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THREAD: In contrast to most military operations, Yemeni attacks on Red Sea shipping don't need to hit their target in order to achieve their objective. The Bab Al-Mandab ("Gate of Lamentation") strait is a very narrow maritime chokepoint,

only some 25 kilometers wide, separating Yemen from the Horn of Africa. More importantly, it is the only passageway connecting the Arabian Sea to the Red Sea.

The Red Sea terminates at the southern entrance to the Suez Canal, through which 10-15% of global trade, significant volumes of oil, gas, and Chinese goods intended for Western markets, pass on any given day.

Bab al-Mandab is best compared to the better-known maritime chokepoint located on the other side of the Arabian Peninsula, the Strait of Hormuz which. The Strait of Hormuz, through which huge volumes of Middle Eastern oil and gas must pass to reach global markets,

has often been in the news due to fears it would be made impassable by Iran in the event of an attack on that country by the US and/or Israel.

Global shipping companies often operate on tight profit margins and tend to be risk-averse. They also don't like to pay more in insurance rates than they can earn from shipping a tanker of oil or deck of containers from Asia to Europe.

In other words, they are not going to keep using Bab Al-Mandab until the first ship is sunk to the bottom of the Red Sea. Readers may recall that when the Suez Canal was blocked by a supercontainer ship a few years ago,

an incident that had nothing to do with armed conflict, the entire global supply chain was disrupted for weeks on end, and large numbers of ships chose the much longer route around the Cape of Good Hope off South Africa to transport goods between Europe and Asia.

In other words, Lloyds of London only requires the knowledge of ongoing, regular attacks on shipping off the Yemeni coast to send its insurance rates through the stratosphere.

Routine attacks by pirates off the coast of Somalia earlier this century resulted in billions of dollars in excess costs resulting from higher insurance rates and re-routing of ships alone. For Israel the challenge is even greater:

if shipping to and from Israel can't use Bab al-Mandab to reach Eilat, or pass through the Suez Canal to reach its Mediterranean ports, a ship delivering goods to Israel from e.g. India has to go around South Africa all the way to Morocco, through the Straits of Gibraltar,

and then traverse the entire Mediterranean Sea to reach its destination.

Given that Yemen's objective is to impose escalating costs on not only the perpetrators but also the sponsors and enablers of the Gaza genocide, it can achieve its goal without sinking a single ship to the bottom of the sea.

It just needs to instil confidence in the global shipping industry that regular attacks on its assets will continue until Israel is called to a halt.

Separately, such attacks are intended to impress upon the West, and Washington in particular, that the self-proclaimed Axis of Resistance means business when it threatens to meet Israeli escalation with regional escalation.

The latter, rather than the sight of thousands of Palestinian children blown to bits by US bombs supplied to its Israeli proxy, is the West's main concern. END

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