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"Marxism consists of thousands of truths, but they all boil down to the one sentence, *'It is right to rebel!'* For thousands of years, it had been said that it was right to oppress, it was right to exploit, and it was wrong to rebel. This old verdict was only reversed with the appearance of Marxism. This is a great contribution. It was through struggle that the proletariat learned this truth, and Marx drew the conclusion. *And from this truth there follows resistance, struggle, the fight for socialism.*"

- Mao Tsetung

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"At least 170,000 children under five years of age will die in the coming year from the delayed effects of the Gulf Crisis."

LIFT THE SANCTIONS
END THE GENOCIDE



Iraqi child suffering from malnutrition.

THE SIEGE OF IRAQ

Siege. Michael Walzer called it "the oldest form of total war." History attests to the horrors of the Roman siege of Jerusalem, the Prussian siege of Paris, the Nazi siege of Leningrad. A siege is designed to inflict such horrible suffering on the civilian population that their will to resist collapses. Or, to quote Walzer again, that the "fearful spectacle of the civilian dead" will cause the government to surrender to the besieger's demands.

As we begin the third Christian millennium, siege warfare is making a comeback. Big time.

In the old days, we only used to be able to lay siege a city. Now, we can inflict the horrors of besiegement to an entire country. Take the case of Iraq. Like all good sieges, the siege of Iraq has several key elements.

The 1991 Gulf War bombing of Iraq laid the foundation. Over 60% of the 88,500 tons of bombs (More bombs than the US dropped on all its enemy countries during WWII) were dropped on the cities and villages of Iraq. For the first time in warfare, US planes specifically targeted the "infrastructure" of Iraq, in particular knocking out the electrical grid for the entire country.

Imagine what happens to a modern country when electricity is removed. Premature babies and the frail elderly die, because incubators and life support machines shut down. The sick die, because medicines spoil in ruined refrigerators. Always the weakest die first - and most. That's the design of a siege - the "fearful spectacle." And then irrigation systems fail. Clean water can't be provided, sewage systems break down. The city - now the whole country - is flooded with disease-ridden water. Siege.

For the first time in warfare, the US and Britain used depleted uranium - 660,000 pounds of the stuff. Ask your friendly physicist or your local family doctor what constant exposure to radiation on the order of a chest x-ray a day, will do to you. Ask your pediatrician what it might do to the chromosomes of an infant. Ask your gynecologist what it might do for a pregnant woman. Then imagine the fearful spectacle of the people of Iraq for the last ten years.

Then add the "sanctions." It means that Iraqi oil is off the market. Iraq got about 95% of its foreign exchange from the sale of oil. So, after all that bombing, take away 95% of their money. Nothing can be repaired. The economy collapses. It's the "Great Depression" times ten, times one hundred. UNICEF has reported 500,000 children now dead as a direct result of the sanctions. Imagine 10s of thousands of grieving families. Massive unemployment, doctors and teachers who have to drive taxis to support their families, mothers having to decide which of their children can go to school (where the sanctions forbid books or even journals) and which must "work the streets" (yes, it's often a euphemism) to help the family survive. Imagine making those choices. Siege: designed to break the will of the people.

Then add the "oil-for-food" program. If it worked perfectly, it would allot each Iraqi about a dollar a day to exist on. But the besiegers can be clever even then. Enter the veto.

Every contract under the "oil-for-food" deal has to be approved by a committee. Any member of that committee can veto any contract for any reason. The US is a permanent member of that committee. And we have exercised our veto over 1,000 times in the last 3 years (next is Britain with a paltry 120 vetoes). Sometimes we exercise a "straight" veto. For example, we invariably veto spare parts to repair the water or sewage systems; invariably veto spare parts for oil production. We sometimes veto baby milk powder because it has phosphates, and that can be used for bombs. We veto chlorine for water purification because it can be used for chemical warfare. The same with many drugs.

But the really winning strategy is what the UN calls "the problem of complementarity." We allow life support machines, then veto the computers needed to run them. We allow dentists' chairs, then veto the compressors. We allow insulin, then veto syringes. The result? The Iraqis "waste" what little money they have on things that don't work. And, the US State Department can point to a warehouse where they store the insulin, waiting for syringes, and then we can say, "Look, they're hoarding medicine! They have it, but they're not distributing it." Appear to give them hope, then snatch it away. Then blame them for it. Siege: break the will of the people.

Then finally, the bombing. We are now engaged in the longest bombing campaign since the Vietnam War. The government admits to 30,000 sorties over Iraq in 1999 alone. Imagine how you are going to explain the constant sonic booming and air raid sirens to your child. Not to mention the random bombing. I visited a school which the US had bombed. When the children heard that the Americans had actually come, they were so terrified that many had to be taken home. One began frothing at the mouth, and his eyes rolled up into his head. Imagine growing up with that much fear.

In fact, you don't have to imagine. You could come to Iraq with a delegation of Voices in the Wilderness, and see for yourself. Just be warned: we bring medicine and toys to Iraqi children, and this is against US law. And it's punishable by up to \$1 million in fines, and 12 years in a federal prison. Because you see, we are breaking the siege.

Think, "siege." Think of our "total war" against Iraq. Think of the fearful spectacle of civilian dead. Then think, please, of those with whom history will associate us. And about what kind of a world we are constructing for our children.

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Squeezed to death

By John Pilger

Wherever you go in Iraq's southern city of Basra, there is dust. It gets in your eyes and nose and throat. It swirls in school playgrounds and consumes children kicking a plastic ball. "It carries death," said Dr Jawad Al-Ali, a cancer specialist and member of Britain's Royal College of Physicians. "Our own studies indicate that more than 40 per cent of the population in this area will get cancer: in five years' time to begin with, then long afterwards. Most of my own family now have cancer, and we have no history of the disease. It has spread to the medical staff of this hospital. We don't know the precise source of the contamination, because we are not allowed to get the equipment to conduct a proper scientific survey, or even to test the excess level of radiation in our bodies. We suspect depleted uranium, which was used by the Americans and British in the Gulf War right across the southern battlefields."

Under economic sanctions imposed by the United Nations Security Council almost 10 years ago, Iraq is denied equipment and expertise to clean up its contaminated battle-fields, as Kuwait was cleaned up. At the same time, the Sanctions Committee in New York, dominated by the Americans and British, has blocked or delayed a range of vital equipment, chemotherapy drugs and even pain-killers. "For us doctors," said Dr Al-Ali, "it is like torture. We see children die from the kind of cancers from which, given the right treatment, there is a good recovery rate." Three children died while I was there.

Six other children died not far away on January 25, last year. An American missile hit Al Jumohria, a street in a poor residential area. Sixty-three people were injured, a number of them badly burned. "Collateral damage," said the Department of Defence in Washington. Britain and the United States are still bombing Iraq almost every day: it is the longest Anglo-American bombing campaign since the second world war, yet, with honourable exceptions, very little appears about it in the British media. Conducted under the cover of "no fly zones", which have no basis in international law, the aircraft, according to Tony Blair, are "performing vital humanitarian tasks". The ministry of defence in London has a line about "taking robust action to protect pilots" from Iraqi attacks - yet an internal UN Security Sector report says that, in one five-month period, 41 per cent of the victims were civilians in civilian targets: villages, fishing jetties, farmland and vast, treeless valleys where sheep graze. A shepherd, his father, his four children and his sheep were killed by a British or American aircraft, which made two passes at them. I stood in the cemetery where the children are buried and their mother shouted, "I want to speak to the pilot who did this."

This is a war against the children of Iraq on two fronts: bombing, which in the last year cost the British taxpayer £60 million. And the most ruthless embargo in modern history. According to Unicef, the United Nations Children's Fund, the death rate of children under five is more than 4,000 a month - that is 4,000 more than would have died before sanctions. That is half a million children dead in eight years. If this statistic is difficult to grasp, consider, on the day you read this, up to 200 Iraqi children may die needlessly. "Even if not all the suffering in Iraq can be imputed to external factors," says Unicef, "the Iraqi people would not be undergoing such deprivation in the absence of the prolonged measures imposed by the Security Council

and the effects of war."

Through the glass doors of the Unicef offices in Baghdad, you can read the following mission statement: "Above all, survival, hope, development, respect, dignity, equality and justice for women and children." A black sense of irony will be useful if you are a young Iraqi. As it is, the children hawking in the street outside, with their pencil limbs and eyes too big for their long thin faces, cannot read English, and perhaps cannot read at all.

"The change in 10 years is unparalleled, in my experience," Anupama Rao Singh, Unicef's senior representative in Iraq, told me. "In 1989, the literacy rate was 95%; and 93% of the population had free access to modern health facilities. Parents were fined for failing to send their children to school. The phenomenon of street children or children begging was unheard of. Iraq had reached a stage where the basic indicators we use to measure the overall well-being of human beings, including children, were some of the best in the world. Now it is among the bottom 20%. In 10 years, child mortality has gone from one of the lowest in the world, to the highest."

Anupama Rao Singh, originally a teacher in India, has spent most of her working life with Unicef. Helping children is her vocation, but now, in charge of a humanitarian programme that can never succeed, she says, "I am grieving." She took me to a typical primary school in Saddam City, where Baghdad's poorest live. We approached along a flooded street: the city's drainage and water distribution system have collapsed. The head, Ali Hassoon, wore the melancholia that marks Iraqi teachers and doctors and other carers: those who know they can do little "until you, in the outside world, decide". Guiding us around the puddles of raw sewage in the playground, he pointed to the high water mark on a wall. "In the winter it comes up to here. That's when we evacuate. We stay as long as possible, but without desks, the children have to sit on bricks. I am worried about the buildings coming down."

The school is on the edge of a vast industrial cemetery. The pumps in the sewage treatment plants and the reservoirs of water are silent, save for a few wheezing at a fraction of their capacity. Many were targets in the American-led blitz in January 1991; most have since disintegrated without spare parts from their British, French and German builders. These are mostly delayed by the Security Council's Sanctions Committee; the term used is "placed on hold". Ten years ago, 92% of the population had safe water, according to Unicef. Today, drawn untreated from the Tigris, it is lethal. Touching two brothers on the head, the head said, "These children are recovering from dysentery, but it will attack them again, and again, until they are too weak." Chlorine, that universal guardian of safe water, has been blocked by the Sanctions Committee. In 1990, an Iraqi infant with dysentery stood a one in 600 chance of dying. This is now one in 50.

Just before Christmas, the department of trade and industry in London blocked a shipment of vaccines meant to protect Iraqi children against diphtheria and yellow fever. Dr Kim Howells told parliament why. His title of under secretary of state for competition and consumer affairs, eminently suited his Orwellian reply. The children's vaccines were banned, he said, "because they are capable of being used in weapons of mass destruction". That his finger was on the trigger of a proven weapon of mass destruction - sanctions - seemed not to occur to him. A courtly, eloquent Irishman, Denis Halliday resigned as co-ordinator of humanitarian relief to Iraq in 1998, after 34 years with the UN; he was then Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations, one of the elite of senior officials. He had made his career in development, "attempting to help people, not harm them". His was the first public expression of an unprecedented rebellion within the UN bureaucracy. "I am resigning," he wrote, "because the policy of economic sanctions is totally bankrupt. We are in the process of destroying an entire society. It is as simple and terrifying as that . . . Five thousand children are dying every month . . . I don't want to administer a programme that results in figures like these."

When I first met Halliday, I was struck by the care with which he chose uncompromising words. "I had been instructed," he said, "to implement a policy that satisfies the definition of genocide: a deliberate policy that has effectively killed well over a million individuals, children and adults. We all know that the regime, Saddam Hussein, is not paying the price for economic sanctions; on the contrary, he has been strengthened by them. It is the little people who are losing their children or their parents for lack of untreated water. What is clear is that the Security Council is now out of control, for its actions here undermine its own Charter, and the Declaration of Human Rights and the Geneva Convention. History will slaughter those responsible."

Inside the UN, Halliday broke a long collective silence. Then on February 13 this year, Hans von Sponeck, who had succeeded

him as humanitarian co-ordinator in Iraq, resigned. "How long," he asked, "should the civilian population of Iraq be exposed to such punishment for something they have never done?" Two days later, Jutta Burghardt, head of the World Food Programme in Iraq, resigned, saying privately she, too, could not tolerate what was being done to the Iraqi people. Another resignation is expected.

When I met von Sponeck in Baghdad last October, the anger building behind his measured, self-effacing exterior was evident. Like Halliday before him, his job was to administer the Oil for Food Programme, which since 1996 has allowed Iraq to sell a fraction of its oil for money that goes straight to the Security Council. Almost a third pays the UN's "expenses", reparations to Kuwait and compensation claims. Iraq then tenders on the international market for food and medical supplies and other humanitarian supplies. Every contract must be approved by the Sanctions Committee in New York. "What it comes down to," he said, "is that we can spend only \$180 per person over six months. It is a pitiful picture. Whatever the arguments about Iraq, they should not be conducted on the backs of the civilian population."

Denis Halliday and I travelled to Iraq together. It was his first trip back. Washington and London make much of the influence of Iraqi propaganda when their own, unchallenged, is by far the most potent. With this in mind, I wanted an independent assessment from some of the 550 UN people, who are Iraq's lifeline. Among them, Halliday and von Sponeck are heroes. I have reported the UN at work in many countries; I have never known such dissent and anger, directed at the manipulation of the Security Council, and the corruption of what some of them still refer to as the UN "ideal".

Our journey from Amman in Jordan took 16 anxious hours on the road. This is the only authorised way in and out of Iraq: a ribbon of wrecked cars and burnt-out oil tankers. Baghdad was just visible beneath a white pall of pollution, largely the consequence of the US Air Force strategy of targeting the industrial infrastructure in January 1991. Young arms reached up to the window of our van: a boy offering an over-ripe banana, a girl a single stem flower. Before 1990, such a scene was rare and frowned upon.

Baghdad is an urban version of Rachel Carson's Silent Spring. The birds have gone as avenues of palms have died, and this was the land of dates. The splashes of colour, on fruit stalls, are surreal. A bunch of Dole bananas and a bag of apples from Beirut cost a teacher's salary for a month; only foreigners and the rich eat fruit. A currency that once was worth two dollars to the dinar is now worthless. The rich, the black marketeers, the regime's cronies and favourites, are not visible, except for an occasional tinted-glass late-model Mercedes navigating its way through the rustbuckets. Having been ordered to keep their heads down, they keep to their network of clubs and restaurants and well-stocked clinics, which make nonsense of the propaganda that the sanctions are hurting them, not ordinary Iraqis.

In the centre of Baghdad is a monument to the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war, which Saddam Hussein started, with encouragement from the Americans, who wanted him to destroy their great foe, the Ayatollah Khomeini. When it was over, at least a million lives had been lost in the cause of nothing, fuelled by the arms industries of Britain and the rest of Europe, the Soviet Union and the United States: the principal members of the Security Council. The monument's two huge forearms, modelled on Saddam's arms (and cast in Basingstoke), hold triumphant crossed sabres. Cars are allowed to drive over the helmets of dead Iranian soldiers embedded in the concourse. I cannot think of a sight anywhere in the world that better expresses the crime of sacrificial war.

We stayed at the Hotel Palestine, once claiming five stars. The smell of petrol was constant. As disinfectant is often "on hold", petrol, more plentiful than water, has replaced it. There is an Iraqi Airways office, which is open every day, with an employee sitting behind a desk, smiling and saying good morning to passing guests. She has no clients, because there is no Iraqi Airways - it died with sanctions. The pilots drive taxis and sweep the forecourt and sell used clothes. In my room, the water ran gravy brown. The one frayed towel was borne by the maid like an heirloom. When I asked for coffee to be brought up, the waiter hovered outside until I was finished; cups are at a premium. His young face was streaked with sadness. "I am always sad," he agreed matter-of-factly. In a month, he will have earned enough to buy tablets for his brother's epilepsy.

The same sadness is on the faces of people in the evening auctions, where intimate possessions are sold for food and medicines. Television sets are the most common items; a woman with two toddlers watched their pushchairs go for pennies. A man who had collected doves since he was 15 came with his last bird; the cage would go next. Although we had come to pry, my film crew and I were made welcome. Only once, was I the brunt of the hurt that is almost tangible in a society more

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westernised than any other Arab country. "Why are you killing the children?" shouted a man from behind his bookstall. "Why are you bombing us? What have we done to you?" Passers-by moved quickly to calm him; one man placed an affectionate arm on his shoulder, another, a teacher, materialised at my side. "We do not connect the people of Britain with the actions of the government," he said. Laith Kubba, a leading member of the exiled Iraqi opposition, later told me in Washington, "The Iraqi people and Saddam Hussein are not the same, which is why those of us who have dedicated our lives to fighting him, regard the sanctions as immoral."

In an Edwardian colonnade of Doric and Corinthian columns, people come to sell their books, not as in a flea market, but out of desperate need. Art books, leather bound in Baghdad in the 30s, obstetrics and radiology texts, copies of British Medical Journals, first and second editions of *Waiting For Godot*, *The Sun Also Rises* and, no less, *British Housing Policy 1958* were on sale for the price of a few cigarettes. A man in a clipped grey moustache, an Iraqi Bertie Wooster, said, "I need to go south to see my sister, who is ill. Please be kind and give me 25 dinars." (About a penny). He took it, nodded and walked smartly away.

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Mohamed Ghani's studio is dominated by a huge crucifix he is sculpting for the Church of Assumption in Baghdad. As Iraq's most famous sculptor, he is proud that the Vatican has commissioned him, a Muslim, to sculpt the Stations of the Cross in Rome - a romantic metaphor of his country as Mesopotamia, the "cradle of Western civilisation". His latest work is a 20-foot figure of a woman, her child gripping her legs, pleading for food. "Every morning, I see her," he said, "waiting, with others just like her, in a long line at the hospital at the end of my road. They are what we have been forced to become." He has produced a line of figurines that depict their waiting; all the heads are bowed before a door that is permanently closed. "The door is the dispensary," he said, "but it is also the world, kept shut by those who run the world." The next day, I saw a similar line of women and children, and fathers and children, in the cancer ward at the Al Mansour children's hospital. It is not unlike St Thomas's in London. Drugs arrived, they said, but intermittently, so that children with leukaemia, who can be saved with a full course of three anti-biotics, pass a point beyond which they cannot be saved, because one is missing. Children with meningitis can also survive with the precise dosage of antibiotics; here they die. "Four milligrams save a life," said Dr Mohamed Mahmud, "but so often we are allowed no more than one milligram." This is a teaching hospital, yet children die because there are no blood-collecting bags and no machines that separate blood platelets: basic equipment in any British hospital. Replacements and spare parts have been "on hold" in New York, together with incubators, X-ray machines, and heart and lung machines.

I sat in a clinic as doctors received parents and their children, some of them dying. After every other examination, Dr Lekaa Fasseh Ozeer, the oncologist, wrote in English: "No drugs available." I asked her to jot down in my notebook a list of the drugs the hospital had ordered, but rarely saw. In London, I showed this to Professor Karol Sikora who, as chief of the cancer programme of the World Health Organisation (WHO), wrote in the British Medical Journal last year: "Requested radiotherapy equipment, chemotherapy drugs and analgesics are consistently blocked by United States and British advisers [to the Sanctions Committee in New York]. There seems to be a rather ludicrous notion that such agents could be converted into chemical or other weapons."

He told me, "Nearly all these drugs are available in every British hospital. They're very standard. When I came back from Iraq last year, with a group of experts I drew up a list of 17 drugs that are deemed essential for cancer treatment. We informed the UN that there was no possibility of converting these drugs into chemical warfare agents. We heard nothing more. The saddest thing I saw in Iraq was children dying because there was no chemotherapy and no pain control. It seemed crazy they couldn't have morphine, because for everybody with cancer pain, it is the best drug. When I was there, they had a little bottle of aspirin pills to go round 200 patients in pain. They would receive a particular anti-cancer drug, but then get only little bits of drugs here and there, and so you can't have any planning. It is bizarre."

In January, last year, George Robertson, then defence secretary, said, "Saddam Hussein has in warehouses \$275 million worth of medicines and medical supplies which he refuses to distribute." The British government knew this was false, because UN humanitarian officials had made clear the problem of drugs and equipment coming sporadically into Iraq - such as machines without a crucial part, IV fluids and syringes arriving separately - as well as the difficulties of transport and the need for a substantial buffer stock. "The goods that come into this country are distributed to where they belong," said Hans von Sponeck. "Our most recent stock analysis shows that 88.8% of all humanitarian supplies have been distributed." The representatives of Unicef, the World Food Programme and the Food and Agricultural Organisation confirmed this. If Saddam Hussein believed he could draw an advantage from obstructing humanitarian aid, he would no doubt do so. However, according to a FAO study: "The government of Iraq introduced a public food rationing system with effect from within a month of the imposition of the embargo. It provides basic foods at 1990 prices, which means they are now virtually free. This has a life-saving nutritional benefit . . . and has prevented catastrophe for the Iraqi people."

The rebellion in the UN reaches up to Kofi Annan, once thought to be the most compliant of secretary-generals. Appointed after Madeleine Albright, then the US representative at the UN, had waged a campaign to get rid of his predecessor, Boutros-Boutros Ghali, he pointedly renewed Hans von Sponeck's contract in the face of a similar campaign by the Americans. He shocked them last October when he accused the US of "using its muscle on the Sanctions Committee to put indefinite 'holds' on more than \$700 million worth of humanitarian goods that Iraq would like to buy." When I met Kofi Annan, I asked if sanctions had all but destroyed the credibility of the UN as a benign body. "Please don't judge us by Iraq," he said.

On January 7, the UN's Office of Iraq Programme reported that shipments valued at almost a billion and a half dollars were "on hold". They covered food, health, water and sanitation, agriculture, education. On February 7, its executive director attacked the Security Council for holding up spares for Iraq's crumbling oil industry. "We would appeal to all members of the Security Council," he wrote, "to reflect on the argument that unless key items of oil industry are made available within a short time, the production of oil will drop . . . This is a clear warning." In other words, the less oil Iraq is allowed to pump, the less money will be available to buy food and medicine. According to the Iraqis at the UN, it was US representative on the Sanctions Committee who vetoed shipments the Security Council had authorised. Last year, a senior US official told the Washington Post, "The longer we can fool around in the [Security] Council and keep things static, the better." There is a pettiness in sanctions that borders on vindictiveness. In Britain, Customs and Excise stops parcels going to relatives, containing children's clothes and toys. Last year, the chairman of the British Library, John Ashworth, wrote to Harry Cohen MP that, "after consultation with the foreign office", it was decided that books could no longer be sent to Iraqi students.

In Washington, I interviewed James Rubin, an under secretary of state who speaks for Madeleine Albright. When asked on US television if she thought that the death of half a million Iraqi children was a price worth paying, Albright replied: "This is a very hard choice, but we think the price is worth it." When I questioned Rubin about this, he claimed Albright's words were taken out of context. He then questioned the "methodology" of a report by the UN's World Health Organisation, which had estimated half a million deaths. Advising me against being "too idealistic", he said: "In making policy, one has to choose between two bad choices . . . and unfortunately the effect of sanctions has been more than we would have hoped." He referred me to the "real world" where "real choices have to be made". In mitigation, he said, "Our sense is that prior to sanctions, there was serious poverty and health problems in Iraq." The opposite was true, as Unicef's data on Iraq before 1990, makes clear.

The irony is that the US helped bring Saddam Hussein's Ba'ath Party to power in Iraq, and that the US (and Britain) in the 1980s conspired to break their own laws in order, in the words of a Congressional inquiry, to "secretly court Saddam Hussein with reckless abandon", giving him almost everything he wanted, including the means of making biological weapons. Rubin failed to see the irony in the US supplying Saddam with seed stock for anthrax and botulism, that he could use in weapons, and claimed that the Maryland company responsible was prosecuted. It was not: the company was given Commerce Department approval.

Denial is easy, for Iraqis are a nation of unpeople in the West, their panoramic suffering of minimal media interest; and when they are news, care is always taken to minimise Western culpability. I can think of no other human rights issue about which the governments have been allowed to sustain such deception and tell so many bare-faced lies. Western governments have had a gift in the "butcher of Baghdad", who can be safely blamed for everything. Unlike the be-headers of Saudi Arabia, the torturers of Turkey and the prince of mass murderers, Suharto, only Saddam Hussein is so loathsome that his captive population can be punished for his crimes. British obsequiousness to Washington's designs over Iraq has a certain craven quality, as the Blair government pursues what Simon Jenkins calls a "low-cost, low-risk machismo, doing something relatively easy, but obscenely cruel". The statements of Tony Blair and Robin Cook and assorted sidekick ministers would, in other circumstances, be laughable. Cook: "We must nail the absurd claim that sanctions are responsible for the suffering of the Iraqi people", Cook: "We must uphold the sanctity of international law and the United Nations . . ." ad nauseam. The British boast about their "initiative" in promoting the latest Security Council resolution, which merely offers the prospect of more Kafkaesque semantics and prevarication in the guise of a "solution" and changes nothing.

What are sanctions for? Eradicating Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, says the Security Council resolution. Scott Ritter, a chief UN weapons inspector in Iraq for five years, told me: "By 1998, the chemical weapons infrastructure had been completely dismantled or destroyed by UNSCOM (the UN inspections body) or by Iraq in compliance with our mandate. The biological weapons programme was gone, all the major facilities eliminated. The nuclear weapons programme was completely eliminated. The long range ballistic missile programme was completely eliminated. If I had to quantify Iraq's threat, I would say

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[it is] zero." Ritter resigned in protest at US interference; he and his American colleagues were expelled when American spy equipment was found by the Iraqis. To counter the risk of Iraq reconstituting its arsenal, he says the weapons inspectors should go back to Iraq after the immediate lifting of all non-military sanctions; the inspectors of the international Atomic Energy Agency are already back. At the very least, the two issues of sanctions and weapons inspection should be entirely separate. Madeleine Albright has said: "We do not agree that if Iraq complies with its obligations concerning weapons of mass destruction, sanctions should be lifted." If this means that Saddam Hussein is the target, then the embargo will go on indefinitely, holding Iraqis hostage to their tyrant's compliance with his own demise. Or is there another agenda? In January 1991, the Americans had an opportunity to press on to Baghdad and remove Saddam, but pointedly stopped short. A few weeks later, they not only failed to support the Kurdish and Shi'a uprising, which President Bush had called for, but even prevented the rebelling troops in the south from reaching captured arms depots and allowed Saddam Hussein's helicopters to slaughter them while US aircraft circled overhead. At they same time, Washington refused to support Iraqi opposition groups and Kurdish claims for independence.

"Containing" Iraq with sanctions destroys Iraq's capacity to threaten US control of the Middle East's oil while allowing Saddam to maintain internal order. As long as he stays within present limits, he is allowed to rule over a crippled nation. "What the West would ideally like," says Said Aburish, the author, "is another Saddam Hussein." Sanctions also justify the huge US military presence in the Gulf, as Nato expands east, viewing a vast new oil protectorate stretching from Turkey to the Caucasus. Bombing and sanctions are ideal for policing this new order: a strategy the president of the American Physicians for Human Rights calls "Bomb Now, Die Later". The perpetrators ought not to be allowed to get away with this in our name: for the sake of the children of Iraq, and all the Iraqs to come

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X-Originating-IP: [207.19.142.191]
From: "G. Simon Harak, S. J." <gsharakj@hotmail.com>
To: <morning@npr.org>
Subject: [freedom] Your segment on Iraq
Date: Tue, 7 Mar 2000 14:35:30 -0500
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Sender: Freedom_For_Palestine@ALQUDS.NET
Precedence: bulk

Dear NPR morning Edition,

I have been to Iraq several times. I have met with UN officials, religious leaders, human rights workers, and common people there. Our group, VOICES IN THE WILDERNESS, has constantly spoken with U.S. officials and challenged them to present something even remotely resembling the truth there. They could not refute our findings.

From: Ali Abunimah <ahabunim@midway.uchicago.edu>
To: morning@npr.org
Subject: NPR: Lies about Iraq

March 7, 2000

Dear NPR News,

Bob Edward's interview on Morning Edition today, with Patrick Clawson of the AIPAC offshoot Washington Institute for Near East Policy, presented a pack of lies and propaganda to the public. Edwards enabled this and did nothing to challenge outright falsehoods.

It must be said that NPR can no longer pretend to have any commitment to honest reporting about Iraq. With this kind of performance you discredit yourselves completely.

I will take the lies, falsehoods and deceptive omissions in order of appearance.

Edwards introduced the segment:

"The United Nations economic sanctions on Iraq are in their ninth year. They require the United Nations to approve all of Iraq's imports and exports, including oil. Some critics say the sanctions have caused widespread food shortages among iraqi citizens and should be lifted. But Patrick Clawson research director of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy says the sanctions should remain in place. He blames Iraq's president Saddam Hussein for suffering by Iraq's people."

This disingenuous introduction omits to mention that the criticism of the sanctions comes from senior UN officials who administer programs on the ground in Iraq, and 70 members of Congress, such as House Minority Whip David Bonior, who recently called the sanctions "infanticide masquerading as policy." And what about the many UN reports over the years who have confirmed and provided the hard data for what these people are saying? Is it fair to equate this body of opinion with the--as we shall see--baseless assertions of Mr. Clawson? Is this what you call "balance"?

Clawson begins: "The tragedy is that Iraq is actually a relatively well to do country. Even under current sanctions, Iraq's income is quite a bit higher for instance than that of its neighbor Syria. Iraq's income is much higher than most countries in Africa, and yet the suffering in Iraq is quite intense because Saddam Hussein's government doesn't really care about the suffering of ordinary Iraqis."

Let us unpack this pack of.... By all accounts, Iraq has descended from being a highly developed country to being at a level of poverty near that of subharan Africa. Mr. Clawson's argument that all the suffering is due to the evil Saddam doesn't hold much water. Prior to the sanctions Iraq was at a very high level of social and economic development. Its health system was the best in the region, and its universities produced graduates and professionals who were sought all over the Middle East. But all along

Iraq had exactly the same government headed by exactly the same Saddam Hussein. Mr. Hussein was not better, he did not respect human rights more, and he was not more peace-loving. He was the same. The only difference was at that time, he was a US ally, fighting dreaded Iran, and receiving American support.

Clawson admits "There's clearly quite a lot of malnutrition in Iraq. The Iraqi government exaggerates the extent but there's no question that people are indeed starving to death."

Now supposing the Iraqi government exaggerates the extent, are the UN findings that one in five Iraqi children go to bed hungry also too high? How much malnutrition would be enough for Mr. Clawson?

Clawson continues: "The United Nations' oil for food program allows Iraq to bring in more than enough food. In fact 2300 hundred calories a day which is more than the US government says is a healthy diet for people. But the Iraqi government does not distribute the food well and the Iraqi government withholds the food from some parts of the country where it doesn't like the people."

Mr. Clawson cannot and did not cite any evidence for this claim, nor was he asked for any. Because the facts are totally opposite to what he says. The UN officials who administer the UN program in Iraq, agree that the reason Iraqis are starving is because the program itself is insufficient. Hans von Sponeck, the humanitarian aid coordinator who just resigned, said that the program has not met the Iraqi people's "minimum requirements" and could not provide more than an average of 49 cents per day of needed food and medicine to Iraqis. Jutta Burghardt, a World Food Program official who resigned soon after Sponeck, agreed with this and said "I fully support what Mr. von Sponeck was saying." (AFP, February 16, 2000)

This goes right to the heart of the frequently repeated but evidenceless State Department charges that the oil for food program is enough, but is not working because Iraq's government withholds supplies. In July last year, von Sponeck responded to these charges, saying "We have no evidence there is a conscious withholding of medicines ordered by the government." (Reuters, July 22, 1999) There are reported problems distributing food as one would expect when Iraq's transport facilities are so degraded.

Latching on to Clawson's tone, Edwards asks: "What is Saddam Hussein doing with his oil profits if he's not feeding his people?" This is a crucial question which Clawson doesn't answer. Instead, he says, "Saddam uses his \$6 billion in personal wealth and he uses the money from smuggling oil out of Iraq outside of UN control to bring in luxury goods. For instance he's had \$2 billion in construction on new palaces for himself since the gulf war. And to bring in military related items that are banned by the UN imports."

If Clawson had answered the question, he would have had to say that all of the revenue from Iraq's oil sales under the UN resolutions goes into UN escrow accounts. It is this revenue that accounts for the vast bulk of Iraq's nominal income, but none of it goes to the Iraqi government. From

the UN accounts, approximately thirty percent is immediately deducted to pay UN costs and reparations. The rest is disbursed by the UN with the approval of the sanctions committee. The US, rather than trying to facilitate the operation of this program, as Clawson claims, uses its position on the sanctions committee to block billions of dollars in contracts for supplies and equipment to Iraq.

As for Clawson's assertions about the palaces, this is stuff and nonsense that comes from the State Department. When Edwards asks how it is known that Iraq has spent \$2 billion on palaces, the best Clawson can come up with is to say:

"Well we can look at these very impressive buildings that he's built and make an estimate how much it would cost to build them and that estimate is particularly informed by the inspections of these palaces which took place by the UN after a long charade about whether or not Saddam was hiding some of his weapons of mass destruction in those palaces."

First of all, the US government routinely calls any government building in Iraq a "palace," in an attempt to make us imagine a Disney-like Arabian wonderland of harems and veils, and its claims about new construction dubious. Secondly, the US estimates are ludicrous. They are obviously based on what it would cost to build equivalent government buildings at United States prices and they take no account of the fact that salaries and wages in Iraq have collapsed to the point where a doctor or a teacher earns two dollars a month. How much do you think a construction worker makes? Iraq's current GDP is estimated to be a fraction of its pre-sanctions level of about \$60 billion. Let us generously put it at \$20 billion today. How large would these "palaces" have to be to absorb an amount equivalent to 10% of GDP? They would, I suppose have to be visible from space with the naked eye. The estimates about Saddam Hussein's personal are similarly suspicious and have no credibility whatsoever.

Edwards asks: "And he [Saddam] continues to make weapons and bring in equipment to do that?" Clawson replies, "It's not so clear if he's making the weapons or just stockpiling the stuff so that he could make the weapons once the world's attention is not so carefully focussed on him."

It would have been useful for Mr. Edwards to recall the words of Assistant US Secretary of State Martin Indyk, who in a no doubt inadvertent moment of honesty declared at a September 13, 1999 press conference, "You know, we do not at this point have evidence of any kind of action to reconstitute those weapons of mass destruction." Where does Mr. Clawson get his superior intelligence from?

As for the military materials being smuggled in, how are they getting there? The US patrols all the seaways, and all cargos to the Jordanian port of Aqaba are inspected by Lloyds of London, and nothing has been found. Mr. Clawson is right that Iraq smuggles oil, and Iraq does this in open defiance of the sanctions. I expect any country subjected to such an embargo would do the same. But what is clear is that the United States turns a blind eye to smuggling when it is done to the benefit of its allies, such as Turkey, or by the Kurdish groups whom Washington has tried

to coopt.

Clawson also states: "And Saddam's got this program we turned a blind eye to, selling about \$300 million of oil each year to Jordan."

This is outrageous. Iraq's oil sales to Jordan occur under the full view and consent of the United Nations, because Jordan has no other source of oil. Jordan officially informs the United Nations sanctions committee of the arrangements every year. Should Jordan's people also be subject to the sanctions? And of the 4.8 million tonnes of oil Iraq will supply to Jordan in 2000, under the terms of an agreement signed by the two countries in January, half is being given free of charge, and the other half at a heavily discounted price of \$19 per barrel.

Finally Edward asks: "What can the United States or the United Nations do about all this?"

Then comes the biggest lie of all. Clawson: "The United States' focus has been on trying to get the oil for food program to work better and emphasising more access to Iraq by humanitarian organizations and trying to shame Saddam's government by exposing just how much he has put impediments in the way of the effective functioning of this oil for food program."

How exactly does the United States achieve these ends? By blocking billions of dollars of "oil for food" contracts? By personally villifying UN humanitarian officials who have the honesty and integrity to state what they see? By making it illegal for US citizens to travel to Iraq and take medicine and supplies with them?

A dimension of the sanctions you have refused to cover, ever, is that they violate human rights. Under their present government, Iraqis enjoy no political or civil rights. But the UN sanctions add to that by stripping them of the economic and social rights they did enjoy, and which are guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

It really is all too much. It is beyond comprehension that you air this kind of garbage over the testimony and scientific evidence of the UN, of international agencies, of countless experts on nutrition and health who have been to Iraq since 1990, and to the testimony even of some of your journalistic colleagues who unlike NPR make an effort to seek out the truth.

I have heard many appalling reports on NPR over the years, but this segment was really as low as you have gone in a long time.

Sincerely,

Ali Abunimah
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www.abunimah.org

G. Simon Harak, S. , 04:33 PM 3/7/00 -, GREAT stuff on Iraq! 1/2

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Sender: Freedom_For_Palestine@ALQUDS.NET
Precedence: bulk

-----Original Message-----

From: Rania Masri
Sent: Tuesday, March 07, 2000 10:48 AM
To: Morning@Npr. Org
Subject: NPR: Explain your position towards objective reporting

Dear NPR and Mr. Bob Edwards,

Please allow me to ask you a simple question. Let's assume that you wanted to present a report on tobacco. On one side you have the U.S. Surgeon General, an extensive list of medical doctors, scientists, and researchers, and hundreds of thousands of cancer victims -- all presenting a solid case that nicotine causes cancer. On the other side you have tobacco lobbyists. Whom would you interview? The scientists or the lobbyists? How would you present the situation? Would you invite the scientists and medical health experts to present their evidence of the harmful effects of tobacco or would you dismiss them as merely "critics" and then invite a lobbyist, or a suit paid for by lobbyists, to refute their claims?

Mr. Bob Edwards did exactly that this morning (7-March) -- except that the subject was the sanctions on Iraq. On NPR's Morning Edition, you dismissed an extensive list of experts as merely "critics" and chose instead to interview Patrick Clawson, of the Washington Institute on Near East Policy, an off-shoot of American-Israeli Political Action Committee (AIPAC), to discuss the sanctions on Iraq. This list of "critics" includes: (1) Denis Halliday, former assistant Secretary General to the United Nations, the first Oil-for-Food Humanitarian Coordinator in Iraq, and the first leading UN official in Iraq to resign in protest of the sanctions two years ago; (2) Hans von Sponeck, Halliday's successor, who recently resigned in protest; (3) Jutta Burghardt, the head of the U.N.'s World Food Program in Iraq, who resigned in protest of the sanctions and the UN Security Council Resolution 1284; (4) seventy House of Representatives who, in a letter submitted to President Clinton last month, demanded the lifting of the economic sanctions on Iraq; (5) numerous delegations to Iraq that, since 1991, have witnessed the devastation caused by the sanctions; and (6) more than a dozen UN reports that have documented the effects of the sanctions. All of this extensive expertise was dismissed, and you chose, instead, to interview someone whose statements are in contradiction with all those who have worked in and visited Iraq.

Why? Why did you choose to interview someone who has not even visited Iraq to discuss the sanctions on Iraq?

In listening to Patrick Clawson's statements during your interview, I had extreme difficulty finding anything that was substantiated. Here are a few examples of the most egregious of Clawson's unfounded accusations.

First, Clawson presented the state of affairs in Iraq as one comparative to numerous other countries. He failed to recognize, and you failed to point out to him, that in correct comparisons, one must compare Iraq with how it was prior to the imposition of sanctions in 1990, and not in meaningless comparisons with impoverished nations. A UN Report on the Current Humanitarian Situation in Iraq, submitted to the Security Council in March 1999, stated that Iraq "has experienced a shift from relative affluence to massive poverty. In marked contrast to the prevailing situation prior to the events of 1990-91, the infant mortality rates in Iraq today are among the highest in the world, low infant birth weight affects at least 23% of all births,

chronic malnutrition affects every fourth child under five years of age, only 41% of the population have regular access to clean water, 83% of all schools need substantial repairs. The ICRC states that the Iraqi health-care system is today in a decrepit state. UNDP calculates that it would take 7 billion US dollars to rehabilitate the power sector country-wide to its 1990 capacity."

Clawson then claimed that the Oil-for-Food program is sufficient, and that it distributes "2300 calories per person". Once again, please explain to me: if you wanted to discuss the Oil-for-Food program, shouldn't you have interviewed the Oil-for-Food Humanitarian Coordinator? Please also tell me why you did not ask Clawson to substantiate his claim. Furthermore, as any nutritionist will attest, it is not the mere quantity of calories that is important to human health. If I offered you only rice, Mr. Edwards, would you be able to live? The Oil-for-Food Program is grossly deficient in proteins and in fruits, and this is one of the reasons it has failed to improve the lives of toddlers and infants in Iraq. As stated by 1998 UNICEF report, "The Oil-for-Food plan has not yet resulted in adequate protection of Iraq's children from malnutrition/disease. Those children spared from death continue to remain deprived of essential rights addressed in the Convention of Rights of the Child."

Yet, the misrepresentations and false statements from Clawson do not end here. Clawson spent the rest of the interview claiming that Saddam Hussein is withholding available food and medicines from his own people, diverting money from the humanitarian program to construct lavish palaces, and placing impediments in the distribution of humanitarian supplies. The United States, on the other hand, is diligently trying to improve the Oil-for-Food program so that it can better serve the Iraqi people. Such as Clawson's claims, and they went completely unchallenged by you. What do the Oil-for-Food humanitarian coordinators, past and present, say? They are the ones who are handling the distribution of food and medicine, and so are in the most informed position.

In responding to accusations that the Iraqi government is starving its own people, Denis Halliday - former Oil-for-Food Humanitarian coordinator, stated, "Before and during Resolution 986 [i.e. the oil-for-food program] the Iraqi government was supplementing it quite extensively, feeding orphans, widows and other single parents. In addition to 986, they're running an extraordinarily effective program...through some 50,000 different agents to a country of 18 million people. Our observers watch that process from the border to the warehouse. It works, and we have no evidence of any significant leakage of foodstuffs. This system works because the Iraqis make it work. To say they don't care about their own people is just rubbish."

In addition to Halliday, UN officials in charge of implementing Oil-for-Food have all emphatically stated that the Iraqi government is not deliberately withholding or hoarding anything, nor is the Iraqi government placing impediments for the distribution of goods under the Oil-for-Food program. The problems in distribution are no computers to plan shipments with, and a phone system in disrepair; not enough trucks to ship goods with, and roads in disrepair. The problem is a Sanctions Committee that approves insulin, but not syringes; notebooks, but not pencils; heart-and-lung machines, but not the computers necessary for their operation.

As for the claim that the US is seeking to improve the Oil-for-Food program, how can the US be seeking to improve the situation while simultaneously withholding a significant portion of necessary items? As reported by Reuters (February 16), the United States alone has frozen 1,000 separate requests for supplies, more than any other country. The list of items that are currently "on hold indefinitely" include: dental materials and supplies; spare parts for bakeries; flour mill equipment; toilet soap; detergent; educational materials; and water treatment chemicals. A request for veterinary medicine was rejected. Please explain to me how such actions are representative of a government allegedly seeking to improve the welfare of 22 million people in Iraq.

This morning's presentation of unsubstantiated claims, false accusations, and wicked attempts to divert responsibility of the sanctions was an injustice committed against the thousands of children who are dying every month in Iraq.

Mr. Edwards, when I first moved to the United States fourteen years ago, I thought that NPR was the domestic equivalent of 'Voice of America' (VOA)-- a government-owned propaganda vehicle. I was told otherwise -- NPR was not VOA. NPR, people told me, was an independent public news-radio with a staff of objective, truth-seeking journalists. I would like you to tell me: which one are you -- a news agency with represents the US government, or others with an agenda, when it comes to the Arab world, or a news agency dedicated to truth and objectivity? Based on this morning's program, and based on NPR's consistent neglect to adequately interview any of the experts on the undeniable horrific effects of the sanctions, what is one left

to think?

Sincerely,

-Rania Masri

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2

G. Simon Harak, S. , 04:07 PM 3/2/00 -, Another GREAT column on Iraq!

X-From : gsharaksj@hotmail.com Fri Mar 3 10:18:31 2000
X-Originating-IP: [204.255.212.51]
From: "G. Simon Harak, S. J." <gsharaksj@hotmail.com>
To: "Michelle Abboud" <mabboud@idsonline.com>
Subject: Another GREAT column on Iraq!
Date: Thu, 2 Mar 2000 16:07:42 -0500
X-MSMail-Priority: Normal
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- > This is an important column in today's Chicago Tribune.
- >
- > You can send a response to the Chicago Tribune at:
- > ctc-TribLetter@Tribune.com
- >
- > Ali Abunimah
- > ahabunim@midway.uchicago.edu
- >
- > *****
- >
- > The Chicago Tribune
- >
- > PERSISTING IN FUTILITY ON THE IRAQ SANCTIONS
- > Steve Chapman
- >
- > March 2, 2000
- >
- > The world has changed a lot since 1990. The Soviet Union no
- > longer exists, the federal deficit has vanished, and Jennifer
- > Lopez is all grown up. But two things remain the same: Iraq is
- > under international economic sanctions, and the sanctions are a
- > failure.
- >
- > If they were a success, Saddam Hussein would no longer be a
- > threat. For that matter, he would be rotting in jail or exile or the
- > graveyard.
- >
- > The sanctions were supposed to put such intense pressure on
- > his beleaguered regime that it would collapse, liberating Iraq
- > from tyranny and ridding us of a principal foreign policy
- > nemesis.
- >
- > Hussein outlasted one U.S. president, George Bush, and he's
- > a good bet to outlast a second. Anybody want to try to for
- > three?
- >
- > Unfortunately, a lot of Iraqis won't be able to mark the 10-year
- > anniversary of the sanctions later this year because they happen
- > to be dead. UNICEF blames the embargo for the death of half a
- > million children. Human Rights Watch says it has contributed
- > to "a pervasive and protracted public-health emergency" that
- > has spawned an epidemic of disease and malnutrition. "Lack of
- > access to sufficient and appropriate food and medicine has been
- > one element, but also crucial has been the degradation of the
- >
- > water and sanitation sectors, contributing to chronic intestinal
- > and acute respiratory infections," reports Human Rights
- > Watch.
- >
- > We have devised an ingenious weapon that decimates the
- > populace of Iraq while miraculously leaving its rulers safe and
- > sound.

IMPERIALIST AUSTRALIA; NUMBER ONE LACKEY OF
YANKEE IMPERIALISM HAS MAINTAINED A NAVAL
PRESENCE IN THE BLOCKADE OF IRAQ IN THE PERSIAN
GULF SINCE 1990. AUSTRALIA WANTS A SLICE OF THE
SPOILS.

BOTH THE LIBERAL AND THE AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY
ENDORSE THE BLOCKADE.

THOUSANDS MARCHED AGAINST THE WAR AGAINST IRAQ
IN 1990, BUT THE WAR IS NOT OVER.

DEFEND OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS IN IRAQ.
OPPOSE IMPERIALISM, MAINLY YANKEE IMPERIALISM, IN
THEIR CONTINUED ATTACK ON IRAQ.

- >
- > Scholars John Mueller and Karl Mueller wrote last year in
- > Foreign Affairs magazine that the sanctions may have
- > contributed to the deaths of more people "than have been slain
- > by all so-called weapons of mass destruction throughout
- > history."
- >
- > Two consecutive UN humanitarian coordinators in Iraq have
- > quit the job to protest the impact of the sanctions on helpless
- > non-combatants.
- >
- > Even in the U.S. Congress, where the deaths of enemy civilians are
- > usually borne with equanimity, 70 members have signed a
- > letter to President Clinton urging an end to the embargo for
- > non-military goods. House Democratic Whip David Bonior
- > calls the economic blockade "infanticide masquerading as
- > policy."
- >
- > Supporters of the policy insist Hussein deserves sole credit for
- > the suffering. In an ostensible-effort to minimize harm to
- > civilians, the UN implemented an oil-for-food program that lets
- > Iraq sell fuel to pay for essentials, and Iraq now exports as
- > much oil as it did before the Persian Gulf war. But under UN
- > rules, a third of the revenues go to pay compensation to
- > Kuwait, UN expenses and the like.
- >
- > Many critical necessities of modern life remain off-limits
- > regardless. Chlorine, used to purify water, isn't allowed into
- > Iraq for fear that Hussein will use it to make poison gas.
- > Syringes and plastic blood transfusion bags have also been
- > blocked--as have many fertilizers and insecticides that come in
- > handy if you want to, say, grow food. The embargo also
- > makes it impossible to repair elements of the country's
- > infrastructure that were pulverized by our B-52s.
- >
- > Hussein himself could make life easier for his subjects if he
- > would divert money from building weapons and palaces or
- > simply do everything the UN wants him to do. But he has
- > shown himself to be quite stoic in enduring the pain of ordinary
- > Iraqis. His guilt in the matter, however, doesn't relieve us of
- > our own obligation to avoid actions that needlessly harm
- > innocents.
- >
- > It's not as though the embargo is accomplishing a lot on the
- > positive side.
- > Iraq was assumed to have biological and chemical weapons
- > even when it was crawling with UN weapons inspectors--and
- > they were kicked out of the country in 1998, making it far
- > easier for Hussein to stockpile such munitions. Back then, Iraq
- > was believed to be close to building nuclear arms as well and
- > they are presumably closer still today. If weapons of mass
- > destruction are the problem, the sanctions have been a poor
- > solution.
- >
- > Lifting the embargo would not exactly mean inviting Hussein
- > to attack his neighbors. He had chemical and biological
- > weapons during the Gulf war but didn't use them because of
- > the threat of overwhelming retaliation--a threat that he can't
- > escape today. Military deterrence is the best defense against his
- > troublemaking, and it doesn't require punishing the Iraqi
- > people to succeed.
- >
- > The Clinton administration is reluctant to abandon a cherished
- > and longstanding policy merely because it has shown itself to
- > be futile.
- >
- > But when a strategy is futile as well as lethal to people who
- > have done nothing wrong, it deserves to be junked.
- >