

MEET IRAQ'S NEW BOSSES



John Negroponte - US Ambassador to Iraq

JOHN NEGROPONTE was hand picked by President Bush to head the 2000-strong embassy in Iraq following the "handover of sovereignty" to the Iraqi people. He is effectively the most powerful man in the country. As an aide to Henry Kissinger he was responsible for chemical warfare in Vietnam, a campaign that cost many thousands of civilian lives and still continues to claim them today. In 1981-85 he was US ambassador in Honduras, presiding over a period of intensive US military support for the Honduran government in a campaign to suppress the peasants, socialists, unions and independence activists which resulted in tens of thousands of killed and recorded human rights violations running at 4000 a year. Imposing democracy on Honduras required an increase in US military aid from \$4m to \$77.4m. Negroponte was instrumental in setting up bases for the Contras in Honduras to conduct their murderous campaign in Nicaragua, and in supporting the death squads in El Salvador who at their height were killing 40,000 a year. He personally covered up the murder of 32 American nuns who were tortured and thrown to their deaths from helicopters. From 1989-93 he was ambassador to Mexico where he ushered in the North American Free Trade Agreement which caused a million Mexican farmers to lose their land and livelihood.

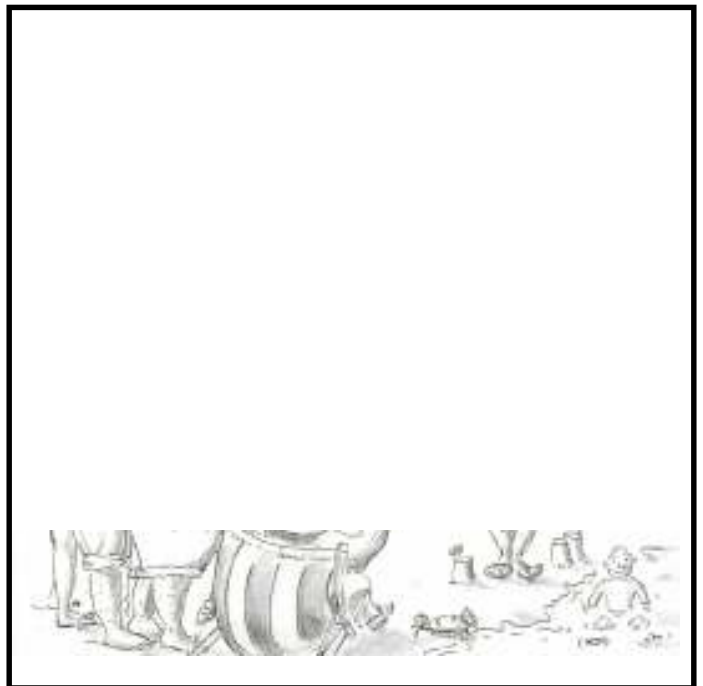
IYAD ALLAWI, head of the "fully sovereign" interim government, is a self-styled "tough guy" with a murky past. In the 1960s he assisted Saddam Hussein in his rise to power, a role not possible without close involvement with torture and executions. In 1971 he came to London, allegedly as an exile and opponent of Saddam, but some reports claim that he was part of a hit team hunting down Saddam's enemies abroad. In 1978 he was himself survived an axe attack, one of three attempts on his life, and thereafter switched his allegiance to the CIA and M16, and became an "asset", it is claimed, to some twelve other governments. His opposition group, the Iraqi National Accord, still receives funds from the CIA. During the 1990s Allawi took part in various US backed attempts to destabilise the Baghdad government, including a car bomb campaign which killed around 100 civilians.

Allawi was not the Americans' first choice to head the interim government, and definitely not the candidate preferred by the UN. But he won favour with the occupiers because his hard man image came with personal charm and a Western education. Allawi has a medical degree as a neurologist, although its value, having been conferred on him by the Ba'ath Party, is in some dispute. Given Saddam's methods in achieving power it could almost have been a sinister little joke on his master's part. Allawi's lack of humanitarian scruple is the theme of a persistent rumour in Baghdad that he shot dead six men in a police station shortly before the handover of power. The prisoners were handcuffed and blindfolded, lined against a wall and each shot in the head. Allawi told the onlookers, who included four American security personnel and some twelve Iraqi police, that the victims "*deserved worse than death*". Reports of the execution were allowed to circulate for about a week before official denials were put out. Two eyewitnesses however have described the event.

Allawi is likely to become Saddam's successor and will reinstate most of his security apparatus. Iraqis will continue to live in fear, but the West will continue to claim that life is "better" than it was under Saddam. That perhaps will be their old ally's final gift to them.



Iyad Allawi - Head of Iraq's "Interim Government"





PREPARING FOR EMERGENCIES
WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

RUN... REALLY, REALLY FAST

By now you will probably have received your copy of the Government booklet "Preparing for Emergencies", and are at this very moment sitting there repeating the mantra "Go in, Stay in, Tune in".

Instead, I offer this advice:

If you find yourself in the middle of an emergency, your common sense and instincts will usually tell you what to do. However, it is important to:

- Run.
- Really, really fast.
- Follow the advice of the emergency services, unless that advice is something other than "Run".

If you are not involved in the incident, but are close by or believe you may be in danger, in most cases the advice is:

- Run.

This advice is taken from the excellent satirical web site www.preparingforemergencies.co.uk which offended the Government so much the author was asked to take it down within 12 hours of publishing it.

The official Government advice is on www.preparingforemergencies.gov.uk

If you are wondering what to do with the booklet, there is a Freepost address to obtain more copies. I'm sure they would like yours back to help meet the demand. Did you know the recipients of Freepost mail are charged by weight? Of course I wouldn't suggest including anything heavy in your parcel, like a brick or anything...

That address in full:
Preparing for Emergencies,
Freepost CN2223, Croydon CR9 4WZ.

Back in February, when he was announcing his intention to bring in laws in "terrorism" cases to sidestep that tiresome *innocent until proven guilty* principle, David Blunkett was keen to tell us that this measure was necessary because the threat to the UK from suicide bombers was so great. But by August he was trying to back-pedal a bit. Rejecting suggestions that a terror attack was "inevitable", he worried that if we all thought this, then we wouldn't bother being vigilant. *"There has to be a balance between telling the truth and reassurance,"* he told the Sunday Telegraph (August 5th 2004), *"otherwise people are jumpy without it having good effect."* Hmm.. you can judge for yourself where the Preparing for Emergencies leaflet comes on this scale. I'd put it somewhere off the scale beyond *telling the truth*, at *trying to create the sort of panic in which you can easily persuade people that they need lots more unjust and repressive laws.*

Just in case reading your leaflet has made you panic, here's our Great Leader, Tony Bliar, with some comforting words: *"I cannot honestly say I believe getting rid of Saddam was a mistake at all. Iraq, the region, the wider world is a better and safer place without Saddam."* (from Bliar's response to the Butler Report, July 2004). Maybe people would like to write to Tony via their MsP and seek clarification about the ways in which the world and in particular Iraq are now better and safer.

Bush and Bliar's "War on Terror" has NOT made the world a safer place; it has increased the likelihood of terrorist attack in the USA and Britain. It isn't possible to guard against or give advice as to what to do in every possibility of attack. Wouldn't the £8m this leaflet has allegedly cost have been better spent in the war on poverty, inequality and injustice, the causes of terrorism?

BEAUMARIS CASTLE - OCCUPIED

Nine student members of Bangor & Anglesey Peace Group staged a non-violent occupation of Beaumaris Castle on the Isle of Anglesey from 27th-28th June in protest at the occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan by British and American forces, along with the ongoing occupation of Palestinian territories by the Israeli army. Beaumaris castle, long used as a base by the occupying English army for subjugating the Welsh population, was chosen for its symbolic value and high public profile.

Protestors scaled the walls using ladders in the early hours of Sunday morning and secured the castle. CADW staff contacted the Police, and van-loads of officers were drafted in. The Daily Post (28th June 2004) reported that these officers had taken up positions in the moat, ostensibly to stop more protesters entering the castle, while passers-by seemed bemused by the excessive level of policing at this peaceful protest.

The protesters said: *"We have occupied this castle in the name of Truth, Peace and Justice ... Our government claims to act in the name of democracy but its actions serve only economic interests. It has put financial gain before the safety of people. Its disastrous policies in the Middle East have made us much less secure here at home as well as doing untold damage to the Arab Peoples abroad... We assert that this government has acted undemocratically, ignoring our views. It has broken international law and waged a war of lies on the people of this country with words of mass deception."*

The protesters left the castle on Monday afternoon, calling for forces in Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine to also end their occupations of these countries. The nine were threatened with charges of aggravated trespass, but were eventually charged with lesser offences.

Photo: see front page.