

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-0533**

April 8, 2019

The Honorable Patrick M. Shanahan  
Acting Secretary of Defense  
1400 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1400

Dear Acting Secretary Shanahan,

According to multiple reports, two airstrikes by the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen over the last two weeks hit civilian targets in Kitaf and Sana'a and killed at least 20 people, including at least a dozen children. I previously served on active duty and taught the Law of Armed Conflict. These strikes look like additional war crimes being committed by the coalition.

The strikes once again call into question the coalition's killing of civilians and any role the U.S. may have played, including whether any U.S. intelligence, advice, information or weapons were used in conducting these airstrikes. We request that you provide responses to the questions below within 14 days of the date of transmission of this letter.

On May 26, 2019, according to reports, the coalition struck a hospital operated by aid organization Save the Children in a rural area of northern Yemen, a de-conflicted site that should never have been attacked. The strike killed at least seven people, including four children, and wounded eight others. Less than two weeks later, on April 7, an airstrike was conducted in the immediate vicinity of Al-Raei school for girls in Sana'a, killing at least 13 children and wounding more than 100.

Unfortunately, these horrific airstrikes on civilian targets are not isolated incidents but rather part of a long track record of bombing civilians at markets, weddings, schools, hospitals, funerals and other off-limits sites that have killed over 4,600 civilians since 2015. For years, these strikes were carried out in close coordination with the U.S., which sold precision-guided munitions to members of the coalition, provided regular mid-air refueling assistance and shared intelligence on targets. While the administration rightly halted refueling assistance in November 2018, it is unclear how much the U.S. continues to assist the coalition in conducting operations and what specific forms of assistance are being provided.

Any assistance of the United States in aiding and abetting what look like war crimes harms both our moral standing and our national security. We are giving terrorists ample recruiting material by our support of a coalition that keeps killing children. Our support of the coalition has also helped worsen the massive humanitarian catastrophe in Yemen.

In light of these latest strikes, we request responses to the following questions within 14 days of transmission of this letter.

1. Are either of the targets described above, the hospital in Kitaf or the school in Sana'a, on the No Strike List or Restricted Target List provided by the U.S. to the coalition?
2. Did the U.S. provide any targeting or other assistance for these two airstrikes?
3. In November 2018, the administration announced an end to U.S. refueling assistance provided to Saudi-led coalition aircraft conducting operations in Yemen. Has refueling assistance resumed since the 2018 announcement?
4. Does the Department believe either of these airstrikes constitute a violation of the Law of Armed Conflict?
5. Please list all forms of assistance the U.S. is currently providing to the Saudi-led coalition conducting missions in Yemen.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ted W. Lieu". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Ted W. Lieu  
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Eliot Engel, Chairman, House Foreign Affairs Committee  
The Honorable Michael McCaul, Ranking Member, House Foreign Affairs Committee  
The Honorable Adam Smith, Chairman, House Armed Services Committee  
The Honorable Mac Thornberry, Ranking Member, House Armed Services Committee

TWL: cj