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Bush's Legacy Ought to be on Trial

By Jodie Evans

April 24, 2013



George W. Bush presided over an international network of torture chambers and, with the help of a compliant Congress and press, launched a war of aggression that killed hundreds of thousands of men, women and children. However, instead of the bloody details of his time in office being recounted at a war crimes tribunal, the former president has been able to bank on his imperial privilege – and a network of rich corporate donors that he made richer while in office – to tell his version of history at a library in Texas being opened in his name.

Kill a few, they call you a murderer. Kill tens of thousands, they give you \$500 million for a granite vanity project and a glossy 30-page supplement in the local paper.

Before getting into that, some facts. According to the US government, more than 100,000 people died following the 2003 invasion of Iraq; of that number, 4,486 were members of the US military. So far, the wars started by Bush and continued by his heir, Barack Obama, have cost upwards of \$3.1 trillion. That's money that could have been spent saving lives and building things, not ending and destroying them.

But that's not going to be the narrative at the George W. Bush Presidential Library, opening this week in Dallas, Texas. No, that's going to be: 9/11, 9/11, 9/11 (see also: 9/11).

Called the "Day of Fire," a main attraction at the new library will be a display on the events of September 11, 2001, where "video images from the attacks flash around a twisted metal beam recovered from the wreckage of the World Trade Center," according to the Associated Press.

"It's very emotional and very profound," Bush explained in an interview. "One of the reasons it has to be is because memories are fading rapidly and the profound impact of that attack is becoming dim with time." That is to say, the former president has a keen interest in fanning the embers of outrage over the killing of nearly 3,000 Americans more than a decade ago lest the world view him poorly for the dozens of 9/11s he perpetrated not just on Iraq, but Afghanistan. Never forget the harm done to us or you just might remember the harm we inflicted on others.

The corporate media doesn't want you to remember those depressing and damning details either. In a supplement that reads as a paid advertisement, *The Dallas Morning News* calls Bush's new library, "A place to learn," featuring a silky soft interview with the former first lady, Laura Bush, and an editorial that states that her husband "stands out as a leader whose convictions guided him."

The latter piece, penned by columnist William McKenzie, recounts the author's dreamy encounter with a young George W. Bush on the campaign trail. "When I met him, I certainly didn't think I would one day walk up to his presidential library," McKenzie tells us. "But the day I did, I felt a sense of pride for him." ("Maybe journalists shouldn't feel that way," he sheepishly adds.)

Unfortunately, when CODEPINK tried to place an ad informing the paper's readers of Bush's real legacy – rivers of blood flooded by a war based on lies – *The Dallas Morning News* rejected it. Pressed as to why, the paper cited vague "advertising guidelines," asking us to remove a graphic of a blood splotch and to include "sourced facts and how they prove the 'lie'" of the Bush-approved official history. One wishes corporate advertisers were subject to such scrutiny.

Bush's legacy is reflected not in his library, but in the regular bombings that rock Baghdad, killing dozens at a time. The Connecticut blue blood turned straight talkin' Texan is of course welcome to tell his side of the story. That's only fair. But let him do it at the Hague.