

“Responsibility to Destroy” (R2D): Total War in Yemen, Humanitarian Catastrophe, Ignored by Western Media

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With almost a whimper, the Western media reported that the US-backed regimes of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and their auxiliary fighters drawn from Al Qaeda have begun carrying out what is the ground invasion of Yemen. Along with an ongoing naval blockade and months of bombing raids, the ground invasion adds a lethal new dimension to the conflict – for both sides.

Landing at the port city of Aden on Yemen’s southern tip, it is reported that an “armor brigade” consisting of between 1,000 – 3,000 troops primarily from the UAE are now moving north, their ultimate destination Sana’a, the capital of Yemen.

Columns of the UAE’s French-built Leclerc main battle tanks were seen moving out of the port city though their numbers are difficult to establish. Reports claiming that the UAE unit is brigade-sized might indicate as many as 100 tanks involved – a third of the UAE’s total armored force.

The bold move comes after months of frustrating failures for the two Arabian regimes. Their Yemeni proxies – loyalists of the ousted president Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi – have proven all but useless in fighting Houthi fighters across most of Yemen despite air superiority provided to them by their Arabian allies. And while it appears the well-equipped Arab forces are able to concentrate firepower, overwhelming Houthi fighters in pitched battles, the ability for Saudi, UAE, and Al Qaeda forces to actually hold territory they move through is questionable at best.

Opportunity

The Roman Empire throughout much of its reign was feared as invincible. After suffering several major defeats, the veneer of invincibility began to peel and along with it crumbled inevitably their empire. Likewise, Western hegemony has been propped up by the illusion of military superiority on the battlefield. By carefully picking its battles and avoiding critical defeats, the West, and the US in particular, has maintained this illusion of military invincibility

As the US moves against nations with larger, better equipped and trained armies, it has elected to use proxies to fight on its behalf. Thus, any humiliating defeat could be compartmentalized.

However, by most accounts the war in Yemen is not only a proxy war between Iran and the

Persian Gulf monarchies, it is one of several such conflicts raging regionally that constitutes a wider proxy war between the US and its regional allies on one side, and Iran, Syria, Russia, and even China on the other.

With the presence of Western main battle tanks in Yemen attempting to move north, the opportunity now presents itself to punch holes through this illusion of Western invincibility. Yemen as the graveyard for an alleged brigade of French-built Leclerc main battle tanks would be one such hole. It would also set the UAE's extraterritorial military ambitions back, if not overturn them entirely, and finally, would leave whatever fighting was left in Yemen to the Saudis who have thus far proven incompetent.

Perhaps this is one of the many reasons the Western media has decided not to cover the events unfolding in Yemen.

Yemen Vs. Ukraine

One might ask how - in the context of international law - it is possible for unelected absolute autocracies like Saudi Arabia and the UAE to intervene militarily in Yemen with naval blockades, aerial bombardments, and now an overt ground invasion including armor columns to restore an ousted regime. This is done with seemingly little concern from the United Nations and with the enthusiastic support both politically and militarily of the United States.

The answer to this question becomes more confounding still when considering Western condemnation of Russia for any attempt to support or defend the ousted government of Ukraine, a nation now overrun by NATO-backed Neo-Nazi militias who in turn are backing a criminal regime in Kiev which includes foreigners assigned to cabinet positions and even as governors. Saudi and UAE military aggression in Yemen makes it increasingly difficult for the West to maintain the illusion of moral superiority regarding Ukraine.

Russia's relative restraint when compared to US-backed aggression on the Arabian Peninsula exposes once again the pervasive hypocrisy consuming Western legitimacy.

This may be yet another reason the Western media refuses to cover the events unfolding in Yemen.

Responsibility to Protect...?

✘ After NATO's attempt to invoke the "responsibility to protect" (R2P) as justification for the destruction of Libya, it became clear that NATO was merely hiding behind the principles of humanitarian concern, not upholding them. And while it may be difficult to believe, there are still those across the Western media and policy think-tanks attempting to use R2P to justify further military aggression against nations like Syria.

However, R2P is conveniently absent amid what little talk of Yemen that does take place in the Western media. US-backed blockades and months of aerial bombardments have tipped Yemen toward a humanitarian catastrophe. Not only does both the UN and the West fail to demand an end to the bombings and blockades, the West has continued to underwrite Saudi Arabia and the UAE's military adventure in Yemen.

The carnage and injustice visited upon Yemen serves as yet another stark example of how

the West and its institutions, including the United Nations, are the greatest dangers to global peace and stability, using the pretext of defending such ideals as a means to instead undo them.

Considering this, we discover yet another potential reason the Western media's coverage of Yemen is muted.

It remains to be seen how the Houthi fighters react to the ground invasion of Yemen by Emirati troops. Dealing severe losses to the UAE's armor while continuing to weather aerial bombardment may see the stalling or even the withdrawal of this latest incursion. Not unlike the 2006 Lebanon War where Hezbollah fighters expertly used terrain to negate Israeli advantages in airpower and armor, forcing an early end to the fighting, the Houthis may yet answer this latest move by US-backed proxies operating in Yemen.

Perhaps this possibility above all, is why the Western media would rather the general public knew little of what was going on in Yemen. It would represent yet another conventional Western-equipped proxy army defeated by irregular forces in yet another failed campaign fought in the interests of Wall Street and Washington. While the Western media refuses to cover the events unfolding in Yemen with the attention and honesty they deserve, the conflict is nonetheless pivotal, and may determine the outcome of other proxy wars raging across the Middle East and North Africa, and even beyond.

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