

The Lynch Mob

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Global Research, January 04, 2007

4 January 2007

Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#)

“The Moving Finger writes; and having writ, Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit, Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line, Nor all your Tears wash out a word of it.” Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam. (Translation: Edward Fitzgerald.)

Will the standing of America as a world power, as the “shining city on the Hill”, the beacon for the “poor, downtrodden and huddled masses”, to build anew in hope, ever recover? How many generations will it take to shake off the world’s revulsion at United States’ actions since 2001?

The day the bombing of Afghanistan began, in October 2001, I was in Windsor, Ontario, on a speaking tour in Canada, on the silent holocaust which was embargoed Iraq. On a sparkling fall day, I walked along the river which separates a lovely part of town, with its clapboard houses and abundant gardens, from its vast neighbour, Detroit, U.S.A., so near, one could have swum there. The towering skyscrapers, dominating glass monoliths, reaching heavenward, glimmered in the sun. It was might personified. Behind me, was dwarfed simplicity and tranquility. Turning my back, I walked up the road seeking the home of my host who was to take me to McManus University. I trod a riot of golden, apricot and near crimson, Fall leaves; black squirrels played joyfully amongst them, leaping, scaling trees, sailing between branches, silhouetted under an azure sky. Overwhelming tragedy temporarily fell away. The world was an incomparable beautiful place.

Identifying the house, the door opened, I was welcomed; then: “They are bombing Afghanistan.” We looked at each other, speechless strangers, silently knowing the end had no bounds. When the (US backed) Taliban destroyed the ancient Banyiman statues, the outcry across the globe was deafening. When the poorest country on earth was destroyed, the world largely looked away and as the slaughter continues, has largely, long forgotten. But western destruction is different, is for the good. As President Bush, in his 11th November 2001, address to the U.N., said: “We choose the dignity of life, over a culture of death. We choose lawful change ... over subversion and chaos.” Further: “We are fighting for peace” (work that one out.)

There were, of course no Afghans reported on the 9/11 planes and the Bush and Bin Laden families were long inextricably linked in the vast Carlyle Group (which gained further stratospheric \$ contracts in Afghanistan and subsequently Iraq.) Some things are worth repeating, lest we forget.

There were no Iraqis reported on the 9/11 ‘planes either, but by the March 2003 invasion, the President had clearly chucked the speech writers’ finest from the White House windows. America had reverted to the Wild West.

In Iraq – where all, from astronomy to mathematics, to the first written records and the first cohesive civil society was developed, the first domestic laws devised by Hammurabi (2123-2081 BC) base of much of Western Law today, the first time piece, the wheel – posters were displayed of its leaders: “Wanted Dead or Alive”. Million’s of dollars in bounties were put on their heads. The Wild West meets Mesopotamia. Is America’s devout President aware that without the region’s scholars from pre-antiquity, the Wise Men would have been unable to follow the star, to the birth place of his Saviour?

To this “Cradle of Civilisation”, Land of Milk and Honey; Babylon of the Hanging Gardens; The Garden of Eden; Kufa, believed site from where the dove brought back an olive leaf (ever since, peace’s emblem) to the Ark of Noah, indicating the flood was receding, in this land of humanity’s history, birthplace of Abraham, the “Land between two Rivers”, the great Biblical Tigris and Euphrates, America, which God Himself is invoked to “bless”, has not brought reverence, awe, but marauders and a lynch mob of old.

An administration which has not moved on since Custer, Wounded Knee, the slaughter of the Indigenous population and corralling of the survivors, has found another land, another spiritual peoples, to desecrate. In a tragic irony, Iraq’s (and the region’s) population are poisoned by toxic and radioactive depleted uranium dust from US and UK weapons (as is every soldier, mercenary, contractor and puppet administrator on Iraqi soil.) In the U.S., the most affected population are the Navajo’s of Arizona and New Mexico who mined uranium, unaware and unwarned of its lethal properties. They suffer parallel cancers and birth deformities to Iraq, Afghanistan and the Balkans. Their language has no word for “radiation”.

In addition to “Wanted Dead or Alive”, some exceptionally psychologically challenged Pentagon employee (or their four year old) came up with another idea. The “Most Wanted” would be depicted on playing cards. Saddam of course, the ace of spades. On another playing card, was Dr Huda Ammash, a gentle, delicate environmental biologist, Professor at Baghdad University, Researcher at the Iraqi Academy of Sciences, with a PH.D from the University of Missouri. She had written numerous papers on the environmental and biological impact of sanctions – and depleted uranium. (She wrote a chilling and salutary chapter on the subject in “Iraq Under Siege”, Edited by Anthony Arrove, Pluto Press, updated invasion year, 2003.)

Dr Ammash was held by the Americans, charged with nothing and finally released after three years. She had lost both breasts to cancer and is now, reportedly in relapse. Her husband is in custody still, also charged with nothing. Dr Ammash, like Saddam Hussein and so many of those held incommunicado at the prison at the airport Iraqis were so proud of having rebuilt, their beacon of hope after twelve embargoed years, knew too much. She also knew of the criminal weapons used in 1991 – and the countries and companies who sold them to Iraq, subsidised by export credit guarantees from those very countries. No wonder thousands of pages of documents disappeared from Saddam’s lawyers’ offices, the denied evidence, the killings of his attorneys. No wonder former Foreign Minister and Deputy Prime Minister, Tariq Aziz was not allowed to testify before the lynch mob, masquerading as a Court.

When the US invaded Iraq, one of their first acts in their “Mission Accomplished” rampage, was to abolish the death penalty, in the “New Iraq”. There was (rightly of course) no place for such barbarism; it was unworthy of a “free, democratic”, society. In 2004, clearly

realising that the living could still communicate, the U.S. quietly brought back the death penalty, thus Donald Rumsfeld, Britain's David Mellor and others, who had negotiated arms deals with Iraq, could not be called to the witness stand, by those beyond the grave. America of course is fourth on the league table of countries which execute (even the mentally retarded) with George W. Bush's Texas accounting for one third of U.S. State homicides. Saddam Hussein under U.S Administration (oh yes, it is) died ostensibly for 148 deaths. In today's Iraq, that would be a peaceful day.

The American backed thugs, who taunted the about to be assassinated President, before and after his death, are not worthy of comment. That which is, are death's double standards. The righteous howls of protest when American or British soldiers are captured anywhere on earth, and shown in the media, dead, held, alive. The Geneva Convention is wheeled out, the press pack bay. Saddam Hussein's sons were displayed, naked, as so much meat. Saddam Hussein himself, shown going to the gallows and in death. But poet, Rupert Brook's "Vast Eternal Pulse", had surely long taken over. The losers forever are the lynch mob in Baghdad, Washington and Whitehall.

The day Saddam Hussein went to his death, the man who took responsibility for the dodgy dossiers which justified invasion, John Scarlett, was given a Knighthood in Britain's New Year's Honours list. He stood by the statement that Iraq could launch an attack on Western interests within forty five minutes and the plagiarised decade old thesis, passing for intelligence, which was taken off the internet and "sexed up" and played a key role in the whitewash Hutton enquiry into the death of scientist and Iraq weapons Inspector, Dr David Kelly. He was rewarded by being made head of MI6 and is now rewarded again. Morals in high places could do with scrutiny.

Comment on the enormity of the unforgiveable wickedness of illegal invasion, all that has followed and this U.S. assassination, goes to Sabah Al Mukhtar, President of the Association of Arab Lawyers, who says: "Never in the Islamic calendar has there been a recorded hanging on this day (the first of Eid Al Adha) not in the Arab world. All 2003 has delivered is death, death and more dead.(Prime Minister) Maliki heads a dying regime. All they could deliver was Saddam's head, so Bush said 'O.K.' and went to sleep."

Bush had given instructions that he should not be wakened, even if the executions of Saddam and his government colleagues, went ahead. It was carried out at 9 p.m., Texas time.

Bush had gone to bed; Blair went to the beach and Margaret Beckett, Britain's Foreign Secretary, who until her recent appointment, had only been as far away from home as she could tow her holiday caravan, said this historically horrendous episode, held President Saddam Hussein: "to account".

"At Nuremberg, in the wake of World War II the U.S. set the bar very high by declaring that even the Nazis, who had committed the most heinous of crimes, should have a fair trial. The U.S. and allies insisted on this, not to serve those charged, but to educate the public through a believable accounting. In the case of Saddam, the bar was lowered to the mud, with the proceedings turned into a political circus reminiscent of Stalin's show trials." (Robert Scheer, Editor Truthdig 30th December.)

Saddam Hussein, could have fled the country, prior to the invasion. He stayed, took his chances and ultimately walked to death with dignity. And there are many questions as to his

capture by US troops, when apparently hiding in a deep shaft – at Ad Dawr, near Tikrit, on 14th December 2003 – well worthy of scrutiny, but outside the scope of this piece. “We got him.” said the ridiculous, desert booted “Viceroy”, Paul Bremer, in true Wild West style, who, like Bush and Blair, dare not even walk downtown Baghdad or Basra.

The Middle East reveres courage above all else – it’s people living it, in orders of magnitude. Had any of these tragic, pathetic little people, shown even an iota, things might be less of the bloodbath about to come, surely to spread to their own shores, by their own hand. “Folly”, does not even go there. And history will not: “write out a word of it”.

Please also see:

Ordinary Iraqis Now: What Has Changed
http://www.islamonline.net/english/In_Depth/Iraq_Aftermath/2004/03/article_08.shtml

Saddam’s Execution Begins to Deepen Divisions Dahr Jamail and Ali al-Fadhily BAGHDAD – New divisions appear to be opening up between Iraqi political and religious leaders following the execution of Saddam Hussein Saturday.
<http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=36027>

‘Illegal’ Execution Enrages Arabs <http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=36041>

They must lay aside egocentric whims and stubborn empirical ambitions
<http://web.onetel.com/~vheadline/00000093.htm>

Iraq Under Siege The Deadly Impact of Sanctions and War
<http://www.southendpress.org/2004/items/Iraq>

Exposed: The Carlyle Group Shocking documentary uncovers the subversion of Americas democracy. <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article3995.htm>

Felicity Arbuthnot: ‘A Milestone for Iraq’
<http://www.unobserver.com/index.php?pagina=layout5.php&id=3006&blz=1>

The Brussels Tribunal: The Execution of the President
<http://www.unobserver.com/index.php?pagina=layout4.php&id=3005&blz=1>

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