

The 'Innocent Civilian'

The term 'innocent civilians' only has meaning as a propaganda term. At least since World War II, civilians (again) became a major, if not the prime target of military operations. This usually takes the form of massacres, destruction of infrastructure, starvation and poisoning, and also assassinations and disappearances, raids and mass imprisonment. All these are more part of psychological warfare than actual combat operations. Population is targeted with the dual goal of submission and control.

The icon of an 'innocent civilian' are the children. They are, together with the sick and elderly, the main victims and targets of warfare, especially the high-tech variety. This is because there is no better way to punish a people than by killing off or taking away their children. For example, hundred thousands of Iraqi children have already been exterminated during the more than 14 years of aggression, blockade and embargo.

The whole strategy is about terrorizing people into submission. It is known that the bombing of the cities in WW-II actually increased the determination and resolve of the targeted population. But the moral and spiritual devastation for the defeated country and population is so much more intense when they are put under the domination of those who destroyed their lives and murdered their loved ones just for being member of the enemy society. It is about breaking people so that they cannot recover and even begin to collaborate, justify or even admire their oppressors and torturers.

Collective punishment and quasi-random killing operations are broadly used in destabilization and disintegration campaigns. Realizing that they cannot convince with ideas and concepts, the US counter-insurgency measures are designed to subdue through death and destruction, impoverishment and creating and leveraging dependencies. The logic is simple and effective: the ability and will to inflict damage and spread pain upon the victims will finally bring down people and make them accept defeat to end the war being waged against them. Successful resistance operations will always be answered by more devastation and collective punishment. Solidarity among the targeted population is being eroded by increasing the level of fear and pain so that people just can't resist the pressure no more and give in. Meanwhile, the aggressor societies continue their lives largely undisturbed and even see themselves as decent and kind people.