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We had in mind the terrible bombardment of Iraqi society and civilisation. We had in mind Chelsea Manning, sitting in a prison cell, for Wikileaks that told us the truth about what was actually happening. A few days ago, I joined a group of Iraqis (such as the writer Haifa Zangana and Thuraiya Muhammed of BAE deal from 1985-2007).

There is always the illusion that military spending is for security, when it appears to be more for profit. The entire world is 'hard-wired for corruption'. 'In 1997, I was told in Washington that a mid-nineties report by the CIA concluded', he wrote. Why do governments spend such a vulgar amount on weapons? In his monumental Grundrisse, Karl Marx made the offhand, but accurate remark, 'The impact of war is self-evident, since economically it is war that provides the funds for the expansion of industry, that gives the raw materials and the labour of the workers, and gives the market for the products of their labour'.

Six of the nine highest-spending countries combined: China, Saudi Arabia, Russia, India, France, United Kingdom, Japan, Germany and South Korea. The top ten arms companies in the world are:

1. Boeing ($26.9 billion) [USA]
2. Raytheon ($23.9 billion) [USA]
3. Northrop Grumman ($22.4 billion) [USA]
4. General Dynamics ($19.5 billion) [USA]
5. Airbus Group ($11.3 billion) [Europe]
6. Almaz-Antey ($8.6 billion) [Russia]
7. Leonardo ($8.9 billion) [Italy]
8. SAAB ($8.3 billion) [Sweden]
9. Saab-Bofors ($8.1 billion) [Sweden]
10. Rheinmetall ($7.5 billion) [Germany]

It has become impossible to hold states to account. The ICC cannot move on powerful states, such as the United States and France (which have been the main arms exporters over the past decade). In November, 2015, the district attorney in New York City, Cyrus Vance, announced that he would not move forward with a case against Russian arms dealers who supplied Saudi Arabia with sophisticated weapons. The reasons were political, he said, not legal. He wrote: 'The United States spends more on its military than the next nine highest-spending countries combined. It is the domain of the United States to define what constitutes acceptable behavior in the international arms trade. Should a powerful state decide to supply another powerful state with sophisticated weapons, the United States, that has become, not an ally, but an enabler.'

Lies lead to war and then lies are needed to cover up the horrors of war. Over the past few years, the International Criminal Court (ICC) had diligently begun a campaign to raise $10 billion to eradicate illiteracy. But even these meagre funds have been impossible to raise, the promise of 'billions into trillions' from the much-heralded public-private partnerships found in 2007. The United States spends more on its military than the next nine highest-spending countries combined.

Against this backdrop, it is no surprise that on 26 April 1937, twelve bombers of the German Condor Legion and the Italian Aviazione Legionaria flew low over the defenceless town of Guernica in north-western Spain. The pilots of the bombers turned on three-second blast settings. Almost two thousand people died in this defenceless town. Noel Monk of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) wrote, 'A sight that haunted me for weeks was the charred bodies of several women and children huddled together in what had been the cellar of a house. It had been a refuge. Pablo Picasso, the artist, was so moved by news of the fascist bombing raid on this town, that he painted his most powerful work – Guernica (1937) – which now hangs in Madrid's Reina Sofia.

The Gestapo officer asked if Picasso had done the painting. 'No', Picasso replied. 'You did'. This entry was posted on Thursday, April 25th, 2019 at 9:53 am and is filed under newsletter, home page main
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