

Saudi, GCC Imperialist Proxy War in Yemen Escalates

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

Global Research, April 07, 2015

Despite the daily airstrikes by Saudi Arabia since March 26, the Ansurallah fighters (Houthis) were able to seize the presidential palace in the southern city of Aden the following week.

Subsequent reports claim that the Houthis occupying the presidential palace were forced to retreat by military forces still loyal to the ousted leader. Saudi bombing of the area and air drops to President Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi loyalists is designed to halt the advances and consolidation of power by the Shiite Islam movement which is supported politically by Iran.

Casualty figures have increased as fighter jets deployed by Riyadh pound residential sections of cities and villages throughout the Middle Eastern state. Officials from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) say that the humanitarian situation is getting worse every day.

ICRC observers are describing horrendous conditions on the ground. Civilian residents are fleeing for shelter further aggravating the overall social and economic crisis inside the country.

Contested neighborhoods and commercial areas in Aden are littered with corpses while the wounded flood into hospitals and clinics. Estimates from Yemeni officials indicate that at least 185 people have been killed in the southern port city while some 1,282 suffered wounds.

These figures have been provided by hospitals in Aden since March 26, according to health department director Al-Kheder Lassouar. These numbers constitute non-combatants and do not account for Houthis and loyalist forces who are also victims of the aerial bombardments and gunshot injuries.

Overall in various regions of the country the casualties are much higher. In addition to the struggle between the Houthis and Hadi supporters, reports indicate that Al-Qaeda of the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and the Islamic State (IS) have entered the fray seeking to carve out territory for the further expansion of their influence.

Since March 26, clashes across Yemen have resulted in more than 500 deaths and approximately 1,700 injuries, United Nations humanitarian administrator Valerie Amos has indicated. Robert Mardini, who is the director of operations for the ICRC in the Middle East, said: "Our relief supplies and surgical personnel must be allowed to enter the country and safely reach the worst-affected places to provide help." (BBC, April 5)

Mardina stressed that "Otherwise, put starkly, many more people will die. For the wounded,

their chances of survival depend on action within hours, not days.”

ICRC officials reported on April 6 that they were able to enter Aden to provide some water, food and medical supplies.

Washington Facing Severe Criticism in Handling Crisis

The United States administration of President Barack Obama has said very little about the current situation in Yemen. 100 Special Forces along with diplomatic personnel were evacuated weeks ago.

Yemen was being championed as a so-called “counter-terrorism success story” just several months ago. The Pentagon and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) airstrikes and drone attacks have killed many targeted Islamic leaders also resulting in many deaths among civilians who happened to be in the vicinity of these aerial assaults ordered by Washington.

The ascendancy to power of the ousted President Hadi was the result of the direct intervention by Washington in 2011-2012 which sought to manage the transition from the rule of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Nonetheless, in the current struggle, forces allied with Saleh have joined with the Houthis in opposition to the Saudi air strikes and the monarchy’s interference in the internal affairs of the country.

Yemenis who hold U.S. passports have bitterly complained about their abandonment amid the escalation of fighting. They point to the fact that states with less influence and military prowess than the U.S., such as China, Pakistan, India and UN staff, have evacuated their personnel and nationals while the Obama administration is continuing to say that the situation is far too dangerous for an intervention aimed at bringing out the remaining U.S. citizens.

The International Business Times reported that “Muslim and Asian-American advocacy organizations Sunday (April 5) stepped up calls for the U.S. government to evacuate American citizens from Yemen, following the death of American citizen Jamal al-Labani in the Middle Eastern country Tuesday. Al-Labani, a 45-year-old California man, is believed to have been the first American citizen killed in Yemen as attacks and airstrikes have been launched in the Middle Eastern state. (April 5)

This same article goes on to point out that “A coalition of groups launched StuckInYemen.com, a website for other Yemeni-Americans stranded in the country to lodge complaints and make pleas for assistance from Washington. The website was created by the Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, the Council on American-Islamic Relations and Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Asian Law Caucus following al-Labani’s death.”

The U.S. administration at present has its hands full in Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan where wars of regime-change and purported “democracy building” have gone awry. In Libya four years ago (2011), the Obama administration initiated the destabilization and massive bombing of the North African state displacing the formerly existing Jamahiriya political system led by Col. Muammar Gaddafi, destroying national institutions and prompting dislocation and economic decline.

Today Libya is a source of instability throughout the region. Deliberations have been underway by European Union (EU) states over whether to deploy a multi-national ground

force into Libya in an attempt to “restore stability.”

However, during early April, rebel forces now recognized by imperialism as the legitimate regime have opposed such a move perhaps learning from the disaster engendered by the 2011 Pentagon-NATO war against the country which has effectively paralyzed the oil industry and prompted lawlessness across the nation and in neighboring states.

Corporate media reports note that counter-attacks by forces loyal to the Saudi-backed ousted Hadi regime were bolstered by arms drops from Riyadh. Nevertheless, they do not acknowledge that Yemen is the most recent battleground of the U.S. and its allied monarchies in the Persian Gulf aimed at curtailing Iranian influence in the region.

Most of the weapons including fighter aircraft utilized by Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) come from the U.S. and other EU member states. Washington and Wall Street are concerned about increasing instability and the political independence exerted by the Ansurallah movement in Yemen.

Yemen is the poorest country in the Arabian Peninsula but it borders wealthier oil-rich states in the Persian Gulf. The waterways surrounding Yemen including the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden have strategic significance for the U.S. in regard to commercial shipping as well as imperialist military dominance.

Developments in Yemen, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Syria and Libya illustrate clearly that there is no such thing as a humanitarian imperialist intervention. Conditions in all of these states have worsened as a result of the so-called “war on terrorism” and putative efforts to “build democracies” in Africa and the Middle East.

Although majority Democratic Party congresses elected in 2006 and 2008, along with the administration of Obama which won office initially in 2008, were sent to Washington with a mandate to end wars of aggression and to work towards a sustainable economic revitalization inside the U.S., they have failed to do so and reveal in stark terms the imperialist character of both dominant parties. Consequently, in the elections of 2010, 2012 and 2014, the electoral base of the Democratic Party among the working class and national oppressed expressed their opposition to these failed promises by staying away from the polls outside the re-election of Obama in 2012.

As the people of the Middle East and Africa must rebuild their societies, national and regional institutions independent of imperialism, the working class and the oppressed inside the U.S. have no alternative than to break with the Democrats and construct a party that is controlled by them and based upon their political and class interests. The winding down of the Obama administration absent of an effective alternative for the masses, opens up the potential for an even more right-wing assault both domestically and internationally after the national elections of 2016.

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