

# War, the Oligarchy, and the Ancient Myth of Overpopulation

by Theodore J. Andromidas

*What most frequently meets our view (and occasions complaint) is our teeming population. Our numbers are burdensome to the world, which can hardly support us. . . . In every deed, pestilence and famine . . . wars and earthquakes have to be regarded as a remedy for nations, as the means of pruning the luxuriance of the human race.*

The above comment was not uttered by Prince Philip's World Wildlife Fund. Nor is it to be found in the prologue to the Trilateral Commission's call for global population control, the *Global 2000 Report*. It is not from the introduction to Paul Ehrlich's *The Population Bomb* or Dennis Meadows' *Limits to Growth*. You won't even find it in Thomas Malthus's "Essay on the Principle of Population" (1798), the late 18th-Century diatribe that became the bible of every modern zero-population-growth fanatic. No, the opening quotation was penned by Tertullian, a resident of the city of Carthage in the Second Century A.D., when the population of the world was about 190 million, or only 3-4% of what it is today.

Today, on an almost daily basis we are fed a barrage of hysterical stories in the newspapers, on television, or Google News—complete with such appropriately lurid headlines as, "Earth Near the Breaking Point" and "Population Explosion Continues Unabated"—predicting the imminent starvation of millions because population is outstripping the food supply. We regularly hear that, because of population growth, we are rapidly depleting our resource base, with catastrophic consequences, such as war and genocide, looming in our immediate future. We are repeatedly told that we



*The oligarchical system, as far back as we know, has relied upon pestilence, famine, death, and war to cull the human population. Shown: "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse," by Albrecht Dürer (1497-98).*

are running out of living space, and that unless something is done, and done immediately, to curb population growth, the world will be covered by a mass of humanity, with people jammed elbow to elbow and

condemned to fight for each inch of space and increasingly scarce resources

These scenarios turn reality on its head. In fact, the greatest danger to humanity today, is the “oligarchical system,” based in the British Empire and its commitment to genocidal conflict, up to and including, if necessary, nuclear war. This is not a modern phenomenon. Oligarchical hatred of humanity, and oligarchical empires which have engaged in the ritualistic slaughter of millions of human beings, originated in the centuries prior to ancient Rome.

This ancient structure of the oligarchic system “divides the human populations between what were designated, explicitly, as being the gods, and, on the other side, the slaves or serfs. That same system, with certain relatively superficial changes, has been the social system reigning over Europe to the present time of the ongoing breakdown-crisis throughout the entire present trans-Atlantic region.”<sup>1</sup>

### **Three Horsemen of the Apocalypse: Pestilence, Famine, Death**

Under its founder Sargon,<sup>2</sup> meaning “true king,” and his successors, the Akkadian (“Babylonian”) Semites of Mesopotamia forged their empire under an oligarchical system more than 4,300 years ago, when they conquered the then-decadent Sumerian empire, whose culture and religion they adopted. They seized control of cities along the Euphrates River, and on the fruitful plains to the north, in what is now Iraq, Syria, and parts of southern Turkey. Then, after only a century of prosperity, the Akkadian Empire collapsed abruptly, for reasons that have been lost to history.

The ruler of the Akkadian empire was styled the Ensi (a Sumerian title). The first Ensi, Sargon’s grandson Naram Sin, extended the empire as far as Aleppo in Syria, and southern Turkey. His most significant innovation was in the conception of kingship: He was the first ruler of Akkadia to deify himself, writing his name with the divine determinative, the cuneiform sign used to identify the name of a god. Perhaps for the first time in human history, in a tradition that would presage the later Roman Empire, the ruler demonstrated his superiority over all men by declaring himself a god. Later, the

Ensi would be deified through ritual marriage to Inanna, the Sumerian goddess of erotic love, fertility, and warfare.

The *Atra-Hasis* (meaning “exceedingly wise”) epic, which includes a Creation myth and a flood account, and is one of three surviving Babylonian deluge stories, recorded on three clay tablets. The oldest tablet concerning the *Atra-Hasis* can be dated to the 19th Century B.C. but continued to be transcribed into the first millennium B.C. In the story of *Atra-Hasis*, soon after the Creation, the gods become weary of work. They had built mountains, dug rivers, and sustained all forms of life. All this work placed them into conflict with one another. They gather in a great conclave before Enlil, the Sumerian counselor of the gods, and complain:

The load is excessive, it is killing us!  
Our work is too hard, the trouble too much,  
So every single one of us gods  
Has agreed to complain to Enlil! . . .<sup>3</sup>

At the conclusion of Tablet I, Enlil, the counselor god, agrees to relieve them of their burden by creating mankind out of clay and spit, to be slaves to do the work.

To make man, a being that will toil for them  
he called upon the womb goddess. . . .  
. . . to be the creator of Mankind!  
Create a mortal, that he may bear the yoke!  
Let him bear the yoke, the work of Enlil  
Let him bear the load of the gods!<sup>4</sup>

In a striking demonstration of the nasty capriciousness that characterizes the oligarchical system from its very beginnings, the god Enlil, an in-law to the Akkadian Ensi, tiring of the incessant noise from the humans, sends plague, famine, and drought every 1,200 years to reduce the population.

The country was as noisy as a bellowing bull  
The God grew restless at their racket,  
Enlil had to listen to their noise.  
He addressed the great gods,  
“The noise of mankind has become too much,

1. Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., “Reflections on a Work by Nicholas of Cusa: The Strategic Situation Now,” *EIR*, Dec. 23, 2011.

2. Legends describe him as an abandoned baby, put in a basket in the river and favored by the goddess Ishtar.

3. “Myths from Mesopotamia: Gilgamesh, The Flood, and Others,” trans. Stephanie Dalley, Oxford World’s Classics, p. 9.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

I am losing sleep over their racket.  
Give the order that surrupu-disease shall break  
out.”<sup>5</sup>

But the god Enki, who often took the side of mankind in Babylonian mythology, intervenes to help the humans stave off these disasters. Tablet II ends with Enlil’s decision to destroy mankind altogether with a flood. Tablet III of the *Atra-Hasis* contains the story of the flood, a theme which would later be repeated in the epic of “Gilgamesh,” the Old Testament, and other stories.

In Tablet III, Enki, in an attempt to save mankind, speaks through a reed wall, to warn the hero Atra-Hasis that he must dismantle his house and build a boat to escape the coming flood. Atra-Hasis boards the boat with his family and animals, sealing the door just before the storm and flood begins. After seven days the flood ends, and bodies “like dragonflies . . . have filled the river,” but Atra-Hasis and his family survive. Enlil is furious with Enki for warning even those few mortals, but, Enki argues: “I made sure life was preserved.” The epic concludes with Enki and Enlil agreeing to continue with alternative means for controlling the human population: plague and famine.

Ironically, the collapse of the Akkadian Empire does not appear to have arisen from either god-induced plagues or floods, but rather, from extreme drought. Whether through over-farming or a sudden climate change,<sup>6</sup> a devastating drought, lasting for almost 300 years, resulted in the abandonment of Akkadian cities across the northern plain, some time around 2200 B.C. This would also account for the sudden migrations of people to the south, as recorded

on clay tablets. It is perhaps these migrations which doubled the populations of southern cities, which over-taxed food and water supplies, which led to conflict, and the eventual fall of the Sargon Dynasty and the Akkadian Empire.

### The Fourth Horseman: War

In 1953, looking back at the history of oligarchical rule, Bertrand Russell, the “scientific consultant” to the new “gods of Olympus” who run the British Empire, had decided that war as a means of population control had been “disappointing,” as Russell noted:

At present the population of the world is increasing at about 58,000 per diem. War, so far, has had no very great effect on this increase . . . but perhaps bacteriological war may prove effective. If a Black Death could spread throughout the world once in every generation, survivors could procreate freely without making the world too full. There would be nothing in this to offend the conscience of the devout or to restrain the ambition of nationalists. The state of affairs might be somewhat unpleasant, but what of it? Really high-minded people are indifferent to happiness, especially other people’s.<sup>7</sup>



National Museum of Iraq

*Founder of the Akkadian oligarchical empire (23rd-22nd century B.C.), Sargon declared himself a god-king, thereby asserting his superiority over mere mortals.*

Yet, it is not Russell, nor the current crop of lunatics running the British Empire, who were the first to define “population control” as one of the paramount goals of warfare. As far as we know, the first time war was introduced as a means of dealing with a “dangerously over-populated” planet, was by the Olympian Gods, as reported in the stories of the fabled war between Greeks and Trojans, ostensibly over the most

5. Ibid.

6. There is evidence of a tremendous volcanic eruption occurring in Turkey near the beginning of the drought, perhaps triggering such a long climate change.

7. Bertrand Russell, *The Impact of Science on Society* (Simon and Schuster, 1953), pp. 116-117,

beautiful woman in the world, Helen, daughter of Zeus, and wife of Menelaus.

Although we almost universally associate the Trojan War with Homer's epic the *Iliad*, that Classic work is only one of many stories about the Trojan War and the events leading up to it. The actual war between the Greeks and Trojans took place centuries before Homer sang his epic. Troy (Ilium) appears to have been destroyed around 1180 B.C. But this does not mean that that conflict was the war of the *Iliad*—even though ancient tradition usually places it around this time.

It appears that this city was, by the standards of the region at that time, very large indeed, and most certainly of supra-regional importance. Located above the Dardanelles, it controlled the access between the Mediterranean/Aegean and the Black Sea, and between Asia Minor and southeast Europe (**Figure 1**). Its citadel was unparalleled in the wider region and, as far as hitherto known, unmatched anywhere in southeastern Europe.

After several decades, a new population from the eastern Balkans or the northwestern Black Sea region, evidently settled in the ruins of what was to become a much smaller city. Troy was in a largely ruined state by Homer's time (Eighth Century B.C.), but the remains of the city of 1180 B.C., both the citadel and the lower city, would have still been impressive. Generations of visitors would have been able to recognize the general outlines of places described in the *Iliad*. Here once stood a great culture, obliterated by war, on the whim of the gods. But was the annihilation of Troy caused by a conflict over the abduction of Menelaus's wife Helen, by the Trojan Paris, or rather, by an oligarchical policy to reduce the global population?

Throughout the *Iliad*, Homer provides us with an accurate assessment of the sentiments of the oligarchical system toward humanity in general, an attitude best expressed by the god Apollo when, in the *Iliad*, he describes humanity as “a pack of miserable mortals, who come out like leaves in Summer, and eat the fruit of the field, and presently fall lifeless to the ground.”<sup>8</sup> Homer makes it quite clear that this war, in accordance with the wishes of the gods, is a war of genocide.

In Book IV, Agamemnon rouses the spirits of his disheartened brother, when he says: “My dear Menel-

FIGURE 1  
Ancient Troy



Troy's citadel overlooked the Dardanelles, giving the city control over East-West trade and commerce.

aus . . . we are not going to leave a single one of them alive, down to the babies in their mothers' wombs—not even they must live. The whole people must be wiped out of existence, and none be left to think of them and shed a tear.”<sup>9</sup>

One epic poem of the Trojan War, largely forgotten today, but well-known in the 7th Century B.C., was the *Cypria*, written for the first Olympiad in 776-72 B.C. According to ancient authorities, Stasinus of Cyprus, a semi-legendary early Greek poet, authored an 11-book epic cycle, narrating the history of the Trojan War. Some ancient historians have ascribed it to Homer himself, who was said to have written it on the occasion of his daughter's marriage to Stasinus, but only fragments of the epic remain. The *Cypria* presupposes an acquaintance with the events of the *Iliad*, confining itself to the events leading up to the Trojan War. Certainly, Stasinus was well known in the ancient Greek world, for Plato puts quotes from Stasinus's works in the mouth of Socrates, in his *Euthyphro* dialogue.

The *Cypria* begins with the first cause of the war.

8. Homer, *Iliad* Book XI, trans. Samuel Butler.

9. Ibid, Book IV.



In the *Iliad*, Agamemnon tells his brother Menelaus, “We are not going to leave a single one of them [the Trojans] alive...” Shown: “The Burning of Troy,” by Jan Bruegel the Elder (1621).

Zeus, as an ancient precursor to today’s “Green Movement,” desires to relieve the overburdened Earth of carrying too many people. In the third fragment of the *Cypria* we learn that:

There was a time when the countless tribes of men, though wide-dispersed, oppressed the surface of the deep-bosomed Earth, and Zeus saw it and had pity, and in his wise heart resolved to relieve the all-nurturing Earth of men, by causing the great struggle of the Ilian war, that the load of death might empty the world. And so the heroes were slain in Troy, and the plan of Zeus came to pass.<sup>10</sup>

It seems that this was not an uncommon theme in narration of the Trojan War. Three hundred years later, the Greek tragedian Euripides emphasizes again that the gods’ chosen method for decreasing “excess” population was war. In the *Orestian* tragedy, Orestes, son of Agamemnon, executes his mother for murdering his father. Just as the concluding scene is about to erupt into a frenzy of vengeful bloodshed, Apollo arrives to take Helen to live with the gods. He tells Menelaus:

10. Hesiod, *The Homeric Hymns, and Homerica*, Hugh G. Evelyn-White, ed., July 2008.

So choose another wife, Menelaus, and take her home. The gods used this one’s outstanding loveliness to bring Greeks and Phrygians together and cause a slaughter, so they might stop the overwhelming crowds of mortal men destroying the earth. So much for Helen.<sup>11</sup>

At this point, you might protest, but, these are merely stories, fables, poems, to provide entertainment during festivals and feasts. In reality, these stories accurately detail the capricious brutality that is at the very foundation of the oligarchical system, killing untold millions in the battles of the ancient world to feed the ideological passions of a depraved elite. The figures cited below have been calculated from reported statistics and accounts from various sources; they do not include approximations of casualty figures in wars and battles where these figures have not been reported in some way.

#### War dead by the Books of the Old Testament<sup>12</sup>

Numbers: 96,000  
 Joshua: 108,000  
 Judges: 200,000  
 Samuel: 120,000  
 Kings: 127,000  
 Chronicles: 770,000

Old Testament accounts of wars provide us with an approximation of battle casualties in some of the wars of the ancient Near East, from the Second into the First Millennia B.C. Battle deaths, executions and other casualties as a direct result of combat detailed in the Old Testament are approximately 1,300,000 dead.<sup>13</sup> Though occurring over a longer period of time, given that the total population of the world did not exceed 50 million, these casualties of the ancient world are of a similar order of magnitude to casualties during World War II.<sup>14</sup>

The Fourth Century B.C. Greek world of Euripides

11. Euripides, *Orestes*, trans. Ian Johnston.

12. Ibid.

13. “Selected Death Tolls for Wars, Massacres and Atrocities Before the 20th Century,” Necrometrics.com

14. Ibid.

was no less brutal. Of a total population of approximately 3 million, over 10%—308,000 Greeks—died as battlefield and related casualties of war. But to find a killing machine not surpassed until the emergence of its successor, the British Empire, we must turn to Rome.

**‘They make a desert and call it peace’<sup>15</sup>**

Embedded in oligarchical religion is a mythology demonizing a debased humanity that must be destroyed by the gods for the sake of the “natural” world. The Roman Pantheon is no different. In fact, for Jupiter (Zeus/Jove), the human race is more dangerous to the world than even “the snake-footed giants,” the mortal enemies of the gods. In Book 1 of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, one of the foundational compendiums on Roman religion and mythology, as with the Akkadian and Greek gods, Jupiter, the chief god, decides that, for the safety of the world, the human race once again must be destroyed by flood.

I was not more troubled than I am now concerning the world’s sovereignty than when each of the snake-footed giants prepared to throw his hundred arms around the imprisoned sky. Though they were fierce enemies, still their attack came in one body and from one source. Now I must destroy the human race, wherever Nereus sounds, throughout the world. I swear it by the infernal streams that glide below the Earth through the Stygian groves.<sup>16</sup>

With this degraded view of man, Rome was to become the model for all future incarnations of the oligarchical system.

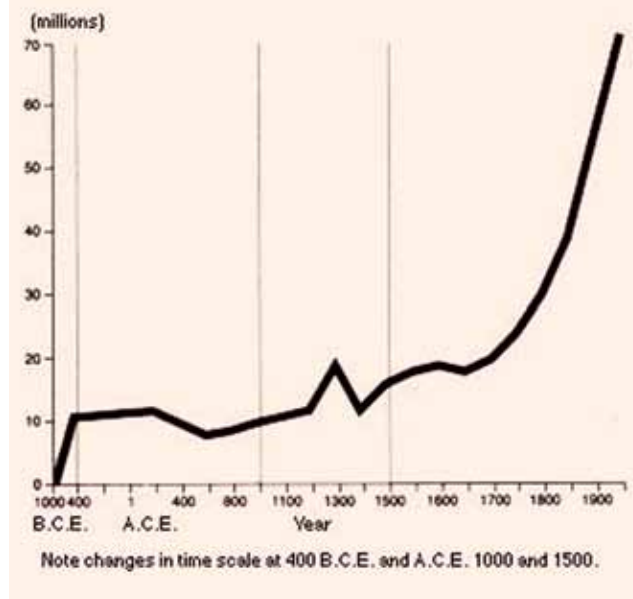
Rome was an oligarchical system long before it officially became an empire, annexing provinces from as early as the Third Century B.C., and reaching its greatest territorial extent 400 years later. A slave-based system from the beginning, the Roman Republic collapsed in 57 B.C., to be replaced by the Roman Empire, establishing an epoch of looting, death, and devastation, not seen before in human history. During the period from the First to the Third Century A.D., beginning at the height of the Roman Empire, the population

15. Tacitus, *Agricola*, 98 A.D., from a speech by the Scottish Chieftan Calgogas describing Rome to his troops.

16. *Metamorphoses*, Book 1, lines 177-198, trans. A.S. Kline, 2000.

FIGURE 2

**Population history of the region of Classical Greek civilization (Greece, Italy, the Balkans) 1000 B.C. to 1950 A.D.**



fell from an estimated 70 million, to less than 50 million, a decline of 30%.

Archeological evidence indicates that during that same period, trade within the empire fell more than 40%. The later decline of Europe’s population west of the Ural Mountains was even more dramatic (**Figure 2**). Some estimates show that in 200 A.D., the European population stood at approximately 36 million; by 600, it had fallen to 26 million; other estimates indicate a more catastrophic collapse, from 44 million in 200 A.D. to 22 million by 600.<sup>17</sup> This almost millennial-long demographic collapse of Europe would continue until the end of the Eighth Century A.D., when the ascension of Charlemagne as the first Holy Roman Emperor in the West<sup>18</sup> ushered in a new cultural and political paradigm.

A measurable percentage of this decline of population was the result of the Romans’ passion for a particularly unique form of entertainment: bloody human slaughter. In the more than five centuries of gladiatorial games, literally millions were sacrificed to satisfy the

17. Francois Crouzet, *A History of the European Economy, 1000-2000* (University Press of Virginia: 2001); p. 1.

18. For an exhaustive examination of the demographic features of the Roman Empire, see: Kenneth Kronberg, “The Roman Model of Mass Depopulation,” *EIR*, Aug. 17, 1982.

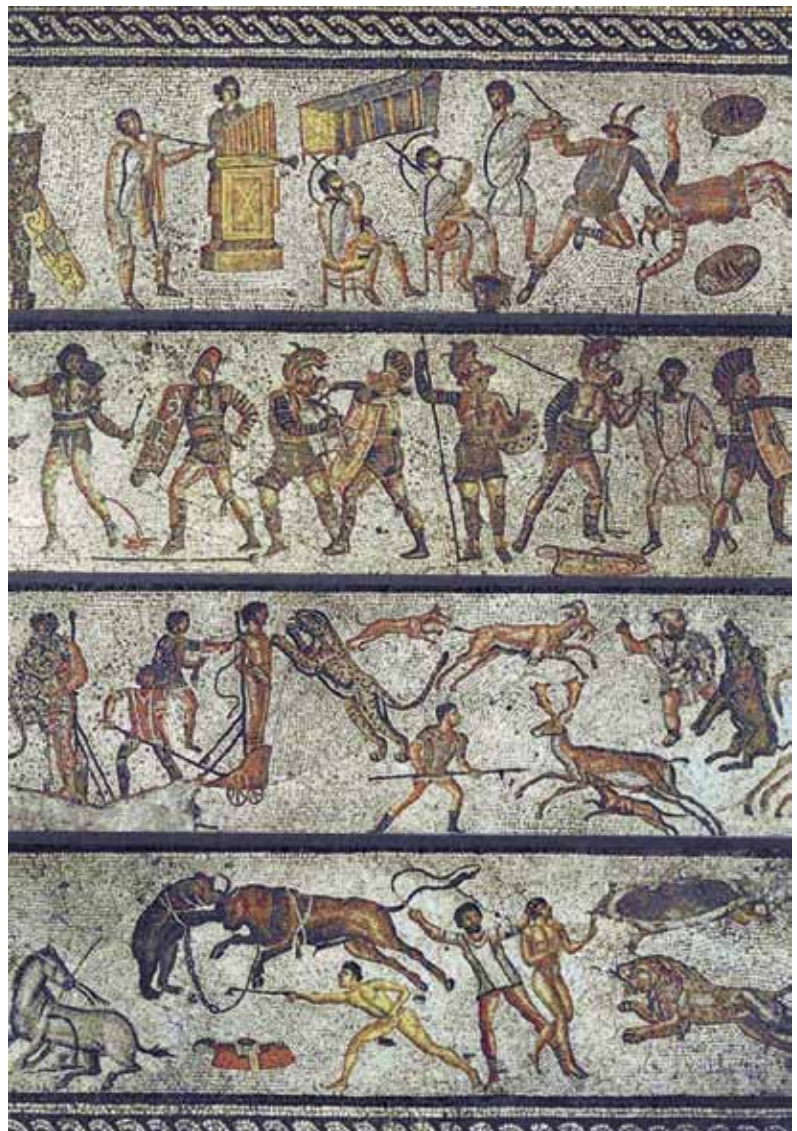
bloodlust of the Roman elites and the mob. For example, from the day of its completion in 80 A.D., until gladiatorial games were banned in 379 A.D., 2,000 gladiators per year, well over 600,000 altogether, were slaughtered in the Roman Colosseum alone. This is a yearly combat death rate comparable to U.S. combat deaths from the Vietnam War.

There is no record of the deaths in the games that took place over a 500-year period, in hundreds of cities stretching across the empire, from Wales to Syria, and Bulgaria to Algeria. These figures also do not include outright political or religious executions, primarily for entertainment, of millions more.

These games of mortal combat had little to do with the “martial spirit” of the Roman leadership, as some have suggested. It was an entirely different spirit that animated the imperial Romans. The games, from the beginning, were held for mass entertainment. As early the Third and Second centuries B.C., Roman patricians would provide entertainment for their guests by forcing slaves to fight each other to the death. But in the First Century B.C., they took on a greater public significance. For example, in 78 B.C., the death of the dictator Sulla was marked with battles fought by 6,000 gladiators.

The gladiators came from the lowest social classes, slaves, or those convicted of a capital offense. Over time, these contests were expanded to provide diversions for the general public throughout the growing empire.

The depth of depravity knew no limits. For example, the Romans seem to have found the idea of women and children murdering each other to be entertaining. It has been reported that in 66 A.D., the Emperor Nero had Ethiopian women and children fight to the death to impress King Tiridates I of Armenia. In 89 A.D., during Domitian’s reign, contests featured battles between female gladiators and dwarfs. Women, children, and dwarfs all submitted to the same regulations and training as their male counterparts, and came to the same violent end. They all died brutally for the pleasure of the Roman audience.



*In the more than five centuries of the gladiatorial games, millions were sacrificed to satisfy the bloodlust of the Roman elites and the mob. Here, a Roman mosaic shows human gladiators in combat with beasts.*

The mentality of the Roman oligarchy is described by historian Cassius Dio, when he said of Emperor Caligula’s attendance at the gladiatorial games: “It was not the large number of those who perished that was so serious, though that was serious enough, but his excessive delight in their death and his insatiable desire for the sight of blood.”<sup>19</sup>

During the course of its existence, before it moved east to Constantinople, estimates are that the Roman

19. Lucius Cassius Dio was a Roman consul and noted historian. He published a history of Rome in 80 volumes.



*In the first Roman war against the Jews (66-73 A.D.), the city of Jerusalem was burned, and all its people killed or enslaved. This detail of a relief from the Arch of Titus in Rome, depicts the looting of the Temple by Roman soldiers.*

Republic and Empire combined killed almost 6 million people in wars, executions, and slave revolts.<sup>20</sup> Below are estimates of some of these casualties. These do not include the millions killed in the games, smaller military pacification operations throughout Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East, nor out-right genocide.

### Estimated Casualties from Roman Wars

- Jewish Wars: 1.9 million
- Gallic War: 1.0 million
- All Punic Wars: 1.0 million
- Social War: 0.3 million
- Cimbri-Teutoni War: 0.3 million
- Boudica's Revolt: 0.15 million
- Slave Revolts: 1 million
- Total: 5.75 million<sup>21</sup>

The Roman oligarchy seems to have been the first to practice genocide as systematic strategic policy. Details of each and every invasion, war, and subsequent massacres, and the number of casualties, would require an

20. "Body Count of the Roman Empire," erols.com

21. These figures are estimates, but of the appropriate order of magnitude.

entire a book. Here are the results of just four of the major genocidal campaigns waged by Rome:

The first, and perhaps most famous, is the destruction of Carthage in 146 B.C. The city was completely destroyed in the Third Punic War, and its inhabitants killed or enslaved.

Julius Caesar's campaign against the Helvetii, inhabitants of present-day Switzerland, in which approximately 60% of the tribe was slaughtered; in one battle alone, 120,000 tribesmen were killed.

In Caesar's campaign against the Gauls, the in-

habitants of present-day France, over 1 million, probably 1 in 4, were killed; another million were enslaved, and 800 cities were destroyed. The entire population of the city of Avaricum, present day Bourges, 40,000 inhabitants, was slaughtered.

In the first war of Rome's attempt to enslave and pacify the Jews, Jerusalem was burned and all its people killed or enslaved. Tacitus reports that those who were besieged in Jerusalem at the time amounted to no fewer than 600,000 men, women, and children.<sup>22</sup>

This practice of deliberate imperial genocide—and the accompanying oligarchical hatred of humanity—is most certainly still very much with us today:

*"Human population growth is probably the single most serious long-term threat. . . . We have no option. If it isn't controlled voluntarily, it will be controlled involuntarily by an increase in disease, starvation and war."<sup>23</sup>*

Prince Philip and the other "gods" of today's oligarchical system are no less committed to slaughter than their ancient predecessors were. The only difference is that they now have control of thermonuclear weapons than can wipe out humanity in a matter of hours. Like their predecessors, they "relish the thought."

22. Op. cit. "Body Count."

23. "Genocide," New World Encyclopedia.