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Violence and Chaos in Yemen

American Fingerprints

by STEPHEN LENDMAN

March 26, 2015

Yemen is one of many examples of what happens following lawless US intervention.

Obama waged drone war on Yemen throughout his tenure – indiscriminately killing many hundreds of defenseless victims, mostly civilians.

Like Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya and Palestine, Yemen is a cauldron of violence and instability threatening to spin entirely out-of-control.

In January, Houthi forces ousted US-backed Ab-Rabbu Mansour Hadi's regime. They took over the presidential palace.

They extended control to other parts of the country. Last year, Obama ludicrously touted Yemen as a success story.

Saying US strategy “of taking out terrorists who threaten us, while supporting partners on the front lines, is one that we have successfully pursued in Yemen and Somalia for years.”

US interventionist strategy created violence, instability and chaos in both countries – much like virtually elsewhere else Washington intervenes lawlessly.

Houthis control the capital Sanaa, Taiz (Yemen's 3rd largest city), other areas, and head toward seizing Aden.

In February, Hadi fled there from Sanaa. Declared himself still president.

Reports now indicate he fled the country after Houthi forces approached Aden.

They seized al-Annad air base near Lahij – about 60 km from Aden. Hadi established it as a temporary capital.

US personnel were evacuated from the country. Witnesses saw a convoy of presidential vehicles leaving Hadi's residence on a hill overlooking the Arabian Sea.

Reports indicate he fled by boat as Houthis advanced. AP said he left with aides around 3:30PM local time Wednesday – in two vessels under heavy security.

His destination wasn't disclosed. He's scheduled to attend an Arab summit this weekend in Egypt.

AP reported Houthis "closing in on Aden...(T)he city's fall appears imminent" as of midday Wednesday.

Yemen heads toward exploding in full-blown civil war. Involving IS fighters for good measure – US proxies used to help Washington regain control.

If things turn out like Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria, years of fighting may follow on top of what's already happened.

Hadi asked UN officials to authorize foreign military intervention.

Saudi Foreign Minister Saud Al Faisal warned Riyadh may take "necessary measures" if Houthis don't resolve things peacefully – with no further elaboration. More on this below.

Hadi's Gulf State allies evacuated their Aden-based diplomatic personnel. Earlier they relocated them from Sanaa.

Houthis occupied Yemen's capital last August. Seizing the presidential palace in January forced Hadi's resignation.

Houthi leader Abdel Malik al Houthi leader's cousin Mohammed Ali al Houthi was declared new president.

Hadi was placed under house arrest. He escaped, fled to Aden, organized supportive military forces, and now apparently fled Yemen altogether.

The Houthi Supreme Revolutionary Committee called on security forces and civilians to fight what it called “terrorist forces across the country.”

Obama bears full responsibility for Yemeni chaos. Drone warfare followed his December 2009 missile attack on Al Majan village.

It killed dozens of civilians, including women and children.

UN special advisor on Yemen Jamal Benomar addressed an emergency Security Council session on Yemen via video conference.

Things are headed for a “rapid downward spiral,” he said.

“Emotions are running extremely high and, unless solutions can be found, the country will fall into further violent confrontations.”

“Events in Yemen are leading the country away from political settlement and to the edge of civil war.”

Humanitarian crisis conditions affect over 60% of the population. UN sources call Yemen “a patchwork of simmering feuds.”

On March 20, suicide bombers targeted Sanaa mosques during Friday prayers – killing at least 126, injuring scores more.

Yemen grows increasingly violent and chaotic. A meaningless Security Council statement said:

“(T)he solution to the situation in Yemen is through a peaceful, inclusive, orderly and Yemeni-led political transition process that meets the legitimate demands and aspirations of the Yemeni people for peaceful change and meaningful political, economic and social reform.”

Violence continues unabated. Last weekend, Saudi and other Gulf states issued a statement backing Hadi’s regime.

They announced their willingness to use “all efforts” to defend it.

Saudi Arabia deployed heavy weapons along its border with Yemen. A porous 1,800 km border separates the two countries.

Conditions remain chaotic. Houthis claim they seized Aden. Reuters said Hadi’s defense minister was arrested.

So far, Saudi forces haven't moved cross border. Air strikes may be planned – maybe joint ones with Washington.

Hadi wants Security Council authorization for force – “to provide immediate support for the legitimate authority by all means and measures to protect Yemen and deter the Houthi aggression,” he said.

Yemeni military officials calling themselves the Higher Committee to Preserve the Armed Forces and Security reject foreign intervention, saying:

“We express our total and utter rejection of any external interference in Yemeni affairs under any pretext and in any form and from any side.”

“All members of the armed forces and security and all the sons of the proud people of Yemen with all its components will confront with all their strength and heroism any attempt to harm the pure soil of the homeland, its independence or its sovereignty or to threaten its unity and territorial integrity.”

Last month, Houthi leader Abdel Malik al Houthi accused Saudi Arabia of wanting Yemen divided along sectarian lines, saying:

“Our elder sister, the Saudi kingdom, doesn't respect the Yemenis and wants to impose here in Yemen the sequence of events and divisions that happened in Libya.”

Whether Saudi forces intend attacking Yemen remains to be seen. What Obama has in mind matters most.

He's engulfed large parts of the region in conflict and chaos. Maybe he'll compound it by greater intervention in Yemen.