

LIBERAL-DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF RUSSIA

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IRAQ - THE SORE OF THE PLANET

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*Iraq - the Sore of the Planet:
Things Corporate Media Won't Tell You!*

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MY IMPRESSIONS OF IRAQ AS BASED ON MANY TRIPS TO THAT COUNTRY

I. BAGHDAD CHOSE ME

(Instead of an introduction)

"Why do they call you a friend of Iraq and why did you choose Iraq?" a young journalist from "Washington Post" asked me once.

"It wasn't me who did the choosing. Baghdad chose me," - I answered her. They often ask me this question, and the media often call me a friend of Iraq. So I am willing to tell everybody how it all began, so that you, my reader, could realize that both I and the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR) despite criticisms and attacks from our opponents carry out the struggle to support Iraq not only in the interests of the Iraqi people, but in the first place for the interests of my Motherland and my people.

Until the day the United States began planning its operation "Desert Storm" which virtually the whole world supported, I had never been to Iraq. A country which turned out to be as beautiful as a fairytale. The cradle of human civilization, a country so proud of its complicated history many centuries old, a history of eternal resistance, of the riot of the spirit, which has created a surprisingly original unique culture. I did not then know the courageous, staunch, generous and talented Iraqi people. Neither was I aware at the time what a wise and courageous politician and thinker the leader of that country - Saddam Hussein - was.

Then, on a cold wintry autumn day when the media spoke and wrote about the international support of the U.S plan, only the LDPR, the only one among all the parties spoke in support of much-suffering Iraq. None other but LDPR activists were standing vigil near the U.S Embassy in the rain.

Of course, Russian press and television highlighted the event. I was invited to the Iraqi Embassy, where I heard the words of appreciation for the support. Then I got an invitation to visit Iraq. It was in November of 1992. I took a flight to the country

that lived in the conditions of total isolation, the severe blockade, the country no one seemed to recognize.

There were no flights there then, so for 16 hours I drove across the lifeless desert to get to the magically beautiful Baghdad, also called "the city of wonders" to the city, which then lacked medicines and food, but where young people continued to study, and artisans worked, and where I spent 4 hours speaking with Saddam Hussein in his study in the Presidential Palace, speaking in a friendly way about very complicated political, economic and social problems.

The very first meeting showed that sitting before me was a man of noble position, with clear and definite care for the interests of both his own people, and the future of the whole planet Earth. I regularly visited Iraq several times a year leading parliamentary delegations, groups of Russian businessmen and journalists, having meetings with Saddam Hussein that lasted for several hours, meeting with high-level officials, government ministers, members of government, cultural workers, with ordinary people, and the youth, which strengthened me in the conviction that the Iraqi President was the man of the humanitarian wave of the new generation of leaders, a well-educated leader, and that his country had wide prospects in the future.

Speaking with Saddam Hussein one feels confidence, undisturbed faith in the strength of the Iraqi people. Saddam Hussein always offers reasonable and convincing political proposals. His words are precise and sincere. The objectivity of his assessment, perspicuity, high moral qualities are the features that undoubtedly show him as a person of talent, brilliant leader and a rare humanitarian.

I saw with my own eyes the results of the barbaric American crimes against ordinary helpless people, women, and children. How many of them died suffering unbearable pain, burning alive, like people in the shelter Amiriyah!

I saw the suffering of people in hospitals, and to see the sufferings of children in the Saddam Children's Hospital was unbearable.

The LDPR not only became the one political party in Russia which was the first to respond to the tragedy of the Iraqi people and draw the attention of the world public to this sore of the planet, but which was also the first to begin interacting with Iraq.

We are patriots, and we realize that cooperation with Iraq in the economic, industrial, trade and medical areas is necessary and mutually beneficial. Flying to Iraq together with parliamentary delegations we bring to Iraqis humanitarian aid and medicines. And the fact that not only the Iraqi government but also ordinary Iraqi people, knowing that we support them, treat us like sincere friends pleases me.

I was pleased to learn that three babies, who had been born on the eve of my flight to Iraq in 1995, were given my name - they are Vladimirs now. It was no less pleasant to hear Saadi Mawhdi Saleh, chairman of the National Council who visited Russia in January 1996, say "Mr.Zhirinovskiy is Iraq's friend and he is always welcome in our country."

I am pleased to hear these words because standing behind them is understanding of the necessity of the mutually beneficial cooperation between our countries. It is only natural that when they quite often ask me "Why, for what reason do you, Mr.Zhirinovskiy need this struggle, for which you are so fiercely criticized and attacked by your opponents?" - I often answer:"All this is done for Russia's sake!»

Russia has always had mutually advantageous relations with Iraq. and they should be maintained and developed. Other political parties begin to realize that, too. Each reasonable person, all people who value justice, and all the countries cherishing liberty should realize that. We should all realize that the Republic of Iraq deserves respect and all-round support in its struggle against the American octopus, which has entangled that country in its mesh of conspiracies.

It is our task to prevent a great aggression, and I would like to acquaint you, my dear reader, with the history, culture, arts and religion of this surprisingly interesting and beautiful country which today faces many vital and multi-faceted problems. To tell you about the life of its President, whose bright biography has

quite a few romantic and tragic pages. I want you to learn and probably to give your heart and support to the courageous Iraqi people, which are now waging a no-compromise fight against the brazen foisting of a strange world outlook and way of life, for its liberty and uniqueness. And may the good win in the global fight of the good vs. the evil! Let us protect Iraq for the sake of our own interests!

2. SADDAM HUSSEIN - DETAILS OF BIOGRAPHY

The Court of human History sees many of those called for, but few of those who are elected. One-hour "Caliphs" do not stay in it for long, but the people whose deeds illuminated the dark political skies like bright stars stay in it for centuries. Saddam Hussein - the current Iraqi president is among those, and his great popularity, not only in the Arab countries but all over the world, is an evidence of that.

Saddam Hussein is called "the man of peace". The policies he pursues straightforward, sincere, clear-cut and just, is oriented towards preservation of peace, as nothing but peace leads to the good. To prosperity and progress. Saddam Hussein, whose sense of patriotism came to him with his mother's milk, the man who becoming a warrior for the greatness of the Arab nation looks at purely Arab problems. The problems of the nations of the third world and important international problems. Politicians from different countries think highly of him, recognizing him as a talented Arab leader, a brilliant political thinker, author of economic theories, the man who has achieved much for his people, leading Iraq out of backwardness into civilization.

Everybody who has met with Saddam Hussein find him an unusually attractive and magnetic personality. His courage, restraint, pride for his people, lofty principles, wisdom and political and military foresight, his confidence in the ability of the Iraqi people to overcome the impossible, his ardent desire and yearning to establish the rule of justice in his region and all over the world - all this cannot fail to provoke respect for the man.

I, too, can confirm this. I have come to know Saddam quite closely over the past years. I think the reader would find it interesting to learn how this phenomenal personality took shape, growing and becoming sturdier, how individual traits of his character were formed, which today, when a terrible aggression threatening Iraq attract to him liberally-minded honest people from all over the world. So I would like to begin my story with a description of the life of the courageous Iraqi leader.

2.1. Childhood. A Boy from the Village of Al Auja.

On the banks of the Tigris, a little to the south of the ancient city of Tikrit, in a small village of Al Auja, where roads in winter turn into mud, and its reticent hard-working residents are used to getting up in the dark, before the sunrise to not be spoken about as lazy-bones, on April 28, 1937 a boy was born in a poor peasant family.

His father had died four months before, so the boy got his name from his uncle, who called him Saddam, which in Arabic means "the one who strikes". The name proved to be prophetic, as from his early childhood Saddam had to face so many circumstances, hardships and obstacles, that to overcome them it really took someone to make an attack, and to strike.

In line with local custom, the boy's uncle, his father's brother married his widowed mother. The child was raised by his mother's brother, an army officer Heiralla Talfah al Mussalat, who devoted his life to the struggle against the British influence in Iraq and the national revival of the Arab nation. The influence of his uncle on the upbringing of the boy and formation of his views was tremendous. And as Saddam Hussein recollects, from early childhood on he felt that "a special responsibility was vested with him."

At the age of 9 he firmly decided he would go to the city to enroll in school, even though all his peasant relatives wanted him to stay a peasant, too. Once at a midnight, when everybody in the house was asleep, Saddam got out of it and walked for nearly three hours across the dark and empty desert with nothing but a walking stick in hand listening to howling jackals, led by only one desire - to study. He found himself in the old town of Tikrit, where his uncle lived. Saddam's daring, firmness and courage overwhelmed the army officer. Having evaluated his deed as a feat worthy of a grown man, he presented the boy with a revolver, and took him to a primary school, paying for his study.

Soon the clever boy began to excel at school. He loved math, which taught him to think and look for answers; he was fond of history with its heroic past and its outstanding figures, he used to read a lot and spent much time at the gym. The teachers

singled out Saddam's lively mind and the spirit of the leader, his ability to rule boys his age. On weekends Saddam walked to his native village, to help in the field.

2.2. Green Years. The Son of the Working People.

In 1955 Heiralla, his beloved uncle who replaced his father, was appointed Director of State technical school in Baghdad. Eighteen year old Saddam also moved to Baghdad, joining the 2nd form of the Al Qarah college and going to live in hostel. He joined the Party of the Arab Socialist Revival, whose objectives seemed to represent ideas of moral principles of the social development, the genuine spirit of his people, their yearning for social justice, independence and the possibility of transformation of the backward Arab society still suffering under the yoke of British influence.

The Arab Socialist Revival Party was very popular with students, its factions were being formed everywhere. That was the time when Saddam Hussein began his political activities. The events of 1956 became an impetus for him, the days of the tripartite aggression staged by France, Great Britain and Israel against Egypt. They shook Iraq. All institutes, colleges and schools took part in riots and strikes.

In the heart of the Suez crisis Saddam Hussein was head over heels in politics. Leading the student movement against the corrupt regime of the King and the ordinary schoolboy became a public leader, a politician with his own clear-cut views, experienced in underground political activities.

On July 14, 1958 revolution took place in Iraq. It was supported by the nation/ But within months it became clear that Abdul Kareem Kassim has left the revolutionary principles behind and begins harassing the Arab Socialist Revival party members. Accused of a killing of a government official, Saddam Hussein was put behind bars. There is no evidence and six months later he is freed. The country is swept by a wave of terror. Murder, torture, death penalties without trials and arrests. The main task now was to destroy the Party of the National revival.

The leadership of Ba'ath prepares a group whose task is to remove Abdul Kareem Kassim. Saddam Hussein, who is about to graduate from his school, a romantic, ready to give his life for his nation, absolutely loyal to his party, a rarely brave man and a sharpshooter, takes his duty before his native country as a high distinction.

On October 7, 1959 a group of young members of the Ba'ath on one of the central streets of Baghdad almost point blank shot at the car of Kareem Kassim, who thanks to his bodyguards as if by magic, escaped death lying on the floor of the car being only wounded. The driver of his car was killed. Saddam Hussein and two of his friends were wounded and one of them died in a hospital. The wounded Saddam Hussein was turned away from the hospital, so he had to extract the bullet from his leg using a knife without any anaesthetic at home.

Kassim who was treated in a hospital, signed a decree on the ban of the Ba'ath. Mass arrests followed.

Escaping them Saddam crossed the desert in the clothes of a Bedouin, skillfully evading the endless patrol stations and catches. Escaping the chase he once threw himself into the cold waters of the Tigris and crossed the river (he was not known at school as a fine swimmer for nothing). Saddam Hussein found himself in Syria.

His young life ended, he was now a seasoned man. Then followed his years of study, political struggle and life far from his native country.

2.3. Living Abroad. Syria, Egypt.

Getting to Syria, not without trouble, Saddam Hussein meets with members of the opposition who had found shelter there. People admire the courageous schoolboy and his friends. Spending two weeks at a hospital, Saddam moves to Damascus, where on the radio he hears an order about his arrest on charges of conspiracy against the Republic. Saddam and four of his friends were given the death penalty. The Iraqi radio had announced that he would be shot without trial.

There was no returning to Iraq now, and the young energetic man joins active life in Syria. After three months in Damascus, Saddam moves to Cairo, where he leads all the activities of the Iraqi Party of the Arab Socialist Revival members in Egypt. There he found himself thanks to Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser. Later, when he got acquainted with Nasser's ideas, Saddam referred to the man as his teacher. Saddam and other party members, young people as himself and his friends now, lived as one big family in Egypt. For reasons of economy the friends prepared their food to save their allowances paid to political émigrés. They all continue to study.

Making his technical grade Saddam, who was 23 then, begins studying at the law department of the Cairo University. He wants to become a lawyer but not for the sake of earning money – he wants to defend the rights of the entire Arab nation, fighting for just laws. In three and a half years of his life in Egypt Saddam criss-crossed the entire country – from Alexandria to Luxor, studying old architectural monuments, making acquaintances with researchers, historians and statesmen. They say that Saddam Hussein can make even the silent Cheops Pyramid speak.

While in Egypt, Saddam managed to consolidate his party colleagues into a strong organization. Five years later, in February 1963 after Ba'ath took power Saddam Hussein returned to Baghdad with a group of political émigrés.

2.4. Coming Back Home

Upon his return, Saddam Hussein who was then a well-known party leader engaged in solving issues of strengthening the state in his new capacity as member of the Central Peasant Bureau and the Chief of Ba'ath's Orderly Service.

The year when he returned to Iraq, his personal life also changed. When in Syria he made his acquaintance with his cousin, the daughter of his uncle who had raised him. Even though life in Cairo was far from being quiet, the two loving hearts decided to come as one in that beautiful city. The bride and the bridegroom knew each other since childhood, and they sincerely loved each other. The guests, who gathered to congratulate them

were young and hopeful, they never stopped speaking about Iraq's future, the future happy life of the people. Everybody remembered the words spoken at the marriage celebration: "Saddam has an enchanting shy bride, but you cannot defend your Motherland shyly."

They married in the spring of 1963 soon after the bridegroom returned to Iraq. A year later son Udei was born, the second son – Kusai was born in 1966 and then their three daughters, Rahjd, Rana and Hala.

He was responsible and critical in the work he did. He saw the main mistakes in the party leaders who lacked truly friendly attitudes towards others. They could never satisfy their yearning for power. Reactionaries conspired against the revolution, and it did not stand, despite the unusual energy of the people and its wish to create new life.

Party leadership, as Hussein wrote later, even quite energetic lacked wisdom and strong revolutionary mind to win the final victory. They also lacked experience, while the temptation to be in power and empty talk together with lack of common spirit played its role. Power became the cause of their discontent. Differences in the party leadership led to open armed clashes. A new wave of arrests followed, when more than 18,000 people were thrown behind bars. The party crisis in November of 1963 became a turning point in the mind of Saddam Hussein. He felt his heavy responsibility for the lives of his friends, the whole of Iraq, and the entire Arab nation. Even though he was not in the leadership of the party then, and he had no authority to withstand dissent, Saddam took up the leadership, issuing a statement about his separation from the greater part of the previous leadership whom he blames for the fall of the revolution, becoming a member of Temporary national leadership.

Saddam Hussein finally strengthens his position in the party, occupying several leading posts, including work on liaison with the military outside Baghdad. He creates the bureau of retired officers. He begins to work out plans of his most daring dream – organization of a coup. He has two versions of the coup. The first one planned shooting down the government airplane,

and the second had it that the leadership be liquidated right at the Presidential Palace. The pilot let him down, so the first plan was replaced. The attack on the Palace was slated for September 5,1964. He thought that the clock of history began to count new time, but due to another information leak, the plan failed. A wave of arrests swept through Iraqi cities.

Saddam was also thrown in jail. A traitor informed the authorities about his secret apartment. In an attempt to escape capture, he shot back until he ran out of bullets. So he landed in Military jail No.1 for two years.

The jail was nothing short of a slaughterhouse with its terrible cries, suffering and torture. Some were hanged on to the ceiling, others were chained to the window. They used to tie him up leaving him without sleep for three days and nights. But the torture fortified his spirit, and he became even stronger and more resolute, supporting people who could not stand torture any longer, and working out a program of studies for himself. While in jail he completed two years worth of credits at the university department of law, made a collection of the works of the world's best writers, enjoyed reading classical Marxists' works, political books, and novels. Residents of Baghdad used to bring books to people in jail. At the break of dawn people queued by the gate of the jail – students, doctors, well-known actors and writers, the servicemen. That was a sort of solidarity act to support political convicts.

Saddam observed a set of rules he had worked out for himself, he did not smoke, never played the cards as many in jail did, took care of his looks and studied a lot. He continued to lead the party activities from his cell, writing letters to his wife, who would hide his letters in the diapers of their newly born son Udei.

A special military court's verdict spelled the death penalty for Saddam, but friends helped him escape from jail together with a group of political convicts. The plan of their daring escape was then included in all jail encyclopedias. A special commission was even set up to study the details of their escape, which concluded that Hussein was a gifted hypnotist and was under protection of Prophet Muhammad. After their escape July 23,1966 Saddam

Hussein and 63 military officers were free. Work on re-organization of the party is renewed.

Getting back to Iraq Saddam Hussein with other party members set their goals orienting themselves at a revolution. Iraqi history was drowned in seas of blood, so this time it was decided to avoid victims. But on the eve of their action they received an ultimatum from the chief of intelligence service, who had been informed about every little detail of the planned attack on the Presidential Palace. In the ultimatum the man offered his help in exchange of the portfolio of Prime Minister. The party was in a most difficult position – to mar itself by having to do with those in power, or to see bloodshed and killings in Baghdad again. The last word was Saddam Hussein's, and he decided to outplay the chief of intelligence, neutralizing a tank battalion, and decoying presidential guards in an ambush in the park, cutting them away from the Palace.

Saddam Hussein was one of the first people to get into the courtyard in front of the Palace in a tank. The driver shot a round of charges at the windows, and the President surrendered to the winner. So on July 17, 1968 the gate was slammed shut on a whole historical epoch. But it was still necessary to write the first page of the new chapter of bloodless revolution, ridding it from career people sticking to it, remove corrupt people and traitors from the government. But at this moment Saddam Hussein congratulated Iraqis with a historical victory, speaking on television. His role in the post-revolutionary period is hard to overestimate. A new stage of his political life began. A coup d'état about which members of Ba'ath could only dream and which had been prepared for so long, happened.

2.5. A Road to Victory. Growth of the Republic

For 11 years following the July coup Saddam Hussein was Vice-President, the closest aide of President Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr.

From 1968 to 1979 Iraq pursued a consistent policy of national revival, striking agreements on economic and technical assistance with the USSR and a number of Socialist countries.

Social reforms were carried out, property of foreign companies was nationalized, so by the end of 1976 the country owned all of its oil riches.

On July 16, 1979 Ahmed al-Bakr leaves his post, and Saddam Hussein becomes both President, Prime Minister, and Chairman of the Council of Revolutionary command. His activities during those years were unusually wide-ranged and large-scaled, including granting autonomy to Kurds, creation of the National Front, nationalization of Iraq's oil, the plan of reactive development which changed Iraqi economy, a sharp rise of industrial output, a boost of agriculture and services sector, devising and implementation of reforms in the cultural and educational areas. There were also long exhausting 8 years of the war with Iran, the fight against American aggression with its allies, and restoration of the economy destroyed by the aggressor.

2.6. In the Foreground Again

Thousands upon thousand of pages are written about the activities of Saddam Hussein, his titanic work for the good of the Iraqi people and the Arab nation, about reforms carried out in that country in the economic, agrarian, social and other areas. So I will not dwell on the issues and problems other writers dwell on. But I cannot pass by the present-day activities of the leadership of that country when the most severe blockade and the barbaric aggression and monstrous sanctions have left such an imprint on the life of millions of Iraqis. I simply have no right to pass by that.

As a mockery, at the Presidential hotel Al Rasheed all the people are met by a mosaic panneau on the floor, showing the ugly threatening smile of President Bush, so stepping on him every one asks the same question. Who entitled America to be the judge of other nations? Who gave it the right to prevent airliners from flying over Iraq? Who entitled it to drop bombs on the peaceful Iraqis, to attempt dismembering the country, to liquidate ethnic groups living there, attempting to ignite interethnic conflicts acting in line with jungle laws, threatening the peace-loving people of Iraq, wishing to make it return to pre-industrial period as a result of the blockades?

But Iraq is lucky to have a much talented insightful leader, a politician of great wisdom. Remember August 1990 - January 1991 when at the outset of the military conflict with the USA Saddam Hussein so skillfully evaded confrontation, attempting to solve the most acute problem by peaceful means, extinguishing the fire. That was a period of active negotiations with foreign states. But the White House did not wish to support peaceful initiatives of Iraqi President, pounding out military hysteria brining it to its zenith. And the noble president and a courageous man had to face the only solution: together with his people to whom he is loyal as a loving son to stand up for his Motherland.

For 43 days Iraq, drawn into the conflict with America withstood aggression of thirty states, standing against 28 armies equipped with the most advanced weapons. Only 43 days, but after them 84 per cent of Iraqi enterprises were ruined and a mere 2 per cent of the power system was operative. Heroic effort of the people helped restore what could be restored within just three years. I saw it all with my own eyes. Moreover, even in the conditions of the most severe blockade the Iraqi government takes care of preservation of its ancient monuments, restoring masterpieces of architecture of Babylon and Mesopotamia. So that's what all those Bakers, Clintons and Bushes dreamed about when they clenched their fists out of impossibility to win, dreaming about the industrial death of Iraq.

Saddam Hussein acted with wisdom and patience also in winter of 1998 when a new series of U.S. provocations was launched, when the torch of the Third World War had been ignited, and which Saddam Hussein knocked out, preventing the fire from spreading all over the world. Certainly, diplomatic assistance of Russia, France and China was given, but it would have achieved nothing had the Iraqi President failed to show staunchness, courage and heroism. "Desert Storm" with its thunder had not yet roared and Saddam Hussein's profile was as high as it had never been. Still the situation around Iraq remains dangerous.

Under the pretext of counterpoising to Iraqi air defense, American warplanes are constantly soaring in the sky next to Iraq

and even over its territory. Many times they have violated its air space. As in February 16, 2001 they shoot their missiles and drop bombs on a regular basis. From December 1998 to March 2001 about 1,400 civilians were killed in Iraq. Foreign airlines including Aeroflot cannot risk making flights to Baghdad. The UN resolution on Iraq does not contain a total ban on passenger flights to Baghdad, but the ban is in place due to the USA stance in regard of Iraq.

Sanctions against it do a lot of harm to all aspects of life in the country. Industry and agriculture operate at 20 per cent of capacity and at the level of 30 per cent of the pre-war period. According to assessments of UN humanitarian organizations Iraqi health care system and its system of education may fall apart.

Under pressure from the USA the UN dispatched a mission of weapons experts to control the alleged nuclear weapons programs of Iraq, but in reality that was a CIA mission, so its members were not admitted to secret facilities and some were even departed from the country.

Protecting its interests Baghdad many times over pointed out that the special commission crosses the boundaries of its mandate that its inspectors are spying for the USA and Great Britain. They tried to penetrate on the territory of the barracks of the National Guard and the Presidential Palace. Iraq does not refuse to cooperate with the commission, which represented all states including Russia, but justly demanded that Americans, who were engaged in espionage, be excluded from it.

Because the Security Council ignored the natural demands of the Iraqi government, Baghdad took the necessary steps to protect its safety and sovereignty. The USA and their allies took that as a new pretext for military action against Iraq. A considerable military group is deployed in the Persian Gulf, which allows the Pentagon to carry out a new large-scale military operation against Iraq. 4 aircraft carrier groups with hundreds of modern warplanes equipped with "Tomahawk" cruise missiles and with several dozens of thousands of U.S. marines were sent to the Persian Gulf. Supported by this strength the USA carries out its regular military actions against Iraq.

The peace-loving Iraq is regularly attacked by the American airforce, and these attacks are made exactly at the most complicated moments of domestic political situation in the USA, aiming at not only effecting control over oil prices in the Persian Gulf, but they also try to divert the American public from solving their real problems.

Demonstration of force with the use of high-precision weapons of the new generation against Iraqi people became a permanent way of affirming their role in the world community for the USA and Great Britain. Such shameful gangster policies are not to be allowed in the present-day world. Such actions should be viewed as absolutely illegal from the point of view of international law.

American pretexts for bombing Iraq are absolutely hypocritical. Should Iraq indeed have huge warehouses with chemical and bacteriological weapons, their liquidation would lead to the death of dozens of millions of people and contamination of vast territories, and there are bacteriological weapons there, no one can be saved at all. Dozens of millions of people would die within twenty-four hours. However Americans bomb these mythical "warehouses", but there is no contamination, no chemical or radiation emissions in the atmosphere. But if there are no warehouses with chemical and bacteriological weapons, then the strikes are made at peaceful facilities on the Iraqi territory. There is no other term for such ignominious strategy except political banditry.

Looking for pretext to bomb Iraq can be accounted for only by the hatred against the leader of an independent state who pursues an independent foreign policy, and in his domestic policies wishes to strengthen the economy rather than to pump out from the country to please transnational corporations, most of whose headquarters are based in the USA.

Aggression is an indicator of the moral bankruptcy of the USA and their allies. Whether they want it or not, but Saddam Hussein's popularity the world over will continue to grow. Saddam Hussein's political activities, his titanic efforts when his country is enmeshed in blockade as if grabbed by the tentacles of

the huge octopus, when new conspiracies against it are made, when even the blind can realize that their leader is cherished by Iraqi people, and that Republic of Iraq deserves to be respected and given all-round assistance by honest to people of the world, of the countries that value freedom and justice.

3. IRAQ - THE CRADLE OF CIVILISATION (History and Geography)

I have given you some information about the biography of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, and I am confident that this wise and honest political leader has attracted your attention by his courage, lofty principles and patriotism. Now I would like to tell you all, the readers of this book, about the country with its ages of exciting history.

The republic of Iraq is a state in South West Asia. Its territory is more than 400 thousand square kilometers, located in-between the Tigris and the Euphrates, flowing into the Shatt El-Arab, which in turn flows into the Persian Gulf.

To the north Iraq borders on Turkey, its western neighbors are Syria and Jordan. In the south it borders on Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, and in the south-east it is washed by the waters of the Persian Gulf at the seashore line about 50 kilometers long.

Iraq's population is about 20 million people, with Arabs some 75 per cent, Kurds are more than 20 per cent, and then there are Turkmenians, Assyrians, Persians, Armenians and other ethnic groups.

The ancient capital city of Baghdad is surprisingly beautiful. There are over 3 million people in this magically beautiful center of civilization and culture.

About 96 per cent of the population are Muslims, with Shiites making up 62 per cent of that and Sunnites - 34 per cent. The official languages in Iraq are Arabic and Kurdish.

Its monetary unit is dinar. Basic exports include oil, dates, cotton, serum, and leather. As for imports, Iraq buys machines and equipment and foodstuffs.

Iraq is a member of the League of Arab States, the Islamic Conference, and the Arab Council for Cooperation.

Geographically Iraq is very diverse. There are mountain crests and valleys, which occupy the greater part of its territory, low lands and hills on whose tops there are prickly bushes, and the banks of lakes which are not rare in Iraq, there are willows, poplars and fig palms, and the beauties like flamingoes and

herons. In spring there are floods in Iraq, whereas it is hot and dry in summer. In the south, for example in the city of Basra the heat reaches 50 degrees. It often rains in winter, and the mountain caps are covered with snow. Here the human civilization was born, and legends say that this place is exactly what is referred to as Paradise, where people and animals that were saved after the Flood came to live. Then the oldest state in the history of mankind was set up here, Sumer, and later the Assyrian Empire replaced it, and still later, the Babylonian Empire appeared here.

Legends have it that after the Babel people went to live in different lands gathering in tribes speaking different languages. The Assyrian and Babylonian sources say that tribes living in Arabia were registered circa the 600s AD under the name of Aribi (Arabu).

According to medieval experts in Arab genealogy, Arabs are descendants of the Biblical prophet Abraham (Ibrahim), and they lived in all parts of Arabia calling it "The Isle of Arabs". Interestingly the word "Arab" did not signify nationality then, it meant "the tramp".

The rich fertile lands always attracted foreign invaders. History remembers Persian wars and Alexander of Macedonia. It also remembers the prosperous Baghdad Caliphate.

Starting from the 16th century and to the end of World War I Iraq was part of the Turkish (Ottoman) Empire.

The ancestors of present-day Iraqis had for many centuries suffered from feudal fragmentation and the tantalizing process of the Ottoman Empire's entry in the world capitalist system.

After World War I and the defeat of Turkey, Iraq was captured by Great Britain, which was mandated to rule the country at the San-Remo conference in 1920. In 1930 when the Iraqi-British agreement was concluded, Iraq became formally independent, however, Britain continued to effectively exert its military and political control due to the pro-Western monarchy, which then ruled the country but whose policies did not meet the national interests. Iraq's progressive forces struggled against this regime, led by the Party of Arab Socialist Revival (Party of the Arab Socialist Revival) which was formed in 1954.

After the people's revolution in which the Party of the Arab Socialist Revival was heavily involved, on July 14, 1958 the monarchy was overthrown in Iraq, and it was declared a republic. Iraq liquidated foreign military bases on its territory, and the republican government began to implement democratic reforms. However not all post-revolutionary Iraqi governments pursued this political line, which led to instability and general weakness of power in Iraq.

The genuine arrival of Iraq began in 1968 when the Party of the Arab Socialist Revival formed the national government. Iraq is nowadays no longer a weak and dependent state, being rather one of the leaders in the Arab world. Iraq nationalized foreign oil companies operating on its territory. Land reform was carried out and new labor legislation and laws on social security and others were adopted.

The Party of the Arab Socialist Revival government put an end to the internecine war between the Arab and Kurdish population lasting for about ten years. On March 11, 1974 the Law on the Kurdistan's autonomy was adopted, according to which the legislature and the executive were established in the Kurdistan Autonomous region.

According to the interim Constitution enforced in 1970 Iraq was declared a "sovereign people's democratic republic". The supreme body of power is the Council of Command of the Revolution, whose chairman is simultaneously the president of the republic and Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces. The National Council (parliament) with 250 deputies elected for 4 years has unlimited authority. The president who is also Prime Minister performs the executive power.

Iraq is a country with the world's largest reserves of crude oil, over 65 billion tons. Saudi Arabia following as the second-biggest country. It also has considerable reserves of natural gas, serum, and phosphates. The revenues from oil exports are the basis for the economic development of the country and implementation of its social and economic reforms.

The overwhelming part of investments is channeled in the state sector, whose share is about 80 per cent of the total