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USA

Trump’s barbarous war on Iran, part of a long history of war crimes

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President Donald Trump’s war on Iran is barbarous, cruel, vicious, undertaken and carried out without a bit of concern for the millions of human beings it is affecting in Iran, in the region, and throughout the world. The nature of the war was revealed on the first day, 28 February , when the United States hit a school in Minab and killed an estimated 175 people, 100 of them children. Attacks on civilians are a war crime, all too common a war crime in all modern wars. Now Trump is threatening an even greater war crime.

Trump announced a few days ago, “If for any reason a deal is not shortly reached, which it probably will be, and if the Hormuz Strait is not immediately ‘Open for Business,’ we will conclude our lovely ‘stay’ in Iran by blowing up and completely obliterating all of their electric generating plants, oil Wells and kharg Island (and possibly all desalinization plants!), which we have purposefully not yet ‘touched.” In a particularly crude comment he said, “We’re going to bring them back to the Stone Ages, where they belong.” There are 93 million people in Iran, more than 24 million of them are children. What makes these people deserve to live in the Stone Age?

Trump’s callous and cruel statement no doubt results from his racial and religious prejudices as well as from his frustration with the inability to win a clear victory in Iran either in terms of regime change or control of the region and its oil wealth. Frustrated, Trump is prepared to kill more civilians.

After all, the U.S. War on Iraq (2003-11), initiated by George W. Bush and based on the false argument that Saddam Hussein’s government had weapons of mass destruction, killed as many as one million people, 100,000 of them civilians. So why not do the same in Iran?

Trump’s statement is an echo of a remark by the notorious commander of the Strategic Air Command General Curtis LeMay who in his 1965 autobiography, written during the Vietnam War, wrote that North Vietnam should “draw in their horns and stop their aggression, or we’re going to bomb them back into the Stone Age. Adding “And we would shove them back into the Stone Age with Air power or Naval power — not with ground forces.” After LeMay’s retirement, other U.S. air force generals “carpet bombed” Vietnam, killing tens of thousands and perhaps hundreds of thousands of soldiers and civilians.

Twenty years before, during World War II, on March 10, 1945, LeMay had ordered about 300 B-29 bombers to carry out the fire-bombing of Tokyo, temperatures reaching 2,800 degrees Fahrenheit, destroying 16 square miles of the city and killing an estimated 100,000 men, women, and children. Of course, this example helped to make possible the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Major General Curtis LeMay famously remarked: “If we lose the war, we’ll be tried as war criminals.”

In Europe during World War II, the United States and its allies also bombed the German cities of Hamburg, Dresden, Kassel, and Lubeck, killing tens of thousands of civilians. The bombing is estimated to have killed 600,000 people, including 70,000 children.

The point of making war on civilians, of killing women, children, and the elderly, has always been to demoralize the enemy, to make people miserable, helpless, afraid and prepared to surrender. This is the logic of war. But a people, fighting for their homeland, may not surrender no matter what, perhaps simply leaving a devastated population, as in Gaza.

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Trump, like other American presidents—Franklin Roosevelt, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, and George W. Bushâ€”is willing to kill as many civilians as necessary to win the war. But even so, he may lose it.

Trump’s war on Iran is barbaric and we should do everything possible to end it.

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