

Democracy Now!

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British MP George Galloway: Elections in Occupied Iraq "Flawed Beyond Redemption"

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British MP George Galloway responds to the Iraqi elections and discusses his victory over various British newspapers which were forced to print retractions of earlier reports that he had received secret payments from Saddam Hussein. [includes rush transcript]

The elections in Iraq have been hailed as a resounding success by both President Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair. In a brief statement at 10 Downing Street, Blair said: "Democracy in Iraq is not just good for Iraq itself. It is also a blow right to the heart of the global terrorism that threatens destruction not just in Iraq but in Britain and virtually every major country around the world."

Not all British government officials feel the same way. Scottish MP George Galloway has been one of the most vocal critics of the Iraq war. He was expelled from the ruling Labour Party in October 2003 after he was accused of encouraging British troops to disobey what he called "illegal orders".

This past weekend, I was in England and Ireland as part of the international "Exception to the Rulers" book tour. Yesterday in London, I met up with George Galloway outside of BBC studios. I asked him about his thoughts on the Iraq elections.

\* George Galloway, British MP.

RUSH TRANSCRIPT

AMY GOODMAN: Yesterday in London, we bumped into George Galloway outside of BBC studios and asked him about his thoughts on the Iraqi elections.

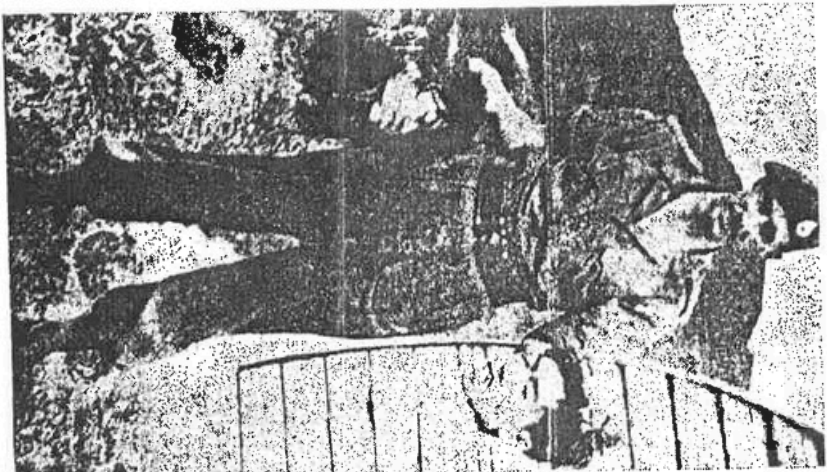
GEORGE GALLOWAY: They're a farce. They're rigged. An election held under foreign military occupation is always, by definition, utterly flawed. But one which is held in the kind of conditions in which this one is being held is flawed beyond redemption.

IF VOTING WAS GOOD FOR US IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BANNED YEARS AGO.

SANCTIONS AND BOMBINGS  
TURNING IRAQ INTO A LEATH CAMP

But in Britain now, 29% of the population support the Iraq war, down from something like 68%

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THERE'S A LOT OF TALK about beheading, but this photo's authenticity was admitted in the British House of Commons. It shows a British soldier with two Malaysian heads, decapitated "for identification."

fighting and the fall of the regime in Baghdad. That's a pretty spectacular fall and it will fall further still.

AMY GOODMAN: Finally, was it the Times of London, which newspaper settled with you and apologized?

GEORGE GALLOWAY: Well, how long have you got? All of them have settled and apologized, and The Daily Telegraph is the one I think you refer to which was my biggest victory. They had to pay me 150,000 pounds in damages and 1.6 million pounds in damages.

AMY GOODMAN: Why?

GEORGE GALLOWAY: Because they falsely claimed that I was in the pay of the Saddam Hussein dictatorship. The same kind of smear utterly baseless, gigantic smear that they leveled at so many sections of the anti-war movement. What they can't take, you see, is that we were right and they were wrong. They were the bugle blowers for one of the most disastrous foreign policy decisions ever taken by Britain or America, and I was amongst those who was telling them that this is going to end precisely in the way that it has ended, and they don't like that.

AMY GOODMAN: Your comment on the latest -- we know about the Abu Ghraib prison scandal from U.S. soldiers. You have your own scandal with British soldiers and then the Guantanamo prisoners returning home here to Britain.

GEORGE GALLOWAY: Well, you see, the ironclad consensus of the mainstream political parties, the front benches and the BBC and the other mainstream media outlets like to reassure each other that this is conduct unrepresentative of British occupation forces. But I'm sorry to tell you it is entirely representative. When Britain suppressed the Mao Mao freedom struggle in Kenya, they killed 100,000 Kenyans. Almost exactly the same number of Iraqis have been killed in the war and occupation. They used to cut off the limbs of Kikuyu tribes people and pin them to the wall and take photographs of them. They used to pay British soldiers five pounds per body for Kikuyu that they brought in. In Malaya when we crushed the Malayan revolt for freedom, we killed 10,000 Malays. I've seen pictures of British soldiers holding the severed heads of Malay people for the cameras. This is how all occupations end. These things don't happen because the soldiers in question are American or British anymore than general Sharon's army behaves as it does because it is Israeli, still less because it's Jewish. They behave like that because they are occupying armies, and all occupations end this way. They end in the demonization, the subhumanization of the occupied people, a belief in the inherent superiority of the occupied forces; otherwise, why should we be there reorganizing their societies? And that inevitably leads when you're dealing with 17, 19, 21-year-old young men with weaponry against helpless civilian populations, it always ends in an Abu Ghraib.

AMY GOODMAN: British M.P. George Galloway. We were speaking yesterday in London.



### DARE TO STRUGGLE AND DARE TO WIN

People of the world, unite and defeat the U.S. aggressors and all their running dogs! People of the world, be courageous, dare to fight, defy difficulties and advance wave upon wave. Then the whole world will belong to the people. Monsters of all kinds shall be destroyed.

"Statement Supporting the People of the Congo (L.) Against U.S. Aggression" (November 28, 1964), *People of the World, Unite and Defeat the U.S. Aggressors and All Their Lackeys*, 2nd ed., p. 14.

Historically, all reactionary forces on the verge of extinction invariably conduct a last desperate struggle against the revolutionary forces, and some revolutionaries are apt to be deluded for a time by this phenomenon of outward strength but inner weakness, failing to grasp the essential fact that the enemy is nearing extinction while they themselves are approaching victory.

"The Turning Point in World War II" (October 12, 1942), *Selected Works*, Vol. III, p. 103.



words of the Soviet novelist N. Ostrovsky:-

"Man's dearest possession is life and since it is given to him to live but once he must so live as to feel no torturing regrets for years without purpose, so live as not to be seared with the shame of a cowardly and trivial past, so live that dying, he can say 'All my life and all my strength were given to the finest cause in the world, the liberation of mankind'."

