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The Moral Rot of Middle East Intervention

by Jacob G. Hornberger

Of one thing we can be certain after decades of the U.S. government's interventionist foreign policy in the Middle East: it has not brought peace to that part of the world.

Another thing we can be certain of: the federal government's interventionist foreign policy is at the center of the moral rot that pervades the U.S. Empire.

The Associated Press [recently reported](#), "President Bush has ordered helicopters and ships to Lebanon to provide humanitarian aid, but he still opposes an immediate cease-fire that could give relief from a 13-day-old Israeli bombing campaign."

We should keep in mind that [much of the weaponry](#) for the Israeli government's bombing campaign has been provided by the U.S. taxpayer, compliments of the U.S. foreign aid. Thus, while opposing an immediate cease-fire in the conflict that is bringing untold suffering to innocent people in Lebanon, Bush simultaneously is rushing to offer U.S. foreign aid to Lebanon to alleviate suffering that is an indirect consequence of U.S. foreign aid to Israel.

That's what passes for moral principles in the U.S. Empire.

For more evidence of the perversity and moral degeneracy of U.S. foreign policy, let's go to nearby Iraq. As the *Washington Post* [has reported](#), to ensure that the military would round up the insurgents who were attacking U.S. forces U.S. military officials ordered mass round-ups of every man of military age in areas where insurgents were attacking U.S. forces. As one U.S. colonel put it, "With the brigade and battalion commanders, it became a philosophy: 'Round up all the military-age males, because we don't know who's good or bad.'"

It gets worse. The military also implemented a policy of taking innocent family members of suspected insurgents as hostages with a promise to release them if the suspect turned himself in — a promise that was often violated after the suspect complied.

Of course, there have also been the torture, sex abuse, rapes, and homicides of countless Iraqis during the occupation, most of which have resulted in either exoneration or light punishment of higher-ups after the standard, superficial, perfunctory military investigations.

Here at home, decades of Middle East intervention have culminated in an omnipotent president who claims the power to ignore laws enacted by Congress, the power to send the nation into war without a congressional declaration of war, the power to conduct warrantless wiretaps on Americans, the power to arrest and punish Americans and deny them trial by jury and due process of law, the power to kidnap and torture people or send them to foreign regimes for the purpose of torture, and the power to establish torture camps in secret Soviet-era detention centers.

Decades of intervention in the Middle East have produced nothing but death, maiming, destruction, empire, tyranny, hypocrisy, corruption, and moral rot. When will Americans rise above the platitudes and propaganda and recognize the moral rot in U.S. foreign policy and the terrible damage it has done not only to people in the Middle East but to our own nation as well?

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