

IRAQ REVIEW

ISSUED BY THE INFORMATION BUREAU OF THE ISLAMIC DAAWA PARTY

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IN THE FIRING LINE BETWEEN SADDAM'S BRUTALITY AND THE ALLIED BOMBING

THE SLAUGHTER OF THE IRAQI PEOPLE GOES ON

OUR VIEW

The Iraqi Islamic opposition relies on Islam to provide it with the guidelines to formulate its political views concerning the problem in the Gulf or any political problem for that matter. From an Islamic point of view, any aggression of one state against another is condoned and for this reason, we wasted no time in condemning the unjust and illegal occupation of Kuwait by Saddam and his regime. Islam also believes that it is the people who decide the nature and type of government that should run a country and that this is best done through free and fair elections aimed at electing their representatives who serve their interests by presenting the people's views in the nation's assembly. Islam believes that the government must always be answerable to the people and must guarantee dignity, freedom and security for the individual and use the country's resources to better the conditions of its people. Islam believes honouring regional and international agreements and believes in aiding the cause of stability, security and co-operation between nations based on the principles of mutual respect. Islam condemns any unjust war and prohibits the accumulation and use of weapons of mass destruction such as nuclear, chemical or biological weapons.

This is because in addition to the moral prohibition of the use of such weapons in terms of the horrific destruction that it inflicts on humanity, there is an economic element. Islam believes that the nation's wealth should be used in a constructive way to improve the material and moral conditions of the people instead of squandering such wealth on weapons that only lead to death and destruction. In all the above principles Saddam and his regime has failed miserably, not that he attempted to achieve such Islamic principles in the first place.

This is why the Iraqi Islamic opposition has firmly condemned Saddam and his regime ever since he came to power and sought to effect a change in government. Initially all attempts at this were peaceful but since the Saddam regime would not tolerate any form of peaceful opposition he waged a vicious and brutal campaign of eliminating all political opposition.

The Iraqi opposition in all its parties and sections are united in their aim of achieving the removal of Saddam from power.

In this and other objectives and aims concerning Iraq and the region they have since last December reached a new level of unity and understanding which it is hoped will provide the environment for the people to choose the government they want after the downfall of Saddam.

As the charred remains of the hundreds of Iraqi civilian women and children who died in the bomb shelter in AL-Ameria district of Baghdad were swept up by rescue workers, the scale of the human tragedy now taking place in Iraq is becoming apparent. We have since the start of the war in the Gulf been warning that the only losers in this war would be the innocent civilians from the Iraqi people who are bound to be caught up in this war when fire power of such intensity is used, particularly when the Iraqi people are effectively being held hostage by Saddam who is thus using them as a shield to protect him and his selfish interest. In this respect therefore, Saddam does not care how many innocent Iraqi civilians are killed. To him the Iraqi people and army are just cannon fodder. In a similar way the Americans and their partners have certain objectives which they consider more important than avoiding civilian casualties and hardships as far as the bombing campaign is concerned. One of these aims include minimising American and Allied casualties. America and the Allies are thus willing to go beyond the bounds of reason in order to bring about the destruction and demoralisation of the Iraqi army even if it means that this results in the slaughter and severe hardships for the civilian population of Iraq.

How else can you explain the bombing of the civilian shelter in AL-Ameria district of Baghdad by the Americans without them even checking whether the such a huge shelter was being used by civilians. How can you explain the extension of the bombing campaign to include (Legitimate targets) such as food processing plants in Karbala, corn factories in Najaf, baybe milk factory in Baghdad, sugar factories in the north of Iraq and cement factories.

All the above were bombed, not to mention the bombing of electricity generation and power grid facilities, sewage and water distillation facilities and most of Iraq's transport system including 42 bridges and Iraq's main highways. No wonder one of the American military commanders described Iraq in his usual cold manner as being a (theatre that had a target rich environment).

Another chilling explanation as to why such targets including civilian areas are being bombed is the possibility that America and the Allies believe that if conditions were made so unbearable for the civilian population and the military, this would increase the chances of Saddam being toppled from within. This is certainly a cold-blooded and inhumane objective if it is true one which is bound to backfire. The destruction mentioned above does not take into account the fact that these precision "smart bombs" are sometimes not so smart and end up cratering civilian residential areas as clearly demonstrated by the RAF on 14th February at the town of Falluja nor the spectre of a "map reading" Tomahawk missile taking a wrong turn and delivering its deadly load into a densely populated residential areas on Iraq's major cities.

It appears that in the case of Saddam, the west and America have perpetrated the same mistake that they had perpetrated previously with other dictators and puppets, namely that these dictators are given all the moral, financial and military backing in order that these ruthless men and regimes may

CENTRE FOR ARAB GULF STUDIES

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UNIVERSITY OF EXETER

News

The Iraqi Islamic opposition holds hunger strike in protest at the civilian casualties in the war in the Gulf at Regent's park mosque, London.

Wednesday 13th February 1991, witnessed the start of a hunger strike organised by the Iraqi Islamic opposition in Regent's park mosque, London. The hunger strike continued for three days and was in protest at the civilian casualties sustained so far in the Gulf war among the Iraqi and Kuwaiti people which must be running into thousands as a result of the intensive bombing.

A large number of Iraqis joined in the hunger strike which attracted much of the British and Arabic press and television. Leaflets were distributed during the hunger strike to point out the desperate conditions under which the Iraqi people were living. The hunger strike gained widespread support from the Muslims of all nationalities who visited the mosque in including many British Muslims and non-Muslims.

Important meetings of the opposition held in London.

Britain witnessed in the past few weeks many important and active meetings and gatherings of not only the main Iraqi political parties and groups opposed to Saddam but also elements and groupings who were not active in the past.

A new level of unity between the various sections of the Iraqi opposition has been achieved and preparations for an Iraqi national conference are actively being pursued.

from page 1

serve the interests of America and the west. Then when these dictators and regimes turn against their backers, America and the west move in quickly to stem any tide of dissent and thus a providing lesson to other dictators to stay within the prescribed guidelines of behaviour.

In attempting to destroy a rebellious dictator, minimal importance is given to the people and infrastructure of that country and maximum importance is given to the (Vital interests) of America and the west such as the oil, having (friendly) regimes in the region and providing peace and stability as dictated by these powers.

As for the so called new world order of Bush which he envisages as being a world order of openness, free from exploitation, and dictatorships and in which importance to the wishes of the people is given, all of this talk becomes meaningless when the people themselves end up being the principal victims.

The absolute nightmare scenario however, would be that if despite all this massive destruction and loss of life in Iraq and Kuwait, Saddam manages somehow to survive and keep a grip on power and for America and the west to start doing business with him again. In that case, not only would the Iraqi people have lost everything, but they would still have Saddam reaching for their throats only to start another era of brutality and oppression.

From this point of view, the Iraqi nation does not object but welcomes the removal of Saddam by any power provided that the Iraqi people are then left to choose the type of future government by way of free and fair elections and certainly any attempt to impose a regime on the Iraqi people is totally unacceptable and in any case will not serve to bring stability and security to the region.

Saddam attempts to draw the opposition into a coalition with him.

Our sources from Iraq have indicated that Saddam is attempting to contact some of the Iraqi opposition groups in order to form a sort of coalition government. Many opposition groups however, including the Daawa Party has made it clear that it rejects any future Iraqi government that includes the criminal Saddam and rejects any attempt by the Saddam regime to draw it or other opposition groups into a coalition.

Saddam's strangle hold weakens on Iraq.

Our sources indicate that the security apparatus of the Saddam regime is becoming greatly weakened and open opposition to Saddam from the people is on the increase. Evidence of this is the inability of the Saddam regime to organise a large scale demonstration not even by way of the usual threats made to employees and students. Also there is the emergence of wide-spread Anti-Saddam graffiti on the walls of Baghdad.

There are also reports large demonstrations in many parts of Iraq against Saddam. One example happened the 10th February in the town of Diwania, 100 miles south of Baghdad when 10 Baathist party leaders were killed during a large anti-Saddam demonstration.

Telegram sent by the spokesman of the Islamic Daawa Party to the secretary general of U.N, Mr. J. Perez Decuellar.

Sheikh Mohammad Mahdi Al-Asefi, the spokesman for the Islamic Daawa Party sent a telegram to the U.N secretary general Mr. Perez Decuellar on the 3rd February 1991. In it Sheikh Al-Asefi described the systematic destruction of Iraq that is now being carried out by the Allies and the civilian casualties that have resulted from this. Sheikh Al-Asefi also condemned the crimes of the Saddam regime in the strongest terms but added that the Iraqi people should not be held responsible or be made to pay for the crimes of this brutal dictator because the Iraqi people themselves have been the victims of Saddam for the past twenty years. Finally Sheikh Al-Asefi called on Mr. Perez Decuellar to intervene urgently to put an end to this destructive war and to try and find a solution to the Gulf crisis by means of a conference attended by the Islamic countries.

The Iraqi opposition holds meetings with Saudi officials in Saudia Arabia.

On 4th February 1991, a delegation from the Iraqi opposition arrived in Saudia Arabia to discuss the future of Iraq and other related issues with Saudi officials concerned with the Iraqi situation. The delegation included members the Iraqi Kurdish, Islamic and democratic Iraqi opposition as well as other sections of the Iraqi opposition. It should be mentioned that on 28th December 1990 all sections of the Iraqi opposition for the first time of their history, formed a joint action committee which encompassed all the main political parties and groupings. The delegation to Saudi Arabia also discussed the idea of a transitional government in post-Saddam Iraq.

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