



Behind the Facade of Incompetence

by Charles Sullivan
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"Economic slavery and burdensome debt, not freedom and democracy, is what we are imposing upon Iraq, aided by the most powerful military in history and, all too often, with the blessings of an oblivious and propagandized citizenry. Aside from the fierce resistance to the occupation, the US is achieving all of its major objectives in Iraq."

It is clear that the US media moguls would have us believe that the catastrophic invasion and occupation of Iraq was a sincere effort to promote freedom and democracy in the Middle East, gone awry. But we must remember that everything associated with capitalism is about marketing: making the people believe that things and events are the opposite of what they really are, and creating artificial wants that neither benefit the individual nor society, while simultaneously embellishing corporate profits.

This understanding would have been equally evident in the mainstream media's buildup to the war had we a less propagandized, better read, and more informed citizenry. Even the politically naïve should have known that Saddam Hussein's threat to the US, so vividly hyped in the media, was pure marketing propaganda.

But the majority of the people bought it, and now we have no choice but to live with our purchase. Short of a major social upheaval, we are going to be in Iraq for a very long time, and the death toll will continue to rise, especially for the Iraqis--the unwilling recipients of our corporate benevolence delivered through carpet bombs, terror, and torture. For these are the undeniable legacy of our foreign policies, and the illegal, amoral, acquisition of property by blunt force trauma.

If we are to survive as a republic, we must appreciate that capitalism and its cousin, global corporatism--not Saddam Hussein, not Communism or Socialism, nor Islamic terrorists, are the greatest threats to democracy. Zionism and Christian fundamentalism, which attempt to provide the flimsy moral basis for our Middle East policy, also pose significant obstacles to world peace by denying justice to others and promoting ethnic cleansing.

It is beguiling that we have yet to learn this fundamental lesson, that we know so little about our own history, and the role that mass ignorance plays in determining the future.

The narcotic of state sponsored propaganda has a powerful and hypnotic effect on our collective senses, and it is rending asunder the fabric of what is supposed to be a free and civil society. We believe what we are told and accept what we are given, without demanding truth, justice or accountability.

It is imperative for the purveyors of war to maintain a cloak of secrecy and a façade of public support where, if the truth were known, none would exist. It is necessary to keep the truth concealed in order to throw the public off the scent of the corruption that is the guiding principle of corporate governance and plutocracy, fomented by morally bankrupt men and women; a system that causes irreparable harm and suffering to its innocent victims and then profits from the misery and suffering it inflicts.

These days it is popular to describe the events occurring in Iraq as the result of incompetence, mismanagement, miscalculation, and benevolent bungling; to characterize them as a well intentioned mistake on the road to freedom and democracy, rather than the moral abomination they are. What we have in Iraq is not the result of any of these phenomena. It is the intended consequence of cold calculation to bomb Iraq into submission, to thoroughly disorient its people, and to apply economic shock therapy before they can recognize what is being done to them.

The intent is to invade sovereign nations either militarily, economically, or both; and to force unbridled capitalism on them. This means, of course, that we must first overthrow the existing governments--many of them democracies, and replace them with ruthless dictatorships willing to betray their own people, and amenable to opening up their countries to corporate exploitation and privatization.

So called free market capitalism requires corrupt leadership on the receiving end that is willing to accept bribes while becoming a puppet to the US. This is how some of the most brutal regimes in the world came into power. Corporate America is always beating the drums of war in search of profits and ever increasing shares of the world's markets. Enough is never enough--they want it all.

Aside from overthrowing popularly elected governments, the unspoken objective of mature capitalism, guided by the doctrine of economic shock therapy, is to turn once sovereign nations into totally deregulated corporate states, answerable to no one.

This objective will be accomplished by privatizing the nationalized infrastructure, inviting in foreign investors, removing tariffs that protect local business and cooperatives from predatory multinational corporations, and downsizing the workforce; by eliminating social spending, and removing all forms of corporate controls. In short, by conducting a fire sale of each nation's stolen assets and auctioning them off at bargain basement prices to wealthy multinational investors.

The intent is to create an unfettered corporate state in which the market, driven solely by profit, is the final arbiter of all things; an Orwellian world in which human

rights, labor laws, environmental protections, and social justice do not even exist, much less enter into market equations.

Aided by the World Bank and the IMF, we are rapidly arriving at a state of global corporate fascism—the free market reform of manic capitalism, greed on steroids; a horrible economic monster unleashed upon unsuspecting people the world over, masquerading as democracy and free trade. And it is occurring in blatant contradiction to everything that is free, decent, and fair; a monstrosity utterly devoid of humanity and empathy for those struggling to survive.

But behind the marketing façade of a beneficent capitalism that is more oxymoronic than real, the skeleton of Reaganism, free marketry, and trickle down economics is exposed for all to see. We are witnessing naked greed unleashed upon the world like a swarm of locusts the size of North America. The fabulously wealthy are realizing obscene profits, while the majority of the world's people are forced into economic servitude, many of them living in abject poverty, scratching out a bleak existence on sweatshop wages under horrendous conditions.

Economic slavery and burdensome debt, not freedom and democracy, is what we are imposing upon Iraq, aided by the most powerful military in history and, all too often, with the blessings of an oblivious and propagandized citizenry. Aside from the fierce resistance to the occupation, the US is achieving all of its major objectives in Iraq. Like flies circling piles of stinking excrement, the lords of unfettered capitalism are buzzing around the bloated corpse of what is left of the world. And they have no intentions of stopping at Iraq. Iran and Syria are waiting in the wings: war that will not end in our lifetime.

If the world were as enamored with capitalism as its adherents proclaim, there would be no need to masquerade it as anything other than what it is--economic self interest for the privileged, driven by insatiable greed, funded by the public treasure. There would be no need to impose it on the world through high tech militarism and occupation, preceded by elaborate propagandistic media blitzes and tricks. All people would seek it out, as they seek water to slake their thirst and nourishment for their bodies.

So we must ask ourselves: When has it ever been in the public interest to over feed the rich and starve the poor? When has it ever been in the public interest to destroy the earth for the sake of profits? When has it ever been in the public interest to promote war and injustice over peace and shared prosperity?

Just people everywhere must resist evil or run the risk of being complicit in it. Neutrality, indifference and apathy, are untenable responses to what is being done in our name. Somehow, we must awaken from this media induced cultural stupor. We must do so under the prying eyes of government and private security contractors who are protecting corporate investors from democracy, and from people like us.

Each of us is being diminished just as the Declaration of Independence states:
"harass our people and eat out their substance."

Every citizen is faced with a simple choice: organize or perish. The storm clouds of World War Three are looming on the horizon. These are extraordinary times that demand something from every one of us.

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