

Special Report

The invasion and occupation of Iraq was a premeditated murderous act of aggression

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"The colonial invasion of Iraq and the ugliest of lies of the lie machine that propagated and justified these barbarous acts will forever remain among the greatest and unpardonable crimes against humanity."—Jose Luis Zapatero, Prime Minister of Spain, 20 May 2005.

September 24, 2005—Deception by governments and the mass media to manipulate the population has been an obsession of Western powers. The illegal invasion and occupation of Iraq by U.S. forces provides the best recent example of murderous atrocities based on deception.

In their seminal book 'Weapons of Mass Deception,' Sheldon Rampton and John Stauber wrote: "[T]he Bush administration has engaged in a deliberate and extraordinarily aggressive effort to rally public support for a war on Iraq, using propaganda, misinformation, distortions and outright lies." From the big lie of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) invented in Washington and London to the big lie of Abu Mussab Al-Zarqawi, the alleged Al-Qaeda mastermind, resort to deception is the art of Western powers.

Despite mounting evidence that Al-Zarqawi was killed in northern Iraq at the beginning of the war, his phantom is used to justify the ongoing atrocities in Iraq. "[Al-Zarqawi's] family, in Jordan, even held a ceremony after his death," said Jawad Al-Khalessi, a Muslim Imam in Baghdad. "Abu Mussab Al-Zarqawi is thus a bogymen used by the Americans, an excuse to continue the occupation. He's simply an invention by the occupiers to divide the people," added Al-Khalessi.

The alleged presence of Al-Zarqawi has two important purposes for the U.S. Occupation: it provides a way to distort the image of the legitimate Iraqi Resistance; and it allows the occupying forces to present the war of Occupation as a war against Al-Qaeda, the created enemy. Al-Qaeda has replaced Communism.

"The primary aim of the Pentagon's 'Strategic Information' program [or propaganda] is to distort the truth in a way that controls the storyline created by the media. Al-Zarqawi fits perfectly within this paradigm of intentional deception," writes American author Mike Whitney.

Al-Qaeda (the 'Base' in Arabic) was the C.I.A.-sponsored training camp for the Afghan Mujahideen, including Osama bin Laden and the likes. The group was created and financed by the U.S. administration against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. They were called "freedom fighters" by former U.S. President Roland Reagan.

As a result of the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan, Al-Qaeda has disintegrated. Its members have been killed, imprisoned and some have melted away in the population of Afghanistan and Pakistan. However, in George Bush's "war on terror," today's Al-Qaeda is alive and fighting on many fronts. In other words, Osama bin Laden is much more useful alive to U.S. imperialism and propaganda than his dead body. Al-Qaeda has become a convenient phantom to justify an ongoing war on defenceless peoples.

The continuing existence of Al-Qaeda is a very useful pretext for the Blair-Bush axis and allies. It provides the necessary tool to instill fear and manipulate domestic public opinion. A U.S. army conscientious objector from the 82nd Airborne Division told the Canadian Refugee Status Commission: "We were told to consider all Arabs as potential terrorists . . . and we were stimulated to encourage an attitude of hatred that gets your blood boiling." The recent massacre of unarmed men women and children in Fallujah is a case in point.

Just before the destruction of the city of Fallujah, in which thousands of innocent men, women and children have been murdered, U.S. forces justified the assault as a necessary step to "enhance democracy" and "flush-out" Al-Zarqawi and his men. After Fallujah was destroyed, and a large number of its people were slaughtered by U.S. forces, Al-Zarqawi was not found—because he died a long time ago. Fallujah has since become the symbol of Iraqi Resistance.

During the U.S. attacks on Mosul, Ramadi and Al-Qaim, the phantom of Al-Zarqawi continues to play an important role in Western propaganda. It was reported that Al-Zarqawi had survived the assault on Fallujah and is fighting the U.S. forces on many fronts. Nothing could be further from the truth. The attacks were directed primarily against members of the Iraqi Resistance and the Iraqi population at large.

"Al-Zarqawi is nothing more than a weapon of mass deception in the hands of the US army, which enables the latter to hide its 'black propaganda' activities, used to mount the population against the [Resistance]," said Mohamed Hassan, a former Ethiopian diplomat and Middle East specialist.

The U.S. attacks on the city of Tal Afar have also been justified as a "necessary operation against Al-Zarqawi and his groups of foreign fighters." A sole journalist from the Iraqi daily Azzaman, who was the only journalist in town, refused to support the U.S. version. Most of the fighters were Iraqis fighting against foreign occupation forces. The attacks on the city of 300,000 people are described by complicit Western media as a "joint U.S. and Iraqi" operation. However, Azzaman reported: "Iraqi soldiers are too few to spot among the thousands of U.S. marines. [U.S.] troops now see all men able of carrying arms as suspects and many of those attempting to flee have been arrested." Like Fallujah, a large number of innocent civilians have been killed and the fate of 400 Iraqi young male detainees is not known.

In contravention of the Geneva Convention and international law, water and electricity have been cut off, and the occupation forces are preventing any food and medical assistance to enter the city, increasing an even worse human disaster and enlarging the U.S. atrocity against the Iraqi people. Like Fallujah, the majority of Tal Afar's population are now displaced refugees in their own country.

"Some of these families live in deserted villages or in makeshift camps where they do not have access to basic essentials like food and water. We are in need of urgent relief to offer assistance to nearly 5,000 families who have fled the city and sought asylum in nearby poor villages," said a statement by the Iraqi Red Crescent.

While Westerners watch their favourite TV shows, the U.S. and its collaborators are waging full scale war against the Iraqi people. After the massacre of Tal Afar, U.S. occupation forces are moving into the Euphrates valley to destroy more Iraqi towns and cities, and at the same time commit more war crimes against the people of Iraq. The "international community" has failed to condemn the violence perpetrated by U.S. occupying forces, and also failed to provide the minimum assistance to a nation considered to be a founding member of the "international community." The Iraqi people are left at the mercy of a new form of Western terrorism. The aim is not to fight the Resistance, but to kill Iraqis en masse and destroy their nation, with the blessing of a puppet government constituted of criminals and comen.

In its recent meeting attended by world's leaders, the UN was unable to define terrorism, because, according to the U.S., terrorism has no definition. Any act of violence not practised by the U.S. and its allies is defined as terrorism. We know who is waging a war of terror on the defenceless people of Iraq. It isn't Al-Qaeda or Al-Zarqawi: it is the U.S. and Britain who are terrorising the Iraqi people on a daily basis. Iraq is not the frontline of terrorism; the Iraqi people are defending themselves and their country against terrorism.

Meanwhile, in Baghdad, the car bombings which targeted civilians were the work of Al-Zarqawi "suicide bombers" against Shiites to "foment civil war." we are told. There was no evidence to substantiate the allegations, and Iraqis have a different idea. Although most of the bombings were timed and remote-controlled bombs, the majority were premeditated attacks. Furthermore, Iraqis acknowledge that there were few attacks executed by "suicide bombers." However, in the West, "suicide bombing" is becoming everything Muslim, fabricated and promoted by the mainstream mass media, including the Arab CNN, Al-Jazeera.

As I wrote earlier, Iraqi sources argued rightly that the U.S. forces and their collaborators are behind every major sectarian killing and kidnapping in the country. The promotion of Shiite-Sunni conflict is the creation of U.S. forces. The attacks on specific religious groups, such as on Shiites, were aimed at provoking sectarian strife among Iraqis. After every large killing of civilians, the U.S. and mainstream media are deliberately blaming the Iraqi Resistance for the violence. The main aim is to distort the image of the Resistance and weaken its popular support in Iraq and abroad.

The fact that Iraqi Police in Basra were able to arrest two British soldiers (the SAS) working under cover, whom Iraqi police accused of planting bombs against civilians, was a case in point. Furthermore, thousands of prominent Iraqi scientists including doctors, intellectuals and politicians have been murdered by Israeli Mossad and C.I.A. agents. Similar patterns of Western terrorism against civilians have their history in the British occupation of Kenya and India, and in the Israeli occupation of Palestine. The U.S. plan to divide Iraq—on ethnic and religious lines—and control its wealth was prepared several years before the war. It was no secret. One only needs to read The New York Times to get an idea about the U.S. Zionist ideology. In addition, the U.S. is promoting religious fundamentalism against Iraqi nationalism.

U.S. forces and their collaborators are the only benefactors of ongoing violence in Iraq. The U.S. is deliberately destroying the fabric of the Iraqi society. Since March 2003, more than 100,000 have been killed—based on the estimation of the Lancet report in November 2004. The majority of these war crimes were committed by U.S. and British forces against innocent men women and children.

The war is one of the—most cowardly fought wars in the history of mankind. Iraq was forced to disarm—by the tool of U.S. foreign policy, the UN—before Iraq was massively attacked by the most modern WMD. It was a one-sided war of large armies against the defenceless people of Iraq. It had nothing to do with WMD, 'democracy' or human rights. It was a war to control Iraq's oil resources, enhance U.S. hegemonic domination, and promote Israel's Zionist expansionism.

Since the invasion of their country by U.S. forces, Iraqis have only known mayhem, all forms of human rights abuses, including torture, and a culture of corruption not seen in Iraq's history. The U.S. is continuing the process of the complete destruction of Iraq. U.S. corporations are not rebuilding Iraq; they are busy building prisons to incarcerate Iraqis, and military bases in order to continue the colonial occupation of Iraq. The imperial deception is so efficient that even well-educated people in the West, and Americans in particular, have been manipulated to the extent that they were unable to differentiate between the destruction of a society by violent military forces and the promotion of 'democracy' and 'freedom.'

The invasion and occupation of Iraq was a premeditated murderous act of aggression. It was the result of the Anglo-American power resorting to deception to manipulate the population into accepting a criminal attack on a defenceless nation. A campaign of lies and deception continues to justify the violent occupation of Iraq by U.S. forces. The only effective remedy for the crimes committed against the Iraqi people is the immediate and full withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq.

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