

NON-STANDARD ISSUE

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 1 | AN ALTERNATIVE NEWS AND INFORMATION SOURCE FOR CALGARIANS | JANUARY 2004

THIS ARTICLE EXAMINES THE MAJOR FINDINGS of our recent trip to Iraq. The main purpose of our trip to Iraq was twofold.

A Divided Nation

A view from
CANDIL

by Julie Hrdlicka
and Noel Ainsley

First of all, the gathering of as much information on the situation inside the country as possible, and second of all to connect with the people.

The information gathered will help CANDIL formulate its policies in

regards to Iraq. And the connections will be used to encourage open and honest dialogue between our communities.

The situation in Iraq seems to be deteriorating day by day and is now on the brink of civil war. One of the main reasons is the deepening divide between the different ethnic, religious and geographic communities. This segregation of the people is being deliberately encouraged by the policies of the American administration.

These policies have been implemented in order to protect the rights of those minorities who suffered under Saddam. While seeming worthy in intention, the execution of these policies has seen the removal of rights and voice from other parts of the population (e.g. the Sunni Muslims). The administrations now familiar style of black and white, them or us, is a concept that is new inside Iraq. The U.S. government, preying on our ignorance of Iraq, would have us believe this was always a divided nation. While talking to local Iraqis, we found this to have never been an issue. When it came to Saddam's brutality, no one was safe.

To imply that all Sunni supported Saddam, because he was Sunni himself, is both incorrect and dangerous. This attitude towards Sunni is reflected in their meager representation on the General Council and their exemption from the newly proposed Militia. The CPA has asked five members of the General Council to form

this Militia. And all five members are Shiite and some have close ties to Iran. This further removes the involvement of Sunni's in the future of the country and increases the divide both geographically and religiously between communities in Iraq

Many Iraqis now fear Iran's behind the scenes involvement in Iraq. Iran has an obvious interest in a destabilized Iraq, as this removes the possibility of the U.S. turning their attentions towards them. This involvement is a major force behind a possible civil war. This apparent push towards civil war has two obvious benefits for the American administration. First of all, the worsening situation for the people of Iraq acts as encouragement for the international community to get involved. Second of all, if this encouragement fails, civil war gives the U.S. government an opportunity to withdraw.

Neither of these two outcomes is acceptable, as one gives the administration legitimacy and the other leaves the country in turmoil.

To avoid this situation, the international community must demand the withdrawal of U.S. troops and deploy a full humanitarian and peace-keeping mission. It is time for the international community to speak as one and intervene before inadequate U.S. foreign policy destroys a nation.

Julie and Noel recently travelled to Iraq with 'Life for Relief and Development' to promote CANDIL's 'Building Bridges Project'. ✌



This is a picture taken during Julie and Noel's recent trip to Iraq. It is a cluster bomb found outside of a school in Baghdad where children were playing.

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WEB LINKS

www.occupationwatch.org
www.nologo.org
www.thenation.com/doc.mhtml?i=20031124&s=pillage

UPCOMING EVENTS

Iraq's Future: Voices of it's People

Presentation by Julie Hrdlicka and Noel Ainsley who have just returned from a fact finding mission to Iraq.

Wednesday, January 14 at 7:30 pm
Parkdale United Church
2919-8th Avenue N.W.
Calgary

CANDIL Movie Night

Come see Naomi Klein's inspiring speech "Bomb It, Then Buy It" on the corporate occupation of Iraq given at this fall's Parkland Institute conference "Challenging Empire."

Friday, January 30 at 7:00 pm
Parkdale United Church
2919-8th Avenue N.W.
Calgary

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WHAT WE BELIEVE

CANDIL promotes global human security through a culture of peace, active democracy and respect for international law. Our vision is global; our strategy is local.

PRINCIPLES

Necessity of International Law for Global Peace and Security

International law is essential for global peace and security, including the peace and security of Canadians. As citizens of Canada, we are expected to obey the law; we expect the same standard of behavior from our government. The government of Canada, and all Canadian political parties, must comply with the fundamental requirements, principles, and purposes of international law, and give international law decisive weight in the formulation and implementation of foreign policy.

Lessons from Iraq

Western policy toward Iraq has contributed to a humanitarian and human rights disaster in that country, and has violated international law, including the law of the UN Charter, international humanitarian law, and international human rights law. The errors and violations of our Iraq policy must be made explicit and used as lessons for constructive change in the direction of Canada's foreign policy, to avoid similarly destructive and costly errors in the future, both in Iraq and in other parts of the world.

Democracy and Responsible Citizenship

A critical, informed, active citizenry is a fundamental requirement of democracy. Citizens are ultimately responsible for the public policy of their government. Citizens of Canada are responsible for compliance of Canadian foreign policy with the law of the United Nations Charter, international humanitarian law, and international human rights law. Familiarity with the basic principles and purposes of international law is an indispensable part of education for responsible citizenship.

CANCEL THE CONTRACTS. DITCH THE DEALS. Rip up the rules.

Those are a few suggestions for slogans that could help unify the growing movement against the occupation of

<p>Bring Halliburton Home</p>
<p>by Naomi Klein</p>
<p>The Nation November 6, 2003</p>

Iraq. So far, activist debates have focused on whether the demand should be for a complete withdrawal of troops, or for the United States to cede power to the United Nations.

But the "Troops Out" debate overlooks an

important fact. If every last soldier pulled out of the Gulf tomorrow and a sovereign government came to power, Iraq would still be occupied: by laws written in the interest of another country, by foreign corporations controlling its essential services, by 70 percent unemployment sparked by public sector layoffs.

Any movement serious about Iraqi self-determination must call not only for an end to Iraq's military occupation, but to its economic colonization as well. That means reversing the shock therapy reforms that US occupation chief Paul Bremer has fraudulently passed off as "reconstruction" and canceling all privatization contracts flowing from these reforms.

How can such an ambitious goal be achieved?
Easy: by showing that Bremer's reforms were illegal to begin with. They clearly violate the international convention governing the behavior of occupying forces, the Hague Regulations of 1907 (the companion to the 1949 Geneva Conventions, both ratified by the United States), as well as the US Army's own code of war.

The Hague Regulations state that an occupying power must respect "unless absolutely prevented, the laws in force in the country." The Coalition Provisional Authority has shredded that simple rule with gleeful defiance. Iraq's Constitution outlaws the privatization of key state assets, and it bars foreigners from owning Iraqi firms. No plausible argument can be made that the CPA was "absolutely prevented" from respecting those laws, and yet two months ago, the CPA overturned them unilaterally.

On September 19, Bremer enacted the now-infamous Order 39. It announced that 200 Iraqi state companies would be privatized; decreed that foreign firms can retain 100 percent ownership of Iraqi banks, mines and factories; and allowed these firms to move 100 percent

of their profits out of Iraq. The Economist declared the new rules a "capitalist dream."

Order 39 violated the Hague Regulations in other ways as well. The convention states that occupying powers "shall be regarded only as administrator and usufructuary of public buildings, real estate, forests, and agricultural estates belonging to the hostile State, and situated in the occupied country. It must safeguard the capital of these properties, and administer them in accordance with the rules of usufruct."

Bouvier's Law Dictionary defines "usufruct" (possibly the ugliest word in the English language) as an arrangement that grants one party the right to use and derive benefit from another's property "without altering the substance of the thing." Put more simply, if you are a housesitter, you can eat the food in the fridge, but you can't sell the house and turn it into condos. And yet that is just what Bremer is doing: What could more substantially alter "the substance" of a public asset than to turn it into a private one?

In case the CPA was still unclear on this detail, the US Army's Law of Land Warfare states that "the occupant does not have the right of sale or unqualified use of [nonmilitary] property." This is pretty straightforward: Bombing something does not give you the right to sell it. There is every indication that the CPA is well aware of the lawlessness of its privatization scheme. In a leaked memo written on March 26, British Attorney General Lord Peter Goldsmith warned Prime Minister Tony Blair that "the imposition of major structural economic reforms would not be authorized by international law."

So far, most of the controversy surrounding Iraq's reconstruction has focused on the waste and corruption on the awarding of contracts. This badly misses the scope of the violation: Even if the selloff of Iraq were conducted with full transparency and open bidding,

it would still be illegal for the simple reason that Iraq is not America's to sell.

The Security Council's recognition of the United States and Britain's occupation authority provides no legal cover. The UN resolution passed in May specifically required the occupying powers to "comply fully with their obligations under international law including in particular the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Hague Regulations of 1907."

According to a growing number of international legal experts, this means that if the next Iraqi government decides it doesn't want to be a wholly owned subsidiary of Bechtel or Halliburton, it will have powerful legal grounds to renationalize assets that were privatized under CPA edicts. Juliet Blanch, global head of energy

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Bring Halliburton Home - continued from page 2

and international arbitration for the huge international law firm Norton Rose, says that because Bremer's reforms directly contradict Iraq's Constitution, they are "in breach of international law and are likely not enforceable." Blanch argues that the CPA "has no authority or ability to sign those [privatization] contracts" and that a sovereign Iraqi government would have "quite a serious argument for denationalization without paying compensation." Firms facing this type of expropriation would, according to Blanch, have "no legal remedy."

The only way out for the Administration is to make sure that Iraq's next government is anything but sovereign. It must be pliant enough to ratify the CPA's illegal laws, which will then be celebrated as the happy marriage of free markets and free people. Once that happens, it will be too late: The contracts will be locked in, the deals done and the occupation of Iraq permanent.

Which is why antiwar forces must use this fast-closing window to demand that the next Iraqi government be free from the shackles of these reforms. It's too late to stop the war, but it's not too late to deny Iraq's invaders the myriad economic prizes they went to war to collect in the first place.

It's not too late to cancel the contracts and ditch the deals. ☺

The Corporate Looting of Iraq

by Sara Flounders

**Workers World
July 24, 2003**

Before the water was running in Baghdad, before the electricity was operating, or the phone system, or

mass transit or even the hospitals, L. Paul Bremer III, the U.S. top administrator, declared Iraq "open for business."

The looting of Iraq by U.S. corporate raiders had begun. Pentagon bombers and tens of thousands of invading troops had smashed open the doors. Some of the same giant U.S. corporations that had received multi-billion dollar contracts to participate in the destruction of Iraq were the first to receive no-bid contracts for reconstruction. Halliburton, MCI World/ Com, Bechtel—all insiders in the Bush administration—were at the front of the line for giant handouts.

The Bush administration and Corporate America had a detailed plan for the reconstruction of Iraq long before Bush gave the order for the massive destruction and military occupation. The May 1 Wall Street Journal reported that the confidential plan prepared by U.S. Agency for International Development and the Treasury Department was drafted in February—before the U.S. invasion and occupation.

The plan calls for mass privatization of Iraqi industry, liquidation of insolvent Iraqi industries and assessment of others for sale. It also proposes a year-long propaganda effort to persuade the Iraqi people that this is in their best interests.

Overseeing the restructuring of Iraq's financial system is Peter McPherson, a top Treasury Department official who is now the head of the Iraq National Bank. The U.S. AID/ Treasury Department report echoes the recommendations of the Heritage Foundation. This powerful, neo-conservative think-tank calls for preparing state assets for privatization, including industries, utilities, transportation, ports, airports—and most importantly, the energy sector.

Ariel Cohen, a research fellow at the Heritage Foundation, wrote a June 17 UPI analysis entitled "Oil Privatization—Key for Iraq." The international implications of restructuring Iraq are made clear. "Iraq's privatization of its oil sector, refining capacity and pipe line infrastructure, could serve as a model for the privatization by other OPEC members, thereby weakening the cartel's domination of the energy markets." According to the Heritage Foundation, windfall oil revenue should be distributed to individuals.

What the war was all about

The restructuring of Iraq and re-conquest of the entire region is what the war was really all about. Corporate America is determined to lay hold of the fabulous oil resources and the developed infrastructure. The reconstruction plan is so deadly, though, that it is fueling greater resistance. No wonder. Every sector in society, except a handful of collaborators, stands to lose.

Decisions are being made, multi-billion-dollar contracts signed and basic industries sold off or closed down by U.S. corporate executives without any Iraqi participation. These decisions will affect the future of Iraq for years to come. All this has been done before there is even an appointed government in place.

This secret corporate plan was very different than the excuses Bush, Cheney, Powell and Rumsfeld gave for the invasion, which are now being exposed as a massive lie and a forgery.

The Bush administration's deception is now being called into question, but only because growing Iraqi resistance is challenging the real plan of corporate looting and quick super-profits. Iraqi acts of armed resistance now average 10 to 20 a day. GI deaths from attacks and accidents average one a day. The cost of occupation is rising in political and military terms. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld admitted that the military cost is now \$1 billion a week.

The changes ahead that the occupiers are planning are every bit as brutal as the 13 years of U.S.-led economic sanctions. The resulting consequences for the average Iraqi would be even more devastating.

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ACTIVIST PROFILE

JULIE HRDLICKA

Julie Hrdlicka has a BA in International Relations from the University of Calgary. She has been involved with various peace groups for the past 5 years. She has been on the executive of Ploughshares Calgary for the past 4 years and really started her peace work as an intern for Ploughshares doing research on Depleted Uranium during and after the Kosovo War. It was there that she first started to look into Iraq and the effects of DU on the population.

Julie has also worked as office coordinator for CANESI (Canadian Network to end Sanctions on Iraq) since the doors opened in Calgary in January 2001. CANESI, through Julie's hard work, helped to play a leading role in Calgary during the anti-war movement with organizing and mobilizing people from all walks of life in the city.

Since the UN Sanctions were lifted in June 2003 the organization has transformed into CANDIL. Julie continues her peace work with CANDIL and she recently went on a two week fact finding mission to Iraq (November 30 to December 14). You can learn more about her trip by attending "Iraq's future: Voices of its people" (see Upcoming Events on page 1).

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STANDARD ISSUE is a military term meaning officially supplied and sanctioned material.

NON-STANDARD ISSUE is the term used to describe the opposite, material that is contraband. We hope this newsletter will give alternative views, broaden the minds of citizens, and encourage them to voice their opinions about democracy, peace, international law and responsible citizenship.

What you can do to become a more responsible citizen.

1. Educate yourself.

Check out alternative news websites and join CANDIL or a similar group.

2. Contact your MP or MLA on issues that you feel they should be addressing.

3. Make your voice heard! Send your letters, commentaries, etc. to editors.

"The world is a dangerous place, not because of those who do evil, but because of those who look on and do nothing"
— Albert Einstein

Shackled in the 'free market'

Bremer, optimistically announcing plans to open Iraq to foreign investment, declared "Iraq will find that opening its borders to trade and investment will increase competitive pressure on its domestic firms and thereby raise productivity."

Bremer took the same message to the world's corporate and political elite gathered at the World Economic Forum meeting in Switzerland in late May. The terms used are all too familiar: protecting property rights, lowering barriers, changing laws governing trade and commerce.

During the 13 years of sanctions, the U.S. shut Iraq off to any economic and commercial relations with the countries of the world, froze all Iraqi assets and barred all forms of trade. Iraq was prohibited from exporting or importing and was unable to modernize equipment or purchase spare parts. Bombing and military occupation followed this.

Now Iraqi industries are told they must compete in the "free market." Edmund L. Andrews described how a flood of imports threatens the survival of Iraqi businesses. "Iraq's cloistered industry suddenly faces the full fury of globalization and international competition," he wrote in a June 1 New York Times article entitled "After Years of Stagnation, Iraqi Industries Are Falling to a Wave of Imports." Andrews explained that "... since American forces seized Baghdad, Iraq has been transformed from one of the most isolated economies into a huge new free-trade zone. Iraqi manufacturers, which employed more than one-tenth of all workers before the war, are almost powerless to match the new competition. Their equipment is badly outdated. ... The free market shocks are even bigger for Iraq's state-owned industrial companies, which produce everything from packaged food to electrical equipment and employ more than 100,000 people." Duty-free, cheap electronic products, packaged food and tons of other materials have flooded into Iraq. They have pushed Iraqi business that survived years of sanctions into overnight bankruptcy.

Privatizing of industry and public services is usually called by the innocuous term "structural adjustment." Through out the former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and many Third World countries, the results for the overwhelming majority of the people have been a total disaster. These measures, dictated by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, led to years of massive, chronic unemployment. The people of Argentina, Mexico, Bolivia, Korea, Thailand and every other developing country have lost jobs and essential services while transnational corporations with capital to invest have picked up the windfalls.

U.S. Labor Against the War (USLAW) released a report in mid-June entitled "The Corporate Invasion of Iraq: Profiles of U.S. Corporations Awarded Contracts in U.S./British Occupied Iraq." USLAW explained in a release: "Most of these corporations have been awarded no-bid contracts worth billions of dollars to rebuild and privatize Iraq, and bring its economy firmly under U.S.

control. Their names read like a rogue's gallery of anti-union U.S. multinationals, including Halliburton (VP Cheney's former company), MCI (formerly MCI/WorldCom, notoriously anti-union and now charged with the largest fraud in history), and SSA (the leader of the attack on the ILWU during 2002 contract negotiations)." The contracts are enormous handouts worth billions. USLAW says its report "exposes the labor, human rights, environmental and business records of these corporations—a sordid history of ... fraud, bankruptcy, overcharging, price-gouging, profiteering, wage-cheating, deception, corruption, health and safety violations, worker and community exploitation, human and labor rights abuses, union-busting, strike breaking, environmental contamination, ecological irresponsibility ..."

The best-laid plans

The occupiers are committed to their plan.

It calls for big layoffs of Iraqi workers, massive turnover of industries and services, cutbacks in all social programs. And it aims to end the numerous free services—from health care to schools—that the previous government had provided. Bremer also wants to cut the free food distributions to the entire population that kept 80 percent of the Iraqi population alive during years of sanctions. He considers them a wasteful subsidy.

Bremer's ban on employment for 30,000 members of the Baath Party impacts on many vitally necessary low-level civil servants. Bremer dissolved the Iraqi Army, putting 400,000 Iraqis out of work without pensions or retraining. He is engaged in a full-scale assault on the Iraqi state. This is calculated to shrink the public sector, including schools, hospitals and other essential social services, including sanitation and sewage and infrastructure needs of a modern country.

However, in order to have stability, the U.S. occupation must be able to provide the basic requirements of life. Electricity, potable water, communications, transportation, jobs, schools and health care are essential. But since taking over two and a half months ago, the U.S. has failed to provide even the bare minimum needed by the people while concentrating on suppressing their resistance and taking over their resources.

The Iraqi people, seething with rage against the occupation and re-colonization, are putting up increasingly fierce resistance. As it grows, U.S. congressional critics are beginning to complain that there is no plan on how to stabilize Iraq.

The plan to hijack the entire economy creates a contradiction that U.S. occupiers will not be able to solve. This unsolvable crisis, the criminal nature of the occupation and the growing resistance of the Iraqi people means that the only real solution will become increasingly clear to GIs on the front lines, their families and millions worldwide. Their voices will rise in a resounding demand to bring the troops home and end the occupation of Iraq. ♡