



TUESDAY, JULY 05, 2005

Iraq: Good News, Followed By Lots of Bad News

by Michael in New York on [7/05/2005 03:50:00 PM](#)

Here's the latest on the [insurgency's effective attacks on Muslim diplomats](#). They've kidnapped the Egyptian ambassador and now attacked the reps of Bahrain and Pakistan. Pakistan even refers to the "deteriorating security conditions" in Iraq. Didn't they get Bush's talking points? Anyone who thinks this will undercut support for the insurgency on the fabled Arab street forgets the very obvious point that the corrupt leaders of Pakistan et al are hated by Arabs almost as much as they hate the US.

And the good news? The Shiites and Kurds continue to reach out to the Sunnis, most recently by agreeing to accept some 15 Sunnis onto the committee overseeing the drafting of the Constitution. This is significant since the Sunnis didn't "deserve" that membership since it boycotted the elections. But the Shiites and Kurds realize they must include the Sunnis if there's to be any long-term hope for peace. This comes on top of their tweaking of election procedures -- in the future, representatives will come from particular regions instead of just the top-vote getters nationally. This means Sunnis will get roughly proportional representation in the governing body no matter how many of them go to the polls. Finally, the 15 Sunnis were accepted even though some of them were suspected of being Baathists. Quite pragmatic, they've been.

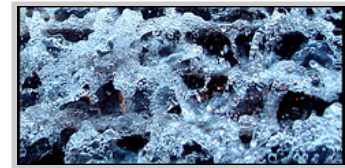
Mr. Hamoudi, a prominent Shiite cleric, said the committee had decided it did not immediately matter that the Sunnis had suspect political backgrounds. It was more important to have the Sunni point of view aired during the writing of the constitution, he said. He added that the committee had sent the 15 names to a commission responsible for keeping senior Baathists out of the government, but that the commission had yet to reply.

"If we were talking about ministries, names might be more important," Mr. Hamoudi said at a news conference. "But since it's a committee, having the views is more important than the names."

No matter how incompetent Bush has been in the execution of this war, no matter how deceptive the American people believe he's been in getting us into the war, the Shiites and Kurds seem to be doing everything they can in the worst possible situation to pull some good out of this mess.



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