

Back to Iraq, and Welcome to the Suicide State

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In-depth Report: [IRAQ REPORT](#)

I feel like an Iraq war veteran not because I served in that still ongoing war.

No one thanked me for my service, and all praises be, I was not among those who were killed, wounded or traumatized on our side or theirs.

I was a veteran in the same sense that I was, as a journalist, for years, totally absorbed in the war from the building to the first shots fired and bombs dropped, as a daily blogger, a film maker that made WMD: Weapons of Mass Deception about the media war that was fought alongside the invasion and two books discussing that coverage in detail. Embedded (Prometheus Books, 2003) and When News Lies: Media Complicity and the Iraq War (Select Books, 2006). I later commented on the issues for Aljazeera's global website.

After such a deep immersion, I was burned out and delighted to focus on another issue, the war at home—the Financial Crisis. I directed two films, In Debt We Trust and Plunder to investigate that crisis. and wrote there companion books from 2006 to 2010.

But, now, Iraq is calling me back as the US plans a new round of bombing, not necessarily that it believes will be any more successful than the murderous Shock and Awe campaign was, but the pressure to “do something” is heard as a call to return to the limited playbook that gets trotted out in all these conflicts. Yes, Virginia, generals do fight the last wars,

Suddenly, an invasion justified by lies and deception is being treated with a certain nostalgia with frequent interviews with pro-war veterans and loud prescriptions for more Pentagonian violence by Neocons who made the mess in the first place. Howard Dean called out the networks for giving “experts” who were so wrong the first time around airtime to call for more US involvement.

Dean said neoconservatives “have no idea what they’re doing” and criticized Sunday talk shows for presenting political viewpoints instead of impartial analysis of what is occurring in the region.

“The problem is the Sunday talk shows are in decline, and that’s because all they have are people on there who either do political posturing like Sen. [Lindsey] Graham — who actually is very smart and knows a lot about defense, but the statements he made are clearly political and silly — and Judith Miller, who has no credibility whatsoever, who was fired from The New York Times for essentially misleading them and all its readers.”

Yet, this time around there are calls from the Obamanoughts who favor liberal intervention.

The “tough” guys of 2003 have been replaced by the tough gals of 2014.

Writes Bob Dreyfus in the Nation:

“It’s appropriate that two of the leading liberal interventionists, both of whom have served in prominent positions in Barack Obama’s administration – are named Power and Slaughter.

Samantha Power, of course, is Obama’s ambassador to the United Nations, and a leading advocate of using American force overseas, especially when in her opinion civilian casualties can be exaggerated as “genocide.” And Anne-Marie Slaughter, long a foreign policy insider and currently head of the New America Foundation, served under Secretary of State Hillary Clinton as director of policy planning at the State Department (2009-2011). Back in 2011”

True to her name, Slaughter is seeking more US slaughter on the ground. Interesting isn’t it that an Administration that backs massive NSA Surveillance, was caught off guard by the ISIS offensive in Iraq that seized cities and now oil fields. So much for the brilliant prognosticators in our intelligence agencies who also missed Putin’s move into Crimea.

Of course, the media jumped in with all its baggage. Suddenly there were new terrorists to excoriate with very little airtime devoted to explaining the corruption and failures of the Maliki regime that we brought to power, and who played the ethnic card by stigmatizing Sunnis and brutalizing critics.

The voices of Iraq Veterans against the war were, of course, not heard. In a press release, they “call on the Obama administration to learn from the lessons of our country’s past and to pursue non-military diplomatic solutions in supporting the people of Iraq in reaching reconciliation.”

How is it possible that after hundreds of millions spent on creating all this alleged “progress” in Iraq, a new U.S. dictator playing the ethnic card has taken over from Saddam.

Iraq is still a militarized state built on human rights abuses and massive inequality and presiding over a society that lost more than a million people with millions more living in other countries as refugees.

Has any of this horror show been explained on US TV by networks that mostly closed their bureaus and moved on, and are as clueless as the government.

The Political Scientist Michael Brenner puts it this way:

“We all are acutely aware that Washington is in a serious jam because of the mounting threat to the Baghdad regime amidst signs of military and political unraveling. The United States is reaping the whirlwind from its twelve years of reckless “War On Terror” in the Middle East.

The disastrous Iraqi invasion/intervention is the direct cause. Strategically incoherent and disjointed American actions elsewhere are also essential parts of the story. For there has been no systemic logic guiding policies from place to place, from issue to issue. Yet the intersection and overlap of developments are the hallmark of the region’s politics. ...Today, we are confounded by unanticipated events that leave us uncomprehending and at a loss as what to do.”

The blogger Legalienate goes further at legalienate.blogspot.com:

“The destruction of Iraq, which began under the conservatively emotional Bush regime, continues under the liberally placid Obama administration. There are differences in style when an intelligent landscaper replaces a slack jawed gardener but the plantation they serve differs only in the cosmetic facade it sells the public, not the diseased crop it produces. ... It contrasts itself to its blood thirsty opposition as a peace-making arbiter among squabbling foreigners, but those squabbles often originate in our meddling foreign policy which looks like the rest of our economy; dangerously de-structuring.”

Could it be that the narrative here is totally different from what we have been told?

Could the men in black, the ISIS Rebels, however brutal in a terribly brutalized society, not be terrorists but a liberation army who have won over people in the towns they took over?

Is that why the NY Times reported public support for the force we have denigrated with the “T” word, writing. “In Places Such As Mosul And Anbar Province, The Security Forces Are Regarded As ‘A Foreign Force In Their Own Country.’ And, “Some Residents, Hardened By Their Hatred Of The Army, Spoke Of The Insurgents Almost As If They Were A Liberating Army.”

Notes US Labor Against the War:

“What we are witnessing today is not just the military victory of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), but an uprising of Sunni tribes against al-Maliki’s authoritarian and sectarian rule. There’s no other way to explain how fewer than one thousand ISIL fighters were able to rout thirty thousand Iraqi troops to take control of Mosul – a city of 1.8 million. The Iraqi Army was not defeated; it simply refused to fight, collapsed and ran.

Sending more weapons to al-Maliki and US jets to bomb Iraq will do nothing to change the trajectory of events, except to increase the blood-letting and destruction in a country that has already seen far too much.”

There is some evidence that Obama knows this and is pursuing another maneuver according to London’s Independent that reports:

“The US has told senior Iraqi officials that the Prime Minister, Nouri al-Maliki, must leave office if it is to intervene militarily to stop the advance of Sunni extremists, The Independent has learnt. The Sunni community sees Mr Maliki as the main architect of its oppression and the Americans believe there can be no national reconciliation between Sunni and Shia unless he ceases to be leader of the country. “

That may be, but the President claims he needs no new authority from Congress, a view that predictably outrages the Obama blamers on the right, and gives solace to the hardheads behind Hillary in the center so it is likely there will be more senseless aggression because flat-footed US policymakers seem unaware that once again, they will make it all worse.

Our media is filled with stories about suicide gunners and bombers, but all too little on what Henry Giroux calls our own “Suicide state.” Is it any wonder that Legalienate quotes Brecht: “War is a bastard but the bitch that bore him is in

heat again.”

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