

WE WILL NOT FORGET THE FALLEN

A Memorial Day Statement by the Kansas City Iraq Task Force

The Kansas City Iraq Task Force laments the suffering and death that have taken place for decades in Iraq. As is always the case in modern war, it is the civilians, the innocent, who have suffered the most.

We recognize that the U.S. has played a leading role in this suffering.

Nearly 13 years of catastrophic U.N. sanctions, on which the U.S. and Britain insisted, killed more than one million of the weakest Iraqi citizens while Saddam Hussein lived in luxury. The wars that the U.S. waged on Iraq in 1991 and 2003 severely damaged the infrastructure of the country, causing continuing suffering and hardship for those lucky enough to have escaped the bombs. When Saddam unleashed chemical weapons on the Kurdish city of Halabjah in 1988 killing 5,000 civilians, the U.S. refused to condemn the act. Instead, during that decade, the U.S. supported his regime in the Iran-Iraq War. The President's claim that we are "liberators" of the Iraqi people is an insult to the millions of Iraqis who have died as a result of self-serving US action and inaction for decades.

*Today, we mourn the deaths of Iraqis and US servicemen and servicewomen who have given their lives in such an unconscionable conflict of greed and power. **We are determined to make the truth known, so that this type of conflict will never be allowed to decimate the human family again.***

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We mourn all those who have died in unjustifiable, unnecessary, illegal or immoral ways.



1 million Iraqi civilians died as a result of 13 years of U.N. sanctions. (United Nations statistic)

Unknown thousands of Iraqi civilians died under Saddam Hussein's repressive regime.

As many as 6,457 Iraqi civilians have died as a direct result of military action by the U.S. and its allies in 2003. This does not include the untold number of deaths not reported by the media. (Iraq Body Count, www.iraqbodycount.org, May 21, 2003)

Thousands of Iraqi military died during the three-week war.

The Pentagon estimates 2,000 to 3,000 Iraqi military died in the first U.S. incursion into Baghdad. (MSNBC, May 23, 2003)

181 U.S. and coalition military died during Operation Iraqi Freedom. (Center for Defense Information, May 21, 2003)

What does it matter to the dead, the orphans, and the homeless whether the mad destruction is wrought under the name of totalitarianism or the holy name of liberty or democracy? —Ghandi

WE WILL NOT FORGET THE FACTS

THE LONG HISTORY OF THE SHORT WAR IN IRAQ

THE BLUEPRINTS WERE DRAWN UP 11 YEARS AGO...

In 1992, Paul Wolfowitz, then Under-Secretary of Defense for Policy, authored an internal policy brief calling for a policy of preemption against states suspected of developing weapons of mass destruction and a policy of acting unilaterally if necessary to protect U.S. interests. ("The Men Who Stole the Show" www.fpif.org; MoveOn Bulletin, May 9, 2003 www.moveon.org)

In September 2000, Wolfowitz's draft was the starting point for the publication "Rebuilding America's Defenses" of the Project for a New American Century, a neo-conservative think tank formed in 1997 by Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, Jeb Bush, Lewis Libby and others. **"The United States has for decades sought to play a more permanent role in Gulf regional security. While the unresolved conflict with Iraq provides the immediate justification, the need for a substantial American force presence in the Gulf transcends the issue of the regime of Saddam Hussein."**

(MoveOn Bulletin, May 9, 2003, www.moveon.org;
www.newamericancentury.org)

THE CONTRACTORS BID EARLY...

A bid was awarded in December 2001 to Halliburton subsidiary KBR to cater to Americans and Iraqi exiles who are rebuilding Iraq. KBR has already earned nearly \$90 million and the contract can remain in place for up to 10 years. (*The Kansas City Star*, May 10, 2003.)

IT WAS A SELLER'S MARKET...

In September 2002, Bush aides launched a \$25 million campaign to sell the administration's strategy on war on Iraq to the public. (*The New York Times*, September 7, 2002 and September 27, 2002.)

BUT THE PILLARS ARE FAULTY...

There was **no connection** between Iraq, Al Qaeda and the attacks of September 11, 2001. See *Questionable Claims: Powell Got it Wrong on the Connections between Saddam Hussein and Al Qaeda*. (www.fourthfreedom.org)

AND THE CORNERSTONE HAS BEEN CAST OUT!

The Bush Administration repeatedly claimed Iraq was a threat to the U.S. due to weapons of mass destruction. None have been found. The groups directing the U.S. search efforts for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq have been unable to find any and are expected to depart next month, according to an article "Frustrated, U.S. Arms Team to Leave Iraq" in *The Washington Post*, May 11, 2003. (www.commondreams.org)

WE WILL TURN OUR GRIEF INTO ACTION

- 1. Help lessen the suffering of the Iraqi people!** Heart to Heart International, based in Kansas City, is sending care kits to victims of the war in Iraq. You can prepare care kits with specific content and take them to their warehouse KCK. This would be a great project for a school group, religious group, civic group, or neighborhood. For more information, visit www.hearttoheart.org/carekit.shtml or call (913) 764-5200. Or, donate money for relief efforts to the International Rescue Committee at www.theirc.org/Iraq or another respected relief agency.
- 2. Help disabled veterans!** While the Bush Administration tries to cut veterans' benefits, tens of thousands continue to suffer the physical and psychological effects of this war and others. Donate to Disabled American Veterans online at www.dav.org/donations/index.html
- 3. Hold the media accountable!** Respond to KC Media Watch e-mail action alerts and urge local media to report Iraqi casualties, the facts behind the path to war, and the full scope of the aftermath of the war, both in Iraq and the U.S. For more information, go to www.kciraqtaskforce.org.
- 4. Stay informed!** The mainstream media will not follow up on the true causes and consequences of this war. Search out alternative media sources!
www.kciraqtaskforce.org
www.commondreams.org
www.afsc.org/human-face/default.htm
www.veteransforpeace.org



Photo: David Berrian, Buddhist Peace Fellowship, www.bfp-seattle.org

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