

There Is No Justice in Our World

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A gathering of rich oil Arabs pledged \$30 billion this week at a meeting in Kuwait to start rebuilding war-shattered Iraq. Sounds nice but these kinds of conclaves are notorious for offering big but delivering little.

The event was billed as helping Iraq repair war damage caused by ISIS. In fact, most of the damage from that short-lived conflict was caused by US bombing and a few Russian air strikes. ISIS, as this column has long been crying in the wilderness, was largely a paper tiger confected by the US, Britain and France to justify their military re-entry into Syria.

Iraq's government says it needs at least \$88 billion to rebuild war damage. What the US-imposed client regime in Baghdad won't or can't say is that the damage to Iraq is far greater than \$88 billion and was largely inflicted by US air power in 1990-1991 and 2003.

Iraq was ravaged, as I saw myself while covering the wars. This small nation of 23-25 million souls, a third of whom were in permanent revolt against the Baghdad government, was pounded into rubble by US air power and cruise missiles. First in 1990-1991, then in 2003, everything of value was blown to bits: hospitals, schools, food factories, chemical plants making insecticide, bridges, and communications. In short, all the attributes of a modern state.

Most shocking to me, was the destruction of Iraq's water and sewage treatment plants by US air strikes.

Their destruction resulted in epidemics of cholera and other water-born diseases. Children were the primary victims. The UN asserted that over 550,000 Iraqi children died as a result of contaminated water. US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright later notoriously asserted that these deaths were 'a price worth paying.' I call them a war crime.

In 2003, 900,000 US-directed troops massed in Kuwait, invaded Iraq to finish off, it was claimed, the 'work that the first president Bush failed to achieve,' the overthrow and lynching of Iraqi president, Saddam Hussein. If Saddam had any nuclear or broad-area biological weapons, the invader's buildup in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia would have been a dream target.

But Saddam Hussein had no nuclear weapons, contrary to US and British claims. I discovered in Baghdad a group of British scientific technicians who had been sent by the UK Ministry of Defense to build outlawed biological weapons at Salman Pak. These included deadly anthrax and Q-fever – but only for use against Iran if a second Iraq-Iran War erupted.

It is now widely accepted that Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction pointed at the West, as George Bush and Tony Blair incessantly claimed. But this was the excuse for going to war against Iraq and destroying it. When no such weapons were found, the story from Washington and London was changed to 'oops, it was an intelligence failure. Sorry about that.'

Journalists like myself who asserted that Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction were fired or marginalized. I was blacklisted at CNN after the White House told the network to fire me at once. All the 'presstitutes', who acted as government boosters for the war, were promoted and lauded. Welcome to the new Soviet media.

Since Iraq, one of the Arab world's most developed countries, was laid waste by US bombing, and since the war was deemed a big mistake, who is responsible for trying to repair Iraq to its pre-war condition? The money offered last week in Baghdad by the Gulf Arabs was a drop in the bucket and designed to bring Iraq into the forming anti-Iran alliance.

If this war crime was being properly litigated, Washington would likely end up being assessed something like \$100 billion in damages just to replace physical infrastructure destroyed in the two wars, never mind the deaths of so many Iraqi civilians. Iran would also have a claim against Iraq's western and Arab backers for Baghdad's 1980-1988 war of aggression against Iran that caused an estimated one million Iranian casualties.

'Oops, I'm sorry we destroyed your country and children' is not a sufficient mea culpa. The western leaders who engineered this criminal war against Iraq deserve to be brought to book. So far, they have gotten off scot free. In fact, the same terrible fate has since befallen Syria, Yemen and parts of Somalia. Were these disasters also mistakes due to faulty intelligence?

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