

They Were ‘Grilled Alive’: US Government Exposed Running Nazi-Like Torture Program in Yemen

The US is once again facing allegations of torture, this time during the interrogation of detainees in more than a dozen secret prisons in Yemen.

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Global Research, June 24, 2017

[Free Thought Project](#) 22 June 2017

Region: [Middle East & North Africa, USA](#)

Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#), [Law and Justice](#)

An unprecedented report from the corporate press claims U.S. forces have participated in extreme torture and abuse of detainees accused of affiliation with Al Qaeda in Yemen — including “the ‘grill,’ in which the victim is tied to a spit like a roast and spun in a circle of fire,” the [Associated Press finds](#).

A network of secretive prisons in southern Yemen provide the backdrop for the alleged barbaric acts allegedly carried out by forces from the U.S. and United Arab Emirates — many of those detention facilities remain hidden in plain sight.

That some of the covert prisons sit inside military bases might not be much of a shock, but others are located in ports, an airport, private villas, and even a nightclub — and all, according to the *AP*, remain untouchable by the embattled Yemeni government.

Whistleblower Edward Snowden weighed in on the new revelations, [tweeting](#),

Biggest [@AP](#) scoop in a long time:

US government behind UAE torture in Yemen, with some reportedly grilled alive. <https://t.co/2ggHLcgZzM>

— Edward Snowden (@Snowden) [June 22, 2017](#)

American officials unsurprisingly balked at the accusation troops have participated in the astonishingly heinous behavior described in the *AP*’s report.

Reports the *AP*:

“Senior American defense officials acknowledged Wednesday that U.S. forces have been involved in interrogations of detainees in Yemen but denied any participation in or knowledge of human rights abuses. Interrogating detainees who have been abused could violate international law, which prohibits complicity in torture.

“The *AP* documented at least 18 clandestine lockups across southern Yemen run by the United Arab Emirates or by Yemeni forces created and trained by the Gulf nation, drawing on accounts from former detainees, families of prisoners, civil rights lawyers and Yemeni military officials. All are either hidden

or off limits to Yemen's government, which has been getting Emirati help in its civil war with rebels over the last two years."

Notably, this is the first 'official' acknowledgment the United States participates in interrogations inside the borders of Yemen.

Forces transported some detainees to an Emirati base in Eritrea, according to Yemen Interior Minister Hussein Arab.

Unnamed and unverifiable U.S. defense officials told the *Associated Press* 'senior U.S. military leaders' have been aware of alleged torture taking place in Yemen for some time — but have investigated the charges, and apparently found nothing amiss, as U.S. troops, they claim, were never present during detainee torture.

Perhaps beyond tellingly, neither the *AP* nor the anonymous officials elucidated on whether the lack of U.S. troop presence during the alleged grilling alive of detainees meant senior military leaders indeed discovered forces from other nations roasting people alive and said nothing, or that the torture allegations were completely baseless.

Those defense officials further

"told AP that American forces do participate in interrogations of detainees at locations in Yemen, provide questions for others to ask, and receive transcripts of interrogations from Emirati allies."

Torture this horrific, if proven true, harkens immediately back to Bush-era implementation of barbaric human rights violations by the CIA — which included waterboarding and other acts the agency, itself, knew to be utterly inefficacious — which temporarily halted adherence to the law and all semblance of ethics under the premise of extracting information from detainees following the attacks of 9/11.

"We always adhere to the highest standards of personal and professional conduct," chief Defense Department spokeswoman, Dana White, told the AP on perusal of its report. **"We would not turn a blind eye, because we are obligated to report any violations of human rights."**

In a statement, the UAE government also balked, insisting,

"There are no secret detention centers and no torture of prisoners is done during interrogations."

"The UAE was one of the countries involved in the CIA's torture and rendition program," reminds New York University Professor of Law Ryan Goodman. "These reports are hauntingly familiar and potentially devastating in their legal and policy implications."

To repeat, the U.S. Department of Defense must report violations of human rights — yet the vagueness of the claim senior military brass investigated allegations of excruciating torture, but would only offer that U.S. troops had not been present. Without further explanation, that detail could indicate a troubling sin of omission — in short, a failure to report violations of

human rights.



Source: [Middle East Press](#)

Not one of the dozens interviewed by the *AP* accused U.S. troops of witnessing torture, but the malicious, degrading, deplorable, torturous abuses described by former inmates of the secret prisons would seem impossible to have taken place without their cognizance.

AP continues:

“At one main detention complex at Riyan airport in the southern city of Mukalla, former inmates described being crammed into shipping containers smeared with feces and blindfolded for weeks on end. They said they were beaten, trussed up on the ‘grill,’ and sexually assaulted. According to a member of the Hadramawt Elite, a Yemeni security force set up by the UAE, American forces were at times only yards away. He requested anonymity because he was not authorized to discuss the matter.

“‘We could hear the screams,’ said a former detainee held for six months at Riyan airport. ‘The entire place is gripped by fear. Almost everyone is sick, the rest are near death. Anyone who complains heads directly to the torture chamber.’ He was flogged with wires, part of the frequent beatings inflicted by guards against all the detainees. He also said he was inside a metal shipping container when the guards lit a fire underneath to fill it with smoke.”

As in the first revelations on the renewed use of the gross physical and psychological abuses comprising torture, human rights advocates admonished such practices cannot be carried out without the broad knowledge of military and intelligence officials at the scene — particularly not for the duration described.

“It would be a stretch to believe the US did not know or could not have known that there was a real risk of torture,” Amnesty International Director of Research in the Middle East, Lynn Maalouf, told the *Associated Press*. Amnesty called for a swift investigation by the United Nations into the torture allegations against the UAE and other possible participants or knowledgeable parties.

Torture has been championed as acceptable by the president and other U.S. officials, despite its illegality internationally — almost exclusively as a tool of the War on Terror to extract information from prisoners — but torture has been proven repeatedly to be ineffective for that very purpose.

At least 2,000 people have vanished in Yemen — their families left agonizing over their fate, tragically wondering whether a torturous interrogation took their lives.

“Wives, mothers, and daughters in the north and south of Yemen want to know whether their husbands, sons, and brothers are all right, if they are even alive,” [noted](#) Sarah Leah Whitson, Middle East director at Human Rights Watch, after issuance of a [similar report](#) on torture in Yemen by her organization, on Thursday.

“Yemen, the UAE, Houthi-Saleh forces, and any other party disappearing people should immediately inform families of where their loved ones are and release those held arbitrarily.”

Despite denial of allegations by the United States military and government of the United Arab Emirates, the report from the Associated Press most likely will be remembered as the beginning of yet another torture scandal embroiling perpetually-ethicless entities during a complex and violent conflict — one, again, involving the U.S., which fights for freedom and against terror by, apparently, eviscerating freedom and waging terror.

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