

Iraq, Massacre of a Country: “A War on Terror” when you are the Terrorist

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Fifteen years ago, April 9, 2003, The Occupation of Baghdad. This article by veteran war correspondent Felicity Arbuthnot was first published by Global Research in April 2012

“How can you make a war on terror when you are actually the terrorist?” (Unknown.)

America’s 2003 assault on Iraq, already devastated by thirteen years of sanctions, infrastructure destruction consequently unrepaired from the 1991 bombing was, in the ridiculous annals of names the US military gives to their slaughter-fests, entitled: “Shock and Awe.”

This approach to nation destruction is technically known as: “rapid dominance”, the concept based on use of “overwhelming power.” It was devised by two arguably psychologically challenged military strategists, Harlan K. Ullman and James P. Wade, in 1996.(i)

Their days devising Machiavellian “shock” in destroying all means of: “communication, transportation, food production, water supply, and other aspects of infrastructure must (cause) the threat and fear of action that may shut down all or part of ... society (rendering) ability to fight useless short of complete physical destruction.”

Further: “Shutting the country down would entail both the physical destruction of appropriate infrastructure ... so rapidly as to achieve a level of national shock akin to the effect that dropping nuclear weapons on Hiroshima and Nagasaki had on the Japanese.”

In an interview with CBS Ullman stated: “You’re sitting in Baghdad and all of a sudden you’re the general and thirty of your division headquarters have been wiped out.

“You also take the city down. By that I mean you get rid of their power, their water.”

Iraq’s water had been deliberately targeted in 1991, on orders to the twenty seven country coalition, from Central Command (ii) and had never recovered, as was intended: “We estimated it will take Iraq’s water six months to fully degrade”, stated the circulated instructions, which also advised: “Iraq will suffer increasing shortages of purified water because of the lack of required chemicals and desalination membranes. Incidences of disease, including possible epidemics, will become probable ...”

Ironically, in an unprecedented action after 1991 hostilities ended, UN Security Council Resolution 687 held Iraq responsible, indeed liable, for all damage, including the Coalition destruction of its water supplies, targets prohibited by both Hague and Geneva Conventions.

Then, after twelve years of deprivation and bombing, of deformed and dying children poisoned by the radioactive and chemically toxic Depleted Uranium (read nuclear waste) weapons used in 1991, Iraqis were subject to further toxic “shock” of enormity, but certainly no “awe.”

As Baghdad’s great bridges spanning the Tigris, which I had walked and driven days before, burned and fell, for the second time in a decade, as the flames consumed Harun al Rashid’s eighth century “Round City”, and its history was raped by looters, as it shook and tumbled, Iraqis hid in cupboards under stairs – or just waited to die, as Hades itself erupted around them – and Washington and Whitehall called it: “liberation.”

Perverts in US and British uniforms put bags over peoples heads, tied their hands, chucked them in to transportation and took them to hastily opened prisons, where they were stripped naked, tortured, sexually abused, murdered.

Fellow perverts took “trophy pictures” of the dead – and trophy fingers, bone fragments and worse, as momentos.

Journalists attempting to relay reality were also targeted and murdered by invading forces, setting a trend. Iraq is now the most dangerous place for journalists on earth and the third most corrupt.

On 9th April, the day Saddam Hussein’s statue was pulled down by US marines, then Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld called it: “a very good day.” Destruction by occupying forces of cultural history, ancient or modern, is, of course, another war crime. It is also low life vandalism and a damn cheek of – literally – historic proportions.

Anthony Shadid was a journalist who survived the invasion’s forces, but lost his life in Syria last month. His testimony to Iraq’s tragedy and his own courage as the carnage enveloped, remains part of his legacy, in countless words.

As the morgues filled to overflowing (victims were soon piled in refrigerated trucks outside) he visited the Mosques, where the “caretaker” of humanity’s last hours on earth, tended the the dead.

Haider Kadim, was carefully washing the body of fourteen year old Arkan Daif, killed with two friends. He had suffered: “a hole in his skull, when the sky exploded.” His relatives described Arkan as: “like a flower.”

“It’s very difficult”, said Haider, his labour of love and respect over and the men closing the coffin.

Earlier in the week: “he had gone to another Mosque to help bury dozens, when a blast ripped through a teeming market nearby. The memories haunted him. He remembered the severed hands and heads that arrived; he recalled bodies, even that of an infant, with more gaping holes.”

Even funeral parties were attacked, from day one. Shadid records an eighty year old lady, whose family had risked the missiles to take her to be buried in the ancient cemetery in southern Najav, Shia Islam's most holy site.

They never made it. U.S. forces, wrote Shadid, attacked the three cars, one carrying her body. It was 31st March 2003.

Troops then moved in to the nations's palaces, painted murals of missiles raining down on the walls - and subsequently held Christian Baptism ceremonies in the swimming pools, having brought in an "Alpha" Christian indoctrination course, enthusiastically run and embraced by the self- appointed "Vicar of Baghdad", Canon Andrew White (iii,iv) who also came in with the tanks.

Dismiss any doubts about it not really being a "Crusade" and that being another George W. Bush "miss-speak."

By 1st May, to declare: Mission accomplished", George W. Bush landed on USS Abraham Lincoln in a little flying suit, his manhood apparently encased in lead. Seldom "in the field of human conflict", has a Commander in Chief looked such a prat. (Apologies to Winston Churchill.)

The episode, did, however, perhaps encapsulate the gargantuan, tragic, fantasy-land concept of the whole illegal, ill conceived Iraq invasion, the venture of a very "New World", in to the "Cradle of Civilization" and, as Petra, it's ancient cities, half as old as time."

Notes

- i. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shock_and_awe
- ii. <http://www.progressive.org/mag/nagy0901.html>
- iii. http://www.alphausa.org/Articles/1000048248/The_Alpha_Course.aspx
- iv. <http://www.virtueonline.org/portal/modules/news/print.php?storyid=4200>

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