

**Title: The New Paradigm of Forced Socioeconomic Underdevelopment**

**Mohammed Daud Miraki, PhD, MA, MA**

**Director Afghan DU & Recovery Fund**

[Mdmiraki@ameritech.net](mailto:Mdmiraki@ameritech.net)

**Abstract:**

The collapse of the former Soviet Union ended the post-WW II bipolar dichotomy and gave way to a new mode of economic subjugation that I choose to call *the new paradigm of forced socioeconomic underdevelopment*. The factors that characterize this new era consist of the absolute power of the United States and its instrument of legitimacy, the post-WW II institutions, especially the United Nations. Cultural imperialism characterizes this era and justifies disregards to the values and traditions of the underdeveloped countries under the umbrella of democracy and human rights. This paper addresses *the new paradigm of forced socioeconomic underdevelopment* and its implications to the so-called Third World Countries, especially Muslim countries. The short review of the situations in Afghanistan and Iraq that are two of the victims of the *new paradigm of forced socioeconomic underdevelopment* compelled me to attempt to redefine development as a phenomenon. Therefore, my attempted redefinition is:

**Development is the totality of one's existence wherein survival is not contingent upon submitting to the imperatives of US's global hegemony.**

**Introduction:**

From the 16<sup>th</sup> century on to the present, Western powers have justified their hegemonic practices and the consequent underdevelopment they imposed on the non-European nations under various frameworks. Different reasons were given suitable in different times to justify their mode of conduct. Whether it was the Spanish Empire's goal of Christianization, or the Civilizing Mission of France and Britain or the post-WW II development/modernization mission led by the US, all echoed one common theme, justification for the subjugation of non-European world.<sup>1</sup> The European colonialism coincided with the Age of Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution, all of which added to their self-proclaimed superiority and arrogance in dealing with the non-European world. They exhibited their arrogance and lack of consideration to the rest of the world through various instruments of manipulation ranging, for example, from diplomatic pressures on the Muslim lands to open their markets for European goods to the utility of the British East India Company to export opium to China. The diplomatic pressures were always accompanied by threat of military force. For example, the Ottoman Sultans were under the threat of force to grant European citizens the same rights as they enjoyed in Europe. These various examples given here are to illustrate as to how

---

<sup>1</sup> See Walter Magnola's article, Globalization, Civilization processes, and the Relocation of Languages and CULTURES in The Culture of Globalization edited by Fredric Jameson and Masao Miyoshi, 1998.

Western world, for the sake of their wealth accumulation, undermined non-European peoples, their social-religious values and independence.

The European Model of nation-states emerged roughly in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and culminated to the onset of absolutist states in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In fact, the dominant approach in the international relations, which views the international arena as an anarchical system, emerged after the peace of Westphalia in 1648. This system of nation-states that emerged in Europe was the result of 150 years of warfare, which also influenced the industrialization process. Industrialization was initially stimulated for security reasons among the competing European forces not as a drive to modernization. However, the emerging core nations in Europe embarked on another form of competition, which was to colonize the rest of the world for wealth accumulation and hegemony. Consequently, by 1815, Britain emerged as the dominant power in the Western world, and its hegemony continued until the First World War.

The non-Europeans were viewed more as commodities than people by the European colonial powers. This fact was evident in the Congress of Berlin 1800s. In the Congress of Berlin (1884-5), the European colonial powers with the exception of the Dutch drew arbitrary lines on the map of Africa to serve as borders for the emerging nation-states after the end of colonial period (Spybey, 1992:113). Moreover, similar disregards were evident in the case of the Middle East, when the British divided the Kurdish nation into several pieces by incorporating them into the several nation-states and formed states by artificial boundaries. That is why, civil wars plagued Africa as well as the Middle East for the past half a century. This happened because Europe treated the non-European people as pieces of chess, devoid of humanity, identity and culture, and belief systems.

The defeat of Hitler and the subsequent emergence of the Soviet Union as a competing world power made colonialism contradictory to the ideal that led the alliance against Hitler, hence, politically unpopular. The post-WW II represented a period when the center of world hegemony in the West shifted from Europe to the USA. However, this new center of global hegemony, the USA represented a different face of the old hegemonic powers hidden under the cloak of a new framework and justification. This represented a more sophisticated institutionalized arrangement to confine the less developed countries under political and economic subjugation. The presence of the opposite pole, the USSR, compelled the US to embark on a broad deterrent approach. The deterrent that the US employed in the post-WW II era was characterized by the Developmental Project. The Project in question consisted of the Marshall Plan geared, initially, toward the reconstruction of Europe. However, later, the Marshall Plan was extended to cover the non-European world as well in order to counter Soviets' advances toward Western interests in different parts of the world to contain communist expansion into the realm of Western interests. Moreover, this project was also aimed at containing the newly independent nations from the Soviet's sphere of influence. Especially when the USSR represented an alternative to that of the US and concocted the image of being the champion of the oppressed, which served well with the former European colonies, now newly independent nation-states. It is worth mentioning that the USSR had its own approach of consolidating power in its own block. Hence, the competition between the

European powers for securing colonies shifted to the competition between the United States and the USSR for strengthening their respective blocks.

The newly independent states, former colonies, were influenced by the intellectual imperatives of the development project, which consisted of an evolutionary philosophy articulated within the theoretical frame of the modernization theory. The modernization theory envisaged development as a unilinear evolutionary process that when followed will enable these newly independent nation-states to reach the technological advances of the industrialized European nations in time. The aim was to assure these former colonies that they were on the same evolutionary path of development that Europe and the USA followed and it was simply a matter of time for them to reach the industrialized nations in technological advances.

The 1970s signaled the decline of the developmental/modernization project. The reasons for its failure were multiple. First, in the 1960s, reactionary intellectuals from what became known as the dependency school challenged the substance of the modernization theory and its viability as a mode of development. Hence, the unilinear character of the modernization theory was discredited and its colonial roots were exposed. Second, by the 1970s, the so-called Third World countries that followed the prescriptions of the modernization theory realized that it was a mirage than a reality to succeed by catching up with the Western industrialized countries as postulated by the modernization theory. Such belief emerged after the so-called Third World countries found themselves sank into heavy debts, whose interest payments exceeded the balance owned by most of these underdeveloped countries (Hettne, 1995:3-5).

The Third World debt crises coupled with the consequent decline in their consumption of manufactured goods from the industrialized West. The lack of consumption by the less developed nations, in part, resulted in economic disparities in the Western world such as increased unemployment and its consequence. The economic disparities alarmed the capitalist countries, and sought to find an alternative paradigm to justify their world hegemony.

Meanwhile, the USSR did not subscribe to the monetary institutions; however, it, the USSR, stipulated its assistance in the development of the less developed countries on their conformity to the Soviet ideological imperatives; otherwise, they would use such non-conformity on the part of the clientele states to hinder their progress. In the late 1950s and mid-1960s, the USSR's foreign policy was aimed at supporting nationalist leadership in the Third World, however, toward the end of the 1960s and onset of the 1970s, their developmental assistance took a sharp ideological turn. That is, the Soviet Union decided to stop supporting the Third World nationalist leaders and instead, support revolutionary Marxist forces there. Therefore, the Third World countries that relied on the Soviet development aid were left in the open and sought alternative sources of assistance. Case in point is Afghanistan, which relied heavily on the Soviets' development aid, however, near the beginning of the 1970s, when the Soviet Union's foreign aid policy changed, Afghanistan was forced to seek alternative sources for its development projects. That, ironically, did not materialize because the Soviet Union followed their new policy of supporting Third World revolutionaries by sponsoring a

military coup, in 1978, with the collaboration of communist military officers in the Afghan army and air force.

In the early to mid-1980s, a new paradigm emerged, globalization. The idea of globalization is based on the neoclassical economic concept of comparative advantage. It advocated the elimination of trade barriers and encouraged free trade. Furthermore, another issue that globalization advocated was the mobility of capital, which served the Western industrialized countries well, enabling them to seek cheap labor in different parts of the world. This ensured on the one hand, the viability of the Western industrial complex, and on the other hand, it served, as a mechanism to deceive the Less Developed Countries that these industries were there to provide jobs for their unemployed and at the same time, it meant sharing technological know-how. In reality, these industries were labor intensive; therefore, their operations in the Western Industrialized Countries were not efficient due to the high cost of labor. Meanwhile, the shift of the labor intensive industries to the so-called Third World Countries was part of the phenomenon of de-industrialization in the West, a trend toward specialized technology and service sector.

Furthermore, the post-War development of the international institutions including the United Nations, World Bank and IMF ensured the institutionalized control of the less developed countries. Especially, with the dollar being the currency of international transactions, the development of the less developed countries was held hostage to the proclivities and moods of the United States economic influences.

### **The New World Order**

The legitimacy of globalization was put in question with the proclamation of the New World Order after the first Gulf War. That proclamation confirmed the United States' intend to use globalization as a medium for imposing its own standardization in political, economic, social and cultural realms on the non-European countries, especially the Muslim World. Thus, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the establishment of the New World Order accelerated the last tenets of the post-WW II bipolar dichotomy and imposed upon the world the onset of yet another approach that I call *the new paradigm of forced socioeconomic underdevelopment*. It is geared to ensure the United States' global hegemony by ensuring submission to its will by other nations, especially the Muslim world, without any regard to the cultural and religious values of those countries.

The mechanism of legitimacy of this approach consists of the post-WW II political and economic institutions such as the United Nations, and the IMF and the World Bank. The instruments of this approach consist of using economic sanctions and international isolation followed by threat of military force or outright military strikes, if the former fails to achieve the desired outcome. These instruments are legitimized through the mechanism of the United Nations under the umbrella of democracy, human and women rights, which are essentially the United States' deceptive means to ward off international criticism while imposing demands and requiring set standards that the rest of the world has to follow. Any state, depending on its geographical location, cultural and religious background and military might, that chooses to "disobey" the demands of the United States would end up suffering from US-imposed economic sanctions and international isolation. If the two former methods fail the threat of military force and

outright invasion are used to bring them in line with US's demands. Ironically, all three are legitimized through the instruments of the United Nations or by members of the Security Council taking US's side against other members. The US uses this approach blatantly against weaker nations, however, when it comes to nation-states-- such as North Korea-- capable of warding off US's aggression, the US leaders do not act boldly. It is worth mentioning that the strength of a nation does not make it immune to the imperatives of this Paradigm because the Paradigm is implemented in a process, whose effectiveness confine and weakens the targeted state.

The New World Order resembled the initial European world hegemony, when European powers used diplomatic pressure in conjunction with the use of military force in dealing with the non-Europeans. Incidentally, the collapse of the former Soviet Union, which was, undoubtedly, achieved with the blood of over 1.5 million Afghans, served a unique opportunity to the United States to exercise power around the world in an unrestrained manner. The boldness of the US government in behaving in such callous manner stemmed from its technological superiority it exhibited during the first Gulf War and from the economic anarchy the former Soviet Union found itself. In particular, Russia needed US and Western aid to transform to market based economy and was in no position to exhibit any rivalry.

Subsequently, the practice of the New World Order, which was fully operationalized with the post-Gulf War was in its infancy stage but slowly but steadily grew, especially when its creator, the United States exercised all aspects of this new paradigm against the former Yugoslavia. The new paradigm uses the existing global institutions to legitimize forced underdevelopment of the Less Developed Countries and to keep them into the web of economic dependence. Any deviation by the Less Developed Nations would result in their economic strangulation, political isolation and followed by military force. Ironically, more than fifty years after these institutional arrangements were created, the world is still dependent on the mechanisms of the post-WW II institutions, and escaping them would only mean national economic suicide. This provided the perfect mechanism for the *Paradigm of Forced Socioeconomic Underdevelopment*, namely to use post-WW II institutions as the moral stamps for any action the United States takes. Furthermore, these institutions are also used to declare the actions of any nation that contradicted the United States' interests, as illegal under the so-called International Law.

Consequently, what we are witnessing is what the European colonial powers used to portray to the non-Europeans that they (the non-Europeans) were inferior, savage and thus less- human compare to them, the Europeans. At the time of the European world hegemony, the European powers demanded the same rights for their citizens as they had in Europe upon traveling to the non-European realm especially the Muslim world without realizing the social, cultural and religious imperatives of the host countries. Otherwise, the European powers would threaten them, the Muslim hosts, with military force. Therefore, as long as the European missionaries, merchants and tourists were allowed to reside in the non-European regions, especially, in Muslim lands, with all the privileges that they were accustomed to in Europe, the European powers would be content and would abstain from using military force (Hodgson, 1974: 180-225). To that end, it became customary for Europeans and their foreign protégé to be under the jurisdiction of

European legal system. Even if they were implicated in any crime, they were not to be tried in the local courts but rather sent back to Europe.

Today, in light of this new paradigm, the United States is not only requiring the same type of privileges as its European predecessors but also going beyond what the European powers exercised in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. That is, the United States is exhibiting the same type of disregard toward the political-legal, social-cultural and religious values of the rest of the world, in particular the Muslim world. For example, when Taleban demanded evidence in the complicity allegations of Bin Laden and wanted to try him in Afghanistan or a third country, the US government failed to provide any evidence, instead, demanded his extradition even though, Afghanistan had no extradition treaty with the USA. Here, International Law only applies to the strong not to the weak. Consequently, nonconformity with the demands of the US results in acts that deprive the Muslims of their basic human needs such as food and healthcare and ultimately life. Such depravity is used to show to the Muslim world that their development and survival are in the hands of the United States unless they choose to submit. Hence, the conduct of the United States is the similar to in some extent to that of the European powers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, however, it is much larger in scope and complexity whose ramifications to the rest of humanity proves to be of grave consequences.

### ***Maturation of the New Paradigm of Forced Underdevelopment***

The maturation of this Paradigm started right after the first Gulf War when Dick Cheney, then Secretary of Defense, produced a document, Defense Planning Guidance. Two of the current neoconservative hawks who were involved in the draw-up of the document were Paul Wolfowitz and Lewis Libby. Wolfowitz is the present Deputy Defense Secretary and Libby is Dick Cheney's chief of staff.

The significance of this document in the maturation of this new paradigm is the intent and strategic goals it advocates for the United States government to follow. For example, it explicitly states: "Our first objective is to prevent the re-emergence of a new rival." This is a significant statement in light of the demise of the former Soviet Union. The goal entails to use different ways and justifications in dispersing US global hegemony under various pretexts to the far reaches of the globe. The positioning of the US military forces in different regions has two intertwined goals: to prevent the emergence of any global rival, and to secure global energy resources and raw materials. The following quotes from the Defense Planning Guidance as it appeared on the PBS program, Frontline's web page, fully explains the emergence of various events in this Bush administration.

- "We must maintain the mechanisms for deterring potential competitors from even aspiring to a larger regional or global role."

The above quote points to the intent of the new paradigm in eliminating any country that might appear as potential rival to the US in the future. The document in question points to the "proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles" along with any threat to "access to vital raw materials, primarily Persian Gulf oil," as reasons for regional conflicts. Therefore, it is no surprise that Bush called North Korea, Iran and Iraq 'axis of evil'. After all, all three countries possessed ballistic missiles and the latter two, Iraq and Iran, also have massive oil reserves.

The maturation process of the new *Paradigm of Forced Underdevelopment* received an added boost when, in 1997, Robert Kagan and William Kristol, two neoconservatives, established the *Project for the New American Century*. The goal of this project was to establish the intellectual justifications for the new paradigm. During the Cold War, US intellectuals used to provide the moral justifications for opposing the Soviet Union's global hegemony. Currently, the intellectual justifications serve as the platform for US global hegemony. It becomes evident when one looks at the mission statement of the Project, when it poses the following question: "Does the United States have the resolve to shape a new century favorable to American Principles and Interests?" This statement clearly establishes the intent to maintain the USA as the only global superpower. This fact became further evident when the Project for the New American Century initiated to study 'weakness' of the US defenses--spending on defense. The result of the study was the September 2000 report: *Rebuilding America's Defenses: Strategy, Forces and Resources For a New Century*. It is worth mentioning that the same neoconservatives that contributed to the Project for the New American Century wrote a policy letter entitled Clean Break, in which they argued the need to attack Iraq and change the regime there to secure the state of Israel.

As I mentioned in the paragraphs above, the Paradigm of Forced Socioeconomic Underdevelopment would use ways and justifications in launching the operationalization of this paradigm. Hence, September the 11<sup>th</sup> was planned and carried out by sinister elements to secure global hegemony, after all, 3000 lives are not 'much' if one views it from the sinister worldview of the neoconservatives translating into trillions of dollars.

The new paradigm is different from any other in that there is a dynamic process that works at two levels. The first level consist of actions that are used initially to force nations into complying with the US's demands. These include using global institutions such as the UN, IMF, World Bank and World Trade Organization in bringing political and economic pressure, followed with threat of military force on any country that resist US global hegemony. The second level of the process pertains to the latest aspect of the paradigm. These aspects consist of branding nations as Al-Qaida sympathizers or accuse them of possessing Weapons of Mass Destruction. Once a nation falls under this category, it becomes susceptible to Preemptive Strikes or invasions.

The concise overview of Afghanistan and Iraq should illuminate the consequences of *the new paradigm of forced socioeconomic underdevelopment* to any other country refusing to submit to the hegemony of the United States.

### **The Case of Afghanistan:**

The retreat of the former Soviet Union in 1989 from Afghanistan, and the subsequent demise of the Marxist regime in 1992, left the country in the midst of bloody civil war between the same factions, which, previously, fought the Soviet army. The result of the civil war was the destruction of the capital city, Kabul, and the loss over fifty thousand lives. Recent CIA documents revealed that the US knew of the eruption of civil

war in Afghanistan yet allowed it to happen because that way any preconceived strategy to contain the so-called fundamentalists would be justified under some "legitimate" pretext. Moreover, the Afghan Mujahideen fighters were joined by volunteers from different countries in the Middle East because the war in Afghanistan was a holy war against Russians and these Muslims took it upon themselves to help their fellow Muslims in Afghanistan.

The United States considered the concentration of Muslim reactionaries in one location, as a potential threat to its interests; after all, these very people, who fought against the Soviets, were as opposed to the United States' hegemonic practices. At the onset of the factional conflict, the US media did not waste any time calling the Afghan Mujahideen terrorists, people the media used to call and glorify as freedom fighters. However, when the United States officials were approached for help in ending the civil war, they showed no interests. The US officials responded: "this is your [the Afghans'] problem, solve it yourselves".<sup>2</sup> This indifference of the United States to the well being of the people of Afghanistan, the country that became instrumental in bringing down the Soviet Empire, angered Afghans as well as other Muslims. The United States' indifference was being looked at as a betrayal, and Muslims saw themselves as becoming the next enemy. The neoconservative intellectuals were formulating perspectives echoing the need for the replacement of the former Soviet Union as the next enemy. The neoconservatives believed that the West was in need of hating some enemy, one that would envisage a potential threat to its way of life. This would solidify and enhance the identity of the Western world against the non-Western or Muslims. From the perspective of these sinister intellectuals, Muslims would be ideal in occupying the position, which used to be occupied by the USSR, as the new enemies of the West.

Meanwhile in about the same time, the US had already carried out its military operations against Iraq and devastated that country. The Muslims were well aware of the New World Order, as articulated by President Bush I after the end of the Gulf War. Other factors, such as the presence of the United States military forces in Saudi Arabia emerged as an additional factor that stimulated the hatred of the Arab volunteers as well as that of the Afghan Mujahideen towards the United States. The presence of US troops in Saudi Arabia, the indifference of the US toward Afghanistan and the categorization of Muslims as the next enemy were ample reasons for the radical Muslims to take up arms against the US.

Consequently, Osama Bin Laden came to the picture. He functioned initially as a philanthropist providing funds and supplies to the Afghan Mujahideen and later served as the commander of the Arab volunteers in Afghanistan. Bin Laden epitomized the anger of the Afghan Mujahideen as well as that of the Arab volunteers, when he promulgated fetwa or religious decree for a Jihad or holy war against the United States.

The civil war in Kabul and the 80 % of Afghanistan ended in 1996 with emergence and subsequent victory of a reactionary force called Taliban<sup>3</sup> whose goals were bringing law and order to Afghanistan as well as working for the reconstruction of

---

<sup>2</sup> This information was availed to me by an Afghan official, who himself with a number of other dignitaries approached the United States officials.

<sup>3</sup> A fighting force consisted of Afghan seminary students from the religious schools in Pakistan. This force came to the scene of Afghan political anarchy in 1994.

Afghanistan. Taleban brought law and order to the country but were hindered from initiating any serious reconstruction and development in Afghanistan. The reason for this was the implementation of the instruments of the new Paradigm, namely the imposition of economic sanctions on Afghanistan and isolating the Taleban government of Afghanistan internationally. The imposition of economic sanctions and political isolation were justified through the legitimizing mechanism of this paradigm, the United Nations, under the umbrella of international law, democracy and human rights.

The basis for the enactment of the economic sanctions and international isolation was the demand of the United States to hand over Osama Bin Laden for trial in the United States on charges that he allegedly bombed the US embassies in Africa. Like its European predecessors, the United States did not care either about the values and long established traditions of Afghanistan. One of the provisions of the Afghan Code of Behavior, called Pashtunwali, is, to give sanctuary to anyone, who requests it and subsequently protect that individual with all possible means. In addition, according to Islamic laws, handing a Muslim over to a non-Muslim state is a sin of unimaginable proportion.

Amidst all the various diplomatic pressures, the Taleban decided to challenge the claims of the United States, and asked the US officials to provide them with the evidence they had against Bin Laden, so that he could be tried in an Islamic court in Afghanistan. The only evidence the United States furnished consisted of a CNN videotape that contained the news of the bombings in Africa as well as some loose speculations. The evidence was forwarded to the Afghan Supreme Court for trial; the result of the trial was too obvious, namely a court of law can not convict a man based on television commentaries and speculations. Hence, Bin Laden was exonerated. The United States refused to accept the verdict of the trial and insisted that Taleban must hand over Bin Laden to the US authorities. Even if Taleban could hand over Bin Laden to the US authorities, it would still be difficult because everyone knew of the "justice" done in the case of the blind cleric Shaikh Abdur Rahman. Shaikh Abdur Rahman was imprisoned on some bogus charges by the US government after Egyptian president Mubarak came to Washington and sought Shaikh Abdur Rahman's imprisonment in the US.

Taleban knew that Osama Bin Laden would be treated even worse, especially when the US alleges, without any proof, his involvement in the bombing of the United States' embassies in Africa. Furthermore, the Saudi government would be more than willing to support his extradition to the United States to prevent Bin Laden's from inciting anti-Saudi rhetoric. Bin Laden expressed his opposition to the Saudi Royal Family for they allowed US military forces to stay in Saudi Arabia. To achieve its goal, the United States continued its diplomatic pressure tactics but they did not work; and were followed with 75 cruise missile strikes against the alleged training camps of Bin Laden as well as a Sudanese pharmaceutical factory in Khartoum. The United States alleged that the pharmaceutical factory was producing poisonous gas. However, it was revealed later that the factory was making antibiotics for a large portion of the population in Africa. Consequently, the owner of the factory filed a lawsuit against the US and won. As to the damages in Afghanistan, there was no training camp except a village, where 33 peasants lost their lives while they were working in their farming plots. Again, this is similar to the 19<sup>th</sup> century European tactics of diplomatic intimidation and use of force against the Muslim countries. Despite the missile strikes, the American officials

shamelessly returned to the Taleban and reiterated their previous demands to hand over Bin Laden, the Taleban, however, declined to do so with the strongest terms possible.

Another issue that was used as a justification for the sanctions was women rights. Due to the Islamic tradition, the Taleban required women to wear veils and abstain from work until a stable atmosphere was brought to Kabul. Amidst all this, the United States Secretary of State Albright on a visit to Pakistan called the Talebans' cultural-religious measures disgraceful and violation of human rights. It is worth mentioning that after the fall of the Marxist regime, the former Marxist militias kidnapped, raped and sold women, the United States did not bother to even mention it let alone condemning it. Moreover, similar restrictions in terms of veil wearing exist in Saudi Arabia, but since the United States has interest in the oil there, the US government could never touch upon that issue in fear of alienating the Saudi Royal Family. The fact is that these are the cultural values of Afghanistan not of the US, a country, where every two minutes a woman is raped or dishonored. Why was then the US making such outlandish demands from Afghanistan, after all Afghanistan was an independent and sovereign state. The answer to this question should be obvious by now, namely everyone has to submit to the will and demands of the United States.

As to the development measures of the Taleban, a consortium of foreign companies was formed which was supposed to work on the construction of gas pipeline from Turkmanistan through Afghanistan to Pakistan. Afghanistan would benefit from this project by collecting significant amount of transit fee. In addition, other consortiums were formed to excavate copper, Iron, gold, silver, precious stones and extract natural gas and oil. Unfortunately, none of the projects went beyond the planning stages after the US imposed economic sanctions and international isolation. Meanwhile, a consortium of telecommunication firms came to Kabul, where they established their corporate offices with the goal to build modern telecommunications such as Internet and telephone links throughout the country and with the outside world. Ironically, that deal was also cut short due to the US imposed international isolation and economic sanctions, which prevented manufacturers to sell the needed implements for the projects. Other major projects included the reconstruction of highways and bridges; they did not materialize either. The function of the United States' sanctions was to isolate Taleban government from the rest of the world. Instead, economic sanctions and isolation imposed severe hardship on the common people, many of them were receiving letters as well as financial help from their immediate family members living abroad. The livelihoods of common people outside major cities were not severely affected as of those inside Kabul, where everyone relied on hospitals and foreign NGOs. Although the sanctions regime have precluded humanitarian aid, but that preclusion had a dilemma of its own.

The UN Resolution 1267, which was imposed on November 14, 1999, suspended all Ariana international flights. The resolution in question also barred the provision of spare parts and training by any foreign company. All international flights were also barred from entering Afghanistan under the UN Security Council Resolution 1333, which was imposed on January 19, 2000. Although the UN claimed that humanitarian and religious flights were exempt from the UN Sanctions. That is where the UN's claim of humanitarian exemption fell apart. In fact, it amounted to an insult to injury.

The deputy minister of the Afghan Civil Aviation and Tourism, Raz Alami said:

"We are living in a landlocked country devastated by war, where communications, roads and infrastructure are next to nonexistent... Our national airline is blocked, and everyone says this will not affect the ordinary people in this country. Who really believes that?" (Integrated Regional Information Network, IRIN, UN OCHA)

In a landlocked country like Afghanistan, air-bridge is of utmost importance in the social and economic development of the country, especially, when other infrastructures of communications are all destroyed or are hardly reliable. Afghanistan was already suffering from various miseries; the sanction ban on international flights by Ariana Airline further debilitated the minimal stability the health care desperately needed. Ariana Airline shipped 50 percent of medicine and hospital equipment used in Kabul hospitals, according to doctors of Indira Gandhi Hospital in Kabul. Consequently, the jobs of most of the 1500 employees of Ariana were threatened along with the 1700 postal carriers'. With the sanctions in place, all the links to the outside world were cut. People could not receive financial assistance from their relatives, and people, both, inside and outside Afghanistan could not relay news to their respective families. This was one of the significant social costs associated with the imposition of the UN-US sanctions.

The imposition of sanction meant another more drastic social cost on the Afghan people, namely reliance on the good will of Pakistan. The corrupt officials of Pakistan took advantage of the miseries of the Afghans, whether it pertained to the extension of their visas or acquisition of permits to send goods abroad. Each of these undertakings required massive bribes at different levels.

Meanwhile, in order to secure one international flight, Ariana Airline had to apply to the UN. The response time from the UN ranged from two days to two months. Then, the airline had to secure permission from every country whose airspace it flew over. This created immense frustration among the airline officials, hospitals that needed medical supplies and other essential goods. Deputy minister Raz Alami said in order to secure one international flight:

"It can take anywhere from two days to two months...In addition to permission from the UN sanctions committee, we are required to get permission from every country whose airspace we wish to fly over."

Since the UN did not inform these countries that it had granted Ariana Airline permission for international flight, this created other related problems. Alam added:

"These countries then tell us that we have to go through diplomatic channels, but our country doesn't have diplomatic relations with them anyway."

In addition, the airplane and the airport needed constant maintenance. The international flight that flew daily through Afghan airspace paid \$400 each which amounted to about \$48,000 a day. This amount constituted significant revenue that would be spent on the maintenance of Kabul Airport and the aging airplanes.

Many worldwide realized that sanctions would not affect the Taleban movement but rather the poor civilians, as the following quote articulates:

"The direct effects of sanctions will surely affect the Afghan people their insensitivity led UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to admonish the Security Council publicly for victimizing civilians and compromising the UN's persistent, if faltering search for peace. Their indirect effects in Afghanistan -- the loss of life, and the loss of faith in the world's efforts to end its war -- are fatiguing and familiar. The assumptions that motivate the Council's reasoning are at best inaccurate and the consequences for the broader region are likely to be self-defeating." (Los Angeles Times, January 04, 2001)

An analogy can be made between the so-called humanitarian preclusion to the practices of Romans, who would destroy and flatten cities and claim that they brought peace and tranquillity to the inhabitants of the destroyed cities. Thus, all of these productive projects were hampered and Afghanistan was forced to accept its fate of poverty and underdevelopment.

### **The effects of US Invasion**

The invasion of Afghanistan is the final step in the instruments of underdevelopment in the *Paradigm of Forced Socioeconomic Underdevelopment*. This final step not only ensured the persistence of underdevelopment as understood in traditional sense of the word, but also sentenced every Afghan in the present generation along with many generations to come to a perpetual death. This disaster resulted from the usage of depleted uranium (DU) and non-depleted uranium (NDU) munitions during the US-UK bombing of Afghanistan.

The uranium disaster brought on Afghanistan by the US-UK bombing not only is a severe form of underdevelopment but rather a silent genocide on otherwise poor and ravaged people. The use of more than 1000 metric tons of uranium weapons in Afghanistan contaminated all aspects of Afghan ecosystem and endangered every generation to come. The intensity of this tragedy could only be appreciated when one looks at the half-life of depleted uranium, namely 4.5 billion years. What this means is that Afghans will be dying from various cancers, other deadly and chronic conditions and will be seeing many congenital deformities in their new born for generations to come.

### **Unique But Tragic Social cost:**

On top of the human cost of this disaster, there are both social and economic costs involved. This would include the permanent care for many disabled people, if they survive their conditions, continuous monitoring of the level of radiation and uranium particles in soil, water and air. The onset of this disaster also brought another tragic social cost and phobia. In Iraq after the first Gulf War, though only 350 tons of DU was used, people developed many types of ailments. The congenital deformities in newborn created marriage-phobia among young women. They expressed fear of marrying. What normally

is a joyous event has become source of anxiety for many women especially in southern Iraq, and, now, in Afghanistan. Areas that are hard hit by the US-UK bombing are especially most vulnerable.

### **Anarchy:**

After the US invaded Afghanistan and ousted the Taleban regime, it effectively brought Afghanistan to the pre-Taleban era characterized by lawlessness, rape, murder and opium production.

Taleban not only put an end to infighting but also disarmed warlords while others involved in crimes abandoned Afghanistan for Iran or other countries in the region. Currently, the most basic of needs, the need for self-preservation is at risk for almost all Afghans. There is no security. Anyone traveling outside Kabul is taking a chance of being robbed, raped, and killed. The local warlords demand outrageous fees from travelers. If one carried anything valuable along while traveling inside Afghanistan, it amounts to a miscalculated deed since the item in question turns the traveler into a target by highway robbers. During the Taleban era, though characterized by extremism, security was of no concern to anyone. Peoples' property and dignity were secured. Now, however, it is the opposite.

With the emergence of Northern Alliance, emerged rape, delinquencies of different types, looting and murder. At night, the 'police force' invades homes in Kabul, raping women and taking their properties. Especially, families that lack males as heads of the households are particularly vulnerable. This includes widows and women whose husbands have gone away to make a living. Warlords whose infighting in Kabul resulted in the death of more than 65,000 civilians have their power restored to them, thanks to the US and her allies. War criminals that looted valuables of Kabul Museum, destroyed Kabul University and mass murdered intellectuals are again in power.

### **Reconstruction:**

The issue of reconstruction is another myth that was propagated by Bush's public relations campaign. Nearly two years after the invasion of Afghanistan, there has been no reconstruction whatsoever. Unpaved roads and destroyed bridges are not rebuilt. Poverty is rampant. Homelessness is much more prevalent than before the US invasion because the bombing, according to an interfaith group returning from Afghanistan, destroyed more than 5000 homes. When those people that survived the bombing of their homes approached the US embassy in Kabul to ask for reparation, they were pushed away. Consequently, homelessness became more prevalent. Especially, those people that lost their homes during the war with Russians and those during the infighting relied on extended families to survive. Tragically, when the US-UK bombers bombed homes of their extended families, survivors ended up either sleeping in bombed buildings littered with unexploded munitions or are sleeping in cemeteries.

Schools, universities and hospitals sit in ruins. No reconstruction efforts are made there. Infant mortality is worse than was before the war. The use of uranium weapons and cluster bombs have targeted both the unborn as well as those living. Lack of proper healthcare facilities, medicine and sanitation has contributed to the rampant spread of

diseases and the consequent higher mortality rate among the young and the rest of the population.

The number of orphans has risen tremendously. Before the war, there were 36,000 orphans--mostly females--inhabiting the ruins of Kabul. Today, no official estimate exists of those poor souls. Most of the orphans either live in cemeteries or in bombed buildings. Tragically, a significant number of girls fell victims to criminals domestic and foreign involved in the trade of young girls sold all over the region. The same criminals that turned Kabul into ruins roam the streets of Kabul. The reconstruction myth and the mantra the Bush White House used, namely the US will not walk away from Afghanistan, became evident in the US budget for 2003. In the budget the same Bush administration that spoke loudly of reconstruction of Afghanistan failed to ask for any money in its 2003 budget for any project, humanitarian or otherwise. (Michael Buchanan of the BBC: February 13, 2003)

The reconstruction myth was even disputed by the brother of the installed President Hamid Karzai, better known as mayor of Kabul. Ahmad Wali Karzai said the following in an interview to an Associated Press reporter on April 07, 2003:

"It's like I am seeing the same movie twice and no one is trying to fix the problem... What was promised to Afghans with the collapse of the Taliban was a new life of hope and change. But what was delivered? Nothing ... There have been no significant changes for people." He does not "know what to say to people anymore."

People lost their economic means of survival due to the US-UK bombing. For example, in eastern and southeastern Afghanistan, honey producers stopped producing honey after the bombing started. The reason for this was that all honeybees perished due to the US-UK bombing. (Interview with Dr. Murad Ali)

The indifference of the Bush administration and its deceptive claims of reconstruction in Afghanistan are evident from the comment of Senator Biden, as reported by Jake Tapper of Salon.com:

"Biden says that he and others on his committee have pressed the White House for more funding for Afghanistan, only to have these concerns brushed aside. "We were told, 'We don't need any more in Afghanistan,'" Biden said in February [2003]."

### **Women Rights:**

The biggest misinformation campaign orchestrated by the Bush White House was the deceitful slogan that the US is fighting to "liberate Afghan women." Nothing could be farther from the truth than what this slogan envisaged. In reality, there are more widows in Afghanistan today than there were during the Taleban regime. The US-UK bombing murdered thousands of men whose wives are now begging on cities' streets. Widows and

disabled men sit on roadsides and beg while the orphans in their laps die from hunger and disease. The other orchestrated falsehood was that women in Afghanistan wore burqas because Taleban forced them to do so. Today, over 95 percent of women in Kabul still wear burqas. The 5 percent or less only exhibit their faces with hesitation. Burqa is a traditional garment that emerged more than one hundred years ago in Kabul and is still worn by more than 95% of women.

In early October, an Afghan woman, Nurgessa, roaming the deserted streets of Kandahar accompanied by her little boy said the following for the 'liberation' efforts of the United States of America:

"Last night, while we were sleeping the Americans bombed our homes. When I woke up I saw Agha Gul [her husband] shattered into pieces and my other two sons had their heads blown away, I screamed for my little boy, Sa'may. Sa'may was unconscious. I ran while the bombs were dropping. This morning I woke up with my little Sa'may looking for grass. We have nothing left. I want to boil grass for Sa'may because he is hungry. Sa'may's father and my other beautiful sons were all I had."

When she was asked that the Americans claim they are liberating Afghan women, she responded:

"Yes, the Americans killed my dear Agha Gul and my sweet boys, that's how they liberated me. They are heartless people." (Miraki: Liberated from Life, April 03, 2003)

Another Afghan lady cried and echoed the pains of many widows:

"I lost everyone, every man in my life represented a bone in my body, especially, my husband Rah'matullah, was my backbone broken forever. The Americans are more cowards than were the Russians because they [Americans] bombed us at night when we were asleep. I want you to remember this: I will go and get married again for only one purpose to give birth to a boy and then I will raise that boy to adulthood to fight against the Americans and defeat them like we did the Russians and avenge my family." (Liberated from life)

In fact, in March 2003, UN General Secretary Kofi Annan reported the following regarding the conditions of Afghan women in post-Taleban Afghanistan:

"Despite positive developments regarding women's rights, intimidation and violence by regional and local commanders against women continue unabated."

Afghan women in Kabul, where supposedly reconstruction efforts are underway still die daily during labor, giving birth to newborn. Lack of medical facilities, medicine and equipment and the indifference of the occupying force exacerbate the fate of the Afghan women. Afghan women are not only victims inside Afghanistan but are also victims of global invader, the US. The Bush administration used falsehood and deception in its public relation campaign during its invasion by envisaging as if the entire military campaign was aimed at "liberating Afghan women". Today, Afghan women are the biggest victims of all.

During the Taleban era, opium production was outlawed. After the demise of Taleban drug production has soared all over the country. The biggest tragedy is that the victims of opium consumption are mostly women and children. Drug addiction is on the rise among women. Radio Free Europe reported on 07/21/2003:

"A nongovernmental group in Afghanistan is expressing concern over the apparent rise in drug addiction among the country's women and children. The Kabul-based Najat Center says most of the women addicts are former refugees who returned home from Iran and Pakistan to find few prospects or means of support. The rise in drug addiction among children has a different, even more troubling, source: mothers are giving them drops of opium to help them sleep."

Another report added:

"Nearly one-third of opium users and pharmaceutical drug users in Kabul are women, according to a historic report released by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), which chronicles the first-ever assessment of the extent of drug use in the Afghan capital." (IRIN, 08/11/2003)

It is a tragedy that the US officials released Ayub Afridi from Pakistani prison to go to eastern Afghanistan along with other drug tycoons and instigate uprising against Taleban before the fall of Taleban. Today, these drug tycoons have increased opium production by thousands of tons. Tragically, the victims are women that the US so falsely advocated. This has been the fruit of the US well orchestrated 'reconstruction or development' thus far.

Whether it was Afghanistan, Iraq or any other Muslim or Third World country, the United States forced them all into underdevelopment.

### **Case of Iraq**

Similarly, the mechanisms of *the paradigm of forced socioeconomic underdevelopment* also brought disaster to the people of Iraq. Iraq was the only Arab country in the Middle East that established a very prominent middle class and brought prosperity to its people. The prewar prosperous Iraq has been turned into infant graveyard since end of the first Gulf War over a million children have died from malnutrition, lack of antibiotics, and uranium poisoning. If Saddam was the problem, then why did the United States allow Iraqi gunship helicopters to bomb the advancing Kurdish forces toward Baghdad that could occupy Baghdad and rule Iraq? The Kurdish forces were initially encouraged by President Bush in several of his public statements to continue their advance toward Baghdad. However, when Turkey objected to the advance of Kurdish forces toward Baghdad, the United States in turn allowed the Iraqis to use their gunship helicopters against the Kurds in order to prevent them from reaching Baghdad. Consequently, thousands of Kurdish civilians lost their lives.

The US did not topple Saddam Hussein because Saddam served as an instrument of justification for the United States' future interventions in the Middle East. Meanwhile, the reason for the US sanctions was not Saddam Hussein rather Iraq's refusal to submit to the will of the United States; otherwise, Saddam Hussein, whom the United States calls enemy, was strengthened and armed by the United States against Iran during the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s. In fact, the recent finding by the US of offensive missiles in Iraq points to the complicity of the United States in arming Iraq. American investigators stumbled across a cache of missiles that Saddam Hussein has legally acquired from the United States. The June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2003, sub-section of Newsweek "Periscope" puts the find in the following terms:

"...One awkward find was a cache of missiles that were made in the United States.

Though details of the discovery are classified, sources in Washington say that military and intelligence agencies launched an urgent investigation to find out how the weapons got to Iraq and whether American firms might have violated U.N. embargoes and U.S. laws. Recently the inquiry was abandoned when convincing evidence turned up that the missiles had been exported legally from the United States to Iraq in the years before the first gulf war, when American policymakers cozied up to Saddam as a counterbalance to Iranian ayatollahs." *(Newsweek, Mark Hosenball: June 09, 2003)*

The lies of the Bush administration and that of the Tony Blair in UK have reached monumental proportion after asserting that the Iraqi regime had mobile biological weapon trailers. These lies have reached their climax when Collin Powell presented his bogus evidence to the United Nations Security Council asserting that allegedly trailers were used to manufacture biological weapons. The false rationale the Bush administration wanted to envisage to the world was that since weapon inspectors could not find WMD, therefore, they were produced and maintained on mobile platforms. The following report from the UK Observer should put to rest those false allegations:

"An official British investigation into two trailers found in northern Iraq has concluded they are not mobile germ warfare labs, as was claimed by Tony Blair and President George Bush, but were for the production of hydrogen to fill artillery balloons, as the Iraqis have continued to insist.

Instead, a British scientist and biological weapons expert, who has examined the trailers in Iraq, told The Observer last week: 'They are not mobile germ warfare laboratories. You could not use them for making biological weapons. They do not even look like them. They are exactly what the Iraqis said they were - facilities for the production of hydrogen gas to fill balloons.'

The conclusion of the investigation ordered by the British Government - and revealed by The Observer last week - is hugely embarrassing for Blair, who had used the discovery of the alleged mobile labs as part of his efforts to silence criticism over the failure of Britain and the US to find any weapons of mass destruction since the invasion of Iraq." (Peter Beaumont, Antony Barnett and Gaby

Hinsliff, The Observer, June 15, 2003)

And, off course, there was the lie of sixteen words, namely that Iraq sought uranium from Niger.

### **The combined effects of Sanctions and Gulf War II in Iraq**

#### **Sanctions:**

The combined effects of sanction and invasion on Iraq amounted to eradication of Iraq as a nation state. Initially, the sanctions weakened Iraq tremendously as the following report collaborates:

"According to economic studies carried out in the late nineties, Iraq's real gross domestic product (GDP), i.e. Iraq's GDP adjusted for inflation, fell by 75 percent during 1991-1999. The results of these studies showed that Iraq's GDP in the late 1990's was estimated at approximately the country's real GDP in the 1940's, before the oil boom the process of the modernization of Iraq."

Consequently, the per capita income of people decreased, so did their calories intake:

"The per capita income and the peoples' calorie intake decreased to a level as low as that of one of the desperately poor so called "Fourth World" states such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda Haiti and Somalia." (UN report, 1999)

For example, according to the IMF and the UN Report of 1999, Iraq per capita income in 1984 was \$3416, while in 1998 it was less than \$1036. Dennis Holiday, former UN Assistant Secretary General, expressed his disgust with the UN (US) imposed sanctions by resigning his post after 34 years of service for the United Nations. He expressed his discontent as follows:

"We are in the process of destroying an entire society. It is as simple and terrifying as that."

The 1999 UN report described Iraq economic situation resulting from the sanctions that the country of Iraq " has experienced a shift from relative affluence to massive poverty". (UN Report, March 1999)

According to World Health Organization,

"Comparing levels of the infant mortality rate (IMR) and the mortality of children under 5 years old during the pre war period (1988-1989) with that during the period of the sanctions (since 1990), it is clear that the IMR has doubled and the mortality rate for children under 5 years old has increased six times." (WHO, March 1996)

Similarly, the UN assessment panel formed under the Chairmanship of Ambassador Celso Amorim of Brazil, reported the humanitarian situation in its March 1999 report as follows:

"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 has regular access to clean water, 83% of all schools need substantial repairs." (UN document S/1999/356, 15, para 43.)

According to a summary prepared by the British Medical Journal Lancet researchers, Mohamed Ali and Iqbal Shah:

"Infant mortality rose from 47 per 1000 live births during 1984–89 to 108 per 1000 in 1994–99, and under-5 mortality rose from 56 to 131 per 1000 live births." (The Lancet 2000; 355: 1851–57)

In 1999, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Iraq, Hans Von Sponeck, whose predecessor Dennis Holiday, I mentioned above, resigned over the injustice of sanctions, reported:

"The oil for food program provides him with \$177 per person per year – 50 cents a day – for all of the needs of each Iraqi citizen. He said, "Now I ask you, \$180 per year? That's not a per capita income figure. This is a figure out of which everything has to be financed, from electrical service to water and sewage, to food, to health – the lot . . . that is obviously a totally, totally inadequate figure." (Meeting with delegation with Physicians for Social Responsibility, [www.scn.org/ccpi/UN andUSreports.html](http://www.scn.org/ccpi/UN_andUSreports.html))

The social effects of sanctions had severely adverse consequences for the younger population as the following quote from the UN panel report illustrates:

"Increase in juvenile delinquency, begging and prostitution, anxiety about the future and lack of motivation, a rising sense of isolation bred by absence of contact with the outside world, the development of a parallel economy replete with profiteering and criminality, cultural and scientific impoverishment, disruption of family life. WHO points out that the number of mental health patients attending health facilities rose by 157% from 1990 to 1998." (UN document S/1999/356, report of the second panel, paragraph 25, March 30, 1999)

As his predecessor, Hans Von Sponeck also resigned his post as UN Humanitarian Coordinator on March 29, 2000. He explained his resignation decision as follows:

"I can no longer be associated with a program that prolongs suffering of the people and which has no chance to meet even basic needs of the civilian population." (Reuters report March 29, 2000)

Meanwhile, in an open letter to the Guardian, Von Sponeck stated:

"Lawlessness of one kind does not justify lawlessness of another kind ... how long must the civilian population be exposed to such punishment for something that they've never done?" (The Guardian, January 03, 2001)

Moreover, the sanctions also prevented the import of pesticides and vaccines. Consequently, date trees started to degenerate and disease spread in cattle. According to a report by the CBC News March 02, 1999:

"The United Nations has discovered: Half of Iraq's vital date trees have died, a total of 15 million so far. Screw worms are burrowing into humans and animals, and spreading to Kuwait and other Gulf states [sic]. Foot and mouth disease, lethal to livestock, is raging in Iraq and spreading towards neighbouring [sic] countries."

The same news report points to the lack of vaccination and absence of storage facilities due to the lack of electricity:

"The UN's Food and Agricultural Organization says it doesn't have enough vaccines to stop the foot and mouth disease... Even if there were enough money for vaccines, there aren't enough places to store them in Iraq because sanctions have also crippled electrical systems and refrigeration units."

Dennis Holiday, the former UN Humanitarian Coordinator stated the following in his speech sponsored by Harvard Divinity School World Conference on Religion and Peace:

"There is an awful incompatibility here, which I can't quite deal with myself. I just note that I feel extremely uncomfortable flying the UN flag, being part of the UN system here... 4,000 to 5,000 children dying unnecessarily every month due to the impact of sanctions because of the breakdown of water and sanitation, inadequate diet and the bad internal health situation". (BBC, 09, 30, 1998)

## **Gulf War II:**

The US bombing of Iraq debilitated what remained of a crumbling infrastructure after a decade of sanctions.

The first liberating event in Baghdad and the rest of Iraq was looting. Everything from the valuable to the dangerous has been looted. Every facility in the country has been stripped of all that was movable. This phase of the Paradigm of Forced Socioeconomic Underdevelopment did precisely that, made Iraq further underdeveloped. Although Gulf War I has contaminated the country with depleted uranium munitions and destroyed infrastructures of all types, Gulf War II not only further contaminated Iraq with uranium weapons, decimated social and economic infrastructures, it destroyed a lot more. In fact, Gulf War II destroyed the intellectual and historical heritage of Iraq as well as rich

manuscripts of early Islamic civilizations. The anarchy of post-invasion has created such lasting cultural and historical disasters, a true underdevelopment

Looters managed to enter every public building except the Ministry of Oil, which was protected by US military after all the war was fought, in part, for that reason to secure Iraqi oil. Looters managed to steal uranium and deadly viruses from Iraqi facilities without being barred by US forces. The Baghdad Central Public Health Laboratory lost several strains of deadly viruses. ABC News Brian Ross reported that:

"Scientists at Baghdad's Central Public Health Laboratory are worried that an unknown number of viruses have been stolen. Scientists say looters took refrigerators full of the deadly viruses last Friday, but they're not sure what's actually missing."

The lab director Mounier Kuba was furious when said:

"The Americans shouldn't just protect Ministry of Oil, they should protect all the general public health services" (Brian Ross, ABC News: April 17, 2003)

Looters and US bombing destroyed cultural icons and manuscripts thousands of years old. Baghdad library had some of the golden literature treasure of early Muslim Civilizations, tragically, some of the most valuable manuscripts burned to ashes. Obviously, the US-UK could care less about historical Islamic arts and manuscripts, after all, they are fighting 'clash of civilizations'.

Today, Iraqi infrastructures are destroyed, electricity and clean water are nowhere to be found. Looting, killing and rape are rampant throughout Iraq. Despite the scorching heat, residents throughout Iraq lock their windows in fear of looters and murderers entering their residents. Amidst insecurity, homelessness, and despair, the US and her allies were busy selling the first shipments of crude oil to US-UK companies.

### **Concise Evaluation**

#### **Afghanistan & Iraq:**

For the validity of my hypothesis, namely that the emergence of this new paradigm has brought on underdevelopment by force, as its name, the Paradigm of Forced Socioeconomic Underdevelopment, signifies, it is instructive to measure the US's reconstruction claims in terms of the economic development indicators. The following is a concise list of indicators for economic and social development:

Measures of economic development:

GNP per Capita  
Population Growth

Occupational Structure of the Labor Force  
Urbanization  
Consumption per capita  
Infrastructure

Social conditions:

Literacy rate  
Life expectancy  
Healthcare  
Caloric intake  
Infant mortality

## **I. Afghanistan:**

I will attempt to present a very short overview in terms of these indicators of the conditions in Afghanistan and Iraq. In Afghanistan as is the case with Iraq, the effects of underdevelopment is measured from the time the sanctions were imposed. The US imposed economic sanctions on Afghanistan in 1999. The immediate effects of the sanctions emanated from the barring Afghan national airline, Aryana from taking international flights. Since the country is landlocked, it depends on the Air Bridge facilitated by its national airline, Aryana. It transported medicine, hospital supplies, emergency goods, transporting family members working abroad and carry international mail from and to the country. These various functions had significant social and economic values for the population. The following essential functions used to be completed by Aryana airline on daily and weekly basis:

1. Transporting 50% of medications for hospitals in Kabul from India. Lack of medications meant death and despair for many living in Kabul as well as outside Kabul. Most of people living in provinces near Kabul would come to Kabul for medical treatment. Moreover, since Kabul is a type of 'gravity center' or 'Modernity Island' for the rest of Afghanistan, people want to come to Kabul to get better medical care. Hence, people in Kabul and in other provinces failed to get proper medication and treatment after the imposition of sanctions in 1999. In fact, after the imposition of sanctions, people in Kabul and in other provinces had 50% less medications and care than they did before the imposition of sanctions. This, nonetheless, is a significant social underdevelopment and signifies the inevitable threat to survival of people there.
  - a. This translated into less medication for newborns, infants, nursing mothers, disabled, chronic illnesses, injuries etc. This also meant fewer medications for those injured in the civil war.
  - b. NGOs relied on air transport for many lives saving items; sanctions put an end to that. Moreover, hospitals in need of equipment and necessary tools had to do without them and the cost was loss of lives.
  - c. Aryana would transport Afghan guest workers from and to the Middle East. These workers and other Afghans living abroad would send money to relatives in mail. Since international mail relied on the 'Air Bridge'--Aryana airline--people did not

- receive life sustaining financial assistance. This meant less food, clothing, less nutrition for many people--hence--less consumption. Moreover, another social cost had to do with information about relatives inside Afghanistan and those outside the country. Mothers would long to hear if their sons are well and sons and daughters would worry about mothers and fathers and siblings' conditions inside Afghanistan.
2. Economic sanctions also meant having no business transactions with companies worldwide. Many global consortiums visited Afghanistan to explore natural resources. Afghanistan has large deposits of iron and copper, gold and silver, precious stones, natural gas and oil and many other natural deposits that need to be explored and extracted. Moreover, Taleban signed the construction contract for the gas and oil pipeline with Brides--the Argentinean Company-- instead of UNOCAL, the American Company. If these consortiums were allowed to start their surveys and explorations, thousands of jobs would be created in virtually all sectors of society. This would translate into more food, clothing and shelter for people. It would have also resulted into the construction of schools, hospitals and higher education facilities. The consequence of this would be:
    - a. Longer life expectancy
    - b. Consumption by people of more food and nutrients
    - c. Lower infant mortality rate and better healthcare
    - d. Larger GNP per capita
    - e. Population growth and urbanization
    - f. Building and renewing infrastructure--both physical and others.
    - g. Most importantly advancement would bring about moderation within Taleban and open the gate for other educated Afghans to participate in the rebuilding of Afghanistan.

With the US invasion of Afghanistan, none of these possibilities materialized. Instead, the following occurred:

1. Complete insecurity and anarchy spread throughout the country.
2. People are dying from disease, malnutrition and uranium contamination
3. Higher infant mortality while more mothers die during child birth from labor related complications
4. Children die from unexploded cluster bombs
5. Any international 'reconstruction aid' that reaches Afghanistan ends up covering the ever worsening humanitarian crisis or goes into the pockets of warlords and those in power.
6. The colossal increase in opium production has contributed to increased addiction, especially among women and children
7. The number of widows has increased since the US bombing has killed thousands of men and boys.
8. The criminal usage of uranium weapons condemned Afghanistan to a perpetual death--from which--hundreds lose their lives and give births to deformed newborns.

In nutshell, what one sees in Afghanistan is lack of hope for the future. The country has served as it did during the Soviet invasion a testing ground for various weapons. Every new weapon technology that required testing before mass production has been tested on the poor people of Afghanistan.

So, what we have is complete underdevelopment. This qualitative analysis should amply establish the forced underdevelopment as the main trait of this paradigm.

## **II. Iraq:**

Similarly in Iraq, invasions and sanctions together have contributed to the underdevelopment of Iraq. Initially, during the war Iraqis soldiers and civilians sustained significant losses. Moreover, bombing destroyed and damaged many water and sanitation facilities, general infrastructure--roads and bridges--electrical generation, production facilities and more. This brought Iraqi economy to a stand still and what used to be a relatively prosperous country had become poor and debilitated. According to a study by Dr. Muna Al-Jubury of Baghdad University, the damage assessment was as follows:

### **Gulf War I**

- A. Bombing destroyed power generation stations, oil refineries and oil storage depots, water installations, bridges and industrial facilities whose toxic chemicals contaminated water supply in some areas. Water supply system was completely destroyed during the first Gulf War. After the war, local engineers rehabilitated some of water installations to 50 to 60 % of pre-war status, however, that number decreased as spare parts did not become available.
- B. Sanitation facilities were destroyed or damaged, resulting into raw sewage backup and flooding of pumping stations. Other systems that were not directly affected by bombing suffered and degenerated from lack of electricity. The raw sewage endangered local communities and schools and contributed to diseases.
- C. The destruction of fertilizer production facilities along with lack of seeds, pesticides, spare parts for agriculture machinery and absence of electrical power have turned Iraqi agriculture into shambles.
- D. Environmental degradation has surfaced within days of bombing in Iraq. However, the long term remedial efforts to combat pollution in the country was hampered due to the bombing:
  1. Stopped construction of industrial pollution control facilities--waste water treatment installations
  2. People started using crude oil for energy purposes instead of paraffin and gas oil
  3. As mentioned above, toxic contaminated water supplies and neighborhoods. Lack of water created health crisis for local hospitals and destruction of industrial production facilities brought healthcare facilities, water system, and sanitation systems to a halt due to lack of spare parts. The interdependence of various sectors of the economy and livelihood brought Iraqi society to its terrible conditions.

- E. Radiation, depleted uranium, and effects: on the eve of January 16, 1991, Iraqi civilian nuclear facility in Tuwaitha was bombed. If they were hit directly, a colossal disaster would have occurred. Meanwhile, the usage of depleted uranium munitions--armor-piercing projectiles from tanks, armored personnel carriers, A-10 warthog, helicopters brought tremendous disaster to Iraq, especially southern Iraq.
- F. According to the New York Times article of January 21, 1993 by Eric Margolis, more than 50,000 children have lost their lives as either direct result of depleted uranium dust or indirect result--radiation.

### **Sanctions and its effects:**

1. 1.7 million Iraqis lost their lives due to the UN-US imposed sanctions according to UNICEF report 1999. Another UNICEF report (1996) stated that 4,500 children were dying every month due to sanctions imposed.
2. According to WHO (1996), there has been a 6 fold increase in infant mortality for children under five
3. According to UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) survey in 1995, 12% of children in Baghdad surveyed were wasted, 28% stunted, and 29% underweight
4. According to WHO between 1989-1990, 96% of the population had access to clean drinking water; however, by 1994 that number had decreased to 45%
5. Under the oil for food program, Iraq was allowed to sell \$5.2 billion worth oil every six months. 53% went to humanitarian aid, the remaining 47% would be going to UN Special Commission and UN Compensation Commission
6. 70% of seeds and spare parts for Iraqi agriculture were imported, with the sanctions imposed no seeds, pesticides, and spare parts were allowed to enter Iraq<sup>4</sup>

Thus, the Paradigm of Forced Socioeconomic Underdevelopment accomplished what it intended to achieve namely underdevelopment. The consequences of UN-US imposed sanctions could be summarized by the following quotes from Jean-Yves Troy (Premiere Urgence) 01/26/2001:

"In the mid-1980s, Iraq was approaching the standards of a developed country: it had free, effective health care that was accessible to everyone and a social welfare system for the most vulnerable. There was an efficient telecommunications network, 24 power stations and a water treatment and distribution system, all of which benefited the population as a whole."

It continues:

"The picture today is quite different. The infrastructure is in an advanced state of dilapidation. The social sector has disappeared. The power supply is

---

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.angelfire.com/rant/truthaboutpalestine/iraqisanctions.html> Compiled by Amnesty International at George Mason University

unpredictable. Water treatment plants and the distribution network no longer work properly."

### **Gulf War II:**

It is not necessary to discuss this final phase of forced socioeconomic underdevelopment imposed on Iraq because by now it should be obvious:

1. Bombing destroyed whatever was left of Iraq's infrastructure
2. Destroyed Iraq's historical heritage--books written 1200 years ago went into smoke
3. Looting destroyed what was spared by the bombs and rockets

Consequently Iraqis are in much worse situation today, than they were after the first Gulf War. That is,

1. Iraqis consume much less than they did before the Gulf War II
2. Their calorie intake is far less
3. Life expectancy is lower before this war
4. Infant mortality rate is higher than before the Gulf War II
5. The effects of uranium weapons worsened since the US has used a lot more uranium weapons this time than the first Gulf War

### **Revising Development as a Phenomenon**

Scholars in the field define development slightly different; however, most conceptualizations are not devoid of two things, industrialization and economic growth. As a result of such narrow view of development, a new perspective of sustainable development emerged. Before I proceed, it is in order to present some definitions of sustainable development:

"Sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." (United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development.)

"Sustainability is the [emerging] doctrine that economic growth and development must take place, and be maintained over time, within the limits set by ecology in the broadest sense - by the interrelations of human beings and their works, the biosphere and the physical and chemical laws that govern it . . . . It follows that environmental protection and economic development are complementary rather than antagonistic processes." (William D. Ruckelshaus, "Toward a Sustainable World," Scientific American, September 1989.)

"The word sustainable has roots in the Latin *subtenir*, meaning 'to hold up' or 'to support from below.' A community must be supported from below - by its inhabitants, present and future. Certain places, through the peculiar combination of physical, cultural, and, perhaps, spiritual characteristics, inspire people to care for their community. These are the places where sustainability has the best chance

of taking hold." (Muscoe Martin, "A Sustainable Community Profile," from Places, Winter 1995.)

However, neither development as conventionally known nor sustainable development has a place in the current global disaster of the new Paradigm of Forced Socioeconomic Underdevelopment. Therefore, in light of the New Paradigm of Forced Socioeconomic Underdevelopment, it is time to redefine development as a phenomenon.

Development used to be viewed as a progress against the benchmark of the European advancement subsequent to the industrial revolution. During the British World Empire, the British needed to manage their empire by investing in education as well as some industry in some of the main regional centers. This phenomenon is not unique to the British; in fact, the Spanish, the Portuguese and the French also invested in each main urban metropolis in their respective colonial holdings. Therefore, local indigenous populations were introduced to the modern miracle. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the former colonial powers were the prime examples for the underdeveloped countries to emulate.

During the Cold War, development would be achieved if any underdeveloped nation followed either of the poles in the bipolar world hegemony. Hence, when an underdeveloped nation that followed either the US or the USSR, it would be relatively developed in terms of industrialization, education, healthcare etc.

Today, however, it is an entirely different world, where not only development but rather existence of peoples is held hostage by the demands of the United States of America. Tragically, it is not development that is affected by the Paradigm of Forced Socioeconomic Underdevelopment, but rather survival with meager capability of subsistence. Rejection of the US's demands, especially, if the country is a Muslim nation, results into the nightmare of the new paradigm.

Therefore, it is my firm opinion that it would be prudent to redefine development in terms of survival, after all the function of the New Paradigm of Forced Socioeconomic Underdevelopment is not only to bring about underdevelopment rather also threatens nations' survival.

Therefore, I define development in light of the current global anarchy as follows:

Development is the totality of one's existence wherein survival is not contingent upon submitting to the imperatives of US's global hegemony.

## **Concluding Remarks**

Though the United States might be successful in the short-run, it will fail in the long run. The new *paradigm of forced socioeconomic underdevelopment* will only serve as a bridge to the next era of global reorganization. The post-Soviet era facilitated this opportunity to the United States to exercise its hegemony without restraints. However, with the Chinese on the horizon of becoming potential military competitor to the United States along with regional nuclear powers will debilitate and restrain the United States in the foreseeable future. Most importantly, the alienation of Muslims has materialized through the crimes of the United States in Afghanistan and Iraq among other places.

The anger and hatred of the young and old of the Muslim world would continue to boil until the US stops tell the world how to live.

Moreover, the hegemonic practices of this new paradigm confirm that the various claims under different pretexts--civilization mission, modernization etc.-- from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century to the present tends to be nothing more than a collection of deceptions geared to submit the less developed-non-European people. As time passes what once used to be politically popular or correct tends to become unpopular. Hence, to avoid the unpopularity inherent in such blatant actions, the US covers its actions by the legitimizing mechanism of the United Nations under the pretexts of human and women rights, democracy and International Law. Finally, no world power remained dominant forever. No one was expecting the Soviet Union and its block to disappear after being defeated by a small Third World country, Afghanistan. Similarly, the United States' world hegemony will not remain forever; in fact this paradigm is serving, as a bridge to the next global reorganization, in which other dissimilar actors would join forces to contain US's global hegemony. These actors could be either Muslims, not necessarily nation-states, or a coalition of Muslims and disenchanted non-Muslims fed up with the crimes inherent in the *Paradigm of Forced Socioeconomic Underdevelopment*. No matter what form the reaction takes globally, it is inevitable to be the next phase of global reorganization wherein better attempts would be made to adhere to justice for humanity.

## Sources:

1. Fredric Jameson. Coeditor. *The Culture of Globalization*. Duke University Press, Durham & London 1998.
2. Hodgson, Marshall 1974: *The Venture of Islam, Vol. III*. Chicago: the University of Chicago Press.
3. Holton, Robert J. 1998: *Globalization and the Nation-State*. New York: St. Martin's press.
4. Jameson, Fredric and Miyoshi, Masao edit. 1998: *The Culture of Globalization*. Durham & London: Duke University Press.
5. Spybey, Tony 1992: *Social Change, Development & Dependency*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
6. Associated Press reporter on April 07, 2003
7. <http://www.angelfire.com/rant/truthaboutpalestine/iraqisanctions.html> Compiled by Amnesty International at George Mason University
8. *The Guardian*, January 03, 2001, Hans Von Sponeck's open letter
9. UNICEF (1996; 1999) Reports on Iraq
10. Bob Aldridge: (May/03/2003) UNDERSTANDING THE “WAR ON TERRORISM”: “PAX AMERICANA” AND PREEMPTIVE FORCE, PLRC
11. Mohamed Ali and Iqbal Shah: *British Medical Journal Lancet* 2000; 355: 1851–57  
Ambassador Celso Amorim of Brazil: UN Assessment Panel Report document S/1999/356, 15, para 43
12. World Health Organization: report of March 1996
13. Integrated Regional Information Network, IRIN, UN OCHA
14. *Los Angeles Times*, January 04, 2001
15. Mark Hosenball: *Newsweek*, June 09, 2003
16. Michael Buchanan of the BBC: February 13, 2003
17. Miraki: *Liberated from Life*, April 03, 2003
18. Miraki: *Silent Genocide from America*
19. Peter Beaumont, Antony Barnett and Gaby Hinsliff, *The Observer*, June 15, 2003
20. Reuters report March 29, 2000
21. UN Report, March 1999

**All Rights Reserved, 2003.**