

US Tsunamis in Iraq

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“They made a wasteland and called it “peace” – Tacitus (Roman historian 55-117AD)

In contrast to nature’s tsunami which recently struck at the coastal borders of the Indian Ocean, wiping out fishing villages, beach resorts, holiday hotels, and killing over 250,000 people, the US-led military tsunamis, starting with Desert Storm, which are still devastating Iraq, have laid waste to the entire infrastructure of this modern Country and to date killed at least 2 million of its people. The recent US destruction of Fallujah may well be remembered by future generations as a replay of the Nazi bombing of the Basque city of Guernica during the Spanish Civil War.

In sharp contrast to the worldwide outpouring of sympathy followed by millions of dollars in aid, both government and private, Iraq’s tsunami victims are struggling to survive their repeated devastations with little outside charity and a minimum of support from either the UN or the occupying forces, which, while facing a growing insurgency are wasting money in efforts to both cover-up their savagery while forcing on Saddam’s people a spurious and largely unwanted “democratic election”

Reports today (19 January) direct from Iraq via KPFA note that 5 almost simultaneous car bombs in Iraq’s capital killed some 29 persons, while several mortar attacks targeted the Green Zone as well as the highway between Baghdad and its airport. Iraqis in Fallujah reported

-2- the Occupation forces, rather than attending to the needs of a desperate population. were engaged in covering their tracks; trucking away bombed-out homes, carting away topsoil contaminated by chemical weapons and anti-personnel phosphorous bombs, to hide evidence of these illegal weapons from both the Red Cross and Red Crescent as well as foreign reporters, all of whom are being kept out of those areas of the City where heavy fighting has taken place and Napalm and phosphorus reportedly burned people in the streets. (www.antiwar.com/journal/1/19/2005).With sewage running in the open gutters, garbage piled high in the streets, scant potable water and only intermittent electricity, our military’s gross neglect of public health has been both maddening and dangerous,

The 1991 “Desert Storm.” was the first act in a genocidal campaign initiated by the first Bush administration, and followed throughout the Clinton years, to first destroy the infrastructure of Iraq and then continue killing its people, using a combination of starvation and biological (call it bacteriological) warfare. Since Gulf War I , almost two million Iraqis, mostly the elderly, children, and babies, have been slaughtered by this US-British-UN tsunami.

There were actually two Gulf Wars. One, to recall Saddam's troops from Kuwait, the second, to destroy the infrastructure of Iraq, "bombing it back into the pre-industrial age," as General Schwarzkopf put it. The destruction of telecommunications, water supplies, sewage treatment plants, and oil facilities had nothing to do with moving Saddam's forces from Kuwait, but with the unspoken US-UN intent to destroy Iraq with those Apocalyptic weapons of mass destruction: war, famine, pestilence, and death. Noam Chomsky correctly called this "biological warfare."

During the Desert Storm the Pentagon conducted 110,000 aerial sorties in 42 days, one every 30 seconds. unleashing 85,000 tons of bombs. Iraq was essentially defenseless. Civilian casualties from the bombing were

in the tens of thousands. Thousands died from direct bomb hits, but far more died from destruction of the facilities essential to human life. Within hours of the first bomb there was no electricity anywhere in Iraq. In the first two days, pipes distributing water ran dry throughout the country. By February 1991 Iraq's Minister of Health estimated 3000 civilians dead and another 25,000 were in hospitals and clinics. A quarter of a million more were sickened without medicines or medical care. from drinking polluted water.

On Sept. 17, 2000, Professor Thomas J. Nagy of George Washington University made public a seven page document prepared by the US Defense Intelligence Agency. This report, hidden by the government for ten years, outlined the Gulf Allies' plan to set the stage for a water-born genocide in that country. The report reads: "Iraq had gone to considerable trouble to provide pure water for its population... importing specialized equipment and purification chemicals... a shortage of pure drinking water... could lead to increased incidents, if not epidemics of disease... Full degradation of the water treatment system will probably take at least six months." The Agency's report "was circulated to all major Allied commands."

This intelligence report identified not only bombing targets, but those specific chemicals and specialized water purification equipment which the US and British then added to their list of embargoed items, to be certain the genocide would succeed. As author and UN specialist Phyllis Bennis reported, by the 1993 the UN committee 616 which was required to pass on items ordered under the "Oil for Food" program by Saddam's government, items to both maintain public services and repair war damage, had denied over \$6 Billion requests from Saddam's engineers, targeting those specific materials needed to return potable water to their people and even medical supplies necessary to treat water-born diseases. The US-British genocide was thus supported at the UN level. -4-

As intended, Allied bombing had destroyed dams, reservoirs, wrecking flood control, irrigation, and hydroelectric power. Pumping stations were crippled as were 31 municipal water and sewage facilities. As raw sewage poured into the Tigris River, the Iraqis only remaining source of water, they died by the thousands. The allies dropped 88,500 tons of bombs, equivalent to seven Hiroshimas, rendering 1.8 million Iraqis homeless and killing over 150,000 Iraqi troops. The Fourth Geneva Convention which the US signed clearly states: "It is prohibited to attack or render useless objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population... including drinking water supplies and irrigation works."

Added to the carnage of Dessert Storm, the US and British fired "anti-tank" shells containing depleted uranium, which on contact burns with intense heat, leaving free uranium 238

particles to blow about freely in the desert winds. Inhalation of this dust has already created both an increase in childhood lymphomas, plus birth deformities. With a half-life of depleted uranium at 4.5 billion years, lethal radiation from our shells will continue killing the civilian population for generations. In addition, cluster bomblets, dropped over civilian centers are still killing children who pick them up.

Americans may have forgotten that on Dec. 16, 1998, while sexual McCarthyism played out on the floor of Congress, President Clinton ordered Patriot and Tomahawk missiles to again hail down on Baghdad. Operation "Desert Fox" (called "OPERATION MONICA" in the Mideast) created extensive damage, killing civilians, and targetting one of the few oil refineries still able to function.

By 1998, Rick McDowell, whose "Voices in the Wilderness" group had visited Iraq many times since 1991, reported, "As of 1995, over a million Iraqis have died, 576,000 of them children, and three million risk acute starvation... More children have died... than the total of the two

atomic bombs dropped on Japan." McDowell noted the Oil for Food program was a failure since reparations to Kuwait, paying for UNSCOM and support for the Kurds ate up over 40 percent, leaving less than 25 cents/person/day for the Iraqis. McDowell said UN Security Council sanction which embargo pipes, pumps, filters, chlorine, ambulance tires, and everything necessary to produce potable water represent a "war of collective punishment."

Americans may recall that in October 1998, Denis J. Halliday, Assistant Secretary-General of the UN and Chief of UNSCOM's "Oil for Food" resigned in disgust over the US-British interference with his program in an "all-out effort to starve to death as many Iraqis as possible." He added: "We see the member states... of the Security Council manipulating the organization for their own national interests." Halliday reported UN sanctions had reduced a once-proud civilization to third world status, resulting in crime, prostitution, beggary, family breakdown and corruption. He said Iraqis "were selling their belongings for food." Under Saddam Hussein, Halliday noted: "Iraq experienced the best civilization in the Mideast with universal medical care, the finest hospitals, free university education and overseas grants for graduate students....I went to Iraq to administer the largest humanitarian challenge in history I didn't realize the level of complicity in the suffering. It is to the point of madness. One day we will be called into account."

Halliday, Ex-Attorney Ramsey Clark and others have reported mass starvation, waterborne diseases previously unknown in Iraq: diarrhea, cholera, strep, hepatitis, typhoid and polio (which had been eradicated).

Right up to Bush Jr's.' "Shock and Awe" invasion US and Britain "overflights" pursued this devastation, though with rising world criticism the French had backed out. Overflights, never authorized by the UN), and bombing missions had killed over 2000 civilians since

1998 wrecking attempts by Iraqi to rebuild its infrastructure. To pursue this mayhem, the US ignored fellow members in the Security Council where Russia, China and France, amongst others.had asked the US to quit the sanctions and normalize trade.

The UN's HansVon Spondek who like Halliday had resigned from the 'Oil for Food Program" , in a Boston Globe interview reported the death rate for children had tripled since 1991, and much-needed electricity was often lacking in Baghdad. The UN had allowed only \$112

million for repairs whereas the system rehabilitation minimum was over \$7.1 billion. Saddam's people, once the best-educated in the Mideast on a 1989 \$2.1 billion school budget, with sanctions struggled with \$229 million. The literacy rate fell from over 90 percent to barely 60 percent. Computers can't be imported, as the UN fears "military use."

The Bush II invasion with its capture of Saddam has only added to the carnage and physical destruction of this once proud people. The resulting insurgency which US forces face today is understandable in terms of the past 14 years of genocide. The added havoc of a second invasion, plus the abject failure of the Bush II administration to offer the occupied Iraqis either security or viable evidence of intent to rebuild their shattered lives has added fire to an increasingly organized effort to drive out the US forces. US interim administrator L. Paul Bremer III's thoughtless isolation of Saddam's Bathist party, which constituency, numbering almost 900,000 government workers and police, might well have helped maintain law and order and kept public works functioning during the Occupation, was another major failure. Jordan's Prince Abdullah on the Charlie Rose Show just two nights ago explained that he had personally advised Bremer to employ the Bathists, but his suggestion had been rejected. Bremer seemed more interested in privatising Saddam's government-owned industries, and providing lucrative business opportunities for his friends.

As for Bush Jr.'s proposed January 31 election, writer Edward S. Herman noted in an extended article (Z- Magazine Dec 2004 pgs 32- 5) the US experience with similar elections managed by Washington in our military-ravaged countries, such as Vietnam, El Salvador, Afghanistan and Nicaragua, have all been abject failures despite attempts by our government and a compliant media to present an optimistic picture. Iraqis may risk their lives to vote on the 31st of January for fear their religious or political group may be overrun, but most will vote in the hope that whatever political consortium manages Iraq after our ex-CIA agent Alawi steps down, will kick the US occupiers out.

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