

COMMENT

WHAT ABOUT BUSH

SADDAM'S TRIAL WAS SUSPECT right from the beginning. The most qualified lawyer in the courtroom, former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, was ejected from the trial for handing Judge Abdul-Rahman a memo in which he said the trial was a "travesty" of law. Ramsey Clark has more integrity than Abdul-Rahman.

What did Saddam do that Bush, and Cheney, and Rumsfeld, and Blair have not done?

Saddam is dead. But what about Bush/Cheney/Rumsfeld/Blair's responsibility for the tens of thousands of Iraqi civilians slaughtered by Bush's invasion of Iraq? This massive carnage is the direct consequence of an illegal invasion--a war crime in itself for which Nazi leaders were sentenced to death--that was based on lies and deception. Bush himself admits that 30,000 Iraqi civilians have been killed. Iraq Body Count puts the civilian deaths at between 45,000 and 50,000. The recent Johns Hopkins University study published in the peer-reviewed British medical journal, *The Lancet* (11 Oct, 2006), puts the *Iraqi civilian* deaths caused by Bush's invasion as high as 655,000.

What did the world think of American hypocrisy when the US government, drowning in the blood of tens of thousands of its innocent victims, cried "justice" as the president of Iraq was sentenced to death for killing 148 people for trying to assassinate him?

The death penalty against Saddam was influenced by the propaganda of mass graves uncovered by the US-led invasion and seized upon as justification for that illegal invasion. However, as various experts have pointed out, the graves are those of war dead from the Iraq-Iran war. The US government has responsibility for these deaths also, as Washington gave aid to both sides in the bloody conflict that is believed to have claimed as many as one million lives.

Now that the American invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan have ended in defeat, those most responsible for the destruction of those two countries, tens of thousands of deaths, and a bill for US taxpayers in excess of \$2 trillion (according to Nobel prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz who was currently in Kolkata to help the communist left in distress for their rabidly pro-neoliberal tilt) are running from any responsibility.

The neoconservatives, of course, are trying to escape blame for the defeat of their strategy by accusing Bush and Rumsfeld of incompetent implementation. Will the neoconser-vatives escape responsibility for launching the wars that have turned the United States into a war criminal abroad and a police state at home?

Saddam's death will do nothing for reconciliation and peace among Iraq's Kurds, Sunnis and Shiites. Most Iraqis view the death as revenge for the years of Sunni rule. A civil war leading to partition of Iraq is all that Bush is now offering to the Iraqis. ~~zz~~

[contributed]