

Terror and Resistance

The determination and courage of the Iraqi Resistance

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Since the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq, there have been three elections and one “transfer of sovereignty”. However, the situation on the ground in Iraq has further deteriorated. What have changed are the pretexts for ongoing terror and occupation. The U.S. administration is using elections as smokescreen to manipulate public opinion and legitimise the subjugation of the Iraqi people to a colonial dictatorship.

As the U.S. and its collaborators failed to control Iraq on the ground – due to a determined Iraqi Resistance –, they turned to the air to rain their daily terror on the Iraqi people. With the complete silence of the “international community”, U.S. warplanes are targeting population centres opposed to the Occupation. The U.S. air war of the 1990s is being re-enacted again in full force. This time the U.S. is not enforcing genocidal sanctions and “no-fly zones” – that killed more than 2 million Iraqis –, but to prop up a puppet government of criminals and thugs, and in the process instil fear and terror among the Iraqi population.

Even the *Washington Post* – the mouthpiece of U.S. terror – acknowledging the fact that U.S. aerial attacks on Iraqi towns and villages with high civilian population are indiscriminate and deliberately killing innocent Iraqis. In one of these attacks more than 80 civilians – hospital records show 97 – were killed when U.S. warplanes bombed the town of Husaybah in the first week of November 2005. The number of airstrikes carried out each month has risen to five folds, from roughly 25 in January to 120 in November. After U.S. warplanes struck homes in Kamaliyat neighbourhood “witnesses observed residents removing the bodies of what neighbours said was a family — mother, father, 14-year-old girl, 11-year-old boy and 5-year-old boy — from the rubble of one house” reported the *Post*.

On Tuesday midnight 27 December 2005, U.S. warplanes attacked a house in Al-Dolouieya, 90 km north of Baghdad destroying the house and killing a father along with two of his daughters, one aged 12. While the *Post* is a deceptive U.S. propaganda mouthpiece, nevertheless it sheds a dim light on the U.S.-driven terror in Iraq.

From the beginning of this criminal war, Iraqi civilians have always been the victims of U.S. terror. The “Shock and Awe” terror is just an example of indiscriminate mass murder. In October 2004, the reputed and peer-reviewed British medical journal *the Lancet* reported that the majority of the estimated 100,000+ Iraqi deaths were civilians killed by U.S. air bombardments of population centres and Iraq’s infrastructure, including ministries and cultural heritage. The aim is not only to kill as much Iraqis as possible but also to trigger the collapse of the Iraqi society through the destruction of Iraq’s cultural values and institutions.

After three years of the same, George Bush still has the courage to tell Western leaders and U.S. allies that the terror against the Iraqi people must continue until “victory” is achieved.

The U.S. is refusing to withdraw its army from Iraq alleging that the Iraqis are not ready yet to rule themselves. This contempt on the part of the U.S. is evident of the West racist and anti-Arab colonial ideology of deep-seated belief in cultural superiority to indigenous peoples. It should be borne in mind that the dismantling of the Iraqi army and police by the U.S. Administration was designed to encourage insecurity and enforce sectarian divisions.

By replacing the army and the police with expatriates and U.S.-trained militia gangs, whose loyalty to the Iraqi state is weak and questionable, the U.S. has deliberately increased the violence and fraternal killings. The U.S. financed and armed these militia gangs, and allowed them to operate freely. These militia gangs are bent more on advancing their ethnic and religious interests than on defending the nation and preserving national unity. By doing so the U.S. ensured obedience and dependence. In other words, the U.S. aim is to cement sectarianism and ethnic division, and destroy Iraq's unity and national identity.

Meanwhile the third fraudulent elections have been rejected before the final results become public. Iraqis were *en mass* protesting the rigged elections. 'No democracy without real elections', 'rigged polls', and 'down with the electoral commission', read a number of banners carried by thousands of protesters in Baghdad. In Mosul, anger flared around the university campus after the body of Qusay Salaheddin, president of the student union, who organised two demonstrations against the fraudulent elections results, was identified. He had been kidnapped on 22 December 2005 with one of his friends. The two bodies were found two days later, handcuffed and shot in the head. It is American-style democracy at gunpoint. Out of touch with reality and playing its role as the handmaiden of Western imperialism, the UN declared the elections "transparent and credible".

The purpose of the elections has always been to provide enough propaganda to manipulate public opinions, Americans in particular, and legitimise the Occupation. The elections are imposed from outside at gunpoint. The elections were illegal, undemocratic, and based on sectarianism rather than politics. The goal is to produce a puppet government bent on carrying out Washington's orders. Elections will not change the situation on the ground; the end of the Occupation and the return of Iraqi sovereignty will. Iraqis voted in the elections because they genuinely believe that the election provide a peaceful way to end the Occupation. It was a trap.

It is shameful to read the opinions of Western "progressive" élites, particularly those on "the Left", praising these imperialist elections as "democratic" elections, "forced by the Iraqi people on U.S. leaders". To the contrary, the elections were forced on the Iraqis by more than 200,000 U.S. forces and mercenaries to provide propaganda for domestic consumption. Unaware that only a full U.S. withdrawal from Iraq will bring the possibility of democracy and freedom, the progressive élites parrot Bush's "war on terror" and "spread of democracy" distortions.

The reason the U.S. has failed to control Iraq and implements its imperialist strategy - advancing Israel's Zionist interests and controlling Iraq's oil resources - is due to the determination and courage of the Iraqi Resistance against the Occupation and its variants. Historical evidence shows that democracy is not a U.S. trade mark. The U.S. is using democracy as smokescreen to conceal its failed imperialist agenda. The vast majority of the peoples of the Middle East view the U.S. and Britain, in particular, as *enemies* of democracy and freedom. Resistance is the only answer to unjust and violent imperialism, and Iraqis have no need for this murderous form of democracy.

To counter the anti-occupation Iraqi Resistance, the U.S. and its collaborators, including the mainstream media, are deliberately misleading the public by describing the Resistance as “insurgency” and “foreign terrorists”. The Iraqi Resistance is not an “insurgency”. Insurgency is an organized rebellion aimed at overthrowing a legitimate and constituted government by force, such as the Contras, a U.S. proxy terrorist gang used against the legitimate government of Nicaragua in the late 1980s. There is nothing legitimate about the U.S. Occupation and its puppet government in Iraq. The unwelcome “foreigners” in Iraq are U.S. forces and their collaborators. This distortion of the fact is part of U.S. psychological warfare not only against the Iraqi people but also against the rest of the world.

According to the recent report by foreign policy expert, Anthony Cordesman of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), the percentage of foreign fighters among Iraqi Resistance groups is “well below 10 per cent, and may well be closer to 4 per cent to 6 per cent”. However, Iraqis are of the opinion that they are resisting the Occupation on their own with no support from the surrounding stooges and tin-pot dictators.

The U.S. message is clear: there is no national resistance to the Occupation, but groups of “foreign fighters” and “terrorists”. The aim is to distort the image of the Iraqi Resistance and justify a U.S. “counterinsurgency” against it. The opposite is true. There is a genuine heterogeneous national Iraqi Resistance movement supported not only by the majority of the Iraqi population but also by the majority of the Muslim population. The aim of the Resistance is the liberation of Iraq from foreign occupation. The Iraqi Resistance has publicly condemned all violence against civilians, including the well-publicised grotesque beheading designed to blacken the name of Islam and the Resistance. It is important to make clear distinction between legitimate resistance that targets the occupying forces and their collaborators, from those who indiscriminately target civilians.

UN Resolution 2649 adopted by the General Assembly on 30 November 1970, “affirms the legitimacy of the struggle of peoples under colonial and alien domination recognised as being entitled to the right of self-determination to restore to themselves that right by any means at their disposal”. In May 2003, the UN declared the invasion of Iraq “illegal” and in contravention of the UN Charter. In other words, the Iraqi people have an inalienable right to resist foreign occupation.

As for the UN complicity in the crimes against the Iraq people by legitimising the U.S.-British Occupation of Iraq, the UN Security Council has no power to alter the norms governing international law. “Any Security Council attempt to condone, authorize, or approve violations of the Four Geneva Conventions of 1949, the 1907 Hague Regulations, the humanitarian provisions of Additional Protocol I of 1977 to the Four Geneva Conventions of 1949, and the customary international laws of war by the United States and the United Kingdom in Iraq would be *ultra vires*, a [legal nullity](#), and void *ab initio*”, writes Francis A. Boyle, professor of law and an expert on international law at the University of Illinois.

In addition, the majority of the Iraqi people reject the Occupation. A recent poll conducted by the British Ministry of Defence in August 2005 reveals that over 82 per cent of Iraqis are “strongly opposed” to the presence of the occupying forces in Iraq. If one excludes the Kurdish region of Iraq – where the U.S. has some support – from the poll, the anti-Occupation sentiment is even higher. Less than 1 per cent of Iraqis think the Occupation forces are responsible for any improvement in security. This small group includes; expatriates, who entered Iraq on the backs of U.S. tanks and a minority of urban elites who have unrealistic and flawed image of U.S. “democracy”.

George Bush refusal to set time for the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq is not only contrary to the wishes of the Iraqi people to be free, but also in contradiction of the “tentative agreement” reached on 21 November 2005 at the Arab League-sponsored Cairo conference, by Iraqi leaders, including the current puppet government. It follows that the Iraqi Resistance against the Occupation and associated violence is a legitimate resistance fighting for Iraqis right for self-determination and Iraq’s independence.

While the aim of the Iraqi Resistance is the liberation of Iraq from foreign occupation, the U.S. aim has been to distort the image of the Resistance and associate it with terrorism. The issue of terrorism arose once the occupying powers (U.S. and Britain) failed to justify the invasion of Iraq, and the surprise and immediate rejection of the Occupation by the Iraqi people. Thus, the U.S. and its collaborators embarked on distorting the image of the Iraqi Resistance by gross manipulation of the media and therefore of the public. Allegations of attacks on civilians, kidnappings of foreigners and the old imperialist cliché of labelling the resistance as bands of “terrorists” and “insurgents” were just few of the distorted images. The creation of Al-Zarqawi phantom is a good case in point. As Iraqis say; “If Al-Zarqawi is not dead, he is happily living on an American base”.

According to the CSIS report, operations carried out during the period from September 2003 to October 2004 by the Resistance and aimed at U.S. and other occupying forces constitute 75 per cent of all attacks, compared to 4.1 per cent aimed at Iraqi civilians. However, the report does not provide evidence that attacks on civilians was carried out by the genuine Iraqi Resistance groups. The Iraqi Resistance has nothing to gain from crimes against civilians; it is the aim of the U.S. forces to terrorise the population and turn them against the Resistance.

The bombing of crowded markets and mosques during time of prayers, and the capture by Iraqi Police of two British SAS officers planting bombs in civilian areas in Basra last October is evident of how far the U.S. and its collaborators will get to distort the image of the Iraqi Resistance and justify ongoing Occupation.

Italian journalist Giuliana Sgrena of the daily *Il Manifesto*, who was taken hostage and was freed on 04 March 2005, recalled that her captors had warned her to be cautious of the Americans after her release. Although, she had dismissed the caution as “superfluous and ideological”, she recalled the words when the U.S. marines shoot at her car killing Mr. Nicola Calipari, an Italian intelligent agent. “They declared that they were committed to the fullest to freeing me but I had to be careful, ‘the Americans don’t want you to go back’”, wrote Sgrena. There is no reason not to believe her story, as Sgrena was not part of the circus of imbedded journalism and have reported crimes of rape and abuses of Iraqis by U.S. forces.

The German-Iraqi archaeologist, Susanne Osthoff, who was held hostage by a group of anti-Occupation fighters described her captors as; “poor people [and I] cannot blame them for kidnapping me, as they cannot enter the [fortified and heavily guarded] Green Zone [in Baghdad] to kidnap Americans. I was treated well ... they were not criminals [and their action] was political”, she said in an interview after her release. Yet, any comparison with the Occupation’s crimes of torture and murder of Iraqi prisoners and detainees is unwarranted.

As the terror becoming unbearable, the Council of Nineveh Province has called on the “international community” to put an end to the daily “crimes committed by the American occupation forces assisted by members of the Interior Special Forces and National Guard”.

The communiqué specifically accuses the occupation forces, the Iranian-trained Badr militia and the Kurdish militia of committing crimes of “rape of Iraqi women”, ethnic cleansing of Arab Iraqis in Kirkuk, Mosul and Tel Afar. “The Iraqi Government is partner to all of these crimes in the absence of the media and in particular the killing and kidnapping of journalists by mercenaries of the occupation ... to enable the slaughter of Iraqi people without witnesses”, added the communiqué. Of course, the silence of the “international community” is deafening.

It is noteworthy that Iraqis, who are the hostages of the victims of the Occupation, show great solidarity with foreign hostages held in Iraq and often demonstrated and demanded their release. With no reciprocity, the silence of Westerners and the lack of solidarity with the Iraqi people demonstrate the ignorance and moral passivity of the West. The failure of Westerners to hold their leaders accountable for a war of aggression and war crimes committed in their name against the Iraqi people is evident of flawed and distorted democracy at home.

While the U.S. terror against the Iraqi people continues, it is incumbent on the people of the world, including the American people, who have concern for peace and the rules of law to show their solidarity with the Iraqi people. It is time to stand up against fascism by demanding the full and immediate withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq.

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