

IRAQ YESTERDAY, IRAQ TODAY

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To save the life of one human being—any human being—is to have saved the life of all humanity, and to take the life of a single human being, any human being, is as if to destroy all of humanity.

[Qur'an 5:32]

Abstract

This study intends to shed some light on why Iraq has been in the news quite a bit, and why it has come to play the role it has in world affairs of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. It concerns Iraq yesterday and today.

Introduction

The paper makes one simple assumption: the notion that all human life on this planet –Muslim and non-Muslim, female and male, civilian and military, poor or rich, ‘North’ or ‘South’, white or black– carries exactly the same intrinsic worth. This essential value of human life is due to the presence of the Divine spirit in all of humanity, the same spirit that, according to the Qur'an, God breathed into each and every human being [Qur'an 15:29 and 38:72]. From this premise of the worth and dignity of each and every human life and the right of each community to realize their vision of prosperity, dignity and righteousness, as long as that vision does not come at the expense of any other community, the researcher intends to begin this study.

The paper is divided into two parts, the first concerns Iraq before the war of 2003–referred to in this study as Iraq yesterday; the second part tackles a number of current issues and attempts to find answers for some controversial questions including: What are the causes and consequences of the US war on Iraq and the occupation of this country? Is it invasion or liberation? Is it true that post-war excuses for invasion and occupation are to make Iraq a western-style democracy and to spread Western values or is the US actually putting on a terrifying show for the whole world to see and yield? And eventually where is the value of human life?

Current assessment indicates that the dilemma of how to win an unwinnable war is the issue begging for an answer. Winning the peace in Iraq becomes actually much harder than winning the war and it has grossly exceeded proportionality in terms of ends and means; nevertheless Iraqis do believe that things will be better by God willing.

IRAQ YESTERDAY

Iraq is as old as it gets. Iraq traces its lineage to ancient Mesopotamia, to Babylon and King Hammurabi, the lawgiver, for much of its history. Iraq has been a region of prosperity and culture, of riches and legends. Baghdad is the setting of the tales of Arabian Nights and the home of Sinbad, the sailor. The Mesopotamian plain was called the Fertile Crescent. This region is known as the Cradle of Civilization.

However, Iraq has always been a historical crossroads of conflict (Tragert,2003). It has witnessed a series of empires that emerge, dominate and are placed by a new wave of invasion and dominance. The reasons for this pattern are simple: the fertile land, the plentiful water; and the oil.

The ancient history of Iraq shows that Iraq has been invaded, conquered and reconquered over the centuries. The Persians conquered this land as did Alexander, the Great. The Arabs brought Islam to Iraq, and Baghdad flowered under Arab Islamic culture, but the Mongol hordes swept through, destroying the accomplishments of the earlier Arab culture and everything in their path. Then, the Ottomans emerged and asserted their control of the region. Eventually, they gave way to the British, after World War 1 (1914-1918). In 1958 with a successful coup, Iraq was a self-governing state. However, in 1968, the Ba'th Party took control of Iraq and Saddam Hussein proclaimed himself the leader of Iraq in the name of the Ba'th Party (ibid).

Despite all this, in the 1980's, Iraq became one of the richest, most industrialized, and highly technologically advanced countries in the Middle East. In fact, at that time, the United Nations estimated that Iraq would enter the ranks of the industrialized countries by the mid-1990s. Unfortunately, this prediction was brought down by wars and sanctions.

Saddam Hussein Era

The story of Iraq under Saddam Hussein has been one of violence, fear and outrage inside the country, among the neighbours, and the west as well. "Politics (to Saddam) is a ceaseless struggle for survival. The ultimate goal of staying alive, and in power, justifies all means" (Tripp,

2000). To Barbara Tuchman, the prominent war historian, "Misgovernment is of four kinds, often in combination: state-society discordance largely explained by tyranny; excessive ambition; incompetence; and state-international system discordance which appears largely to be a product of folly or perversity" (Ismael & Ismael, 2004). The Iraq misfortune was that its dictator exercised all these four kinds.

Along the 'march of folly', and between 1980 and 2003, the Iraqi regime provoked three indescribably bloody wars ruinous to the nation. Consequently, devastating sanctions imposed by the UN deprived Iraq of nearly all legitimate income from trade for 13 years. This led to massive deprivation of food, medicine, medical supplies and sanitation equipment, ultimately causing the death of over one million Iraqis including half a million children under the age of five (MECA, on line).

Invasion of Iraq: Targets

In March 2003, the United States conducted military operations to overthrow Saddam Hussein. The stated goals for invading Iraq according to Donald Rumsfeld, the US Minister of Defense, were to:

- end the Saddam Hussein government,
- help Iraq's transition to democratic self-rule,
- find and eliminate weapons of mass destruction, weapons programs and terrorists,
- end sanction and to deliver humanitarian support, and
- secure Iraq's oil fields and resources.

(2003 Invasion of Iraq)

Many staff and supporters within the US administration had other, more ambitious goals for the war. They propagated the claim that the war could act as a catalyst for democracy and peace in the Middle East and that once Iraq became democratic and prosperous other nations would quickly follow it, and thus the social environment that allowed terrorism to flourish would be eliminated.

Opponents of the Iraq war disagreed with many of the arguments presented by the administration, attacking them as being untrue, and inadequate to justify a preemptive war. "This doctrine is a complete repudiation of the whole notion of international law, of the international rule of war. It takes us back to the notion of the rule of the jungle," argued Dewitt Clinton, a History Professor (cited by Greg Woodward, 2002). No weapons of mass destruction were found by the Iraq Survey

Group headed by Inspector David Key, who stated: “We were almost all wrong- and I certainly include myself here” (2003 Invasion of Iraq).

Later, it was argued that the invasion was justified because of human rights abuses committed by Saddam Hussein. Critics raised the question why the US government did not do much to prevent or punish those crimes when they happened but used them years later for a war initially explained with different reasons. Ken Roth of 'Human Right Watch' has argued that the justification of 'Human rights' for the war in Iraq does not meet appropriate standards for the level of suffering that it causes. Still, on August 2, 2004 President Bush stated “Knowing what I know today we still would have gone on into Iraq. He had the capability of making weapons of mass destruction. He had terrorist ties... the decision I made is the right decision. The world is better off without Saddam Hussein in power” (ibid)

These are the apparent excuses for invasion of Iraq, to oust Saddam Hussein and implant democracy. But does the mere existence of evil somewhere in the world justify preemptive war at the expense of people? Utopian dreams, fulfilled by autocratic means, hardly qualify as being morally justifiable. Besides, going about the world waging war to promote peace, without weighing the price paid, has resulted in failed efforts to make the world a better place.

Bruce Preston (2005) believes that the naked truths for invasion are: “A desire to control natural resources (oil), and a quest for a Neo-con agenda of American hegemony with the goal of redrawing the borders of the countries of the Middle East.”

Voices against the War

According to the ‘Pew Research Centre for the People and the Press’ (on line) most people of the world were against the war on Iraq. Time Magazine ran an online poll on the biggest threat to the world peace. The question was: “Which country poses the greatest danger to world peace in 2003?” More than 80% think the United States poses the greatest danger. Following are quotes from famous people, who have spoken against the war before it took place and after –voices against the war.

- **Nelson Mandela** (in an interview with MSNBC)

“The attitude of the United States of America is a threat to world peace because what America is saying is that if you are afraid of a veto in the Security Council, you can go outside and take action and violate the sovereignty of other countries. This is the message they

are sending to the world. That must be condemned in the strongest terms.”

- **Ramsey Clark** (former US- attorney general (Ramsey Clark Letter to UN: Do Not Support Attack on Iraq)
“A military attack on Iraq is obviously criminal; ...unjustifiable on any legal or moral ground, irrational in light of the unknown facts; out of proportion to other existing threats of war and violence; and a dangerous adventure risking continuing conflict throughout the region and far beyond for years to come.”
- **Edward Kennedy** (Guardian, September 28, 2002)
“America should not go to war against Iraq unless or until all other reasonable alternatives are exhausted. There are realistic alternatives between doing nothing and declaring unilateral or immediate war.”
- **Jimmy Carter**
“War may sometimes be a necessary evil. But no matter how necessary, it is always an evil, never a good. We will not learn how to live together in peace by killing each other’s children.”
- **Kofi Annan** (current Secretary-General of the United Nations (speaking on behalf of the UN charter)
“I have indicated (the war) was not in conformity with the UN charter from our point of view, from the charter point of view, it was illegal.”
- **Pope John Paul** (in a speech to Vatican diplomats on January 13, 2003)
“No to war! War is not always inevitable. It’s always a defeat for humanity.”
- **Robert Bowman** (Bishop of the United Catholic Church in Melbourne Beach (in ‘Why US is hated’)
“We are the target of terrorists because our government stands for dictatorship, bondage, and human exploitation. We are hated because our government has done hateful things. In country after country, our government has thwarted democracy, stifled freedom, and trampled human rights.”
- **Richard Butler** (Former Chief Weapon Inspector in Iraq Butler (Truthout Issues, Los Angeles, Nov.18,2002)
“My attempts to have Americans enter into discussions about double standards have been an abject failure-even with the highly educated and engaged people. What America totally fails to understand is that

their weapons of mass destruction are just as much a problem as are those of Iraq.”

- **Scott Ritter** (Former UN Weapons Inspector in Iraq (Truthout, July 24 , 2002)
“This is not about the security of the United States. This is about domestic American politics... the day we go to war for that reason is the day we have failed collectively as a nation.”
- **Noam Chomsky** (Front-line Interview with Noam Chomsky on Iraq)
“This action is in fact a call for a lawless world in which the powerful will rule. The powerful happen to be the United States and Britain, which is by now a pathetic puppy dog that has abandoned any pretence of being an independent state.”
- **Arundhati Roy** (Guardian, September 30,2002)
“America’s perfect war, the perfect vehicle for the endless expansion of American imperialism” “... If you don’t love us, you hate us. If you aren’t good, you’re evil. If you’re not with us, you’re with the terrorists.
- **Dilip Hiro** (author of Secrets and Lies: The True Story of the Iraq War (2005),
“What has actually happened in Iraq is something deadlier than the worst scenarios sketched by the so-called liberal pessimists. The invasion of Iraq has led to an alliance of Arab nationalism with Islamic militancy steering both of them towards an amalgam, which is very ominous for the region and in fact for the world.”

IRAQ TODAY

After the War

The conventional war on Iraq may be over now, but a vicious guerrilla war of resistance continues to worsen. George Packer (2003) calls it ‘War after the War’. The invasion has attracted a new “terrorist infrastructure” into Iraq, through the nation's previously well-controlled but now porous border. It creates a horrific “resistance of terror bombs” in which military and civilians, perceived collaborators and hapless innocents alike, are blown apart indiscriminately, (the Iraq Page, 2005).

The picture painted by the news and on TV Satellites everyday is dreadful: another suicide bomber, an oil pipeline exploded, military patrols attacked, Iraqi police and security guards dying in an ambush with ordinary and defenseless civilians caught in the middle. News about property destruction, sectarian strife, political conflicts and accusations of

corruption at the highest level are really depressing. There is no glimpse of any positive development or an indication that something, somewhere, might be going right. It seems that the ultimate cost of war is almost always the loss of liberty, as Rep. Ron Paul believes (on line).

Voices for the coalition forces to leave Iraq

Opponents of the Iraq war are now asking the coalition forces to leave Iraq. The reasons Paul Savoy (2004) cited are summarized below:

- Prewar claims regarding Iraq's weapons of mass destruction have all proved to be wrong.
- The number of terrorists has increased rather than decreased.
- More American troops were killed than were lost during the entire phase of the war.
- The systemic and barbarous abuse of Iraqi detainees and torture of Iraqi prisoners contradict the most basic values they claimed they would bring to Iraq.
- And the uprising in Falluja and at least half a dozen other cities portend a nationwide insurgency against the US presence.

Paul Savoy introduces one truly serious question about the morality of the war, and that is the same question posed more than fifty years ago by French Nobel laureate Albert Camus, looking back on two world wars that had slaughtered more than seventy million people: 'When do we have the right to kill fellow human beings or let them be killed?'

The pretexts for the war were proved to be just lies, Savoy argued. Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction, and Iraq had no relations with terrorism. The war on Iraq was an illegal act of aggression, designed to increase the threat of terrorism and violence, in order to exert control. The continuing occupation of Iraq is to rob Iraq resources, and enhance U.S. imperialist doctrine (ibid).

Green Party leaders in US, on the other hand, have called the Iraq invasion a catastrophe, and they demand withdrawal noting that:

- About 100.000 Iraqi civilians have been killed in the war; the number of U.S. troops killed exceeds 2,000.
- The U.S. Administration now admits that secular democracy is unlikely in Iraq; possible civil war, further breakdown of vital infrastructure, and establishment of repressive Islamic government threaten the Iraqi people.
- The deceptive justifications for the invasion: nonexistent WMDS; forged evidence of nuclear weapons; fraudulent claims of conspiracy

between al-Qaeda and Saddam Hussein and Iraqi involvement with 11/9 attacks.

- The costs of the occupation are causing social needs in the U.S. to go unmet, about \$99 billion over the next decade in the best case and 1,9 trillion during the same period in less favourable circumstances. (Report of the American Academy of Arts and Science, December 3, 2003).
- The war itself is a crime, violating international covenants signed by the U.S. against invasion of a nation on 'preventive' grounds. Hitler used preventive justifications for the German invasion of Czechoslovakia and Poland in 1939.

(ZNET, 2005)

Aftermath

Today, Iraq is facing a monumental humanitarian crisis that comes on the heels of 13 years of devastating sanctions and the illegal occupation. The latter has brought to bear an unimaginative security situation which makes it nearly impossible for humanitarian agencies to properly assess the crisis and work for the health, safety, and protection of the Iraqi people. "We didn't go in with a plan. We went in with a theory," said a veteran State Department officer who was directly involved in Iraqi policy. (Warren, P. et al). The hole, created by the absence of an adequate plan to rebuild Iraq, The dismantling of Iraq's military, security and government infrastructure, the misplaced faith in Iraqi exiles and other mistakes made after Baghdad fell, is a deep one.

It is now almost three years after the war; yet, discontent with America and its policies has intensified rather than diminished. The security situation, health hazards, water crisis and suffering children have made Iraqis feel very angry at the coalition forces who came 'to rebuild Iraq, and make it an example for others to follow'. The following issues are parts of the Iraqis' daily sufferings.

- **Security**

Although, the US announced that major combat operations were over in Iraq in May 2003, there is no sign yet of an end to the violence unleashed in post Saddam Iraq, despite the transition to a civilian government. The risk of death from violence has risen 58 times since the invasion, (John's Hopkins Bloomberg, 2005). Car bombs and jacking, kidnapping, rapes, robberies, and homicides have skyrocketed forcing Iraqis to stay home.

In Baghdad, just driving to work is a deadly daily game of Russian roulette. People go to work everyday without knowing whether they will come home safely or be shot by a crazy Iraqi police or an American soldier suspecting them or by a suicide bomber. Staying at home is not safe either. A car bomb may smash all doors and windows of one's house.

The majority of international aid agencies including the staff of the UN, the International Red Cross, CARE International, have left Iraq for safety concern (MECA on line).

• **Electricity**

The electric situation is bizarre; Iraqis call it "traffic lights", for every 1 hour of electricity 5 hours of darkness during the summer days where the temperature reaches 120 Fahrenheit. In some days, it is 12 off and 1 on. The consequences of this cutting off are unimaginative and disastrous. More than 20.000 small factories were completely closed because of electricity shortage (Al-Sabah Newspaper: 622, 2005). Most household appliances blow out because the current is sometimes too strong; food in the refrigerators goes bad; for lighting, families use oil lanterns. Well-off families have bought small generators. But there is always the risk of keeping benzene in the houses for these generators. A further problem is the high consuming of fuel. Five million litres of benzene is the amount needed for these small generators in Baghdad only, not to mention the hydro carbonic and lead compounds gases discharged from them. Many houses caught fire and the inhabitants were burnt to death, another tragedy besides air pollution (ibid)

Working or sleeping is almost impossible during the day when one sweats all through. To have a bath will be a miracle because there is also a shortage of water. At night, people may go to sleep out on the roof: yet, they are usually disturbed and terrified by the US helicopters whining and hovering above all night. Children's cries are heard for fear of these planes.

• **Health**

A few decades ago, Iraq had one of the Middle East's best health systems. By the time Saddam Hussein was ousted, it had all but collapsed under the pressure of sanctions, wars and slashed budgets. Neglected or damaged health facilities need repair or rebuilding, and equipment needs replacing. Vital drugs like antibiotics, insulin and chemotherapy drugs have been in short supply (Pilger 2005). Since 1990, health indicators have worsened. Death rates in babies and under-fives have risen. Chronic

undernourishment now affects some 25% of under-fives. Maternal mortality rates are among the region's highest. .

The biggest threat against Iraqi children is unsafe water and its related diseases. Drinking water is mixed with sewage from broken pipes under the streets and rare too. According to UNICEF, 70% of all deaths of children under five are due to waterborne diseases, (UNICEF 2003). Doctors in Iraq have also reported a significant increase in deformities among newborn babies that could be due to radiation passed through mothers following U.S. wars of 1991-2003.

Iraq is also facing 'double burden of diseases.' They face dramatic rises in cancer, diabetes and heart diseases among the youths, coupled with preventable infectious diseases like typhoid, hepatitis, and cholera (Voices in the Wilderness, 2004).

• **Economy**

The dismantling of Iraq's military, security and government infrastructure by the CPA has led to a drastic rise in unemployment. Today, 60% of Iraqis are without jobs (Medact 2004). 27% of Iraqis live on less than \$2 per day and half of the active population has no income at all (Voices in the Wilderness, 2004). Joblessness is a serious problem facing thousands of families whose breadwinners were ousted. Colonel Paul Hughes of the US army, an adviser to former General Jay Garner, said "It was absolutely the wrong decision...We changed from being a liberator to an occupier with the single decision. By abolishing the army, we destroyed in the Iraqi mind the last symbol of sovereignty they could recognize and as a result created a significant part of resistance" (Omaar, 2004: 254).

• **Education**

War and economic decline have taken their toll on Iraq's once-admired education system. More than a hundred presidents of universities, deans of colleges and university teachers were killed. Hundreds of the most distinguished professors left the country. In addition, more than 700 hundred schools were bombed during the invasion and subsequent attacks on civilian areas (Pilger 2005). Attendance at Baghdad schools was less than 50% in 2003, with most women and girls staying home due to the dangers of being in the streets. (Electronic Iraq, 2003). In 2005 attendance is better but occasionally a sudden blocking of a bridge or street will mean skipping that day. It is common nowadays to give a third chance to those students who were unable to have a second sitting for the

final examinations because their way is blocked or because of a military operation in their district.

The other main issue is that the reconstruction of Iraqi education is an enormous challenge for post conflict society. Besides, in-service training of teachers and school management staff has been more or less non-existent during the last decade. Curricula and textbooks have not been revised for about two decades, and teaching methodologies are not updated. The challenges ahead are immense. Still, the Iraqis have a strong tradition and motivation for education and are committed to rebuilding the system.

- **Road transport**

Life has become unpredictable and unbearable for most people because of transport difficulties, blocked bridges and streets, and lack of facilities. More than seventy main streets are completely closed in Baghdad, in addition to three bridges out of nine. It is quite common to be on your way to work when suddenly police cars block the street and you have to strife back home.

- **Fuel shortage**

Although it sounds implausible, since the invasion a major gas shortage condition has existed in Iraq, the world's second largest oil reserve. The Iraqi domestic oil supply has plummeted into crisis and round each gas station in Baghdad, hundred of cars line up for hours to fill the tanks. Oil industry is facing serious problems resulting from years of sanctions, underinvestment and lately insurgent attacks. (Lee Siu Hin, 2005).

- **Reconstruction**

Wars, sanctions and looting have left Iraq's infrastructure in ruins. After Saddam Hussein was overthrown in 2003, total reconstruction costs were estimated at \$55bn and grants and loans were promised but not pledged. Almost three years have passed, insecurity is a major obstacle and reconstruction is still largely stalled in many places. So far less than a fifth of total pledged funds have been disbursed; some of the money intended for rebuilding is being diverted to security –estimates range from 10% to 50% of the US funds and the rest ripped off.

Human Costs of the 2003 War

The Iraq war has resulted in civilian casualties far greater than that of September 11, yet the loss of their lives (exceeding 100,000 according to John Hopkins Bloomberg, 2005) has hardly been engaged by the American media or government with the same humanity that they have

treated the loss of the American life, both military and civilian. When pressed to explain such a high number of civilian deaths in a war that was presented as being conducted through ‘precision targets’ and ‘smart bombs’, General Tommy Franks responded ‘We don’t do body counts’ (AlterNet, 2005).

On the other hand, hundreds of Americans have also been killed, and thousands more wounded and crippled, while thousands of others will experience new and deadly war-related illnesses not yet identified, (Ron Paul). US is pouring more than a billion dollars a week into the Iraq war that could otherwise be spent on health care, schools and infrastructure here at home (ibid).

The Value of Human Life

With the Iraqis taking role in battling terrorism and patrolling their own streets, accusations of human rights abuses are shifting from the Americans onto Iraqi police officers and soldiers who are actually the militia of the ruling parties.

Norman Soloman (2005) states that humanitarian principles and justice demand 'compensation' for the wounded and for the families of the dead. Such measures are morally right—but woefully insufficient, "We should never forget that it is impossible to truly compensate for a life that has been taken. Solutions require a halt to the wounding and killing, not just fulfilment of financial obligations after each tragedy." One may ask “Why is the Iraqi's blood so cheap?”

Critical National Problems

Not only public services such as electricity, fuel, water supplies, availability of medical care have not been improved, but also several other critical problems have emerged. Among the most perilous ones facing Iraq and having serious impact on society are terrorism and abuse of power, sectarian tensions and excessiveness, nepotism and favouritism, corruption within the Iraqi state administration and the theft of public money.

• Terrorism

“War stimulated terrorism”, says Former chief U.N. weapons inspector Hans Blix. He believes that “the US–led invasion of Iraq had failed tragically in its aim of making the world a safer place and succeeded only in stimulating terrorism. The acknowledged gained of the war was that a dictator was removed, but the rest has been tragedy and failure.” Many critics of the invasion argue that the war opened Iraq to Islamist militants

involved in insurrection against coalition forces (Reuters October 13, 2003). Iraq has become a battlefield for various and unknown groups to settle their accounts with their enemies. Several foreigners (soldiers and contractors) have been kidnapped and killed. Hostages were beheaded and videos of the killing were posted on the internet. This is not an Iraqi deed. Iraqis are not killers. This violence is not ours. Killers and their supporters will extend the occupation, hinder reconstruction and hold back economic development and job opportunities. Vice president Cheney continues to call Iraq a "critical front in the war on terror". This, in agreement with intelligence studies, asserts that the occupation itself has motivated further attacks on the West and violence within Iraq and threatens U.S. security and international stability.

- **Sectarian excessiveness**

The coalition forces aggravated sectarian tensions and excessiveness in Iraq which threatens to plunge Iraq into civil strife despite the great efforts from all the good groups to ease tensions. The coalition forces maintain their control through "the divide and conquer policy", and internal power struggle among the potential opposition

Nepotism and favouritism are flourishing after the war. Appointing military and civilian officials based on their sectarian identity will definitely undermine society and lead to divisions in the society and state. In addition, arresting leaders of opposing parties or clerics will also have serious impact on the society.

- **Corruption within the Iraqi state administration**

Newspapers and TV satellites debates talk about billions of dollars which have been stolen by the two state administrations and the era after the fall of Baghdad (Al Basaer newspaper, October 12, 2005). It is said that the administration officials at the top want to steal in months what Saddam stole in thirty-six years, (heard on the Democracy TV Sat.).

Recommendations of the International Criminal Tribunal for Iraq

The ICTI suggests the following recommendations to end this invasion:

1. Withdrawal of all troops of coalition forces stationed in Iraq and recovery of full sovereignty to the Iraqi people.
2. Refraining from indiscriminate military attack against civilians.
3. Recognition of illegality of all crimes committed and sincere apology for the crimes
4. Reparation to the victims
5. Investigation and punishment of the perpetrators of crimes

6. Investigation and impact assessment of weapons on human body and environment.
7. Ratification of the statute of the international Criminal Court.
8. Reform and restructuring of the UN system and the Security Council.
(ICTI , 2005)

Conclusion

Despite the chaos in Iraq, it is good to remember what President R. Nixon once said: “A man is not finished when he is defeated. He is finished when he quits.” and Iraqis are not quitters. On the other hand, that American minister, who says “Oil is too important to be left to the Arabs,” should consider that what God gives no-one can take. Our country is not for grant or sale.

Iraqis believe that the war has humiliated Iraq not liberated the country. The images of the prisoners in Abu-Ghraib being naked and attacked by dogs and the women being raped by the unbridled American guards could hardly be forgiven or forgotten. In addition, the unleashing of violence and unbridled military power against the peoples of Falluja, Al-Qa'im, Samara, Mosul, Talafer, and Baghdad itself, which has never stopped and which have led to a large number of civilian casualties are completely rejected. Winning the hearts and minds of Iraqis can never be achieved in this way.

Besides, the dishonesty and hypocrisy that underlie the war have caused countless millions all over the world to be deeply suspicious of America and its close allies, and resentful of the West. This is not a war that can bring peace or security to the United States or any country, nor democracy or freedom to the Iraqis

Further, operations like ‘Shock and Awe’ which aim at scaring enemy to death and putting on a terrifying show for the whole world to see, are used against people who have not fired a single bullet at U.S, argued Ira Chernus (2005).

Finally, Iraqis deserve as any human beings on this earth to live in prosperity and dignity. The war has opened a new festering sore in the Middle East. Only a change of heart and a change of policy can begin to right the wrong. The ‘coalition of the willing’ should now show their willingness to cease imposing themselves on Iraq, and aid the Iraqis to find a solution instead of continuing to be the problem. The nation is at crossroads: will the others continue to squander resources and take lives

in a conflict that never should have happened or will they be left to commit themselves to the rebuilding of their country?

Let's wish the Iraqi people all the best; they do need a lot of luck, and good will to overcome the ills that have been done to them these last hundreds of years. As for foreign interference, they have had more than enough of it. The end of the occupation will stop the chain reactions of violence and may allow the victim's wounds to heal.

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