

Iraqi leaders back away from reconciling

by UPI

BAGHDAD -- Some Iraqi leaders said they no longer believe the U.S. goal of sectarian reconciliation in the country is attainable. The leaders said sectarian tensions are too far ingrained in the structure of the country's government and advocated alternative goals to reconciliation, including simplifying the country's bureaucracy, putting experienced people in positions of power and improving basic services, The Washington Post reported Monday. "I don't think there is something called reconciliation, and there will be no reconciliation as such," said Deputy Prime Minister Barham Salih, a Kurd. "To me, it is a very inaccurate term. This is a struggle about power." Meanwhile, Iraqi President Jalal Talabani, a Kurd, voiced support for a nonbinding U.S. Senate resolution that suggested decentralizing Iraq into three autonomous regions for the country's Shiites, Sunnis and Kurds, the Voice of America reported. Talabani said he believes the Senate proposal, which is opposed by U.S. President George Bush and Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, doesn't undermine the unity of the country and should be considered.

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