



SPECIAL ISSUE: IRAQ, 14.04.2004

NewsWire

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As this is being written a massacre is taking place in Falluja, Iraq.

Falluja is a town which has been resisting the occupation of Iraq since June. US troops have been forced to the border of the town since then. The town's people have fought uncompromisingly and have regularly been pummeled by F16 fighter jets and apache helicopter gunships. Civilians are being slaughtered on a regular basis.

According to the BBC "at least 87 US soldiers have died in action this month while aid agencies counted at least 470 Iraqi dead in the Sunni city of Falluja alone last week, with 243 women and 200 children among them." Despite this the US military maintains that "95% of those were military age males that were killed in the fighting."

Another 1700 people have been injured. The death toll is expected to rise as the siege continues around the town. Ambulances are being fired upon by snipers as they attempt to move around town and hospitals have been attacked. Medical supplies and bed shortages are at crisis levels and bodies are lying dead in the streets. Residents and international observers are calling it a massacre.

As the situation worsens for the occupying forces, U.S. Commander General Abizaid, has announced his intention "to get more senior Iraqis involved, former military types involved in the security forces." These can only be "former military types" from Saddam Hussein's regime.

This massacre must be opposed in every way possible. There is information overleaf about a London demonstration as well as other ways you can respond to these atrocities.

Eyewitness account from Falluja.

Jo Wilding is a British peace activist in Iraq. She has been working in a hospital and accompanying ambulances around Falluja collecting the sick and injured as the fighting continues. This is part of her account.

[At the makeshift hospital] screaming women come in, praying, slapping their chests and faces. Ummy, my mother, one cries. I hold her until Maki, a consultant and acting director of the clinic, brings me to the bed where a child of about ten is lying with a bullet wound to the head. A smaller child is being treated for a similar injury in the next bed. A US sniper hit them and their grandmother as they left their home to flee Falluja.

The lights go out, the fan stops and in the sudden quiet someone holds up the flame of a cigarette lighter for the doctor to carry on operating by. The electricity to the town has been cut off for days and when the generator runs out of petrol they just have to manage till it comes back on. Dave quickly donates his torch. The children are not going to live.

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If you want to get involved, e-mail imc-cambridge@lists.indymedia.org or come to one of our open meetings at 7.30 on the first and third Monday every month in Clown's Café, King Street.

"Come," says Maki and ushers me alone into a room where an old woman has just had an abdominal bullet wound stitched up. Another, in her leg, is being dressed, the bed under her foot soaked with blood, a white flag still clutched in her hand and the same story: I was leaving my home to go to Baghdad when I was hit by a US sniper. Some of the town is held by US marines, other parts by the local fighters. Their homes are in the US controlled area and they are adamant that the snipers were US marines.

Snipers are causing not just carnage but also the paralysis of the ambulance and evacuation services. The biggest hospital after the main one was bombed is in US territory and cut off from the clinic by snipers. The ambulance has been repaired four times after bullet damage. Bodies are lying in the streets because no one can go to collect them without being shot...

[Later, in the ambulance] we go down the street we were sent to. There's a man, face down, in a white



Iraqi woman shot by American snipers in the neck

dishdasha, a small round red stain on his back. We run to him. Again the flies have got there first. Dave is at his shoulders, I'm by his knees and as we reach to roll him onto the stretcher Dave's hand goes through his chest, through the cavity left by the bullet that entered so neatly through his back and blew his heart out.

There's no weapon in his hand. Only when we arrive, his sons come out, crying, shouting. He was unarmed, they scream. He was unarmed. He just went out the gate and they shot him. None of them have dared come out since. No one had dared come to get his body, horrified, terrified, forced to violate the traditions of treating the body immediately. They couldn't have known we were coming so it's inconceivable that anyone came out and retrieved a weapon but left the body.

He was unarmed, 55 years old, shot in the back.

We cover his face, carry him to the pick up. There's nothing to cover his body with. The sick woman is helped out of the house, the little girls around her hugging cloth bags to their bodies, whispering, "Baba. Baba." Daddy. Shaking, they let us go first, hands up, around the corner, then we usher them to the cab of the pick up...

[The full account is available on cambridge.indymedia.org.uk]

Report from Fallujah: Destroying a Town in Order to Save it

An extract from a report by Rahul Mahajan, author of "Full spectrum dominance: U.S. power in Iraq and beyond," on the ground in Falluja.

... Al-Nazzal told us about ambulances being hit by snipers, women and children being shot. Describing the horror that the siege of Fallujah had become, he said, "I have been a fool for 47 years. I used to

believe in European and American civilization."

I had heard these claims at third-hand before coming into Fallujah, but was skeptical. It's very difficult to find the real story here. But this I saw for myself. An ambulance with two neat, precise bullet-holes in the windshield on the driver's side, pointing down at an angle that indicated they would have hit the driver's chest (the snipers were on rooftops, and are trained to aim for the chest). Another ambulance again with a single, neat bullet-hole in the windshield. There's no way this was due to panicked spraying of fire. These were deliberate shots designed to kill the drivers.

The ambulances go around with red, blue, or green lights flashing and sirens blaring; in the pitch-dark of blacked-out city streets there is no way they can be missed or mistaken for something else). An ambulance that some of our compatriots were going around in, trading on their whiteness to get the snipers to let them through to pick up the wounded was also shot at while we were there...



The entrance point of the tank shell that killed Murtada Muhammad, age 4

Take Action!

Rally: The Stop the War Coalition has called an Emergency Lobby 10 Downing Street: GIVE IRAQ BACK TO THE IRAQIS! Saturday 17 April, 12-2pm, outside 10 Downing Street, Whitehall, Central London. Tubes: Westminster, Charing X.

Lobby: Contact your MP. Even if she/he is completely useless you need to contact them in order to 'shake the tree' so that public outrage can filter up the system.

You can find an alphabetical list of MPs, including (where they have them) their web-sites, e-mails etc www.parliament.uk/directories/hciolists/alms.cfm

If you know your postcode you can also fax your MP on-line using www.faxyourmp.org

If you want to leave a message for Jack Straw, the main switchboard # at the Foreign Office for general enquiries is 020 7008 1500.

You can fax the Prime Minister on 020 7925 0918 or send him an e-mail via www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page821.asp Alternatively you can write to him at 10 Downing Street, London, SW1A 2AA

You can phone the Defence Attache's Office at the US embassy by calling (0207) 894 0745, fax it on 020 7894-0726 or e-mail WereszczynskaAM@state.gov

Contact the MoD: a list of contacts is available on-line www.mod.uk/contacts/index.html You can write to them at Ministerial Correspondence Unit, Ministry of Defence, Room 220, Old War Office, Whitehall, London SW1A 2EU or e-mail them at public@ministers.mod.uk (including your postal address).

Direct Action & Civil Disobedience: Use the internet resources that are out there to organise your own action. There's help from Voices in the Wilderness and Schnews (see links at the bottom).

Post information on your action at cambridge.indymedia.org.uk and email: imc-cambridge-contact@lists.indymedia.org

Links

Cambridge Independent Media Center - cambridge.indymedia.org.uk
Electronic Iraq - electroniciraq.net
CamPeace - www.campeace.org
Voices in the Wilderness UK - www.voicesuk.org
Schnews - schnews.org
Stop the War Coalition - www.stopwar.org.uk