

Lebanon's Expendable People: The deliberate killing of innocent civilians to achieve political objectives

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Global Research, July 20, 2006

uruknet.info 20 July 2006

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The most shocking thing about Israel's assault on Lebanon is the dispassionate precision with which the bombardment has been carried out. From bridge to granary, from granary to power plant, from power plant to factory, from factory to mosque, from mosque to hospital, from hospital to apartment building; each decimated with the calm disdain of a surgeon removing a cancerous tumor. We get no sense of rage in Israel's behavior, just the calculated savagery of men who see their duty as systematically decapitating an entire civilization and leaving it in ruins.

The destruction of Lebanon is the work of robots not men; unfeeling, remorseless bundles of skin and bone.

No one could have done what these men did in just seven days and be a part of the same human family as you and I.

So far, there is no indication that the captured Israeli soldiers have been hurt or mistreated. The leveling of a once-bustling and prosperous metropolis has been executed while the victims are still safely tucked away in some unknown hiding place. There's no purpose for Israel's rampage, the terms for release could have been negotiated in a "prisoner swap" as they have many times before. The bombing is purely a gratuitous act of violence intended to destroy a nation that just recovered from 18 years of Israeli occupation. Now Lebanon has been returned to the Stone Age.

Why?

Have the soldiers been tortured or abused as they would have been in American or Israeli care?

I hope not. I hope they are being treated well. I hope they are set free and allowed to walk southward through the scattered-rubble and body parts so they can appreciate what their leaders have done in their names. I hope they are released so that Hezbollah can claim a moral victory over the forces of inhumanity and cynicism that have infected the seats of government in Tel Aviv and Washington.

Whatever chance there may have been for peace is gone now. We have to be realistic. The next generation of Muslims will despise us and everything we stand for. No capital or city will be safe. The US and Israel are sowing dragon's teeth throughout the Middle East and their bloody harvest will come in the decades ahead. Cheney was right, this war could last 50 years and not end in our lifetime.

Lebanon was the last straw. It proves that everything Bin Laden said was true: "They have come to take your land and your resources; they have come to shame your women and disgrace your culture; they have come to humiliate you in front of your children and heap ignominy on your religion."

Where was he wrong?

Author and writer Pepe Escobar said it best: "The effect of the Israeli bombing barrage will be to draw newer, thicker waves of moderate Muslims toward political-and radical-Islam. The perception in the Arab street- as well as for most of the world's 1.4 billion Muslims-has been reinforced: the U.S./Israel axis seems to hold a license to kill Arabs with impunity." (Pepe Escobar, "[Leviathan Run Amok](#)" Asia Times)

Escobar's right. The lives of Muslims mean nothing. They've become the "expendable" people whose security simply doesn't matter. Their wholesale slaughter appears regularly on the evening news while heart-wrenching stories are spun about the suffering of Israeli fathers and mothers who lost loved ones in retaliatory attacks.

Don't Muslims have mothers and fathers? Is it so important to demonize them that they must be stripped of every trace of humanity including parents?

Where will these "expendable" people go as the world's resources continue to dry up and their homelands are increasingly besieged?

Indonesia, Somalia, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Syria, Libya, Sudan, Afghanistan; where will they all go? Will they be shunted off to refugee camps or live as prisoners in their own land; be shot like dogs or stand and fight until the end?

How many will chose to join the growing ranks of jihadis and resistance groups plotting and planning to strike back in any way they can? How many will figure that it's better to die on your feet than live on your knees?

Lebanon has paved the way for a century of war. It's been ravaged and its people evacuated to settle scores with Hezbollah and create a buffer zone on Israel's northern flank. The ruined lives are of no consequence. The city will be rebuilt by loans from the World Bank and IMF and the work will be contracted by Halliburton and Bechtel. We've seen it all before; the utter destruction of a society so that it can be placed in the hands of the global corporatists. Lebanon will be no exception.

Now that Israel's northern flank has been "pacified" Olmert can turn his eyes eastward towards Damascus where the ophthalmologist Bashar Al-Assad will have to be toppled to secure pipeline routes from northern Iraq to Haifa. That way Israel will become a major player in this century's resource wars and a leader in the region.

The geopolitical chess match is unfolding just as it was written years ago by neoconservatives who were dismissed at the time as radicals and lunatics. No one is laughing now. The 12 villagers who were massacred in Srifa yesterday by Israeli bombs aren't laughing nor are the parents of the 11 children who were vaporized by an Israeli missile while taking a swim in a canal at Oasmia refugee camp.

This is the calculus of human misery; the deliberate killing of innocent people to achieve political objectives. It is no different than terrorism. Bush and Olmert are two men who have

absolute confidence in the ability of violence to shape behavior. They are not concerned about the rivers of blood that feed their dreams. After all, those people are “expendable.”

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