

Yemen: The Anguish, Bloodshed and Forgotten Heroes in a Forgotten War

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It should be personal to all of us. Yemen, regularly portrayed as the poorest nation in the Arab world, is proving itself to be the richest in courage, resourcefulness and resilience.

Ever since March 2015, some of you may have noticed how oil-rich Saudi Arabia, with the United States at its side, have been waging genocidal war against the Yemeni people.

Yemen are a people under attack by an undeclared super-power coalition comprised of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, US, UK, EU, UAE and Israel. [As in Iraq](#), while the Yemeni people are under attack from super-powers, they are simultaneously being collectively punished by the illegal sanctions imposed by a corrupt United Nations body.

Sanctions imposed by resolution 2216, against 5 named individuals, on the pretext of legitimizing an illegitimate fugitive ex-president, Saudi Arabia and Washington's hand-picked puppet leader, Mansour Hadi, who demanded that neighbouring Saudi Arabia bomb his own people – even after Hadi had resigned twice from an already over-extended presidential term, before fleeing to his alma mater in Riyadh.

UN sanctions imposed upon 5 named individuals yet being exploited by the US/UK/EU backed Saudi coalition to collectively starve and punish 27 million Yemeni people.

This fact has been consistently omitted and waxed over by western political appeasers and ethically challenged mainstream media apologists – and their ignorant and conceded omission is one of the primary reasons why this conflict has been allowed to go from bad to worse.



To compare Saudi Arabia's belligerent actions in Yemen to Nazi Germany's undeclared wars of aggression prior to WWII is no exaggeration. In fact, one could make the argument that this Saudi-US joint venture is much worse, and a far more dangerous precedent. Likewise, the failure of a corrupt UN (which effectively [sold Saudi Arabia its seat on at the head of the UN Human Rights Council](#)), led by an impotent Secretary General in Ban-ki Moon, to censure Saudi Arabia for its flagrant violation of international law, the Nuremberg Principles and the entire Geneva Convention content and implied framework – leaves the UN in the exact same position as the League of Nations in 1938.

This is most certainly the case on paper, and with each passing moment we are nudging ever closer to geopolitical déjà vu.

The Anguish

This is one of the most egregious war crimes we've seen so far in Yemen, and considering what Saudi Arabia has already done to date, this is off the scale. On the 9th October 2016, the Saudi 'coalition' targeted one of the biggest public halls in Yemen's capital Sanaa.

Officials said two air strikes hit the grand hall of ceremonies, where a post funeral gathering was held to receive condolences for the late Ali bin Ali al-Ruwaishan, the father of Interior Minister, Jalal al-Ruwaishan.

A total of 4 missiles were launched into crowds of civilians. The first strike, two missiles tore into the hall and surrounding areas leaving dozens dead and dying. Then, as funeral-goers clambered over the smouldering rubble to rescue the injured, Saudi coalition planes returned for the double tap air-strike, targeting the civilian rescuers.

Yesterday, the under secretary of the Public Health Ministry in Yemen told journalist and Middle East commentator, [Marwa Osman](#), the death toll had risen to 458 and hundreds more injured. In an interview with RT, Osman went on to describe, 213 bodies were reported as charred, burned beyond recognition, 67 bodies were completely dismembered and 187 bodies torn apart by shrapnel. The brutality of this attack is evident from the

horrific photos that appeared on social media very quickly after the event, as Yemenis were reeling from the scale of the massacre.

For further background on Saudi 's war of aggression please read 21WIRE article: [UN Whitewashing Saudi Coalition War Crimes and International Human Rights Violations](#)



Yemen civil defence and army recovering bodies from the Saudi coalition bombed ceremony hall in Sanaa (Photo: Yemen the Forgotten War)

The hundreds more injured have been described as “bleeding to death in the streets”. The following report came in from Sanaa hours after the attack:

“Saudi-American airstrikes targeted the biggest hall in Sanaa. The hall was hit by 4 missiles, 2 air-strikes. When rescuers went to the aid of the dying and injured Saudi jets attacked for the second time in their double tap operation. It’s impossible to count the deaths. Officially they are saying less than 500 but many more are dying because they cant be treated due to the absence of medical supplies and hospital facilities. This is entirely due to the UN sanctions and effective land, air and sea blockades. The hall is 2km from our home and 150m from my university but luckily, today I was not there.

Yesterday we killed several mercenary leaders in Mareb and Saudi commanders so today they are taking their revenge on the innocent people” ~ information supplied to Vanessa Beeley of 21st Century Wire.

This video captures the depth of anguish and horror felt by the relatives searching in vain for their children, parents, friends or relatives.

WARNING: this video is not graphic but it is extremely distressing. Watch:

According to [Hassan Al Haifi](#), writer, academic and political commentator, living in Sanaa, the Saudi attack was deliberate:

“The mourners were paying tribute to General Jalal Al-Rouishan, Min of Int, who hails from a leading family of Khowlan Al-Tayyal Tribe, a leading and powerful Yemeni tribe.”

Al Haifi commented that this was a cynical and brutal attack by the Saudi coalition, intending to kill as many Ansarullah and Ali Abdullah Saleh officials and supporters as possible. A number of Saleh’s closest friends and allies were killed by the strikes along with a smaller number of Ansarullah members. Al Haifi, himself should have been at the ceremony but had been delayed and fortunately was not there when the Saudi jets launched their missiles into the throngs of mourners.

The Bloodshed



Saudi air-strike on Sanaa (Photo supplied to 21st Century Wire from Yemen)

The US State Department immediately swung into damage limitation mode and cranked up their hypocrisy to protect their Saudi coalition military industrial complex clients. John Kirby even deployed the “self-defence” terminology usually reserved for their other regional, arms guzzling ally with close links to Al Qaeda, Israel.

The bloodshed and suffering of the Yemeni people was reduced to an obscene game of semantics by a cold and calculating US State Department, as their multi billion dollar arms industry registered obscene trading levels with the Saudi coalition in 2015. In the first 21 months of Saudi-US illegal war on Yemen, US arms sales worth \$33 Billion were closed Saudi and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) entities according to [Defense News](#). In total, America’s

Nobel Peace Chief Barack Hussein Obama has offered to sell \$115 billion in weapons to Saudi Arabia since taking office in 2009 – more than any previous US administration, according to a [recent report](#).

Not to be left out of the party, Britain has also sold more than £3.7 billion in arms to Saudi Arabia since Saudi's illegal war of aggression began.

In truth, many of these estimates are conservative and do not include many more hundreds of millions in ancillary costs, staffing, support contracting and engineering.

Forgotten Heroes

Even though they've been completely redacted by the western media, and also by the myriad of Gulf monarchy media outlets, the real heroes of this conflict are the Yemeni people.

In their reductionist way of thinking and categorizing the world outside of their shores, Americans refer to Middle East populations in sectarian terms – because this is the way they would like to see the world, but it couldn't be any further from reality. To Americans, the Yemeni war is all because of “Iranian-backed Shia Houthi Rebels.” The first US Congressman ever to say that in public probably read it directly off an AIPAC policy briefing sheet. That's the sad reality still in Washington – information-poor (and lobby cash-rich) elected representatives are only able to see the world through the Israeli lens.

The reality is much more complex than just “the Houthis.” A genuine Arab Spring has taken place in Yemen and the US and Saudi response was simply to try and crush the people. But the people have resisted fiercely, and together. Unlike other neo-colonial ventures like Iraq and Afghanistan – the people of Yemen have united to a large degree and are determined to realize their own vision of self government. This is something that has been written off by everyone in the US establishment – from the President all the way down the political food chain.

Damning Indictment

The UK/US built, House of Saud, is waging a genocidal war of aggression that has already destroyed entire swathes of Yemeni cultural heritage and decimated entire communities, particularly in the northern, traditionally Ansarullah (Houthi) held areas such as Saada and Hajjah. This was by design. By now, we can see clearly how this was yet another ethnic cleansing programme being endorsed, fuelled and defended by the United States and her allies in the UK, EU, Israel, and of course the neighbouring Gulf States, the majority of whom participated in this dirty war. Oman, a lone, moderate, and independent thinking gulf state, has remained neutral, providing a degree of support to the Yemeni people.

This is yet another war being fought over resources, based upon illegitimate pretexts and murderous hegemony, whose primary victims are the innocent people of Yemen, and above all the children of Yemen whose sunken eyes, distended, starving bellies and bird-like limbs are a stark reminder of the cruelty of the corporatist-imperialist elite branding their road map on the lives of peoples who, in their twisted optic, are nothing more than insignificant obstacles, collateral damage in the ascent to unipolar supremacy.

The height of US hypocrisy was on full display during a US State Department press briefing

where the [already discredited US spokesman](#) John Kirby shameless danced around a mass-murder by Saudi Arabia – whose airstrikes are supported logistically by the United States. This is the definition of criminality unchecked. Watch:

Author Vanessa Beeley is a special contributor to 21WIRE, and since 2011, she has spent most of her time in the Middle East reporting on events there – as a independent researcher, writer, photographer and peace activist. She is also a volunteer with the Global Campaign to Return to Palestine. See more of her work at her blog [The Wall Will Fall](#).

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