

U.S. Sending Humanitarian Aid To ISIS

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Whether it continues is now the subject of anguished debate among officials in Washington and European. The fear is that stopping aid would hurt innocent civilians and would be used for propaganda purposes by the militants, who would likely blame the West for added hardship...

...the aid convoys have to pay off ISIS emirs (leaders) for the convoys to enter the eastern Syrian extremist strongholds of Raqqa and Deir ez-Zor, providing yet another income stream for ISIS militants, who are funding themselves from oil smuggling, extortion and the sale of whatever they can loot, including rare antiquities from museums and archaeological sites.

“The convoys have to be approved by ISIS and you have to pay them: the bribes are disguised and itemized as transportation costs,” says an aid coordinator who spoke to The Daily Beast on the condition he not be identified in this article. The kickbacks are either paid by foreign or local non-governmental organizations tasked with distributing the aid, or by the Turkish or Syrian transportation companies contracted to deliver it...

The origins of the aid programs pre-date President Barack Obama’s decision to “degrade and defeat” ISIS, but they have carried on without major review. The aid push was to reach anyone in need. A senior State Department official with detailed knowledge of current aid programs confirmed to The Daily Beast that U.S. government funded relief is still going into Raqqa and Deir Ez-Zor. He declined to estimate the quantity. But an aid coordinator, when asked, responded: “A lot .”

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