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**news** BY KATE ROGERS GESSERT

# Losing the Peace

## Undercovered #34: Updates on Iraq, Afghanistan.

**W**hoever is organizing guerilla attacks against Americans in Iraq, recruits may be easier to find as anger grows. Iraqis say, "They can take our oil but at least they should let us have electricity and water" (*Independent*). "We will rise up and fight the Americans. We have moved from one dictatorship to another" (Reuters). Paul Bremer, U.S. head of the occupation authority, insists Baghdad has 20 hours of electricity a day, while many Iraqis sweat in 113-degree heat without refrigeration, air-conditioning, or lights at night to help protect them from looters (*Independent*).

•In "a cycle of action, reaction, and counter-action," U.S. military sweeps arrest suspected resistance fighters, and one U.S. soldier on average dies every day (*Edinburgh Sunday Herald*). Iraqis civilians are shot while protesting, taking care of sheep, or trying to extinguish fires lit by American flares in their wheat fields (*Guardian*). U.S. soldiers kick in doors and drag men from their houses while families scream. Octogenarian Khalaf Shabib weeps, "They treated me like an animal. We are not their enemies but they are turning us into enemies" (*Taipei Times*).

•Many U.S. soldiers just want to go home. They expected to go when the war ended. Spread thin as peacekeepers at banks, police stations, and electrical installations, they are vulnerable targets for Iraqi rocks and guns. "Saddam isn't in power any more. The locals want us to leave. Why are we still here?" (*Washington Post*). Exhausted soldiers of the 315th Infantry Division relive battle experiences: "You can't distinguish between who's trying to kill you and who's not ... [You] concentrate on getting through it by killing as many people as you can. Killing them first and getting home." "At night time you think about all the people you killed ... There's no chance to forget it, we're still here, we've been here so long." "I don't care about Iraq one way or the other ... Saddam could still be in power and to me, it wasn't worth leaving my family for." One soldier has a photo of the World Trade Center hanging above his bed. "Every time I feel sorry for these people I look at that. I think, 'They hit us at home and now, it's our turn ...'" (*London Evening Standard*).

•Bremer has issued a proclamation that forbids any "gatherings, pronouncements, or publications" calling for the return of the Baath party, or opposition to the American occupation (*Guardian*). A further edict prohibits media from broadcasting or publishing material that encourages civil disorder or incites violence against any individual or group or against coalition forces. Ni'ma Abdulrazzaq, editor of Baghdad's *As-Saah*, says the restrictions resemble those under Saddam Hussein (*Christian Science Monitor*).

•Two Iraqi trailers suspected as mobile

biological weapons labs may have manufactured hydrogen for weather balloons, according to an intelligence official involved in the investigation. The trailers lack both traces of pathogens and equipment needed to sterilize lab materials (*L.A. Times*). Bush has now explained that weapons of mass destruction are missing because Iraqi arms sites were looted and burned (Reuters).

•On NBC's "Meet the Press," former General Wesley Clark said people in the White House had telephoned him on Sept. 11, 2001 and urged him to link Saddam Hussein to the terrorist attacks. Clark said he couldn't because there was no evidence

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(FAIR). In the "Selective Intelligence" newsletter, Seymour Hersh writes that Rumsfeld believed Iraq had numerous WMDs and close ties to Al Qaeda and ignored conflicting evidence (*The New Yorker*).

•In the international report "Afghanistan: Are We Losing the Peace?" foreign policy experts urge immediate U.S. action before Afghanistan "reverts to warlord-dominated anarchy." Experts recommend greatly expanding the peacekeeping force, rapidly training the Afghan army, and getting agreement from Afghanistan's neighbors to stay out of the country's internal affairs (*Asia Times*). Thanks to war and lawlessness, Afghanistan has reclaimed its role as the world's largest opium producer (AP). Regional warlords who helped the U.S. win the war were rewarded with money and large territories. They have their own armies and collect their own taxes, which they do not send to Karzai's central government. Karzai controls only Kabul. (*Globe & Mail, Canada*). One-third of Afghanistan is inaccessible to U.N. agencies because of security problems (Reuters). Taliban forces have rebounded, attacking U.S. special forces, foreign travelers, aid workers, and especially, Afghan soldiers who work with Americans. Dozens of Afghan soldiers are killed each month. Handwritten letters left in villages at night threaten to torture and kill anyone who supports Karzai's government. As a warning, bodies of two kidnapped Afghan border guards were returned with noses and ears chopped off and bones crushed (*Christian Science Monitor*). Pakistani and U.S. intelligence officers recently met with Taliban leaders to discuss conditions for reconciliation, which might lead to a Taliban role in the Afghan government (*Asia Times*). **EW**

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