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Sent: 12 October 2006 18:34
Subject: CAABU British Broadsheet Summary - Thursday 12th October 2006

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The respected medical journal The Lancet yesterday published a report by epidemiologists from Johns Hopkins University claiming that over 650,000 Iraqis have died since the invasion, and it's this story that makes every British broadsheet today, even if the prominence given to the story varies. If accurate, the researchers' figure of 655,000 deaths - which is the median of a possible range (allowing for data and statistical errors) of between 392,976 and 942,636 (The Times) - equates to the death of one in 40 Iraqis since March 2003 (The Guardian). The new figure is 13 times larger than the 46,500 toll computed by the Iraq Body Count group (The Independent). The report, which has been peer-reviewed by "four experts who provided detailed comments to the editors" (The Financial Times), was immediately rejected by President George W. Bush, who said that the report was "not 'credible'" (The Daily Telegraph) because "its methodology was flawed" (The Independent). The figures are so disputed because the report "is not based on an actual body count but on a random sampling of 1,800 Iraqi households in 47 areas across the country" (The Times); however, researchers managed to trace "death certificates in over 4 out of 5 cases to make sure that they had a double check on the numbers", the editor of The Lancet said (The Guardian).

At a speech to Muslims yesterday, the Communities Secretary Ruth Kelly said it was "time for a 'fundamental rebalancing' of relations [between the government and] Muslim organisations" (The Daily Telegraph), and warned that state funding would be only be available for Muslim groups which "were taking a 'proactive leadership role in tackling extremism and defending our shared values'" (The Times). The Communities Secretaries' words "amount to a warning to...the Muslim Council of Britain" (The Financial Times). However, a spokesman for the Muslim Council of Britain said that, "'if the government... [wants to]...merely seek out those organisations that will be less critical or parrot its policies, then this strategy will not succeed'" (The Daily Telegraph).

In brief: The American army chief of staff has cautioned that US troop levels in Iraq may have to remain unchanged until 2010 (The Financial Times); Israeli roadblocks in the West Bank have increased by 40% this year and consequently "the West Bank is increasingly being carved into separate parts, with travel...becoming more and more difficult" said the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Jerusalem (The Guardian and Associated Press); and radical cleric Abu Hamza has bought a £220,000 house despite having his assets frozen and being in maximum security gaol, it has been revealed (The Daily Telegraph / The Guardian / The Times).

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The Daily Telegraph

News

Back British values or lose grants, Kelly tells Muslim groups
 Toby Helm

"Muslim organisations that refuse to defend core British values and fail to take a "pro-active" role in the fight against extremism are to lose access to millions of pounds of Government funding, it was disclosed yesterday.

13/10/2006

Ruth Kelly, the Communities Secretary, said it was time for a "fundamental rebalancing" of relations with Muslim organisations if a new generation of terrorists was not to grow up in this country. The tough new approach would involve shifting grants towards those organisations which accepted and promoted a set of "non-negotiable values" including respect for the law and freedom of speech."
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2006/10/12/nkelly12.xml>

Iraq war has killed 650,000, says study

Nic Fleming

"About 650,000 more Iraqis have lost their lives since the start of the war than would have died if the occupation had not occurred, research shows.

American and Iraqi epidemiologists, whose research was published online yesterday by the medical journal The Lancet, said that a more than doubling of the mortality rate between the periods before and after the March 2003 invasion constituted a "humanitarian emergency".

The estimate, far higher than the figures produced by other bodies, including the Iraqi government, was calculated by randomly sampling homes containing 12,800 individuals across Iraq and checking death certificates."

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2006/10/12/wiraq12.xml>

Hamza 'paid £220,000 for house while on legal aid'

Duncan Gardham

"Abu Hamza, the radical cleric, bought a house for £220,000 in cash and let it out while receiving legal aid, it was claimed yesterday.

An investigation by the Legal Services Commission has led to a freeze on the sale of the four-bedroom property in Greenford, west London."

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2006/10/12/nhamza12.xml>

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The Financial Times

News

Kelly warns that Muslim groups risk losing funds and support

James Blitz

"Ruth Kelly, the communities secretary, has announced a "fundamental rebalancing" of the government's relations with Muslim organisations, saying it would fund only those that spoke out against extremism.

In the latest indication of ministers' resolve to recalibrate their approach to the Muslim community, Ms Kelly said yesterday that people of all faiths in Britain shared "non-negotiable values" - such as respect for the law and freedom of speech - that were under attack from Islamist extremist groups. It was not enough for Muslim groups to "sit on the sidelines or pay lip-service" to tackling extremism."

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/635b6900-598d-11db-9eb1-0000779e2340.html>

Iraq conflict has killed 600,000 since the 2003 invasion, says Lancet

Clive Cookson and Steve Negus

"Conflict in Iraq has killed more than 600,000 people since the US-led invasion in March 2003, according to a controversial study published online yesterday by The Lancet, a leading medical journal. The researchers said their figure, far higher than any previous estimate, was more accurate than the death tolls produced by official Iraqi sources."

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/4e7813ca-598e-11db-9eb1-0000779e2340.html>

Iraqi parliament approves contentious federalism law

Steve Negus

"Iraqi lawmakers yesterday approved by a slim majority a law that lays out a mechanism for forming autonomous federal regions, reports Steve Negus.

The law would allow Iraq's 18 governorates to hold referendums on whether to amalgamate into federal regions similar to the Kurdistan self-rule zone in the north."

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/a932c1fc-598e-11db-9eb1-0000779e2340.html>

Current US troop levels could stay in Iraq until 2010

Demetri Sevastopulo

"The US army chief of staff yesterday said the Pentagon was planning for the possibility that it might have to keep current troop levels in Iraq until 2010.

General Peter Schoomaker said he was not predicting the situation in Iraq would require maintaining levels of about 140,000 troops for the entire period. But the army needed to plan for that possibility."

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2502a226-598e-11db-9eb1-0000779e2340.html>

Comment

How Bush made evil-doers into an axis

Jacob Weisberg

(This article requires a subscription to view)

"...The president's biggest act of axis-enhancement was tying up the American military in Iraq and antagonising America's allies. While the global cop was busy in Baghdad, the world's other worst villains staged a jail break. They understood that Mr Bush could not readily respond to their provocations with force. The opportunity cost of occupying Iraq has also been felt in Syria and Sudan, among the other places where evil has gone unchecked for want of effective American leadership..."

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/348a2404-594c-11db-9eb1-0000779e2340.html>

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The Guardian

News

One in 40 Iraqis 'killed since invasion'

- US and Britain reject journal's finding that death toll has topped 650,00

Sarah Boseley

"The death toll in Iraq following the US-led invasion has topped 655,000 - one in 40 of the entire population - according to a major piece of research in one of the world's leading medical journals.

The study, produced by the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in Baltimore and published online by the Lancet, claims the total number of deaths is more than 10 times greater than any previously compiled estimate."

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/Iraq/Story/0,,1920166,00.html>

Jailed cleric under investigation over London property deals

Sandra Laville

"Legal aid investigators are examining whether jailed radical cleric Abu Hamza bought a £220,000 home while he was in prison. They are following a money trail from a flat in Hammersmith, west London, which Hamza sold for a profit of about £130,000 in September 2004, to the house in Greenford, west London, which was bought in October 2004 while he was in custody awaiting trial for soliciting murder and inciting racial hatred."

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/terrorism/story/0,,1920137,00.html>

Kelly challenges Muslim groups

Tania Branigan

"Ruth Kelly yesterday challenged Muslim groups who have boycotted Holocaust Memorial Day, in a speech warning Islamic organisations that sitting on the sidelines in the struggle against extremism was "not good enough". The communities secretary announced that funding for groups would depend on their willingness to take a lead on the issue, and defended the government's record, insisting: "Britain is a good place to be a Muslim.""

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/guardianpolitics/story/0,,1920225,00.html>

Aura of fear and death stalks Iraq

Peter Beaumont

"Baghdad resounds to the tales of the dead. Not the distant, dry accounting of news wires, but terrifying close-up accounts. Six beheaded corpses are dumped with their heads between their knees in Muhammad's street in Ghazaliya, a largely Sunni suburb of Baghdad. US soldiers ask him to search the bodies for IDs, fearful the corpses may be booby-trapped. He manages to frisk two before the effort becomes too awful.

This summer Muhammad witnessed a mass attack by Shia gunmen from a neighbouring area to his own, of running battles outside his house, the loudspeakers on the mosques coordinating the defence."

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/international/story/0,,1920009,00.html>

Gaza sliding into civil war

Rory McCarthy

"When they buried Rafiq Siam, the traffic stopped and hundreds of armed men, some firing into the air, gathered at the Gaza mosque. Eight men wearing red berets and black combat uniforms lifted his body wrapped in a white shroud and Palestinian flag and carried it inside with as much ceremony as the pressing crowd would allow.

Mr Siam, 40, a father of seven, was the victim of a single bullet to the base of his skull. He died on Sunday a week after he was shot, the latest victim in the worst outbreak of factional violence in Gaza for more than 10 years..."

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/international/story/0,,1919971,00.html>

Road blocks up by 40%

Associated Press

"The number of Israeli military road blocks in the West Bank grew by nearly 40% in the past year, part of an increasingly sophisticated lockdown that disrupts all aspects of Palestinian life, a UN aid agency said yesterday."

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/israel/Story/0,,1920023,00.html>

Comment

If someone freely chooses to wear a niqab, what skin is it off your nose?

Timothy Garton-Ash

"...Fareena Alam, the editor of the excellent British Muslim magazine Q-News, who wears a headscarf, tells me that she too feels uncomfortable talking to women in the niqab, because of that missing face-to-face contact. Yes, there's an issue here - though whether Straw was right to raise it in a newspaper article...is another question...I recently took part in a degree ceremony at Sheffield Hallam University. It was a heart-warming event. Many of the graduands were Asian British women - often, I was told, the first in the history of their family to go to university - and some of them came on stage to collect their degrees wearing a hijab. There was polite applause for each student and louder cheering for a few who were especially popular. One of the loudest cheers went up for a female student in a full niqab. Clearly her fellow students knew the woman behind the veil..."

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,,1919957,00.html>

This terrible misadventure has killed one in 40 Iraqis

Richard Horton - Editor of The Lancet

"...[The research team] identified more than 12,000 family members and tracked those who had died over an interval that spanned both pre- and post-invasion periods. The Iraqi interviewers spoke fluent English as well as Arabic, and they were well trained to collect the information they were seeking. They asked permission from every family to use the data they wanted. And they chased down death certificates in over four out of five cases to make sure that they had a double check on the numbers and causes of death given to them by family members.

All of these checks and balances mean that the 650,000 additional Iraqi casualties they report since the invasion is the most reliable estimate we have of civilian deaths. Most of these deaths have been of men aged 15 to 44...In the latest study there is also a large degree of uncertainty, but even the lowest possible figure it gives for the number of deaths - 400,000 - makes clear just how terrible our intervention in Iraq has been..."

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,,1919977,00.html>

Editorial Leader

Saddam Hussein - Trials and errors

"...Judicial procedure and decorum may seem irrelevant in a country that is reeling under seemingly unstoppable sectarian violence. Even if the human toll since March 2003 is less than the horrific, if contentious, new estimate of 655,000, Iraq seems to be bleeding to death and falling apart. Still, when Saddam was captured in December 2004, trying him was seen - cynically, short-sightedly or naively - as a way of obtaining retribution for ordinary Iraqis, drawing a line under the past and thus helping a new democratic political system to take root. Only the most diehard Ba'athists denied, after all, that he had terrible crimes to answer for...Justice cannot be done or seen to be done in Iraq today - impartially, efficiently or even safely. The old tyrant may be getting a far better deal than anything that existed when he was in charge..."

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/leaders/story/0,,1919953,00.html>

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The Independent

News

Survey suggests death rate in Iraq is now running at one killed every three minutes

Andrew Buncombe and Ben Russell

"The human cost of the war in Iraq could be far higher than previously thought. A new survey says more than 650,000 Iraqis have lost their lives as a consequence of the invasion by the United States and Britain, with an estimated 200,000 violent deaths directly attributable to Allied forces.

The new figure is much larger than all previous estimates - more than 20 times higher than President George Bush claimed 11 months ago - and will add considerable weight to the calls of those seeking a withdrawal of troops."

<http://news.independent.co.uk/world/politics/article1842559.ece>

Palestinian gunmen release US student after 24 hours

Donald Macintyre

"An American volunteer was freed unharmed last night after being held for a day by Palestinians in the West Bank city of Nablus in a bizarre kidnapping.

Michael Leighton Phillips, 24, was brought to the home of a former Nablus mayor, Ghassan Shaka. He was accompanied by about 20 gunmen from the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, who claimed credit for freeing him. Al-Aqsa is a violent group linked to the Fatah movement, headed by the Palestinian President, Mahmoud Abbas."

http://news.independent.co.uk/world/middle_east/article1842695.ece

Editorial Leader

Iraq - This shocking figure reveals the true cost of the war

(This article requires a subscription to view)

"The US authorities said at the outset [that] it would be too difficult to log figures for Iraqi casualties with any accuracy...Last December President Bush gave a figure of about 30,000 for Iraqi civilian deaths...[The research group from Johns Hopkins] has updated its study, using similar methodology [as in 2004] but with a larger sample. This has produced an estimated Iraqi death toll in the war to

date of a catastrophic 655,000. This is more than 13 times the current Iraq Body Count figure..."
http://comment.independent.co.uk/leading_articles/article1838335.ece

Letters

Veil puts fashion slaves to shame
 (Five more letters on the Jack Straw/veiling issue)
<http://comment.independent.co.uk/letters/article1838337.ece>

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The Times

News

Kelly penalises mosques' failure to tackle terror
 Sean O'Neill and Philip Webster

"The Government withdrew its support from Britain's largest Muslim organisation yesterday after accusing it of failing to lead the fight against religious extremism.

Ruth Kelly, the Communities Secretary, attacked the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) for boycotting Holocaust Memorial Day, criticising police anti-terrorist operations and "sitting on the sidelines" in the campaign against extremists.

Muhammad Abdul Bari, the secretary-general of the MCB, was invited to hear Ms Kelly's speech, which was delivered to a Muslim audience, but refused to attend."

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2-2400151,00.html>

Abu Hamza paid £220,000 for house while in prison
 Daniel McGrory and Sean O'Neill

"Gordon Brown was asked last night to explain how Abu Hamza al-Masri, the militant cleric, managed to buy a £220,000 house in London while being held in a top-security prison. MPs want to discover how the Islamist extremist was able to pay cash for the four-bedroom property in northwest London when both the Treasury and the United Nations had frozen his assets because of his terrorist links.

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,17129-2400156,00.html>

Straw backed by race chief
 Philip Webster

"Britain's race watchdog intervened in the row over Muslim veils yesterday by offering strong support to Jack Straw.

Trevor Phillips, chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality, said it was perfectly reasonable for Mr Straw to ask Muslim women to remove their veils. The Commons leader was unequivocally right to raise the issue, he said, adding that schools had the right to use their uniform and dress codes to stop Muslim girls wearing veils in lessons."

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,17129-2400150,00.html>

Majority show their support
 Peter Riddell

"...The Populus poll, undertaken at the weekend, shows that while most voters take a positive view of Muslims, they think more needs to be done to achieve integration and to root out terrorist sympathisers. More than two thirds think "Muslims make a valuable contribution to British society..."

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2-2400152,00.html>

Terror video mastermind faces US treason charges

Catherine Philp

"The California-born son of a failed rock musician who converted to Islam and became the mastermind of al-Qaeda's video propaganda unit has become the first American to be charged with treason since the Second World War.

Adam Yahiyeh Gadahn, 28, was indicted by a grand jury yesterday on federal charges of treason and aiding terrorists, which carry a maximum penalty of death."

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,3-2400289,00.html>

655,000 Iraqis have died in war, says Lancet

James Hider and Michael Evans

"The invasion of Iraq has cost the lives of 655,000 Iraqis, most of them killed as a direct result of violence, according to a disputed new study.

The figure - 13 times higher than the gloomiest of previous estimates - was compiled by random sampling of households across Iraq. It concluded that 601,000 people had died in the country's unrelenting violence, and the rest from medical conditions and diseases whose treatment has been neglected as a result of the disruption caused by the conflict."

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,3-2399950,00.html>

Chris Doyle

Director

CAABU (Council for Arab-British Understanding)

"Islamic Science and the Making of the European Renaissance" A lecture by Professor George Saliba - 19 October - for details:

http://www.caabu.org/index.asp?homepage=events&article=events&detail=george_saliba

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<http://www.justgiving.com/chrisdoyle>

see the CAABU section on the current Israel-Lebanon conflict

http://www.caabu.org/index.asp?homepage=key_issues&article=israel_lebanon

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