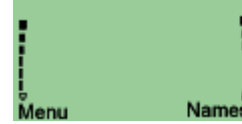


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US think tanks and post-war Iraq

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Public policy research and analysis organizations, “think tanks”, play a unique role in the formulation of US foreign policy.

Richard Haass, the director of Policy and Planning at the US state department, remarked, “Of the many influences on U.S. foreign policy formulation, the role of think tanks is among the most important and least appreciated.”

There are three principle benefits to the fifteen hundred think tanks that now exist in the U.S. They generate “new thinking” among U.S. decision-makers, provide experts to serve in the administration and Congress and give policy-makers a venue in which to build shared understanding on policy choices.

Donald Abelson, Professor of Political Science at the University of Western Ontario, distinguished U.S. think tanks from institutions in other countries. American think tanks are able “to participate directly and indirectly in policy-making”. Additionally, there is a “willingness of policy-makers to turn to them for policy advice.”

Strobe Talbott, President of the Brookings Institution, seconds the sentiment. Think tanks “provide the policy community with analysis and conclusions to use as the basis for developing new policies, and for modifying or retiring existing policies.”

The views portrayed are intended to give a sampling or cross section of influential think tanks that deal with U.S. foreign policy towards a post war Iraq. All three have enjoyed support by different members of administrations and policy makers in the last few years.

Their views demonstrate the range of ideas flooding into the Administration. It is impossible to say which think tank is the most influential. However, those pushing for war – namely Richard Perle, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz and Douglas Feith – are no strangers to the American Enterprise Institute.

The American Enterprise Institute, founded in 1943, claims to be “dedicated to preserving and strengthening the foundations of freedom, supporting a strong foreign policy and national defense”.

Brian Whitaker of the British Guardian newspaper comments, “Foremost among the great AEI minds tapped by Mr. Bush is Richard Perle, chairman of the defence policy board at the Pentagon and chief architect of the ‘creative destruction’ project to reshape the Middle East,

starting with the ninety billion dollar invasion of Iraq.”

Other AEI figures include John Bolton, under secretary of state for arms control, Michael Rubin – working on plans for reshaping Iraq at the Pentagon – and David Wurmser, author of “Tyranny’s Ally: America’s Failure to Defeat Saddam Hussein.”

In the last five years, AEI’s Annual Reports show revenues average around eighteen million dollars, with roughly equal amounts coming from foundations, corporations and (mainly anonymous) individuals, and the remaining 18 percent from conferences, sales and other revenues. Expenses average around fourteen million, with AEI investing the surplus in building its endowment, and prefunding future research.

The Washington Institute for Near East Policy aspires to “scholarly research and informed debate on U.S. interests in the Middle East.” WINEP’s first executive director after it was set up in 1985 was Martin Indyk, who later became Clinton’s deputy national security advisor on the Middle East.

Indyk made history by becoming a US citizen barely a week before he joined the National Security Council at the White House. He also worked for the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), a powerful pro-Israel lobbying organization, in the early 1980s and for eight years served as the Executive Director of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, a research institute specializing in Arab-Israeli relations. After that, he was appointed Washington’s ambassador to Israel. The Washington Post has used the adjective ‘pro-Israeli’ to describe the institute, probably because it was founded in part with money from AIPAC.

The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace was founded in 1910. It describes itself as “a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing cooperation between nations and promoting active international engagement by the United States.”

Its support for inspections to continue in Iraq singles it out from other well-known think tanks in the U.S. at the moment. It does accept contract research, but a large part of its income of eighteen million dollars a year comes through its publication Foreign Policy.

Those interviewed gave their own personal opinions, and said they did not speak in the names of their institutes.

Danielle Pletka	Patrick Clawson	Marina Ottaway
Vice President AEI	Deputy Director WINEP	Senior Associate CEIP
Post War Government	Post War Government	Post War Government
"We are perfectly keen on anybody and everybody in the Iraqi opposition as long as they are willing to work for a debaathified and liberated, democratized and federalized Iraq."	"As soon as security is stabilized, control would be handed over to some kind of international security institution. Ideally, that would be under some kind of UN auspices."	"I find it difficult to believe that the Bush administration is willing to go to war unilaterally and then turn over the administration of Iraq to an international force."
Debaathification	"Clearly we are	"I don't know how

<p>"should go from the top to the bottom"</p>	<p>going to gave to deal with a vast number of Baath officials. Pary membership runs to millions. Our experience in both Germany and Japan is that you start out by working with a large number of people, and then you investigate their backgrounds and remove people from power that way."</p>	<p>far down in the structure of the administration it is possible to go. Let me remind you that the US tried to de-nazify Germany in World War II, they ended up re-instating ninety percent of the people they had originally eliminated from any role in teh government."</p>
<p>"I don't think it is necessary to recognize a provisional government, I think it is very important that we have an Iraqi partner, not just after Saddam has gone, but before Saddam goes."</p>	<p>"If you have already recognized a provisional government with all kinds of positions of authority handed out, then it is harder to incorporate those people [already in Iraq] after the war."</p>	<p>"The only provisional government that could be put together would be formed entirely by exiled groups. If you look at other post conflict situations, the tension between the exiles and internal political forces has always been high."</p>
<p>"Should the US government come up with a framework? I think that it is very important that we articulate a vision. Without question. And I think that we have not done that. I think that we don't seem to have a sense of where we are going. Even if we know where we are going, the Government is not making it clear to others, for good or for bad."</p>	<p>"The exact details for how a post war Iraq is going to work depends upon how it is arrived at. If there is a very messy period of fighting ... the military will have to provide a much more obtrusive government. If Saddam's regime collapses ... then there will be a very different situation. We just don't know. So we should outline the</p>	<p>"I think that there shouldn't be a framework for government, we should not go in saying this is going to be the constitution.. There should be immediately a framework on how to bring the various political factions in the country. That is likely to be something that takes years of dialogue. Either it's a make belief</p>

	principle, and stay there as long as necessary but not one day longer."	dialogue, like the Loya Jirga in Afghanistan where all the decisions were made before hand outside the country, or it can be a very productive dialogue, the sooner the better."
Exporting Democracy	Exporting Democracy	Exporting Democracy
<p>"It is vitally important to understand that democracy is not about saying 'OK all of you can vote tomorrow', its about open political institutions, its about a system of education that relates to information and not political ideology, its about having newspapers that deal in reality."</p> <p>"The United States would like to see a better democracy in Pakistan and would like to see a democracy in Saudi Arabia."</p>	<p>"There are many places the US would not like to see a parliamentary democracy tomorrow, the prerequisites for free democratic elections don't exist. In the nineties, this was a mistake made in a lot of the former soviet republics. When a society emerges from totalitarianism it is necessary to have a period of transmission in which a free press emerges, political parties can organize and so create an environment appropriate for elections. I believe the US would favor democratization in every nation of the world."</p>	<p>"I don't think that at this point there is a US plan that goes beyond occupation. There is a plan on how the US military and civilian administrator will govern Iraq. I don't see at this point a plan how to go from this situation to an Iraqi government."</p>
A Secular State	A Secular State	A Secular State
<p>"I wasn't aware that anyone was keen to see anything other than a secular state."</p>	<p>"Not secular like French or Turkish secularism – where there can be no expression of religion in public places. Secularism in an American</p>	<p>"This is something for the Iraqis to decide. Before we decide if we push for a secular state, we need to understand what is the mood of the</p>

<p>“OK, there are parts of the INC such as DAWA and SCIRI, but I think that the vast majority of Shi’ites have no interest in seeing a Shi’ite state a la Iran in Baghdad.”</p>	<p>sense where there is a great deal of publicly expressed religious sentiment by bodies and public figures.”</p>	<p>Iraqi population. How much support is there in fact for a secular state. Let me remind you also that a secular government is not necessarily a democratic government – look at Saddam’s Iraq and Jamal’s Egypt.”</p>
<p>Relations with Iran</p>	<p>Relations with Iran</p>	<p>Relations with Iran</p>
<p>A new Shi’ite majority Iraq may align with Iran?</p>	<p>A new Shi’ite majority Iraq may align with Iran?</p>	<p>A new Shi’ite majority Iraq may align with Iran?</p>
<p>“That’s never been the case in the past. It’s an incredibly racist question, as far as I am concerned. It’s like saying ‘Well don’t black Americans identify more with Africa?’ No, they are Americans, Iraqi Shiites are Iraqis and they are the majority of the country and have been shut out of the political process unfairly, and it’s a pathetic reflection not only on the Middle East and on the Western World that we have not been interested in seeing a representative government there and that we have forced them to turn to the likes of Iran to look for political assistance.”</p>	<p>“No. I think the US is going to have to constrain power at the center. Iraq has historically had too much power centrally. The question is how to diffuse power, and to diffuse power in the center we need to construct some checks and balances in power in Iraq.”</p>	<p>“It’s certainly a concern. ... There are certainly Shi’ia groups including the SCIRI what are close to Iran. At the same time we really don’t have a sense of what support this organization has amongst the Iraqi Shi’ia. You know, we really have so little knowledge of the balance of political forces in Iraq once Saddam is removed. It is impossible to answer this question.”</p>
<p>Iraqi Oil</p>	<p>Iraqi Oil</p>	<p>Iraqi Oil</p>
<p>“First of all, Iraq currently produces only three percent of the current world</p>	<p>I think it is very important that the US sell the idea that they are not there for the oil. At</p>	<p>“I don’t think this is a war to control oil. I don’t think this is the main motivating factor</p>

<p>oil supply, and should Iraq come on line at the end of a decade may produce six percent. The idea that the US would somehow control Iraqi oil in a country where control of oil has been the paramount interest not only of Saddam's regime but also of the opposition is utterly ridiculous. The United States has absolutely no interest in Iraqi oil other than we buy oil from everybody. OPEC provides a miniscule percentage of the oil which we buy, and ever declining."</p>	<p>the same time, it is clear that the US has to protect the oil fields and will be seen to do that. This will give an unfortunate perspective. But in the months after the invasion, the message will emerge clearly."</p>	<p>of the Bush Administration to remove Saddam Hussein. I think there is no doubt that control of Iraq would give the US a strong position to determine how the oil is exploited and how it is used. I think that there is a real danger that the administration might try to do something that might back fire. I can see various possibilities. One is to try to use Iraq to break OPEC. Second .. the possibility that the US will try to use oil revenue not just to pay for reconstruction of Iraq, but to also pay some of the costs of occupation. The third danger is that the administration will manipulate future contracts to favor US companies .. an Iraqi government controlled by the US is not going to grant oil contracts to France, for instance."</p>
<p>Public Opinion</p>	<p>Public Opinion</p>	<p>Public Opinion</p>
<p>Do you think it is ironic that so much public sentiment is not being represented at a political level in the governments that want to 'democratize' Iraq?"</p>	<p>Do you think it is ironic that so much public sentiment is not being represented at a political level in the governments that want to 'democratize' Iraq?"</p>	<p>Do you think it is ironic that so much public sentiment is not being represented at a political level in the governments that want to 'democratize' Iraq?"</p>
<p>Of course not. War is hell. Americans are against war and</p>	<p>"No, that's great that we have difference of</p>	<p>"There is an element of that. The position of the Bush</p>

<p>rightly so. But sometimes war is the only option.”</p> <p>But ‘democracy’ and ‘rule of the people’...</p> <p>“Come on, forgive me, that is an incredibly stupid question. Democracy is not rule of the people, first of all. Rule of the people is mob rule. Democracy is the rule of law, and because of the rule of law we have elections every four years, every six years in the senate and every two years in the Representatives”</p>	<p>opinions. This is why we elect governments though. We don’t run government by referenda, democracy means the leaders get to choose and not the mob.”</p>	<p>administration is of course that the fact that you live in a democratic country does not mean that leaders should respond to the crowd. Leaders are elected to lead. .. I don’t think any president should rule by keeping his eyes on the opinion polls. On the other hand, I think we are dealing with a very extreme situation in which Bush is disregarding public opinion everywhere. That does not help. Not only is that not very democratic, but it is going to put the administration into a very weak position if things go badly in the war.”</p>
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