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US Senate Probe Names British, French Politicians in UN Oil-for-Food Scandal

By Michael Drudge

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A U.S. Senate panel has presented evidence that a senior French politician and a British member of parliament received oil deals from Iraq's Saddam Hussein regime during the U.N. oil-for-food program.

The report by the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations has revived a controversy over whether Saddam Hussein gave oil deals to European politicians in exchange for political support.

According to the Senate's year-long investigation, Iraqi oil ministry documents show that former French interior minister Charles Pasqua got 11 million barrels in oil allocations and British lawmaker George Galloway got 20 million barrels.

Both men deny the allegations, and there is no evidence in the report of financial transactions that would confirm the two men actually sold any Iraqi oil options.

Mr. Galloway has told British radio the Senate committee had not allowed him to state his case before the panel.

"This is a very peculiar type of committee. They have not written to me. They have not spoken to me," he said. "And they have not answered my request to be heard by them, so it's no kind of investigation, just the repetition of a false allegation."

Mr. Galloway was expelled by the ruling Labor Party after he told British troops they should disobey orders to fight in Iraq.

Before the 2003 invasion, Mr. Galloway was a strong opponent of international sanctions against Iraq. And he visited Baghdad on several occasions and met with Saddam Hussein.

Mr. Galloway successfully sued the *Daily Telegraph* newspaper last year after it accused him of being an agent of Saddam Hussein. He was re-elected to parliament last week after defeating a pro-war Labor Party candidate in a heavily Muslim area of East London.

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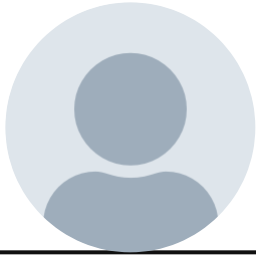
Congress, UN Clash Over Oil-for-Food Investigation

The United Nations and the U.S. Congress are locked in a legal battle for control of sensitive files relating to the U.N.-run Iraq Oil-For-Food program. The files were kept by an investigator who resigned last month from a U.N. panel looking into allegations of corruption in the \$64-billion program. A U.S. federal judge has issued a 10-day freeze as the two sides seek a compromise. Federal district judge Ricardo Urbina this week issued a temporary restraining...

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Kofi Annan (file photo)A published report here in the United States says U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan initially failed to tell investigators of the oil-for-food program that he had taken part in meetings with members of the firm that employed his son, shortly before the Swiss company began soliciting U.N. business.



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