

# Going Nowhere on the 5th Anniversary of the Iraq Invasion

by Janet Jagan

A prominent French citizen, Alexis de Tocqueville, in 1831, after visiting the USA, said this: "I predict that any warrior prince who may arise in a great democratic nation will find it easier to lead the army to conquest than to make it live in peace after victory..." Those wise words by the youthful Tocqueville can well be applied as the USA commemorates the 5th anniversary of its invasion of Iraq.

President George Bush and his war-like mentors in the White House can talk all the talk, but they cannot convince the American people and the vast majority internationally that an error of gross and deadly proportions was not made in that decision to declare war on Iraq.

Few are left in this wide-wide world who will believe that Bush's decision five years ago to make war on Iraq was justified. The two initial reasons given when he spoke to the joint session of the US Congress were to protect the Middle East and the world in general from the Weapons of Mass

Destruction held by the Saddam Hussain regime and to punish Saddam for his relationship with Osama bin Laden, the perpetrator of the 9/11 assault on the Twin Towers in New York City and the hit on the Pentagon in Washington, DC.

Aside from these two

figures put it in the tens of thousands. Also, there are no figures on the numbers injured permanently and who can no longer work and live normally. 2) Some 3 million Iraqis are displaced, some have taken refuge in Syria and Jordan and the rest inside Iraq, but away,

so-called efforts to rebuild what the Americans destroyed in Iraq. Much of the latter contracts and allocations have been stolen outright or in corruption in contracts – mostly by US firms.

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basic reasons for going to war, President Bush also labeled the invasion as the need to fight terrorism in general and bring peace and security to the Middle East.

Now, five years later, we know that all of the reasons for the assault were lies. The results have been disastrous. 1) Thousands of US soldiers, Iraqi citizens and others have been killed. The number of Iraqi dead is not known, but rough

from the killing zones 3) Iraqis have suffered unbelievable hardships as regards housing, education, electricity, water, sanitation, jobs, health care and most of all, security 4) Terrorism has grown from nothing to over 1000 suicide attacks, more than double the number carried out in Sri Lanka, Lebanon, and Palestinian areas. 5) Trillions of US dollars have been spent on the war and on the

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If it were not for the sheer number opposed to the Bush administration and the mid-term elections that gave the Democrats a strong position in the two houses of Congress, the USA might have engaged in another invasion, either Iran or Syria, but more likely, Iran.

The USA today is facing deep economic problems; the word "recession" is being used more frequently. The value of the US dollar has dropped and large numbers of Americans are homeless as a result of bad mortgage/debt arrangements that have literally thrown large numbers on the streets. The BBC just a few days ago reported a "tent" city

growing in California, where one time householders are obliged to live in tents – something never seen before in the USA since the Depression of the 1930's.

I saw on the US television programme "60 Minutes" a scene wherein hundreds of US citizens who cannot afford health insurance clamouring for free medical services provided by teams of health care personnel. Some had travelled hundreds of miles and waited for hours for this free service, which, in Guyana is provided to all its citizens!

The massive cost of the Iraq war has not been cited as a reason of the downturn in the US economy, but if only a part of that vast war expenditure had been used to help needy US citizens, it surely would have been better spent.

The pity is that, because of the peculiarities of the US electoral system and the way presidential nominations are conducted, it's a possibility that the two excellent Democratic Party candidates may attack each other so much, that the discredited Republican Party candidate could win in the November elections!