Conclusion

Iraq's Past And Possible Iraqi Futures

If we think there is a fast solution to changing the governance of Iraq, then we don't understand history, the nature of the country, the divisions, or the underneath suppressed passions that could rise up. God help us if we think this transition will occur easily. The attempts I've seen to install democracy in short periods of time where there is no history and no roots have failed. Take it back to Somalia.[1] —*Marine General Anthony Zinni (retired) Head of U.S. Central Command from 1997 to 2000, 10 October 2002*

U.S. forces in Iraq today face the problem of how to deal with a country whose civil society was largely wiped out during the Baathist dictatorship. Politics in modern liberal democratic states are based on formal and semiformal legal rational links between the governed and the governing, transparently relaying information and resources, mutually constraining the behavior of both state and society. After thirty-five years of Baathist rule, the last twelve of which were spent under a sanctions regime explicitly designed to cripple state institutions, these intermediary institutions in Iraq do not exist.

U.S. forces can look elsewhere for models of state building and reform and seek out the best practices developed since the Cold War. Interventions into failed and rogue states for humanitarian or political proposes have become increasingly common since 1989.[2] But the most important question at the heart of such interventions—can states be rebuilt and, if so, how?—remains largely unanswered.[3] The evidence from post–Cold War interventions is hardly inspiring. The Cambodia mission, the first large-scale UN attempt at root-and-branch political reform, failed to deliver meaningful change.[4] Intervention in Somalia resulted in the ignominious exit of U.S. troops and the collapse of the UN mission. Direct U.S. military intervention in Haiti to facilitate regime change did little in the long term to alter the underlying political dynamics of the country. In the cases of Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan, the ongoing and very mixed results of intervention mean that it is probably too early to draw

any long-term conclusions. This suggests that for U.S. forces currently involved in attempting to reform Iraq's political structures, the libraries are full of books that provide no guidance.

After surveying the rather disheartening examples of recent interventions L. Paul Bremer III, the former diplomat in charge of U.S. attempts to reform the Iraqi state, could turn to the first attempt at state building in the country, that of the British from 1914 to 1932. He would find in the example of the Iraqi Mandate a genuine but confused exercise in state formation, constrained by the international system of the time, domestic British politics, but also by the demands of Iraqis, keen to take their independence from the foreign state builders as quickly as they could. The Iraqis of the 1920s were deeply suspicious of British motives. Through violence and political mobilization, they forced the colonial power to leave much sooner than they had anticipated. Ultimately, however, it was the way the British understood Iraqi society that came to undermine their attempt to build a stable state. British colonial administrators, aware of the short time they would be in Iraq, set about devolving power to indigenous Iraqis they believed had social influence. Resources were channeled through these individuals in the hope that they could guarantee social order at the lowest possible cost. The resulting state was built on extremely shallow social foundations. The governments that inherited the state after independence had, like the British before them, to resort to high levels of violence and patronage to keep the population from rising up and unseating them.

Another lesson for Bremer to learn from the British experience stems from the ramifications of imposing order on an increasingly resentful population. The way a modern state attempts to impose order shapes both the society it seeks to repress and also the nature of the government itself. The technology that a state has at its disposal mediates the nature and extent of these attempts. Crucial to the dialectic of state-society relations is how soldiers and civil servants understand the way that society is structured. The British in Iraq in the 1920s, because of a lack of finance and soldiers, came to rely heavily on the coercive power of airplanes. Governance was delivered from two hundred feet, in the shape of regular bombing and machine-gun fire. This meant that state institutions never managed to fully penetrate society, mobilize resources, or ultimately engender legitimacy.

The two most important and urgent tasks facing Bremer are the reestablishment of order and government services. Faced with congressional worries about expenditure and the public's concerns about casualties, the strong temptation would be to cut corners, to search for local intermediaries to work through while depending on brute force to impose law and order. If Paul Bremer does succumb to this temptation, then he will not have learnt from the British experience but will run the distinct danger of repeating it.

Understanding Contemporary Iraqi Society

The country that the United States is struggling to pacify and reform is in many ways politically distinct, even among the states of the Middle East. Since seizing power in 1968, the Baath regime efficiently used extreme levels of violence and the powers of patronage delivered by oil wealth to co-opt or break any independent vestiges of civil society. Autonomous collective societal structures beyond the control of the state simply do not exist. In their place, society came to be dominated by aspects of the "shadow state,"[5] flexible networks of patronage and violence that were used to reshape Iraqi society in the image of Saddam Hussein and his regime.

The danger for U.S. administrators trying to make sense of a society they have little knowledge of is that they will grasp aspects of the shadow state as authentic representations of the Iraqi polity. In doing so they will be reproducing the very structures set up by Saddam Hussein to guarantee his own grip on power.

Another danger is that the United States, like the British in the 1920s, will succumb to "primordialization." This would involve them reimagining Iraqi society as dominated by the supposedly premodern structures of tribe and religious authority.[6] However, in doing this, U.S. administrators will not be discovering the "essence" of Iraq. They will again be picking up the structures of Baathist rule, aspects of society destroyed and then rebuilt by Saddam to perpetuate his presidency. There is strong evidence that in the early days of the occupation British and American forces did just that.

In the post–1974 era, the Baathist regime astutely used its newfound

oil wealth to tie the population, on an individual basis, to the state. From 1958 to 1977, for example, the number of Iraqis employed by the state dramatically increased from 20,000 to more than 580,000, not including the estimated 430,000 in the armed and security services. The most recently available figures, produced in the aftermath of the 1990–91 Gulf War, estimated that the civilian arm of the state employed 21 percent of the working population, with 40 percent of Iraqi households directly depending on government payments.[7] This direct dependence on the state was exacerbated by the emasculation of trade unions. Workers were expected to petition the government, in the name of Saddam Hussein, on an individual basis, for improvements in their working conditions and wages.

The atomization of society and the dependence of individuals upon the state increased dramatically after the 1990–91 Gulf War. It was (and still is) the rationing system that provided food for the majority of the population in the south and center of the country. Under United Nations resolution 986, agreed to by Iraq in May 1996, Iraq was allowed to import and distribute humanitarian aid under UN supervision. The food is distributed through 53,000 neighborhood grocery shops and regulated through a government-controlled ration card. Applications to receive a ration card gave the government crucial information about every household under its control. The restrictions placed on ration cards meant individuals could not travel between different areas of the country and had to pick up their food within the same region each month. The rationing system became an additional way in which the regime secured loyalty from, and domination over, the population. Sixty percent of the population depends on these handouts for their day-to-day survival.[8]

Under the pressures of sanctions, the official institutions of the state, with the exception of the rationing system retreated from society during the 1990s, especially in the area of welfare and education.[9] The flexible, informal arms of the shadow state replaced them. The shadow state, with its structures of patronage and violence, underpinned Saddam Hussein's rule and guaranteed his survival throughout the 1990s. It is through the shadow state that Saddam Hussein, and before him Hasan al-Bakr, set about reshaping society so it could no longer pose a threat to the ruling elite.

At the heart of these distribution networks was Saddam Hussein's extended clan group, the al-Bu Nasir, based in Takrit, and the affiliated tribes in the northwest of Iraq above Baghdad. The al-Bu Nasir and the tribes linked to them provided the social cohesion needed to run this unofficial system of regime power. This group consisted of up to 50,000 people, including their families, in a population of 23 million. They are still spread throughout state institutions and dominate the official and unofficial economies. Members of these clans held the top positions in every state institution, they ran the command and control structures of the Iraqi army, dominating all major sections of the economy. Ultimately they realized their safety and survival depended on the rule of Saddam Hussein.[10]

For these networks to be effective, they had to spread out from the center of rule in Baghdad, through and beyond the al-Bu Nasir, to the rest of Iraq. They protected Saddam by penetrating all corners of society, Sunni, Shia and Kurd, rural and urban, north, central and south. The conscious and utilitarian targeting and co-opting of specific members of society profoundly changed the individual's relations with the wider population and the ruling elite in Baghdad. They became conduits for regime resources but in return had to guarantee the passivity of that section of society they had become responsible for. In that respect the "figures of social influence" that U.S. and UK forces are now using as intermediaries are almost certainly the very same individuals picked by Saddam Hussein to act as his eyes and ears. The UK and U.S. in selecting them did so for the very same reason that Saddam would have. They would act as channels for resources from the central government, thus generating good will but also power for the chosen individuals. In return they are expected to provide intelligence about society and guarantee its passivity. However, as Saddam fully understood (unlike the Coalition Provisional Authority), these informal and highly personalized networks undermine the creation of a legal-rational bureaucracy and have a flexibility and tenacity that make them very difficult to root out. Coalition forces run the danger of unconsciously bolstering the networks of the shadow state created by the regime they ousted.

A good example of this process is the Baathist regime's relations with Iraqi "tribes" and its attitude to "tribalism." In the late nineteenth century, the introduction of a market economy in land and agriculture and

the slow increase in the strength of the state transformed the nature of rural life in what was to become Iraq. Tribal life and the role of the shaikh were caught up in this transformation.[11] On taking power, the Baathists sought to exacerbate what they saw as the disintegration of "premodern" tribalism, linked as it was in their minds to collaboration with British Imperialism, backwardness and state weakness. This process was driven forward by experiments in the collectivization of land ownership in 1970 and nationalization of land in 1971.[12]

However, with the rise in dominance of the Tikritis within the ruling elite and the increased personalization of power around Hasan al-Bakr and Saddam Hussein, the stability of Baath Party rule came to depend for its coherence on the al-Bu Nasir tribe, and within it the Beijat clan group and Majid extended family. So as the Baath sought to extend their totalitarian and patrimonial grip on society, they tried to either co-opt tribal groupings, where they would be useful for the stability of the ruling elite's power, or break them where they were perceived as a threat.[13] This process reached its peak in the 1991 Gulf War and the uprisings that swept across the north and south of the country in its aftermath.[14] The ruling elite where shocked at the hatred shown to senior Baath Party officials in the conurbations in the south of the country. However, one of the main reasons the rebellions in the south in 1991 did not succeed was that the rural population largely refused to take part. Instead, they chose to remain passive until it was clear which side, the government or the rebels, would prevail. This allowed the Iraqi army to move through the largely passive countryside of southern Iraq dealing with one rebellious urban center after another.

After 1991, as sanctions began to take effect, there was a rapid decline in all the official institutions of the state. Baghdad was forced to cut back on the resources they could devote to the armed forces and security services. In the aftermath of the 1991 revolt, Saddam also marginalized the Baath Party's role as a vehicle for societal mobilization. The quiescence of the rural population during the 1991 revolt allowed Saddam Hussein to develop a further network of patronage. In effect he decentered responsibility for the provision of order to reinvigorated and recreated tribal networks and tribal shaikhs. By appointing "recognized shaikhs" across Iraq, Saddam Hussein targeted another group of people to receive state resources in return for loyalty to him. He created yet another informal

channel of power to run alongside the others that served him so well over the twenty or so years of his rule. It is these very same "recognized shaikhs" that the British and American forces have begun to look to for the cost-effective provision of order in the post-Saddam era. It is no great surprise that the reappointment of these figure has not been greeted with universal warmth by the rest of Iraqi society.

Washington's Approach to the Reform of Postwar Iraq: The Coalition Provisional Authority

Although it can be argued that the neoconservatives spent most of the 1990s plotting how they would remove Saddam Hussein once they returned to power, they appear to have put very little effort into planning what the United States would actually do with Iraq once Saddam was gone. There are two explanations for this apparent oversight. The first is the ideological vision of Iraq and its state-society relations that dominated key decision makers' perceptions. Advisers to the government anticipated that at the advent of the air war or in the immediate aftermath of the invasion, an uprising or coup would remove Saddam Hussein while leaving the rest of his governing structures in place.[15] The U.S. president himself, in a speech in the run-up to war, actively encouraged the Iraqi armed forces to move against their leaders.[16] In addition to this, the long and close association between one of the exiled opposition parties, the Iraqi National Congress, and the neoconservatives meant that excessively optimistic predictions about the welcome U.S. troops would receive once they reached Iraq where taken at face value.[17] Under this rubric, the need for large numbers of grounds troops or detailed planning was negated. Upon liberation, it was assumed that U.S. troops would find state structures largely in place and operating coherently. Civil servants, more than happy to serve their liberators, would staff them.

The reality of the war and its aftermath were quite different. Sections of the mainstream army fought more tenaciously than most people expected. The level of Iraqi resistance in the south, especially in Umm Qasr and Nassiriyah, surprised U.S. Central Command, Iraqi analysts, and possibly even the government in Baghdad itself. There were two possible reasons why the regular army in the south fought much harder than

expected. The first was that the Iraqi command and control had been decentralized from Baghdad down to the level of each town. This means that although Baghdad had effectively been cut off from its troops outside the city early in the war, the troops continued to fight on because (unlike in 1991) the local commanders had been given executive power to run the battle in the best way they could. Many of these commanders were trusted high-ranking military figures, men like Ali Hasan Majid. The second reason for the tenacity of troops fighting in the south was, however, even more problematic: Iraqi nationalism. There is no doubt that ordinary conscript soldiers, the majority of whom were Shia, hated Saddam Hussein. But there exists in Iraq today a militant and aggressive Iraqi nationalism, born of three wars and over a decade of sanctions. This was rallied during the war to motivate troops fighting against U.S. forces and has now come to dog the CPA.

Once the initial military opposition had been overcome and Baghdad seized, plans to take state institutions more or less intact and use them to rule Iraq also proved to be misguided. After twelve years of sanctions, the fabric of Iraqi government had been stretched very thin. In 2003, the Iraqi state institutions faced their third war since 1980. This, combined with the three weeks of looting and the general lawlessness that greeted liberation, meant that large numbers of civil servants simply went home and stayed there. The CPA, instead of finding a coherent state, found a governmental shell that it will have to spend many years and a great deal of money to reconstitute.

The second reason for the lack of substantive planning in the run-up to the war has more to do with the internecine ideological battles that have come to be a hallmark of the Bush presidency. Initially, the State Department set up a series of committees, largely staffed by Iraqi exiles, to plan for the future of Iraq. In January 2003, the President signed a secret National Security Policy Directive authorizing the coordination of Iraq policy.[18] After much interdepartmental infighting, the Office for Post-War Planning at the Pentagon was given overall responsibility for Iraq. Given the long-running dispute between the State Department and the Pentagon, it was no surprise that the initial work done by the State Department on the future of Iraq was largely unused. It was Douglas Feith, the Under Secretary of State for Defense Planning, who gained overall responsibility for the project's management. The fact that Feith is a noted unilateralist

signaled U.S. determination to thwart international coordination and United Nations involvement in the reform of the Iraqi state.

A former General, Jay Garner, headed the team of mostly retired diplomats, senior military figures and former CIA staffers who were first charged with rebuilding the Iraqi state in the immediate aftermath of the liberation of Baghdad.[19] The vast majority of the officials appointed did not speak Arabic. They were assisted by what Garner termed "the Michigan bunch," a group of exiled Iraqis on short-term contracts hired to act as translators. Below General Garner, three regional coordinators for the south, center, and north of the country were appointed. The division of the country into three governing sectors was presented as an arrangement designed to efficiently manage the huge task of administering Iraq. But the measure immediately gave rise to fears that it was intended to establish the basis for a permanent, decentralized federal structure, long promoted by neoconservative think tanks in Washington. Under the guise of "consociationalism," this policy recommendation had been put forward by the Office of the Vice President.

As the size of the administrative task began to dawn on U.S. officials, such long-term grand designs had to be shelved. General Garner appears to have been made to pay the price for lack of prewar planning and postwar progress. His replacement to head the Coalition Provisional Authority, Paul Bremer, was chosen in an attempt to bridge the battle lines between the neoconservatives in charge of postwar construction and their colleagues at the State Department. Politically close to the neoconservatives in the Pentagon, Bremer was trained as a foreign service officer in the State Department. With the president's ear and with his authority, the administration hoped that Bremer could weld together the CPA's disparate factions and provide the U.S. effort in Iraq with unified strategic leadership.

One of Bremer's first decisions upon arriving in Baghdad was to delay delegating power to a leadership council composed of the exiled parties. Movement toward creating a democratic body had been both hasty and ramshackle. The first two meetings, at Ur near Nassariyah on 15 March and then in Baghdad, on 28 April, were designed to draw together Iraqis into some form of representative assembly. In Ur the divisions between the State Department and the Pentagon and their proxies in the Iraqi

opposition, immediately made themselves evident in petty bickering.[20] The meeting was even more notable for those who chose not to attend. The large demonstration against the meeting outside highlighted the small number of delegates (eighty) and the truth of the accusations that the delegates represented little more than themselves. With three hundred in attendance, the turnout in Baghdad was larger, but it did not reach the two to three thousand predicted in advance. The American organizers refused to reveal how many had been invited but did concede that the meeting was "not sufficiently representative to establish an interim authority".[21] The fact that over half the attendees were recently returned exiles indicates a larger problem of confidence in the U.S. occupation. Many Iraqis, aware of the unpopularity of the U.S. presence in their country and believing it to be temporary, are still simply sitting on their hands. Iraqis are shunning involvement in government institutions, political and administrative, until the situation becomes clearer and the risks of political involvement fewer.

Aside from the unpopularity of their presence, the small numbers of troops available for the commanders to deploy has plagued the U.S. effort at reconstruction of postwar Iraq. Lack of an adequate number of soldiers has determined both the nature and quality of the law and order American troops have been able to enforce. In the run-up to war, Army Chief of Staff Eric Shinseki in a senate hearing called for "hundreds of thousands" of troops to guarantee order. Michael O'Hanlon, of the Brookings Institute, based on his experience in the Balkans, took the figure of 150,000 as a minimum with at least 100,000 staying in the country for several years.[22] In July of 2003, there were only 21,000 U.S. troops attempting to impose order on Baghdad. One hundred and forty-five thousand troops were in Iraq overall.[23]

Interaction with Iraqi Society

The Coalition Provisional Authority, in the early going, was internally incoherent and politically divided. Externally its interaction with Iraqi society was, at best, intermittent. With very few Arabic speakers on their staff, the coalition assumed the Iraqi exiles it was bringing back would provide its eyes and ears. These intermediaries proved much less effective

than was hoped. Despite setting up numerous offices around Baghdad, publishing party newspapers, and spending large sums of money, the two main exile groups, the Iraqi National Congress and Iraqi National Accord have not put down roots in society. They have instead elicited hostility and anger on the part of many Iraqi citizens. I spoke with one Baghdadi who, under Saddam's rule, had worked secretly for one of the exile groups. He had been arrested and sentenced to death. After nine months on death row in the notorious Abu Ghraib prison he survived only because the regime collapsed. When I asked about the party for which he had nearly lost his life, he replied, "I would have done anything to see the back of Saddam. But since the exiles have returned I have been disappointed; I do not trust them."

Given the lack of troops and intelligence available to U.S. administrators—and the "ad-hoc" nature of postwar planning—it is not surprising that U.S. and UK troops have been searching for "figures of local influence." Such individuals are needed to interpret Iraqi society, to guarantee order, and ultimately to reform and rebuild governing institutions. But the troops operating in chaotic circumstances on the ground have had little alternative but to take those individuals who have presented themselves at face value. In lieu of a coherent understanding of the society they are charged with ruling, they, like the British in the 1920s, are forced to rely upon what they think Iraq should look like rather than upon empirical knowledge supplied by experts with a deep knowledge of the social forces at work.

In Basra, for example, there has been the speedy return of the shadow state, both in its "tribal" and commercial guises. On 8 April 2003, a British colonel, Chris Vernon, announced that coalition administrators had appointed "a tribal leader, a shaikh" to form the civilian leadership within Basra province. Although the colonel was reluctant to name the shaikh, he assured journalists at the news conference—hastily convened to announce this breakthrough in civilian government—that they had ascertained that the individual was "worthwhile and credible and has authority in the local area, particularly with the tribal chiefs."[24] This individual turned out not to be the authentic representation of tribal society in and around Basra that Vernon had hoped, but Muzahim Mustafa Kanan Tameemi, a former brigadier in the Iraqi army and a member of the Baath Party. Tameemi's appointment caused a near riot outside his

house. Demonstrators demanded that they not be represented either by a tribal figure or a member of the Baath Party.

In the aftermath of this embarrassing mistake, Tameemi was unceremoniously dropped. He was replaced by Ghalib Kubba, described as "the wealthiest businessman" in the city. Besides mistaking the nature of tribal representation in Iraq, the British army also misunderstood the nature of entrepreneurial activity under Saddam Hussein. "He's a partner of Uday Hussein. It's well known," asserted Abbas Mohammed Musa, forty-seven, a fertilizer merchant. "All commercial people from the first-class in Iraq, all of them are partners of Saddam Hussein. We want somebody who is representative of Iraqi people."[25]

American and British commanders on the ground in Iraq are hamstrung by a shortage of battlefield troops and have little accurate information about the country. In this situation they are forced to accept without verification or local knowledge Iraqis who present themselves at the barracks' gate claiming to be able to represent the needs and wants of the wider population. What appears "authentic" to these commanders is revealing. British forces, faced with the ongoing crisis in law and order across the south of Iraq, turned to their own history of state building in Iraq. According to reports, they are "dusting down the system of law used during the 38-year British mandate in Iraq in an urgent effort to reach a workable interim criminal and civil code before a new constitution and legal system is agreed."[26] The law being exhumed is the Tribal, Criminal, and Civil Disputes Regulations, drawn up by British occupying forces in February 1916 and introduced into Iraqi law by Royal *Iradah* in 1924. It fundamentally misconceived the nature of Iraqi society. By dividing Iraqi people into rural and urban communities, it entrusted the rural population to the authority of tribal shaikhs who had, even by the 1920s, lost any ability to influence the so-called tribal groups to whom they were meant to dispense justice. It was this misconception that underlay the social unrest that led to the bloody coup of 1958, resulting in the murder of the British-installed monarchy and opening a new, even more oppressive chapter in Iraqi political instability.[27]

Evidence from Umm Qasr suggests a different and more sustainable approach to rebuilding Iraq's governing structures. The experiment there has been acknowledged by American forces to be a potential model for

the rest of Iraq.[28] This time, instead of grand figures of social influence, the Iraqis who presented themselves to British troops were modest, midlevel civil servants—teachers. They were self-selected and approached British soldiers asking when the schools could be reopened. The U.S. Agency for International Development moved quickly to capitalize on this development, giving the council formed by these men $41,000 for offices and computers. This experiment in "micromanagement" implies the value of a "root and branch" approach to the reform of Iraq's governing dynamics. If carried to its logical conclusion, such a policy would involve a sustained attempt not only to change the visible institutions of the state and their interaction with society, but also to transform the dynamics of the shadow state by creating the basis for social trust. This would be an extremely ambitious undertaking, whose ultimate aim would be to transform the values that have underpinned the last thirty-five years of Iraqi public life.[29] By choosing low-level technocrats in Umm Qasr over the remnants of the shadow state, a start has been made along this ambitious road. It remains to be seen if UK and U.S. forces have the local knowledge, resources, and staying power to sustain this immense and truly transformative task.

Conclusion

Iraqi politics, from the creation of the state in the aftermath of the First World War until the removal of Saddam Hussein, have been dominated by four interlinked structural problems. These are: first, the deployment of extreme levels of organized violence by the state to dominate and shape society; second, the use of state resources—jobs, development aid, and patronage—to buy the loyalty of sections of society; third, the use of oil revenue by the state to increase its autonomy from society; and, finally, the exacerbation and re-creation by the state of communal and ethnic divisions as a strategy of rule. These interlinked problems have fuelled the state's domestic illegitimacy, its tendency to embark on military adventurism beyond its own borders, and even the Baathist regime's drive to acquire weapons of mass destruction. Seen in this perspective, Saddam Hussein must be understood less as the cause of Iraq's violent political culture—or even of Iraq's role as a source of regional instability—and

more as the symptom, albeit an extremely consequential one, of deeper, long-term dynamics within Iraq's political sociology. The degree to which these dynamics can be overcome—with what expenditure of resources—is the crucial question facing U.S. and UK administrators.

U.S. policy makers and their allies will have to decide if they can commit the time (up to ten years), resources, and personnel to tackle the underlying structural problems dominating Iraqi politics. Will they instead choose simply to change the personnel at the head of government and allow them to govern in a way very similar to that of the old regime? This minimalist approach may very well come to dominate policy. Now that the war has been won, the altruistic investment for U.S. involvement in Iraq will have to compete with a U.S. economy in recession and a U.S. public politically sensitive to increasing casualties. The long-term, costly, and ambitious reform of Iraq may well be sacrificed to the short-term electoral politics of the U.S.

Any serious postwar attempt to reform the state will have to take into account the members of the shadow state. They are still in their positions of influence across the country. They still run state institutions and still guarantee order. The temptation for U.S. administrators, short of resources and time because of American domestic pressures, will be to use these individuals to provide oppressive and violent stability at the lowest possible cost. As in post-Taliban Afghanistan, the military victors would, in effect, be choosing to use existing sociopolitical formations to restore the old ruling formula, foreclosing any real attempt at effective reform.

If this becomes the path chosen by the U.S. and its allies, resources are likely to be distributed both through the new or reformed state institutions set up by U.S. forces and through the remaining networks of the shadow state. As U.S. troops are withdrawn and U.S. public opinion loses interest in Iraq, the shadow state with new masters will once again come to dominate. A new governing structure will not have been built. Instead, a veneer of legal-rational bureaucracy will have been placed on top of the shadow state with its tried and tested use of violence, patronage, and favoritism. The shadow state will slowly come to dominate as international oversight diminishes. In the medium-term, Iraq will be prone to insecurity—mitigated only by the degree of ruthlessness and efficiency exhibited by the new rulers in Baghdad. The long-term result

can be expected, at best, to resemble Egypt, with a population demobilized and resentful. The state will dominate society through the use of high levels of organized violence. The governing elite will colonize all aspects of the economy and corruption will be the major source of the regime's longevity.