



## Selecting a New Iraqi President

May 31, 2004

*Patti Ann Browne: Iraq's Governing Council postpones a meeting to select a new Iraqi president; the reason not given. But the delay suggests there is a disagreement between the Governing Council and the U.S. run coalition over who should get the job as the interim President. And joining us now in Studio B, Fox News foreign affairs analyst, Alireza Jafarzadeh. Thank you so much for joining us.*



**Alireza Jafarzadeh:** Thank you very much Patti Ann.

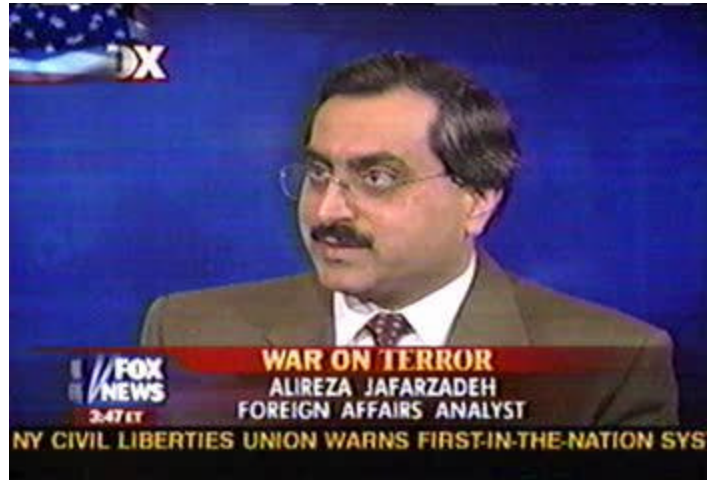
**Patti Ann Browne:** Why do you suppose there's been this delay?

**Alireza Jafarzadeh:** Well, first of all appointing a Prime Minister, a President and cabinet members wasn't exactly the way it was supposed to be; this was Mr. Brahimi's mandate. So there's clearly a lot of influence being played there. I think there's a tug of war. There is a lot of pressure both within the Iraqi Governing Council but I think also from the neighboring countries of Iraq; there are a lot of countries which have things at stake there; Turkey, Jordan, Syria, and definitely Iran. They want to make sure that the future President would look after their interests and look away when they meddle in the internal affairs of Iraq. So I think it's best for Mr. Brahimi to be allowed to do his job and make his own choice.

**Patti Ann Browne:** Mr. Brahimi being the U.N. envoy.

**Alireza Jafarzadeh:** Right.

**Patti Ann Browne:** Let's talk about the two main candidates here. The U.S. is said to favor the 81 year-old Adnan Pachachi, whereas the Governing Council members want Ghazi Mashal Ajil, tell us a little about the two candidates and why everyone is favoring different ones.



**Alireza Jafarzadeh:** Well, clearly Mr. Pachachi is more experienced, being a former foreign minister, he has a lot of experience in perhaps leading Iraq into success, and also dealing with the different voices and figures within the Iraqi Governing Council. Whereas Sheikh Ghazi –he is also known as Sheikh Ghazi there-- is perhaps more of a new face. But I think either choice, who ever is the future President, he has to do certain things to bring about success; definitely he has to deal with the issue of economy, health system, education, electricity, all the basic things. But none of that can be accomplished unless the question of political and security problems of Iraq is answered. And that can not be accomplished unless the future President or future leaders would state very strongly and firmly that in the future of Iraq there is not going to be any room for violence. Nobody would have any political gains from instigating chaos and violence, and there is no room for meddling in the internal affairs of Iraq. You just had Captain Nash on; he, very correctly, stated how Iran has been meddling in the affairs of Iraq in the South and other places; by funneling money, arms and agents. So that is the most important task of the future President.

**Patti Ann Browne:** And we want to get back to it. The presidency supposedly, from what I understand is more of a ceremonial role it is the Prime Minister that has the main authority and of course there's been a name for that, Iyad Allawi, what can you tell us about him?

**Alireza Jafarzadeh:** Well I think Mr. Allawi, the fact that he is a Shiite, so certainly he would be more acceptable to all the other parties and the majority of the population. He is very experienced and I think he should be given the opportunity, and be tested for this position. And I have the same suggestion for Mr. Allawi, that in the future developments in Iraq he has to be very firm and decisive in making sure that the Islamic extremists and those who pursue violence will have no room and no voice. And that is really the way to ensure success in the future developments of Iraq.

**Patti Ann Browne:** We'll see if it goes that way. Alireza Jafarzadeh, thank you so much for joining us.

**Alireza Jafarzadeh:** Thank you.