

# “Pre-emptive” Terrorism

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Global Research, July 05, 2005

5 July 2005

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

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

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

On March 16, 2003, Bush, Blair and Aznar of Spain met on the Portuguese island of Terceira in the Azores and declared war on Iraq at a time of their “choosing” unless President Saddam Hussein and his two sons leave Iraq. On March 20, 2003, without explicit authorisation of the UN Security Council and in violation of international law, and against the majority of the world public opinion, the US and Britain attacked Iraq “pre-emptively”.

The violent attack was one of the most severe seen in modern history against a defenceless nation. It caused the death of tens of thousands of innocent Iraqi men, women and children. Iraq’s state infrastructure and Iraq’s cultural heritage were deliberately destroyed and looted in the days following the invasion. It was not a war; it was a new form of Western barbarism.

The principle reasons given for the invasion at the time were to “disarm Iraq” of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and Iraq’s alleged links to “terrorism”. The real motive was the imperialist control of the Middle East, and support for Israel. There was no firm evidence provided to substantiate the fabricated allegations. To the contrary, Iraq had no WMD since 1991, and Iraq had no link to “terrorism” or the 9/11 attacks on the US. Bush own 9/11 Commission found no link between Saddam and 9/11. In fact evidence shows that the decision to attack Iraq was taken several years prior to the 9/11 attacks, which were carried out by individuals from nations allied with the US and Britain. The war was an illegal act of aggression.

Since March 2003, the principle reasons for the war on Iraq keep changing and are rightly described as “a pack of lies” when repeated again in [Bush’s Speech at Fort Bragg](#). The biggest lie of WMD has disappeared from Bush speech. Bush is simply playing the role of a propagandist in order to deceive his own people and continue his war of terror against innocent people. As Dr. Joseph Goebbels, German Minister of Propaganda (1933-1945) noted at the time: “If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it”. He added; “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”. “President [Bush] seems capable of nothing but lying and crying about terror while terrorizing others”, wrote Canadian author, John Chuckman.

In order to accept the use of “pre-emptive” attack in the name of self-defence, it is essential to first accept the existence of such a right under the UN Charter. According to Michael Bothe, Professor of Law and an expert on international law at W. J. Goethe University in Frankfurt, Germany; “lawful self-defence requires the actual existence of an armed attack or of a situation to be considered as equivalent to an armed attack”.

The UN Charter is very clear about the prohibition of the use of force. Article 2(4) stated: "All members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state or in any manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations". Iraq was a defenceless nation and Iraq posed no threat to the US, Britain and their allies. Further, there was no evidence of Iraq's intention to attack any other state. The attack on Iraq was a premeditated act of terrorism.

The official definition of terrorism, according to a US Army manual: "is the calculated use of violence or threat of violence to attain goals that are political, religious, or ideological in nature. This is done through intimidation, coercion, or instilling fear" [1]. The British government definition of terrorism in the Terrorism Act 2000 is: "terrorism is the use, or threat, of action which is violent, damaging or disrupting, and is intended to influence the government or intimidate the public and is for purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause". In 2005, a UN panel defined terrorism: "as any action intended to cause death or serious bodily harm to civilians or non-combatants with the purpose of intimidating a population or compelling a government or an international organisation to do, or abstain from, any act".

While these definitions are important, they are only used when Western states and Western interests are attacked by so-called "retail" terrorists. They are deliberately avoided and ignored when Western forces attacked other states. For example, these definitions are not considered appropriate when discussing the daily acts of terrorism practised by Israel against the Palestinian people or the 1981 Israeli "pre-emptive" attack on Iraq's nuclear reactor plant in Baghdad, killing two French technicians in the attack. These definitions were also not considered appropriate when the US "pre-emptively" attacked a pharmaceutical plant in Sudan in 1998 killing many civilians and destroyed the country's vital source of medicinal supplies. The use of the term terrorism is deliberately ignored in the current indiscriminate attacks by US-British forces on population centres in Fallujah, Najaf, Ramadi, Al-Qaim, Hillah, Haditha, Karabila and many other Iraqi towns and cities using prohibited Napalm and chemical weapons. The current premeditated US terror, termed "collective punishments", to destroy Iraqi towns and cities is in complete violation of the Geneva Protocol and The Hague Convention. Sadly, it is encouraged by the deafening silence of the UN Secretary General, Mr. Kofi Anan, who is only interested in serving his imperial master than serves the principles of the UN Charter.

The US and its allies use terrorism as an "ideological instrument of propaganda and control". "It is the West and Western interests that have pushed terrorism to the forefront, not the 'terrorists'", wrote Edward Herman. Terrorism is the driving force behind Western imperialism and the ongoing illegal conquest of people's resources and livelihoods.

Furthermore, it is worth remembering that since 1991, the US and Britain used the phantom of WMD to enforce the murderous sanctions against the Iraqi people, and to illegally bomb Iraq in order to force a change in Iraq's leadership in total violation of international law.

Meanwhile, despite the clear illegality of the war and the enormous war crimes committed against the Iraqi people, people in the West, particularly the American people, are reluctant to show solidarity with the Iraqi people and acknowledge the sacrifices of the Iraqi people to defend themselves and their nation against the violence of colonial occupation and state terrorism.

Phyllis Bennis of the Institute for Policy Studies and one of the so-called “anti-war” movement leaders in the US wrote (ZNet, June 28, 2005) recently: “Anti-war organizing that began within days of September 11th and kicked into high gear in the run-up to Bush’s war in Iraq is paying off” ..... “The most significant aspect is that a large majority of people in this country now believe some or all U.S. troops should be withdrawn from Iraq”.

Nothing could be further from the truth. The “anti-war” movement record is that it has not only failed to stop the US-Britain from instigated an illegal war of aggression against the people of Iraq, the “anti-war” movement has also failed to prevent those who committed the crime from re-elected to high office. This deliberate denial by the “anti-war” movement of the existence of indigenous Iraqi Resistance against imperialist forces is embedded in the West ignorance and imagined superiority and consistent with the Bush administration. One has to be living on another planet in order to believe that the “anti-war” movement and not to the sacrifices of the Iraqi people and the Iraqi Resistance who are forcing the US-British public to rethink the crimes of their governments. Like the Bush administration and its allies, the leaders of the “anti-war” movement are disconnected from reality.

The “anti-war” movement takes no credit from the failure of the US imperial agenda in Iraq. Had it not been for the Iraqi Resistance and the sacrifices of the Iraqi people against US Occupation, Syria and Iran would have been attacked by now. Is the US administration afraid from attacking Iran or Syria because of the “anti-war” movement? Is the dramatic decline in enlistees for the US Army a result of the “anti-war” movement? Are the 6000 US conscientious objectors afraid of the “anti-war” movement? Are Bechtel, Halliburton and all the oil corporations freezing their looting of Iraqi resources because they are worried about the “anti-war” movement?

The Iraqi people and the Iraqi Resistance do not need recognition from the “anti-war” movement, the Bush administration and the US army have recognised and publicly acknowledge the existence of the Iraqi Resistance.

Organisers of the “anti-war” movement should use their ‘democratic rights’ to resist and disassemble the new draconian and undemocratic “anti-terror” legislations introduced by their governments in order to curtail freedom and civil liberties in the name of potential terrorist attacks. Here in Australia, ‘counter terrorism’ raids by Special Forces on homes of innocent Muslim Australians are very common and carried out for political reasons in order to create a climate of fear against the Muslim community with tacit support of biased judicial system. In today’s “global” war of terror, being a Muslim or having a Muslim name can get you in serious trouble. A strong “anti-war” movement should use the overwhelming *prima facie* evidence to formally indict those who committed this international war crime against the Iraqi people.

From the first day of the Occupation, the US and its allies have use a policy of pitting Iraqis against each other in order to create a climate of fear and benefit from any ethnic and religious divisions that will weaken the Iraqi nation. Fear is the powerful weapons of terrorism and occupation. In addition, the most advanced technology and sophistication have been used to destroy Iraq and loot the nation’s natural resources. The Occupation forces have failed to provide Iraqis with anything close to peace and freedom. Iraq is disintegrating with every passing day of the Occupation. The US aim in Iraq is the creation of a colonial dictatorship in order to re-colonise Iraq economically and institutionally to serve US interests.

Like any act of terrorism, the violent US attack on Iraq is political. It is about power. The US is able to manipulate the outcome of the violence it created by altering the very language of politics. The war on Iraq is not about fighting “terrorism”; it is a war of terror to enhance US imperial control. There are conscious efforts by Western media and Western pundits to discredit the images of the Iraqi people and the Resistance against the Occupation. The Iraqi Resistance made up of local fighters and not “terrorists” who target civilians. Those who target civilians (Iraqis and non-Iraqis) are foreign intelligence agents and collaborators with the Occupation forces.

Billion of dollars have been spent to destroy the fabric of the Iraqi society and divide the Iraqi people. The marketing of civil strife or ‘civil war’ is also brought into Iraq with the Occupation. Since the Occupation, Iraqis living conditions have worsened; freedom and the rules of law have disappeared all together. The Occupation brought with it the current misery, violence and a culture of mass corruption. The Occupation has no solution, it is the problem. All Iraqis are united for an independent Iraq, and for an immediate end to the Occupation of their country.

The truth about the Bush war of “pre-emptive” terrorism is that it will continue unless it is resisted by people committed to building a civilised world free from the fear of terrorism in all its forms and shapes. The US cannot continue its violent Occupation in Iraq pretends to fight “terrorists”. If there are “terrorists” in Iraq, they are in Iraq because of the Occupation. Once the Occupation forces withdraw from Iraq, the phantom of “terrorists” will withdraw with them. Iraqis will be able to negotiate a peaceful solution that serves their nation interests and the interests of their communities without the interference of foreign forces.

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Notes:

[1] US Army Operational Concept for Terrorism Counteraction (TRADOC Pamphlet No. 525-37, 1984).

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