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Yemeni Genocide Proceeds Apace, US and the “Islamic State” are De Facto Allies

By William Boardman

Global Research



[NOTE: Shortly after this story was filed, the UN announced a “humanitarian pause in the country’s ongoing conflict” starting July 10 and expected to last a week. As framed by the UN, the “pause” was agreed to by “Yemen’s President Hadi” as well as the Houthis and “other parties” in Yemen, as if there were no other significant combatants. This deceitful framing omits the most aggressive, undeclared war-making carried out against Yemen by the US, Saudi Arabia, and sundry other UN members. The UN missive makes no mention of the months of Saudi-American bombing, even though the bombers must have agreed to a “pause” to make it happen. In the author’s view, the pause is a good thing from a humanitarian perspective, although the previous 5-day pause in May was relatively ineffective. From the perspective of policy and politics, the “pause” is a sham and a delusion that will have the effect of keeping some Yemenis

from starving long enough so they can be bombed. In other words, the UN continues to collude in a complex of continuing war crimes and crimes against humanity, as the article that follows argues.]

US and ISIS join efforts to kill Yemenis

Turns out the United States and the Islamic State, ISIS, are de facto allies of Saudi Arabia and its alliance of dictator states, all bent on exterminating Yemeni Houthis and pretty much any other Yemeni in the neighborhood. This Yemencide started in earnest in March 2015. After years of US drone strikes proved too slow and ineffective at wiping out people in the poorest country in the Arab world, it was time to expand the arsenal of war crimes. Rarely, in discussions of Yemen, does one hear much about the violations of international law that have reduced the country to its present war-torn and devastated condition.

Failing to acknowledge a foreign policy disaster in Yemen, the Obama administration has chosen instead to trash international law by supporting the criminal, aggressive war that Saudi Arabia's coalition of police states launched on Yemen on March 26. Now, despite more than three months of Saudi-American terror bombing, the Houthis remain in control of northwest Yemen, their tribal homeland, as well as much of the southeast of Yemen, having overthrown the internationally-installed puppet government, later "elected" without any opponents, of President Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi.

President Obama praised Hadi as his "successful" partner in attacking terrorists, by which Obama meant he was grateful to Hadi for not objecting to the US drone attacks against his own people. Hadi's legitimacy always depended on foreign puppeteers, and it still does. Having resigned as president, fled the capital, and rescinded his resignation, Hadi fled again, to Saudi Arabia the day before the Saudi blitz began. The official story is that Hadi requested the undeclared Saudi attack on his own country. Hadi remains in the Saudi capital of Riyadh, free to go nowhere while he pretends to head a government-in-exile that is the presently desired fiction of his captor-protectors.

On July 8, from Riyadh, Hadi reportedly proposed a ceasefire in Yemen to start before the month of Ramadan ends July 17. On July 1, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon had called for a "humanitarian halt" in combat "until the end of the holy month of Ramadan." So far, Hadi's Saudi controllers have used the muslim holy month to rain increased terror on populated areas of Yemen, killing hundreds of civilians and Houthi fighters, with no accurate count available. July 7 saw the highest death toll in Yemen since the Saudi bombing campaign began. This bland-seeming coverage of the carnage by Reuters is riddled by propaganda deceptions:

The United Nations has been pushing for a halt to air raids and intensified fighting that began on March 26. More than 3,000 people have been killed since then as the Arab coalition tries stop the Houthis spreading across the country from the north.

The Iran-allied Shi'ite Houthis say they are rebelling against a corrupt government, while local fighters say they are defending their homes from Houthi incursions. Sunni Saudi Arabia says it is bombing the Houthis to protect the Yemeni state.

The Reuters perspective represents the mainstream consensus, which also typically includes some of the same threads of deceit as these:

- **“The UN has been pushing ...”** No it hasn’t. The UN as a body has done little to protect the Yemenis, but the Security Council has done less for a country in which civil war has spanned generations. Security Council resolutions are determinedly “evenhanded” in their equal treatment of aggressors and victims. In June 2015, after two months of Saudi bombing, the Security Council expressed its “full support” for an impossibility: “a peaceful, inclusive, orderly and Yemeni-led political transition process that meets the legitimate demands and aspirations of the Yemeni people.”
- **“pushing for a halt to air raids ...”** No it hasn’t. The air raids are being carried out by the nine UN member states in the Saudi Coalition, including Security Council member Jordan. The US, a permanent Security Council member, has supported the aerial war crime campaign with logistics, in-flight refueling of bombers, intelligence, air-sea rescue, and naval support for the blockade (which is also an act of war).
- **“intensified fighting that began on March 26 ...”** Intensified fighting began long before March 26. Yemen’s civil war has waxed and waned over several decades. What began March 26 was the war crime nexus of bombing civilian targets by the nine-member Saudi Coalition that includes Egypt, Morocco, Jordan, Sudan, UAE, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Qatar. The Houthi rebellion is more than a decade old and gained intensity in the fall of 2014. The Houthis drove out the Yemeni government and now control the western half of the country, where most of the population lived and most of the bombing takes place.
- **“the Arab coalition tries to stop the Houthis spreading across the country from the north ...”** Reuters is just wrong on this. The Houthi spread was a fact, and the “Arab coalition” failed in an ill-conceived campaign. Faced with an army advancing on the ground, the “Arab coalition” has not deployed ground troops. Without serious objection from the international community, the “Arab coalition” attacks military forces in another country with which they are not at war, as well as terror-bombing that country’s civilians with US-made cluster bombs.
- As for spreading **“from the north,”** that is at best wrong, if not duplicitous. Saudi Arabia has declared the northernmost province of Yemen, Saada, a military zone in

which every civilian is a presumed combatant. This is the same bloodthirsty policy that leads the US to count every drone victim as a combatant until proven otherwise. This is the same moral numbness that led the US to establish free fire zones in Vietnam, where every living thing was deemed an enemy. This is total war as waged by the powerful, at a distance, against the weak and almost defenseless. This is as bad as any Nazi onslaught of World War II.

- The absurdity of the Reuters characterization is illustrated by another UN Security Council position in support of a **“political solution to Yemen’s crisis in accordance with the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative.”** The Gulf Cooperation Council is an oxymoron, in that it includes six of the seven Arab states (not Iraq) on the Persian Gulf who allied determinedly NOT to cooperate with the other Persian Gulf state, Iran. Further, the Security Council absurdly supports the “Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative” when five of the six Gulf Council members (not Oman) are busily bombing Yemen in violation of international law.

- **“The Iran-allied Shi’ite Houthis ...”** There is no evidence of an alliance between Iran and the Houthis, certainly not in any sense equivalent to the overt alliances waging undeclared war on Yemen. The Houthis are Shi’ite muslims, and Iran has almost surely supported them to some extent, but most claims of Iranian involvement in the current fighting are patently over-stated and lack supporting evidence. Reuters here is parroting Arab, American, and Israeli propaganda about the “threat” from Iran.

- **“say they are rebelling against a corrupt government ...”** Who says? Reuters doesn’t say. This is specious journalism. Yemen has a long history of corrupt government, but perhaps the Hadi government allowing US troops to wage war on Yemeni territory, killing Yemenis at will, raised the corruption bar to a new level.

- **“local fighters say they are defending their homes ...”** is worse than specious journalism, it’s pretty much a lie since the main opposition to the Houthis comprises forces loyal to Hadi, as well as cohorts of both Al Qaeda and ISIS.

- **“Sunni Saudi Arabia says it is bombing the Houthis to protect the Yemeni state”**would be a laugh line were it not such a dark lie. Saudi bombing is destroying the Yemeni state in order to “save” it. The Saudis may be “protecting” the Hadi government,

but only in the sense that the Mafia provides protection in a protection racket. The Saudis have longstanding territorial conflicts with the Houthis along the northwest Saudi-Yemeni border. And the Saudis are acting as if they believe their own demonizing propaganda about Iran. Saudi Arabia is more likely bombing the Houthis because they are defenseless and Saudi Arabia doesn't dare bomb Iran.

Nobody seems to care about Yemen, not even *The New Yorker*

The widespread, bland disinterest in the unending victimization of Yemenis facing unrelenting, daily crimes against humanity is hardly unique to obtuse observers like Reuters. The New Yorker, which eventually distinguished itself in opposition to the horrors of Viet-Nam, last published a piece on Yemen on May 1 (according to a site search). That piece conveys the American denial of its own terrorism with a tone of mild distaste suitable to Eustace Tilley, whose monocled default opinion is to blame the victim, as Robin Wright wrote little more than a month after the Saudi-American bombardment began:

The current Houthi rebellion – the seventh – is only the latest. The Houthi clan are Zaydi Muslims, who make up about a third of Yemen's twenty-six million people. A once powerful people from the rugged northern highlands, they ruled an imamate for a millennium and deeply resented their reduced influence under [former President] Saleh [now a Houthi ally]. Between 2004 and 2010, they fought six other wars against his government....

The quarter-century experiment in uniting Yemen has definitively failed. There is no military solution, and there are unlikely to be any winners out of such a multilayered conflict, whatever the territorial gains....

Last week, the United States dispatched the aircraft carrier U.S.S. Teddy Roosevelt to supplement seven American warships off the Yemen coast. Washington strongly supports a political solution to the conflict in Yemen, but without interested players the risks of unintended consequences increase.

Rhetorically the US may support a "political solution" (to its own liking) and gullible reporters may accept that as some sort of reality. The reality on the ground (and on the water) is that the US supports and participates in endless terror bombing and a naval blockade. That is to say, the US supports and participates in the war crimes that are leading toward mass starvation and human devastation, what the discreet Ban Ki-moon refers to as a "humanitarian crisis" or a "catastrophe," as if there were no agency causing it.

An editorial July 7 in The New York Times takes the same concerned-but-oblivious-to-the-genocidal-actors tone that reinforces the general pretense that no one is responsible:

Yemen has now been added to the United Nations' list of most severe humanitarian emergencies, along with South Sudan, Syria and Iraq. It is a tragic distinction, highlighting the peril to 80 percent of the country's 25 million citizens. The international community, including the United States, is not doing enough to push for an immediate cease-fire in the war that is ravaging the country to make it possible to deliver aid.

Yemen, a poor country, was deeply unstable even before a coalition, led by Saudi Arabia and backed by the United States, started bombing the Houthi rebel movement in late March. Last week, Ban Ki-moon, the United Nations secretary general, declared the situation a “catastrophe.”

Is it possible to commit a long string of war crimes in self-defense?

Having tiptoed up to the edge of US war crimes, the Times retreated. The rest of the editorial comprises little more than helpless handwringing, without even hinting at the most effective way to save Yemeni lives: stop the bombing. That means you, “Saudi Arabia ... backed by the United States.” Like most of the rest of the world, the Times settled for asking for a reasonable-sounding impossibility, which it then undercut with another wisp of Saudi reality:

What is needed is a permanent political solution that will ensure the Houthis, who have some legitimate grievances and are unlikely to give up, get a significant role in any new government. Negotiations should be started without preconditions. But Saudi Arabia and its allies have appeared intent on forcing the Houthis to surrender, no matter what the cost to civilians and Yemen’s cities and villages.

Well, “Saudi Arabia and its allies” includes the US and others. The Times needs to look in the mirror without flinching. Saudi Arabia and its allies need to stop their bombing.

Ironically, they are not bombing Al Qaeda or ISIS forces in Yemen with anything like the same intensity they’re bombing Yemenis. In fact, Al Qaeda and ISIS are supplementing Saudi-American bombing with their own terror-bombing of Yemenis. For whatever reason, if there is one, the Saudi-American aerial genocide against Yemenis is making most of Yemen a much safer haven for terrorists. Yet this lunatic policy continues without serious opposition apparent anywhere. Who decided that Yemen should be treated as if it were the Haiti of the Arab world?

If any of the umpteen candidates for president of the United States has said anything humane, useful, or even dimly relevant about Yemen, it is hard to find (and I have found nothing). And nowhere have I found any call to establish the appropriate International War Crimes Tribunal to judge the illegality of the multiple, heinous predations of the United States, Saudi Arabia, and their sundry allies, all members in good standing of the world peacekeeping authority.