

Iraq: “Occupation” is the Highest Form of “Dictatorship” which Washington calls “Democracy”

Iraq, 15 April: The Friday Of The Free

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Global Research, April 16, 2011

BRussell Tribunal 16 April 2011

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

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The letter below was sent to me by Asma Al Haidari, who follows the news of the Friday demonstrations in Iraq. These peaceful demonstrations have been going on for weeks now. Today was called “ the Friday of the Free ”. Western media reported about Egypt and Tunisia but they will - again - fail to report about this democratic movement. Occupation is the highest form of dictatorship, but the Americans call it “democracy”, “freedom”, “liberty”. And this occupation that is enslaving a nation of 26 million Iraqi citizens, is far from over.

The US Embassy in Baghdad, already the largest in the world, is expected to double its staff from 8.000 to 16.000 “civilians” after American forces pull out of the country later this year. <http://www.commondreams.org/headline/2011/04/02-0> . And a private security force some 5,500 strong will protect the large US diplomatic presence in Iraq . I guess that they will have to issue hand-held GPS’s so that the 16,000 “non-military staff” can find their offices in the new and upgraded US Embassy in the “ Emerald City “! Just what are all of these people going to do?

For as long as I can recall, the US has always told the UN that it is an inflated organization and that it could easily function with half the current staff members. The UN’s website states the following today:

” The UN Secretariat employs some 7,750 staff members under the regular budget and some 8,230 under special funding. Coming from nearly 175 countries, they administer the UN’s policies and programmes in New York and at duty stations around the world. The UN system as a whole - the UN and its related programmes and specialized agencies, including the World Bank and the IMF - employs some 63,450 people worldwide. ”
<http://www.un.org/geninfo/ir/index.asp?id=160>

This means that a “diplomatic mission”, the US Embassy in ONLY ONE CITY, Baghdad , will employ one-fourth of the number of UN staff worldwide!!! The mind boggles.

If the Americans consider Iraq so important that 16.000 of their staff + 5.500 mercenaries for protection will be deployed there, how come the solidarity work of the peace movement is so weak today when it comes to Iraq ? Can anyone explain? Something is not right here. The Iraqi demonstrations should be wholeheartedly supported by the whole Western civil society, to give the Iraqi courageous protesters a clear signal that they are not alone.

Here’s Asma Al Haidari’s comments on today’s protests.

“What am I to write to you about today? The Friday of the Free???”

For this is what our young revolutionaries have called it.

What am I to start with? Mosul or Tahrir Square I will start with the courageous and long suffering men, women, children and youth of Iraq in Tahrir – my tears are streaming down uncontrollably – a man of 50 who cries and says Death to Iran – Death to America – Death to Maliki – 80% of Parliament and the people who rule are Iranians – no loyalty to Iraq – Long Live Iraq – all our sons are in detention centers – my 16 year old son is in prison – Iraq is the crown on our heads – we will all die for Iraq – Iraq will live forever – then a young man who says Down with Sectarianism- Down with the Quota System – Death to Iran – let all Iraqi Young Men rebel and fight for Iraq – If Mohammed is a Sunni then I am a Shi’i – we are all one – we are all brothers – we all have the same blood – women – women cry and men – grown up men cry tears of agony and anguish for Iraq and for our sons and daughters – for our country that has been raped and pillaged

Dirk, where is the free western press???? Ah, Dirk the scenes in Tahrir were phenomenal because Maliki and his henchmen yesterday ordered people to demonstrate in two football grounds – again on a sectarian basis can you imagine???? But he is a stupid man – so are his advisors – the Iraqis are much too intelligent and clever for all of this and demonstrated that they are now at the point of no return in their rebellion and revolt – they assembled in Tahrir and told Maliki and his parliamentarians to go and play football in the stadiums he has assigned!

The young man who said let’s all unite and fight – yes, armed resistance is what he is speaking about – continued to say that Maliki and his parliamentarians seem to be equating their demonstrations with a game – well, we will show you that we are not playing. He says that if we do not demonstrate in Tahrir then we will return to Armed Resistance and get martyred for Iraq – he also said that he was sure a massacre was going to be committed by the security forces against the demonstrators, today.

These same security forces that could not stop them from coming to Tahrir.

Men, women, and children, and Christians who are speaking out about the “government’s” criminality against them – it was amazing and enthralling! The crushed Iraqi middle class in all its colours and hues is out and will remain out – this is the beginning of civil disobedience – all very peaceful but full of force and commands respect and a bowing of our heads to them.

The women who are in Tahrir are in the hundreds – all women whose sons or husbands have disappeared in Maliki’s and the Occupation’s secret prisons – Iraqis have broken the chains – the world should watch out – But the world is so silent and apparently deaf and blind as well.

Can’t the world see that this revolution is totally different – that we are a people and a country under occupation – and that we have slowly started to take our rights back and to free ourselves.

You can feel the atmosphere of Tahrir – you can see and feel the life that is Tahrir – Tahrir belongs to the People – Of course all the bridges and streets leading to Tahrir were cut off but people came all the same and are still there – They are chanting that Maliki is a liar and a thief – they are chanting that whoever does not say Tahrir – “Liberation” then his life is a

loss - They are daring the security forces who are there in great numbers to detain them - I have always known and told you what we are made of - Dirk, how can people not love the Iraqi People - how could the Americans have ever thought that they can colonize us?????

I am amazed at the fact that the United States believed the lies that it was told about us - I am amazed - then you come to Mosul - ah brave and courageous Mosul where for the past 6 days a huge demonstration and gathering has been gradually grown in numbers and today there are 5,000 people in The Square of the Free - the old prison square - all the tribal sheikhs who had not sold themselves to the occupation came from the very south of Iraq, Nassiriya and Basra, led by Shaikh Salim Al Thabbab - The Prince of Rabee'a and Sheyban , tribal sheikhs and leaders from Kut, Diyala, a contingent of Kurdish demonstrators from Azadi Square in Sulaymaniya whose leader put on the "Iqal" - the traditional headgear of Arab men and said that we are all Iraqis - and stood under the old Iraqi flag - they came from Haweeja and Tikreet - a tribal chief from Tilkaif - the Christians in the north as well as tribal leaders from Anbar, Kubaissa and Fallujah - we have come together again, this time publicly - for all the world to see but what is most amusing is that today the American Occupation's helicopters made a great entrance on the stage demonstrating that the American Administration really does believe the democracy it alleges it brought to Iraq is in fact equal to garbage No really, Dirk, I really mean it literally!

It was funny and it is all on film - daily, since the vigil and demonstration started in Mosul , American helicopters buzzed the demonstrators and the demonstrators answered back by throwing their shoes and slippers at them in disdain! Today, the helicopters performed what they considered their coup de grace! By flying very low over their heads and throwing down bags of garbage! This is the American sham called "democracy" and this is their attempt to colonize Iraq - they should read history and anthropology a bit more carefully from now on!

When the people in the Square of the Free were asked for comments their answers were that the Americans throw garbage at us every day since the occupation - all the enriched uranium; all the white phosphorous; all the drugs and aids; all the disease, tyranny, oppression, plunder, theft lies and illiteracy they brought with them amongst much more - so we, Iraqis, know everything and we will have justice at the end of the day when a new dawn comes - the feeling is that it is going to be quite soon.

In the Square of the Free, united Friday Prayers were held for the 5,000 - women, poets, lawyers and the important Muslawi Business Merchant community joined - they all signed their names in blood in the Register of the Honoured. A young couple insisted that their wedding should take place in the square today!

Again, I ask, where is the world - where are the free men and women who opposed this war - is there no man no woman, who feels that justice is on his side and that he should speak freely and forcefully about us?????

Reading the NY Times one would believe that their correspondents must be living on another planet - amazing. They are so silent - all the mainstream press, in fact.

Today, there were large demonstrations in Basra , all over Anbar province and and Babil as well - in Diwaniya they were threatened by the security forces that they would all be detained. Of course, Sulaymaniya in the tens of thousands in Azadi Sqaure. I also heard a tribal chief from Tel'laafer say that 10 large vehicles were on their way to Mosul when they were stopped by the notorious general Ghannam and told why do you want to go to Mosul -

they are all Sunnis and terrorists and you are Shi'is! and were turned back - the scene is developing and is building up -

I'll keep you in touch but please check the English page of the Great Iraqi Revolution for all the videos etc... which will be posted soon."

Sallams, Dirk.

Asma Al Haidari

Dirk Adriaensens is a member of the B Russell s Tribunal Executive Committee

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