

# America's "Killing Fields" in Yemen: Children are Dying, Engineered Starvation, US Enforced Blockade on Food and Medicine

Megadeaths from America - Yemen Is the Worst Case Among Many

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

Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#), [Poverty & Social Inequality](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

*"Let me be clear: The use of starvation as a weapon of war is a war crime."* - [UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon](#), January 15, 2016, warning the warring parties in Syria

*"People are dying; children are suffering not as a result of an accident of war, but as the consequence of an intentional tactic - surrender or starve. And that tactic is directly contrary to the law of war."* - [US Secretary of State John Kerry](#), February 1, 2016, denouncing atrocities in Syria

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As Americans get ready for Thanksgiving 2017 over-eating, their government is on the verge of [successfully starving millions](#) of Yemenis to death by [siege warfare](#). The US naval blockade of Yemen has been unrelenting [since March 2015](#). The US Navy is an essential element of this [perpetual war crime](#), this endless assault on a civilian population of about 25 million. This is the kind of collective punishment of innocents that we once put Nazis on trial for at Nuremberg. The US Department of Defense [Law of War Manual](#), however, advises ([section 5.20.1, page 315](#)) that: "Starvation is a legitimate method of warfare." So now the US is a blithe mass-murdering state with impunity, qualities hardly ever mentioned in the world's freest media (with one remarkable exception in Democracy NOW, where [coverage of Yemen](#) has been excellent at least since 2009).

Well, never mind, at least Taylor Swift's reputation is soaring and everyone gets to throw figurative rocks at Roy Moore, Harvey Weinstein, Kevin Spacey, and other serial predators. Predator is also the name of one of the US drones that the US President [sends to assassinate people](#) who may or may not have done anything wrong, but who showed up at the wrong time on the wrong list, and what more due process do those un-white foreign people deserve anyway? You don't hear Congress complaining, do you? Or mainstream media? Or the courts? This is beyond bipartisan thrill killing, this is national consensual mass murder.

OK, to be fair, there has been some tepid, insincere, sporadic objection to wiping out millions of innocent people. Why, just as recently as October 10, The New York Times ran an op-ed article - NOT an editorial - that began with a pretty fair summary of the carnage being visited on Yemen by the US and its allies:

Imagine that the entire population of Washington State — 7.3 million people — were on the brink of starvation, with the port city of Seattle under a naval and aerial blockade, leaving it unable to receive and distribute countless tons of food and aid that sit waiting offshore. This nightmare scenario is akin to the [obscene reality](#) occurring in the Middle East's [poorest country](#), Yemen, at the hands of the region's [richest](#), Saudi Arabia, with unyielding United States military support that Congress has not authorized and that therefore violates the Constitution.

The headline on this op-ed piece is “Stop the Unconstitutional War in Yemen,” which is something of a deception since the war is truly criminal by any standard of international law and its “unconstitutionality” is but one aspect of its overall criminality. Like the Times, the authors of the op-ed have yet to face the raw criminality of the aggressive war on Yemen. The authors are three members of Congress, two Democrats, Ro Khanna of California and Mark Pocan of Wisconsin, together with a rare Republican of some integrity, Walter Jones of North Carolina. But they do not call out the gross criminality of American siege warfare against Yemen, they come hat in hand arguing that the war is unconstitutional because Congress hasn't approved it formally. Congress has approved it with silence. No party leadership on either side has joined with these three in their gentle effort to “Stop the war.” These three Congress members, with Republican Thomas Massie, were the original sponsors of the [House resolution](#) introduced September 27, as a hint “to remove United States Armed Forces from unauthorized hostilities in the Republic of Yemen.” The resolution has so far gathered an additional 42 co-sponsors (one more Republican) from the House's 435 members. One measure of where we are as a country is that something as bland and incomplete as this resolution is seen somehow as a radical act that gets little support in Congress or coverage in the media, where the forced starvation of millions of people is not a big issue.

Yemen is a nation under siege from the air with daily bombings. The Saudis and their allies control the air over Yemen, which has almost no air force and almost no air defenses. Nothing flies in or out of Yemen without Saudi permission, which is rarely given, even for food or medical supplies. The Saudi air force could not function without American support. US military forces select targets, provide intelligence, re-fuel Saudi jets in mid-air and repair them on the ground. Every bomb that falls on Yemen has American fingerprints on it, especially the [cluster bombs](#) (another war crime) made in America.

Yemen is a nation under siege from the water, where the US Navy enforces a blockade not only of food, medicine, and other humanitarian relief coming in. The US Navy also turns back Yemenis trying to flee, essentially reducing their choices to risking drowning or starvation. And thanks to the effectiveness of the blockades, there is a massive risk of cholera in Yemen as well, as the US and its allies deliberately wage [biological warfare](#) in Yemen as well.

Yemen is a nation under siege on the ground. The Saudis control Yemen's northern border, which has been under dispute between the two countries for decades. Nothing crosses the border into Yemen without Saudi permission, mostly granted to artillery fire. Little effectual return fire comes from Yemen. Yemen's eastern border is with Oman, which is a friendly state. In between Oman and Yemeni population centers in the west, the territory is mostly controlled by al Qaeda and ISIS, with the Saudi-backed puppet regime tucked in around Aden. All of those forces oppose the Houthis in control of the northwest, which has been their homeland for centuries. Just to be clear: the US is deliberately starving a population

that is fighting al Qaeda and Isis.

With its recent governmental purges, Saudi Arabia maybe have become the [second most dangerous nation](#) in the world. Not to worry, the USA is still Number One. But the [US/Saudi axis](#) can hardly be much better news for the region than it is for Yemen.

On November 8, the United Nations and some twenty international [relief agencies](#) issued [a statement of alarm](#) at and opposition to the US/Saudi-enforced siege on Yemen. The human cost of two and a half years of US/Saudi aggression is already unforgivably punishing and cruel. Now the US/Saudi siege threatens unprecedented catastrophe:

There are over 20 million people in need of humanitarian assistance; seven million of them are facing famine-like conditions and rely completely on food aid to survive. In six weeks, the food supplies to feed them will be exhausted. Over 2.2 million children are malnourished, of those, 385,000 children suffer from severe malnutrition and require therapeutic treatment to stay alive. Due to limited funding, humanitarian agencies are only able to target one third of the population (7 million)... outbreaks of communicable diseases such as polio and measles are to be expected with fatal consequences, particularly for children under five years of age and those already suffering from malnutrition ... the threat of famine and the spread of cholera ... deadly consequences to an entire population suffering from a conflict that it is not of their own making.

Also on November 8, the day of the statement of alarm, UN Emergency Relief Coordinator Mark Lowcock briefed the UN Security Council on the [crisis in Yemen](#). The briefing was secret, on the request of Sweden. After the briefing, Lowcock met with reporters. [He warned that](#), unless there is a significant, massive humanitarian response soon:

There will be a famine in Yemen. It will not be like the famine that we saw in South Sudan earlier in the year where tens of thousands of people were affected. It will not be like the famine which cost 250,000 people their lives in Somalia in 2011. It will be the largest famine the world has seen for many decades, with millions of victims.

The [aggression against Yemen](#) has been a nexus of war crimes from the beginning, when it was sanctioned by the Obama administration to appease Saudi peevishness over international peacemaking with Iran on nuclear development. For almost three years, Yemen has been a holocaust-in-the-making, with this difference: turning most of the country into a death camp, with America's blessing and collusion. Repubs will choose to confirm 300 unqualified judges before they'll choose to intervene in one criminal war, and mostly Democrats will not seriously object to either choice.

If the United States doesn't kill you, it's perfectly happy to let you die (what health care?). The question - with hope embedded - is whether most Americans support the legal reign of terror that is [Pax Americana](#). Given US treatment of Americans from Ferguson to Flint to Standing Rock to Puerto Rico, the prospect is grim.

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