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U.S. is not losing Iraq war: Rumsfeld

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24 June, 2005

THE ARTICLE

U.S. is not losing Iraq war: Rumsfeld

BNE: U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld came under fire today in the American Congress over the questionable success of his strategy to date in Iraq. He assured lawmakers that America and its allies were not losing the war in Iraq and that the situation was far from degenerating into a Vietnam-like quagmire. He said: "Any who say that we've lost this war, or that we're losing this war, are wrong. We are not." His statement somewhat belies the fact that May was the bloodiest month in Iraq since hostilities began over two years ago. Eighteen more people died today in Baghdad in the latest daily car bombings. Mr. Rumsfeld did not try to delude anyone that the coalition was winning the war.

Mr. Rumsfeld also deflected calls for him to resign, saying President Bush had twice refused his tender of resignation. He seemed impervious to the reality that 1,700 U.S. soldiers had now lost their lives in Iraq and the public mood was swinging against his war. He insisted any radical changes of policy would be detrimental to the war effort. He attested any reversal of policy would only galvanize the insurgents. He scoffed at suggestions of setting a timetable to withdraw or of reducing troop numbers, saying: "It would throw a lifeline to terrorists, who in recent months have suffered significant losses and casualties, been denied havens and suffered weakened popular support."

WARM-UPS

1. WINNING THE WAR: Do you think the American-led coalition is winning the war in Iraq? Did you think the war in Iraq had been won over two years ago when President George W. Bush said hostilities had ended? Is Iraq another Vietnam for America? When will the war end? What do you think would be the answers to these questions for the following people?

- President George W. Bush
- A high school student in Baghdad
- An Iraqi insurgent fighting U.S. troops
- Your country's leader
- Saddam Hussein
- An American soldier in Baghdad

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

Donald Rumsfeld / U.S. Congress / the war in Iraq / the Vietnam War / Baghdad / Mr. Rumsfeld to resign / 1,700 US troops dead / terrorists in Iraq

3. IRAQ: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with Iraq. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

4. IRAQ OPINIONS: To what degree do you agree or disagree with these opinions? Change the statements so they match your own opinions and provide support for any changes you make.

- American troops should leave Iraq within six months.
- The United Nations should take over peacekeeping duties in Iraq.
- War money should be given directly to Iraqi people to rebuild their country.
- America should stay in Iraq until peace and democracy have victored.
- Donald Rumsfeld should resign. It's time for fresh thinking.
- Iraq is becoming another Vietnam.
- The war in Iraq is a small part of the war on terror. The fight must continue.
- History will prove Donald Rumsfeld brought peace and prosperity to Iraq.
- The war in Iraq is one of America's (and Britain's) biggest ever mistakes.
- Insurgents in Iraq can never be beaten.

5. DAILY LIFE: Choose one of the people below. Imagine you are that person. You live in Baghdad. Walk around the classroom and introduce yourselves to other students (also Baghdad residents). Talk about your daily life.

- A baker
- A UNICEF aid worker
- A ten-year-old child
- Other?
- A policeman
- A nurse
- A security guard outside coalition HQ

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. Donald Rumsfeld answered questions about Iraq on a TV show. | T / F |
| b. He said Iraq was turning into another Vietnam for America. | T / F |
| c. May was the bloodiest month in Iraq since the war began. | T / F |
| d. Mr. Rumsfeld categorically stated America was winning the war. | T / F |
| e. Mr. Rumsfeld has always refused to resign. | T / F |
| f. He said any strategy changes in Iraq would be detrimental. | T / F |
| g. He entertained thoughts of cutting the number of U.S. troops in Iraq. | T / F |
| h. Mr. Rumsfeld said militant groups had been greatly weakened. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| a. came under fire | energize |
| b. degenerating | offer |
| c. quagmire | fool |
| d. belies | unmoved |
| e. delude | contradicts |
| f. deflected | was attacked |
| g. tender | sanctuaries |
| h. impervious | sinking |
| i. galvanize | parried |
| j. havens | entanglement |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| a. the questionable | from degenerating |
| b. the situation was far | contradicts the fact that... |
| c. a Vietnam-like | to terrorists |
| d. His statement somewhat | for him to resign |
| e. Mr. Rumsfeld did not try | to the war effort |
| f. deflected calls | success of his strategy |
| g. detrimental | popular support |
| h. He scoffed | quagmire |
| i. throw a lifeline | to delude anyone |
| j. weakened | at suggestions... |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words in the column on the right into the correct spaces.

U.S. is not losing Iraq war: Rumsfeld

BNE: U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld came under _____ today in the American Congress over the _____ success of his strategy to _____ in Iraq. He assured lawmakers that America and its _____ were not losing the war in Iraq and that the situation was _____ from degenerating into a Vietnam-like _____. He said: "Any who say that we've lost this war, or that we're losing this war, are wrong. We are not." His statement somewhat _____ the fact that May was the bloodiest month in Iraq since hostilities began over two years ago. Eighteen more people died today in Baghdad in the latest daily car bombings. Mr. Rumsfeld did not try to _____ anyone that the coalition was winning the war.

Mr. Rumsfeld also _____ calls for him to resign, saying President Bush had twice refused his _____ of resignation. He seemed impervious to the _____ that 1,700 U.S. soldiers had now lost their lives in Iraq and the public mood was _____ against his war. He insisted any radical changes of policy would be detrimental to the war effort. He attested any _____ of policy would only galvanize the insurgents. He _____ at suggestions of setting a timetable to withdraw or of reducing troop numbers, saying: "It would throw a lifeline to terrorists, who in recent months have suffered _____ losses and casualties, been _____ havens and suffered weakened popular support."

allies
delude
fire
far
questionable
belies
quagmire
date
reversal
tender
denied
swinging
scoffed
deflected
significant
reality

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words '**defense (USA) /defence (UK) ' and 'secretary'.**

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the gap fill. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. STUDENT IRAQ SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about Iraq and the future.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

6. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- fire
- questionable
- far
- belies
- Baghdad
- delude
- deflected
- reality
- swinging
- galvanize
- lifeline
- havens

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. What was your initial reaction to this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the story?
- c. Are you interested in the Iraq war?
- d. How often do you read the news about Iraq?
- e. Do you always read news about Donald Rumsfeld?
- f. Do you think Donald Rumsfeld is a good man?
- g. Do you think Donald Rumsfeld sees a different picture of the war in Iraq?
- h. What do you think about the fact that May was the bloodiest month in Iraq since fighting began?
- i. How many more U.S. soldiers need to lose their lives?
- j. Do you think Iraqi people want the U.S. army in their country?

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What did you think about what you read?
- c. What are your opinions on the war in Iraq?
- d. Are your opinions the same as when the war started?
- e. Do you think Iraq is degenerating into another quagmire like Vietnam?
- f. How do you think events in Iraq will unfold over the next year?
- g. Do you think Donald Rumsfeld should be fired?
- h. Do you think U.S. and coalition forces will defeat the insurgents?
- i. Will the Iraq war make George W. Bush the most unpopular U.S. President in history?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

THEN AND NOW: In pairs / groups, talk about the following statements made about Iraq. Many people now believe them to be wholly untrue. What were your thoughts at the time the statements were made? What are your thoughts now?

STATEMENT	THEN	NOW	X
"Saddam Hussein is a danger to the world." (George W, Bush – January, 2003)			
"The major hostilities are over." (George W, Bush – May, 2003)			
"Saddam Hussein aids and protects terrorists, including members of Al Qaeda." (George W, Bush – January, 2003)			
"The Iraqi people will be happy to see US soldiers liberate them." (Donald Rumsfeld – January, 2003)			
"Iraq has weapons of mass destruction." (Colin Powell – December, 2002)			
"Saddam Hussein has the ability to launch a missile attack on Europe within 40 minutes." (Tony Blair – January, 2003)			
"Any who say that we've lost this war, or that we're losing this war, are wrong. We are not." (Donald Rumsfeld – June 23, 2005)			
Other?			

Change partners and compare the views you heard from your previous partners.

With your new partner(s), agree on a "truth" score to put in column "X" about each of the statements (1 = total, 100% lie; 10 = the absolute truth).

Return to your original partner(s) and compare and discuss your "truth" scores.

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

U.S. is not losing Iraq war: Rumsfeld

BNE: U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld _____ today in the American Congress over the _____ of his strategy to date in Iraq. He assured lawmakers that America and its allies were not losing the war in Iraq and that the situation was _____ into a Vietnam-like _____. He said: "Any who say that we've lost this war, or that we're losing this war, are wrong. We are not." His statement somewhat _____ May was the bloodiest month in Iraq _____ over two years ago. Eighteen more people died today in Baghdad in the latest daily car bombings. Mr. Rumsfeld did not _____ anyone that the coalition was winning the war.

Mr. Rumsfeld also _____ him to resign, saying President Bush had twice _____ of resignation. He seemed _____ to the reality that 1,700 U.S. soldiers had now lost their lives in Iraq and the public _____ against his war. He insisted any radical changes of policy would _____ the war effort. He attested any reversal of policy would only _____. He scoffed at suggestions of setting a timetable to withdraw or of reducing troop numbers, saying: "It would throw a _____, who in recent months have suffered significant losses and casualties, _____ and suffered weakened popular support."

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find more information on Donald Rumsfeld's recent comments on Iraq. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

3. DONALD RUMSFELD: Create a biography on Donald Rumsfeld. Focus on what he has said about Iraq and whether those things are true. Show your biographies to your classmates in your next lesson. Did everyone have similar opinions of Mr. Rumsfeld?

4. LETTER: Write a letter to U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. Tell him what you think of his recent comment that America is not losing the war in Iraq. Give him advice on what America should do in Iraq from now. Read your letters to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all write about similar things or give similar advice to Mr. Rumsfeld?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

a. F b. F c. T d. F e. F f. T g. F h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

a. came under fire	was attacked
b. degenerating	sinking
c. quagmire	entanglement
d. belies	contradicts
e. delude	fool
f. deflected	parried
g. tender	offer
h. impervious	unmoved
i. galvanize	energize
j. havens	sanctuaries

PHRASE MATCH:

a. the questionable	success of his strategy
b. the situation was far	from degenerating
c. a Vietnam-like	quagmire
d. His statement somewhat	contradicts the fact that...
e. Mr. Rumsfeld did not try	to delude anyone
f. deflected calls	for him to resign
g. detrimental	to the war effort
h. He scoffed	at suggestions...
i. throw a lifeline	to terrorists
j. weakened	popular support

GAP FILL:

U.S. is not losing Iraq war: Rumsfeld

BNE: U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld came under **fire** today in the American Congress over the **questionable** success of his strategy to **date** in Iraq. He assured lawmakers that America and its **allies** were not losing the war in Iraq and that the situation was **far** from degenerating into a Vietnam-like **quagmire**. He said: "Any who say that we've lost this war, or that we're losing this war, are wrong. We are not." His statement somewhat **belies** the fact that May was the bloodiest month in Iraq since hostilities began over two years ago. Eighteen more people died today in Baghdad in the latest daily car bombings. Mr. Rumsfeld did not try to **delude** anyone that the coalition was winning the war.

Mr. Rumsfeld also **deflected** calls for him to resign, saying President Bush had twice refused his **tender** of resignation. He seemed impervious to the **reality** that 1,700 U.S. soldiers had now lost their lives in Iraq and the public mood was **swinging** against his war. He insisted any radical changes of policy would be detrimental to the war effort. He attested any **reversal** of policy would only galvanize the insurgents. He **scoffed** at suggestions of setting a timetable to withdraw or of reducing troop numbers, saying: "It would throw a lifeline to terrorists, who in recent months have suffered **significant** losses and casualties, been **denied** havens and suffered weakened popular support."