

A Compassionate Solution to the Iraq War

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One can go to any town or city in America to discuss the Iraq war and be confronted with an emotional response. Because of the unresolved turmoil from the September 11, 2001 attacks, and the many loved ones lost or stationed in the Middle East, American involvement in Iraq invokes powerful feelings. The fear of future attacks and an underlying eagerness for revenge has allowed the Bush administration to manipulate the public into believing that Saddam Hussein posed an imminent threat. Public support for the war has waned in light of the Valerie Plame case, the shifting reasons for the invasion, and the weapons of mass destruction that have not been found after almost three years of occupation. Rather than scrutinize the many discrepancies that led us into war, one must focus on resolutions that will end our military presence in Iraq.

Whether one supports the war or speaks out against it, the fact remains that we are occupying Iraq. The Bush administration will not discuss any plans to end our military campaign. Instead, the public is treated to tired slogans and endless references to terrorists and terrorism. Donald Rumsfeld's recent shift of labeling the Iraqi insurgency as terrorists, al Qaeda, Baathist, and "*Enemies of the Iraqi -- legitimate Iraqi government*" (Rumsfeld, 2005) is propagandist spin to inflame the American public. The assumption from the administration seems to be the American people will only endorse fighting terrorists. The sad fact is that the war in Iraq has denigrated to a growing insurgency because most Iraqi people want coalition troops to leave.

"By combating terrorists in Iraq, the U.S. military is helping to prevent another terror attack on American soil", a senior U.S. military officer was quoted as saying. (Gilmore, 2005) One argument that is constantly used by conservative supporters of the war in Iraq is that America

must bring the fight to the terrorists. Conservatives attempt to credit the war with the lack of terrorist attacks since September 11, 2001. However, what supporters of the war disregard are the fact that there was an eight-year lapse between the original bombing of the World Trade Center in 1993 and the destruction of those towers in 2001.

The argument that combating terrorists in Iraq keeps America safe makes the assumption that terrorists are too foolish to consider attacking America because they are busy attacking American troops in Iraq. Although most guerilla attacks are executed by the insurgency, the fact remains that there are terrorists practicing in Iraq on live targets. The borders to Iraq and America are unsecured. Terrorist groups can easily train in armed conflict against coalition forces in Iraq, cross the border without any difficulties, and then infiltrate America on a student or guest worker visa. America's continued military occupation of Iraq has made the United States more vulnerable to a terrorist attack.

The consensus throughout the world, and especially in America, was that Saddam Hussein was a brutal dictator. However, the American government created Hussein. The Central Intelligence Agency installed Saddam to stabilize the region. Money, bio-agents, chemical agents, intelligence, and arms were given to Hussein to fight the Iran/Iraq war during the 1980s. Our government turned a blind eye to Saddam's treatment of the Kurds and Shiite Muslims in Iraq. The American public was, for the most part, complicit. There is no argument against the fact that the Iraqi populace needed to be liberated from Hussein's dictatorship. However, using that same logic, America should have invaded Darfur, Sudan, Haiti, or any number of Latin American

countries where deadly oppression and even genocide are more evident. Sadly, those countries have no resources to offer American investors so military intervention will never be an option.

Once again, we are faced with the basic fact that we are occupying Iraq with no contingency plan to end the war. The world, the American public, and especially the Iraqi people generally believe that the reason for the war is to exploit the resources of Iraq, otherwise, United States troops would be in third world countries like Darfur. In fact, most terrorist attacks are aggressive resistance to globalization: Economic Colonialization. America must address these concerns and demonstrate a willingness to stop the exploitation of the Iraqi people.

An important step to achieve peace and thwart terrorism would be to make a formal apology through the United Nations for the aggressive campaign of war. American and coalition troops would then be pulled immediately from Iraq on condition that the United Nations will deploy nation builders and peacekeepers to that region. All American and transnational corporations must then be barred from business transactions with Iraq, with the exception of charity or reduction in cost to the Iraqi and American citizens.

America's aggressive military actions, including the detention and torture of many civilians, have caused a knee-jerk reaction from the Iraqi people and Muslims throughout the world. This is understandable when one considers the long history of America's covert involvement in Middle East politics for the expressed purpose of controlling oil and natural gas. Because there have been decades of British Colonialization, and American hegemony, fundamentalist Muslim terrorists have gripped society with cruel intensity. By elevating the poor of all nations, ensuring

that no one goes without food, water, shelter, education, and medical care, terrorism can be almost eliminated. In this way, the War on Terrorism can begin in Iraq and spread throughout the world.

Reference

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