

The West's Moral Hypocrisy on Yemen

By [Jonathan Marshall](#)

Global Research, February 22, 2017

[Consortium News](#) 21 February 2017

*The West's "humanitarian interventionists" howl over bloody conflicts when an adversary can be blamed but go silent when an ally is doing the killing, such as Saudi Arabia in Yemen, reports **Jonathan Marshall**.*

Only a few months ago, interventionists were [demanding a militant response](#) by Washington to what [George Soros branded](#) "a humanitarian catastrophe of historic proportions" — the killing of "hundreds of people" by Russian and Syrian government bombing of rebel-held neighborhoods in the city of Aleppo.



Billionaire currency speculator George Soros.
(Photo credit: georgesoros.com)

Leon Wieseltier, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution and former *New Republic* editor, was [denouncing](#) the Obama administration as "a bystander to the greatest atrocity of our time," asserting that its failure to "act against evil in Aleppo" was like tolerating "the evil in Auschwitz."

How strange, then, that so many of the same "humanitarian" voices have been so quiet of late about the continued killing of many more innocent people in Yemen, where [tens of thousands of civilians have died](#) and [12 million people face famine](#). More than a thousand children die each week from preventable diseases related to malnutrition and [systematic attacks](#) on the country's food infrastructure by a [Saudi-led military coalition](#), which aims to impose a regime friendly to Riyadh over the whole country.

"The U.S. silence has been deafening," [said](#) Philippe Boloignon, deputy director for global advocacy at Human Rights Watch, last summer. "This blatant double standard deeply undermines U.S. efforts to address human rights violations whether in Syria or elsewhere in the world."

Official acquiescence — or worse — from Washington and other major capitals is

encouraging the relentless killing of Yemen's civilians by warplanes from Saudi Arabia and its allies. Last week, their [bombs struck a funeral gathering](#) north of Sanaa, Yemen's capital, killing nine women and a child and injuring several dozen more people.

A day earlier, [officials reported a deadly "double-tap" airstrike](#), first targeting women at a funeral in Sanaa, then aimed at medical responders who rushed in to save the wounded. A United Nations panel of experts condemned a similar double-tap attack by Saudi coalition forces in October, which killed or wounded hundreds of civilians, as a violation of international law.

The Tragedy of Mokha

On Feb. 12, an air strike on the Red Sea port city of Mokha killed all six members of a family headed by the director of a maternal and childhood center. Coalition ground forces had



launched an attack on Mokha two weeks earlier.

Xinhua news agency [reported](#), "the battles have since intensified and trapped thousands of civilian residents in the city, as well as hampered the humanitarian operation to import vital food and fuel supplies . . . The Geneva-based UN human rights office said that it received extremely worrying reports suggesting civilians and civilian objects have been targeted over the past two weeks in the southwestern port city . . . Reports received by UN also show that more than 200 houses have been either partially damaged or completely destroyed by air strikes in the past two weeks."

The U.N.'s humanitarian coordinator further [reported](#) that "scores of civilians" had been killed or wounded by the bombing and shelling of Mokha, and that residents were stranded without water or other basic life-supporting services.

That could be Aleppo, minus only the tear-jerking photos of dead and wounded children on American television. However, unlike Syria, Yemen's rebels don't have well-financed public relations offices in Western capitals. They pay no lip service to the United States, democracy, or international human rights. Their foe Saudi Arabia is a friend of Washington, not a long-time adversary. In consequence, few American pundits summon any moral outrage at the Saudi-led coalition, despite [findings](#) by a United National Panel of Experts that many of its airstrikes violate international law and, in some cases, represent "war crimes."

Aiding and Abetting

The United States hasn't simply turned a blind eye to such crimes; it has aided them by selling Saudi Arabia the warplanes it flies and the munitions it drops on Yemeni civilians. It has also siphoned 54 million pounds of jet fuel from U.S. tanker planes to refuel coalition aircraft on bombing runs. The pace of U.S. refueling operations has [reportedly](#) increased sharply in the last year.



Billionaire currency speculator George Soros.
(Photo credit: georgesoros.com)

Saudi King Salman bids farewell to President Barack Obama at Erga Palace after a state visit to Saudi Arabia on Jan. 27, 2015. (Official White House Photo by Pete Souza)

The Obama administration initially supported the Saudi coalition in order to buy Riyadh's reluctant support for the Iran nuclear deal. Over time, Saudi Arabia joined with anti-Iran hawks to portray Yemen's rebels as pawns of Tehran to justify continued support for the war. Most experts — including U.S. intelligence officials — [insist to the contrary](#) that the rebels are a genuinely indigenous force that enjoys limited Iranian support at best.

As I have [documented](#) previously, all of the fighting in Yemen has damaged U.S. interests by creating anarchy conducive to the growth of Al Qaeda extremists. They have planned or [inspired major acts of terrorism](#) against the West, including an attempt to blow up a U.S. passenger plane in 2009 and a deadly attack on the Parisian newspaper *Charlie Hebdo* in January 2015. The Saudis tolerate them as Sunni allies against the rebels, in the name of curbing Iran.

Though the Obama administration is gone, the Trump administration is flush with ideologues who [are eager to take a stand against Tehran](#) through Yemen and look tough on "terrorism." Within days of taking office, President Trump approved a commando raid targeting an alleged Al Qaeda compound in central Yemen that went awry, [killing an estimated 10 women and children](#). The administration has also diverted a U.S. destroyer to patrol Yemen's coast.

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, to his credit, has cited "the urgent need for the unfettered delivery of humanitarian assistance throughout Yemen," [according to a department spokesman](#). But no amount of humanitarian aid will save Yemen's tormented people from the bombs made in America and dropped from U.S.-made warplanes, with little protest from Washington's so-called "humanitarian interventionists."

Jonathan Marshall is author of many recent articles on arms issues, including "[Obama's Unkept Promise on Nuclear War](#)," "[How World War III Could Start](#)," "[NATO's Provocative](#)

[Anti-Russian Moves](#), " [Escalations in a New Cold War](#)," and "[Ticking Closer to Midnight](#)."

The original source of this article is [Consortium News](#)
Copyright © [Jonathan Marshall](#), [Consortium News](#), 2017

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: **[Jonathan Marshall](#)**

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca