

# Wyatt Reed on visiting Minab massacre site

The Grayzone's Wyatt Reed tells Max Blumenthal what it was like to visit the site of the US bombing of a girl's school in Minab, Iran - scene of one of the worst American war crimes in history The Grayzone ||| Find more reporting at <https://thegrayzone.com> Support our original journalism at Patreon: <https://patreon.com/grayzone> Facebook: <https://facebook.com/thegrayzone> Twitter: <https://twitter.com/thegrayzonenews> Instagram: <https://instagram.com/thegrayzonenews> Minds: <https://minds.com/thegrayzone> Mastodon: <https://mastodon.social/@thegrayzone> #TheGrayzone

## #Max

So let me ask you about two major war crimes where you went to the ground and went to the sites of two of the worst U.S. war crimes in recent memory. One of them was, historically, possibly the worst U.S. war crime, which was the bombing of the girls' school in Minab, Iran, in which close to 170 people were killed, 120 of them schoolgirls. We won't have time to play the entire package, but you begin in a destroyed classroom. Here's your intro.

## #Wyatt Reed

The morning of February 28th began like any other. We had come to the school here to learn and to play. And just like our children in America, they had names and faces and hopes and dreams. All of that was shattered when, at 10:30 a.m., the U.S. military launched a Tomahawk missile directly at them. The U.S. Department of Defense struck directly in the center of the building, killing dozens of children instantly. The teachers who survived tried desperately to usher the children to safety. With many still trapped inside, adults and kids alike ran back in to rescue their friends and siblings. Outside, parents began to arrive, and they started searching frantically for their children. That's when the U.S. military hit the school with a second Tomahawk missile. In all, 155 people were killed, 120 of them children.

## #Wyatt Reed

Around me, you can see the results of American foreign policy firsthand. This is what our leaders and the Israeli leaders have decided to do to the children of Iran in order to teach them a lesson. It is an unconscionable act, and one which every thinking and caring person should endeavor to spend the rest of their life trying to prevent from ever happening again.

## #Max

Well, obviously that experience made a big impact on you, as it would have on everyone. It's, you know, every parent's worst nightmare. And hundreds of family members had to deal with the

aftermath of this hideous crime—two Tomahawk missiles striking a school. And you met some of those family members. Give us your impressions of that experience and what the family members of those murdered schoolgirls told you.

## **#Wyatt Reed**

It was probably one of the worst days of my life, just watching, just experiencing that vicariously through those poor parents who will never get to hold or hug or kiss their children ever again. Their children who will never get to grow up, who will never get to live lives, will never get to fall in love, will never get to have children of their own. It's, again, just one of the worst things I can imagine happening. And it didn't happen to just one family. It happened to over a hundred families. And in some cases, families lost both of their children. There was a pair of siblings, Madi and Rehana, whose parents—you can see in the footage—you see her mother throwing herself on the grave of Rehana and then caressing it, their fingers touching, showing the longing that she has for her child, who she will never get to see again.

And then she gets up, and she has to do the same with another gravestone right next to it—her other child, also taken from her. I was told that Rehana survived the initial blast, was outside the school, and went back in because she said she had to find her brother, and neither one of them ever left. So that was... I mean, it's just beyond heartbreaking. It took my breath away when I heard that, and... obviously, I kind of broke down over and over again that day. It's just something—there's something so deeply, deeply wrong about the loss of a child and about parents having to go through that. And you never recover from that. There's no coming back from it.

So to see that, again, enacted on not just one family but on over a hundred was deeply, deeply distressing. And, you know, if you show the footage again, right at the very beginning, in the first 10 seconds, there's an exterior shot of the school, and you can see the windows of the upper floor. You can see that they are charred black, that there is soot coming out from the windows. And that was all of the windows of the building have this sort of outline of black ash extending out from... Yeah, just let this roll for two or three more seconds, and I think we'll see it here after this next shot of me when there's this exterior shot of the building.

Um, you're right there. Oh, well, yeah, I think we may have just—yeah, you can see this—it looks like smoke, but you can see the soot coming out from the windows. And this was clear on the backside of the building, but all of that soot that's around the windows on the upper floors just kind of gives you an insight into how powerful that blast was. It instantly incinerated many children. It was a huge fireball that blasted throughout the building and then escaped through the windows, which was the only place that the heat and the energy had to leave. So many of those children were instantly burned alive.

And then when the follow-up strike happened minutes later, that was—it was—because the media fixated on this, and the U.S. government kind of tried to claim that, oh, you know, we saw that

people were approaching this IRGC facility, right? And so we just assumed that they were terrorists, right? And it's a little bit like that infamous video where they—I think they target—it was collateral damage, and they were targeting journalists in Iraq. And they kind of make the point that, oh, because people are sort of gathering, they must necessarily be terrorists together. That was the line of thinking, apparently, right?

I suppose it's entirely possible that they had pre-programmed in some kind of strike package and all these missiles were going to be sent one way or the other. But to me, it certainly seems like they deliberately targeted the people who gathered in order to send a message, basically, that we will kill anyone. We will kill whoever it is. Because, again, this attack happened within the opening salvo of the U.S.-Israeli attack on Iran. This was within hours of the sneak attacks, within hours of the execution, the assassination in broad daylight of the leader of Iran, Sayyid Ali Khamenei, who, again, was not just the leader of Iran but the spiritual leader for all Shia Muslims. I think that's also worth noting, that this wasn't just, you know, some mullah.

This was a man widely beloved and respected by over 100 million Muslims—hundreds of millions of Muslims. And then to follow it up almost immediately with the brazen massacre of over 100 schoolchildren—I believe it was 73 little boys and 47 little girls was the figure that they ultimately arrived at—and that was whose graves I walked among outside of Manab. All of this just to say, this is the war that we're fighting, right? It's not a World War II-style liberation war. It's not freeing the Iranians from some oppressive regime. It's murdering little kids in order to strike fear into the heart of an entire society. It's "believe Trump when he says an entire civilization will die tonight." It's a crime against humanity. It has all the matching components.

The murder and extermination of an entire group of people—a systematic, widespread effort—according to the standard ICC definition, that qualifies as a crime against humanity, not just a war crime. So I want people to understand what we're talking about when we discuss the Manab School massacre. And I also want them to note that the U.S. government still refuses to release its investigation into what happened. We know from people who have leaked information to The New York Times that it points to the U.S. military being responsible, but they won't release it, presumably because it found that our government and our military carried out this horrible, horrible crime. And I also want people to note that as soon as it became clear that the U.S. was responsible, this story basically disappeared from the news.

No one in the West is talking about Manab anymore. This horrible, horrible crime, which—if Russia committed, or the Iranian government itself committed—can you imagine? We would never hear the end of it. But since the U.S. was responsible, it's presumed to be an accident, and it's basically covered up and not meant to be discussed in polite company. So everything about this is just unconscionable. And everyone involved in that strike should spend the rest of their life rotting in prison. Everyone involved in covering it up should be punished heavily as well. And everybody involved in the media manipulation, in burying this story, would also ideally, you know, in a just world, be tried at The Hague as well.

