

Haditha: A Cover-up of Mass Murder

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Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#)

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Haditha is not "a lawless, insurgent-plagued city deep in Sunni-dominated Anbar Province", as described by the BBC. There were no combat zones confused by the "fog of war". These are massacres of innocent civilians. Haditha is like many Iraqi cities and towns destroyed one by one by constant U.S. air bombardments.

The massacre in Haditha is part of the U.S. deliberate and unprovoked war of aggression against a defenceless nation. The current media hype is an orchestrated propaganda campaign designed to mislead the public and cover up the mass atrocity in Iraq as an "isolated incident by few bad apples". It is the result of an illegal war of aggression based on lies fabricated by the highest levels of the U.S. administration.

Since the 2003 invasion, there have been daily massacres of innocent Iraqis by U.S. Marines with the full knowledge of the U.S. military chain of command. The war was based on lies printed in the minds of Americans and their army. Today, Iraq is littered with mass graves. Hundreds of thousands of innocent Iraqis, mostly women and children have been slaughtered in cold blood and in cowardly fashion. These countless massacres by U.S. forces were obfuscated and barely reported by Western media.

On the morning of 19 November 2005, U.S. Marines were on their way to Haditha, in northwest Iraq. When they were attacked and later failed to find their attackers, they deliberately and indiscriminately massacred 24 Iraqi civilians in the Subhani district of Haditha. The victims "range from little babies to adult males and females". Initially, the U.S. Marines alleged that 15 "insurgents" and civilians were killed in "cross fire". As usual, the U.S. Marines lied about the massacre and tried to cover it up. It was the video of an Iraqi journalism student from Haditha which prompted the *Time* to investigate the massacre.

Like many other stories, the Pentagon concocted the massacre. The Marines threatened to kill anyone who gives evidence against them. Indeed, the Marines killed a large number of people to remove any eyewitnesses. The *Los Angeles Times* reported that the inquiry overseen by Army Maj. Gen. Eldon Bargewell found that several infantry Marines fatally shot as many as 24 Iraqis and that other Marines either failed to stop them or filed misleading or blatantly false reports.

Eman Waleed, a 9-year-old girl who survived the massacre told the *Time*: "First, they went into my father's room, where he was reading the Koran, and we heard shots. Then, the soldiers came back into the living room. I couldn't see their faces very well — only their guns sticking into the doorway. I watched them shoot my grandfather, first in the chest and then in the head. Then they killed my granny". Safa Younis Salim, a 13-year old girl, who in an interview said she lived by faking her death. "I pretended that I was dead when my brother's body fell on me and he was bleeding like a faucet", she said. She said that she

saw American troops kick her family members and that one American shouted in the face of one relative before he was killed.

According to *NBC News* reports, photos taken immediately after the incident “show many of the victims were shot at close range, in the head and chest, execution-style. One photo shows a mother and young child bent over on the floor as if in prayer, shot dead.” A video, shot by a Haditha journalism student confirmed the residents’ accounts.

Another eyewitness Khalid Ahmed Rsayef whose brother was among the dead told the *Time*: “It was a [premeditated] massacre in every sense of the word. The Marines came in and they killed everybody inside”. The *Tim* also reported that there were no signs of Iraqi Resistance fighters around the scene of the massacre in which four houses were destroyed. The massacre was videotaped by the student and handed to Hammurabi Human Rights group. The cowardice attack destroyed four families and left a girl and her infant brother terrorised and traumatised forever.

Haditha is not “a lawless, insurgent-plagued city deep in Sunni-dominated Anbar Province”, as BBC war propaganda depicts it. There were no combat zones confused by the “fog of war; these are massacres of innocent civilians. Haditha is like many Iraqi cities and towns destroyed one by one by constant U.S. air bombardments.

In April 2004, U.S. forces siege the vibrant city of Fallujah and indiscriminately and deliberately killed more than 800 civilians in cold blood. Again, in November 2004, U.S. forces bombed the city with napalm bombs white Phosphorous, “depleted” uranium and cluster bombs. More than 6000 innocent civilians, mostly women and children were massacred, and the entire city was destroyed in gross violation of the Geneva Conventions and international law. The silence of Western media was deafening despite the enormity of the committed war crimes.

In November 2005, indiscriminate U.S. bombings of civilian centres killed 18 innocent Iraqi children in Ramadi, 97 civilians in Husaybah, and 40 civilians in Qaim. Not surprisingly, these crimes of Western terrorism against the Iraqi people have become daily routine in a country ruled by foreign occupying forces and without the slightest barking from (supposed to be sovereign) a puppet government.

On March 15 2006, US forces raided a house in Isahaqi, near the town of Balad about 60 miles north of Baghdad. According to Iraqi Police, and eyewitnesses on the ground, U.S. troops gathered and handcuffed 11 civilians, including a 75-year-old female, a six month-old baby and 3-year old children, into a single room and executed them in cold blood and cowardly fashion, before destroying the house as they left the area.

On Sunday night 26 March 2006, US forces and their Iraqi collaborators attacked Al-Mustapha Mosque in the Ur neighbourhood in east Baghdad and deliberately killed 37 unarmed worshipers including the 80-years old Imam in charge of the Mosque.

Eyewitnesses on the scene observed US soldiers entering the Mosque unprovoked and started shooting at random. A video-tape showed several civilians bodies and spent 5.56 mm shell casings ammunition, the type used by the US soldiers. “It’s an organized crime with serious political and security implications. It aims to incite a civil war ... To kill such a great number of the faithful of the family of the Prophet after handcuffing and torturing them is indefensible. It’s an attack on the dignity of Iraqis that strips away any credibility

from the slogans of freedom, democracy and pluralism flaunted by the American administration", reported the French daily, *Le Figaro* quoting an Iraqi communiqué. "They went in, tied up the people and shot them all. They did not leave any wounded. [The victims] were unarmed", added the *Guardian* of London on 28 March 2006.

It is important to remember that U.S. soldiers were sent to commit crimes and are provided with "immunity" from prosecution, making it very easy for them to kill with institutionalised impunity, as if Iraqis were not even human beings. The criminal practice emanates from the Pentagon; it is created by the U.S. government – and even enforced on other nation. Its purpose is to encourage more recruits into U.S. army. The army itself is built on violence and poor discipline and soldiers were ordered to take revenge by Bush and his gang. In addition, the majority of soldiers are from poor, marginalised and destitute minorities. A large number of them are non-U.S. citizens and joining the army for the sole reason of acquiring citizen. They are brainwashed by an imperialist racist system that teaches to dehumanise the 'Other' and creates an enemy based on the same discredited pretexts that lead to this criminal war. They are trained for the sole purpose of killing innocent people in far away places masked by a concerted efforts that the U.S. military is "accountable" and "discipline" force.

However, the lack of moral outrage expressed by the American people in response to the crimes committed against Iraqi civilians is in itself an epitome of moral bankruptcy. Haditha is not an incident; it is part of the daily massacres committed against the Iraqi people. It is the result of an illegal war of aggression agreed upon at the highest levels of the U.S. administration and U.S military chain of command. It is aided and cove-up an offensive misinformation propaganda campaign promoted by the mass media to justify war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Haditha is no an "isolated incident" committed by a "few bad apples"; Haditha is part of mass atrocity committed against the Iraqi people. The sadistic torture of Iraqi prisoners and civilians at Abu Ghraib prison is not an "isolated incident" committed by "a few bad apples". Since it was hyped by the mass media, torture has increased with brutality and continuing with the full knowledge of those in the Pentagon and the White House.

If U.S. war on Iraq judged by the standard laid down by the *Nuremberg Tribunal Judgement* that judged the Nazi war criminals, "it is not only an international crime; it is the supreme international crime differing only from other war crimes in that it contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole", (1946, p. 26).

Hence, the war was an illegal criminal act and cannot be defended. George Bush, Tony Blair and their allies who initiated this war of aggression are guilty of committing war crimes against the Iraqi people. Before this happen, the full and immediate withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq must be achieved.

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