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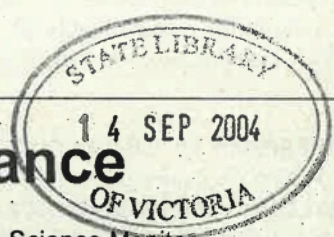
'IT IS RIGHT TO REBEL'



2004

The only class that can lead the toilers and the exploited masses is the class that unswervingly marches along its path without losing courage and without dropping into despair even at the most difficult, severe and dangerous crossings. Fits of hysteria are of no use to us. What we need is the steady march of the iron battalions of the proletariat.

LENIN: *S.W.*, VII, p. 350 (1918).



Singing The Resistance

August 17, 2004 By Annia Ciezadlo, Correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor

BAGHDAD – In Iraq, there is a saying that beside every palm tree, you will find a poet. To give you some idea of how many poets that is, there are 25 million people in Iraq, and 38 million palm trees.

Iraqi poets have a new injustice to protest: the US military presence.

"Don't trouble yourself with the dirty Americans, and don't trouble yourself with her dirty servants," chants a heavyset man, stepping into the middle of an admiring circle of men.

In a poem addressed to the renegade Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, he compares Paul Bremer to the founder of the Baath Party, Michel Aflaq: "Why does the family of al-Sadr threaten America?" he sings, as the men around him clap rhythmically. **"People were loyal to Aflaq, and now they have become loyal to Bremer / But we will always be ready to fight with you whenever you want."**

Picking up the theme, another poet tries to outdo his rivals. "Look, people, the eagle of Kufa came home to his city," he cries. "Moqtada, the Eagle of Kufa, to whose will both America and the Governing Council submitted! / He has at his command al-Mahdi soldiers who are ready to sacrifice their souls."

Cheering, the men begin to jump up and down, waving daggers and Kalashnikovs in the air.

You won't find these verses in any anthologies or literary magazines. These anonymous poets star on a compact disc, a low-quality digital video of a tribal gathering that you can buy in Sadr City's Mraidi market for a couple of dollars. Intoning their poems in low, dramatic voices, the poets are singing a traditional form of Iraqi oral poetry called *darmee*, with a complex and untranslatable rhyme scheme and a rollicking, irresistible rhythm.

In Iraq, poetry and politics have always intertwined. In 1917, as revolt brewed in Iraq against British rule, the Iraqi poet Saad Salih sent a letter to another poet, asking him to spread rebellion and enclosing a poem: "Oh, Ahmed, stand and call the brave free men of Iraq," he wrote. "Perhaps blood, pouring over the earth, will utterly cleanse our disgrace."

The image - of blood rinsing away national shame - lives on to this day in a poem called "A Page of Miracles" that is dedicated "To Fallujah: the City of endurance and Jihad." Dated May 10, 2004, for the day American troops left Fallujah, the poem honors the Fallujan fighters.

"The precious blood of your people has washed away / The disgrace of their submission to the enemy, of those who accepted humiliation and lick the boots of those who invaded our country," writes poet Muhammad Said al-Jumeily. "The blood which watered our fields / Will remind us forever that we should take revenge."

In stirring language, Mr. Jumeily likens Fallujah to a banner, a sword, a moon, a light, and a castle: "You are a castle, in which young men became old / When they fought the marines."

Naming specific neighborhoods in Fallujah, he celebrates their ouster of American troops: "Ask people in al-Sinaa about the American herds which / Lick their wounds after being defeated. / Remember al-Nazzal and remember how the American armor melted / And how it proved to the world that the mythical glory of America is false after their defeat."

The irony is that Jumeily used to write poetry denouncing the Baath regime. "He never hesitated to state - even in front of the governor - his revulsion and abhorrence publicly," says Mr. Turki, who knows Jumeily. "I saw the bitterness in his eyes against the ex-regime."

A grave and bespectacled young poet who loves Jonathan Swift and George Bernard Shaw, Turki makes photocopies of "A Page of Miracles" for all of his friends. He's not anti-American, he just wants people to see the battle of Falluja through Fallujan eyes.

"It is a celebration of the die-hards," explains Turki, who teaches English literature at Anbar University in Ramadi, close to Fallujah. "They are celebrating their heroic actions and the Iraqi exploits. They believe that they won, because they prevented the American troops from reentering the city."

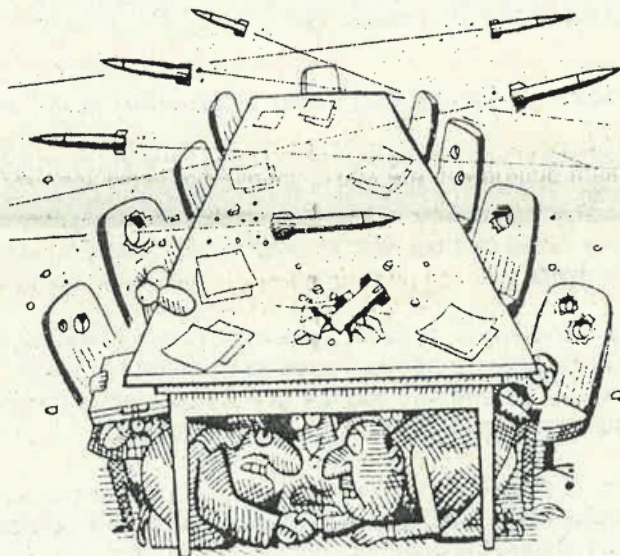
During the Fallujah uprising in April and May against the US occupation, Turki's classes stopped. When he came back to the English literature department, he found the black banners that commemorate the dead. Many of his students, most of whom were from Fallujah, had been killed in the fighting.

Ramadi Officials Want U.S. Occupation Force To Go Away

Sunday, August 15, 2004

THE FIRST IRAQI
NATIONAL CONFERENCE:

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THE STRAITS TIMES
SINGAPORE



Miel

Iraq, Civilian Fatalities, and American Power

Posted by David Peterson at 11:07 PM

Ever since Ahmed Janabi's report first surfaced on english.aljazeera.net that an "Iraqi political group," indeed, an expatriate Iraqi political group based in Britain, contends reports that approximately "37,000 Iraqi civilians were killed between the start of the US-led invasion in March 2003 and October 2003" (That's already

ten months ago), I have been watching and waiting to see which English-language medium in the States, the U.K., Canada or Australia was going to mention the fact that somebody, somewhere, had produced such an estimate. If only to denounce the estimate as uncorroborated fabrication, for Christ's sake. Or to allow one of the State Department or Pentagon spokespersons to disavow any knowledge of such irrelevancies. ("Iraqi group claims over 37,000 civilian toll," July 31. --For a copy, also see below.)

RESISTANCE BY IRAQ WILL GROW BECAUSE
THEIR CAUSE IS JUST!