

Anglo-American war has made Iraq into a vast death camp

by Joseph Brewda

The Anglo-American imperialists who led the war against Iraq, which killed as many as 500,000 civilians and soldiers, are now determined to kill millions more in the war's aftermath. There is no other explanation of their behavior since the Feb. 28 cease-fire.

As the accompanying documentation shows, epidemics of cholera and other diseases, as well as starvation, can be expected to kill large number of Iraqis over the spring and summer months. Yet, the Anglo-Americans, who have occupied northern Iraq out of supposed "humanitarian" concerns over the Kurds, have continued to impose a food and medicine boycott on the rest of country. As for the Iraqi Kurds, the highly publicized aid that the Europeans and Americans have provided them is grossly insufficient, almost token.

On April 15, the Iraqi government asked the U.N. Security Council for permission to sell some \$1 billion of oil to finance the desperately needed purchase of food. At a Washington press conference that day, where he announced the beginning of the U.S. occupation of northern Iraq, President Bush also rejected the Iraqi plea. "Let these [Kurdish] refugees be settled in flat areas" in Iraq by the U.S. military, Bush told the press, "then I might be willing to consider something else."

This policy of genocide was amplified in a London *Daily Telegraph* editorial on April 23. The "tightly drawn" U.N. resolutions mean that "the ban on oil sales cannot be lifted until chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons facilities have been destroyed," the paper gloats. It warns against the U.N. allowing "exceptional oil sales in return for food," because "the dangers here are of the exception becoming the rule and of the food being diverted to the Republican Guard." This is mere cover; the paper admits that "it is true that, in the short term, the main victims of a strong Western stand will be the hapless people of Iraq."

Why starve the Iraqis? "Now is the time to avoid giving the wrong signals to Baghdad," the editorial says, "The Iraqi people must realize that there will be no future for them while Saddam remains in power."

On April 24, former Reagan-Bush administration arms negotiator Kenneth Adelman put out the same line in the *Washington Times*. "We should refuse to lift any U.N.-imposed sanctions against Iraq until Saddam Hussein no longer rules." A Gulf diplomat who for obvious reasons, wished not to be identified, told *EIR*: "Better an Iraq with 9 million

people without Saddam Hussein, than 18 million people with him." Yet there is no reason to believe that even if Saddam Hussein were out of power, the policy would not remain.

While continuing to impose a food blockade on this dying nation, the Anglo-Americans have refused to allow the Iraqis to protect their wheat and barley crop from insects. Last fall, when the Anglo-Americans imposed a worldwide blockade against Iraqi, the Iraqi government ordered a massive planting of winter wheat. The wheat is due to be harvested in May.

On April 24, Iraqi Agricultural Minister Abdul-Wahab al-Zaba reported to the press that the U.S. has refused to allow Iraqi helicopters to spray pesticides on the wheat and barley crop. Al-Zahab said the U.S. has given no reason for withholding permission for these flights, and warned that if the area were not sprayed within seven days, a major part of the wheat and barley in that area, which supplies three-quarters of Iraqi domestic needs, would be devastated.

The Iraqi minister asked whether it were the American intention to "destroy Iraq's food supply"? He said that, given the urgency of the situation, Iraq might go ahead and do the spraying anyway, even at the risk that the U.S. would try to shoot down the helicopters.

A policy of dismemberment

Anglo-American policy is not only to kill off the Iraqi population physically, but also to kill Iraq as a sovereign nation. One piece of Iraq is set to be forked over to Turkey (this is so-called "Kurdistan"); another is to be forked over to Iran (southern Iraq).

This policy, which was first floated publicly by former U.S. Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger last fall, is the actual basis for the creation of the Kurdish "enclave." It was brazenly proclaimed in an April 24 *Washington Post* commentary by Albert Wohlstetter, who recently retired as a member of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board.

"We have the empirical evidence from 70 years of experience that the putative realism of those who support a centralized dictatorship in Iraq to maintain a stable balance of power is simple fantasy," Wohlstetter wrote. "It is the highly centralized pan-Arab government that threatens the stability of the region, rather than the increased autonomy of Iraq's three principal component parts."

'Delayed infanticide'

Dr. Martin Houmøller-Jørgensen of *Danechurchaid*, the relief organization of the Danish State Church, told the Danish newspapers *Berlingske Tidende* on April 7, following a one-week tour of Iraq:

"Thousands of children, weak, and elderly people will die from starvation and the polluted waters of the Tigris River in the coming months. What I saw in Baghdad during the week I was there, reminded me of the symptoms I know from starving Africa. There is already diarrhea because of polluted water, and the signs of starvation in the form of low serum albumen, especially in the children who do not get sufficient milk. I have seen terrible cases of diarrhea in the hospitals and bed after bed with dehydrated children also bearing the signs of starvation. They looked like children from concentration camps, and when I was there, one child died.

"We have to realize that the situation is so severe that even the international relief mobilization will only represent patchwork. We can only take care of the worst of the epidemics. The only thing I can say is that we might end up with diseases and death rates far exceeding those of the war itself.

"Nobody in Baghdad knows if major epidemics have already broken out. Due to the precision bombings during Operation Desert Storm, there is no electricity and therefore no functioning laboratories. It is even impossible to do the necessary tests to determine whether the diarrhea is due to cholera."

Physicians for Human Rights (PHR), press conference in Amman, Jordan, as reported by the *London Guardian* on April 15:

Joost Hiltermann, Middle East organizer for PHR, charges that the bombing of Iraq "was called surgical, but we're calling it neuro-surgical: With extraordinary accuracy, the allied bombs took the brain out of the country's ability to survive." According to Hiltermann, electricity plants had been taken out with "amazing precision—we even saw individual pylons bombed out." Jack Geiger, president of PHR, who joined a team of doctors and logistical managers for the end of its tour around Basra, described the effect as "Bomb now, die later. You don't kill people, you just cause the system to collapse."

Baltimore News, from an editorial on April 17, titled "A Just Peace?":

"Televised pictures of Kurdish refugees have justifiably

stirred outrage and sympathy. But, so far at least, the West has not seen the graphic evidence of the desperation of 14 million other Iraqis—the other victims caught between Saddam Hussein's aggression and the allied coalition's determination to turn him back. . . .

"These deaths must also be counted in the toll of the Gulf war, along with those still dying by way of Saddam's troops. In very real ways, the situation in Baghdad today is not unlike that envisioned from the neutron bomb, the device that preserves buildings while killing human beings—except that in this scenario, the inhabitants are condemned to a slow-motion death."

Mainzer Allgemeine Zeitung, article by Washington, D.C. correspondent Marlene Manthey, April 17:

The Kurdish tragedy moves the world, she writes, but a tragedy far worse is unfolding several hundred kilometers south, as a result of the U.S. bombing of Iraqi cities,

"Thinking of destroyed cities," she quotes envoys of the Red Cross and other relief organizations that have visited postwar Iraq, "people will no longer have the image of Dresden before their eyes, but rather the image of Baghdad."

As a result of the allied bombing raids against Iraq's infrastructure, there is "no clean water nor sewage system, no electricity nor telephones, no modern medication nor gasoline for the few power-machines that keep the hospitals going. Waste water is flowing into the rivers which supply the population with fresh water. The result is the spread of typhoid fever, dysentery, and diarrhea from which little children die within hours, as the Red Cross has reported. And all of this is happening while the outer image of the city has remained almost undestroyed."

The White House is playing dumb, saying that the destruction of Iraqi infrastructure "allegedly was the idea of the military," Manthey writes. "Can the commander-in-chief of Desert Storm, General Schwarzkopf, therefore be blamed for the *delayed infanticide of Baghdad*?"

The London Independent, article by correspondent Patrick Cockburn from Baghdad on April 22:

Cockburn quotes Dr. Koshaba Aboona, the director of the Alwiya Children's Hospital in the Iraqi capital: "We are suffering a lot of cases of malnutrition because of lack of milk. A small baby takes one tin of milk every three days. Now mothers are trying to eke out the milk by putting more water in it, so their babies are just skin and bone. In the market, a tin of milk costs 10 dinars. Before the war, it cost half a dinar." Cockburn describes other horrors from the same hospital, including the death of 113 babies because of lack of incubators due to cutoff of electricity for most of the time.

The weather is an increasingly worrisome factor, he adds: "In the past three days, it has become hot and humid in Baghdad, but this is nothing compared with the suffocating heat from May to September. This is the period when Iraqis will be most vulnerable to disease."