

IRAQ: “The Occupation is the disease”

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Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#)

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The following information is from three highly esteemed Iraqi professional people. Their lives are in danger. Two people's names and professions have, by request, thus been withheld.

ONE: “There is no way out of this ‘Camp Iraq.’ “

Iraq is worse than during sanctions ...

“By February 2006, 224 (health professionals) had been killed. 1000 had left the country. Since February, I personally know six more highly specialised doctors who have been killed ... Many in medical training have also left Iraq ... Post graduate studies have closed down because of lack of teaching staff. So a (generation) gap has been created. Experienced doctors are unable to pass on their experience to new doctors ... Specialised health services have declined.

The airport road used to be a lovely area, with trees and roses. Families used to go there for picnics. An American soldier threw a stone at me because I didn't stop. My architect friend was killed – shot dead on this road by Americans. If you don't stop, the Americans will shoot you ...

The US kill civilians and blame the resistance ...

A doctor friend of mine was shot in front of his home by Americans. There was no apology. Why have doctors been killed – some by Americans? Some are kidnapped. In Fallujah, why did the Americans go inside the operating theatre and kill? Why go to a house at night? At 2 AM, there were helicopters and bombs. He was a neighbour of mine. His name was Riad Khammal.

A child runs to his mother when he hears a helicopter. A child is now afraid of helicopters ...

Once a bullet came into my office, towards me, but it hit the metal on the window...

Omar Salem Khattab, a urology surgeon, was taken by the US – trained Iraqi police and National Guard when he was trying to help people in a bomb blast. He was taken away for detention. I went to ask about him. The doctor had been abused and hit. He was released. He left Iraq ...

There is a difference in the study of history. In the West, one learned a little about western history, but nothing about the rest of the world. In our country, we studied the history of Europe and of the world.

Education had been free since Saddam. Books were free. It was compulsory for children to go to school until 1993. Literacy was compulsory for everyone who didn't know how to read or write, no matter how old they were. Before the Gulf War, 92% of the children attended school. And now? The schools are closed; 362 schools are closed in Baghdad because of the difficult situation. Dijula school was bombed. Children are not going to school. People are afraid ... I have a daughter. It is dangerous for her to go out.

There is poverty. The children are outside, begging. Begging is greater than in the '70s or '80s. There is malnutrition. Iraqi people want to eat just like all other people.

Why destroy the electricity, water supply, waste product system? ... The aim is the complete destruction of Iraqi society ... The healthy aspects of home life have disappeared. There is no water, no electricity. There are no drugs in the hospitals; no theatre gloves. Hospitals need to be renewed. They were destroyed in the sanctions, and now we can't renew them. Twice my hospital has been destroyed - first in 1991, when it then took two years to rebuild; and again in 2003, it was destroyed when an American bomb hit the building beside the hospital, causing the hospital roof to collapse. The hospital needed to be renewed again, but there was no money - and there was the occupation. The hospital was out of action for 8 months. Now, the generator is sometimes not working. This is a danger to the patient during an operation, as the generator has to be worked by hand.

It is difficult and frustrating for a patient to go to hospital. There are bombs, no oxygen, no drugs, can't do surgery. In the private sector, it is better.

Those inside the wire are not like those outside the wire. We need courageous men inside the wire.

Do you fight, or do you negotiate? If you negotiate, will you not be killed anyway? How can you say 'fight' when are also speaking for the children, who will be killed?

There is no way out of this 'Camp Iraq.'

The US should announce that their forces will go out by - X - this date. And on this date, the UN should move the security forces to Iraq, so no one can then criticize anyone."

TWO: Heart of Darkness

Another Iraqi source told me that there is a [DU](#) (Depleted Uranium) project in Baghdad supported by the University of (!) Texas. "Congenital abnormalities and stillborn children increased five-fold during the 90s, particularly in the Basra region ... DU is killing thousands ... Cancer increased 1 year after the bombing in Basra; there were 460 cases that year."

My source suffers from "bad memories - first from the severe sanctions, then war and imprisonment in a 3x3m cell, now with the occupation.

It is a long pain, an interruption of peaceful living. ... To live under occupation is Hell. We have elusive enemies we do not know. We don't know why they are targeting us ...

Many academics had senior posts; for example, they were the head of a department.

Academics have been subjected to four types of hassle. First, to being interrogated and

detained, right after the war. This was due to an accusation of participating in the (non-existent) WMD secret programme. Detention was from a few days to three years. Two women scientists, Dr. Huda Amash and Dr. Rehab Taha, were only recently released after confirmation that there was no such secret programme.

The second hassle is that many have been subjected to 'de-Baathification.' Hundreds were fired from their jobs because they were members of the Baath party, although all of them were seniors in different scientific fields.

The third problem is having to endure threats and intimidation by students who are motivated by different political and sectarian parties. Academics receive threatening letters, asking them to leave the institute and the country. Or they find a bullet in their letterbox. Some letters are written by students who are not doing well - a kind of blackmail - but we cannot take chances.

The fourth problem is the assassination list. Those who are still alive try and survive in the heart of danger - the heart of darkness. Many are trying to leave Iraq.

Iraq is very chaotic ... The academics need temporary jobs or fellowships to get them away from the risks. They are the treasures of Iraq. The heart of darkness is overshadowing them."

I ask: And if the US leaves Iraq?

"America is the germ. We need to flush the germ out. The symptoms can then be treated and relieved. Then we can restore our living."

THREE: "We need international support"



Eman Khamas. Photo by Sarah Meyer

Eman Khamas is a journalist, author and human rights advocate. She is passionate about her work; driven by and dedicated to injustice.

Eman says:

"With every dead man, woman and child, Iraq is killed anew. The bombing continues to this

minute. The US bombs hospitals, and bury the people under the rubble. Schools are bombed and destroyed. Every time, all Iraqi's rights are violated.

It is criminal to kill thousands of people because there are a few individual criminals. Almost 300,000 Iraqis have been killed in the last 3 years. 1,400 Iraqi civilians were killed in the last month.

Students cannot go to school. Professors cannot go to school. Many girls do not go to school. It is dangerous for girls. The roads are closed, or there is a curfew, or bombs, or suicide bombing. People have to walk for miles to get to their school. For some, it is a two-hour, dangerous walk ... We had a demonstration under the window of the dean of a university. He wouldn't look out the window ...

We have never had this phenomena in the past - only since the occupation. 224 (health professionals) have been killed. 1000 are in exile. The only thing these people have in common is that they are Iraqi and intellectual. If they are in jail, they are tortured, released, and then they disappear ... People are assassinated by Americans and insurgents. We don't know who they are. There are lists on the wall of people who are going to be killed - so these people leave Iraq. They are afraid of retaliation. People are threatened either by being accused by the occupation or by those who are giving information to the occupation. If one talks about the occupation, one is fired. It is dangerous to talk about the occupation.

The United States and the United Kingdom have programmes. There is collaboration. They are only interested in scientists with certain qualifications. They want to ensure those scientists stay in the country, and not to go to the 'Axis of Evil' countries. They say, 'come attend a workshop in Jordan,' for example. There are 'trainers.' They might organise something for environmental health, for example, in Oman.

There is no information from any institution. They are not allowed to give information to journalists ...

What is the future of Iraq under occupation? The killing is done by the militias - political militias, using the religious emotions of the Iraqi people to gain power. The US know they can do this and get away with it. There are no official Iraqi investigations. The people in government are behind this killing ...

What about the families of those who have been assassinated?

Displacement, too, is a problem because of the bombing and fear. These people need everything. They cannot wait. They need help NOW. There are widows, orphans. They have no financial help. Their husbands have been killed or are in jail. There are homeless families, living in tents or in unsafe structures. There is a problem with a shortage of medicines. The US apologises for bombing hospitals, but this means nothing.

We need to work to educate people. It is the right of any people to resist occupation. Iraqis have resisted because of the killing of civilians - the bombing of cities. Mainstream Media does not understand the urgency ... The US and Mainstream Media concentrate on political success, elections, democracy. All of this is irrelevant to the Iraqi people.

The occupation is responsible for everything that happens. What happens are the symptoms. The occupation is the disease. The occupation works on division. The issue they are working on now is civil war. We have never had civil war in our history. Because the

occupation is in Iraq, there is violence. The US says that Iraqis are not capable. This is a lie. There are many Iraqis who are capable, given a chance.

We need international support for the Iraqi intellectuals ... I have a recommendation ... to call for Spanish universities and then to the International Federation of World Universities and the Association of Arab Universities, and ask them to raise the issue in regular meetings ... Scientists are national treasures.

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The Dead and Homeless

Refugees. The number of Iraqi refugees is up for grabs. The [Displacement and Migration Ministry](#) said two weeks ago that the number of refugees was about 60,000. A 28.04.06 [Reuters article](#) quotes the Iraqi vice president as recently saying that there are around 1/2 million refugees.

The number of [widows in Iraq](#) is increasing. There is a rising number of [orphans](#). [Families hunt](#) for Iraq's Lost.

Murdered Academics & Doctors.

On 01.06, The Washington Post reported on the [Exodus](#) of Iraqi educated professionals.

The Iraqi Minister of Health has just declared that "220 health professionals" have been assassinated. Approximately 190 academics have been murdered. See the BRussels Tribunal list, report and Madrid conference resolution [here](#). The Spanish website [CEOSI](#), (Statewide Campaign to End the Occupation and Restore the Sovereignty of Iraq) has further details.

For latest information on doctors in Mosul, see 01.05.06 [Reuters report](#).

The BRussels Tribunal needs help from the Iraqi people themselves to substantiate the number of doctors and academics killed, when, and how. The dead are victims of war crimes.

Murdered Journalists.

[Reporters without Borders](#) says that 88 journalists and media assistants have been killed since the start of fighting in Iraq in March 2003. Two are still missing. To put this in perspective, "around 63 journalists were killed in Vietnam during the 20 years from 1955 to 1975." Read their March '06 report, Three Years of Slaughter, [here](#).

Dead Iraqi Civilians.

[The Iraq Body Count](#), 38,661 killed, appears to be incorrect. Mr. Sloboda has tried to [defend](#) his figures. Both [Media Lens](#) and Gabriele Zamparini at [The Cat's Dream](#) have disputed the Iraq Body Count figures, backed by evidence. [William Bowles](#) does not find Mr Sloboda's Newsnight defense convincing.

In 2004, The Lancet, a UK medical journal, wrote a [report](#), Mortality before and after the 2003 invasion of Iraq: cluster sample survey. This report said there were approximately

100,000 dead Iraqi civilians.

The estimated number of civilian dead now is estimated at between 250,000 – 300,000+. Iraqis are afraid to go to the police if a relative has been killed.

Suicide Bombers.

There have been rumours that in Iraq, the US secretly puts bombs in cars and then sets them off from a helicopter. These rumours are now becoming more substantiated. See The Independent, 29.04.06, [Robert Fisk](#)

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The url for Iraq: The Occupation is a Disease is: <http://indexresearch.blogspot.com/2006/05/iraq-occupation-is-disease.html>

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