

Special Interests Create The “Good”, The “Bad” And The “Compelling” Story - The Media Tell It

By [Moon of Alabama](#)

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Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Media Disinformation](#)

A [thoughtful analysis](#) by Amanda Taub of the *New York Times* describes why some wars get more “western” public attention than others:

Conflicts gain sustained American attention only when they provide a compelling story line that appeals to both the public and political actors, and for reasons beyond the human toll. That often requires some combination of **immediate relevance to American interests**, resonance with American political debates or cultural issues, and, perhaps most of all, **an emotionally engaging frame of clearly identifiable good guys and bad guys**.

...

Yemen’s death toll is lower than Syria’s, and although Al Qaeda does operate there, **Yemen’s conflict has not had the kind of impact on American and European interests** that Syria’s has. There is no obvious good-versus-evil story to tell there: The country is being torn apart by a variety of warring factions on the ground and pummeled from the air **by Saudi Arabia, an American ally**. There is no camera-ready villain for Americans to root against.

Those are good observations. But they themselves are part of the process they describe. They artificially create “good” and “bad” and are driven by “interests”. (Side note: I doubt the sweeping claim “Yemen’s death toll is lower than Syria’s”. The famine in northwest Yemen is very severe. The number of dead is simply not known yet but like in the hundred-thousands.)

Reporting does not depend on the existence of good and bad or the existence of a compelling story. Such thinking is just idealized nonsense. It is the media that creates the (often artificial) sides of a war on behalf of the interests. Good and bad are not inherent, they are constructs. A real compelling story is not needed. One can be created any time though it will likely not be a true one.

It is the “interests” that designate the “good” and “bad” labels and inject the “compelling” story - specific economic interests but also pursuit of personal power or tribal advantages. The public relation firms and politicians working for the “interests” feed the reporters with the stuff they need to skillfully write the stories down. The well domesticated reporters of main-stream media will intuitively understand when the “interests” are on a roll. They will do their best to support them - or lose their lucrative jobs.

In the mid of of 2000s al-Qaeda in Iraq was the “bad” and the U.S. occupation force was the “good” that “saved the poor Iraqis”. But this was only a fake differentiation and “compelling” story the U.S. military wanted the media to tell. It provide this story to hide the

rather obvious: Genuine Iraqis of all stripes were rising up against the occupation.

The U.S. military [payed over \\$540 millions](#) to the British public relation firm Bell Pottinger to create gruesome al-Qaeda videos:

Bell Pottinger's output included short TV segments made in the style of Arabic news networks and fake insurgent videos which could be used to track the people who watched them, according to a former employee. The agency's staff worked alongside high-ranking U.S. military officers in their Baghdad Camp Victory headquarters as the insurgency raged outside.

For \$540 million one could create two Oscar winning movies in the [most expensive films](#) list. It is an enormous amount of money, enough for thousands of short, low budget "al-Qaeda terror" clips. In the Iraq war those clips created the new "bad" actor in the war and the "compelling" story that needed to be told to keep the military occupation "good", justified and going.

"Western" governments pay more than 70 million dollars to the "White Helmets", the fake "Syrian Civil Defense" [created](#) by the New Yorker PR company Purpose Inc., to make and distribute pictures and movies that show the Islamic insurgency in Syria as "good" and the Syrian government and its allies as "bad". (Additional [billions\(!\) per year](#) go to weapon supplies and mercenary pay for the Jihadi side.)

The "western" media understand what the "interests" want. They eat the PR product up, digest it for form and spit it out towards the consumer. The "outrage" created by the daily "compelling" stories is then used by the "interests" to further their aims.

Below are recent examples of such manipulations picked from the daily diet the "western" public is fed.

Lousie Loveluck, a "reporter" for the *Washington Post*, is stenographing "moderate Jihadi" propaganda from east-Aleppo: [Bombing in Aleppo puts another major hospital out of service](#)

The largest hospital in eastern Aleppo was bombed Saturday for the second time in a week, killing and wounding more than a dozen patients as they recovered from earlier attacks. Doctors at the facility, known as M10, said the assault involved cluster munitions, barrel bombs and incendiary weapons, prompting mass panic and appeals for help.

She [tweets](#):

Louisa Loveluck @leloveluckAttack on Aleppo's main trauma hospital killed 2 patients, injured 13. **7 strikes, incl cluster munitions, barrel, incendiary & vacuum bombs.**

8:38 AM - 1 Oct 2016

It seems that the "doctors" (likely [all pediatricians, some "the last" and dead](#)) are the only sources in Aleppo Loveluck has.

Seven attacks with cluster munitions, barrel bombs, incendiary weapons and vacuum bombs together (note: no nukes yet) “ON” an allegedly filled hospital and only two people dead??? There is still a recognizable building standing??? That is a bit curious. Putin and Assad are really bad at hitting their targets. Or maybe the hospital was not targeted at all. Maybe some Jihadi military headquarter or artillery position nearby was the real target. Mrs Loveluck shows no interest in finding that out. The “doctors”, paid by U.S. PR organization [SAMS Foudation](#), are all she needs. “Good”, “bad”, a “compelling” story – all is already there, provide to her to “report”.

The National from Dubai in the United Arab Emirates is generally a good newspaper. Its [recent report](#) on the background of the propaganda scam the “White Helmets” are is way better than the [usual mainstream media piece](#). Its reporting [by Phil Sands](#) on south Syria is excellent. But sometimes it has to do its duty as a state subsidized outlet and ends up publishing “funny” stuff: [Passengers rescued from Emirati aid ship targeted by Yemen rebel fighters](#):

Civilian passengers were rescued from an Emirati **aid ship** carrying **medical and relief supplies** to Yemen after it was targeted by Houthi militias. A rescue operation was launched in the early hours of Saturday after a **civilian vessel** owned by the UAE’s National Marine Dredging Company was intercepted in the Bab Al Mandab Strait during a journey to deliver emergency supplies to Aden.

The “aid-ship” was the fast military supply catamaran HSV-2 Swift. It is doing runs between Eritrea’s Assab port and Aden in south-Yemen transporting UAE military and mercenaries as well as their heavy weapons. Last year *Janes* [analyzed](#) satellite pictures of Assab harbor:

The 7 November image also shows that the high-speed roll-on/roll-off (ro-ro) catamaran Swift 1 (IMO: 9283928) was also present.

(*Janes* errs with the name. The ship and [IMO number](#) is of [HSV-2 Swift](#) which is the one the UAE leased.)

Last month *War on the Rocks* took a [deeper look](#) into the UAE war on Yemen for which Assab port, rented from Eritrea, is the main base:

Over the last year, this port was built up from empty desert into a modern airbase, deep-water port, and military training facility.

...

By late July 2015, the buildup at Assab airfield was complete, with the base serving as a logistics support area and staging hub for the brigade-sized Emirati armored battlegroup that would spearhead the Aden breakout. This was composed of two squadrons of Leclerc main battle tanks, a battalion of BMP-3 infantry fighting vehicles, and two batteries of G6 howitzers. The Emirates also shipped a 1,500-man strike force of U.A.E.-trained Yemeni troops mounted in U.A.E.-provided armored vehicles after they were trained and equipped at Assab.

The obviously military ship was hit on September 28 at night. Yemeni army forces allied with the Houthis used a land launched, Chinese made C-802 anti-ship missile. The Houthi media

published an [excellent video](#) showing the launch and the hit. The ship, a high powered large aluminum can, went completely up in flames. The “aid” and many “civilian passengers” have likely not survived.

Today the UAE military, led by [the Australian general](#) Mike Hindmarsh and his men, bombed Yemeni fishing boats along its western coast. The fishing boats, one of the few sources left for food supplies in Yemen, had nothing to do with the successful attack. The C-802 was launched and radar-guided from land. But no “western” main stream media will tell you those facts. “Good” and “bad” are not well assigned for them in this war. They probably would like to speak of the “good” underdog Yemenis and “bad” Saudis but are not allowed to do so. The “compelling” point of the story is not provided. *The National* tries to support its guiding “interests” but fails.

Another example of very biased “good” “bad” reporting, if not outright lying, comes from today’s *Independent*: [Syrian swimmer and her 12-year-old brother killed by shelling in Aleppo](#)

Student and sportswoman Mireille Hindoyan was seriously injured and later died after **bombs fell** on the Villi district of the city

“Bombs fell”, the *Independent* writes. Nowhere in piece does it says who’s “bombs fell” and killed the swimmer But the readers already know that only the Syrian and Russian forces have aerial bombing capabilities over Aleppo.

Villi is the Armenian quarter of Aleppo. Here is what Armenian media [write](#):

ALEPPO. – Three Armenians are killed as a result of the shelling of the densely Armenian-populated Villi district of Aleppo, Syria.

.. **Terrorists** are **shelling** the densely Armenian-populated [...] Villi districts of Aleppo, since early Friday morning.

Villi district lies in the government held western parts of Aleppo. The swimmer were killed by shelling by U.S. supported Jihadis in east-Aleppo. But the *Independent* won’t tell you that. It insinuates that the “bad” Assad and Putin killed the swimmer. That the “good” Jihadis kill civilians on the government side is not a “compelling” story. It is not allowed to be told. Unless they are swimmers with a trophy such daily casualties do not exist.

Similar reporting, then with regards to Libya, was all over “western” media in early 2011. [Gaddafi speech threatens to trigger “genocide” in Libya](#) was one of the decisive headlines. Ghaddafi of course never threatened such. He only vowed to defeat the bloody, armed insurgency led by the [Libyan Islamic Fighting Group](#), al-Qaeda aligned Jihadis financed by Qatar. They occupied Benghazi, suppressed its inhabitants and threatened the Libyan state. But the false reporting and “western” outrage created by it was the basis for a large scale NATO attack which then destroyed the Libyan nation. A [British parliament inquiry now confirms](#) that there never was any threat against civilians by Ghaddafi and all such assertions by the media and by “western” politicians were false and made without any evidence. Back then it was a “compelling” story told by the ruling “interests” – and a complete lie.

The “compelling” Ghaddafi genocide story only sold well with the “western” public because the media played the game on the side of the warmongers. It projected the Libyan government as “bad” and the Jihadis as “good”. Real reporting would have unveiled the facts, which prove the opposite, with very little efforts. But the “reporters” never tried. That hasn’t changed as we can see with regards to Syria. All claims by the “good” opposition are repeated as truth without any challenge. Attacks by “good” Jihadis on the government side, perceived as the “bad”, are not “compelling” and get no or only obfuscated reporting.

In the war on Yemen the media is on the side of the U.S. supported attackers from the UAE and Saudi Arabia. Only few stories can be found about the raging famine in north Yemen caused by the Saudi/U.S. blockade of all vital imports to the country. While that is really a compelling story driven awaking human interests and which could induce a public discussion it is not made “compelling”. Likewise the daily Saudi and UAE terror bombing of the Yemeni capital Sanaa finds no echo in “western” papers. The successful Houthi attack on the military ship will be sold as “terrorism” and justify a further escalation of the war.

It is only “interests” driving this. Not general “American interests” or the idealized “human interests” but way more specific ones. Amanda Taub and other “reporters” are working for those. But often they delude themselves and believe otherwise. The evidence though does not support such faith.

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