

“Big Lies” and “Small Lies”: White (Phosphorous) Christmas

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“(…) the broad masses of a nation are always more easily corrupted in the deeper strata of their emotional nature than consciously or voluntarily; and thus in the primitive simplicity of their minds they more readily fall victims to the big lie than the small lie, since they themselves often tell small lies in little matters but would be ashamed to resort to large-scale falsehoods. It would never come into their heads to fabricate colossal untruths, and they would not believe that others could have the impudence to distort the truth so infamously. Even though the facts which prove this to be so may be brought clearly to their minds, they will still doubt and waver and will continue to think that there may be some other explanation.” – Adolf Hitler (1)

“If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it. The lie can be maintained only for such time as the State can shield the people from the political, economic and/or military consequences of the lie. It thus becomes vitally important for the State to use all of its powers to repress dissent, for the truth is the mortal enemy of the lie, and thus by extension, the truth is the greatest enemy of the State.” – Joseph Goebbels (2)

Judging from our leaders and mainstream media, it seems these two gentlemen quoted above didn't die in vain.

A few days ago, the Chicken-Hawk-in-Chief said: “Stop throwing the Constitution in my face. It's just a goddamned piece of paper!” (3) On 29 January 2003, at the State of the Union speech, the same Chicken-Hawk-in-Chief addressed the Congress: “And as we and our coalition partners are doing in Afghanistan, we will bring to the Iraqi people food and medicines and supplies – and freedom.” [It followed one of the many standing ovations from the Congress' members. Good to remember when still so many think the Congress should impeach the President. My grandma would say: If you want it done right, you have to do it yourself.]

According to “The State of Iraq: An Update”, an article published by The New York Times “A sober reading of the data argues against a rapid withdrawal, which would concede the fight to the terrorists.” (4) One wonders how many people must be murdered before (soberly) calling someone terrorist: 30,000? 100,000? 500,000? 1,000,000?

“The war in numbers: From WMD to the victims” is a collection of numbers published on 13 December 2005 by The Independent. It reads: “30,000 Estimated Iraqi civilian deaths” (5)

What's the source of this number? Is The Independent (and the other mainstream media) accepting the numbers given by the official sources, which is to say the White House and

the Pentagon? Why did most of the Western mainstream media bury the most serious study conducted on the subject? (6) This study, published on 29 October 2004 in the prestigious medical journal *The Lancet* (7), reads:

Making conservative assumptions, we think that about 100000 excess deaths, or more have happened since the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Violence accounted for most of the excess deaths and air strikes from coalition forces accounted for most violent deaths. (Interpretation)

Most individuals reportedly killed by coalition forces were women and children. (Findings)

Les Roberts, of the Center for International Emergency Disaster and Refugee Studies at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, one of the world's top epidemiologists and lead author of the report, recently wrote:

"It is almost a year since a group of scientists from Al-Mustansirya University in Baghdad, and Columbia and Johns Hopkins Universities in the US, released a report in the medical journal *The Lancet* estimating that 100,000, and perhaps far more, Iraqis had died due to the US invasion. The issue of civilian deaths in Iraq and *The Lancet* report in particular were deemed by the group Project Censored as the second most under-reported story of 2005. (...) I thought the press saw their job as reporting information. This may indeed be the case for the coverage of auto accidents and the cost of pig-futures, but it was not the case regarding civilian deaths in Iraq." (8)

On the same day *The Independent* gave those numbers, it published the leading article "The perils of planting democracy in a hostile land". The first and the last paragraph read:

"One thousand days. This is how long British troops have been in Iraq, and still we are counting. Such an accumulation of time seemed inconceivable in the days after the invasion, when the military operation looked likely to be completed in weeks. As we now know to our cost, the ease of removing Saddam Hussein offered no preparation for the multifarious resistance that was to come. Ousting a dictator is one thing; sowing and watering the seeds of democracy where none existed is an undertaking of quite a different order."

"It is possible that, if the security situation deteriorates further, not leaving now will come to be seen as a mistake and an ignominious retreat will follow. On balance, it is probably worth waiting in the hope that the elections usher in calmer times and serious reconstruction can begin. The only bright point in this whole sorry episode will be if we are able to plan an orderly departure and leave Iraq in a better state than we found it. Anything else will constitute a shaming defeat." (9)

For those of you who don't know, *The Independent* is considered to be an anti-war newspaper. No kidding!

Let's see how we have been "sowing and watering the seeds of democracy".

Never mind the British colonialism, the slaughters and the use of poison gas by the British Empire, let's not consider the Iraq-Iran war and the US governments' role behind that war,

providing weapons, intelligence and any kind of financial help and support for the carnage to continue. Let's just start from 1990.

The UN sanctions against Iraq, wanted by the governments of the US and the UK and imposed on 6 August 1990 (HIROSHIMA DAY) ended only with the invasion and occupation of Iraq in 2003.

In 1996, Madeleine Albright - US Ambassador at the United Nations and soon to become Secretary of State under President Clinton - said about half million children murdered by those sanctions: "I think this is a very hard choice, but the price - we think the price is worth it." (10)

Those sanctions killed a terrifying number of innocent people. One million? Two millions? Will we ever know?

Denis Halliday, former UN Assistant Secretary General and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq (1997-98) said: "I had been instructed to implement a policy that satisfies the definition of genocide: a deliberate policy that had effectively killed well over a million individuals, children and adults." After thirty-four years with the United Nations, he resigned in protest over the effects of the embargo on the civilian population. (11)

Hans Von Sponeck, who had succeeded Denis Halliday as UN Assistant Secretary General and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq (1998-2000), resigned on February 13, 2000. He asked: "How long should the civilian population of Iraq be exposed to such punishment for something they have never done?" Like Halliday, he had been with the United Nations for more than thirty years. (12)

Remember the first Gulf War? Surgical bombings, smart missiles and a great show on TV. There were between 142,000 and 206,000 Iraqi deaths directly attributable to the Gulf War in 1991 (13)

Guantanamo, Abu Ghraib, kidnappings, tortures, cluster bombs, depleted uranium, white phosphorous, Fallujah... "sowing and watering the seeds of democracy"!

The 'big lies', the 'colossal untruths', the 'large-scale falsehoods'. When our ruthless leaders and their apologists in the media use words such as democracy, freedom and human rights just run and run fast!

Whatever the reasons Afghanistan and Iraq have been bombed and occupied, they have nothing to do with freedom, democracy and human rights. And the other big lie, the war on terror, is just a show for the western audience, a smoke screen Hitler and Goebbels would be proud.

Every time our leaders and mainstream media "tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it", let's "dissent, for the truth is the mortal enemy of the lie". And as Oscar Wilde wrote: "If one tells the truth, one is sure, sooner or later, to be found out."

NOTES

1) Mein Kampf, published in Germany in 1925-1926. Author: Adolf Hitler (1889 - 1945) Founder and Leader of National Socialism (Nazism), and German Dictator 1933 - 1945

- 2) Joseph Goebbels (1897-1945), German Propaganda Minister 1933 - 1945
- 3) Bush on the Constitution: [‘It’s just a goddamned piece of paper’](#), by Doug Thompson, Capitol Hill Blue, December 9, 2005
- 4) [The State of Iraq: An Update](#), by Nina Kamp, Michael O’Hanlon and Amy Unikewicz, The New York Times, December 14, 2005
- 5) [The war in numbers: From WMD to the victims](#), The Independent, 13 December 2005
- 6) Suggested reading:
 - BURYING THE LANCET - [PART 1](#), September 5, 2005
 - BURYING THE LANCET - [PART 2](#), September 6, 2005
 - BURYING THE LANCET - [Update](#), September 12, 2005
- WATCHING HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH. [Open Letter to Kenneth Roth](#), Executive Director Human Rights Watch, by Gabriele Zamparini, December 7, 2005
- 7) Mortality before and after the 2003 invasion of Iraq: cluster sample survey, [The Lancet](#), Published online October 29,2004
- 8) A year later - 100,000 deaths in Iraq, by Les Roberts. This op-ed was sent to me by the author.
- 9) Leading article: [The perils of planting democracy in a hostile land](#), The Independent, 13 December 2005
- 10) Lesley Stahl on U.S. sanctions against Iraq: “We have heard that a half million children have died. I mean, that’s more children than died in Hiroshima. And, you know, is the price worth it?” US Ambassador at the United Nations (soon to become Secretary of State) Madeleine Albright: “I think this is a very hard choice, but the price - we think the price is worth it.” CBS - “60 Minutes”, May 12, 1996
- 11) Source: The New Rulers of the World, by John Pilger, Verso, 2002
- 12) Ibidem
- 13) Source: U.N. 1991 the Ahtisaari report; Daponte 1993

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