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The Evil of U.S. Aggression against Iraq

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What better confirmation of the manifest failure of the philosophy of foreign interventionism than the renewed U.S. bombing of Iraq?

Just think: All those hundreds of thousands of dead, maimed, detained, and tortured Iraqis, along with those who lost their homes, businesses, and savings. They were all bombed and shot by U.S. troops for nothing. All those Iraqis suffered and died for nothing.

The same holds true, of course, for U.S. soldiers who died or came back maimed or all screwed up in the head. The ones who lost their lives died for nothing. The ones who came back physically handicapped or mentally disturbed are suffering for nothing.

How can anyone still be an interventionist after what has happened in Iraq?

But everyone is expected to continue playing the game. We're supposed to just keep praising those brave troops who went to Iraq to defend our freedoms and to help the Iraqi people. Never mind that the results of their intervention have turned into a total failure and fiasco.

Let's first keep in mind one central truth, a truth that interventionists don't like talking about: In the Iraq War, the U.S. troops were the aggressors. It was Iraq that was the defending power.

A war of aggression, which the U.S. was waging on Iraq, was condemned as a war crime at Nuremberg.

Second, the U.S. government's war on Iraq was also illegal under our form of constitutional government. President Bush was required by the law of the Constitution to secure a declaration of war from Congress before waging war on Iraq. He refused to do that and instead, on his own initiative, launched a war of aggression with his military and CIA forces.

Third, U.S. officials justified the killing of Iraqis by using a cost-benefit analysis. They said that by killing x number of Iraqis, U.S. forces would be bringing into existence a free and democratic Iraq for the survivors, which, it was said, would serve as a model for the rest of the Middle East.

Where is the morality in killing and maiming people based on a cost-benefit analysis?

Through it all, there was never one iota of genuine remorse for all the Iraqis that were being killed, maimed, tortured, or destroyed in the purported aim to bring the good society to Iraq.

Equally telling, neither the Pentagon nor the CIA ever put an upward limit on the number of Iraqis who could be killed in the quest to bring freedom and democracy to Iraq. Any number of Iraqi dead, no matter how high, would be considered "worth it."

Interventionists are pointing out the evil nature of the Islamic State, the group that is threatening to oust the U.S.-installed regime in Bagdad from power. But simply because one group is evil doesn't necessarily mean that the term cannot also be applied to what the U.S. government has done to Iraq, especially given it was the U.S. government's war on Iraq, along with its other Middle East policies, that unleashed the furies that have given rise to the Islamic State.

How can an unlawful and unconstitutional war of aggression, a type of war condemned as a war crime at Nuremberg not be considered evil?

How can a war in which people are being killed and maimed based on a cost-benefit analysis not be considered evil?

Indeed, think back to the brutal sanctions that the U.S. government enforced against Iraq for more than ten years. When "Sixty Minutes" asked U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Madelyn Albright whether the deaths of half-a-million Iraqi children from the U.S. sanctions had been "worth it," she responded that while the choice was a difficult one, the deaths were in fact worth it.

How can those deadly sanctions — indeed, how can such a horribly callous mindset — not be described as anything but evil?

Or think back to the Persian Gulf War, when the Pentagon ordered the destruction of Iraq's water and sewage treatment plants, knowing that such destruction would bring infectious illnesses in its wake? And it did. That's what helped kill all those children, given that the sanctions prevented

Iraqi officials from repairing those water and sewage treatments plants that the Pentagon had destroyed.

How can such a thing not be described as evil?

The problem, of course, is that all too many Americans can easily see the evil in other people's actions but unable to see the evil in their own government's actions. That's because in their minds they've raised the federal government to the level of an idol, one that can do no wrong, especially since it operates through courageous American troops and CIA agents who are always defending our freedoms in whatever they do, including waging wars of aggression against Third World countries that have never attacked the United States, killing innocent children with brutal sanctions, or killing people in a cost-benefit analysis intended, supposedly, to bring the "good life" to the survivors of the onslaught.

If the Iraq fiasco has taught us anything, it is that evil means produce evil results. Just ask anyone who is now calling on the U.S. national-security state to drop more bombs on Iraq in order to combat evil.