Yemen, especially in the remote locations not visible on the frontlines of the conflict. Relief International does have a good relationship with the authorities, but it’s obvious that in a situation like this, it’s difficult to get humanitarian access while dealing with a lot of bureaucratic impediments on the ground. Even the process of conducting humanitarian needs assessments is difficult because samples are drawn from the most accessible areas, making those vulnerable areas more vulnerable.

#### Thankfully ending arms sales SLOWS DOWN the conflict and allows for more food aid to IMMEDIATELY reach Yemeni civilians. Ending arms sales generates pressure on Saudi Arabia to negotiate in peace talks. Doug Bandow indicates in December that as:

Doug Bandow. 12-18-2018, “It’s Time to End U.S. Support for the Saudi War on Yemen”. CATO Institute. <https://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/its-time-end-us-support-saudi-war-yemen>, Date Accessed 2-5-2019 // JM

Washington has turned many Yemenis into enemies and potential terrorists while rewarding Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman’s worst impulses. The Pentagon’s claim that aiding Riyadh’s war reduces civilian casualties is risible: Some sixty thousand civilians have been killed, most in coalition airstrikes. Nearly half the population needs aid; a million people have contracted cholera; famine stalks much of the land; civilian infrastructure, primitive to start, has been wrecked. The number of dead from malnutrition approaches one hundred thousand. Emirati and Saudi interests are diverging, with Abu Dhabi promoting separatism in the south, making a peaceful, stable settlement even more difficult. Which has left the administration and its congressional servants, paraphrasing Secretary Pompeo, to caterwaul about Iran. The ever-blinkered Wall Street Journal complained about a vote to “abandon an ally in a proxy war with Iran.” Yet Riyadh started the war without considering America’s interests. Moreover, Tehran has never controlled the Houthis, did not start the present conflict, and has only limited influence even now. With its own economy is in crisis, Iran could not afford to underwrite even a victorious Houthi regime. Tehran also would have little reason to do so: Yemen will remain in desperate crisis for years, neither able nor willing to challenge Riyadh or Washington. Yemen is a problem for Riyadh primarily because of MbS’ hubris. He is likely to acknowledge his blunder only if the United States stops trying to protect the crown prince from his own folly. The ongoing peace talks offer some hope. They have advanced further than previous attempts, and have reached some positive agreements, such as prisoner exchange, though implementation remains. The fact that Western nations have turned against the war encouraged the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to start making concessions, necessary to reach a more enduring peace. So long as Riyadh can count on a blank check from Washington—it turns out the United States wasn’t even charging enough for refueling Saudi aircraft—the kingdom has no reason to temper its policy. Which means the administration should take the next step and end all support for the war; MbS and his companions should bear the full burden of what amounts to imperial warmongering. However, the administration continues to treat the KSA as the superpower, needed far more by America than Riyadh needs Washington. Indeed, the president, who asserts his divine negotiating skills, tossed away his leverage when he announced that the United States was lost without Saudi Arabia’s aid. So obsequious has he been in dealing with the Saudis that some critics presume he is protecting private business interests. Yet the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has no choice but to sell its oil; otherwise, the crown prince and his thousands of relations won’t be able to afford their palaces, yachts and vacations. Worse, without funds to spread at least a little largesse among the population, the royals would end up hanging from lamp posts. Riyadh could shift to other weapon suppliers, but its investment in American arms makes that difficult: requirements for training, spare parts and interoperability would continue to push the KSA toward the West. China and especially Russia cannot fulfill ambitious economic development plans; Saudi Arabia requires American and European participation. Most importantly, who else would promise to protect the licentious princes and princesses as they mulct their people while treating Islam as a libertine license? With just one and two rudimentary aircraft carriers, respectively, Moscow and Beijing will not be sending their armadas, to use Trumpspeak, to the Persian Gulf. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is not the first murderous dictatorship with which America has dealt. Doing so may be necessary, but always should be done reluctantly, without illusion. Policy should focus on achieving Washington’s objectives at the least cost. The United States should seek a regional balance, not Saudi hegemony. The KSA has proved far more brutal and destabilizing than Iran: invading one neighbor; kidnapping the leader of another; launching a diplomatic offensive, backed by the threat of military action, against a third; and supporting radical insurgents against a fourth. Washington should end all support for the Yemen war and terminate further weapons sales until the kingdom draws down that conflict. While remaining formally friendly toward Riyadh, the Trump administration should indicate that business as usual is impossible with a regime that has made ostentatious irresponsibility the bedrock of its foreign policy. In just four years MbS has directed multiple foreign disasters and humiliations. It would be wise for the king and other members of the royal family to ponder whether they should move forward with a leader who guarantees continued embarrassment for and estrangement from those nations once most friendly to the KSA. Moreover, Washington should denounce Riyadh’s crimes. The United States lacks credibility when it criticizes Tehran but ignores the fact that Saudi Arabia remains a totalitarian state both politically and religiously—despite MbS’ presentation as the great reformer, not one church, synagogue or temple operates. Indeed, the country has become even more repressive under the crown prince. Khashoggi’s murder and dismemberment simply highlighted a brutal policy already evident to Saudis at home. Secretary Pompeo, who falsely certified that Riyadh was acting to limit civilian casualties in Yemen, should attempt to keep his hypocrisy within more modest bounds. It is, to coin a phrase, time for a change in policy toward Saudi Arabia. The U.S. administration should stop acting as the monarchy’s public relations agent and the U.S. military should stop acting as the royal family’s bodyguard. Most importantly, Washington should stop supporting a war it should never have backed. Only then will it be possible to reform America’s relations with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

#### Fortunately, Bazzi concludes in 2018 that:

Mohamad Bazzi, 9-30-2018, "The United States Could End the War in Yemen If It Wanted To," Atlantic, https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/09/iran-yemen-saudi-arabia/571465/, Date Accessed 2-4-2019 // JM

Saudi and Emirati leaders want a clear-cut victory in their regional rivalry with Iran, and they have been emboldened by the Trump administration’s unconditional support to stall negotiations. A recent UN effort to hold peace talks between the Houthis, Hadi’s government, and the Saudi-led coalition [collapsed](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security-un/yemen-peace-talks-collapse-in-geneva-after-houthi-no-show-idUSKCN1LO08Z) in early September, after the Houthi delegation did not show up in Geneva. Houthi leaders said the Saudis, who control Yemen’s airspace, would not guarantee their safe travel. Days later, Yemeni forces loyal to the Saudi-UAE alliance launched a new offensive aimed at forcing the Houthis out of Hodeidah port, which is the major conduit for humanitarian aid in Yemen. UN officials warn that a prolonged battle for the port and its surroundings [could lead](https://www.wsj.com/articles/u-n-pushes-to-avert-catastrophic-uae-attack-on-yemen-port-1528668213) to the death of 250,000 people, mainly from mass starvation. After the Trump administration’s endorsement this month, the Saudi-UAE alliance has even less incentive to prevent civilian casualties and new humanitarian disasters. Saudi Arabia and its allies are more likely to accept a peace process if it is clear that the United States won’t support an open-ended war in Yemen and won’t provide the military assistance required to keep the war apparatus going. But Trump has shown little sign of pressuring his Saudi and Emirati allies, least of all over Yemen. The only realistic check left is in Congress, where more voices are asking why the world’s most powerful country is helping to perpetuate the world’s worst humanitarian crisis.

#### Slowing down the war and allowing for food aid to reach Yemeni civilians helps curb starvation. Al Jazeera continues that

Al Jazeera, 2-11-2019, "Yemen food aid to feed millions at risk of rotting: UN," https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/02/yemen-food-aid-risk-rotting-190211174419940.html, Date Accessed 2-12-2019 // WS

Food aid in a warehouse on the front lines of [Yemen's war](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/12/yemen-civil-war-ali-abdullah-saleh-death-171204163618674.html) is at risk of rotting, leaving millions of Yemenis without access to life-saving sustenance, the UN said on Monday. The Red Sea Mills silos, located in the western port city of Hodeidah, are believed to contain enough grain to feed several million people. But the granary has remained off-limits to aid organisations for months. "The World Food Programme grain stored in the mills - enough to feed 3.7 million people for a month - has been inaccessible for over five months and is at risk of rotting," said a joint statement by the UN aid chief and special envoy for Yemen. "We emphasise that ensuring access to the mills is a shared responsibility among the parties to the conflict in Yemen." Hodeidah, and its food silos, have been in the hands of Yemen's [Houthi](https://www.aljazeera.com/topics/subjects/houthis.html) rebels since 2014, when the armed group staged a takeover of large swaths of Yemen's territory. The move prompted the military intervention of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and allies the following year on behalf of the embattled government, triggering what the UN calls the world's worst humanitarian crisis. More than 10 million Yemenis are on the brink of starvation [and]. As many as 85,000 children in [Yemen](https://www.aljazeera.com/topics/country/yemen.html) may have starved to death over the past three years, the charity [Save the Children](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/11/yemen-85000-children-died-starvation-181121041742347.html) estimated.

#### Thankfully aid solves because they conclude just the current aid stored in Yemen would be:

Al Jazeera, 2-11-2019, "Yemen food aid to feed millions at risk of rotting: UN," https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/02/yemen-food-aid-risk-rotting-190211174419940.html, Date Accessed 2-12-2019 // WS

Food aid in a warehouse on the front lines of [Yemen's war](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/12/yemen-civil-war-ali-abdullah-saleh-death-171204163618674.html) is at risk of rotting, leaving millions of Yemenis without access to life-saving sustenance, the UN said on Monday. The Red Sea Mills silos, located in the western port city of Hodeidah, are believed to contain enough grain to feed several million people. But the granary has remained off-limits to aid organisations for months. "The World Food Programme grain stored in the mills - enough to feed 3.7 million people for a month - has been inaccessible for over five months and is at risk of rotting," said a joint statement by the UN aid chief and special envoy for Yemen. "We emphasise that ensuring access to the mills is a shared responsibility among the parties to the conflict in Yemen." Hodeidah, and its food silos, have been in the hands of Yemen's [Houthi](https://www.aljazeera.com/topics/subjects/houthis.html) rebels since 2014, when the armed group staged a takeover of large swaths of Yemen's territory. The move prompted the military intervention of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and allies the following year on behalf of the embattled government, triggering what the UN calls the world's worst humanitarian crisis. More than 10 million Yemenis are on the brink of starvation [and]. As many as 85,000 children in [Yemen](https://www.aljazeera.com/topics/country/yemen.html) may have starved to death over the past three years, the charity [Save the Children](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/11/yemen-85000-children-died-starvation-181121041742347.html) estimated.

## Contention 2 – Canning MbS

#### Robin Wright indicated in 2018 that:

Robin Wright, 10-25-2018, "Can Saudi Arabia’s Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman, Survive the Jamal Khashoggi Murder?," New Yorker, https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/can-saudi-arabias-crown-prince-mohammed-bin-salman-survive-the-jamal-khashoggi-murder, Date Accessed 2-16-2019 // JM

Can Saudi Arabia’s Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman, Survive the Jamal Khashoggi Murder? Modern Saudi Arabia has only twice witnessed the ouster of its king. King Saud, the son and first successor of the country’s founder, was forced out peacefully, in 1964, but his departure was six years in the making. King Faisal, who orchestrated the coup against Saud and succeeded him, was assassinated eleven years later, by a nephew. (Three months later, the nephew was beheaded, by a sword with a golden hilt, as a crowd shouted, “God is great.”) Both upheavals linger in the public memory as questions grow about Saudi Arabia’s current de-facto leader and crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman, and his role in the murder of the journalist Jamal Khashoggi. Several of the henchmen involved in the murder of the Washington Post columnist, which took place at the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul, were part of Prince Mohammed’s inner circle or security entourage. M.B.S., as the prince is widely known, has been widely implicated, directly or indirectly. “Yes, I think he did it,” Senator Bob Corker, the chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, told CNN. On Tuesday, the President of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, charged that some of the “highest ranking” Saudi officials were involved in the killing. “From the person who gave the order to the person who carried it out, they must all be brought to account,” he told the Turkish parliament. Finally, on Thursday—after two weeks of claiming that the Saudi journalist had exited the consulate alive, and then claiming that he had been accidentally murdered in a “rogue” rendition—Saudi officials reversed course yet again and conceded that “new information” gleaned in a joint investigation with Turkey had confirmed that the murder was, indeed, premeditated. The crown prince appears to be aware of the dangers ahead. He also already appears to be gaming his political rehabilitation, both at home and in the eyes of the outside world. His first public comment on Khashoggi’s murder was, notably, at the “Davos in the Desert” conference designed to lure foreign investment to pay for his own ambitious Vision 2030 economic plan. With his red-checkered kaffiyeh draped over the front of his pristine white robe, M.B.S. finally broke his three-week silence on the murder of his fellow-Saudi. “The incident was really painful to all Saudis. I believe it is painful to every human in the world,” he said, on Wednesday. “It is a heinous crime that cannot be justified.” Prince Mohammed’s first comment—and the recent arrest of eighteen Saudis—will clearly not be enough, especially for the international community. On Thursday, the European Union’s parliament voted, 325–1, to ban all arms exports “of surveillance systems and other dual-use items that may be used in Saudi Arabia for the purposes of repression.” In Washington, both Republicans and Democrats have advocated limits on arms exports, particularly for use in Saudi Arabia’s three-year war in Yemen. There are at least four potential scenarios for how all this will play out for M.B.S., Saudis and Middle East experts contend. The first centers on the royal family’s response. In 1975, after King Faisal’s murder, the then governor of Riyadh, Prince Salman, was reportedly the only royal in a crowd of some ten thousand to witness the execution of the young assassin. (The assassin’s head was displayed on a stake for a time, before being removed for burial, the Times reported.) That same Salman is now king; M.B.S. is his son and political heir. One scenario is that the international furor eventually settles down and M.B.S. remains the crown prince and retains his hold on the country’s future. “People who think there’s going to be any change in the succession are wrong,” Prince Turki al-Faisal, a former chief of Saudi intelligence and a former ambassador to the United States, told David Ignatius of the Washington Post this week. “The more [foreign] criticism there is of the crown prince, the more popular he is in the kingdom.” Before the murder, M.B.S. seemed widely popular among young Saudis, because he provided release valves in the kingdom’s rigid social mores—opening movie theatres, allowing women to drive, and reining in the morality police. Opposition often played out over human rights or on sectarian grounds, fuelled by the isolation and repression of the minority Shiite population. Judging public sentiment in Saudi Arabia is difficult, however, as it is one of the most impenetrable societies on earth and has no independent public polling. A second scenario is that M.B.S. is replaced as crown prince. There is precedent for this. Since King Salman came to power, three years ago, he has twice dismissed a crown prince: Prince Muqrin, one of the last of the generation sired by the kingdom’s founder, was pushed aside in 2015. Prince Mohammed bin Nayef, the former Minister of the Interior and a close U.S. ally on counterterrorism, was forced out in 2017—to make space for M.B.S. Nayef is still under virtual house arrest. “A lot of senior princes are whispering in the king’s ear that it’s time for M.B.S. to be moved aside and another son of the king or another member of the family to be put in his place,” Bruce Riedel, a former senior U.S. intelligence official, said at a Wilson Center event on Wednesday. “They have to be aware that M.B.S. is the greater danger to the kingdom today.” The crown prince’s ouster is perhaps possible, but it’s not yet probable. It would take a decision by the king to turn against his favorite son. And, as Senator Corker told CNN, King Salman “is not particularly coherent.” The king is now in his early eighties and has purportedly been ailing in the last few years, possibly with a mild form of dementia. That is one reason that M.B.S. has been able to swiftly consolidate all the wings of political, military, and economic power under his own office. More basically, there is no sign yet of a coalition within the royal family to block M.B.S.’s ascension to the throne. Gregory Gause, a Saudi expert at the Bush School of Government, at Texas A. & M., told me, “I haven’t seen any public evidence—as in the past incidents—of an intra-family dispute. Although many don’t like him, they don’t have the ability to get together to stop him.”

#### And Zachary Basu indicates that the royal family is already on thin ice as he reported a month later that:

Zachary Basu, 11-20-2018, “Members of Saudi royal family reportedly sour on MBS,” <https://www.axios.com/saudi-royal-family-line-succession-mbs-salman-fc167ccf-a07b-4be0-b526-7362c3c0ad6a.html>, Date Accessed 2-15-2019 // JM

Dozens of members of the Saudi royal family are discussing making Prince Ahmed bin Abdulaziz, the only surviving brother of King Salman, the heir apparent to the throne after Salman's death, as the embattled Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MBS) continues to deal with the fallout from the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, reports [Reuters](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-saudi-khashoggi-royals-exclusive/exclusive-after-khashoggi-murder-some-saudi-royals-turn-against-kings-favorite-son-idUSKCN1NO2KP). The big picture: MBS already acts as the kingdom's de-facto leader and has a close relationship with the Trump administration, particularly with the president's son-in-law Jared Kushner. But [reports](https://www.axios.com/cia-report-mohammed-bin-salman-ordered-khashoggi-killing-aa0089fb-c884-4a3e-a0b8-59192aaf53ea.html) that he ordered the murder of Khashoggi have rankled the international community. Prince Ahmed, who has been critical of MBS' rise to power, would reportedly have the support of "family members, the security apparatus and some Western powers," according to Reuters.

#### Ending arms sales would be the straw that breaks the camel’s back – Zvi Barel indicates in 2018 that:

[Zvi Bar’el, 11-26-2018, "How Mohammad Bin Salman Put His Kingdom in Debt to Trump and Netanyahu," Haaretz, <https://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/.premium-how-mohammad-bin-salman-put-his-kingdom-in-debt-to-trump-and-netanyahu-1.6695165>, Date Accessed 2-16-2019 // JM

The crown prince needs the Arab handshakes to stop the domestic criticism, including within the royal family itself. He must prove that the Khashoggi affair did not harm Saudi relations with other countries and thus neutralize the claim that the murder has undermined the kingdom’s status in the Middle East and the world. He has already received the most important backing from U.S. President Donald Trump, who then praised himself for keeping oil prices stable through his cooperation with Saudi Arabia, which pledged to increase output in anticipation of the sanctions imposed on Iran earlier this month.

#### This reversal in backing would lead the kingdom to can MbS in favor of someone like Ahmed, a more popular choice among Western powers. There are two implications to canning MbS. The first is that MbS blocks any chance for Saudi democracy. Al Jazeera indicates in 2018 that:

Al Jazeera, 10-3-2018, "Khashoggi: Saudi Arabia can never be a democracy 'on MBS watch'," No Publication, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/03/khashoggi-saudi-arabia-democracy-mbs-watch-180323103543171.html, Date Accessed 2-15-2019 // JM

A prominent Saudi journalist and former royal family adviser has criticised the government's crackdown on Saudi intellectuals and journalists, lamenting that the kingdom will never become democratic under Crown Prince [Mohammed bin Salman](http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/06/profile-saudi-crown-prince-mohammed-bin-salman-170621130040539.html). Speaking to Al Jazeera in the programme [UpFront](https://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/upfront/), Jamal Khashoggi - currently self-exiled in the US - said that there was no space for debate in [Saudi Arabia](https://www.aljazeera.com/topics/country/saudi-arabia.html) with intellectuals and journalists jailed for questioning policies. "As we speak today, there [are] Saudi intellectuals and journalists jailed. Now, nobody will dare to speak and criticise the reforms [initiated by the crown prince]," he said, adding that "it would be much better for him to allow a breathing space for critics, for Saudi intellectuals, Saudi writers, Saudi media to debate." Asked whether Saudi Arabia could ever become democratic under bin Salman, popularly known in the West as MBS, Khashoggi said: "Not on his watch. I haven't heard him make even the slightest inference that he would open the country for power-sharing, for democracy."

#### Fostering democracy is the only way to permanently end wars like Yemen – Natan Sharansky indicates that:

Natan Sharansky, deputy prime minister of Israel and a former Soviet dissident, 10-10-2001, Wall Street Journal, “What Are We Fighting For?,” p. A16, Date Accessed 2-16-2019 // JM

The democratic world must export freedom throughout the Middle East not only for the sake of people who live under repressive regimes, but for the sake of our own security. For only when the world is free will the world be safe. The consequences of merely eradicating an enemy rather than building a friend were made crystal clear in the decades following World War II. In Eastern Europe, the evils of Nazism were replaced with the evils of Communism. One dictatorship replaced another and the effect was continued internal repression and external belligerence. In contrast, democracy was forced on Germany and Japan and the result has been over 50 years of peace and stability--both within those states and in their relations with the outside world. The logic of why democracies do not go to war with each other is ironclad. When political power is a function of popular will, the incentive system works towards maintaining peace and providing prosperity. For nondemocratic regimes, war and terror are essential to survival. In order to justify the internal repression that is inherent in nondemocratic rule, dictators and autocrats must mobilize their nation for wars against both internal and external enemies. Democratic leaders can be corrupt, prejudiced and xenophobic. But they will not survive long in office if they impoverish their people and sacrifice their sons in wars that are not vital to their nations' existence. That is why war is always the last option for democratic states.

#### Second, MbS is the root cause of all Saudi problems right now. David von Drehle indicates that:

David von Drehle, 10-19-2018,”Mohammed bin Salman could bring his kingdom crumbling down”, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/mohammed-bin-salman-is-bad-for-the-family-business/2018/10/19/5c2cbda6-d3b4-11e8-8c22-fa2ef74bd6d6_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.6fd5398adbdf>, Date Accessed 2-16-2019 // JM

Among advisers to family-owned businesses there’s a [widely known adage](https://www.morganstanley.com/what-we-do/wealth-management/private-wealth-management/shirtsleeves-to-shirtsleeves) : “Shirtsleeves to shirtsleeves in three generations.” Difficult as it is to build a successful enterprise, it is more difficult to raise children with the ability and desire to keep it going. Producing one grandchild among a potentially rivalrous set of cousins with the right talent and interests and force and tact — is more challenging still. Observers of Saudi Arabia have been mulling this problem for many years, as the strongest among founding king Abdul Aziz ibn Saud’s 45 sons passed the crown from one to another. Now, the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, a Post contributing columnist lured to the Saudi Consulate in Turkey, chillingly tells us that generational succession is no longer a future problem. It is a present crisis. Admittedly, thanks to the ocean of oil discovered beneath the sands of Saud’s realm, there’s no risk of his grandchildren reverting to the nomadic life from which the kingdom was built nearly a century ago. Instead, the risk is that the third generation — lacking its grandfather’s cunning and the caution of its fathers — will drag the kingdom into a spiral of treachery, backstabbing and recklessness. Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has shown himself to be steeped in all three. MBS, as the crown prince is widely known, is the first of his very numerous generation (Saud had at least 22 wives) to wield the power of the crown; his father, King Salman, is 82 and partially disabled by Alzheimer’s disease. A young tyrant in a big hurry, MBS [elbowed aside](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/28/world/middleeast/saudi-prince-released.html) an older cousin last year, confining him to house arrest, and also set about [jailing his rivals](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/04/world/middleeast/saudi-arabia-waleed-bin-talal.html), torturing his critics, silencing dissenters, and creating a humanitarian crisis of staggering proportions in neighboring Yemen. Khashoggi’s murder, for all its alleged grisly sadism, seems right in character. True, the House of Saud has never been known for liberalism. Oppressive at home and subversive abroad, it long ago made a devil’s bargain with radical [Wahhabism](http://www.theweek.co.uk/87832/wahhabism-what-is-it-and-why-does-it-matter) that lies near the root of al-Qaeda, the Islamic State and the Taliban. Even so, dispatching a team of killers — [allegedly packing a bone saw](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/15/world/middleeast/missing-saudi-journalist-jamal-khashoggi.html) — to dispose of a prominent U.S. resident on Turkish soil is an act of alarming brashness. I asked one knowledgeable business executive whether this tells us MBS is crazy or stupid. “Hmm,” came the answer. “Maybe both.” Heedless leaders are bad enough in troubled byways such as Libya or Sudan. But to have one at the controls in Saudi Arabia is intolerable. This is arguably the United States’ strongest ally in the Muslim Middle East, and has been since President Franklin D. Roosevelt gave his blessing to Saud. The kingdom serves as a critical counterweight to Iran’s ambitions, and a reasonable custodian of the most sacred sites of Islam. Set aside the oil — thanks to the fracking and efficiency revolutions, we don’t need it like we used to. The most precious resource the Saudis can offer today is stability in the heart of the world’s tinderbox. Rather than stability, though, we get this impetuous crime, which no doubt unsettled old King Salman (who is not, I’m told, as enfeebled as some suggest) and his last surviving full brother, Prince Ahmed bin Abdulaziz. Though rivals, both men were raised in the cynical pragmatism of their generation of Saudi royals; surely they see that MBS has become bad for the family business. Unfortunately, the crown prince still has friends in high places, having wormed his way into the naive hearts of the inexperienced Trump administration. After striking up a bromance with Jared Kushner — MBS flattered Kushner’s self-image as a Mideast peace broker — the budding strongman scored a Trump Tower audience with the newly elected president, Kushner and former Trump whisperer Stephen K. Bannon. Not an Arabist in the bunch. Was the relationship greased by Saudi purchases of luxury Trump-branded properties? Special counsel Robert S. Mueller III is reported to be looking into that question. This much we know: From that gulling of the dupes came Trump’s first foreign travel: a lavish trip to Riyadh in May 2017, during which the crown prince blew so much smoke the president nearly floated home. The same Trump who trusts Russian President Vladimir Putin and loves Kim Jong Un of North Korea clambered aboard the MBS Express. And, for a moment, all was lovely. The kingdom permitted movie theaters and allowed women to drive. MBS spoke of diversifying his economy and purging Islam of radicals. Now we see what’s behind the facade. Trump is not the first president to bet on the wrong foreign leader. But he should now use the United States’ considerable influence to steer the king toward a new succession plan. Khashoggi’s murder was a flagrant insult to the United States and to the president personally. To go groveling after its apparent author weakens Trump, weakens the United States, and makes Saudi Arabia a powder keg.

# EXTRA CARDS

#### in two ways. First, current food aid cannot be reached because of conflict zones as Al Jazeera writes this week that

Al Jazeera, 2-11-2019, "Yemen food aid to feed millions at risk of rotting: UN," https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/02/yemen-food-aid-risk-rotting-190211174419940.html, Date Accessed 2-12-2019 // WS

Food aid in a warehouse on the front lines of [Yemen's war](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/12/yemen-civil-war-ali-abdullah-saleh-death-171204163618674.html) is at risk of rotting, leaving millions of Yemenis without access to life-saving sustenance, the UN said on Monday. The Red Sea Mills silos, located in the western port city of Hodeidah, are believed to contain enough grain to feed several million people. But the granary has remained off-limits to aid organisations for months. "The World Food Programme grain stored in the mills - enough to feed 3.7 million people for a month - has been inaccessible for over five months and is at risk of rotting," said a joint statement by the UN aid chief and special envoy for Yemen. "We emphasise that ensuring access to the mills is a shared responsibility among the parties to the conflict in Yemen." Hodeidah, and its food silos, have been in the hands of Yemen's [Houthi](https://www.aljazeera.com/topics/subjects/houthis.html) rebels since 2014, when the armed group staged a takeover of large swaths of Yemen's territory.

#### Second, by creating a Saudi Weapons Supply Shock. Josh Rogin writes in 2018 that Saudi Arabia:

Josh Rogin, 10-16-2018, "Opinion," Washington Post, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/josh-rogin/wp/2018/10/16/trump-has-it-totally-and-completely-backwards-on-saudi-arms-sales/, Date Accessed 1-28-2019 // WS

When President Trump argues that the United States can’t halt arms sales to Saudi Arabia over the Saudis’ alleged murder of journalist and Post contributor Jamal Khashoggi, he’s giving up a key piece of leverage over Riyadh for no reason at all. What’s worse, Trump is also turning one of America’s best strategic assets into a liability, a massive unforced error that could weaken the United States worldwide. Set aside that Trump’s claim of $110 billion of arms sales to Saudi Arabia as announced last year is hugely exaggerated, considering that number [mostly refers to](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2018/10/11/trumps-billion-arms-sales-saudi-arabia-still-fake/?utm_term=.b68c162ded5c) deals struck during the Obama administration and new deals that haven’t yet materialized. The significant arms-sales relationship we do have with Saudi Arabia gives us enormous leverage over them, leverage Trump should use to pressure King Salman to reveal what his regime knows about Khashoggi’s disappearance. Saudi Arabia’s military is already built around U.S. and British defense platforms, meaning they can’t easily switch to Russian or Chinese systems. Riyadh is especially dependent on U.S. arms right now because their bloody war in Yemen requires a constant flow of U.S. munitions, not to mention U.S. intelligence, maintenance and refueling support. U.S. arms sales are not simply a financial deal or a jobs program; they represent a strategic advantage of the United States. Countries want U.S. weapons because they are the best. That gives us connections, influence and, yes, leverage over these countries. That’s how arms sales have always worked, until Trump flipped the script.

#### Since Saudi Arabia cannot successfully fight without US support, ending arms creates the necessary shock and forces a gap in the fighting. That’s why Joe Gould quantifies that

Joe Gould, 11-20-2018, "Trump statement sticks with Saudis, hyping economic benefits of alliance," Defense News, https://www.defensenews.com/2018/11/20/trump-statement-sticks-with-saudis-hyping-economic-benefits-of-alliance/, Date Accessed 1-30-2019 // WS

“The Saudi military depends on U.S. arms, spare parts and maintenance to carry out its brutal war in Yemen, and could not prosecute that war for long without that support,” Hartung said. Two-thirds of the 365 combat-capable aircraft in the Saudi arsenal are of American-origin, including 171 F-15 combat aircraft, a mainstay of the Saudi air war in Yemen. The Saudi land forces and National Guard possess more than 3,000 U.S.-supplied armored vehicles, and the Saudis have tens of thousands of U.S.-supplied bombs and missiles. That’s why a competitor could not easily replace the U.S. in supplying Riyadh, according to Hartung. “It would take decades for the Kingdom to wean itself from dependence on U.S. equipment, training and support, and new equipment might not be easily interoperable with U.S.-supplied systems,” Hartung said. “Saudi Arabia could buy a Russian or Chinese system here or there to send a political message, but they could not easily replace the role of sales and support from the United States, along with the United Kingdom, as the major bulwarks of its military capability.”