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Five Years Iraq War

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Item Type	Article
Authors	Saleem, Muhammad
Publisher	Qurtuba University, Pakistan.
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Download date	2026-07-12 02:14:56
Link to Item	http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/187789

FIVE YEARS IRAQ WAR: Surge & After Surge

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Saleem*

Abstract:

After 9/11 the U.S. public was visibly shaken. They felt injured & insecure. Its Administration, particularly the Bush regime was anxious to redress this situation with a view to restoring & rehabilitating public trust & confidence in their rulers that they were capable of defending their lives & their sovereignty. Bush regime felt that she was obliged to overcome this trauma regardless of socio-moral & politico-legal justification for its aggressive and ruthless policies. Such considerations were deemed as totally irrelevant in view of national urgency. These mounting pressures & imperatives pushed them to Afghan war on extremely flimsy grounds. And while they were still half way thro' they opened another front, that is, an Iraq-war. Bush & his allies offered terribly poor rationale for these pre-mediated wars & as a result have lost much of their moral supremacy & enough of their respect in International Community. This brief article offers a catalogue of some of major events that has taken place during the last five years. Attempt is also made to assess the surge & after surge & its implications for peace in the region.

Introduction:

In a hind-sight, it appears that George W. Bush stepped into the White House with a renewed ambition to establish a global imperialism of the United States. He picked up the thread where it was left by his father, the Bush Senior. Immediately he gathered together all those neo-conservatives & the leading members of the Jewish lobby that had worked with Bush Senior. This group is led by a known hawk, Dick Cheney, the Vice-President (of the United States).

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It may be recalled that when the Soviets were defeated in Afghanistan, American intellectuals & foreign policy specialists urged their Administration that the U.S. shouldn't become complacent. Rather, it should "seize the moment" & move ahead to conquer the East (including China) as well. Initially, these intellectuals apprehended that may be the Confucian Civilization would join hands with the Muslim Civilization with a view to resisting the aggressive strategies of the United States & its imperialist cohorts. Hence they decided that it would be advisable to keep these two civilizations apart and defeat them one by one. In order to realize their global ambitions, they decided first to control the oil fields of both the Middle East and of the Central Asian Muslim States. This was deemed essential so that the U.S. could back & boost its super-technology with super economy & be able to bear the cost of a possible war with China – the real emerging threat to the U.S. hegemony. The U.S. & its allies invaded & occupied Afghanistan under the pretext of 9/11. But the ulterior motives were to assume control of oil & gas of the Central Asian Muslim States; whilst they invaded & occupied Iraq with a view to controlling the oil fields of Iraq and the rest of the Middle East, including Iran. This invasion was strongly advocated by the Jewish lobby & the neo-cons who deemed it as a continuation of the Gulf war of 1990-91. Their purpose was to ensure the safety of oil & Israel & realize their dream of greater Israel or the regional hegemony of the Jewish State. Likewise they were anxious to divide Iraq into three mini-states on sectarian & racial grounds, that is, on the basis of Shia, Sunni, & Kurdish affinities. Another probable reason was to pre-empt Saddam from de-linking his currency from U.S. dollar and linking it to Euro or some other currency. It was apprehended that if Saddam were to effect this change, it would inflict serious financial loss to the U.S. It is

reported that for the last so many decades, the U.S. has been able to manipulate more than \$ 540 billion per year from the rest of the world whose currency was linked with the U.S. dollar. So the decision to occupy these strategic points (i.e. Afghanistan & Iraq), which were crawling under defenseless conditions for quite some years was made long ago. The U.S. & its allies were just looking for a plausible “political context” – so that they could easily sell this war & justify their pre-planned invasion. Eventually Afghanistan was destroyed on the pretext of 9/11 terrorist attacks. No evidence was ever produced that could incontrovertibly implicate the poor Afghans or for that matter Osama bin Laden & his manpower. *9/11 The Big Lie* proves quite convincingly that it was the job of remote controlled aircrafts that were further guided by some ground forces. And the rest of it was a political rhetoric & a drama. But no one has ever examined these possible leads & the whole issue is still shrouded in mystery. Of late Ahmedinijad of Iran has questioned the rationale and authenticity of 9/11 & its subsequent corollaries.

Richard Clarke in his scholarly work—*Against All Enemies*—has forcefully alleged that Bush made a blunder of leaving Osama bin Laden & his al-Qaeda alone in Afghanistan while the job was barely half done, and rushed to Iraq & Saddam who has had nothing to do with 9/11 or other terrorist activities. Bush undertook this invasion on false & fabricated grounds such as:

- i). Iraq has stock-piles of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD).
- ii). That there were active contacts between Saddam Hussain & Osama bin Ladin. And that Saddam was anxious to pass on these WMD to Osama bin Ladin who, in turn, intends to attack the U.S. & kill our Children in

our own cities & streets. Hence it was advisable to go after Saddam Hussein & his Iraq and destroy these WMD.

Bush's arguments were highly suspect & were not taken at their face-value. United Nations inspection teams, in particular, couldn't validate these contentions. Even the world-round protests couldn't prevent Bush from Iraq invasion. He recruited Tony Blair to his plans. Both Bush & Blair deceived their respective nations, virtually the whole world by their blatant lies. And their lies have been detected from their official documents. The sole defense that they could offer is that they were misled & misinformed by their intelligence agencies.

This brief which is based on a leaked document: *The Secret Downing Street Memo* of a meeting of July 23, 2002 falsifies these contentions of both Bush & Blair. These minutes fully demonstrate that both Bush & Blair were accurately informed by their respective agencies that there were no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Further, that there were no active & operational contacts between Osama bin Ladin & Saddam Hussein. If any thing, these two characters were poles apart. These minutes clearly indicate that both of them were indeed telling lies & were engaged in deceiving not only their own respective nations but also the whole world. These minutes have totally discredited both Bush & Blair. In fact, Blair was forced to relinquish his office prematurely under public pressure. Let us examine, these minutes of the *Secret Downing Street Memo*.

On July 23, 2002, that is, nearly eight months before the Iraq invasion, Tony Blair, the British Prime Minister meets the members of his war Council in order to discuss the Iraq situation. Meeting was attended by the following officials: -

- i). Geoffrey Hoon, The Defence Secretary;
- ii). Jack Straw, The Foreign Secretary;
- iii). Lord Goldsmith, The Attorney General;
- iv). John Scarlett; the head of the Joint Intelligence Committee, which advises the Prime Minister;
- v). Sir Richard Dearlove, also known as “C”, the head of MI6 (the British equivalent of the CIA);
- vi). David Manning, Tony Blair's Foreign Policy Adviser (equivalent to the US National Security Advisor);
- vii). Admiral Sir Michael Boyce, the Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS);
- viii). Jonathan Powell, head of staff at Number 10;
- ix). Alistair Campbell, Director of strategy (Blair communications & political advisor); and
- x). Sally Morgan, Director of government relations.

The most significant part of the proceedings is that “C” the head of M16 – the equivalent of CIA, reports on his visit to Washington where he had conducted talks with George Tenet, his counterpart at the CIA, & other high officials. His reporting is reproduced verbatim:

“C reported on his recent talks in Washington. There was a perceptible shift in attitude. Military action was now seen as inevitable. Bush wanted to remove Saddam, through military action, justified by the conjunction of terrorism and WMD. But the intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy. The NSC had no patience with the UN route and no enthusiasm for publishing material on the Iraqi regime's record. There was little discussion in Washington of the aftermath after military action.”

From this paragraph one can see: -

- That by the mid-July 2002, that is, eight months before the war began (i.e. March 2003), President Bush had decided to invade & occupy Iraq. (As the subsequent proceedings show, Blair also decided to be a party to this crime & both of them committed a blatant violation of international law).
- Bush has justified the invasion “by the conjunction of terrorism and WMD”. Bush, recommends that we must pre-empt this eventuality otherwise we would have to pay a heavy price of our inaction.
- Already “the intelligence & facts were being fixed around the policy”. Senator Edward Kennedy rightly observed that there wasn’t anything wrong with intelligence reporting. It was the Bush regime that was busy in manipulating this information & fixing the facts & evidence around to justify the “policy decision” – & the decision was to invade & occupy Iraq whether or not there were any WMD.
- Many at the top of the U.S. Administration didn’t want to seek the prior approval of the United Nations for Iraq invasion – “going the UN-route”. Dick Cheney & the neo-cons around him, in particular, didn’t want to waste the opportunity to invade Iraq & secure their access to oil fields; to promote Israel’s geo-political interests, & also to prevent Saddam from de-linking its currency from the U.S. dollar.
- Few in Washington seemed much interested in the aftermath of the war. Their main purpose was to control the oil fields. What happens to the Iraqi people or for that matter to the U.S. soldiers, was none of their concerns.

- Bob Woodward, it may be recalled, has observed in his famous book: *Plan of Attack* that the military planning for Iraq war began as early as Nov. 21, 2001 wherein President ordered Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, to look at “what it would take to protect America by removing Saddam Hussein if we have to”; and that Secretary of Defense along with General Tommy Franks, head of the Central Command, were briefing the American officials on the progress of military planning during the late Spring and Summer of 2002. In any case, what the Downing Street Memo confirms for the first time is that President Bush has decided no later than July 23, 2002 to “remove Saddam through military action” & that war with Iraq was deemed as “inevitable”. The only thing still missing was a plausible “political context” that may help to fix the intelligence & facts around the policy”. Further, Bush & his neo-cons partners were not interested to go back to the UN in order to seek fresh mandate or authorization for war. This was done to appease Blair & satisfy his demand for finding a “political context” that may enable him to sell the war to the British people.

It was Jack Straw, the Foreign Secretary who got to the heart of the problem, that is, how to justify such an invasion? He rightly observed that “the case for invasion was very thin. Saddam was not threatening his neighbors, & his WMD were less than that of Libya, North Korea or Iran.” It may be underlined that both the U.S. & British officials were thoroughly aware that Iraq has no such stock-piles of WMD. Jack Straw recommended that we should work-up a plan for an “ultimatum” to

Saddam to allow back the UN weapons inspectors. In his opinion, this “ultimatum” may help us to find a legal & moral justification for the war.

His expectations were that probably Saddam would decline to oblige the UN & this defiance would facilitate our process to go all out for war. Tony Blair approved of the “ultimatum” plan. Such an “ultimatum”, he observed, could be “politically critical” only if it was turned down by Saddam. In any case, it would hopefully provide us with the much needed “political context” & enable us to move freely for a regime change. Geoffrey Hoon suggested that the Prime Minister should set-out the “political context” for Bush and make it clear to the U.S. administration that it won’t be possible for Britain to participate in Iraq war without the UN authorization and involvement. Blair agreed in principle & decided to visit the United States personally so that he could persuade President Bush to go to the United Nations. Dick Cheney, Bush & others, however, were extremely reluctant to take the UN route. Their apprehensions were that the UN might prevent the war which, in their opinion, was “inevitable”. Blair, on the other hand, insisted that the UN route was indispensable for creating an impression that he has had exhausted international institutions before resorting to force. Bush eventually yielded to Blair & went to UN & declared that “we will work with the UN Security Council for the necessary resolutions”. The Prime Minister felt relieved that the war was finally given the “political context”. United Nations inspectors for WMD were sent back to Iraq. Obviously the purpose was not to promote peace but instead to sell the war: purpose was not to ensure disarmament of Iraq (as there were no arms to begin with) but to dislodge Saddam Hussein from power through war & violence and occupy the oil-fields. Their war-mongering attitude is evident from the fact that while the inspectors were still busy doing

their job, the US & Britain decided to rush to war. France, China, Russia, in fact, the whole world demanded that let these inspectors complete their job, but the U.S. and Britain refused to oblige the advocates of peace. Instead they asked the inspectors to leave Iraq within three days & at the end of the dead-line, the allied forces opened their attack & occupied Iraq. Victory was formally declared on May 1, 2003 by President Bush, but war still goes on even in 2008 & has claimed the lives of nearly 5000 U.S. soldiers and more than 1.5 million Iraqis.

Now that the cat is out of the bag, it is incumbent upon the world at large to identify the real war-criminals & persuade the people of the United States & of Britain to initiate the proceedings against both of them who deliberately pushed the world to an unjust war & that too on the basis of sheer lies. They are equally guilty of flouting the International Law and the UN Charter which was formulated after a long & strenuous struggle. In fact, this “pre-emptive” war has pushed the world to Hobbes’ *state of nature*. No nation is safe. The UN has completely lost its relevance. Probably the world would never be the same again. Custodians of peace, unfortunately, turned out to be the merchants of war and violence, death & destruction and there is no end insight to this madness.

Most tragic part of this unjust war is that its important characters have been duly rewarded. For instance, G.W. Bush awarded the Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor the U.S. can bestow, to George Tenet, the former Director of Central Intelligence (Paul Bremer & Gen.(r) Tommy Franks were equal beneficiaries). Tenet, of course, would be known to history as the intelligence director who had failed to detect & prevent the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001; & the man who assured

Bush that the case for Saddam's possession of WMD was "slam dunk" (i.e. absolutely sure).

It looks that Tenet didn't qualify for this honor on the basis of his meritorious services to his country but for his servile & spineless submission to George W. Bush. For he allowed Bush to manipulate the intelligence reports to justify his war policies while Tenet himself remained mum, mute & silent even though a man like Kennedy implored him to tell the truth to the people of the United States. Kennedy underlined that Tenet owes it to the nation and to history at large. But nothing could move Tenet to break the ice. Now of course his silence & his abject compliance have been duly rewarded. But that is not all. Even Bush & Blair got duly rewarded for their lies as both of them got re-elected to their respective positions. It is a different matter though that Blair was subsequently forced to relinquish his office under public pressure. Bush is equally disgraced but is somehow still holding on to power though adjudged to be one of the worst President in 2000 years.

War Atrocities

Since late April 2004, when the first photographs of the U.S. Soldiers humiliating torturing & mistreating detainees at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq were flashed, the U.S. government sought to portray the abuse as an isolated incident committed by some bad elements without the blessings of the commanding officers. For instance, Donald Rumsfeld observed that abusive incidents of Abu Ghraib were an "exceptional, isolated" case. Likewise Bush in his televised address to the nation on May 24, 2004 termed it as a "disgraceful conduct by a few American troops who dishonored our country & disgraced our values".

Human Rights Watch, however, has forcefully challenged & rejected these contentions of the U.S. Administration. The HRW report

underscored that these atrocities & brutalities were inflicted on the detainees of Abu Ghraib because of the “shock & awe” policies of President Bush and his regime. The Bush regime apparently believed that the new wars it was fighting could not be won if its acts were regulated and constrained by “old” rules. HRW Report insists that “this pattern of abuse did not result from the acts of individual soldiers who broke the rules. It resulted from decisions made by the Bush Administration to bend, ignore, or cast the rules aside. The disturbing information coming to light points to an official policy of torture & cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment”. The report further points out that the Pentagon & the Justice Department developed the breathtaking legal argument that the President, as commander-in-chief of the armed forces, was not bound by U.S. or international laws prohibiting torture when acting to protect national security, and that such laws might even be unconstitutional if they hampered the war on terror. Following these legal trends the United States began to create offshore, off-limits, prisons such as Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and maintained other detainees in “undisclosed locations,” and sent terrorism suspects without legal process to countries where information was beaten out of them. Needless to emphasize that all these moves were running counter to international Law & well-established moral norms of the United States.

White House Legal Counsel did point out the dangerous implication of this policy & stated that it might “undermine U.S. military culture which emphasizes maintaining the highest standards of conduct in combat and could introduce an element of uncertainty in the status of adversaries.” These warnings, however, were totally ignored. The Human Rights Watch points out three fundamental reasons that

eventually contributed towards this hostile & inhuman attitude towards more than 60,000 detainees:

1. In the aftermath of the September 11 attacks on the United States, the Bush Administration seemingly determined that winning the war on terror required that the United States circumvent international law including the Geneva Conventions of 1949 which prohibit the use of coercive measures against the prisoners of war (or ordinary detainees). The Pentagon and the Justice Department urged the President to disregard all these conventions & go for hard measures against the terrorists, & other insurgents.
2. The United States began to employ coercive methods designed to “soften up” detainees for interrogation. These methods included holding detainees in painful stress positions, depriving them of sleep and light for prolonged periods, exposing them to extremes of heat, cold, noise and light, hooding, and depriving them of all clothing for a prolonged period of time. Purpose was to inflict severe humiliation, pain & torture on the detainees & through them send a message to the insurgents outside to give up their resistance against the occupying forces.
3. From the earliest days of the war in Afghanistan and the occupation of Iraq, the U.S. government has been aware of allegations of abuse. But it deliberately dismissed them as inconsequential & irrelevant. In fact, a new term “enemy combatants” was coined to circumvent the legal norms sanctified by the Geneva Conventions. These detainees were not treated even as human beings & were subjected to all sorts

of brutalities prompted by religious & racial discrimination. All sort of coercive methods were authorized including the use of military guard dogs to instill fear amongst the prisoners. These detainees have not been allowed to seek any legal relief & have been deprived of their human rights without due process of law. Amongst thousands of prisoners both from Afghanistan & Iraq there has been only one case of John Walker Lindh, an American citizen, who challenged the U.S. government and got relief thro' the legal proceedings.

It was a strange irony that the Bush regime was never tired of labeling this war as a “War against Terrorism” & still his regime was not willing to treat these prisoners or detainees as the prisoners of war & to extend them the facilities allowed them under Geneva Accords.

The HRW report concludes that each new photo of an American soldier humiliating an Iraqi could be considered a recruiting poster for al-Qaeda. Policies adopted to make the United States more secure from terrorism have in fact made it more vulnerable. America is losing the war for hearts and minds around the world & there is a mounting resentment against the U.S. polices. It is obvious that “War against Terrorism” cannot be won by spreading more tyranny & terror.

These atrocities become all the more unacceptable when we keep in mind that one of the so-called stated objectives of this war against terrorism is to introduce the rule of law & respect for freedom & democracy in Iraq & Afghanistan—countries that have been subjected to repressive and oppressive rulers.

Well, we must give credit to Bush & Blair that they have consistently maintained their record of deception and lies to the public &

the world at large. Even when these brutalities are perpetrated by their blessings, they insist that these incidents were / are solitary actions of some “bad apples”. But who were the real “bad apple”? well, we have to wait for the judgment of history.

Findings of World Tribunal

By Feb. 2003, it was obvious that Bush & Blair were itching for the invasion of Iraq & destruction of this poor country. International institutions didn't have the courage & conscience to stand-up to the brute aggression of the U.S & UK governments. Iraq has been invaded, occupied & devastated. The attack on Iraq was in fact, an attack on the sovereignty of nations, on justice, and liberty &, in fact, on the future of mankind. Some people feeling the pricks of their conscience decided to stand-up, form a world tribunal on Iraq to demanded justice & peace for poor Iraqis who have been subjected to ruthless sanctions & relentless brutalities of war—sometimes a war with Iran, sometimes a war imposed upon them by more than 30 different countries named as Gulf War and sometimes a war of Bush & Blair under the name of bringing freedom, peace & prosperity to Iraq. Istanbul session was the culmination of a series of 20 hearing held in different cities of the world. This jury of Conscience consists of 10 members drawn from different countries. They have heard so far more than 54 testimonies from a panel of advocates and witnesses, who came across the world, including Iraq, the U.S. & the United Kingdom. The overriding objective of this tribunal is to identify the real war criminals & bring the truth to the surface that Iraq war was based on sheer lies & blatant deceptions. Ultimate goal, of course, is to help Iraq regain its sovereignty, freedom & independence by urging the allied forces to withdraw from Iraq forthwith & transfer power to the people of Iraq.

1. Overview:

- Reasons given by the US and UK governments for the invasion of Iraq (i.e. the conjunction of WMD and terrorism) have proven to be false. The real motive was to occupy Iraq and control its oil fields along with promoting the geo-political interests of Israel, the junior partner to the U.S. global imperialism.
- Iraq was kept under sanctions for more than a decade which led to the loss of lives of more than half a million innocent children for want of adequate food and health facilities. The country was subjected to frequent bombings - purpose was to weaken its defense potential for eventual invasion & occupation. In this enterprise the U.S. was endorsed by a complicit U.N. Security Council.
- In pursuit of their agenda for global imperialism, Bush & Blair blatantly ignored the massive opposition to the war demonstrated by millions of people around the world.
- The Anglo-American occupation of Iraq has led to the destruction and the devastation of the Iraqi state & society. Law & order have broken down completely. Physical infrastructure is in shambles, health care facilities are gone, the education system has ceased to operate. There is a massive ecological devastation & the cultural heritage of humanity has been ruthlessly destroyed.
- Occupation forces are doing every thing possible to create a civil strife amongst various ethnic & religious groups—Shia-Sunni tension is vigorously promoted.

Their ultimate aim is to divide Iraq into three mini states meant for the Shias, the Sunnis, and the Kurds & thus eliminate any future threat to Israel and its pursuits of regional imperialism.

- U.S. & UK alliance through its first round of war of 1991 & subsequent sanctions brought a great havoc to the Iraqi nation. Its second round of “pre-emptive” attack has further claimed more than 15,00,000 lives and has detained more than 60,000 people at various prisons. They are subjected to heinous crimes -- disgraced, mistreated & humiliated. Iraq has also witnessed more than 4 million refugees taking shelter in neighboring Syria & Jordan.
- The allied forces have virtually destroyed everything in Iraq except the oil fields & (they are now busy in pumping its oil & transporting it to their respective countries). Contracts are allotted to different oil companies especially of U.S. origin.
- Occupying forces are not allowed to have intrusive interference in the national life of the occupied country. Whatever these allied forces have done so far is totally illegal & illegitimate. But the occupying forces are least bothered by such legal or moral concerns.
- There is widespread resistance to this occupation. The Global Tribunal considers this resistance as lawful struggle for the restoration of their sovereignty, freedom and independence. The Tribunal urges the occupying

forces to withdraw from Iraq forthwith & hand over the power to the Iraqi people.

2. Findings & Charges:

- Bush & Blair are guilty of planning, preparing & waging the supreme crime of a war of aggression in contravention of the UN charter & the Nuremberg Principles. Evidence of this can be found in the leaked Downing Street Memo of 23rd July 2002. (We have already analyzed this memo above.
- Allied forces are guilty of deliberately destroying cities & the infra-structure that could sustain human life, such as, hospitals, electricity stations, water purification facilities, etc. These are clear violations of Geneva Conventions of 1949.
- Using massive force such as, cluster bombs, incendiary bombs, chemical weapons, etc & killing thousands of innocent civilians.
- Imposing punishments without charge or trial & also indulging in extra- judicial killing of innocent people.
- Subjecting Iraqi soldiers & civilians to torture & degrading treatment.
- The employment of mercenaries and private contractors to carry out torture.
- Re-writing the laws of a country that has been illegally invaded and occupied.
- Air, water pollution & land degradation.
- Sexual violence & forcing Iraqi women to prostitution.

- Transporting people to other countries for torture & abuses.

Against the Security Council of the United Nations:

- Failing to protect Iraq against a crime of aggression.
- Imposing harsh sanctions against Iraq which caused the loss of life of more than half a million children.
- Allowing the allied forces to carry out illegal bombing in the no-fly zones.
- Failure to stop war crime against humanity by the U.S. & its coalition partners.
- Giving recognition to illegal occupation.

Recommendations:

Recognizing the right of the Iraqi people to resist the illegal occupation of their country and to develop independent institutions, and affirming the right to wage a struggle for self-determination, freedom, and independence as derived from the Charter of the United Nations, we the Jury of Conscience declare our solidarity with the people of Iraq.

We recommend:

- The immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the coalition forces from Iraq;
- That coalition governments make war reparations and pay compensation to Iraq for the humanitarian, economic, ecological, and cultural devastation they have caused by their illegal invasion and occupation;

- That all laws, contracts, treaties, and institutions established under occupation which the Iraqi people deem inimical to their interests, should be considered null and void;
- That the Guantanamo Bay prison and all other offshore US military prisons be closed immediately; that the names of the prisoners be disclosed, that they receive POW status, and receive due process of Law;
- That there be an exhaustive investigation of those responsible for crimes of aggression and crimes against humanity in Iraq, beginning with George W. Bush, President of the United States of America; Tony Blair, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom; and other government officials from the coalition of the willing;
- That we initiate a process of accountability to hold those morally and personally responsible for their participation in this illegal war, such as journalists who deliberately lied, corporate media outlets that promoted racial, ethnic and religious hatred, and CEOs of multinational corporations that profited from this war;
- That people throughout the world launch actions against US and UK corporations that directly profit from this war. Examples of such corporations include Halliburton, Bechtel, Carlyle, CACI Inc., Titan Corporation, Kellogg, Brown and Root (subsidiary of Halliburton), DynCorp, Boeing, ExxonMobil, Texaco, British Petroleum.
- That soldiers exercise conscience and refuse to enlist and participate in an illegal war. Also that countries provide conscientious objectors political asylum.

- That the international campaign for dismantling all US military bases abroad be reinforced.
- That people around the world resist and reject any effort by any of their governments to provide material, logistical, or moral support to the occupation of Iraq.

The Latest Profile

- In Jan. 2005 a group of 50 peace activists, former veterans of Vietnam & Gulf war, issued a global appeal to end the Iraq war. There has been tremendous impact of this appeal as by July 2005, the White House received more than 500,000 petitions for an early end to this war and an immediate withdrawal of allied forces from Iraq.
- The anti-war movement is gaining ground. Democratic opposition has been infused with a new will & vision to put the Republicans on the defensive. Vietnam & Gulf war Veterans & their families are becoming more active & vocal against Iraq war. A World Tribunal (already examined above) has also emerged urging the Anglo-American alliance to stop the war, withdraw their forces immediately & hand-over the control of the state to the Iraqi people. Further, the Tribunal has urged the U.S. in particular to dismantle its air-bases on foreign lands so that the fast emerging dangers of global war could be averted.
- Already 100 Congressmen & 9 U.S senators have expressed their willingness to participate in Sept. 24, 2005 public demonstrations aimed at mobilizing the Congress to investigate the Downing Street Memo that has proved beyond any shadow of doubt that the grounds for Anglo-US Iraq

invasion were totally fabricated; that the decision for the war was taken long ago and that subsequently facts & intelligence were shuffled around to produce the much needed “political context”, & that, too, on the insistence of the British War Council otherwise the Bush regime was hell-bent to go for a unilateral pre-emptive attack.

- The Downing Street Memo clearly indicates that the high officials of Anglo-American alliance were fully aware that there were no WMD in Iraq, nor any active/operational contacts between Usama bin Ladin & Saddam Hussain, (that is, the oft-trumpeted “Conjunction between WMD & terrorism” was absolutely false & fabricated). Parenthetically, it may be stated that the intelligence agencies didn’t deceive their respective governments. In fact, all the relevant facts were brought to the notice of their respective governments. Truly speaking, it were the Bush-Blair regimes that were determined to deceive their own nations and push them to this brutal war. And in this process they flouted the world opinion and also made a mockery of the UN Security Council.
- There is a growing consciousness amongst the people of the United States that if staining the dress of a women (Monica Lewinsky) & then telling a lie: “I haven’t done sex with that women” was a reprehensible crime leading to impeachment proceedings (against a sitting president i.e. Bill Clinton), then soaking the sands, cities, & streets with the blood of more than 150,000 innocent men, women & children (& that too on the basis of white-lies of the White House & of the Downing Street & the brutality still continues) should be treated as far

more heinous a crime calling for more drastic measures. To say the least, this crime should call for an urgent & immediate impeachment proceeding against Bush, the real war criminal. Further, it may be observed that this reckless war not only devastated Iraq but has also claimed the lives of nearly 5000 U.S. soldiers whilst more than 30000 U.S. soldiers have been seriously injured. Besides these human losses, the country has also spent from its exchequer more than \$650 billion on Iraq war so far. Whilst the fact remains that this unjust, illegal and pre-mediated war was prompted by the lust & greed of a few officials of the Bush regime who were anxious to occupy the oil-fields of Iraq & to ensure the safety of Israel, the soft-belly of the U.S.

- As a result of the efforts of anti-war movement, the tide is now turning. Public support for the war is now down, as are the President's ratings (over 70% people are opposed to Bush's war policy). Anti-war Democrats are back. Military recruitment is hitting the wall. The impression amongst the masses is deepening that the U.S. is losing the war in Iraq and also in Afghanistan. Nation-wide anti-war demonstrations are witnessed quite frequently. Senate & Congress elections of 2006 did prove a Waterloo for Bush & his war policies. Bush, it may be recalled, was somehow able to camouflage his war crimes during his own Presidential election. Now that the Downing Street Memo has put him in the dock, it is expected that like Blair he too would have to pay the price for his lies. Even the Republican nominee for the forthcoming Presidential

elections didn't feel like attending the dinner hosted by the incumbent President.

- Anti-war movement apprehends that Bush may escalate war & attack Syria or Iran in order to salvage his fast-sinking popularity & his fascist war policies. 7/7 London blasts may be re-examined in this context. May be Tony Blair was also seeking a new lease of life thro' these blasts. Anti-war Movement presumes that thro' a nation-wide campaign, the people of the United States must be informed about the lies of George W. Bush & his neo-con partners, so that they be prevented from another adventurism of this sort.
- Pentagon is protecting its war in Iraq mostly by a false propaganda. Insurgents are inflicting massive losses to the allied forces but they are kept secret from the public eye. Body-bags are constantly pouring in. Panic has set-in amongst the decision-makers in Iraq & in Anglo-American bloc. National resistance in Iraq is on the rise. Notwithstanding the propaganda of the Bush regime that Iraq has turned into a terrorist magnet & the militants from all over the Arab world are flocking in, the resistance movement is essentially homegrown & indigenous. Both Shia & Sunni factions (in spite of the U.S. efforts to put them to war against each other) are making joint efforts for the liberation of their homeland. Bush regime has inadvertently confessed their losses by falsely accusing Iran & Syria for not doing enough to seal their borders & preventing the free-flow of terrorists into Iraq. The sagging morale of the allied commanders in Iraq is also evident from their pressing demands that additional 40,000

armed forces should be sent to Iraq for meeting the rising-tide of the insurgents. Bush did concede to this request & dispatched 21,500 soldiers to Iraq by way of a new surge. We will assess the impact of this surge a little later.

- Perhaps the most significant factor on the ground is the emergence of an Iraqi movement calling for an immediate withdrawal & ending the illegal & immoral occupation of their land by the allied forces. Brookings Institute reported that soon after the elections, more than 100,000 Iraqi Shias demonstrated on the streets of Baghdad pressing for an immediate end to the war & the withdrawal of occupation forces. The Institute report further underlined that 82% Sunnis & 69% Shias are demanding the end to war & the withdrawal of occupation forces. Even the Iraqi Prime Minister, voicing the popular sentiments of his people, has asked the Anglo-American governments to withdraw their forces from Iraq. It is really unfortunate that the Bush-Blair combination has rebuffed his demand.
- Some leading U.S. Think-Tanks are pleading that the apprehensions of civil-war after the withdrawal of the allied forces are totally baseless. They insist that just as the withdrawal of forces from Lebanon or for that matter from Vietnam didn't lead to any such eventuality, the same would be true of Iraq as well. They contend that terrorist attacks are prompted essentially because of invasion & occupation of Iraq by the allied forces & if these forces are withdrawn, these attacks would automatically come to an end. Anti-war movement observes with dismay that Secretary Rumsfeld is

proudly asserting that “we have no exit strategy, only a victory strategy” (It is interesting to note that Rumsfeld was shown the door without a victory in Iraq & Bush may follow soon). The movement, however, observes that that’s what the Americans in Saigon kept saying till they were jumping on the helicopters from roof-tops in 1975.

- Anti-war movement has made the recruitment for the army too difficult. Vietnam Syndrome is coming back. In fact, the recruitment crisis is connected to a morale crisis on the battle-field itself. The so-called coalition of the willing having troops on the ground in Iraq has declined from 34 to 20 nations. In March 2005, New York Times reported that Ukraine was pulling out its 150 troops by Oct. 2005. Two staunch allies of the U.S., that is, Great Britain’s Tony Blair & Italy’s Berlusconi suffered politically in recent elections due to their pro-war stances. Even 7/7 blasts are attributed to the same cause by some of the leading analysts including the Mayor of London. The Mayor contends that if people of London were subjected to the same sort of injustices & brutalities (as was the case with Muslims) every second man in Britain would have turned into a terrorist & a militant.
- Nearly 20,000 stateless mercenaries & contractors are also fighting along with the allied forces. They too have suffered heavy losses; but as they are private contractors, the U.S. government is not obliged to report about their deaths & losses. Iraq war, it may be emphasized, is provoking resentment & anger in the entire Muslim World and stirred-up

hostilities are not likely to subside in the near future. Even Bush has to admit that may be his grand-children will have to fight this war against terrorism. Obviously Bush & Blair are responsible for creating this massive tension. Abu Ghraib scandals have done havoc to the reputation of Pentagon & the U.S. norms & values.

- The war climate is fast-changing. The rank & file of the anti-war movement expects that if body bags keep coming from Iraq, it would move Congress from fence-sitting to forward motion. However, a world-wide anti-war campaign is required to wean away Bush & Blair from oil & blood addiction. Of course, the people of the United States can play the crucial role. But it is still awaited.

Surge & After Surge

It may be recalled that Bush & Blair rushed to war in Iraq on the basis of false & fabricated pretexts. Both were telling their respective nations (& the world at large) that Saddam Hussain was sitting on nuclear arsenal & was in close contact with Osama Bin Laden & his militant al-Qaeda. Further, it was trumpeted that Saddam was anxious to transfer these weapons of mass destruction to Osama who, in turn, was eager to kill U.S. citizens in our own cities & streets as he has already done by the destruction of New York Towers. Threat of a possible nuclear attack broke the public resistance to war & there was indeed a ground – swell in favor of Iraq invasion. Soon after the invasion, the world could see that Bush & Blair had failed to produce the WMD & that the war was morally unjustified, economically disastrous, & politically counter – productive as it would further alienate the Muslim world & encourage more militants to rush to arms. At this juncture both Bush & Blair turned

around & by way of face – saving device, coined yet another excuse that their primary objective of war in Iraq was to dethrone Saddam Hussain – a replica of Hitler – and turn Iraq into a model democracy for the Middle East. The attack was launched in March 2003 & by May 2003, Bush formally declared victory in Iraq even though the war still goes on in 2008. The U.S. is reportedly spending \$10 billion (P.M.) in Iraq war while its war in Afghanistan is consuming & claiming \$ 2 billion (P.M). As of now more than \$ 650 billion are spent in these two wars. (Bush has recently asked for an additional grant of \$47 billion to meet the war expenditures). In general, the financial specialists are telling us that the U.S. has suffered a loss of more than \$ 2 Trillion during the past 5 years. It has also forced the world to suffer more than \$ One Trillion during the same period. Its losses in human terms are equally staggering. It is reported that the U.S. has lost more than 5000 soldiers while the number of its injured soldiers is 10 times more than its dead. Some 300,000 of the 1.6 million U.S. soldiers who have served in Iraq & Afghanistan suffer from psychological traumas of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression or both, an independent study showed last moth. It may be underlined that more than 1.5 million Iraqis have been killed while around 5 millions are forced to go for internal or external migration. In spite of all odds, the insurgents were able to inflict heavy losses to the occupying forces.

In the year 2007, the field commanders, the Pentagon experts & the military analysts were insisting that the U.S. was losing the war in Iraq unless it could commit at least 40,000 more soldiers to Iraq to save the lives of entrapped U.S. soldiers and enable them to withdraw with some semblance of grace & dignity. Bush finally conceded to send five more brigades (i.e. 21500) of fresh soldiers to Iraq. This new

reinforcement is generally called a new “surge”. The purpose of this “surge” was two-fold. First it was meant to provide a political space to al-Maliki regime to go for aggressive national reconciliation and accommodate the interests of all stake holders especially the Sunni Arabs so that there could be a viable peace & stability in Iraq. Second objective was to allow a breathing space to Bush Administration to broaden its peace initiative & get involved the major regional powers such as Iran, Syria, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, O.I.C., the Arab League as well as the U.N. & the European Union & solicit their active involvement in an early settlement of the on-going war in Iraq. Parenthetically it may be observed that this surge was also an indirect message to Iran & Syria to stay away from Iraq otherwise they may have to pay the price for meddling in Iraq affairs.

It may be admitted that “surge” did reduce the violence in Iraq at least for the time being. For instance, in 2007 the average attacks were over 6000 (P.M). Now they are reduced to 2000 (P.M). More perceptive analysts however, contend that this lull & calm was by no means the result of more soldiers in the battlefield for that they presume was virtually too late. Some critics (such as Bob Woodward & others) are of the opinion that the Bush regime never planned for victory in Iraq (For a more detailed account see Bob Woodward’s book: *State of Denial*). Their main objective was to destroy Iraq (so that it may not remain a threat for Greater Israel in future); & that they have done more ruthlessly & systematically than the 13th Century Mongols. In their opinion the main reason for this lull in insurgency came about because of a new alignment amongst the insurgents. For instance, the tribal warlords realigned themselves with the former insurgents known as the “sons of Iraq”. Both these groups joined hands against the al Qaeda forces in Iraq.

They contend that Al Qaeda made a blunder in declaring that Iraq was in fact a battle ground for a future Islamic State. Whereas, the tribal war-lords & the sons of Iraq were somehow committed to the solidarity of Iraq & were opposed to al Qaeda & its leadership. The U.S. was somehow able to ignite these differences & divide the insurgents between the “locals” & the ‘outsiders’ as well as the Shias & the Sunnis. Since these sons of Iraq & their tribal partners were familiar with the topology of their own country they were able to inflict heavy losses to al-Qaeda, especially their top leadership was killed. Further, the U.S. by siding with the Sunni Arabs were also able to inflict considerable loss to Shia militias. The U.S. also prompted Shia-Sunni sectarian war leading to ethno-sectarian cleansing. As a result thereof, the Sunni minorities left Shia majority areas & Shias did the same. Naturally, it led to some decline in mutual war & violence. These multiple causal forces, in their opinion, were largely responsible for a reduction in violence. They hold that surge was just a matter of coincidence and was by no means a determining factor. It may however be observed that the U.S is guilty of sowing the seeds of disintegration of Iraq by promoting tribalism, sectarianism, and war lordism. All three elements would eventually militate against the center and spell disaster for the country. If the U.S forces are withdrawn the warring factions may seek help from their sympathetic neighbors and the local war may burst-out to a regional war. And that of course is one of the primary objectives of the U.S policy. The Bush regime is anxious to push the entire Middle East to Shia- Sunni Sectarian war and let the Muslims bleed to death and destruction.

Further, if the principle objective of the “Surge” was to allow adequate opportunity to al-Maliki regime to work for national reconciliation his efforts are conspicuous by their absence. In fact, the

very concept of reconciliation/accommodation is viewed differently in different camps. For instance:

- i). For Shias reconciliation really means their exclusive control over the State with full opportunity to exploit its oil and gas resources. Change in political power should mean that Shias should be allowed to compensate themselves for their past deprivations be they meted out to them at the hands of Saddam or other rulers of the past.
- ii). For Kurds reconciliation means protection of their hard-earned autonomy with all the prospects for future independence. Also, it should include the possibility of annexing areas rich in oil-resources to Kurdistan.
- iii). For Sunni Arabs reconciliation means restoration of Sunnis to power and position. Only an arrangement of this kind, they perceive, can protect Iraq from Iranian hegemony and its local proxies, that is, the Shia militias.

The fact of the matter is that al-Maliki cannot amend the Constitution in order to accommodate Sunnis in political power or offer them an equitable share in oil revenue. This kind of appeasement would turn his own constituency against him and push him out of power.

Besides, if the U.S was supposed to broaden its peace initiative and involve regional powers (such as, Iran, Syria, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia) or international bodies (such as, U.N.; O.I.C; Arab League or the European Union) nothing is being done in this direction either. Bush being a lame-duck President is just marking time. His popularity is all-time low and he is simply incapable of doing anything that may change the course in Iraq

or the Middle East. It is quite likely that this opportunity will slip away and the insurgents who are apparently down, but not out, weakened but not vanquished, may renew their passion for fighting against the occupying forces and their local collaborators. Al-Qaeda might be in temporary disarray and may recompose its rank and file and fight back with full force.

In conclusion we may emphasize that al-Maliki regime is both unable and unwilling to reconcile with the Sunni Arabs. Likewise Bush is on his way out and as such simply incapable of drastic changes in the Middle East policy. Given these stark realities, one is irresistibly driven to the conclusion that war in Iraq will go on. Probably Bush was right to anticipate that his own grand children would rush to Iraq to fight this war. Probably Al-Zawahri was no less prophetic when he predicted that if the U.S. stays on in Iraq, she will bleed to death; and if they withdraw they would lose everything. His prediction is in line with Madam Albright's observation (See her book: *The Mighty & the Almighty*) that the U.S. went to war (in Afghanistan & Iraq) to demonstrate its military might. It's a strange irony that it has demonstrated its helplessness & limitations. My own feelings are (maybe they are tainted with a wishful thinking) that the U.S. would meet its Waterloo in Iraq as the Soviets were met with theirs in Afghanistan.

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