

Another Killing Spree in Mesopotamia: “Pacifying” Mosul

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“When I hear anyone talk of Culture, I reach for my revolver.”
Hermann Goering (1893-1946.)

In the Orwellian world of the United States military, when a killing spree in Mesopotamia is embarked upon, it is called an “Iraq Pacification Operation”. There have been hundreds of these (I abandoned counting at three hundred and eighty, with numerous more to go.)

Each ‘pacification’ has a name which brings a glimpse into a very strange mindset: “Operation Devil Thrust”, “Operation Terminator”, “Operation Scorpion Sting”, “Operation Sidewinder”, “Operation Roaring Tiger”, “Operation All American Tiger”, “Operation Panther Squeeze”, “Operation Warhorse Whirlwind”, “Operation Resolute Sword”, “Operation Wolverine Feast”, “Operation Arrowhead Ripper”, “Operations ‘Geronimo Strike’, ‘Rat Trap’ and ‘Grizzly Forced Entry’”. And from a porn show near you: Operations “Squeeze Play”, “Triple Play”, “Therapist” and “Tombstone Thrust”. (<http://www.globalsecurity.org>)

Seemingly there are even “insurgent” cows, if “Operation Cowpens” lived up to its name. Al Cow-aeda, maybe?

Perhaps the oddest is: “Operation Suicide Kings”. Suicide bombers of course, were unheard of in Iraq until the invasion. The title is no doubt a coincidence in macho “bring ‘em on”, bragging. None however are titles which conjure up the joyously liberated, reveling gratefully, savoring their freedom and democracy.

Having “pacified” Iraqis in to the grave, from Abu Ghraib to Falluja, from Ramadi to Tel Afar, with numerous other murderous stop offs across the land of Abraham, the crusading Christian soldiers are moving onwards to “cleanse” Mosul. That it was the puppet “Prime Minister”, Nuri Al Maliki who used the expression is as inconsequential as he is – his orders come from the pacifiers and their masters in Washington.

In words and deeds, happenings in Iraq are chillingly redolent of Nazi Germany. Neighborhoods walled in and “cleansed” of Sunnis, others of Shias, Christians and Iraq’s richness of minorities ... people who have lived together and inter-married since time immemorial. The distinctions were imposed with the incoming tanks and troops – divide and rule writ large. In Falluja, Goebbel’s ghost walks tall. The residents even have their own identifying arm patch to prove it. And it has certainly been cleansed, in uncountable thousands – exactly how many unknown, since in the words of General Tommy Franks it is not “productive” to count Iraqi deaths.

So how is Mosul to be purified? The most ethnically diverse city in Iraq, consisting of Arabs, Syrians, Kurds, Armenians, Turcomans, Jews, Christians, Yazedi's, Muslims and a trading centre since the sixth century BC. Who will draw the short straw? Their slaughter justified in a search, of course, for "Al Qaeda" with the innocents "a mistake", "regrettable" or "collateral damage". Americas military planners have become the modern day equivalent of the child who repeatedly cried "wolf", they continually justify massacre by crying "Al Qaeda. In 1935, Major General Smedley Butler, referred to the "'racketeering" of the "military gang". He described his military career as a: "... muscle man for big business, Wall Street and the bankers". In Mosul's case, surrounded by and floating on oil, the "muscle" is for Chevron, Shell, Exxon Mobile...

The pastoral Yazedis have already been subject to a cleansing last August, blamed of course on suicide bombers from "Al Qaeda", who presumably, thoughtfully, left identification amongst their and others body parts - similar to the two "Down's syndrome" women, who detonated bombs in two pet markets two weeks ago.

The first great epic fable, Gilgamesh was fashioned and honed in Iraq. It is being bloodily rivaled since 2003.

Perhaps, even more sinisterly, the world will not hear about the "pacification" of Mosul. Just as internet cables were severed between the Middle East and Europe, seemingly in four places, during the time of the great escape from besieged Gaza - a modern day flight in to Egypt - twenty five communication towers have been destroyed in Mosul and the environs, in an "ongoing" sabotage of some sophistication. (<http://www.uruknet.info/?p=40975>)

The British sought to pacify Mosul in 1920. The people were less than grateful, killing six officers in ten days and later Colonel Gerald Leachman, an officer celebrated for his "travels and feats in eastern deserts". Leachman, at a loss to understand why Iraqis did not want to be occupied, stated that the only way to deal with them was "wholesale slaughter". He was, unsurprisingly, shot in the back by his Arab host, which led the British to talk of "Arab treachery". Some sanity came from newspaper letter columns, encapsulated by one to The Times: "How much longer are valuable lives going to be sacrificed, in the vain endeavor, to impose upon the Arab population, an elaborate and expensive administration, which they never asked for and do not want?" Within months, however, five hundred British were dead and fifteen hundred injured.

This was the region where Winston Churchill did not "understand this squeamishness about the use of gas. I am strongly in favor if using poison gas against uncivilized tribes", he said of peoples who brought the world astronomy, in a region where Saints walked and Nineveh's ancient wonders still stand. Churchill railed against the "prejudices of those who do not think clearly", regarding the use of poisons as a "scientific expedient". It was an excellent strategy, in spite of it causing blindness or permanent eye damage: "... kill children and sickly persons especially as the people against whom we intend to use it have no medical knowledge with which to supply antidotes".

The all is an uncanny mirror of current plans and foolishness. The British also drew up a list of weapons: "Phosphorous bombs, war rockets, metal crow'sfeet for maiming livestock (an early "Operation Cowpens"?) man killing shrapnel, liquid fire and delay action bombs ... "If the people whose right was to be there did not behave", remarked a Wing Commander Gale: "... we will spank their bottoms. This was done with bombs and guns." More kinky

language. How little has changed – and there are still those alive in the region who remember this previous barbarity. Western invaders are unwelcome and unforgiven. Like America’s Nuri Al Maliki : “The king is widely regarded as a British puppet”, commented General Haldane.*

Phosphorous and “unusual” and illegal weapons are still being used, with depleted uranium in bombs and bullets leaving its radioactive legacy for four and a half billion years. Troops also breathing its gene altering and cancer causing properties and taking it home in dust, on clothes and in kit bags, to affect their families, children – and babies not yet conceived.

Before the onslaught on Mosul begins, will soldiers walk as the apricot sun sinks beyond the Tigris and the great black curtain of keening birds, their cries rising heavenwards, yet hanging in the air, dance and swirl past to their secret places of the night? Will they watch the fishermen, in their tiny corraks, emerge silently from between the reeds, their reflections plumbing the translucent, golden and tangerine streaked Tigris? Will they reflect that it is the cradle of civilization they are destroying? Will they stop for a moment, to reflect on what actor David Garrick (1717-1779) referred to as: “That blessed word: Mesopotamia, which ... has the power to make men both laugh and cry”? Will they walk in wonder by Nineveh’s winged bulls, these soldiers of God, in the land of so much of His Bible? If they did, they surely would walk away, heads hung and turn to another career path.

Will they ever encounter the true spirit of Iraq, in those they denigrate as “sand niggers”, “hajjis”, “rag heads”, or as one British soldier wrote: “I hate f ...g Arabs.”

Their spirit enveloped me in Mosul, after I became dangerously ill. I recovered and noticed there was a distance, almost an embarrassment, from those I knew. Suddenly a dear friend apologized to me: “Madam Felicity, you who love our country, you who care for what is happening to us; we are so sorry. Iraq has made you ill.” They were ashamed not to have prevented a recalcitrant Iraq “making me ill”. Garrick was right on Mesopotamia’s power’s over men (and women.)

Mosul is threatened also with the collapse of the great dam to its north. The US Army Corps of Engineers has said it is in danger of a “catastrophic” breach, which is likely to wipe out much of the city and sweep an estimated half million people before it in a flood which could reach Baghdad. It does not take an engineer to figure that the US chosen method of pacification, bombing with up to two thousand pound munitions, would almost certainly create vibrations which would breach the dam.

George Bush’s “crusade” would thus end in a flood of biblical proportions, also sweeping away countless of his own troops on the ground – and with it, the last shred of any reputation he has left – and the loyalty of his armed forces. In this region of Saints, of the Prophet Jonah, perhaps divine intervention will yet prevail. It is sorely needed.

*From Sumer to Saddam, Geoff Simons, Macmillan 1994, still unbeatable, detailed reference, ancient and modern.
<http://www.amazon.com/Iraq-Sumer-Saddam-Geoff-Simons/dp/1403917701>

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Please also see:

No Attack on Mosul! An Emergency Statement of Intellectuals and Activists - 05 February 2008

<http://www.unobserver.com/index.php?pagina=layout4.php&id=4372&blz=1>

Iraq's Tidal Wave of Misery

<http://www.motherjones.com/commentary/tomdispatch/2008/02/iraq-tidal-wave-of-misery.html>

Iraq and Afghanistan Wars Breed Deadly Disease

http://www.motherjones.com/blue_marble_blog/archives/2007/10/5815_iraq_and_afghan.html

New Bacterial Infection Linked to Military Report: Troops Transmitted Mysterious Bacteria That Has Killed 7 And Affected Military And Civilians Alike

<http://abcnews.go.com/Health/Germs/story?id=4233448&page=1>

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<http://www.watershedsentinel.ca/CurrentArticle.htm>

T*IMZ - Iraq

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