

Re: How America Massacred Many Innocent Civilians At Fallujah

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.med.diseases.lyme/2004-06/0807.html>

From: derdrittemann (derdrittemann2003_at_yahoo.com)

Date: 06/17/04

Date: 16 Jun 2004 21:40:40 -0700

a_weisman@yahoo.com (A_Weisman) wrote in message
news:<e55e6d97.0406151113.4c8ec9eb@posting.google.com>...

>>

>

>

> *I don't agree that the legalisms are not pragmatic.*

>

> *"International law, whether or not an effective "legal" system, has
> important political implications."*

At times, and in context...but when "push comes to shove" ...as they
say, I think the clear record of history is that international
agreements are not only expendable...but the first casualties.

> *"The pragmatism of obeying international norms, working through
> multilateral organizations, and obeying treaties and laws whether or
> not "binding" shouldn't be underestimated".*

The world just currently lacks anything approaching an effective
enforcement mechanism...except, perhaps to try some slob like
Milosevic...(anyone remember him)?

>

> *"For instance, should we obey the geneva convention? John Ashcroft can
> write legal opinions arguing that they don't apply".*

And clearly...that is a very powerful reminder of the importance of
the electoral process.(If someone tells you...I really don't see much
difference between the parties).

I never, ever thought I would hear an American AG even question
whether we should respect the Geneva Convention as it applies to
"detainees". What is remarkable to me...is that the rather obvious
"play" politically...SHOULD have been to OVER-protect the rights of
detainees. Give them every protection of the US Constitution...whether
applicable or not. Ashcroft, as you have observed, laid the groundwork
here for disaster...they were, perhaps tempted by a desire to extract
information...especially in regards to the alleged WMDs. This is what

can happen if you are caught manipulating public opinion, perhaps.

>

> *"I don't like when people talk about "legal technicalities" which is a
> phrase invariably used when people disagree with a particular result.
> Usually those "technicalities" involve fundamental constitutional
> rights. And people are disagreeing with the dictates of due process
> and often with the decision of a judge or jury who actually heard the
> evidence in a case".*

Yes, absolutely.

>

> *Dan Abrams on MSNBC does this all the time. It is demagoguery and
> nonsense.*

I think Dan is a very bright guy. He has, however learned the rules of media coverage...and this means, at times, telling the public what they want to be told, rather than a more complex, but accurate explanation.

>

>

> *"I think that you're using the word pragmatism to diminish the
> importance of conduct that can't be justified without ignoring
> international law. And you can't do that because international law is
> part of pragmatic politics".*

And I am saying "international law" is a nice ideal...but it is, unfortunately, largely an irrelevancy in actual international conflict, where the law of the jungle, the law of the gun...and the "why does a dog lick himself" rule are the real "law".

>

> *"Bush tried to argue that the UN and multilateral action was irrelevant
> if they didn't go along with what he wanted. He out and out called the
> UN irrelevant and tried to bully them into doing what he wanted saying
> if they didn't they were irrelevant".*

As I understand it, their position was, and is, that Iraq was in substantial breach of previous UN Resolutions...regardless of what the sort of French led coalition of opposition maintained. Their position was that legal justification was present.

>

> *"That was instead of trying to act together with our allies and the
> nations of the world and by eschewing diplomacy as a means of gaining
> consensus. He was ready to go it alone".*

The alternative explanation (and I am NOT arguing this)...is that France, fearful of a US dominance, organized a late attempt to try to strike a sort of balance of power alliance with Russia and Germany, at the same time, possibly seeking to protect some economic interests it held in Iraq.

And...it was this countering effort that was, in fact, the opposition to legitimate need for international action...and thus, a repudiation of the UN...and a revisiting of the old sort of colonial manipulation and treachery for which the European powers have been famous...or infamous.

And...an instant replay of France's failure at Munich.

> *"At some points he even argued that it was his way or the highway with
> Britain our staunchest ally".*

You mean our British "helpers"?(Oh...I'm just kidding, here).LOL.

>
> *"But now he is DESPERATE for help from the UN and other nations. Who
> aren't anxious to save his bacon for lots of reasons".*

Yes. I wonder how much they want?

>
> *"I guess the legalisms and diplomacy and use of multilateralism and
> multilateral institutions was more important than he thought.
> Multilateralism, it turns out, helps focus power rather than weakening
> it. Going it alone was a mistake".*

A tragic underestimate was made of the number of troops necessary to enforce a "postwar scenario" ...Rumsfeld won't admit the "error". If a realistic assessment had been presented...of troop deployment or cost...the plan may not have gone forward.

>>
> *"Saudi Arabia is a brutal and repressive monarchical non democratic
> regime that maintains power by suppressing the rights and aspirations
> of its own people. The ruling class benefits disproportionately
> economically from the wealth of the nation. Their maintenance of power
> is precarious at best. They have sold their people out for their own
> benefit and betrayed much of what their own people believe in. The
> house of Saud is linked for decades to the house of Bush. And both
> houses have betrayed the interests of their people in order to
> maintain their own power and wealth.
>
> In the meantime, they pay lip service to us but also pay what amounts
> to "protection" money to terrorists and wink and nod while those
> terrorists threaten us.
>
> The Saudis do what is good for THEM. Because they've got a pretty good
> gig going so why risk doing what is right for their own people?
>
> I'm not sure what you're saying about them at all".*

Basically what you just said. I think we have been aware for some time that they are making tragic mistakes...yet we are powerless, it seems, to do anything. If the Saudis now, as I am sure they will...crack down even harder on internal dissent...the result will be an even speedier

demise of their regime...as it appears their security and police forces are "compromised".

They are similar to the Scottish border lords who played both the English and Scots crowns against one another...even sending one son to fight for England...the other for Scotland. Didn't want to get caught backing the loser. Tribal chieftans. Looked after themselves only, totally treacherous. What I was saying was that I actually can feel some empathy for the aspirations of the insurgents.

> *"The ICC gives subject matter jurisdiction to an international body
> over common criminals, which is a departure from most international
> law prior to that which conferred jurisdiction over the actions of
> states as states and individuals acting on behalf of those states
> rather than with rare exceptions the individuals themselves".*

What I would have argued, I hope, was for al Qaeda detainees to be treated as criminal suspects...and be afforded due process of an American citizen.

>

> *"I wouldn't underestimate religion as a motivation for wars throughout
> history".*

I would.

And I think it is a critical piece of understanding.

Religions are "tribal" in a sense. Even Christianity, which is an "adopted" faith has developed sects that are identifiable by ethnicity.

Show me a "religious" war...and I will show YOU a tribal, or ethnic struggle for land, resources, wealth...once the veneer is removed.

Even the "Great Crusades" were largely over the control of lucrative trade routes.

What many Americans don't seem to understand about the "Troubles" in Northern Ireland, for instance, is that the Catholic and Protestant divisions are traceable to differences in ethnicity as well.

Protetsants are descended from Scots and English settlers of defeated "Irish" by William of Orange. So, not really a RELIGIOUS difference...but an ETHNIC one...religion only being a part of the equation.

I would say that religion can be used to motivate some...of poor education to do the bidding of others who have other purposes in mind...as I believe Osama and others manipulate the religious issue with the ultimate goal of social and political revolution in mind.

- > *"I would argue that the way to create good will towards the US is to*
- > *stop supporting the "pro western" oil rich state regimes which treat*
- > *their own people so badly and exploitatively. If we believe in the*
- > *rights of people we should stand for them".*

Is this realistic? Just stop supporting the Saudis? And they control a good portion of OPEC? What if they get pissed and shut off the taps? This is realism, here. I am NOT just talking about increased fuel prices either...as I think you understand.

What are you saying?

- >
- >>
- > *"And though I don't think you're agreeing that the western way is*
- > *"superior" I think that you saying that the neocons think that and*
- > *they do, which is part of the reason that people hate us. For all the*
- > *times bush has said that it isn't a war against islam, it is very much*
- > *a war against islam".*

I think that is a fundamental misinterpretation on your part. I think it is very clear that it is Islam...fundamentalist Islam...that wishes to establish Islamic governments, ruled by Islamic law...has identified western values...particularly those of the US, as inimicable to their beliefs. Remember the "great Satan" talk? Unfortunately, the western values are extremely attractive...especially to women and youth. I have no respect for authoriatrian enforcement of brutal repression of rights and freedom of expression...from any source.

These regimes are a very reactionary attempt to turn back the clock...a repression of the advancement of their own cultures and peoples...and I have every right to form that opinion. I would NOT suggest anyone act against any such regime on that basis.

- "It is a war of western "democratic" CHRISTIAN
- > *values. It is about converting them to the "right" way of thinking.*
 - > *Connoting a deep disrespect for their traditions and values and*
 - > *culture and religion. Which by the way has been around a LOT longer*
 - > *and has a richer heritage than ours".*

That is absurd.

- >
- >
- > > *"What ever happened to the road map? There were so many detours that no*
- > > *one could find their way from step 1 to step 2".*

It was sabotaged by Sharon. The entire world knows it...except perhaps, the US. No American politician will deal with the now evident lack of faith and brutal repression that is the hallmark of the Sharon and Likud approach. The Arab world, to answer your question about "why they hate us"...is very aware of our silence...and where the

helicopters and missiles are made.

I think it is abundantly clear that Sharon is only willing to play lip service to the concept of a Palestinian state. In reality, they will do the damndest to thwart it...because terrorist attacks launched from an independent state...would be coming from sovereign soil. Launching reprisals...an act of war, arguably. Better to keep the Palestinians literally "under the gun"...under the shoe.

> *"Well there are reasons beyond the domestic jewish vote for aligning
> ourselves with Israel having to do with geopolitics".*

And that would be what, exactly? I am serious. I would like to hear what the justification is of the US support of Israel following the collapse of the USSR. Many I have talked to repeatedly state that Israel is "the only democracy" in the region.

But...according to Sharon...it is a Jewish STATE. If displaced Palestinian refugees were allowed to return...the Jewish majority would be displaced. This is NOT going to be allowed.

> *"The founders were wise in creating a separation of church and state".*

Here, I ABSOLUTELY agree. And, whether Moslem or Hebrew...I distrust theocracies as they have a very "undemocratic" tendency to suppress opposition...and rule through a tyranny of the majority.

American foreign policy has always worked best when it stands for the same principles overseas...as it espouses at home.

>

>

What was benign?

> >

> > *Think ahead and consider the possibilities...realize that part of the
> > motivation here might have been an effort to thwart even larger
> > catastrophe.*

>

> *"I don't buy that argument. And more important I don't think the
> approach taken advances those objectives. It has made us more hated
> and the world a more dangerous place".*

The interesting thing here is that IF intervention prevented some regional catastrophe...no one will ever know.

American foreign policy—thinking has been haunted by the failure of Neville Chamberlain...and American isolationism before WWII. This may be, in a way, the lesson of Munich in 1938...and an attempt to intervene and prevent disaster.

>

> >

> *"But we're not doing it for them. We're doing it for us. And to expect
> them to be grateful especially considering how little respect we've*

sci.med.diseases.lyme: Re: How America Massacred Many Innocent Civilians At Fallujah

- > *shown for them, is a little unrealistic. And not important anyway if*
- > *they appreciate it. Since we acted for us and without them, even if*
- > *they benefit, of course they resent it".*

And they(the European critics) benefit...while not only taking no risk...but distancing themselves in the event of failure...yet expecting to share in the rewards of success.

Nice work if you can get it.

>

- > *"But I think he was an important political thinker and though he may*
- > *have been a real bastard (see the documentary "The trials of Henry*
- > *Kissinger" or read the book) that doesn't mean he was wrong or should*
- > *be ignored".*

I would recommend "The Price of Power", by Seymour Hersh to you, if you haven't read it already...(and if you have...how could you say this)?

Tells you, I think, what you need to know about the Nixon–Kissinger years and may answer a lot of your issues concerning international law, balance of power, etc.

Specifically, you can see very directly how they were put into practice by der herr Doktor Kissinger.

Remember asking me if I had ever heard of the concept of "sovereignty"?

Why don't you ask Hank? Damn little respect for the sovereignty of Laos or Cambodia...or North VietNam for that matter.

One of the impeachment articles against Nixon was for waging an undeclared, illegal and SECRET war against Cambodia. Kissinger was the architect.

I personally cannot begin to fathom how you could admire this freaking monster.

- > *"Disagree strongly. It may seem that way now. But at the time the USSR*
- > *had lots of power. As does china now".*

No. I mean historically also. The "balance" was always decidedly in the US's favor.

Economically and militarily. The "balance" theory was used as a chip in the domestic political game...and played a significant role in the building of the US defense arsenal. Again, nice academic theory. Not reality.

Re: How America Massacred Many Innocent Civilians At Fallujah

- >
- > >
- > *"You could NOT say that US domination was one sided from 1950–1980".*

Just did.

- >
- > *"Our whole foreign policy was predicated on the notion that we weren't*
- > *dominant".*

NO!!! Our whole JUSTIFICATION for our foreign policy was predicated on the notion that we weren't dominant. Different.

- > *"I think you underestimate the importance and actual role of*
- kissinger
- > *and the role of balances of power prior to his even being born. You*
- > *might dislike him or disagree with him. But I think it is a mistake to*
- > *ignore him and what he did because of your opinion of him".*

Read Hersh's book...not the self-serving self-promoting shit he has spewed about himself.

- >
- >
- > *"I am saying that if you look at the places where terrorists are*
- > *harbored and grown, afghanistan wasn't the first place to look. Or*
- > *iraq. Sudan, pakistan, saudi arabia and others are as much a danger to*
- > *us as are our "enemies" so our "allies" may be just as dangerous or*
- > *more".*

Yes...and I think it is now common knowledge that our intelligence believes that bin Laden is, or was, most likely in Pakistan...and we won't go in there freely and pursue him because we fear a general Islamic revolt which would destabilize a supposedly "friendly" or at least, "cooperative" government.

But...nations cannot be allowed to give sanctuary to international terrorists who would hide behind those nation's sovereign status.

Many of the things you have said are undoubtedly true concerning our support of repressive regimes...both in the middle East and elsewhere.

American foreign policy has succeeded, I think...where it has exported American ideals...American principles.

But...in my opinion, even knowing the lesson of the Iran failure...we have really had a narrow range of options presented to us in regard to say, Saudi Arabia.

It is easy to find fault.

The oil must flow.

sci.med.diseases.lyme: Re: How America Massacred Many Innocent Civilians At Fallujah

>

>