

The United States and democracy promotion in Iraq and Lebanon in the aftermath of the events of 9/11 and the 2003 Iraq War

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work and effort and that it has not been submitted anywhere for any award. Where other sources of information have been used, they have been duly acknowledged.

Signature:

Date:

Abstract

This thesis features two case studies exploring the George W. Bush Administration's (2001 – 2009) efforts to promote democracy in the Arab world, following military occupation in Iraq, and through 'democracy support' or 'democracy assistance' in Lebanon. While reviewing well rehearsed arguments that emphasise the inappropriateness of the methods employed to promote Western liberal democracy in Middle East countries and the difficulties in the way of democracy being fostered by foreign powers, it focuses on two factors that also contributed to derailing the U.S.'s plans to introduce 'Western style' liberal democracy to Iraq and Lebanon.

The first is the adverse impact upon the U.S.'s efforts to foster democracy in Iraq caused by bureaucratic in-fighting and conflicting U.S. agency agendas. The argument is that the internecine struggles between competing U.S. agencies, not only in the build-up to the invasion of Iraq, but also during the post-war occupation of that country, helped to undermine the Bush Administration's policy there. In Lebanon the study shows that, notwithstanding the non-military approach the Bush Administration pursued there, its efforts again still fell short of the grand rhetoric which accompanied the shift in U.S. foreign policy toward democracy promotion in the aftermath of 9/11 and the 2003 Iraq war.

The second factor put forward in this study as also significant in the failure of the Bush enterprise is the widespread suspicion of U.S. motives across Iraq, Lebanon and the wider Arab world. The thesis argues that such suspicions are reflective of the broader issues of credibility and trust which have bedevilled U.S. democracy promotion. The analysis to follow will show how Bush's democracy campaign was compromised by a prevalent anti-American sentiment borne out of the deep and pervasive suspicions of U.S. motives.

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Note on Transliteration

Arabic words have been transliterated in accordance with the standard practice in International Journal of Middle East Studies. The spelling of Arabic names and places has been based on the most prevalent practice used in books. As far as those interviewed are concerned, the translation of their names is based on how the individuals concerned spell it themselves.

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Aljebouri, Senior Program Officer, Middle East & North Africa with the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) in Washington D.C. and Dr. Salam Saadi, Member of the Association of Iraqi Academics in the UK. In Lebanon, I particularly wish to thank Gaby Jammal for his hospitality and energetic intellectual stimulation. Gaby was also the perfect dinner companion. Together, we prowled the streets of Hamra in downtown Beirut searching for delicious offerings of *Kibbet Batata* (potato kibbeh) and *Yakhnehs* (Lebanese stew); Thanks are also due to Hasnaa Mansour of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy in Beirut and Lauren Williams, MENA Editor at *The Daily Star* newspaper for lending me far more time than I deserved during my visit to Beirut in January 2013. All my interviewees were unstinting in their time, and I thank them for their support.

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Abess Taqi

Ph.D. Candidate, London, April 2015

List of Abbreviations

ABA	American Bar Association
ACDI/VOCA	Agricultural Cooperative Development International and Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance
ADDL	Association for the Defense of Law and Liberties (Lebanon)
ADF	American Development Foundation
AEI	American Enterprise Institute
AMIDEAST	America-Mideast Educational and Training Services, Inc.
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BMENA	Broader Middle East and North Africa Partnership Initiative
CAP	Community Action Programme (Iraq)
CAT	Convention against Torture and other Cruel Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment
CCER	Civil Campaign for Electoral Reform (Lebanon)
CCFE	Civic Coalition for Free Elections (Iraq)
CEPPS	Consortium for Elections and Political Party Strengthening (Iraq)
CERP	Commanders Emergency Response Programme (Iraq)
CESMO	Centre for Middle Eastern Strategies
CFUWI	Committee For the follow-up on Women's Issues (Lebanese NGO)
CHF	Cooperative Housing Foundation International (now renamed Global Communities)
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIPE	Centre for International Private Enterprise
CLAO	Council of Lebanese American Organizations
CLD	Centre for Legislative Development (University of Albany)
CLOE	Coalition for the Observation of Elections (Lebanon)

CNN	Cable News Network
CPA	Coalition Provisional Authority
CoR	Council of Representatives (Iraq)
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CSCBP	Civil Society Capacity Building Programme (Iraq)
CSIS	Centre for Strategic and International Studies
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations (Iraq)
CSRCs	Civil Society Resource Centres (Iraq)
EIN	Election Information Network (Iraq)
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act (United States)
GAO	Government Accountability Office (United States)
GMEI	Greater Middle East Partnership Initiative
ICG	International Crisis Group
ICSP	Iraq Civil Society Programme
ICSP	Iraq Civil Society and Independent Media Support Programme
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICRSS	Iraq Centre for Research and Strategic Studies
IECI	Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
IGC	Iraqi Governing Council
IHEC	Independent High Electoral Commission (Iraq)
IHRLI	International Human Rights Law Institute (De Paul's University College)
IMIE	International Mission for Iraqi Elections
IMN	Iraqi Media Network
INC	Iraqi National Congress

IPW	Institute of Progressive Women (Lebanon)
IRDC	Iraq Reconstruction and Development Council
IREX	International Research Exchanges Board
IRI	International Republican Institute
IWN	Iraqi Women's Network
JFDHR	Justicia Foundation for Development and Human Rights
JINSA	Jewish Institute for National Security
JWF	Justice without Frontiers
KDP	Kurdistan Democratic Party
LADE	Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections
LBC	Lebanese Broadcasting Company
LCCE	Lebanese Centre for Civic Education
LCW	Lebanese Council of Women
LCSI	Lebanon Civic Support Initiative
LECORVAW	Lebanese Council to Resist Violence against Women
LGP	Local Governance Programme (Iraq)
LJR	Lebanese Journalism Review
LPHU	Lebanese Physical Handicapped Union
LTA	Lebanese Transparency Association
MEPI	Middle East Partnership Initiative
MENA	Middle East News Agency
MoIM	Ministry of Interior and Municipalities
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCSC	National Centre for State Courts (Lebanon)
NED	National Endowment for Democracy

NDI	National Democratic Institute
NGOs	National Governmental Organisations
NINA	National Iraqi News Agency
NSC	National Security Council of the United States
NSDD	National Security Decision Directive
NSS	National Security Strategy of the United States 2002 & 2006
OCU	Observer Coordination Unit (Lebanon)
OPCAT	Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture
ORHA	Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance
ORI	Oxford Research International
PNAC	Project for New American Century
PUK	Patriotic Union of Kurdistan
RTI	Research Triangle Institute
SAIC	Science Application(App) International Corporation
SESOBEL	Social Service for the Welfare of Children in Lebanon
SIJCAJ	Strengthening the Independence of the Judiciary and Citizen Access to Justice
SIMI	Support for Independent Media in Iraq
TAG	Transparency and Accountability Grants Programme
TAL	Law of Administration for the State of Iraq for the Transitional Period
TOT	Training of Trainers Program (Iraq)
UN	United Nations
UNAMI	United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific Cultural Organization
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

USAID/RIG	USAID Regional Inspector –General
USIP	United States Institute for Peace
VFW	Veterans of Foreign Wars
VR	Voter Registration
WMD	Weapons of mass destruction
YAB	Youth Association of the Blind (Lebanon)

The Republican administration of George W. Bush Jnr. (2001 – 2009)

Cast of main characters

George W. Bush, 43rd President of the United States (2001 – 2009)

Dick Cheney, 46th Vice President of the United States (2001 – 2009)

Condoleezza Rice, National Security Adviser (2001 – 2004) and Secretary of State (2005 – 2009)

Retired General Colin Powell, Secretary of State (2001 – 2005)

Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense (2001 – 2006)

Paul Wolfowitz, Deputy Secretary of Defense (2001 – 2005)

George Tenet, CIA Director (2001 – 2004)

Douglas Feith, Undersecretary of Defense for Policy (2001 – 2005)

Richard Perle, Chairman of Defense Policy Board Advisory Committee (2001 – 2003)

Stephen Hadley, Deputy National Security Adviser (2001 – 2005) and National Security Adviser (2005 – 2009)

Elliot Abrams, National Security Council Senior Director for Democracy, Human Rights, and International Operations (2001 – 2002); National Security Council Senior Director for Near East and North African Affairs (2002 – 2005) and Deputy National Security Adviser for Global Democracy Strategy (2005 – 2009)

Paula Dobriansky, Undersecretary of State for Democracy and Global Affairs (2001 – 2009)

Scooter Libby, Chief of Staff to Vice President Dick Cheney (2001 – 2005)

Scott Carpenter, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs (2004 – 2007)

Andrew Natsios, Administrator of United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (2001 – 2006)

John R. Bolton, Undersecretary of State for Arms Control and International Security (2001 – 2005)

Ambassador L. Paul Bremer III, Administrator of the Coalition Provisional Authority of Iraq (CPA) (2003 – 2004)

Jay Garner, Director of the Office for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (Iraq) (April 21, 2003 to May, 12th 2003)

Richard Haass, President, Council on Foreign Relations, director of policy planning at State Department, (March 2001 – June 2003)

Chronology of key events in Iraq 2001 – 2009

Date	Event
11/09/2001	Suicide Attacks on World Trade Centre and Pentagon.
2002	<p>January: President George W. Bush identifies Iraq as part of an ‘axis of evil’;</p> <p>June: Bush Administration finalise war plans against Iraq;</p> <p>October: US Congress passes resolution authorising use of military force against Iraq.</p>
20/01/2003	National Security Presidential Directive 24, creating Head of the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA).
19/03/2003	In an address to the American people, President George W. Bush announces that coalition forces began striking Iraqi military targets to neutralize Saddam Hussein’s army - Start of Operation Iraqi Freedom.
09/04/2003	The Liberation of Iraq. U.S. forces advance into central Baghdad. Saddam Hussein’s grip on the city is broken and his statue is toppled. There is widespread looting in Baghdad and elsewhere.
21/04/2003	General Jay Garner arrives in Baghdad as the appointed Head of ORHA to rule Iraq after the U.S.-led invasion.
01/05/2003	President George W. Bush announces major combat operations in Iraq have ended.
11/05/2003	Ambassador L. Paul Bremer III succeeds Jay Garner as chief U.S. civilian administrator in Iraq heading the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA).
16/05/2003	Bremer issues CPA Order No.1, disbanding the Baa’th party (De-Baathification).
22/05/2003	United Nations Security Council adopts Resolution 1483, lifting 13 sanctions regime on Iraq and granting the U.S.-led coalition authority to govern Iraq.
23/05/2003	Bremer issues CPA Order No.2 which dissolves the Iraqi Armed Forces, the ministries of Defence and Information, and other security institutions that supported Saddam Hussein’s regime.

13/07/2003	Iraqi Governing Council (IGC) created.
08/09/2003	Bremer op-ed appears in Washington Post.
15/11/2003	The United States and the IGC agree to speed up transition to sovereignty by June 30, 2004. Agreement to terminate CPA and launch Iraqi Interim Government.
08/03/2004	IGC approves an interim constitution, called the Transitional Administrative Law (TAL), which lays out a roadmap for parliamentary elections and a constitutional referendum.
30/04/2004	Prisoner abuse scandal breaks in the U.S. media (CBS News) and evidence of prison abuse inside the US-run Abu Ghraib prison is widely condemned.
28/05/2004	IGC names Iyad Allawi, a secular Shia, who leads the Iraqi National Accord faction, Prime Minister of the incoming interim government.
02/06/2004	IGC dissolves itself.
08/06/2004	Resolution 1546 is adopted by the U.N. Security Council. The resolution declares the end of the occupation of Iraq and endorses a fully sovereign and independent interim government that will serve from June 30, 2004, until elections in January 2005.
28/06/2004	The United States hands over power to the Iraqi Interim Government headed by Prime Minister Iyad Allawi and President Sheikh Ghazi al-Yawar. Ambassador Paul Bremer leaves the country.
15/11/2004	US-led forces retake the Sunni rebel stronghold of Fallujah, killing approximately 2,000, and capturing 1,200 people including a number of non-Iraqis.
30/11/2004	The Association of Muslim Scholars, a Sunni political group in Iraq, announces a boycott of upcoming parliamentary elections.
27/12/2004	The Iraqi Islamic party, the largest Sunni Muslim party, withdraws from the election.
30/01/2005	Elections for the Transitional National Assembly, along with elections for the Kurdish Regional Parliament and Iraq's 18 Governorate Councils.
07/04/2005	Iraq's new president, Jalal Talabani, elected on April 6, 2005, names the Shia leader Ibrahim al-Jafari as Prime Minister.
28/04/2005	Members of the newly elected Iraqi parliament sanction the first elected

	government since the fall of Saddam Hussein.
01/08/2005	Deadline for drafting permanent constitution.
15/10/2005	Millions of Iraqis vote in a referendum on Iraq's new constitution.
15/12/2005	Iraqis vote for their first, full-term government.
21/01/2006	It is announced that the Shiite-led United Iraqi Alliance has emerged as the winner of more seats than any other group.
22/04/2006	United Iraqi Alliance names Nouri al-Maliki as Prime Minister.
03/05/2006	Iraq's parliament meets for its first full legislative session since it was elected in December 2005.
08/06/2006	Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, leader of Al-Qaeda in Iraq is killed in a U.S.-led air strike near Baquba.
08/07/2006	Five U.S. soldiers are charged with the rape and murder of a young Iraqi woman and the murder of three members of her family in Mahmoudiyah. The incident marks the latest in string of alleged incidents of abuse by U.S. soldiers.
08/11/2006	Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld steps down and President Bush nominates Dr. Robert M. Gates to be Secretary of Defense.
06/12/2006	The Iraq Study Group (ISG) calls for, and recommends a change of course in U.S. policy, saying conditions in Iraq are "grave and deteriorating".
10/02/2007	General David H. Petraeus assumes command of U.S. forces in Iraq. U.S. sends 28,000 extra troops to Iraq to implement new security plan.
13/01/2008	A new law reverses elements of the 2003 "de-Baathification" policy and allows some to return to government.
23/04/2008	General Petraeus's former No. 2 in Iraq, Lt. Gen. Raymond Odierno is named the new commanding General in Iraq.
20/01/2009	Barack Obama assumes office of the President of the United States of America.

Chronology of key events in Lebanon 2001 – 2009

Date	Event
06/05/2002	As a follow-up to his 2002 State of Union address, and in a speech entitled “Beyond the Axis of Evil”, President George W. Bush expanded the “forces of evil” bearing down on the world to include Syria.
12/04/2003	US Congress promulgated the Syrian Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act
03/05/2003	U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell presented Syrian President, Bashar al-Sad with a long list of U.S. demands aimed at loosening Syria’s grip on Lebanon.
02/09/2009	Promulgation of UNSC 1559 which supported free and fair presidential elections in Lebanon and called upon remaining foreign forces to withdraw from the country.
14/02/2005	Former Lebanese premier, Rafik Hariri is killed by a car bomb in Beirut. The attack sparks anti-Syrian rallies and the resignation of Prime Minister Omar Karami’s cabinet. Calls for Syria to withdraw its troops intensify until its forces leave in April. Assassinations of anti-Syrian figures become a feature of political life.
29/04/2005	Withdrawal of Syrian Forces from Lebanon
29/05/2005	First Parliamentary elections in Lebanon in thirty years without a Syrian military or intelligence presence.
June 2005	Anti-Syrian alliance led by Saad Hariri wins control of parliament at elections. Hariri ally Fouad Siniora becomes prime minister.
July – August 2006	Israel attacks after Hezbollah kidnaps two Israeli soldiers. Civilian casualties are high and the damage to civilian infrastructure wide-ranging in 34-day war. UN peacekeeping force deploys along the southern border, followed by Lebanese army troops for first time in decades.
May 2007	UN Security Council votes to set up a tribunal to try suspects in the assassination of ex-premier Hariri.
May 2008	Parliament elects army chief Michel Suleiman as president, ending six-month-long political deadlock. Gen Suleiman re-reappoints Fouad Siniora as prime minister of national unity government.
October 2008	Lebanon establishes diplomatic relations with Syria for first time since both countries gained independence in 1940s.

March – April 2009	International court to try suspected killers of former Prime Minister Hariri opens in Hague.
07/06/2009	The pro-Western March 14 alliance wins parliamentary elections and Saad Hariri forms unity government.

Map of Lebanon

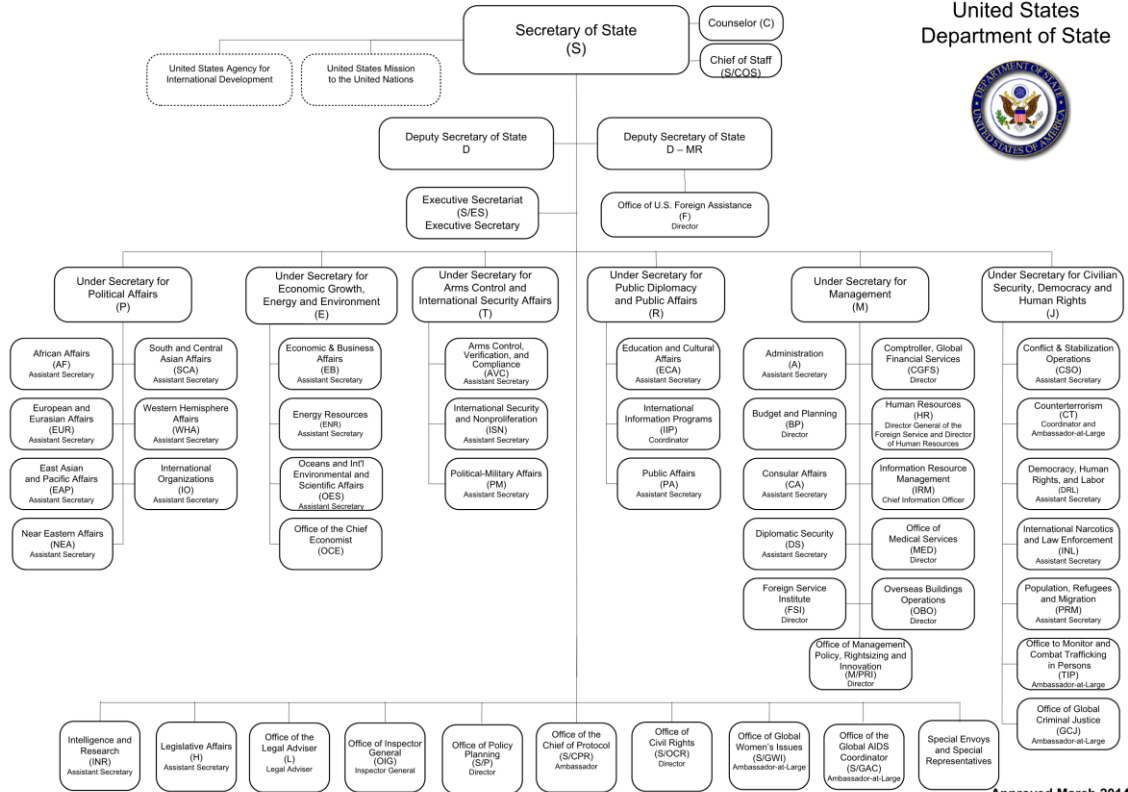


¹ Map of Lebanon

Map of Iraq



United States
Department of State

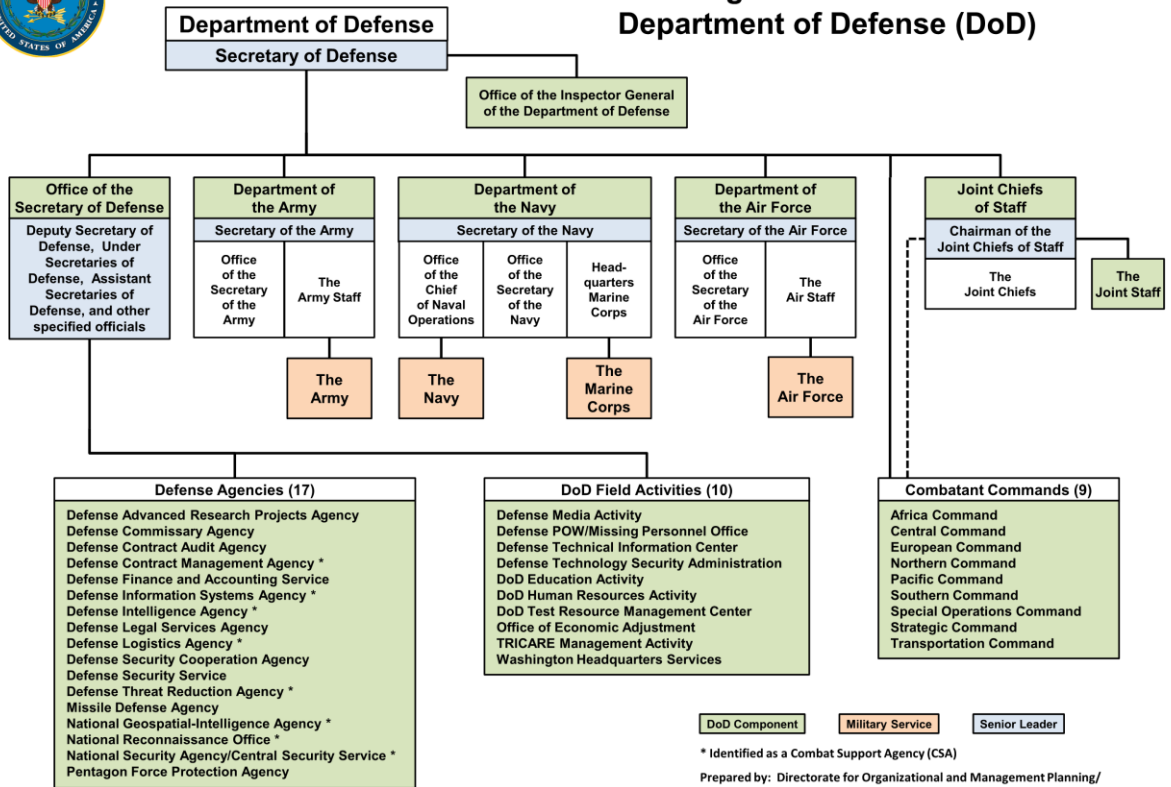


Approved March 2014

Source: U.S. Department of State (accessed via <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/rls/dos/99494.htm>) on 17/01/2015



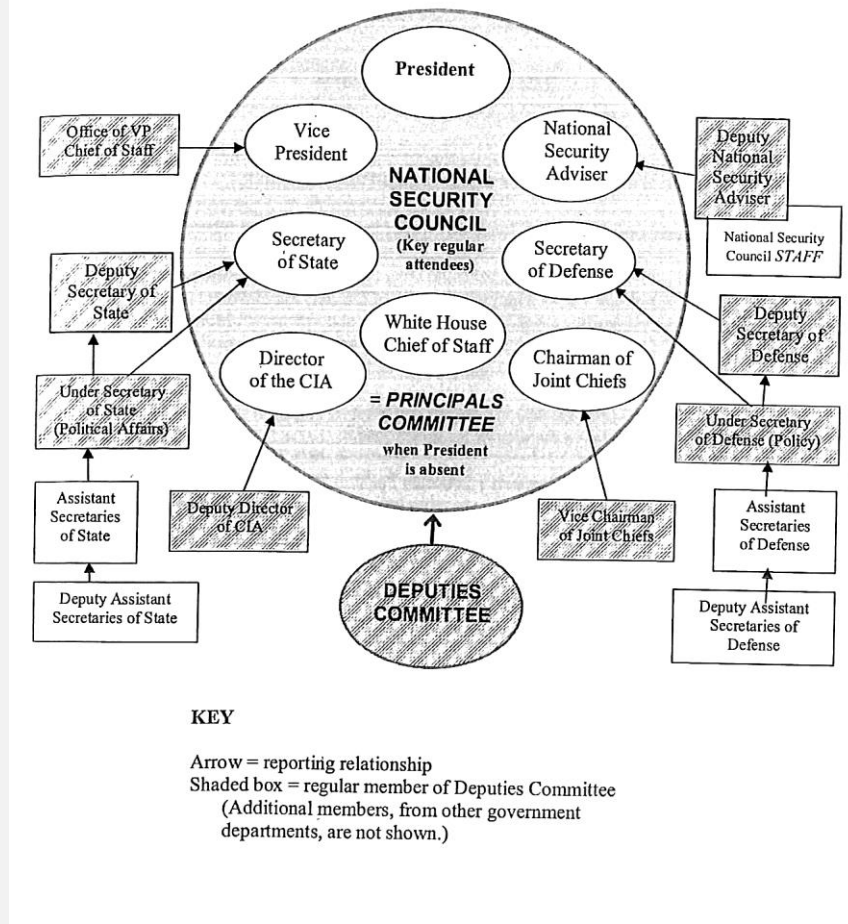
Organization of the Department of Defense (DoD)



Internet source: accessed via:

[http://odam.defense.gov/Portals/43/Documents/Functions/Organizational%20Portfolios/Organizations%20and%20Functions%20Guidebook/DoD Organization March 2012.pdf](http://odam.defense.gov/Portals/43/Documents/Functions/Organizational%20Portfolios/Organizations%20and%20Functions%20Guidebook/DoD%20Organization%20March%202012.pdf).

U.S. Government national security organization:
Key members of top committees



Source: Feith, D.J. (2008) *War and Decision: Inside the Pentagon at the Dawn of the War on Terrorism* (New York: Harper Collins: p.531, Appendix 1)

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will present the introduction to the study. It will focus on the following:

- Definitions of key terminology and their interpretation by the George W. Bush administration;
- The hypotheses of the study;
- The research questions;
- The basis for choosing Iraq and Lebanon as country case studies;
- A review of the literature;
- The structure of the subsequent chapters; and
- The methodology adopted to examine the aims and objectives of the study.

DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMINOLOGY AND THEIR INTERPRETATION BY THE GEORGE W. BUSH ADMINISTRATION

The key terms requiring definitions are ‘*Western style liberal democracy*’, ‘*democracy promotion*’ and ‘*democracy support*’. These terms occupy a central position within this study. A basic understanding of these terms and their relevance to George W. Bush’s democratization campaign in Iraq and Lebanon is therefore integral to this study.

Let us start with a definition of the term ‘*Western style liberal democracy*’. Deriving from the classical Greek ‘*rule by the people*’ the term democracy is now synonymous with ‘*Western – style liberal democracy*’ in which leaders are elected by citizens to act on their behalf (Luckham et al 2003). This simplified and concise connotation of the

term however does not command consensus amongst democratic theorists who argue that the concept of democracy has a number of different meanings and in essence, remains a fundamentally contested concept. Democratic theorists such as Robert Dahl and James Hyland have indeed found it difficult to construct a definitive meaning of the term. In attempting to state what democracy actually is, Dahl lamented that “*a term that means anything means nothing. And so it is has become with ‘democracy’, which nowadays is not so much a term of restricted and specific meaning as a vague endorsement of a popular idea*” (Dahl 1989:2). This perspective is endorsed by Hyland who makes the point that “*Everyone purports to be in favour of democracy, but there is little agreement over what democracy is*” (Hyland 1995: 36).

As a result of the widespread disagreement and diversity of views amongst democratic theorists about what the concept of democracy means and how it is best expressed as an ideal, this study inclines towards the most widely accepted definition of democracy advanced by Dahl which highlights no fewer than seven institutional components.

According to Dahl, ‘modern democracy’ is a type of regime in which:

1. *Control over government decisions is constitutionally vested in elected officials;*
2. *Elected officials are chosen in frequent and fairly conducted elections;*
3. *Practically all adults have the right to vote;*
4. *Practically all adults have the right to run for elective office;*
5. *Citizens have the right to express themselves on political matters broadly defined, including criticism of officials;*
6. *Citizens have a right to seek out alternative sources of information [which] are protected by law; and*
7. *Citizens have a right to form relatively independent associations and organizations including political parties and interest groups (Dahl 1982:11).*

Following on from the definition of ‘*Western style liberal democracy*’, and turning next to the term ‘*democracy promotion*’, we find that a definition of this term is also not uniformly agreed. Nancy Bermeo defines ‘*democracy promotion*’ as the ‘*ideational project of framing democracy as the best form of government*’ (Bermeo 2009: 243).

Whilst the idea of democracy, as a general formula for governance, has universal appeal and theoretical legitimacy, the definition of the term ‘*democracy promotion*’ adopted in this study is that which is advanced by Peter Burnell. Burnell defines the term as a ‘*wide range of largely non-coercive attempts to spread democracy abroad*’ (Burnell 2011: 1-2). At the heart of this definition is a kind of political intervention in the domestic affairs of countries that seeks to affect the distribution of power there (Dauderstadt & Lerch 2005 – cited in Burnell 2011: 2) mainly by patient and non-violent involvement, although some (e.g. Palmer 2003 – cited in Burnell 2011: 2) argue that in certain situations, more forceful action might be needed.

The final term ‘*democracy support*’ was coined following the unwelcome association of ‘*democracy promotion*’ with regime change through the use of force. According to the academics Jeff Bridoux and Milja Kurki, instead of practicing ‘*democracy promotion*’, ‘*democracy support*’ took over as a generic term to describe the activities of the U.S. and other Western democracy promotion actors (Bridoux & Kurki 2014: 58 – 59). This form of support is closely tied with the already long -existing strategy of achieving democratic change through ‘*democracy assistance*’ from the ground up (Lennon 2009). The term ‘*democracy assistance*’ has been described as the ensemble of techniques and instruments that are activated to implement democracy support programmes (Bridoux & Kurki 2014: 59). It includes programming, sourcing of partners, technical support of target governments and NGOs – training, financial and material support, follow up, and assessment of programmes’ effectiveness (Bridoux & Kurki 2014: 59). Bridoux and

Kurki make the point that, the U.S. Administration develops democracy assistance programmes around four pillars: civil society, elections and political processes, governance, and rule of law. U.S. governmental democracy support actors then rely on a sophisticated procurement system to choose organizations they will work with – both U.S.-based NGOs and the target country’s NGOs (Bridoux & Kurki 2014: 59). These NGOs are in charge of deploying an array of techniques to achieve the aims specified in the programmes that are implemented. Achievements are constantly monitored according to specific assessment methods to ensure that the programmes financed by the U.S. government progresses according to plan (Bridoux & Kurki 2014: 59).

Having now settled on working definitions of the terms ‘*Western style liberal democracy*’, ‘*democracy promotion*’ and ‘*democracy support*’, it is important to clarify how these concepts were interpreted by the Bush administration and subsequently utilised in its foreign policymaking.

For a start, by engaging in *democracy promotion* in Iraq and Lebanon, the Bush Administration aimed to promote ‘*Western style liberal democracy*’. When the Administration spoke about ‘*democracy promotion*’ or ‘*democracy support*’ it had a very clear idea of the shape and form it wanted ‘*democracy*’ to take. The version of democracy which U.S. implementers aimed to introduce in Iraq, Lebanon and the wider Arab world looked a lot like the American liberal democratic system and the values that underpin it. There seemed to have been little debate amongst Bush and his team over exactly what counts as a ‘*democracy*’ other than to assume that it resembles ‘*Western style liberal democracy*’ or specifically, U.S. – style democracy. The U.S. strategy of democracy promotion in Iraq, Lebanon and the wider Arab World is therefore more accurately viewed as a direct attempt to export the political [and economic] institutions that comprise the American liberal democratic system. Indeed, the rhetoric which

surrounded Bush's effort to spread democracy in Iraq, Lebanon and the Arab World implied that the political system is applicable in a standardized (Western) form, that it can succeed in the Middle East region, it can remedy the region's democratic deficit, and that it can bring peace within Arab societies and between nations, rather than sow disorder. There was also very little need to spell out the main features of the preferred political system. Bush's Vice President Dick Cheney (2001 – 2009) reflected this sense in interview with Stephen F. Hayes, a senior writer for the *Weekly Standard*, when he stated that:

I am a big democracy advocate. And I say that for a couple of reasons. Because on the one hand I think we have an obligation, we Americans, if we go in and take down a government to do the best we can to stand up a new one in its place that meets the standards and principles that we believe in.....Political reform is part of that.....(Hayes 2007: 474).

In his memoir, *In My Time*, Cheney reiterated his view with regard to Iraq:

If the United States took military action and removed Saddam from power, we had an obligation to ensure that what followed reflected our values and belief in freedom and democracy. It may well have been easier simply to hand pick another Iraqi strongman and install him in one of Saddam's palaces, but that would have been inconsistent with American values and, in my view, immoral (Cheney 2011: 387 – 388).

Following the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, U.S. Presidential Envoy, Ambassador L. Paul Bremer III (2003 – 2004), oversaw the production of Iraq's interim constitution - referred to as the Transitional Administrative Law (TAL) - which defined a Western-style parliamentary democracy.

Yudith Yaphe states that the TAL document described Iraq's government as “*republican, federal, democratic, and pluralist*” (Yaphe 2010: 240 – 260).

Bremer himself described the TAL document as follows:

The Transitional Administrative Law, written and approved by the Iraqi Governing Council.....lays out the path Iraqis will follow to sovereignty, elections and democracy” (cited in Allawi 2007: 219).

According to Bremer, the TAL document which was written in 2003 by Iraqis but with “guidance” from Bush Administration advisers resonated with protections for individual rights and civil liberties, as detailed in Western constitutions. Regarding the task of preparing the TAL document, Bremer stated that:

To meet President Bush’s vision for the New Iraq, the interim constitution would have to establish guarantees of fundamental individual rights, address the contentious issue of federalism, and establish checks and balances to protect against a slide back into tyranny. Of course, Iraq’s democracy would not be like America’s. The Iraqis would have to decide their own structure. But these basic principles would be essential, we judged, for long-term stability in a country riven by sectarian tensions [Bremer 2006: 213].

Ali Allawi, who served as minister of trade and later minister of defence in the Cabinet of the Iraqi Governing Council (IGC) and who was also a member of the Transitional National Assembly and Minister of Finance in the Transitional National Government of Iraq, states that the text of the draft TAL enshrined principles that were supposed to guide the transitional process, and even the constitutional framework, of Iraq. He argues that the TAL’s preamble was worded in stirring terms, reminiscent of permanent constitutions – and utterly alien in construction and phraseology from the Arabic language and the Iraqi experience. “*The people of Iraq, striving to reclaim their freedom*” the TAL began. It talked about pluralism, gender rights, separation of powers and civilian control over the armed forces – none of which according to Allawi were even remotely familiar terms in

Iraq. Allawi states that the TAL embodied western, specifically American notions, and was carefully supervised by the CPA. He states that each significant point had been pre-cleared with the NSC in Washington and neither the CPA nor its drafters envisaged it as anything less than the basic model for Iraq's permanent constitution (Allawi 2007: 222).

Furthermore, the Bush administration used the antithetical concepts of “*democracy*” and “*freedom*” interchangeably. Notwithstanding the intellectual efforts which highlight the tensions that exist between “*freedom*” and “*democracy*”, and the fundamental differences between the two concepts, the distinction that these efforts drew, seemed lost on the Bush administration. In their statements, Bush and his senior officials espoused the notion that where there is democracy, citizens of a country enjoy fundamental freedoms and are free to exercise their inalienable rights. Indeed, the perspective, it would seem, was why spell it out? Isn't ‘*democracy*’ synonymous with ‘*freedom*’? If you want ‘*freedom*’ and the fall of the old regime, isn't it obvious that ‘*democracy*’ is what you seek? If these questions seem rhetorical, it is because at all material times, Bush and key members of his cabinet sought to make a connection between democratic values and the fundamental values of freedom and human goodness.

In his memoir, *Decision Points*, Bush stated that one of the aims of the ‘Bush Doctrine’ was to advance liberty and hope – the so-called ‘*forward strategy for freedom*’ agenda. Reiterating the point he made during his Second Inaugural Address when he stated that “*America's vital interests and our deepest beliefs are now one*”, Bush added:

Critics charged that the freedom agenda was a way for America to impose our values on others. But freedom is not an American value; it is a universal value. Freedom cannot be imposed; it

must be chosen. And when people are given the choice, they choose freedom (Bush 2010:396).

The fullest elaboration of Bush's 'twin ideology' came in the form of the National Security Strategy (NSS), a document that the White House issues annually at the behest of Congress. In the wake of 9/11, Bush set out to clarify the values his government stood for in the world. In the second section of the 2002 National Security Strategy of the United States, which outlined the aim to 'Champion Aspirations for Human Dignity', Bush spelt out the key objectives of his democratization agenda as follows:

We will:

- *Speak out honestly about violations of the nonnegotiable demands of human dignity using our voice and vote in international institutions to advance freedom;*
- *Use our foreign aid to promote freedom and support those who struggle non-violently for it, ensuring that nations moving toward democracy are rewarded for the steps they take;*
- *Make freedom and the development of democratic institutions key themes in our bilateral relations, seeking solidarity and cooperation from other democracies while we press governments that deny human rights to move toward a better future; and*
- *Take special efforts to promote freedom of religion and conscience and defend it from encroachment by repressive governments.*

We will champion the cause of human dignity and oppose those who resist it (NSS 2002: 4).

Bush's Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice (2005 – 2009), re-affirmed the former president's 'twin ideology' when in her confirmation hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, she listed the priorities of the Administration's diplomacy as follows:

.....we will unite the community of democracies in building an international system that is based on shared values and the rule of law.....we will spread freedom and democracy throughout the globe. That is the mission that President Bush has set for

America in the world and is the great mission of American diplomacy today².

In a speech delivered to the Council on Foreign Relations in Washington, D.C. on February 17, 2005, the former Under Secretary for Defense Policy in the Bush Administration, Douglas J. Feith (2001 - 2005), also remarked that:

A key element of the president's strategy is the interest that the United States has in seeing freedom and democracy gain ground in the world³.

In addition, in his interview with the *Weekly Standard's* Stephen F. Hayes, Dick Cheney echoed Rice and Feith's remarks when he stated that:

.....What the president's recommending is supporting the proposition that we can have a bigger impact on that part of the globe [the Arab world] by supporting freedom and democracy (Hayes 2007:474).

Bush followed this rhetoric in the 2006 NSS document when he explicitly declared the spread of '*democracy and freedom*' as a defining objective of his administration's foreign policy. The NSS 2006 stated that:

To protect our Nation and honour our values, the United States seeks to extend freedom across the globe by leading an international effort to end tyranny and promote effective democracy (NSS 2006:3).

Thus, we see that the key tenet of Bush's democratization agenda was that '*democracy*' and '*political freedom*' are for all practical purposes synonymous with each other.

² Opening statement by Dr. Condoleezza Rice's before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 18th January 2005 – internet source: accessed via http://www.age-of-the-sage.org/sharansky/rice_confirmation - accessed on 16/11/2012;

³ Accessed via <http://www.cfr.org> – on 16/11/2012

Whilst Bush and his officials were somewhat vague and imprecise in their interpretation of Dahl's widely accepted definition, it could be reasonably inferred that their intention was to uphold the core tenets of this definition. If a difference in perception between Bush and Dahl's conceptualisation of 'democracy' exists, it is explained primarily by the fact that 'democracy' remains a fundamentally and famously contested concept - the philosopher W.B. Gallie described democracy as one of the "essentially contested concepts" for it is "the appraisive political concept par excellence" (Gallie 1956:184). For this reason, and given that the definition of 'democracy' is continuously amended to suit its particular user's need, this study does not aim to define 'democracy' conclusively, but operationally. Through this process, we can critically analyse what Bush and his officials talked about, and aimed to promote and install in Iraq, Lebanon and the wider Middle East region.

Some help towards understanding Bush's operational definition of 'democracy' is offered by the U.S. based Freedom House organization which was founded by Eleanor Roosevelt and other notable Americans in 1941 to be a voice for 'democracy' and 'freedom' in the world. In its mission statement, Freedom House underscores the point that:

Freedom is possible only in democratic political systems in which the governments are accountable to their own people; the rule of law prevails; and freedoms of expression, association, and belief, as well as respect for their rights of minorities and woman, are guaranteed⁴.

Also, in its publicised statement on the 2003 Iraq War, Freedom House echoed its mission statement, and urged a commitment to free elections, multiple political parties, freedom of association, independent trade unions, women's equality and rights, an

⁴ Accessed via <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=2> on 16/11/2012;

independent judiciary, separation of religion from the state, an independent press, and religious tolerance in Iraq and throughout the Middle East region⁵. Taken together, these statements clearly indicate that ‘*freedom*’ is generally viewed as a basic determinant of ‘*democracy*’, and that to qualify as a democracy a given political system has to guarantee essential ‘*freedoms*’. It would seem therefore, that there is certainly a degree of overlap or better described, an interdependent relationship between the two terms with ‘*democracy*’ acting as an umbrella concept which embodies the core principle of ‘*freedom*’. It could be argued that this interdependent relationship is what Bush and his officials (who included Paula J. Dobriansky, Under Secretary of State for Democracy and Global Affairs (2001 - 2009) and currently (2015) a member of the Board of Trustees of Freedom House) embraced and emphasised within their global democratization agenda. From this analysis, it could be argued further that what was purposefully being advocated by Bush, was the appropriateness of the application of Dahl’s definition as within the language of his Administration’s democratization agenda, “I am a democratic state” translated to “I am legitimate, I am fair, and I can guarantee fundamental freedoms”.

HYPOTHESES

This study advances two hypotheses. There are relevant considerations in respect of each hypothesis which help to clearly mark out the parameters and scope of this study. The hypotheses and the relevant considerations in respect of each are as follows:

The First Hypothesis

It is the aim of this study to first show that the democracy infrastructure utilized by the Bush administration, and the personnel it called upon to advance its democratization

⁵ Accessed via: www.freedomhouse.org/article/freedom-house-statement-iraq-war - on 16/11/2012;

strategy, - which comprised for the most part, various branches of the U.S. government - experienced difficulty in achieving strategic cooperation or convergence on approaches to democratisation 'on the ground' in Iraq and also within the corridors of power in the United States.

Illustrating this, this study will present evidence of communication failures and lapses in teamwork among the myriad agencies of the U.S. government. It will draw attention in particular to the bureaucratic infighting between the U.S. State Department, which is the constitutionally nominated overseer of U.S. foreign policy, and Defense Department whose job it was to advise Bush on the U.S.'s defence policy. The State Department officers were tasked to ensure that efforts undertaken by other groups did not serve to undermine U.S. foreign policy. This coordination function was extremely difficult to execute in Iraq because there were other important actors in Iraq and in Washington with responsibility for various implementation efforts. The evidence presented in this study shows that the lines of authority and coordination responsibility were often unclear, and particularly blurred in the dealings between State and Defense officials.

The relevant considerations relating to the first hypothesis are:

- (1) It is not the aim of this study to analyse U.S. democratisation efforts in Iraq and Lebanon in terms of the political outcomes in these countries. Indeed, this study appreciates that the U.S. cannot be the primary determinant of the status of democratic currents in Iraq and Lebanon. What is certain is that the most basic, consistent lesson coming out of the experience of democracy promotion in other regions is that external actors, even very determined ones, rarely have a decisive impact on the political direction of other societies. The political history and

circumstances of Iraq and Lebanon are unique and distinctive, and the evolution of pluralistic political systems within these societies will inevitably follow its own path. This point was endorsed by George W. Bush in his NSS 2006, when he declared that “*We have a responsibility to promote human freedom. Yet freedom cannot be imposed; it must be chosen. The form that freedom and democracy take in any land will reflect the history, culture, and habits unique to its people*” (Bush, NSS 2006:5). Consequently, this study accepts that it would be naive to trace the ebb and flow of democracy’s advancement in Iraq and Lebanon through the successes and failures of the U.S.’s ‘democratisation project’.

- (2) This study does not argue that it was the primary intention of the U.S.’s grand democracy strategy to disconnect rhetoric on democracy promotion from practise or that the Bush administration was not genuinely committed to democracy promotion in Iraq and Lebanon as a general proposition. Rather, the perspective taken by this study is that the U.S.’s declared policy failed to match policy deeds because of the unintended consequence of a series of decisions or miscalculations made by key U.S. policy makers.
- (3) The failure by U.S. agencies to achieve strategic cooperation or convergence on approaches to Bush’s democracy campaign is not being emphasised as the sole explanation for the U.S.’s failure to match rhetoric with policy deeds in Iraq and Lebanon.

The Second Hypothesis

The second hypothesis argues that deep and pervasive suspicions of U.S. motives amongst many Iraqis and Lebanese, and also the anti-American sentiment that is shared by these people with the rest of the Arab world, further undermined the Bush administration's efforts to promote democratic change in Iraq and Lebanon in the aftermath of 9/11 and the 2003 Iraq war.

The relevant considerations relating to the second hypothesis are:

- (1) The suspicion of U.S. motives amongst Iraqis and Lebanese cannot be attributed solely to the disconnection between U.S. rhetoric and practise vis-a-vis democracy promotion. The negative image of the U.S. permeating Iraqi and Lebanese societies is the product of history of U.S. foreign policy towards both countries and across the Arab world.
- (2) Whilst it is argued that the glaring gap between talk and action has caused Iraqis and Lebanese to question the depth of the U.S.'s normative commitment to the democratic cause, this study does not argue that Iraqis and Lebanese do not support democratic ideals or the foreign policies that seek to advance them.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study seeks answers to the following research questions:

- To what extent did the various branches of the U.S. government tasked with democracy promotion experience difficulty in achieving strategic cooperation or convergence in the build – up to the 2003 Iraq war, and on approaches to democratisation 'on the ground' in Iraq?

- Based on the scholarly literature consulted, how do Iraqis and Lebanese perceive U.S. efforts to promote democracy in their respective countries and what impact, if any, did such perceptions have on U.S. democratisation efforts?

ORIGINALITY OF THE STUDY

This thesis is entering a scholarly conversation that is already in progress. Its novelty rests on its ability to furnish the current dialogues and debates with a body of work that is representative of the Iraqi and Lebanese case studies. The primary sources relied upon and the feedback obtained from interviews conducted form an important and original aspect of this.

CASE STUDY ANALYSIS OF IRAQ AND LEBANON

Why Iraq and Lebanon?

The choice of Iraq and Lebanon can be justified on two fronts. The first justification can be drawn from a U.S. policy perspective whilst the second justification is linked to the two countries' political, intellectual and sociological make-up which is deemed relevant for understanding their capacities and political desires to accommodate the introduction and internalisation of democratic norms.

Turning first to the U.S. policy perspective, we find that in the wake of 9/11, Iraq and Lebanon acted as centrepieces in the George W. Bush's democratization agenda in the Middle East. Thereafter, both countries featured prominently in the U.S.'s rhetorical commitment to democratize the Arab world.

Iraq featured first on Bush's freedom agenda as U.S. efforts to democratize the Middle East became more pronounced after 9/11 with sustained attention directed towards achieving 'Western style' liberal democracy in that country.

The apparent lack of democracy in Iraq was touted as one of the main justifications for the invasion of that country by the US-led coalition in 2003. Bush stated that one of the reasons for starting the war in Iraq was to bring democracy to that country:

[We] are committed to a strategic goal of a free Iraq that is democratic, that can govern itself, defend itself and sustain itself⁶.

However, and contrary to Bush's stated aim to democratize Iraq in the aftermath of 9/11, key members of his administration held differing views.

Douglas Feith explained that in his view, the reason to go to war with Iraq was self-defence. In his memoir, Feith stated:

I do not doubt that President Bush meant what he said when he spoke high-mindedly of his policies and the unselfish, humanitarian benefits he hoped to achieve. But to my knowledge – and contrary to what his critics have charged – he never argued, in public or private, that the United States should go to war in order to spread democracy. While he was willing to conclude that the United States might have to go to war in self-defence, I never heard him say that we should do so simply or primarily to help a foreign pro-democracy movement oust a dictator (Feith 2008: 234).

Feith added:

I did not think that a U.S. president could properly decide to go to war just to spread democracy, in the absence of a threat requiring self-defense. I did not see democracy promotion as trumping every other national security consideration (Feith 2008: 235).

Whilst endorsing Feith's view to a certain extent, Condoleezza Rice stated in her memoir, *No Higher Honour* - which is based on her years in

⁶ President Bush meets with Senior U.S. Defense Officials on Iraq, December 13, 2006. [<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/12/20061213-5.html>] cited in CRS Report for Congress, "Democracy Promotion: Cornerstone of U.S. Foreign Policy?", December 26, 2007, Congressional Research Service.

Washington - that Bush's plan was always to pursue a democratization effort on the ground in Iraq in the aftermath of the invasion of that country.

Rice stated:

Moreover, we did not go to Iraq to bring democracy any more than Roosevelt went to war against Hitler to democratize Germany, though that became American policy once the Nazis were defeated. We went to war because we saw a threat to our national security and that of our allies. But if we did have to overthrow Saddam, the United States had to have a view of what would come next. When the NSC had that discussion, some members, including Don [Donald Rumsfeld] argued that we had no such obligation. If a strongman emerged, so be it. But the President believed that the use of U.S. military power had to be followed by an affirmation of the United States' principles. If war occurred, we would try to build a democratic Iraq. And democracy in the Arab heartland would in turn help democratize the Middle East and address the freedom gap that was the source of hopelessness and terrorism (Rice 2011: 187).

In his memoir, *Known and Unknown*, Bush's Defense Secretary, Donald

Rumsfeld (2001 – 2006) expressed his view on Bush's plans to democratize

Iraq:

I had another issue with the President's remarks. "The transition from dictatorship to democracy will take time, but it is worth every effort", Bush had said. "Our coalition will stay until our work is done". That was not the way I had understood our plan. A nation that had suffered under decades of dictatorial rule was unlikely to quickly reorganize itself into a stable, modern, democratic state. Deep sectarian and ethnic divisions, concealed by a culture of repression and forced submission to Saddam, lurked just below the surface of Iraqi society.....I hoped Iraq would turn toward some form of representative government, but I thought we needed to be clear-eyed about democracy's prospects in the country... (Rumsfeld 2011: 498).

Rumsfeld added:

I wondered as well how we would define democracy if that became our goal. If Iraq never created an American – style system of government, would that mean that our mission had been a failure or that the troops would have to stay indefinitely? Emphasis on Iraqi democracy invited critics of the war to find the innumerable instances in which Iraq would inevitably fall shortBringing democracy to Iraq had not been among the primary rationales (Rumsfeld 2011: 499).

Notwithstanding Feith, Rice and Rumsfeld's comments, - which suggest that democracy promotion was not an overriding objective or prime factor in shaping Iraq policy within the Bush administration post-911 - Bush publicly vowed to bring democracy to Iraq and the wider Middle East and he told an audience of foreign policy and defence experts in London's historic Banqueting House, Whitehall Palace, in the keynote speech of his state visit to Britain on 19th November 2003 that:

We will meet our responsibilities in Afghanistan and Iraq, by finishing the work of democracy we have begun⁷.

Achieving democracy in Iraq, it was said, would also significantly act as an impetus and unarguably provide a powerful model for democratic change in the Arab world. As

Larry Diamond argued shortly before serving as a senior adviser to the CPA in Baghdad:

In its most extravagant expressions, the democratic transformation of Iraq is envisioned as a geopolitical earthquake that will shake Middle Eastern autocracies to their foundations and finally extend the global wave of democratization to the last major region to hold out against it (Diamond 2003).

⁷ Internet source: accessed via <http://www.foxnews.com/story/2003/11/19/raw-data-on-17/12/2013>;

Richard Perle, Chairman of the Defense Policy Board Advisory Committee (2001 – 2003) in the Bush Administration also argued:

*A democratic Iraq would be a powerful refutation of the patronising view that Arabs are incapable of democracy*⁸.

Furthermore, Paul Wolfowitz, Bush's Deputy Secretary of Defense (2001 – 2005) spoke to Bill Keller, a *New York Times* reporter in September 2002 and stated:

I don't think it's unreasonable to think that Iraq, properly managed – and it's going to take a lot of attention, and the stakes are enormousit really could turn out to be, I hesitate to say it, the first Arab democracy ...I think the more we are committed to influencing the outcome, the more chance there could be that it would be something quite significant for Iraq. And I think if it's significant for Iraq, it's going to cast a very large shadow, starting with Syria and Iran, but across the whole Arab world, I think (cited in Allawi 2007:77).

Bush echoed Diamond, Perle and Wolfowitz's arguments in numerous public speeches as he sought to advance the case for his Administration's democratization agenda in Iraq. During his speech to the World Affairs Council of Philadelphia in 2005 he stated that:

*The advance of freedom in the Middle East requires freedom in Iraq. By helping Iraqis build a lasting democracy, we will spread the hope of liberty across a troubled region, and we'll gain new allies in the cause of freedom.....*⁹.

⁸ Comments by Richard Perle cited in James Fallows, "The Fifty-First State?" in *The Atlantic*, November 1, 2002 – accessed via <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2002/1> - on 29/08/2013;

⁹ Bush, G.W., 'The Struggle for Democracy in Iraq: Speech to the World Affairs Council of Philadelphia', 12/12/2005 – accessed via <http://www.presidentialrhetoric.com/speeches/12.12.05.html>, - on 29/08/2013;

Earlier, in his remarks at the American Enterprise Institute Annual Dinner on 26th February 2003, Bush had trumpeted his democratic crusade and advanced the case for the invasion of Iraq by declaring that:

The world has an interest in the spread of democratic values. A new regime in Iraq would serve as a dramatic and inspiring example of freedom for other nations in the region¹⁰.

Furthermore, in his speech on 6th November 2003 at the 20th Anniversary of the National Endowment for Democracy in Washington, Bush declared that:

Iraqi democracy will succeed and that success will send forth the news from Damascus to Tehran that freedom can be the future of every nation¹¹.

As the audience at the National Endowment for Democracy answered Bush's rallying cry for democracy promotion in the Arab world with hearty applause, the former president went on to purposefully declare that:

The establishment of a free Iraq at the heart of the Middle East will be a watershed event in the global democratic revolution¹².

To this end, and in view of the dramatic events in the region dubbed the 'Arab Spring', former U.S. policy makers in the Bush administration, and neoconservatives, have argued that the inspiration for the popular demonstrations emanated from the attempts by the U.S. to promote freedom and democracy in Iraq. Dick Cheney suggested that the "Arab Spring" was one of the "ripple effects" of America's toppling of Saddam Hussein in Iraq (Norton 2012: 16), and Bush's speechwriter Peter Wehner claimed "vindication

¹⁰ Internet source: accessed via <http://www.aei.org/article/foreign-and-defense-policy> - on 29/08/2013;

¹¹ Internet source: accessed via <http://www.ned.org/george-w-bush/remarks-by-president> - on 29/12/12;

¹² Ibid;

for Bush's freedom agenda". Robert Kagan, a neoconservative and Senior Fellow at U.S. think tank The Brookings Institution, also jumped on the bandwagon of vindication when he stated that:

....there were repeated free elections in Iraq and that undoubtedly had some effect on how neighbouring people view their government.

Kagan added:

*I think Egyptians said: 'If the Iraqis can have elections, why can't we have elections?'*¹³

Whilst these claims are refuted by most commentators who argue that the inspiration for the rebellions appeared locally, and was purely indigenous (Norton 2012: 16), it is clear that Iraq was the main focus of attention of Bush's democratic mission in the Arab world.

After the events of 9/11, Lebanon also acquired symbolic significance in the attempts by the Bush Administration to promote democracy in the Middle East region. With the scope and influence of Syria and Iran in Lebanon, and also concerns about terrorist groups operating in that country, the Bush administration sought to promote its Middle East democratization policy in Lebanon in 2005.

Bush supported politicians, including former Lebanese prime minister, Rafik Hariri, who were demanding independence from Syrian military occupation. The Syrian presence in Lebanon was seen by the U.S. as a destabilizing factor and a hindrance to

¹³ Interview cited by journalist Jordan Michael Smith in article entitled "Neocons' new lie" posted on Salon website on Wednesday, April 25, 2012 – accessed via www.salon.com/2012/04/25 on 29/12/12;

Lebanese sovereignty and political reform, whilst the Iranian regime was considered a serious threat to the stability of the entire Middle East.

The assassination of Rafik Hariri in February 2005 intensified the U.S.'s campaign against the Syrian presence and influence in Lebanon. The Bush Administration reacted strongly to Hariri's assassination and held Syria responsible. Bush criticized the Syrian presence in Lebanon and demanded the withdrawal of Syrian forces from that country. The U.S. government also stated its commitment to pursue justice with regard to the assassination of Hariri and actively supported UN Security Council Resolution 1664 which called for the establishment of a tribunal to try the perpetrators of this crime. This international pressure was able to use the mass mobilisation inside Lebanon culminating in a demonstration in Beirut in which thousands of Lebanese took to the streets to demand the withdrawal of Syrian forces from Lebanon. In his interview with the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation (LBC) on 18th April 2005, President Bush stated that he was not surprised when he saw pictures of the demonstrations in Lebanon with people calling for freedom and democracy in Lebanon because everybody wants to be free and that the Lebanese people in particular were tired of living under a government which, in essence, was a foreign occupation¹⁴.

Syria did withdraw its remaining forces from Lebanon on 29th April 2005, with many commentators arguing that its withdrawal was opportunistically presented abroad by the Bush Administration as a manifestation of the U.S.'s global democratic revolution. The Bush Administration took credit for the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon claiming that the events that were taking place in Lebanon were the direct result of the

¹⁴ George W. Bush interview with the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation on 18th April 2005 in the Map Room at the White House – accessed via <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=73663> on 13/12/2014;

U.S.-led invasion of Iraq. Paul Salem of Carnegie Endowment Middle East Center in Beirut made the salient point then that:

For the Bush Administration, the independence and success of Lebanon is now seen as an important feather in the cap of President George W. Bush's freedom and democratization vision for the Middle East (Salem 2005:3).

Consequently, in the immediate aftermath of the *Beirut Spring*, Lebanon was repeatedly touted by the Bush administration as being at the heart of the Administration's Middle East democracy promotion strategy. On 8th March 2005, Bush stated that:

Lebanon could serve as democratic bellwether for the Middle East and that if Lebanon is successful [as a democratic experiment], it is going to ring the door of every Arab regime¹⁵.

Bush also argued that the '*Beirut Spring*' signalled the cracking of the region's autocratic edifice and the end of Arab rulers' ability to smother popular discontent or co-opt dissenters into submission (Wittes 2008: 83). He said:

And any who doubt the appeal of freedom in the Middle East can look to Lebanon, where the Lebanese people are demanding a free and independent nation¹⁶.

Earlier, at a news press conference on 28th February 28 2005, Paula J. Dobriansky stated as follows:

In Lebanon, we see growing momentum for a 'cedar revolution' that is unifying the citizens of that nation to the cause of true democracy and freedom from foreign influence. Hopeful signs

¹⁵ George W. Bush, speech to the National Defense University, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, March 8, 2005 (Accessed via: www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/03/20050308-3.html - on 12/12/12);

¹⁶ Ibid;

span the globe, and there should be no doubt that the years ahead will be great ones for the cause of freedom¹⁷.

The U.S. also welcomed the formation of a new Lebanese government, and in keeping with its concept of a global democratic revolution, the Bush Administration pledged its support for parliamentary elections in Lebanon. Speaking in London on Tuesday, 1st March 2005, the day after the toppling of the Syrian – backed government in Lebanon by what the media called “*people power*”, Condoleezza Rice, offered support to Lebanon for free and fair elections. Rice stated that:

.....events in Lebanon are moving in a very important direction. The Lebanese people are starting to express their aspirations for democracyThis is something that we support very much¹⁸.

Later, and after a meeting with then Lebanese Prime Minister, Fouad Siniora on 22 July 2005, Rice said:

I think that you cannot find a partner more supportive of Lebanon than the United States¹⁹.

President Bush also made a personal pledge to the Lebanese people. In his aforementioned interview with the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation, he delivered this message to the Lebanese people:

[The] United States believes in freedom, and we appreciate courage. We appreciate the courage of those who are willing to stand up and say, “We want to be free. We want to be a

¹⁷ Morley, Jefferson (3 March 2005) “The Branding of Lebanon’s Revolution”, *The Washington Post* – accessed via <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A1 - on 19/12/2013>;

¹⁸ As reported at CNN.International.com and headlined ‘*U.S. hails Lebanese democracy move – Government resigns amid anti-Syria protests*’ (posted on Tuesday, March 1, 2005);

¹⁹ BBC Monitoring Middle East, Text of live news conference by U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and former Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora in Beirut, *Lebanese LBC TV*, July 22, 2005;

democracy. We want to help establish a Government that responds to the people". And you will have our help²⁰.

Thus, like Iraq, Lebanon was viewed by the Bush administration as a country that could serve as a great example of what is achievable from a democratic perspective in the Arab world. The Administration hoped that democracy will take hold in these two countries and create a powerful model for the spread of democratic values in the Middle East region.

Considering the second justification for choosing Iraq and Lebanon to study, we find that Iraq (prior to the current conflict and constitutional battle in this country) and Lebanon exhibit unique political characteristics. Both countries now share a significant common political feature in that they both possess competitive multiparty systems. Indeed, being competitive elective democracies, both Iraq and Lebanon are a rarity in the Middle East.

Lebanon in particular has been hailed and proclaimed as arguably the most democratic state in the Arab world. It boasts an institutional legacy as well as democratic habits formed in successive generations from the 1920s onwards. Not only is Lebanon the first Republic to be instituted in the Arab World and the second in the Middle East (Turkey was first), but it also continued to abide by its constitution longer than any country in the region (Harik 1980: 27). Iliya Harik points out that electoral politics have persisted in Lebanon since 1922 and corrective measures to achieve a greater degree of representativeness by means of structural changes have taken place over the years (Harik 1980: 27) most notably under the auspices of the Ta'if Agreement and its revised consociational formula. Indeed, Lebanon enjoys a well-established tradition of

²⁰ George W. Bush interview with the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation on 18th April 2005 in the Map Room at the White House – accessed via <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=73663> on 13/12/2014;

democratic suffrage and the civil war (1975 – 1989) was the only period after independence during which the country did not hold elections.

Julia Choucair -Vizoso, a Project Associate in the Democracy and Rule of Law Project at Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and the Editor-in-chief of the online journal, *SADA*, supports Lebanon's democratic status pointing to the fact that since becoming independent in 1943, Lebanon has had regular elections, numerous political parties, and relatively free and lively news media under parliamentary rule (Choucair 2006).

Even Larry Diamond in his article entitled “*Why are there no Arab democracies?*” maintains that among the sixteen independent Arab states of the Middle East and coastal North Africa, Lebanon is the only one to have ever been a democracy (Diamond 2010). Further, it is also the view of some that in Lebanon, one can count on an overwhelming majority with a deep-rooted commitment to freedom and existing democratic institutions that merely need to be released from their bondage and allowed to function properly²¹. Paul Salem states that:

Lebanon has had the institutions and political culture of statehood and cooperative, electoral-based government for many decades.....” and that “Although Lebanon faces many changes, it has not embarked on some brand new political adventure or experiment, but rather a process of reinforcing existing institutions and behaviour patterns (Salem 2005: 4).

Regarding Iraq, this country is also considered by some to possess the appropriate human and economic resources to enable it to embrace democracy. Given that Iraq has enormous economic potential – with oil reserves second only to Saudi Arabia, its

²¹ See Article titled “Winning the War on Terror: The Case for a Free Democratic Lebanon” posted on the website of The National Alliance of Lebanese Americans on December 01, 2003 at 11:05.

economic importance is clearly global (Dodge 2005:8) - and because Iraqi people have been among the most educated in the Arab world in the past, some writers are of the view that this country has the potential to readily assimilate liberal democracy. Eric Davis is a strong proponent of this view. In citing the popular wisdom in the well-known Arabic saying which states that “*The Egyptians write, the Lebanese publish, and the Iraqis read*”, Davis argues that:

Iraq has the resources to create one of the most vibrant democracies in the Arab world – one that can become the envy of countries around the globe (Davis 2005b: 18).

According to Davis,

Iraq has the capability to become one of the most advanced countries of the Middle East” as it “has a large and highly educated middle class, a tradition of a flourishing civil society, an agricultural sector whose potential is greatly underutilized, one of the world’s great civilizational heritages, and a rich base of oil wealth (Davis 2005a: 244).

Bush himself expounded on this theme when he stated that:

*The nation of Iraq – with its proud heritage, abundant resources and skilled and educated people – is fully capable of moving toward democracy and living in freedom*²².

Furthermore, there are others who argue that democratic practices, and the values that support them, are not alien to Iraqi society and traditions. Adeed and Karen Dawisha are notable proponents of this view and they extol the virtues of the Iraqi parliament (the so-called Constituent Assembly) during the monarchical era (1921 – 1958). According to the Dawishas,

²² Internet source: accessed via <http://www-aei.org/article/foreign-and-defensepolicy-on-17/09/2013>;

.....debates in parliament were often vigorous and legislators were usually allowed to argue and vote against the government without fear of retribution.....Parliament often managed to influence policy (Dawisha & Dawisha 2003).

Eric Davis supports this view and he states that “*Democracy is not new to Iraq*” and that “*In fact, quite the opposite is true*” (Davis 2005b: 3). Other commentators go further in saying that even under authoritarian rule, Iraqis demonstrated a commitment to cultural and political pluralism. Fatima Moshen argues that:

Even under Baathist Party rule, there were a number of newspapers and magazines calling for democracy and freedom of expression in the 1960s (Moshen 1994:8).

Additionally, Moataz Fattah’s statistical analysis of the first large scale survey of literate Muslims (22 Muslim countries were surveyed) conducted in 2002 concluded that:

There is nothing in the current data that shows Iraqis to be exceptionally anti-democratic (Fattah 2004:3).

Based on the above evidence, it is argued that the wide range of historical, cultural and social characteristics of Iraq and Lebanon did play an important part in the U.S.’s assessment of the applicability of democratic traditions to these countries.

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

There are significant discoveries, key concepts, arguments, and theories that scholars have put forward in respect of each of the hypotheses advanced in this study. The discussion under this section will critically review this literature, show how prevailing ideas fit into my research, and demonstrate how my research agrees or differs from them.

The relevant literature examined comprises scholarly books, journal articles, newspaper articles and a range of media constructs which together provide an ample collection of

resources. An examination of these resources offers diverse viewpoints and opinions, as well as scholarly analysis.

This review of the relevant literature is organized thematically and my sources are arranged in terms of the topics they cover within my research.

Theme I: U.S. Interagency competition and conflict

The bureaucratic battles between the U.S. State and Defense departments are the subject of voluminous journalistic stories and academic analysis. Those battles are an important part of the first hypothesis of this study.

Stephen Glain's book, *State vs. Defense: The Battle to Define America's Empire* (Glain 2011) traces the U.S. State Department's decline as the lead U.S. government agency responsible for developing and implementing U.S. foreign policy. Told largely through tales of bureaucratic infighting between the U.S. State and Defense departments, Glain chronicles the rise of post-war national security and argues that U.S. foreign policy is increasingly made and carried out by the Pentagon. According to Glain, this does not bode well for the United States. The George W. Bush administration is particularly singled out by Glain as having forced the air out of the U.S. State Department. Glain argues that the early days of the U.S.'s occupation of Iraq were orchestrated not by skilled Arabists from the State Department, but by the Pentagon²³.

Glain's work places the findings of this thesis into a wider context. His critique of the Pentagon's active role in the formulation and application of U.S. foreign policy, whilst

²³ See reviews of Stephen Glain's *State vs. Defense* by Karen De Young, Washington Post Senior National Security Correspondent (accessed via <http://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/> on 15/03/2014) and by Mark Mayor, author of "A Question of Command: Counterinsurgency from the Civil War to Iraq" (accessed via http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB1000142405311_on_15/03/2014);

warranting urgent consideration, must be balanced against wider considerations and other historical perspectives. His argument that the State Department, USAID and nominated civilians are equipped to foster nation-building and international development better than the Pentagon attracts controversy for many reasons. Critics of Glain's book argue first and foremost that the variable effects of politics and personality make any simple "militaristic" pattern hard to detect. For this reason, they argue that the Defense Department is not necessarily more 'hawkish' than the State Department. They point to the fact that the Defense Department was influential under U.S. Presidents Lyndon Johnson (1963 – 1969) and George W. Bush whilst the State Department was dominant under other U.S. Presidents, including supposed 'hawks' like Ronald Reagan (1981 – 1989) and Dwight Eisenhower (1953 – 1961). Under Reagan's regime, Secretary of State, George Shultz (1982 – 1989) is singled out as being more enthusiastic than his Defense counterpart Caspar W. Weinberger (1981 – 1987) about injecting U.S. ground forces into Third World crises. However, it is worth noting that Eisenhower and Reagan, along with their predecessors, Jimmy Carter (1977 – 1981) and Bill Clinton (1993 – 2001) never engaged in a sustained war abroad.

Other counterarguments to Glain's work point to the fact that American military governors were remarkably successful in rehabilitating Germany and Japan after World War II and that also, following the annexation of the Philippines in 1899, the U.S. Army governed the Islands with a degree of administrative competence and integrity that earned it renown among the populace. Critics charge further that during World War II, Franklin Roosevelt tasked the military with administering occupied Axis territories after

the State Department's mismanagement of the North African occupation revealed appalling deficiencies²⁴.

The thesis differs from Glain's work and the prevailing counterarguments in respect of it in that it does not enter the debate as a battering ram at the Pentagon's gates. In the final analysis of its findings, the thesis argues that interagency cooperation can help address transnational global security challenges and create a broader culture of collaboration between respective agencies, where energy once spent fighting turf battles can instead be devoted to getting things done. This argument finds support in the remarks made by Andrew J. Shapiro, the former Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs (2009 – 2013) at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Washington, DC on 8th August 2012. In his remarks Shapiro stated that whilst it may not be the most attention-grabbing topic, the need to improve interagency – and in particular, State-Defense collaboration, is of vital importance to U.S. national security. Earlier, a CSIS report dated July 2012 on stabilization and reconstruction, noted that “*almost all experts cite the need for improved interagency coordination*”²⁵.

Shapiro's comments, and the CSIS's above mentioned report, advocate the urgent need for U.S. interagency collaboration. The thesis resonates with this discussion as it hypothesizes that the lack of interagency cooperation was an important factor

²⁴ See reviews of Stephen Glain's State vs. Defense by Karen De Young, Washington Post Senior National Security Correspondent (accessed via <http://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/> on 15/03/2014) and by Mark Mayor, author of “A Question of Command: Counterinsurgency from the Civil War to Iraq” (accessed via <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB1000142405311 on 15/03/2014>);

²⁵ A report of the CSIS Program on the Case for Conflict and Stabilization Operations Today, July 12, 2012) – internet source: <http://csis.org> – accessed on 15/01/2013;

responsible for derailing the Bush administration's plans to introduce 'Western style' liberal democracy to Iraq.

Theme II: The problem of U.S. credibility

Marina Ottaway's article, "*Promoting Democracy in the Middle East: The Problem of U.S. Credibility*", highlights a problem of fundamental importance – the lack of credibility that the United States has in the Arab world when it presents itself as a pro-democratic actor in the aftermath of 9/11. The basis for this lack of credibility is discussed extensively in this study at Chapter Five aptly titled, 'The Problem of U.S. Credibility'.

In his foreword note to Ottaway's article, Thomas Carothers argues that, while the U.S. may feel that its credentials as a pro-democratic actor are unquestionable, the stubborn fact remains that Middle Easterners, have a different opinion²⁶. Carothers adds that if left unaddressed, this credibility gap will undermine even the most-well intentioned efforts by the United States to promote positive political change in the Middle East (Ottaway 2003: 3). Ottaway makes the point that, the Arab press consistently questions the U.S.'s rhetorical championing of Middle East democracy. She argues that the deep suspicions of U.S. motives harboured by Arabs led many to perceive Bush's freedom agenda as amounting to hypocrisy (Ottaway 2003: 3-5).

Larry Diamond shares Ottaway's view and he argues in his book entitled *The Spirit of Democracy: The Struggle to build Free Societies Throughout the World*, that Americans are seen as hypocrites – favouring democracy and the rule of law throughout the world

²⁶ This opinion is quite nuanced and complex as there used to be more admiration in the Arab world for the U.S. democratic model, and this has gradually been eroded as a result of the factors discussed in Chapter five amongst others.

so long as it does not constrain how the United States acts in the world (Diamond 2008:331).

Also, in their book, “*Who Speaks for Islam? What a Billion Muslims Really Think*”, John L. Esposito and Dalia Mogahed introduce evidence reflecting the Arab press’s disenchantment with U.S. democracy policy in the region. Quoting media pundits such as the Lebanese journalist; Michael Young and citing a journalistic piece from the Syrian newspaper, *Izz-al-Din al-Darwish* amongst others, Esposito and Mogahed argue that many in the Arab world do not believe that the U.S. is committed to democratic change in the region (Esposito & Mogahed 2007: 33-34, 59).

The relevant literature also reveals that Arab commentators who challenge the collective wisdom regarding the perceived ‘ill-intentions’ of America in particular, and the inappropriateness of its proposed reforms for democratic change in the region, are definitely in the minority. Sami E. Baroudi, a Lebanese academic and professor of political science at the Lebanese American University, argues in his article “*Arab Intellectuals and the Bush Administration’s Campaign for Democracy*” that those who support the U.S. intention to promote democratic change in the Arab world “.....*remain like voices in the wilderness with little influence over the opinions of the majority of intellectuals and the larger public who are fiercely anti-American*” (Baroudi 2007: 415).

The views of Ottaway, Diamond, Esposito, Mogahed and Baroudi are consistent with my hypothesis claim but differ in that they relate to the perspectives of Arabs generally. My research is country-oriented and specific and it focuses mainly on the Iraqi and Lebanese perspectives. It investigates the deep suspicions that many Iraqis and Lebanese harbour but appreciates that this pervasive suspicion is also shared by Arabs

generally. The feedback obtained from select primary sources will form an important and original segment of this aspect of my study.

In addition, David M. DeBartolo's article entitled "*Perceptions of U.S. Democracy Promotion: Part One: Middle Eastern Views*" which relies heavily upon public opinion data and which significantly includes polling data obtained from Iraqis and Lebanese people, adduces evidence to show that Middle Easterners are unhappy with American democracy promotion efforts because they believe the U.S. does not genuinely and consistently support democratic reform (DeBartolo 2008: 1). The evidence advanced by DeBartolo's work supports my hypothesis further substantiating it through the production of polling data reflective of Iraqi and Lebanese perspectives on U.S. democracy promotion.

PLAN OR ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

The remainder of this study is organized as follows:

Chapter Two traces the evolution of the U.S.'s commitment to democracy promotion in Iraq and Lebanon by examining first, U.S. foreign policy towards both countries pre-9/11 and thereafter, in the immediate aftermath of this watershed event. The discussion within this context will provide the first glimpse of the turf wars which characterised U.S. interagency relationships as the Bush administration struggled and wrestled analytically to shape and formulate a unified pre- and post-9/11 Iraq policy.

Chapter Three focuses on U.S. efforts aimed at promoting Western style 'liberal democracy' in Iraq post-9/11 and the 2003 Iraq war. This discussion examines the resources and policy initiatives directed towards supporting democracy, good governance and election programs in Iraq. It will aim to show how the plethora of U.S. agencies tasked with 'democracy promotion' in Iraq pursued differing and often

contradictory agendas in their formulation of the ‘democratisation project’ with predictably perplexing and perverse results.

Chapter Four focuses on U.S. democracy promotion in Lebanon. It examines the shift in U.S. foreign policy towards Lebanon which took place against the background of that country’s so-called Cedar Revolution in 2005. Within its discussion of the role played by the Bush Administration in promoting democracy in this country, this chapter contrasts the operating environment of Lebanon with that of the unique set of circumstances within which the U.S. operated in Iraq in its capacity as an occupying force. It concludes that U.S. democracy promotion overall, in spite of its more peaceful expressions in Lebanon, was unable to match its strong rhetoric with policy implementation on the ground.

Chapter Five examines the apparent contrast between U.S. efforts aimed at promoting democracy in Iraq and Lebanon, and Iraqi and Lebanese perspectives on the role of the U.S. as a promoter of democratic reform in their respective countries. This chapter examines the main factors responsible for the suspicions on the part of Arabs generally of U.S. motives to spread democracy across the Middle East region. Thereafter, it argues that the Bush administration’s democracy promotion efforts were compromised by the pervasive suspicions amongst Iraqis and Lebanese of U.S. motives aimed at spreading democracy in their respective countries. By drawing upon a historical account which demonstrates the deep suspicions of U.S. motives which many Iraqis and Lebanese harbour in common with large sections of the Arab world, the discussion in this chapter investigates the extent to which the pervasive suspicions about U.S. efforts to advance liberal democracy caused Iraqi and Lebanese commentators to articulate vociferous criticisms of U.S. initiatives aimed at promoting democratic reform in their respective countries.

Chapter Six is the conclusion to this study. It will summarise the thesis findings and place the number of important contributions which are synoptic of the Iraq and Lebanese case studies into a wider context. In doing so, the conclusion to this study will aim to raise a variety of questions which require further research.

METHODOLOGY

This section of the study includes a description of the means through which the hypotheses of the thesis are pursued. It sets out the methods, procedures and tasks utilized to test the hypotheses and answer the research questions posed above.

In order to prove the hypotheses and answer the research questions, I applied a qualitative analysis method that makes use of country case studies, in this case, Iraq and Lebanon.

Methods of data collection

The qualitative analysis consists of elite based interviews and a critical analysis of published primary and secondary sources. The interview research was conducted in the UK, Lebanon and the United States throughout 2013 to 2014.

Rationale for elite interviews

The elite interview data was not considered in isolation as the goal of collecting such data was to corroborate the information that I had previously collected from other sources. The data served to provide substance and meaning to my analysis of published primary and secondary material. By helping me to make sense of what had been gleaned from prior analyses, the elite interview data also assisted in the process relating to the validation of my arguments.

Target population, sample size and ethics

The target population for the study is represented by various spectrums of elite opinion in Iraq, Lebanon, UK and the US.

In deciding who to interview, I identified commentators with knowledge of the Bush administration's Mid-East 'democracy policy' in Iraq and Lebanon. The commentators selected fall into three broad groups:

- (1) Newspaper columnists and editors of distinguished Iraqi, Lebanese and Arabic newspapers including those affiliated with pan-Arab newspapers in circulation in the UK;
- (2) Academics and intellectuals based in Iraq, Lebanon, UK and the US;
- (3) Key personnel of U.S. agencies tasked with democracy promotion in Iraq and Lebanon.

A total number of seven elites were interviewed. The number of elites interviewed was influenced and determined by the difficulties experienced in accessing participants. Most of the elite professional participants targeted were often very busy, and could not fit research into small amounts of time in between their meetings and other professional commitments. Despite this constraint, and bearing in mind that this project was not supported by sufficient financial resources, the sample size was an appropriately sized research sample²⁷.

The interviews were conducted via telephone, email and face-to-face meetings and the language used throughout was English. No ethical issues or challenges arose

²⁷ Some academics argue that a sample of one is enough to suit some types of qualitative research in some circumstances (Back 2012; Becker 2012; Brannen 2012; Denzin 2012 and Passerini 2012).

during the conductance of these interviews. The participants did not set their own agendas and those who were nominated by my supervisors participated voluntarily and did not undermine the process of valid consent. There were also no agreed limits of confidentiality and anonymity.

Question design

The questions utilised during the course of the interviews were designed to prove the hypotheses and answer the core research questions posed above. The questions were designed with the elites' specialist and general knowledge in mind. Two sets of specific questions were thus designed – one set for U.S. policymakers and expert commentators and the other set for the Arab subjects/elites. General questions were also designed for both groups of elite commentators.

The overall aim of the question design was to enable me to conduct a research interview that proceeds like a normal conversation but one with a specific purpose and structure. Different dimensions introduced in the interview subjects' responses were pursued. The decisive issue here was my ability to sense the immediate scope of an answer and the horizon of possible sub-issues that it can potentially unravel.

Testing the hypotheses and answering the research questions

I applied the following methods and procedures to test the hypotheses and answer the research questions.

I assessed the claims of democracy promotion by the U.S. in Iraq and Lebanon by examining the official statements and actions of senior U.S. officials of the Bush administration and those not officially part of but close to the administration.

The post-9/11 speeches of George W. Bush and members of his administration in particular were cited as important primary sources relevant to U.S. rhetoric on democracy promotion in Iraq and Lebanon.

Further claims of the Bush administration's commitment to the promotion of democracy generally were provided by the National Security Strategy (NSS) of the United States of America documents of 2002 and 2006. Both sets of documents were consulted as together these documents formed the intellectual framework for the Bush administration's *forward strategy for freedom* agenda in Iraq and the wider Middle East region. Together, these documents represent the most sweeping shift in U.S. foreign policy since the beginning of the Cold War.

Furthermore, I consulted relevant publications of U.S. think tanks associated with the neoconservative group that influenced U.S. foreign policy during the Bush era such as the Project for New American Century (PNAC), the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), Heritage Foundation, and Center for Strategic and International Studies. In addition, the publications of other institutions such as Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Council on Foreign Relations, RAND Corporation and Brookings Institution, which are not definitively classed neoconservative, - although their fora and organs were occasionally used by individuals who share a neoconservative perspective - were also consulted.

For a comprehensive account of the invasion and occupation of Iraq by an Iraqi insider, I consulted Ali A. Allawi's *The Occupation of Iraq – Winning The War, Losing The Peace* (2007). Allawi is the former minister of trade and the first post-war civilian minister of defence in the Cabinet of the Iraqi Governing Council (IGC). He also served as a member of the Transitional National Assembly and as minister of finance in the

Transitional National Government under Dr. Ibrahim al-Jaffari. Allawi's insider account is an exposition of Iraqi society and politics in the aftermath of 9/11 and the 2003 Iraq war.

Additionally, I accessed relevant primary sources such as biographies, memoirs and books written by key figures of the Bush administration and interview transcripts relating to such figures. These types of sources provided important 'insider' information relating to Bush's '*forward strategy for freedom*' agenda. They also revealed some pertinent information about the personalities of key policy-makers and the prevalent mode of thinking amongst them which formed the basis for the interagency turf wars and bureaucratic infighting.

Examples of firsthand accounts consulted include amongst others: the presidential memoir of George W. Bush *Decision Points* (2010); a study of Dick Cheney, *Cheney: The Untold Story of America's Most Powerful and Controversial Vice President* (2007); a personal and political memoir of Dick Cheney aptly titled *Dick Cheney: In my time* - (2011); the memoir of Donald Rumsfeld, former Defense Secretary, *Known and Unknown: A Memoir* (2011); the recollections of former Under Secretary of State of Defense for Policy, Douglas J. Feith, *War and Decision: Inside the Pentagon at the Dawn of the War on Terrorism* (2008); and those of the former head of the Coalition Provincial Authority (CPA) in Iraq, Ambassador L. Paul Bremer III, *My Year in Iraq – The Struggle to Build a Future of Hope* (2006).

The above mentioned sources are particularly relevant in view of the fact that some of the most useful primary documents in the form of government public records are usually inaccessible because they fall under various closure regulations. These regulations restrict the use of analysis of documents covering recent events such as

those addressed in this study. In the United States, the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) generally release records after a 30 – year closure period.

Most notably, access to the George W. Bush Presidential Records is governed by the U.S. Presidential Records Act (PRA) of 1978 which provides amongst other provisions that a former President’s records are not subject to public access requests until five (5) years after the end of a presidential administration²⁸. For the administration of George W. Bush that date of accessibility was 20th January 2014. The records of the former Vice-President, Dick Cheney, which are housed at the NARA in Washington DC, are also subject to the same FOIA provisions as Bush’s presidential records. Both sets of official records became accessible and subject to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests as effective from 20th January 2014.

Despite being currently accessible, the George W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum processes FOIA requests for Bush’s records in the order in which they are received based on a queue structure determined by the amount and type of records requested. Requesters are advised that the FOIA process can take time, given the laws and regulations; the volume and complexity of presidential records generally; and also the process of making materials available²⁹. In the first week it was open to FOIA requests, the George W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum received more than 200 requests from journalists, scholars and activists³⁰. It is also noteworthy that documents processed in response to a request may be closed in whole or part in compliance with

²⁸ It is noted that materials that are restricted under the U.S. Presidential Records Act (PRA) of 1978 will remain closed for twelve (12) years after the President has left office.

²⁹ George W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum - accessed via <http://www.georgebushlibrary.smu.edu/en/research - on 17/09/2014;>

³⁰ Ibid;

applicable PRA restrictions and FOIA exemptions. Furthermore, most of the material that is ‘explosive’ enough to be really interesting, for example to reporters and researchers, is classified or the story is already in the public domain. Indeed, Bush and key members of his cabinet have written memoirs explaining the reasoning behind the decisions they took whilst in office in relation to specific policy issues.

Thus, until the briefing notes summarizing high-level meetings between Bush and his principal advisers becomes available, one can only speculate about the Administration’s motives to install democracy in Iraq, Lebanon and the wider Middle East region on the basis of other accessible material. Moreover, until this and other relevant information surfaces, and considering also, that it may literally take years to piece together an accurate and complete assessment of Bush’s foreign policy towards the region, the biographical and other contemporary studies used will help to provide important ‘insider’ information. Indeed, the information accessed did shed light on some of the key influences on U.S. foreign policy during the Bush years.

Notwithstanding the value of the above biographic sources, there are notable weaknesses associated with these types of sources. In his book titled “*Political Memoirs*”, Gamble argues that the weakness of these types of sources is that they focus only on the ‘*inside story*’, and often, they have less to say on the ‘*outside story*’ and the wider context in which government operates. According to Gamble, it is almost impossible to trace the evolution of policy-making through the use of biographies alone (Gamble 2002: 150). Burnham et al also make the salient point that biographies may lack neutrality thus making it necessary for the researcher to consider the extent of bias towards the issue at hand (Burham et al 2004).

Bearing in mind the above scholarly advice, the biographies accessed in this study are those of senior officials which explain their predominant mode of thinking during the period spent in office. More importantly, these biographies were not treated as 'stand-alone' sources as they were considered in conjunction with other relevant material in the form of important investigative journalism such as Seymour Hersh's book *Chain of Command: The Road From 9/11 to Abu Ghraib* (2004) and Bob Woodward's books, *Bush At War* (2003); *Plan of Attack* (2004); and *Bush At War, Part III: State of Denial* (2006). Woodward's three books which are based on unprecedented access to all the senior Washington players take us inside the White House and corridors of power to explore the thoughts of Bush, key cabinet members, the White House staff, and officials who served at various levels of the Defense and State Departments and the CIA.

To analyse the role of the plethora of U.S. agencies on the ground in Iraq and Lebanon, I examined unofficial documents and writings (such as journalistic and scholarly publications) and also the official reports, factsheets and news bulletins produced by organizations tasked with 'democracy promotion' such as USAID, National Democratic Institute (NDI), International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) amongst others. These resources were supplemented with elite interviewing.

Bearing in mind that one of the subsidiary aims of this study is to examine the gulf between the Bush administration's rhetoric and practise on democracy promotion in Iraq and Lebanon, I utilised a checklist comprising of the essential elements constituting a liberal democratic political system to evaluate the extent to which rhetoric which placed human rights and democratic governance at the forefront of Bush's freedom agenda was channelled into meaningful policies in Iraq and Lebanon. The checklist comprised of the following elements in the liberal democratic canon: free and fair

elections; free and investigative media; respect for human rights and the presence of civil society (that is, a plurality of social organisations).

In order to gauge the perceptions of Iraqis and Lebanese commentators on the U.S.'s democratization project, I focused on the contributions of a select number of commentators, who, in my view, provided the most articulate commentary on U.S. efforts to promote democracy in Iraq and Lebanon. The secondary sources referenced were drawn from the opinion pieces and editorials of web-based archives of Iraqi and Lebanese newspapers which commented on the U.S.'s project to promote democracy in Iraq and Lebanon in the aftermath of 9/11 and the 2003 Iraq war.

Flowing from this exercise, I identified notable U.S. initiatives that focused on effecting democratic change in Iraq and Lebanon during the George W. Bush era. I used these initiatives as case studies, and I examined Iraqis and Lebanese reactions towards the specific proposals embodied in these programs to promote democracy and good governance in their respective countries. Iraqis and Lebanese reactions towards the Bush Administration's democratic agenda as articulated in its Middle East Partnership Initiatives were examined with reference to the opinion pieces and editorials of web-based archives of Iraqi and Lebanese newspapers (drawn exclusively from the secondary sources consulted). The most notable of these initiatives are the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) which was launched in 2002 and its successor, the Greater Middle East Partnership Initiative (GMEI) launched in 2004³¹.

The above exercises were also supplemented by elite interviewing

³¹ The Greater Middle East Partnership Initiative (GMEI) was launched in partnership with the G-8 and it is a product of a flurry of transatlantic meetings held in June 2004 – the G – 8 meeting, the brief U.S. /E.U. summit, and the NATO summit.

CHAPTER TWO

THE BACKGROUND TO U.S. DEMOCRACY PROMOTION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

PRE- 9/11 PERIOD

Before 9/11, the promotion of democratic reform in the Arab world was not something around which heated debates erupted nor was it a topic of discussion that found its way very frequently into U.S. presidential remarks or speeches.

With the onset of the Cold War, access to the oil resources of the Middle East was, from the U.S.'s point of view, a crucial strategic interest in the struggle with the Soviet Union. Indeed, U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East post-World War II aimed at fending off Russian domination of the region's petroleum resources. At the heart of this policy was the objective to contain Soviet expansionism in the region.

The containment of Soviet expansionism became an end in itself and the U.S. defined the means of achieving this interest as vital, leading it to cooperate closely with authoritarian regimes such as that of Shah of Iran and the Al – Saud dynasty in Saudi Arabia. Diplomatic historians and political scientists have written extensively on Washington's support for autocratic regimes during the Cold War. Philip H. Gordon makes the point that for decades prior to 9/11, the United States basically had a deal with repressive governments throughout the Arab world: they could run their countries more or less however they wanted, as long as they were willing to sell oil at reasonable prices to the West, act as strategic allies of the United States and not threaten the Middle East regional order (Gordon 2003: 156). The pattern itself was crystal clear: when the

incumbent was pro-American (and anti-communist), the United States was pro-incumbent.

Blocking Soviet penetration and gaining access to Iran and the Arab world's oil resources during the post-World War II period was tied in with another broad U.S. objective which was supporting and protecting Israel. Extending support to Israel was deemed politically significant as it was apprehended that any reluctance to do so would alienate an important political force, the American Zionist constituency, whose electoral and lobbying power was clearly influential. The pressure of American pro-Israel public opinion and ideas propagated by the pro-Israel lobby on Congress and the White House compelled the U.S. to extend its long protective arm over Israel.

In short, in the late 1940s and early 1950s and 1960s, the U.S. pursued three broad objectives in the Middle East: access to oil, containment of the Soviet Union and security for Israel. These three interests remained relatively constant from 1948 through to 1989, when the USSR collapsed and the Cold War ended.

In the 1970s, and at the regional level, the U.S. embraced the 'dual containment policy' in the Gulf region in order to isolate 'rogue states' and to create a suitable framework for proceeding toward a complete peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict through a series of limited agreements. Throughout this period the U.S. continued to reject democratization on the basis that it was incompatible with Arab-Islamic culture. Based on these prevailing ideas, the U.S. opted to cooperate with authoritarian, traditional regimes.

In the 1980s, military and strategic cooperation became increasingly important to protect access to petroleum supplies and provide staging areas for U.S. military operations in Asia and Africa. Michele Durocher Dunne who served in the Department

of State for seventeen years as a Middle East specialist (1986 - 2003), with assignments in the U.S. Embassy in Cairo and U.S. Consulate General in Jerusalem, states that during the '80s, the United States also focused increasingly on the need for economic growth as a crucial component of maintaining stability in Arab countries (Dunne 2004: 3).

The promotion of political reform in the Middle East region began to creep into U.S. foreign policy in a modest way in the early 1990s. For many scholars, the 1990s were the period when post-Cold War democracy promotion began to take shape (Mitchell 2008 and Mitchell 2011:311).

However, notwithstanding the growing rhetoric of democracy promotion, the U.S. still prioritized security interests in the region ahead of representative government. During this decade, concerns that democratic openings would pave the way for Islamists to impose their own 'illiberal' rule and to pursue anti-American policies led the United States to avoid pushing for such openings (Hawthorne 2003:24). The mild response of the George H.W. Bush's administration to the Algerian military's undemocratic intervention in seminal multi-party elections in which a conservative religious movement, the Islamic Salvation Front (Front Islamique du Salut, or FIS) was poised to command a large legislative majority in Algeria in 1991, was a case in point. The former U.S. Secretary of State James A. Baker III (1989 – 1992) described the view then of the George H.W. Bush administration as follows:

Generally speaking, when you support democracy, you take what democracy gives youif it gives you a radical Islamic fundamentalist; you're supposed to live with it. We didn't live with it in Algeria because we felt that the radical fundamentalists views were so adverse to what we believe in and what we support, and to what we understood the national interests of the United States to be (Baker 1994).

From the study of the trajectory of U.S. Middle East foreign policy from George H.W. Bush to Clinton, it appears that Clinton continued with the policy of his predecessor. According to Amaney A. Jamal, officials in the Clinton administration admitted that if the Arab world's Islamists did not have an international agenda, the United States would not resist their coming to power (Jamal 2012: 242). Jamal states that the theological or potentially non-democratic character of the Islamists is not the driving force behind U.S. rejection of them but their anti-American views. She argues that the United States is far more likely to tolerate conservative, non-democratic rulers, like the monarchy in Saudi Arabia and the Taliban in Afghanistan (before they became more internationalized through al-Qaeda), than a democratic state that is not friendly toward the United States. Fawaz Gerges endorsed Jamal's argument with reference to the Clinton administration. He stated that "*The Clinton administration would not oppose Islamists if they.....kept their focus on domestic issues*" (Gerges 1999: 102). Jamal reports that one official affiliated with Clinton's administration even stated frankly that: "*We are prepared to live with Islamic regimes as long as they do not endanger or be hostile to our vital interests*" (Jamal 2012: 242). An address on 18th May 1993 by Martin Indyk, a senior State Department official in the Clinton administration who also served as ambassador to Israel, referred to Islamists as "troublemakers" who can potentially create chaos in the Arab world (cited in Jamal 2012:86). Clinton echoed these sentiments in his 1994 speech before the Jordanian parliament. In his speech, Clinton spelled out the U.S. perspective on politics in the Arab world as follows: *there were forces of tyranny (the Islamists) and forces of freedom (the United States) allied to authoritarian regimes* (cited in Jamal 2012: 86).

The former Secretary of State during Clinton's second term, Madeleine Albright (1997 – 2001), further explained the rationale behind the U.S.'s reluctance to promote democratization because of the perceived threat of Islamists by claiming that:

We have been afraid to push hard for democracy, especially in Arab countries. We worry, perhaps with reason, that if radical Islamists obtain power through an election, there would be no more elections.....and instability might be created (cited in Yetiv 2006:400).

Jamal concludes that under Clinton, U.S. policy toward Islamists became crystallized and that government officials worried about the implications of Islamists because of their foreign policy agendas (Jamal 2012: 242).

Whilst fearing the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, U.S. officials also assumed during the 1990s that pursuing political reform and democratization in the Arab states would disrupt efforts at Arab – Israeli peacemaking which was a major focus of U.S. diplomacy (Dunne 2004:4). On a practical level, senior U.S. government officials consistently resisted raising internal political issues with Arab leaders, even when U.S. ambassadors in the field recommended that they do so. Dunne states that senior officials deleted the issue from the meeting agendas because they did not want to irritate Arab leaders, possibly damaging the prospects of getting their cooperation on the specific issues of the day related to the peace process (Dunne 2004:4). He adds that, the general attitude in the U.S. State Department and the White House during this period was that if there were to be political reform in the region, it should be gradual and driven entirely by internal forces, primarily by the middle classes and elements of civil society that were expected to arise as a result of economic reform (Dunne 2004:4). According to Dunne, U.S. officials also believed that the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict

prevented Arab peoples and regimes from focusing on domestic reform (Dunne 2004:4).

A brief history of U.S. foreign policy in Iraq and Lebanon pre-9/11 and the 2003 Iraq war

Iraq

Prior to the 1991 Gulf War, U.S. foreign policy toward Iraq oscillated between conflict and cooperation for over five decades.

The United States had no formal diplomatic or consular relations with Iraq after the Iraqi government severed ties with the U.S. in 1967 following Egypt's Gamal Abdul Nasser's claim that the U.S. collaborated with Israel during the Arab-Israeli War. Relations were resumed in the 1970s after the State Department noted Saddam Hussein's declaration in July 1973 that he would welcome better relations with the U.S. Saddam's move was viewed by the U.S. as an indication that Iraq was prepared to chart a more independent course in foreign relations (Kiely 2009: 47).

The year 1979 represented a major watershed in U.S.-Iraq relations. The Iranian revolution of the same year displaced U.S. strategy in the region in one fell swoop by undermining traditional pro-Western regimes in the Arab world. Prior to the 1979 revolution, Iran served as one of the 'twin pillars' of the U.S.'s regional security system alongside Saudi Arabia. The fall of the Shah of Iran transformed the most powerful state in the region from America's ally into its enemy. In the same year, Saddam Hussein had formally assumed the presidency of Iraq after forcing Ahmad Hassan al-Bakr into retirement on 16 July 1979. With Saddam's ascent to power, the U.S. sought to pursue

its objective to re-establish a stable hegemonic position across the region by curtailing the spread of Iran and Ayatollah Khomeini's growing influence. The U.S. viewed Iran as a primary threat to regional stability because of Khomeini's explicit aim of exporting its revolutionary theocratic doctrine to neighbouring countries³². Khomeini had a firm belief in popular movements and was seeking to institutionalize the struggle at the level of the masses. The Shi'a Islamic revolutionary ideology enunciated by Khomeini attacked Western imperialism and its perceived aim of eradicating Islam. The U.S.'s relationship with Iraq thus featured prominently at the heart of its effort to undermine the revolutionary influence of Ayatollah Khomeini. Ali A. Allawi, the former minister of trade and minister of defence in the Cabinet of the Iraqi Governing Council states that:

Throughout the 1970s, U.S. policy towards Iraq was increasingly determined by a new strategic variable: the emergence of the Shah's Iran as a key ally in the area. Whenever the USA was seen to be interfering in Iraq's affairs, it was to enhance the relative power of Iran in the struggle for supremacy in the Gulf. Iraq was relegated to the second drawer of U.S. concerns in the area. All this changed with the collapse of the Shah's rule and the establishment of the virulently anti-American Islamic Republic of Iran. The threat to the Gulf states was too real to ignore, and the hitherto neglected Ba'ath of Iraq, especially after the ascendancy of Saddam Hussein to unchallenged power in 1979, became a crucial instrument in blocking, and possibly reversing, the march of revolutionary Islam (Allawi 2007: 3).

In the 1980s, starting with Ronald Reagan's Administration, U.S. relations with Saddam Hussein grew stronger resulting in the formation of a kind of tacit alliance between the two countries. The fact that the U.S. was at loggerheads with Iran appeared to be favourable to Saddam as he saw an opportunity to replace Iran as the dominant Persian

³² Iran's sponsorship of militant Islamist organisations such as Hamas and Hezbollah emerged as a prime concern of the United States.

Gulf state and undermine Khomeini's influence. The hostilities between Iraq and Iran are historic and deeply rooted in concerns over internal security and territorial boundaries. The respective ideologies and ambitions of Saddam and Khomeini at the time to gain and maintain control over regional politics also played a part in the hostilities that continued in the aftermath of the Iranian revolution. Following the Iranian revolution, Saddam began to interpret the build-up in hostilities in Iraq's Kurdish controlled areas as not only resulting from the political aspirations of some Kurdish leaders to undermine and destabilize his regime, but as a calculated and premeditated effort by Iran to stir and sustain revolutionary activities in these areas. The demands by the Da'wa Party and its Shi'a leader, Ayatollah Baqir al-Sadr - a personal friend and protégé of Ayatollah Khomeini - for the overthrow of the Ba'ath party and its replacement by an Islamic revolutionary government led Saddam to believe that Khomeini deliberately wanted to foment revolutionary activities in the Kurdish controlled areas of Iraq. By waging war on Iran, Saddam aimed to stifle the Shi'a insurgency which had been influenced by the Iranian revolution and assert Iraq's claim to regional power. On 22nd September 1980, Saddam launched a pre-emptive attack against Iran via air and land to achieve this objective.

The Reagan administration's policy toward Iraq in the 1980s was thus one in which the mutual interests of the two nations was considered. In pursuance of this policy of mutual interests, the U.S. provided important support for Iraq during its eight year war with Iran. At that time, a defeat or even weakening of Iran's military prowess represented a mutual goal for both the U.S. and Iraq. Iraq wanted to be the sole regional power while the U.S. wanted to prevent a hostile Iran from posing any military threats to oil-rich countries in the area. Allawi argues that:

The war that Iraq fought with Iran (1980 – 88) was as much to do with protecting and advancing the interests of the west as with local and regional considerations. The USA viewed Saddam's Iraq as the single most valuable, albeit indirect, bulwark against the spread of revolutionary Islam into the Gulf region (Allawi 2007: 3).

Close cooperation between the U.S. and Iraq continued throughout the 1980s. In early 1982, the United States provided civilian and military aid to Iraq to support Saddam Hussein in his war against Iran. In a sworn court declaration regarding the “Iran-Gate” affair, Howard Teicher, who served as a staff member to the United States National Security Council under the Reagan administration between the years 1982 – 1987, testified as follows:

In June, 1982, President Reagan decided that the United States could not afford to allow Iraq to lose the war to Iran. President Reagan decided that the United States would do whatever was necessary and legal to prevent Iraq from losing the war with Iran. President Reagan formalized this policy by issuing a National Security Decision Directive ("NSDD") to this effect in June, 1982. I have personal knowledge of this NSDD because I co-authored the NSDD with another NSC Staff Member, Geoff Kemp. The NSDD, including even its indentifying number, is classified (Teicher 1995).

As indicated by Freudenheim et al, the Reagan administration also took Iraq off the U.S. State Department's list of terrorist states, apparently without Congressional approval (Freudenheim et al 1982). There were nonetheless policymakers within the U.S. administration who raised concerns during the 1980s about the U.S.'s close cooperation with Saddam's regime, but their caveats were rejected. The main policy thrust was to stop Iran from exporting the Islamic revolution and to block Soviet expansion into the Gulf area. Noel Koch, the former Principal Assistant U.S. Secretary of Defence for International Security Affairs (1981 – 1985) in the Reagan Administration and Deputy

U.S. Undersecretary of Defence (Wounded Warrior Care and Transition Policy) in the Barack Obama administration (2009 – 2010), made the point that:

no one had any doubts about his [Saddam's] continued involvement with terrorism.....The real reason [for taking Iraq off the terrorism list] was to help them [Iraqis] succeed in the war against Iran (cited in Halabi 2009:84).

William Colby, a former director of the CIA, stated in 1986 that:

It is in the interest of the United States, the Western world and even the Soviet Union that Iraq successfully withstands the Iranian assault.....The United States [had] better make direct efforts to strengthen Iraq against Iran (cited in Halabi 2009:84).

This pattern of engagement and tacit support for Iraq continued through to the early years of the George H.W. Bush administration. In October 1989, George H.W. Bush signed National Security Directive 26, which was to ‘*propose economic and political incentives for Iraq to moderate its behaviour and to increase our influence with Iraq*’ (cited in Jentleson 1994:15). Only when Iraq invaded Kuwait did the U.S.-Iraq relationship break down. The U.S. withdrew its military, economic and diplomatic support for Iraq in its war with Iran following Saddam’s annexation of Kuwait. Allawi states that “*the direct challenge to vital U.S. and western interests, and the enormous effects this would have if it were not reversed galvanised the U.S. into action*”. According to Allawi, the objective became “*the expulsion of Iraqi forces from Kuwait and then a strategy to ‘contain’ Iraq. The latter was designed to disarm, isolate and weaken the regime, remove it as a threat to regional security, and keep it politically off balance*” (Allawi 2007: 3).

Prior to the invasion however, the U.S. reportedly gave mixed signals to the presence of Iraqi forces on the border with Kuwait. Excerpts from a purported transcript of a

conversation which took place between then U.S. Ambassador to Iraq, April Glaspie and Saddam Hussein on 25th July 1990, appeared in *The New York Times International* on Sunday, 23rd September 1990. The details of this conversation showed the U.S.'s indecisiveness on the bilateral border disputes raised by Iraq with respect to Kuwait.

According to the foregoing transcript, Ambassador Glaspie reportedly told Saddam Hussein that:

*The instruction we had during this period was that we should express no opinion on this issue and that the issue is not associated with America. Secretary of State James A. Baker III has directed our official spokesman to emphasize this instruction*³³.

Regarding the Glaspie interview and other "signals" emanating from the Washington government in July of 1990, a senior United States diplomat in the Middle East is reported to have said, presumably in the autumn of 1990 or the winter of 1990/1991 that:

We virtually gave him [Saddam Hussein] the green light [to attack Kuwait]. If I had been sitting where he was sitting and getting the signals he was getting from Washington and elsewhere at the time, I would probably also have gambled on the invasion of Kuwait (cited in Watson 1991).

However, it is also reported that Ambassador Glaspie denounced the Iraqi transcript of her interview with Saddam as having been "*maliciously*" edited by the Iraqis "*to the point of inaccuracy*" (Ogden 1991 and Watson et al 1991:22). Appearing before the Foreign Relations Committee of the U.S. Senate, and the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives on

³³ Confrontation in the Gulf; Excerpts From Iraqi Document on Meeting With U.S. envoy, *The New York Times International*, Sunday, 23rd September 1990 – accessed via <http://www.nytimes.com/1990/09/23/world/confrontation-in-the-Gulf/> - on 15/01/2014;

20th and 21st March 1991, Glaspie explained that the published transcript included only one part of her sentence to Saddam Hussein which stated that the United States had no opinion on his quarrel with Kuwait. According to Glaspie, the other part of her sentence made it clear that the United States insists that Saddam settles his disputes with Kuwait non-violently to which Saddam assured her that he would do so (Watson et al 1991:22). On 2nd August 1990, four days after Glaspie's meeting with Saddam Hussein, Iraqi troops invaded and occupied Kuwait. Days after Glaspie delivered her message to Saddam Hussein, the former Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, John Kelly, explained to a subcommittee of the Committee on Foreign Affairs in Washington on 31 July 1990, that:

Historically, the United States has taken no position on the border disputes in the area, nor on matters pertaining to integral OPEC deliberations, but the United States has taken a strong position in support of the sovereignty of all States in the area (cited in Wilz 1996).

In their justification for attacking Iraq and causing large scale devastation to that country's infrastructure and industry, members of the George H.W. Bush administration cited preventing Iraq from posing any threats to its neighbours. Initially, the George H.W. Bush Administration highlighted violations of sovereignty and human rights notably Saddam's gassing of Kurds in Iraq in 1988; Iraq's illegal occupation and plunder of Kuwait; and babies being removed from incubators by Iraqi soldiers during the invasion of Kuwait. However, doubts appeared about what Washington's real concern was when Bush stated that the aggressive stance towards Iraq was about "access to energy resources" and "our way of life" (cited in Aruri 2002: 24). Further comments from Bush's Secretary of State, James Baker, triggered more doubts about the U.S.'s real intentions and served to underline U.S. motives, when he accused Iraq of

threatening a recession in the United States. According to Baker, the real conflict was over “jobs” and that:

This [conflict with Iraq] is not about increases in the price of a gallon of gas.....It is rather about a dictator who.....could strangle the global economic order, determining by fiat whether we all enter a recession or even the darkness of depression (cited in Marshall 1990:A14 and Neuman 1990).

The Clinton administration which came to power following the Persian Gulf War opted to pursue a policy of ‘dual containment’ of Iraq alongside Iran, replacing the previous strategy of ‘balancing’ one against the other with their mutual isolation (Gause 1994:56). Clinton’s policy towards Iraq was no less devastating than that which was pursued by his predecessor as it continued the bombing raids begun by the George H.W. Bush administration and also stringent and devastating sets of sanctions. Following in the footsteps of Bush senior, Clinton used human rights violations to justify the U.S.’s continued hostility towards Saddam’s Iraq. Whilst his administration hastened to cite the attacks launched by Iraq against the Kurds, statements made by members of the Clinton administration also revealed that the issue had global and regional dimensions beyond the Kurds. Clinton’s Defense Secretary William Perry (1994 – 1997) admitted that:

The issue is not simply the Iraqi attack on the [Kurds in] Irbil [on 31st August 1996], it is the clear and present danger Saddam Hussein poses to [Iraq’s] neighbours, to the security and stability of the region and to the flow of oil in the world (cited in Aruri 2002:287).

Clinton himself made it clear that vital U.S. interests lay with Iraq’s immediate neighbours, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia rather than to the Kurds in the north. He said:

“*We acted in southern Iraq, where our interests are the most vital.....*”³⁴. This point was reinforced following comments by Clinton’s Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright when she was asked on national television on 12th May 1996 by the journalist, Lesley Stahl what she thought about the fact that 500,000 Iraqi children have died as a result of the sanctions. Albright responded that this was a “*very hard choice,*” and but then added, “*but we think the price is worth it*” (Albright 1996).

Overall, Clinton’s foreign policy towards Iraq was widely criticised by influential national security intellectuals and former policy-makers resident at or involved with conservative think-tanks in Washington. Nick Ritchie and Paul Rogers point out those broad criticisms of Clinton’s Iraq policy judged that policy as a failure (Ritchie and Rogers 2007:44). For instance, in January 1998, Bush’s Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz (2001 – 2005) joined other neoconservatives such as Richard Perle, Chairman of Defense Policy Board Advisory Committee (2001 – 2003), Undersecretary of State for Democracy and Global Affairs, Paula Dobriansky (2001 – 2009), Special Assistant to Bush and Deputy National Security Adviser for Global Democracy Strategy, Elliot Abrams (2005 – 2009) and former U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan and the United Nations, Zalmay Khalilzad (2007 – 2009) amongst others, in signing a public letter published by William Kristol in his “Project for the New American Century” (PNAC) addressed to Bill Clinton, arguing that containment of Saddam had failed. Allawi interestingly points out that; a number of the signatories of the letter to Clinton found top-level jobs in the George W. Bush administration whilst other prominent individuals associated with the former alternative Iraq policy were nominated to senior

³⁴ Bill Clinton, President’s Weekly Radio Address, Federal News Service, 14th September 1996 – cited in Arno, A. (2003) *Iraq Under Siege: The Deadly Impact of Sanctions and War* (London: Pluto Press).

positions throughout the new administration (Allawi 2007: 79)³⁵. In a prescient note, the letter, which was described by Colin Dueck, Professor of Government and International Politics at George Mason University, as “*an explicit vision of American primacy*” (Dueck 2012:60), stated that,

*Given the magnitude of the threat, the current policy [towards Iraq].....is dangerously inadequate....In the long term, [the only acceptable strategy] means removing Saddam Hussein and his regime from power. That now needs to become the aim of American foreign policy.....American policy cannot continue to be crippled by a misguided insistence on unanimity in the U.N. Security Council*³⁶.

A month later, in February 1998, Robert Kagan and William Kristol, co-founders of PNAC, challenged the administration’s prognosis on Iraq. They argued that containment of Saddam was an illusion (cited in Ritchie and Rogers 2007: 44). Later, in September 1998, John Bolton, later Undersecretary of State for Arms Control and International Security for George W. Bush, condemned Clinton’s Iraq policy as “*worse than incompetent*”, declaring containment unsustainable (cited in Ritchie and Rogers 2007:44). In December 1998, Bolton argued further in the *Weekly Standard* – a leading conservative political journal edited by William Kristol – that “*seven years of*

³⁵ Elliot Abrams, a signatory to the PNAC statement, joined the National Security Council and in 2002 became Senior Director for Near East and North African Affairs. John Bolton, a board member of PNAC, became the Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Affairs. Paula Dobriansky, another PNAC supporter, became Undersecretary of State for Global Affairs, responsible for spreading democracy. Zalmay Khalizad, a former RAND Cooperation senior analyst, who went on to become ambassador to Iraq, joined the National Safety Council (NSC) as its Director for the Gulf and Southwest Asia and Other Regional Issues. Richard Perle became the head of the Pentagon’s Defense Policy Board. Peter Rodman, another PNAC signatory, became the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs. Donald Rumsfeld became the Secretary of Defense (cited in Allawi 2007: 467).

³⁶ ‘Letter to President Clinton on Iraq’ published by the Project for the New American Century, 26th January 1998. Available from: <http://www.newamericancentury.org/iraqclintonletter.htm> (accessed on 17/07/2013).

incompetence” had left the administration “*precious few options to reverse the downward drift of our Iraq policy*”. Bolton described Clinton’s foreign policy as “*inattentive*” and “*feckless*” (cited in Ritchie and Rogers 2007: 44).

Furthermore, Section 3 of the Iraq Liberation Act passed in January 1999 stated that:

It should be the policy of the United States to support efforts to remove the regime headed by Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq and to promote the emergence of a democratic government to replace that regime (cited in Allawi 2007:62)³⁷.

The administration of George W. Bush which took up office in January 2001 did not change U.S. policy towards Iraq and it continued in the same vein and fashion as the Clinton administration. The attacks of 9/11 however prompted a change in U.S. foreign policy towards Iraq and turned it on its head. Allawi argues that:

It took the attacks of 11 September, 2001 on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon to create the breach in the policy ramparts into which marched the proponents of the ‘Alternative Discourse’. It was only then that Middle Eastern policy, in particular the policy towards Iraq, began to undergo a fundamental and far-reaching revision (Allawi 2007:4).

The possibility that Iraq harboured WMD was the main basis upon which an aggressive U.S. policy towards it could be based. From this flowed other ‘legitimate’ U.S. strategies such as the idea of implanting the ideals of Western style liberal democracy which it was hoped would serve as a strong antidote to Islamic fundamentalism.

³⁷ The U.S. House of Representatives approved the Iraq Liberation Act by a vote of 360 to 38 (Republicans voted 202 to 9 and Democrats voted 157 to 29 in favour of the bill). It passed the Senate without a single dissenting vote. Clinton signed the legislation into law making regime change in Iraq an official policy of the United States.

Lebanon

Following Lebanese President Camille Chamoun's announcement of Lebanon's participation in the Eisenhower doctrine³⁸ in 1957, Lebanon gained importance as a key ally in President Eisenhower's administration's Baghdad Pact³⁹. Thereafter, U.S. marines entered the country in 1958 to restore order following the outbreak of Lebanon's first post-independence civil war. The American military intervention of 1958 foreclosed a second term of office for Chamoun and it led to the election of Army Commander General Fuad Shehab as president. No military response followed the outbreak of the 1975 civil war, although the U.S. maintained its political involvement in the country via the activities of special envoys, particularly around the second Israeli invasion in 1982. Washington's involvement in Lebanon, which then aimed at negotiating peace between that country and Israeli in 1983, was influenced by the historical precedent of 1958. Ronald Reagan chose as his emissary to Lebanon one of America's premier career diplomats and a notable Lebanese – American in the person of Philip C. Habib.

³⁸ The term Eisenhower Doctrine refers to a speech by President Dwight David Eisenhower on 5 January 1957, within a "Special Message to the Congress on the Situation in the [Middle East](#)". Under the Eisenhower Doctrine, a Middle Eastern country could request American economic assistance or aid from U.S. military forces if it was being threatened by armed aggression from another state. Available from: <http://history.state.gov/milestones/1953-1960/eisenhower-doctrine> (accessed on 15/12/2012).

³⁹ The Baghdad Pact was a defensive organization for promoting shared political, military and economic goals founded in 1955 by Turkey, Iraq, Great Britain, Pakistan and Iran. Similar to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, the main purpose of the Baghdad Pact was to prevent communist incursions and foster peace in the Middle East. It was renamed the Central Treaty Organization, or CENTO, in 1959 after Iraq pulled out of the Pact.

Habib's task was:

*to defuse the tensions and to create an atmosphere.....for resolving the crisis by peaceful means and forestalling a confrontation*⁴⁰.

The Lebanon of 1982 was, however, far different from that of 1958. The journalist, John Kelly succinctly describes the Lebanese political landscape in 1982 as follows:

with an active Israeli invasion of Lebanon underway, a besieged set of Palestinian fighters, a Syrian expeditionary force on the ground, and dozens of separate armed Lebanese factions already embroiled in lethal contests and active warfare for the previous seven years, Lebanon was a perilous land for well-meaning strangers (Kelly 2006).

Devastating suicide attacks were carried out against the U.S. Embassies in Beirut (on April 18, 1983 and September 20, 1984 respectively) and on the garrison of U.S. soldiers (on October 23, 1984) resulting in a total of 310 deaths (Faath 2006: 146). In addition to the suicide attacks, various kidnappings of American professors at the American University of Beirut and U.S. journalists were carried out by anti-U.S. forces. Consequently, the U.S. administration imposed a travel ban for U.S. citizens wanting to visit Lebanon. The ban was lifted in 1997 but security measures were still maintained because of strong evidence of a virulent anti-American sentiment amongst the Lebanese population. A complete withdrawal of U.S.

⁴⁰ Passage of statement read by the Department of State Acting Spokesman in former US President Ronald Reagan's administration on May 29, 1981;

troops from Lebanon took place on 26th February, 1984 but it took until 1997 before USAID resumed its work in the country (Faath 2006:146).

Needless to say, the Cold War dimension of the 1982-1984 intervention was very different from Eisenhower's 1958 deployment of the Marines to Lebanon. Kelly points out that whilst the 1958 justifications were placed very much in the context of an East-West contest - *militant Arab nationalist movements assisted by the Soviets versus pro-Western forces for stability backed by the United States* - the 1982 to 1984 justifications were more linked to regional acts and actors: *the Palestinians, the Israelis, the Syrians, and the Lebanese factions* (Kelly 2006).

In the late 1980s, the U.S.'s foreign policy toward Lebanon became inextricably linked to Syrian influence and authority over that country. In 1988, a constitutional crisis engulfed Lebanon with two rival governments formed at the end of Amin Gemayel's presidency. Before the expiry of his presidential term, Amin Gemayel appointed an interim military cabinet headed by General Michel Aoun, the commander of the Lebanese Army to rule the country until elections could be held. Syrian forces, which then controlled large swathes of Lebanese territory, instigated a political impasse by rejecting Aoun's government and establishing a rival regime in Syrian-controlled West Beirut. Despite the constitutional legality of Aoun's government, the U.S. openly discredited Aoun's declaration of a war of liberation against Syrian forces. In an effort to resolve the crisis on terms acceptable to Syria, the U.S. promoted a mediation effort by the Arab League. The former Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger even told a congressional hearing that the Lebanese crisis might worsen if Syrian forces

withdrew from Lebanon⁴¹. The mediation process yielded the Ta'if Accord which former White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater hailed in a speech in 1989 headlined 'State Department Welcomes Arab Plan for Lebanon' as '*the first step toward restoration of a sovereign, unified, and independent Lebanon, free of all foreign forces*' (cited in Gambill 2001).

General Aoun's refusal to relinquish power following the elections of Rene Mouawad as President of the second republic of Lebanon on 5th November 1989, and his successor, Elias Hrawi (following Mouawad's assassination on 22nd November 1989), prompted George H.W. Bush's administration to launch a diplomatic campaign to isolate Aoun. The U.S.'s condemnation of Aoun resulted in a December 27th UN Security Council Statement calling for the implementation of the Ta'if agreement and expressing "*deep concern*" over Aoun's rejection of it. Subsequent international pressure weakened Aoun's position and this paved the way for a Syrian invasion of Lebanon in October 1990.

Although U.S. – Syrian relations were not cordial during this period, the U.S. used the Ta'if Agreement to improve diplomatic relations between the two countries. Syria's regional importance was recognised by the U.S. as it sought to address Israeli security concerns vis-a-vis Hezbollah and Iran. This marked the start of the processes that would see the U.S. grant Syria custodianship of Lebanon in 1990 and Syria's subsequent alliance with the U.S. against Iraq following Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait. The timing of Syrian involvement in Lebanese politics is significant as it was a time when the U.S. and its allies were rewarding allies who had helped and collaborated with them

⁴¹Boustany, Nora "An Old War Claims New Victims; Shellings Galvanise Christians of East Beirut Against Syrians", *The Washington Post*, 12 April 1989 – accessed via <http://www.washingtonpost.com> – on 15/02/2014;

to regain and restore Kuwait's sovereignty from the shackles of Saddam's grip. At the time, the U.S. relied on partner countries to assist in stabilizing other potential disturbances in the region.

Whether the U.S. ever had any intention to follow through on the Ta'if Agreement and enforce Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon is difficult to ascertain. What is notable however is that whilst the official U.S. position supported the full implementation of Ta'if, U.S. officials appeared to be paying lip service to the restoration of Lebanese sovereignty by bolstering Damascus's perceptions that Syrian control over Lebanon was not being contested by the United States. Indeed, the administrations of George H. W. Bush and the Bill Clinton both found it politically expedient for one reason or another to tacitly support Syrian authority over Lebanon. The George H.W. Bush administration's interest in regional stability and its inability to be equally present on all Middle Eastern fronts explains its reasons for turning a blind eye to Syrian custodianship over the implementation of peace and the Ta'if Accord in Lebanon in 1990. Whilst George H.W. Bush and his team expected Syria to comply with the provisions of the Ta'if Accord and remain committed, at least in principle, to its full implementation, the administration undertook no further initiatives to pressure Syria on this matter. Washington expressed little concern when Syria reinterpreted the clause in the Ta'if Agreement calling for the redeployment of its troops stationed in Lebanon in advance of parliamentary elections. It also failed to condemn the 1992 elections which were held against serious objections from the Christian political forces and resulted in a major boycott of the process and the subsequent marginalization of these forces from the Lebanese political scene.

The U.S.'s failure to condemn the brashness and cynicism with which Syria attempted to influence Lebanon's democratic foundations and principles became a modest political liability in the months leading up to the 1992 presidential election. This period

witnessed a concerted lobbying campaign by the Council of Lebanese American Organizations (CLAO) and the Clinton-Gore campaign, not surprisingly, took aim at the Bush administration's policy in a bid to secure the votes of an estimated 2 million Americans of Lebanese descent. In his presidential statement on Lebanon on 18th September 1992, Bill Clinton told a gathering of Lebanese Americans that, "*The Bush administration appears willing to sacrifice the prospects for an independent Lebanon in order to curry favour with Syria's dictator*" (cited in Gambill 2001). He added, "*Obviously, the withdrawal of Syrian troops is essential to Lebanon regaining its independence*" (cited in Gambill 2001).

The U.S.'s apparent indifference towards Syria's Ta'if implementation failures however spilled over to Bill Clinton's administration despite the former president's condemnation of his predecessor's Middle East policy vis-a-vis Lebanon. Clinton's eloquent defence of Lebanon's sovereignty during his 1992 presidential election campaign, proved to be, as Gary C. Gambill, General Editor of The Middle East Forum, a Philadelphia-based think tank, describes it, "*a fleeting mirage of American electoral politics*" (Gambill 2001). Whilst it is argued that, the Clinton administration never openly disavowed U.S. commitments to the "spirit" of the Ta'if Accord (and to the Lebanese deputies who signed it), just like the Bush administration that preceded it, Clinton's team consistently declined to criticize Syrian control over Lebanon (Gambill 2001). According to Gambill, "*the palpable wave of anticipation that swept through Lebanon after Clinton's election was very short-lived*" (Gambill 2001). Gambill attributes the disconnection between Clinton's rhetoric and policy implementation to the former president's Mid-East strategy towards Lebanon which he states "*stemmed from a desire to coax the Syrians into making the necessary concessions for peace with Israel*" (cited in Gambill 2001).

Within this context, the Clinton administration notably declined to acknowledge that Syria's adamant refusal to undertake a limited redeployment of its forces to the Beqaa Valley was in violation of the Ta'if Agreement. A June 1997 Congressional hearing on U.S. policy toward Lebanon by the House Committee on International Relations led to an exchange between the chairman of the committee, Republican Benjamin A. Gilman and Assistant Secretary for Near East Affairs David Welch that fuelled speculation surrounding the Clinton administration's consistent refusal to publicly acknowledge Syrian violations of the Ta'if Agreement. Asked by Representative Gilman whether Syria has redeployed to the Beqaa Valley pursuant to its agreement within the Accord, Welch deftly avoided the issue of whether Syria was in violation of the Ta'if Accord by stating only that the "*redeployment from Lebanon to Syria*" has not been completed (cited in Gambill 2001).

Furthermore, the Clinton administration was very responsive to Syrian concerns over General Aoun's opposition towards Damascus's involvement in Lebanese politics. This was most evident in the days leading up to the June 1997 congressional hearing mentioned above. Aoun had been invited by Representative Gilman to testify before the committee and was listed on the committee's schedule just days before the hearing, but failed to appear. In an interview with Gary Gambill on 18th April 2000, Lester Munson, Communications Director for the Committee on International Relations, remarked that "*the State Department chose not to provide him [Aoun] with the necessary visa to come to the United States*" and "*at no time was his invitation to testify withdrawn*" (cited in Gambill 2001). This appears to have been the first time that a U.S. administration has ever deliberately obstructed the appearance of someone invited to testify before Congress. According to Gambill, this was a strong indication of how responsive the Clinton White House was to Syrian sensitivities at the time (Gambill 2001). A report

prepared by the Lebanese Study Group in May 2000 at the Middle East Forum strongly criticized the Clinton administration for soft-peddalling on “*Syria’s record on terrorism and its acquisition of weapons of mass destruction*”. The report bemoaned the fact that the U.S. possesses enormous leverage over Syria that it does not seem willing to use. It advocated that the Executive Branch openly call on Damascus to end its occupation of Lebanon, suggesting in reference to the Turkish-Syrian interaction over PKK (Kurdish Workers Party) presence in Syria that “*a credible threat to use force does not fall on deaf ears in Damascus and may well yield swift results* (Pipes and Abdelnour 2000).

Bill Clinton’s successor George W. Bush Jnr. also appeared to follow the policies of his predecessors by appeasing Syrian interests in Lebanon as he initially sought to achieve a Syrian-Israeli peace treaty at all costs, and contain Iraq’s perceived drive to produce weapons of mass destruction. Asked by U.S. Representative Engel during a congressional committee hearing on 7th March 2001 if the U.S. was taking steps to facilitate a Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon, Bush’s then Secretary of State, Colin Powell, remarked vaguely that Syrian withdrawal would be beneficial to the region “*eventually at some point*”, but it “*isn’t going to happen tomorrow*” (cited in Gambill 2001). Powell also bizarrely presented Syria’s late president Hafiz al-Assad as a champion of peace as he sought to enlist Syria as a partner equally concerned about Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction. The Syrian president, Powell stated, supports the Bush administration’s new sanctions policy against Iraq because “*he, too, is concerned about weapons of mass destruction*” (cited in Gambill 2001). Powell’s earlier visit to the Middle East in February 2001 had also previously attracted controversy as he had abruptly cancelled a stopover in Beirut after discussing tensions in South Lebanon with Syrian officials in Damascus. The incident had prompted an angry Rafik Hariri, then Prime Minister of Lebanon, to declare to a local TV channel that “*it is not enough for*

*him [Powell] to visit DamascusLebanon is Lebanon and Syria is Syria*⁴². The former U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon, Dr. Vincent Battle (2001 – 2004) came closest to admitting allegations surrounding the U.S.’s tacit support for Syrian forces in Lebanon when he stated in an interview with Michael Kerr that the U.S. did not push Syria to implement Ta’if in the letter and spirit of the agreement because the Lebanese Government did not ask the U.S. to do so (Kerr 2003).

It is noteworthy that despite the considerable efforts of representatives of the Lebanese American community to goad Bush into action over Syria, the president and Powell; both reportedly refused to meet with Cardinal Nasrallah Boutros Sfeir, the Patriarch of Lebanon’s Maronite Church and a staunch opponent of the Syrian presence, during the latter’s month-long visit to the United States in March 2001. Powell even declined to make an appearance at a luncheon held in Sfeir’s honour at the Vatican embassy in Washington on March 9, 2001 saying that his schedule was too full (Gambill 2001).

Based on the above events, it did seem that, because of the U.S.’s perceived concerns about the delicate balance of regional security, it afforded Syria the latent authority to influence almost all civil, political, and security institutions and organisations in Lebanon.

In summing up, the picture that emerges shows that throughout the decades leading up to the events of 9/11 and the 2003 Iraq War, U.S. democracy strategy was hesitant, subdued in tone and content, and more often, constitutive of an afterthought to the main thrust of the prevailing U.S. foreign policy toward Iraq, Lebanon and the wider Arab world. Suffice to say, the cause of democracy did not feature prominently in U.S. foreign policy initiatives toward these countries and across the region, as the U.S.’s

⁴² Murr Television (MTV – Beirut), 25 February 2001 (cited in Gambill 2001);

values of liberty, human rights and rule of law became subordinated to its more important objectives.

In Iraq's case, the George H.W. Bush and Clinton administrations both invoked human rights to justify the sanctions regime against that country and to propel the U.S. military into action. Yet, neither Bush nor Clinton, hesitated to admit that what really was at stake was the protection of U.S. interests across the wider Arab world. This pattern of promoting U.S. interests in Iraq in favour of respecting human rights and democratic freedoms was continued by George W. Bush Jnr. when he took up office in January 2001 up until the events of 9/11 and the 2003 Iraq war. The George W. Bush Administration's pre-9/11 and the 2003 foreign policy toward Lebanon mirrored U.S. policy in Iraq. In the process of turning a blind eye to Syria's influence in Lebanon, the U.S. failed to prevent Damascus from establishing a political stronghold in Lebanon in the aftermath of the Lebanese civil war.

Then came the 9/11 terrorist attacks and thereafter, the 2003 Iraq war. These momentous events were accompanied by a remarkable change in U.S. foreign policy toward democracy promotion and support for human rights in Iraq, Lebanon and the wider Arab world. In the build up to these watershed events, the hesitancy and subdued tone and content of the U.S.'s Mid-East democracy strategy became aligned with the 'turf wars' and bureaucratic infighting between members of the George W. Bush's cabinet as they struggled to agree a unified Iraq policy . This bureaucratic conflict was clearly evident in the build-up to the invasion of Iraq, and as we shall see later, also during the post-war occupation of that country.

Iraq Policy in Pre-9/11 George W. Bush Administration – Indecisions and bureaucratic politics

The first glimpses of indecision, bureaucratic infighting and conflicting U.S. interagency agendas which affected strategic cooperation and convergence on approaches to U.S. policy towards Iraq were noticeable in the pre-9/11 era of the Bush administration.

There are differences of opinion about whether Bush himself was ‘hawkish’ and interventionist from the start and was set upon invading Iraq from the first day he entered into office. Bush himself gave mixed signals about his internationalist and interventionist tendencies prior to the events of 9/11. In his 1999 campaign autobiography, *A Charge to Keep*, he states that:

Our greatest export is freedom, and we have a moral obligation to champion it throughout the world (Bush 1999:240).

However, in his presidential campaign in 2000, he took up foreign policy positions flowing from criticisms that had been made of Bill Clinton’s administration during its eight year tenure in office. Bush famously called for a “*humble*” foreign policy, meant to contrast with the interventionism of Clinton’s presidency, and promised to focus on “*enduring national interests*” rather than idealistic humanitarian goals⁴³. As a presidential candidate, Bush warned against the notion that:

⁴³ Commission on Presidential Debates: Presidential Debates, October 3, 2000 Boston, and October 11, 2000 – accessed via <http://www.debates.org/index.php?page=october-3-2000> and <http://www.debates.org/index.php?page=october-11-2000> – on 11/12/2013;

Our military is the answer to every difficult foreign policy situation – a substitute for strategy (cited in Gordon 2006: 75-86).

To underscore his scepticism surrounding the use of force and “nation-building” expeditions, he suggested that as president, he would not have intervened in either Haiti or Somalia. As Bush put it at the time,

*I would be guarded in my approach. I don't think we can be all things to all people in the world. I think we've got to be very careful when we commit our troops*⁴⁴.

Also, during his presidential campaign in 2000, Bush's team of advisers hardly spoke about Iraq and there was no sign that the former president had accepted the logic of a pre-emptive strike against Saddam Hussein (Elliot and Carney 2003). Professor Peter Berkowitz, a Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institute at Stanford University points out that, nothing in the first seven and a half months of Bush's presidency gave the slightest indication that he was inclined to adopt a more ambitious internationalist approach. Berkowitz describes Bush as being thoroughly believable in his presidential campaign debates with candidate Al Gore when he declared his opposition to a foreign policy based on ‘nation-building’ and his modest attitude towards intervening in the internal affairs of other nation states. According to Berkowitz, Candidate Bush was firm and unequivocal and his stance reflected classical conservative realism⁴⁵.

⁴⁴ Commission on Presidential Debates: Presidential Debates, October 3, 2000 Boston, and October 11, 2000 – accessed via <http://www.debates.org/index.php?page=october-3-2000> and <http://www.debates.org/index.php?page=october-11-2000> – on 11/12/2013;

⁴⁵ Participatory comments made by Professor Peter Berkowitz during a public discussion evening organised by the Harold Hartog School of Government and Policy at Tel Aviv University in Israel on Bush's Foreign Policy and Neo-conservative ideology after 9/11 – accessed via <http://socsci.tau.ac.il/government/images/PDFs/bush> - on 17/12/2013;

It would appear then, that despite his initial reference to ‘*freedom*’ in his 1999 campaign autobiography, Bush’s early rhetoric when he took up office as U.S. President, suggested that he might follow the prevailing realist view which opposed any attempt by the United States to meddle in the internal affairs of other nation states. Bush’s Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, Douglas J. Feith (2001 – 2005) endorses this point in his article published in the Wall Street Journal entitled “*Why We Went to War in Iraq*”. In it, Feith states that:

As a participant in the confidential, top-level administration meetings about Iraq, it was clear to me at the time that, had there been a realistic alternative to war to counter the threat from Saddam, Mr. Bush would have chosen it (Feith 2008b).

Bush’s foreign policy appointments following his electoral triumph in 2001 were broadly reflective of his presidential campaign rhetoric as the more central players of his Administration appeared to be closer to his pre-9/11 realist views. As Secretary of Defense in his father’s Administration, George W. Bush’s Vice President, Dick Cheney (2001 – 2009), had opposed using U.S. forces to overthrow Saddam Hussein during the first Gulf War and had even lobbied against sanctions as CEO of the giant oil-services company; Halliburton in the late 1990s. In many interviews after the Gulf War cease-fire in February 1991, Cheney explained why he opposed marching to Baghdad. If U.S. forces got there, he had argued, it would not be clear what they were meant to do. Cheney also explained during these interviews that it was not evident how a new government would handle divisions among Iraq’s Sunnis, Shiites and Kurds, how long the U.S. would have to stay in Iraq, or what would happen when it left (cited in Elliot and Carney 2003). Bush’s Secretary of State during his first term in office, Colin Powell (2001 – 2005), was also famously cautious about the use of force to pursue foreign goals. In the U.S. State Department, Powell was working on a plan for “*smart*

sanctions” on Iraq while allowing more humanitarian support for innocent Iraqis (Elliot and Carney 2003). Powell did not want to scrap the sanctions, as he was of the view that they simply needed to be made more effective. He stated in February 2001 that:

Though [the Iraqis] may be pursuing WMD of all kinds, it is not clear how successful they have been. We ought to declare this a success. We have kept him contained, kept him in his box (cited in Elliot and Carney 2003).

Powell had also questioned whether Iraq posed a serious threat and had suggested in his January 2001 confirmation hearings that U.S. policy would be to “*keep[the Iraqis] in the rather broken condition they are in now*” (cited in Gordon 2006). In addition, in her Republican Party foreign policy manifesto published in January/February 2000 issue of Foreign Affairs, Bush’s former National Security Adviser, and later U.S. Secretary of State in the Bush Administration , Condoleezza Rice– a protégé of the realist icon Brent Scowcroft⁴⁶ - gave an idea of what Bush’s foreign policy would be like if he won the election. Rice wrote that regimes such as those in Iraq and North Korea were “*living on borrowed time, so there need be no sense of panic about them*”. Rice called for the first line of defence to be “*a clear and classical statement of deterrence – if they do acquire WMD, their weapons will be unusable because any attempt to use them will bring*

⁴⁶ Brent Scowcroft was the United States National Security Adviser under Presidents Gerald Ford and George H.W. Bush. He served as Chairman of the President’s Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board under President George W. Bush from 2001 – 2005. He was a leading Republican critic of American policy towards Iraq before and after the 2003 invasion. Explaining in 1998 why as part of the Bush Snr.’s administration, they did not go on to Baghdad in 1991 after they had ousted Saddam Hussein from Kuwait, he explained “*Had we gone the invasion route, the United States could conceivably still be an occupying power in a bitterly hostile land*” – cited in White, Craig M. (2010) *Iraq: The Moral Reckoning – Applying Just War Theory to the 2003 War Decision* (Plymouth, UK: Lexington Books), p.147;

national obliteration” (cited in Gordon 2006). Rice had also earlier insisted that the role of the 82nd Airborne⁴⁷ was not to “*escort kids to kindergarten*” (cited in Gordon 2006).

While Bush and his team had identified Saddam Hussein as a problem that had to be dealt with, indecisions over Iraq policy in pre-9/11 Bush Administration were evident from the differences of opinion expressed by key White House staff. John Dumbrell makes the point that Bush’s foreign policy was notable for the very early emergence of high-level splits, notably between Powell’s defence of multilateralism and the pugnacious ‘Americanism’ of Rumsfeld and Cheney (Dumbrell 2005: 35-47).

In previous Administrations – both Republican and Democratic – relations between the U.S. State Department and the Department of Defense in particular were often characterized by suspicion and distrust. Feith reports that the senior Mr. Bush (*George H.W.*), while Ronald Reagan’s Vice President, had disapproved of the bureaucratic warfare between Caspar Weinberger’s Pentagon and George Shultz’s State Department. According to Feith, many issues became deadlocked in contentious meetings and had to be elevated to President Reagan for decision. When George H.W. Bush became president, Feith states that he insisted on an interagency process that minimized such disputes. He got it, largely by allowing Secretary of State James A. Baker III a more dominant role than Secretaries of State had played throughout most of the Reagan Administration (Feith 2008: 249). Donald Rumsfeld’s successor, the former U.S. Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates (2009 – 2011) noted that through most of his career, the Secretaries of State and Defense often “*weren’t speaking to one another*” and that “*it could get pretty ugly*” (cited in Shapiro 2012). John Hamre, a former Washington

⁴⁷ The 82nd Airborne Division is an active duty airborne infantry division of the United States Army specializing in parachute assault operations into denied areas. In the aftermath of 9/11, the 82nd Airborne was called upon by Bush to fight global terrorism. The Unit was later deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Government Official and President and CEO of the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) also remarked ironically in his speech at a CSIS conference aptly titled ‘A New Era in State-Defense Cooperation’, that the two institutions, State and Defense Departments, ‘*love each other like brothers*’, alike ‘*Cain and Abel*’, with each wanting to ‘*kill each other to get the other guy’s inheritance*’. Hamre also noted that a raw tension exists between the two institutions (cited in Shapiro 2012). Andrew J. Shapiro, the former Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political – Military Affairs (2009 – 2013) endorses the views of Gates and Hamre and he admits that despite being inextricably connected and requiring a need to work together, the two bureaucracies do not normally do that. Shapiro admits that whilst the State Department prides itself on the work it carries out through foreign policy and diplomacy which is about building and tending to relationships, for too long, the State Department was not building this sort of durable relationship with the Defense Department. He admits that as a result, contact and communication between the two institutions in the past was ‘*stove-piped*’ (Shapiro 2012) meaning that information was transmitted higher in the hierarchy or chain of command while bypassing intervening levels that remain uninformed about such information. These observations were reflected in press stories which depicted policy disagreements between State and Defense which often descended into bureaucratic back-stabbing.

The divisions over Iraq policy in pre-9/11 Bush Administration between key White House staff was clearly seen from the differences of opinion expressed during National Security Council (NSC) meetings and inter-agency meetings during the first eight months of the Administration’s life prior to the 9/11 suicide attacks. The Bush Administration included major players from the neoconservative camp. The highest ranking members included Deputy Defense Secretary, Paul Wolfowitz, Undersecretary

of Defense, Douglas J. Feith, Undersecretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, John Bolton, and Chairman of the Defense Policy Board Advisory Committee, Richard Perle – all of whom believed that, regimes like Saddam Hussein’s dictatorial Iraq, which were willing to acquire and use terrifying weapons, posed the most significant threat to the United States and other democracies.

During these NSC meetings, each major official had his or her own opinion about what to do, which was never resolved. Some wanted to continue with containment policy of the previous presidents while others advocated military options to overthrow Saddam and bring about regime change in Iraq. The formulation of a new Iraq policy was an important issue on the agenda of the first NSC meeting which took place on January 30, 2001. Colin Powell advocated diluting the multinational economic sanctions against Iraq in the hope that a weaker set of sanctions could win stronger and more sustained international support. Essentially, Powell wanted more targeted sanctions on Iraq as current sanctions were in his view failing because they were blocking common goods like medicines from entering the country, and causing mass hardships. Powell was of the view that Saddam was manipulating the situation and turning international opinion against the embargo. Powell’s proposed idea of targeted sanctions aimed to block dual use military equipment, and allow other goods to enter Iraq. Also present at the Administration’s first NSC meeting was the CIA Director George Tenet and he went over the intelligence he had on Iraq. He showed a photo of a factory he claimed was producing WMD. Tenet also pointed out that Saddam was giving money to families of Palestinian suicide bombers as well and that Iraq was selling oil to Syria and Jordan at cut-rate prices to undermine U.S. sanctions. At the end of the meeting, Bush called for more action on the sanctions and Iraq’s WMD. He then told everyone to continue on with their work. Powell and the State Department would explore revising the sanctions

regime and the Pentagon would look into rebuilding an international coalition against Iraq, and also into the best possible ways to support the Iraqi opposition. Tenet and the CIA were ordered to prepare a report about how to collect more intelligence on Iraq, and Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neil would devise solutions to cutting off Iraq's international finances.

The next NSC Meeting held on 1st February 2001, aimed amongst other matters to revisit the plans for Iraq discussed in the first NSC conference. But somehow, this meeting emphasised the divisions that were already emerging within the cabinet. Colin Powell set out the State Department's proposal for strengthening sanctions whilst Donald Rumsfeld advocated for regime change as opposed to sanctions and claimed that getting rid of Saddam would transform the entire Middle East region and send a message to the World about the United States' aims and power. Rumsfeld stated clearly that:

What we really want to think about is going after Saddam.....Imagine what the region would look like without Saddam and with a regime that's aligned with U.S. interests.....It would change everything in the region and beyond it. It would demonstrate what U.S. policy is all about (cited in Hurst 2009:158).

In his memoir, *Known and Unknown*, Rumsfeld stated that the sanctions administered through the UN's Oil –for-Food-program had loopholes big enough to drive trucks through (Rumsfeld 2011: 418).

Tenet floated the possibility of a coup to achieve Rumsfeld's goals but leaned more on the side of caution on the basis that the prospects of success were remote at best.

Treasury Secretary O'Neil thought that Rumsfeld wanted to make an example out of Saddam's Iraq by stopping other countries from acquiring chemical and biological

weapons and developing WMD. Throughout these discussions, there was noticeably no mention of an invasion of Iraq. Like the first NSC meeting, no decision was made on what the Bush administration's stance should be towards Iraq but Rumsfeld had put the idea firmly on the table.

Rumsfeld's approach was notably aggressive as he hoped to impose the U.S's will in Iraq, the wider Middle East region and in other trouble spots, ultimately forcing adversaries to submit to U.S. military superiority thus making the world safer for U.S. interests. Rumsfeld long regarded weapons inspections in Iraq as a game of hide-and-seek and in essence, a waste of time, while Powell used his influence to get Bush to seek the return of U.N. inspectors to Iraq to exhaust their investigations. The author Bob Woodward writes that on one occasion, when Rumsfeld raised Iraq as a potential war target during an NSC meeting with Bush, Powell approached Army General Hugh Shelton, the former Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff (1997 – 2001) and expressed concerns about the Defense department's proposed military plan. Woodward quotes Powell as saying "*What the hell, what are these guys thinking about?Can't you get these guys back in the box?*" (cited in Woodward 2003:61). Being one of the few senior cabinet members to have been involved in the Vietnam War, Powell was more cautious about going to war in Iraq and he viewed it as a last resort. James Mann points out that Powell was concerned that Bush and those in the administration advocating the use of force did not appreciate the difficulties involved in overthrowing Saddam Hussein. In Powell's view, the advocates of war underestimated the danger of Iraq descending into civil and religious conflict (Mann 2004). According Woodward, the top echelon of the Bush administration was otherwise noticeably free of those who had seen combat. Bush had served in the Texas Air National Guard but had not been in combat. Cheney had never served in the military himself, though he was Defense Secretary during the Gulf

War. Rumsfeld had been a Navy fighter pilot in the 1950s but not during wartime. Rice and Tenet had not been in combat (Woodward 2004:78). Only Powell had been in combat. He had served two tours in Vietnam as a major in the U.S. Army in 1968 and earlier, as South Vietnamese Army (ARVN) adviser from 1962 – 1963 and he had witnessed the horrors of war. In his memoir, *My American Journey*, Powell explained how he was haunted by his recollections of the nightmare of the Vietnam War (Powell and Persico 1995: 147-150). By inclination, Powell saw nuances and favoured diplomatic solutions toward Iraq where possible, however arduous and rugged the road may prove to be. The difference in views between Rumsfeld and Powell on how the U.S. should approach Iraq was succinctly analysed by Robert Einhorn, an analyst with the Centre for Strategic and International Studies who served until August 2001 as Assistant U.S. Secretary of state for non-proliferation. According to Einhorn, "*These are two genuinely different, and very strongly held, views on how the United States should behave in the world,*" (cited in Foundation for Defense of Democracies 2014).

But whilst the debate during first and second NSC meetings was about policy, its fervour stemmed from the personalities and philosophies of the main protagonists – Powell and Rumsfeld. "*You have two very different geopolitical views and two very strong personalities, two men who are not only sure of themselves personally but are at the capstone of their careers,*" said P.W. Singer, a former Pentagon official and now a political strategist at the New American Foundation (cited in Foundation for Defense of Democracies 2014). "*They're also both secure in that they know they have a certain constituency and know it would be very difficult for President Bush to choose between them and say it's either one or the other*" added Singer (cited in Foundation for Defense of Democracies 2014). Indeed, the outcome of the tug-of-war between the Bush administration's two most powerful cabinet members in the pre-9/11 era would not only

later affect the Bush Administration's future conduct in Iraq and the wider Arab world but also how others view the United States' political manoeuvring in the region.

Iraq was also discussed in the NSC meetings which took place on 5th and 7th February 2001 but the only decision made was to collect more intelligence on Saddam's WMD programs. However, on 16th February 2001, Bush told one of his chief speechwriters David Frum that he was going to get rid of Saddam Hussein, but he never mentioned how⁴⁸. During this second month of the Administration's tenure, the Department of Defense made it clear that it was the strongest supporter of getting rid of Saddam. Like the rest of the government, it had not however decided how to achieve that goal but it was willing to use the full force of the American military to do so.

On 27th February 2001, at his Senate Confirmation hearing, Paul Wolfowitz said that a U.S. invasion of Iraq had not been discussed, but that the administration was reviewing its Iraq policy, and was looking into how to support opposition groups like the Iraqi National Congress (INC) run by Ahmad Chalabi, an American-educated mathematician who left Baghdad in 1958, and the Iraqi National Accord (INA) led by Ayad Allawi who later became prime minister of Iraq's interim government following the 2003 U.S. – led invasion of Iraq.

In staff meetings, Wolfowitz argued that the U.S. should arm the INC, and back their attempt to overthrow Saddam. That included an option to send in troops to defend them if they were able to start an uprising against the regime. As previously discussed, this was an idea that Wolfowitz had been advocating for since the early 1990s. Indeed, shortly after the end of Gulf War in 1991, whilst serving as Under Secretary of Defence

⁴⁸ Musings on Iraq, *Indecision Over Iraq Policy In Pre-9/11 Bush Administration*, Friday, 16th September 2011 – accessed via <http://musingsoniraq.blogspot.co.uk> – on 12/12/2013;

for Policy in the Pentagon in the George H.W. Bush Administration, Wolfowitz was asked by Dick Cheney, then Secretary of Defense, to carry out a comprehensive overhaul of the Pentagon's basic strategic – planning document, known as the 'Defense Planning Guidance'. The main emphasis of the document is an evaluation of the threats faced by the United States following the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The document detailed potential threats and suggests strategies in reference to almost every country in the world, including Iraq and the broader Middle East. In March 1992, assisted by other neo-conservative intellectuals such as the former Director of the Office of Special Plans, Abram Shulsky, and the former Chief of Staff to the Vice President Cheney, I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby (2001 – 2005), Wolfowitz drafted a document - which was first leaked to the New York Times – and which under one section read as follows:

In the Middle East and Southwest Asia, our overall objective is to remain the predominant outside power in the region and to preserve U.S. and Western access to the region's oil. As demonstrated by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, it remains fundamentally important to prevent a hegemon or alignment of powers from dominating the region (cited Elliot and Carney 2003).

The document also suggested that the United States should discourage other nations "*from challenging our leadership*". The U.S., the draft went on to say, "*may be faced with the question of whether to take military steps to prevent the development or use of weapons of mass destruction*" (cited Elliot and Carney 2003). Those steps, Wolfowitz argued, might include pre-emptive action – and the Guidance made it clear that both Iraq and North Korea were among those at whom the new policy would be aimed.

During the George W. Bush Administration's second month in office, Rumsfeld also mentioned war for the first time saying that an incident over the no fly zones might be

used as a justification to attack Iraq. Prior to the suicide attacks of 9/11, Rumsfeld took a hard-line stand on his Administration's Iraq policy but he seemed unable to press for a comprehensive strategy consistent with that which was advocated by his committed neoconservative colleagues such as Wolfowitz, who believed that the United States was first in rank and grade above other nation states.

During NSC meetings held on June 22nd, July 13th and August 1st 2001, Wolfowitz and the Pentagon pushed again for providing training to the Iraqi opposition in the hope that it could pull off a revolt against Saddam. Rumsfeld was of the view that though Iraq was discussed occasionally at senior levels of the administration, by the summer of 2001, U.S. policy remained essentially what it had been at the end of the Clinton administration – adrift and at the mercy of external circumstances. For this reason, Rumsfeld felt compelled to bring his questions about the U.S.'s inherited Iraq strategy to the members of the NSC to seek, in his own words, “*some clarity and presidential guidance*” (Rumsfeld 2011: 419).

On 1st July 2001, Donald Rumsfeld urged in a memo to the other Principals that all the friendly, democratic Iraqi opposition groups be organized into a cooperative body. Rumsfeld based his request on a paper written by his Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, Peter Rodman, which advocated “*organizing the democratic opposition groups into a real political-military force*”, in order to avoid a political vacuum in Iraq (cited in Feith 2008: 252).

On 27th July 2001, Rumsfeld sent another memo to Condoleezza Rice and Dick Cheney in which he urged the Administration to come up with a completely new Iraq policy. In his memo, Rumsfeld stated that the U.S. could end the no fly zones and sanctions, and work with its Arab allies to formulate a new stance. He said that this was

necessary because Iraq was developing WMD, which meant that the U.S. was going to have to deal with Iraq sometime in the future (cited in Feith 2008: 535). In early August 2001, the CIA under Tenet created the Joint Task Force on Iraq as part of its new focus upon the country. The Task Force's chief carried out a review of the Agency's options, which decided that a coup would not work, and only an invasion could get rid of Saddam Hussein.

During the NSC meetings Wolfowitz discussed the INC's Liberation strategy, which involved a Kurdish and Shiite uprising in northern and southern Iraq that would lead to a provisional government being formed. Powell disagreed with that plan, because the State Department and the CIA did not trust Chalabi. The CIA favoured Allawi's INA. Wolfowitz was close to Chalabi and the INC, so he advocated giving them support. The Pentagon's stance was running into direct opposition from Powell's State Department and Tenet's CIA, which believed that giving aid to the INC was ill-conceived because Chalabi had failed at leading uprisings in the 1990s, and the State Department had lost faith in him. Douglas Feith reports that in a paper distributed at a Deputies Lunch, the State Department described Chalabi as "*autocratic*" and criticized him for his "*efforts to dominate*" and unwillingness "*to work cooperatively with others*". In the same paper the State Department praised Allawi and the INA for favouring "*pluralistic democratic government*" and for "*good working relationships*" with Saudi Arabia and others, and "*good relations with a variety of Shi'a clerics and tribalists*" (cited in Feith 2008: 243). The State Department repeatedly warned that U.S. officials should not allow Iraqi oppositionists to play a major role in post-Saddam Iraqi politics. There was in effect a major divide between State and Defense departments on how to deal with the Iraqi external opposition groups, and in particular with Ahmad Chalabi and his INC party. In a paper distributed at a Deputies Lunch on 6th June 2002 the State Department argued

that the U.S. government should not rely on any Iraqi émigré grouping to carry a heavy load (cited in Feith 2008: 256). The State Department warned that external players cannot form a credible provisional government and it cautioned against forming a provisional government before regime change (Feith 2008: 256). According to Allawi, Colin Powell publicly disavowed the possibility that the Iraqi opposition would be militarily enabled to challenge the regime of Saddam Hussein claiming that its role would be limited to ‘public diplomacy’ and humanitarian work (Allawi 2007: 80).

Whilst all this was happening, Allawi states that Dick Cheney’s office was issuing statements that gave the INC ‘100%’ support and calling for Saddam’s overthrow (Allawi 2007: 80). According to Feith, on countless occasions, State and CIA officials declared that the Iraqi externals lacked “legitimacy” and would therefore have no substantial political support in Iraq after regime change (Feith 2008: 372). Feith argues that there was more to the CIA and State Department’s lack of faith in Chalabi. He states that the CIA had its own personal reasons for opposing Chalabi. He explains that following the 1995 and 1996 clashes between Iraqi oppositionists, which led to recriminations between the oppositionists and U.S. officials, Chalabi denounced the CIA for incompetence and gained a respectful audience with members of the U.S. Congress and other former U.S. officials for doing so. As a consequence, Feith argues that Chalabi effectively burned his bridges with the CIA (Feith 2008: 190).

In an interview with FRONTLINE, America’s longest-running investigative documentary series on U.S. television, Richard Perle described the quarrel over Chalabi, and in particular, the CIA’s opposition to Chalabi as follows:

The CIA doesn’t like him, because they don’t control him, and they only like people they control. Their view has always been that we should propagate a coup against Saddam; that we

needed to find another strongman like Saddam, that the problem was Saddam and not the Baa'ith structure. So they were quite happy to find some other Baa'ithists to replace Saddam. They went to extraordinary lengths attempting to do so. They organized coups that failed. People were killed (Perle 2003).

Perle also asserts that the State Department did not want Chalabi's INC functioning at all and blocked efforts to set up an interim administrative authority early on. According to Feith, it is hard to overstate how important the State department and CIA's actions were in shaping thinking about post-Saddam Iraq at State, the CIA and CENTCOM (Feith 2008: 372). Seymour Hersh also asserted in a May 2002 *New Yorker* article, "A dispute over Chalabi's potential usefulness preoccupies the bureaucracy, as the civilian leadership in the Pentagon continues to insist that only the I.N.C. can lead the opposition" (cited in Feith 2008: 254). Furthermore, in his memoir, George Tenet described the Department of Defense's proposals for post-Saddam Iraq as "*thinly veiled efforts to put Chalabi in charge*" (cited in Feith 2008:255). This charge was denied by Douglas Feith. Feith stated in response that:

I do not know what might exist in the file cabinets of every official in the Defense Department, but of the thousands of pages of material that senior Defense Department officials wrote for interagency meetings on post-Saddam Iraqi governance, I know of not one supporting this charge. Even in informal meetings and conversations, I never heard anyone at the Defense Department make an argument or suggest a plan for putting Chalabi into power in Iraq (Feith 2008: 255).

Reflecting on U.S. strategy at the time, Richard Perle explains that the United States did not align itself with any Iraqi opposition and as result a strategy that might have entailed building up the opposition so that if and when the United States went into Iraq, it would go in with some thousands of Iraqis ready to go, trained and organized, never happened. According to Perle, the reason why it did not happen was a stubborn refusal by the State Department and the CIA to embrace an opposition –oriented strategy. Perle states that

the United States never had such a strategy (Perle 2003). Stephen Hadley, Deputy National Security Adviser (2001 – 2005) and National Security Adviser (2005 – 2009) saw a useful role for the Iraqi opposition leaders as potential U.S. partners: “*to promote an Iraqi government that would not oppress its own people or threaten others, to build international support for action against Saddam, and to contribute to U.S. intelligence on Iraq*” (cited in Feith 2008: 242). According to Feith, Hadley was however left exasperated because anti-Chalabi manoeuvring was impeding ‘sensible’ cooperation with the Iraqi opposition (Feith 2008: 242).

Bush’s Vice President, Dick Cheney also thought that in Iraq, it was important to establish Iraqi political legitimacy as soon as possible. Cheney was aware of the policy differences relating to Iraq which emerged in bitter disagreements over the role of the Iraqi externals, and particularly the role of the INC. He understood the concerns of the State Department and CIA and their opposition, scepticism and stiff resistance to Chalabi and other Iraqi exiles. Cheney appreciated that the idea had a certain “crawl-before-you-walk” appeal but he felt the idea of bringing a government –in-waiting to Iraq to run the country, a provisional Iraqi government – even an imperfect one – could help convince Iraqis that the U.S. government was serious when it promised to send a liberating force, not an occupying force (Hayes 2007: 428). In his memoir, *In My Time*, Cheney stated that:

I have watched so-called externals play a crucial role in Iraq’s democratic government. The prime minister of Iraq today, Nouri al Maliki, lived in exile until 2003, as did Ayad Allawi, whom Maliki narrowly defeated in the 2010 national elections. The idea that we shouldn’t work closely with opponents of Saddam who were living in exile slowed us down. I think we should have done a better job in the wake of Saddam’s ouster if we had had a provisional government, made up of externals and internals, ready to take over as soon as Saddam fell. This would have put

Iraqis in charge of Iraq and helped avoid the taint of occupation that we began to experience under the Coalition Provisional Authority (Cheney 2011: 387).

The Chalabi affair was a good illustration of the hidden weakness that lay at the heart of the administration's embrace of pre-emption. It has long been a rule of politics that relying on exiles can be dangerous, and the Iraqi case was no exception (Ehrenberg et al 2010: 164). Bob Woodward states in his book, *Plan of Attack* that one of the core differences between Rumsfeld and Powell was on the issue of pre-emptive attacks. Since 9/11, Rumsfeld had been saying categorically that defence was not enough, that the U.S. needed an offense. The battle had to be taken to the terrorists, they had to be attacked, taken out pre-emptively. According to Woodward, any discussion of employing the military under some theory, and not an immediate threat to U.S. national security, made Powell exceedingly nervous (Woodward 2004: 129).

Eight months into the Bush Administration's tenure in office, there had been lots of talk, and many disagreements about what to do about Iraq, but little had progressed past the initial discussions outlined in the first NSC meeting in January 2001. There was no concrete Iraq policy emerging and as 9/11 approached, the Bush Administration's Iraq policy was still adrift. Indeed, top officials were increasingly disagreeing over what constituted a viable and defensible Iraq policy. According to Feith, while CIA officials debated with Paul Wolfowitz and Scooter Libby about the best form of regime change in Iraq, State Department officials argued for muddling through with variations on the containment policies of the 1990s. He states that Powell and Richard Armitage were promoting what they called "smart sanctions" as the way to reinvigorate the Security Council's flagging containment effort (Feith 2008: 204). Feith saw Powell's smart sanctions initiative as a way to seem to be addressing a problem without doing anything difficult or risky – or effective (Feith 2008: 205). Richard Armitage sees the picture

differently. In an interview with the *New York Times* reporter Michael Gordon and former Marine Corps Lieutenant General Bernard Trainor, the co-authors of *Cobra II*, Armitage stated that he and Powell did not oppose going to war against Saddam Hussein. Armitage confirmed: “*Powell and I did not object to the prospect of taking out Saddam Hussein, but we had real questions about timing*” (cited in Feith 2008: 246).

In another interview with FRONTLINE, Richard Haass, the former director of policy planning at the U.S. State Department, (2001 – 2003) admitted that there were differences between the State Department, Defense Department, and other wings of the U.S. government on the U.S.’s Iraq policy (Haas 2003). Edward Walker, President, Middle East Institute, and the former Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern affairs, (1999 – 2001), also gave an interview to FRONTLINE in which he explained that there was a sort of suspicion between the two departments – State and Defense, or at least elements of State and Defense. Walker makes the point that if only there had been a greater degree of confidence between the Pentagon and the State Department they could have worked in tandem a lot better than they did, instead of going off in different directions (Walker 2003). Richard Perle also states that the White House was essentially unable to reconcile differences among the CIA, State and Defense departments and as a result it chose not to take the steps that might well have meant that when the United States went into Iraq, it would enter with a significant number of Iraqis to help promote its agenda (Perle 2003). Feith endorses Perle’s views. Reflecting on the Administration’s overall interagency decision-making process, Feith states that he was struck by its lack of clarity. According to Feith, on issue after issue, where there were disagreements they were not brought to the surface to be presented to President Bush for decision. Rather, Feith argues that basic disagreements were allowed to remain unresolved – as long as a degree of consensus could be produced on immediate next

steps (Feith 2008: 245). He argues that although National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice worked hard to spare Bush the task of having to decide between clear-cut mutually exclusive options, she relied on her practice of bridging or blending key elements of the views of several interagency players. According to Feith, this approach tended only to paper over the cracks, rather than resolve, pertinent differences of policy opinion (Feith 2008: 250). As a result, there was also no leadership from the top about what to do. Against this background of interagency conflict, President Bush was also undecided on which course of action to pursue making it more difficult for his Administration to devise a clear and concise pre-war Iraq policy.

What this series of events and reflections show is that while the Bush administration had placed Iraq at the centre of its Middle East foreign policy agenda, the debate amongst the Administration's major players was deadlocked. In the first eight months of the administration, meetings were held by the deputies and the principals on Iraq, but no substantial Iraq policy change was formulated. There was no doubt that all the top officials were concerned about Iraq's WMD programmes but it was also obvious that there was clearly a lack of consensus or strategic cooperation amongst them about what to do about them and about Saddam's authoritarian regime. Indeed, the Bush Administration found it difficult in its early months to agree on a course of action toward Saddam's Iraq. The Defense Department favoured the idea of cooperating with Iraqi democratic opposition groups and wanted to support Chalabi's INC. The Pentagon was talking about regime change one way or the other. The State Department was clearly sceptical of the Defense department's position preferring instead a traditional form of Republican realism which aimed to continue with the previous containment policy alongside new and improved targeted sanctions. The CIA was increasing its intelligence collection on Iraq, but it was mainly working of assumptions, rather than

hard incontrovertible evidence, and had even found that a coup attempt was unlikely to succeed.

What became clear from all of the disagreements and bureaucratic politics was that the Bush administration seemed to be inconsistent with regard to its Iraq policy with no particular authority being able to dominate the policy agenda and influence proceedings. President Bush knew of the respective positions of his key advisers as his Administration struggled to formulate an agreeable Iraq policy. He writes in his memoirs, *Decision Points*, that:

For months, the National Security Council had been meeting almost daily to discuss Iraq. I knew where all my advisers stood. Dick Cheney was concerned about the slow diplomatic process. He warned that Saddam Hussein could be using the time to produce weapons, hide weapons, or plot an attack.....Don Rumsfeld was not as definitive. He assured me the military would be ready if I gave the order.....Condi [Condoleezza Rice] was careful to stay neutral at the NSC meetings but she gave me her opinion in private.....She reluctantly concluded that the only way to enforce the UN resolution would be to use the military option.....Colin [Colin Powell] had the deepest reservations. In a one-on-one meeting in early 2003, he had told me he believed we could manage the threat of Iraq diplomatically. He also told me he was not fully comfortable with the war plans.... (Bush 2010: 251).

According to Woodward, the deep divisions and tensions in the war cabinet with Powell the moderate negotiator and Rumsfeld the hard-line activist meant no real policy would be made until either the president stepped in or events forced his hand (Woodward 2004: 23). Indeed, despite being privy to the personal thoughts of his key advisers, Bush remained uninterested in the aggressive agenda of his Defense Department. This remained Bush's stance up until the suicide attacks of 9/11 when he abandoned his cautious realist approach to invade Iraq and embark upon a transformative foreign policy focused on spreading democracy and ending tyranny throughout the world.

The Eureka Moment – from realism to primacy

POST - 9/11 PERIOD

In the days immediately after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Bush was still reluctant to press ahead with an Iraq policy that called for an immediate ‘regime change’ in Iraq as he wanted a more compelling reason for military intervention in order to win domestic and international support for removing Saddam Hussein from power. It is reported that, at one point during a Camp David meeting which took place after 9/11, Wolfowitz – who, according to Allawi, was one of the most vociferous supporters of the view that it was in the U.S.’s strategic interest to advance the cause of democracy and to implant the values of liberalism, pluralism and human rights (Allawi 2007:83) - tried to persuade Bush to back a scheme to ‘lop off’ the southern part of Iraq, including Basra, its third largest city, and some important oil fields but that Bush remained unconvinced of the virtues of a pre-emptive strike (Elliot and Carney 2003:172).

Indeed, it did seem that Bush was simply looking for an opportunity to undertake a more aggressive policy and 9/11 provided him with this. Bob Woodward states that since taking up office, Bush had been seeking ways to undermine Saddam Hussein. According to Woodward, the fear was that Saddam was still attempting to develop, obtain and eventually use WMDs, and without United Nations inspectors in the country, there was no way to know the exact nature of the threat the U.S. faced. Woodward states that the terrorist attacks of September 11 gave the U.S. a new window to go after Saddam Hussein (Woodward 2003:83).

The 9/11 suicide attacks stimulated the rethinking of Bush's initial realist foreign policy and presented the pro-war foreign policy advocates within and beyond his Administration with a window of opportunity to advance their case for an aggressive grand strategy aimed at promoting a world order more reflective of American ideals and values as well as U.S. interests. From the point of view of many commentators, the suicide attacks of 9/11 reinforced the rationale for regime change in Iraq by creating a tolerant domestic and international political environment that encouraged the pursuit of that agenda.

Bush himself stated in his memoirs, *Decision Points*, that:

For my first eight months in office, my policy focused on tightening the sanctions – or, as Colin Powell put it, keeping Saddam in his box. Then 9/11 hit, and we had to take a fresh look at every threat in the world (Bush 2010: 228).

He added:

Before 9/11, Saddam was a problem America might have been able to manage. Through the lens of the post-9/11 world, my view changed. I had just witnessed the damage inflicted by nineteen fanatics armed with box cutters. I could only imagine the destruction possible if an enemy dictator passed his WMD to terroristsThe lesson of 9/11 was that if we waited for a danger to fully materialize, we would have waited too long. I reached a decision: We would confront the threat from Iraq, one way or another (Bush 2010: 229).

Bush's views were shared by key members of his Administration. Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld stated that, 9/11 created “*the kind of opportunities that World War II offered, to refashion the world*” (Rumsfeld 2001).

Douglas Feith stated that:

The 9/11 attack was one of those events in history potent enough to stimulate fresh thought and disturb the complacent. Rumsfeld,

Wolfowitz, and I shared the view that the President had a duty to use his bully pulpit in order to promote awareness of the challenge from terrorist extremists. Whereas Powell stressed the importance of respecting the views of allies and friends abroad, we encouraged the President to act, with due respect, to shape those views (Feith 2008:59).

Dick Cheney also stated that:

I think probably it is fair to say that 9/11 was a watershed event. And it was the kind of thing that was so significant, such a dramatic change from what had gone before, nineteen guys with box cutters can kill 3,000 Americans, that it forced all of us to go back and look fresh at what had transpired, at what had led up to that point.....(Hayes 2007: 348)

Cheney added:

I think after 9/11 when you move into a situation where your biggest threat is the possibility of terrorists, state – sponsored terrorists, or a terrorist with a relationship with a rogue government able to get their hands on deadly technologies, Saddam Hussein is a hell of a problem. And he was a problem before 9/11, but he became a bigger problem after 9/11 in light of that threat that we're living with still to this day, the possibility of an al Qaeda cell in the middle of one of our cities with a deadly biological agent or a nuclear weapon (Hayes 2007: 393).

After 9/11, the hawkish members of the Bush administration cited the post-World War II experience of Germany and Japan to bolster their case for invading and occupying Iraq. It soon became clear that in terms of achievability, the trump cards in the hands of advocates of the Bush administration's Iraq and Middle East democracy policy were indeed the examples of post-World War II Germany and Japan⁴⁹. In both countries, the

⁴⁹ In his book, *American Foreign Policy and Post-war Reconstruction: Comparing Japan and Iraq*, Jeff Bridoux provides a detailed analysis of the reconstruction of Japan and Iraq in order to understand why the G.W. Bush administration's officials believed that extensive social reengineering aimed at seeding democracy and economic development, as performed after World War II, was replicable in Iraq. In his analysis, Bridoux contrasts the successful reconstruction of Japan after WWII with the not-so-successful case of Iraq in the aftermath of

U.S. Army helped transform militaristic dictatorships into pillars of liberal democracy. The successful cases of U.S. political engineering in Japan and West Germany – and one might add Italy and Austria as well for the sake of completeness - in the aftermath of World War II have lasting importance. These cases laid the groundwork for the perception that democracy can be externally imposed and that the United States is capable of exporting it. The post-war reconstruction of Japan and West Germany following World War II is widely considered the most successful example of democratic nation-building engineered by the United States and its allies. A leading RAND study of American ‘nation-building’ declares, “*The cases of Germany and Japan set a standard of post-conflict nation-building that has not since been matched*” (cited in Dobbins et al 2003:xiii). Others have likewise lauded U.S. and allied efforts in the former ‘Axis’ countries as the “*apex,*” “*pinnacle,*” and “*gold standard*” of democratic nation-building (Von Hippel 2000:11; Coyne 2008; Brownlee 2007:323). Bush also invoked the American – led democratization campaign in post-World War II Germany and Japan as outstanding examples of magnanimity and statesmanship stating that there were many doubters, amongst them American and Japanese experts who claimed that Japan in particular was not ready for democracy (cited in Wallesten and Perry 2005). In his speech marking the 20th Anniversary of the National Endowment for Democracy in Washington D.C., Bush stated that,

After the Japanese surrender in 1945, a so-called Japan expert asserted that democracy in that former empire would ‘never work’. Another observer declared the prospects for democracy

the 2003 Iraq war. He argues that U.S. policy managed to achieve a workable balance between coercion and consensus in the case of post-war Japan whereas in Iraq, the U.S. relied so much on coercion that it left little room for developing consensus among elites which left it short of achieving its goal of establishing a neo-liberal historical bloc (Bridoux 2011: 99).

in post-Hitler Germany is, and I quote, 'most uncertain at best' – he made that claim in 1957 (Bush 2003).

Later, in his speech to the World Affairs Council of Philadelphia in 2005,

Bush confidently explained,

We've done this kind of work before; we must have confidence in our cause. In World War II, the free nations defeated fascism and helped our former adversaries, Germany and Japan, build strong democracies -- and today, these nations are allies in securing the peace. In the Cold War, free nations defeated communism, and helped our former Warsaw Pact adversaries become strong democracies -- and today, nations of Central and Eastern Europe are allies in the war on terror (Bush 2005).

Bush also stated in his memoirs *Decision Points* that:

I had studied the histories of post-war Germany, Japan, and South Korea. Each had required many years – and a U.S. troop presence – to complete the transition from devastation of war to stable democraciesWith time and steadfast American support, I had confidence that democracy in Iraq would succeed (Bush 2010: 357).

The transformation of the former 'Axis' countries into peaceful democracies also influenced neoconservative thinking - both inside and outside the administration of George W. Bush. Referring to the 'democratic peace' theory, the neo-conservative political commentator Charles Krauthammer claimed that:

The spread of democracy is not just an end but a means for securing American interests. The reason is simple. Democracies are inherently more friendly to the United States, less belligerent to their neighbours, and generally more inclined to peace (Krauthammer 2004:11).

The successful democratization experiences in the aftermath of World War II somehow also dictated U.S. foreign policy and reinforced the political thinking that America is not only the freest country in the world, but that it

is also the best equipped to bring democracy to other countries. Indeed, Americans of various political persuasions believe profoundly that it is their divine right and duty, and indeed their destiny, to promote freedom and democracy in the world. According to Matthew Alan Hill, the United States has always proclaimed its unique sense of mission and suggested that it plays a particular role as a beacon of freedom and righteousness for the rest of the world (Hill 2011:1). Hill points out that the rhetoric of American presidents, perhaps best expressed in Woodrow Wilson's 'Fourteen Points' speech to a joint session of Congress in January 1918 for a new world order⁵⁰, and voiced since by Republican and Democrat presidents alike, suggests that the United States has a divinely sanctioned mission to spread its own version of liberal democracy to the rest of the world (Hill 2011:1). Jeff Bridoux and Milja Kurki, also argue that democracy promotion constitutes one of the foundational elements of American foreign policy. Bridoux and Kurki point out that it is difficult not to consider the United States as the cradle of democracy promotion because U.S. foreign policy has been principled in its support for democracy since the inception of the Republic (Bridoux and Kurki 2014:3). According to Bridoux and Kurki, liberal internationalism, and thus the promotion of democracy, remained central to the foreign policy of successive American presidents over the course of the twentieth century with the likes of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Truman, Kennedy, Reagan and Clinton all championing freedom and democracy (Bridoux and Kurki 2014:5). Bridoux and Kurki identify the peak

⁵⁰ In Woodrow Wilson's view, the best way to achieve American security was not to defend the United States against the outside world but to change the outside world fundamentally. In policy circles, this tradition became known as Wilsonianism or Wilsonian liberalism.

of this strategy as an embodiment of Ronald Reagan's 1982 address to members of the British Parliament. In his speech, Reagan declared that:

If the rest of this century is to witness the gradual growth of freedom and democratic ideals, we must take actions to assist the campaign for democracy. We must be staunch in our conviction that freedom is not the sole prerogative of a lucky few, the inalienable and universal right of all human beings. Let us now begin a major effort to secure the best – a crusade for freedom that will engage the faith and fortitude of the next generation (Reagan 2004).

Certainly, George W. Bush's transformation into a democratic crusader follows in the footsteps of his predecessors. Bush who once championed modest foreign policy goals, and who entered office pledging to focus on narrowly understood "vital interests" such as building a national missile defence system, managing relations with China and Russia and getting the United States out of the nation-building business, suddenly decided to harness American power to liberal ends by embracing democracy promotion as his vision for the future of Iraq and the wider Middle East region. Indeed, the 9/11 suicide attacks radically transformed Bush's worldview so much so that he pledged that the United States "*will use this moment of opportunity to extend the benefits of freedom across the globe*" (Kaplan 2003: 21-23).

In his second inaugural address on 20th January 2005, Bush set out what later became known as his "freedom agenda". In his speech to the American nation, Bush enunciated his new thinking when he declared that,

America is a nation with a mission, and that mission comes from our most basic beliefs.....It is the policy of the United States to

seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture (Bush 2005).

Overall, most commentators argue that, the events of 9/11 made it easier for the neo-conservatives to convince Bush and Congress to wage the same war that they had earlier failed to convince the Clinton administration to undertake in 1998. They assert that the Bush Administration capitalized on the hostility toward the Middle East voiced by American public opinion and Congress in order to pass a resolution to invade Iraq in March 2003 and remove Saddam Hussein from the seat of power. Toby Dodge, who served as an occasional adviser to U.S. General David Petraeus who commanded the multinational forces in Iraq in 2007 – 2008, argues that the 9/11 al-Qaeda terrorist attacks were seen as an opportunity to rework the envelope within which previous American foreign policy had been conducted (Dodge 2009: 93). To this, John Dumbrell adds that in various ways, “9/11 bolstered the neo-conservative agenda, which clearly included military action, sooner rather than later, in Iraq” (Dumbrell 2005:35-47).

It would take a change in mentality and a convergence of nationalist realist and neo-conservative forces to convince Bush of the need for urgent military action against Saddam Hussein. It was only when key presidential advisers and hardliners decided to align their thinking with the neoconservative members of the Administration that the possibility of invading Iraq became a realistic prospect. Robert Singh makes the point that after 9/11, the neo-con solution seemed, to the conservatives in the Bush administration to be the American solution. Singh asserts that the events of 9/11 encouraged the Bush administration to enlist and adapt certain neo-conservative arguments in support of its policies and that Iraq represented the clearest example of the new conservative convergence (Singh 2009:33-47). Singh’s assertion obviously begs the question of how did the long-time true believers who argued for ‘regime change’ in

Iraq end up convincing Bush and his close circle of advisers of the need for urgent military action against Iraq.

The general feelings of insecurity which dominated the American mindset following the events of 9/11 and also an awareness of America's supreme military strength amongst key members of the Bush Administration would seem to provide the answer to this enquiry. The sudden sense of vulnerability which Americans up and down the country felt in the aftermath of the 9/11 suicide attacks, was enough to convince Bush and his advisers of the danger posed to America if WMDs fell into terrorists hands. Once this sense of vulnerability became pervasive, it became necessary for the Administration to identify a potential supplier of WMDs to terrorists such as al-Qaeda. Whilst no evidence was found linking Saddam to the 9/11 suicide attacks, it was only a matter of time before a link to Baghdad would be established. As Saddam had once admitted developing anthrax weapons to U.N. inspectors and now anthrax was being used to murder innocent Americans at home⁵¹, Bush officials readily latched on to evidence dug up by alliance soldiers in November 2001 when they raided and combed through al-Qaeda safe houses in Afghanistan. The evidence retrieved in the form of documents and

⁵¹ American investigators who probed anthrax outbreaks in Florida and New York in 2001 concluded that they had all the hallmarks of a terrorist attack. Saddam's Iraq was named as a prime suspect adding to what Bush's hawks said was a growing mass of evidence that Saddam Hussein was involved, possibly indirectly, with the 9/11 hijackers. Bush's hawks repeatedly tried to pin the anthrax attacks on Saddam and use it as a basis for attacking Iraq. The focus on Iraq was based on its record of developing a germ arsenal and also on what some commentators said was a desire on the part of the Bush administration to find a reason to attack Iraq in the war on terrorism. The UN weapons inspector Scott Ritter pointed out that the evidence did not support the conclusion that Iraq was involved. Ritter knew the strain of anthrax Iraq had developed and knew that it was not the strain sent in the anthrax attacks. The repeated attempts to link Iraq to the anthrax attacks turned out to be speculation at best.

computer records, revealed that Osama bin Laden's network had been trying to acquire WMDs. From this point onwards, Administration officials did not have to work hard to identify Iraq as the most likely supplier of WMDs to al-Qaeda. A White House official is quoted as saying that "*Iraq was the easiest place they [al-Qaeda] could get them [WMDs] from*" (cited in Elliot and Carney 2003:172). Another former senior Administration official is quoted as saying that:

The eureka moment was that realization by the President that were WMD to fall into [terrorists'] hands, their willingness to use it would be unquestioned. So we must act pre-emptively to ensure that those who have that capability aren't allowed to proliferate it (cited in Elliot and Carney 2003:172).

The argument that the suicide attacks of 9/11 did create a new sui generis rationale for regime change in Iraq in the form of fear of WMD-armed terrorists was seemingly reinforced by Dick Cheney during his speech to the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) convention in August 2002. In his speech to VFW convention, Cheney stated that a WMD-armed Iraq:

Could then be expected to seek domination of the entire Middle East, take control of a great portion of the world's energy supplies, directly threaten America's friends throughout the region and subject the United States or any other nation to nuclear blackmail (Cheney 2002).

Cheney's statement did serve as an endorsement of the Bush administration's unaltered pre-occupation with American hegemony in the Arab world. Toby Dodge argues that:

Iraq personified the problems, writ large, faced by U.S. hegemony in the Middle East.....if it could be removed, the full force of U.S. military might could be displayed in one of the most important states in the region, then the rest of the Arab regimes could be made to submit fully to US hegemony (Dodge 2006).

Inevitably, the reasons for the U.S.'s decision to invade Iraq in the aftermath of the 9/11 suicide attacks attracted considerable speculation amongst commentators prior to the

event. There were reports of other motives for the 2003 U.S.-led invasion and these pointed mainly towards Bush's personal motives. In an article in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* on the U.S. intentions towards Iraq, Dick Polman posed the question:

Is this a grand crusade, or a grand match? Is this about securing world peace, or grabbing the oil fields? (Polman 2002:1-2).

He then goes on to say that:

There is a nagging suspicion that Bush's motives for toppling Saddam Hussein are far more personal, that what he really wants is to avenge his father and open the Iraqi oil reserves to his friends (Polman 2002: 1-2).

Polman presents Bush as the main source of the vengeance theory. "*The audience grew quiet,*" Polman writes, "*in a Houston ballroom.....when Bush said about Hussein, 'After all, this is a guy who tried to kill my dad'*" (Polman 2002: 1-2). Polman also reports that George H.W. Bush Snr. told CNN, "*I hate Saddam Hussein*" (Polman 2002: 1-2). Another source Polman presents is Larry Kudlow, a former aide to Ronald Reagan who served on the transition team of George W. Bush Jnr. and Vice President Cheney. Kudlow is reported to have said that:

The 'Baby Bush' factor raises the issue of whether the current president isn't going after Saddam Hussein merely to avenge his father's unfinished business. This thought mars George W. Bush's clear-headed logic (cited in Polman 2002: 1-2).

Bruce Buchanan, professor of government at the University of Texas and a long-time Bush observer commented that Bush's remarks "*do not surprise him at all*". He then went on to add:

A leader has to be careful with word choice, but every once in a while, Bush's feelings about Saddam Hussein sneak through. That indicates he is personalizing things to some degree (cited in Omran 2003:278).

Some commentators also argued that, the fact that Iraq has the second – largest proven reserves of petroleum in the world next to Saudi Arabia must have figured highly among George W. Bush’s motives for wanting to topple Saddam Hussein. Michael Klare, an expert on the geopolitics of oil stated that:

The oil factor is crucial and these [administration] people are very conscious of it, even if they would rather not talk about it. They know that if they talk about the oil, they can kiss goodbye to getting speedy support at the UN (cited in Omran 2003: 278 - 279).

To this Marcy Katpur, a Democrat and the U.S. Representative for Ohio’s 9th congressional district added:

The driving force of this potential war on Iraq is oil (Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report 2002).

Buchanan also points out that:

This president [Bush], in particular, can’t mention it [oil] in connection with Iraq, because he and Cheney don’t want to draw fresh attention to their long-standing business ties or to campaign –finance reports that show that, in 2000, oil industry donors favoured Bush more than any other presidential candidate (cited in Omran 2003:279).

Another expert, Bill Minutaglio, the Bush biographer, said that:

Bush really does believe that what is best for Big Oil is best for America. His whole formative world view was formed by being hip-deep in the oil patch (cited in Omran 2003:273).

Personal motives aside, Elsayed M. Omran states there were also reports that another of Bush’s motives was what his advisers anonymously referred to as redrawing the political map of the Middle East (Omran 2003: 279). A number of pro-Israel, right-wing think tanks in which Pentagon hawks were entrenched, such as the Hudson Institute, the American Enterprise Institute, the Jewish Institute for National Security (JINSA) among others, advocated the invasion of Iraq on the basis that such a war would create a pro-

American regime in Iraq and enable Washington to remap the region. The various reports produced by these organizations argued that the ouster of Saddam Hussein and the installation of a U.S. – backed democracy in Baghdad could trigger democratic change in neighbouring Iran and put pressure on the Saudi monarchy (Omran 2003: 279).

On the heel of these reports, Bush's State of Union address on January 29, 2002 hinted at a strategy of bringing democracy to the Middle East. In his address, Bush stated:

America will lead by defending liberty and justice because they are right and true and unchanging for all people everywhere. No nation owns these aspirations and no nation is exempt from them. We have no intention of imposing our culture, but America will always stand firm for the nonnegotiable demands of human dignity, rule of law, limits on the power of the state, respect for women, private property, free speech, equal justice and religious tolerance. America will take the side of brave men and women who advocate these values around the world, including the Islamic world, because we have a greater objective than eliminating threats and combating resentments. We seek a just and peaceful world beyond the war on terror (Bush 2002).

The promotion of democracy in Iraq thus became a primary U.S. objective given the consensus amongst Bush's team of 'hawks' that people who live under democracy are less prone to join terrorist organizations – this predominant thinking derived its logic from the 'democratic peace theory'. Accordingly, the Bush administration aptly named the invasion of Iraq 'Operation Iraqi Freedom'. On 16th March 2003, in a speech a few days before the invasion, Bush declared that:

We would undertake a solemn obligation to help the Iraqi people build a new Iraq at peace with itself and its neighbourswe will support the Iraqi people's aspirations for a representative government that upholds human rights (Bush 2003).

The decision to advance democracy in Iraq had been widely touted by the so-called neo-conservatives for some time but as we have seen, it had been notably absent from the George W. Bush administration's thinking prior to 9/11. In the aftermath of this event, it became inextricably linked to the issue of U.S. security. In his biography of Paul Wolfowitz entitled *Paul D. Wolfowitz: Visionary Intellectual, Policymaker, and Strategist*, Lewis Solomon makes the point that:

The failure to find WMD in Iraq and the inability to conclusively prove relevant connections between Saddam and al-Qaeda led the Bush administration to justify the invasion of Iraq on an idealistic policy of an Arab world political transformation. Iraq formed a key place to test the hypotheses that Arab nations could support democratic institutions (Solomon 2007: 122).

Indeed, Bush left no one in doubt about his faith in democracy being a universal antidote to terrorism. In his remarks on 21st March 2003, Bush stated that:

I have determined that the use of armed force against Iraq is consistent with the United States and other countries continuing to take the necessary actions against international terrorists and terrorist organizations.....United States objectives also support a transition to democracy in Iraq, as contemplated by the Iraq Liberation Act of 1998(Public Law 105 -338) (Bush 2003).

Bush also repeated the U.S. objective of fighting terrorism and promoting democracy as two sides of the same coin. On 8th September 2003, Bush stated that:

In Iraq, we are helping the long suffering people of that country to build a decent and democratic society at the centre of the Middle East. Together we are transforming a place of torture chambers and mass graves into a nation of laws and free institutions. This undertaking is difficult and costly – yet worthy of our country, and critical to our security (Bush 2003).

Bush stated further in the NSS 2006 that:

Because free nations tend toward peace, the advance of liberty will make America more secure (Bush 2006).

Bush's idealism was also evident in his memoirs *Decision Points* when he states that:

Freedom is the most practical way to protect our country in the long run (Bush 2010).

The idea of promoting democracy as an antidote to terrorism was also backed by the neo-conservative camp in George W. Bush's administration.

Paula Dobriansky declared in a speech before the Heritage Foundation that:

[the] advancement of human rights and democracy . . . [is] the bedrock of our war on terrorism. The violation of human rights by repressive regimes provides fertile ground for popular discontent . . . cynically exploited by terrorist organizations. . . . [A] stable government that responds to the legitimate desires of its people and respects their rights, shares power. . . is a powerful antidote to extremism (Dobriansky 2001).

Feith also stated in his memoir that:

Critics have accused the Administration of going to war in Iraq for the sake of a political experiment in Arab democratization. But the primary decision the President faced was not whether democracy could or should flourish in Iraq, but whether the United States could live with the risk that Saddam Hussein might one day threaten to attack us, directly or through terrorists, with biological or other catastrophic weapons. If we decided we had to remove Saddam from power, the next decision was whether the United States should try to help the Iraqis build democratic institutions – or accept the possibility that Saddam might be replaced by another military dictator. Given the options, President Bush decided that the interests and principles of the United States required us to try to promote democracy (Feith 2008: 236).

Thus, the official Bush motives for the Iraq invasion can be categorized as long-term and short-term. The short-term interests included stripping Saddam Hussein's regime of weapons of mass destruction, toppling the regime, and cutting links, if there were any, between Saddam's regime and al-Qaeda (Russett 2005:396). The long-term interests included the construction of democracy in Iraq (Yetiv 2006:397-98).

In short, the Bush administration came to the conclusion that promoting political liberalism in Iraq and throughout the Arab world was the only guarantee of U.S. domestic security. What followed was a rhetorical onslaught aimed at unequivocally declaring Bush's brand new policy to advance and establish the foundations of democratic governance in the Middle East. Suddenly, the previously obscure topic of the Arab – Islamic World's "democracy deficit" became the focus of wide discussion in U.S. media and policy circles.

U.S. rhetoric vis-a-vis democracy promotion towards the Arab world post – 9/11

George W. Bush placed a greater rhetorical emphasis on democracy promotion than any of his predecessors and he raised the rhetorical bar to new heights. In his National Security Strategy (NSS) of the United States of America 2002, Bush speaks of democracy promotion as an idealistic burden and he states that:

The United States must defend liberty and justice because these principles are right for all people everywhere (Bush 2002).

Paula J. Dobriansky also argued in her article published in *Foreign Affairs* magazine in 2003 entitled 'Democracy Promotion', that the promotion of democracy was a key foreign policy goal of the Bush administration and that the NSS of 2002 prominently features democracy promotion as a core part of post – 9/11 U.S. foreign policy strategy.

Bush also affirmed his commitment to democracy promotion in personal and religious terms. In a July 2007 meeting he stated:

I come at it [his belief in spreading liberty globally] many different ways. Really not primarily from a political science perspective, frankly, it's more of a theological perspective. I do

believe there is an Almighty, and I believe a gift of that Almighty to all is freedom. And I will tell you that it is principle that no one can convince me that doesn't exist (cited in Brooks 2007:A21).

Furthermore, in his memoirs *Decision Points* he states that “.....*freedom is a universal gift from Almighty God.....*” (Bush 2010:397).

Bush's foreign policy re-orientation was a significant change of course – rhetorically, it moved away from the decades of support for political stasis and from deep attachments to autocratic rulers in the Arab world. Indeed, a year after the 9/11 attacks, Richard Haas, publicly acknowledged that the U.S.'s policy toward the Middle East had been operating in default mode. In a speech to the Council on Foreign Relations in Washington, D.C. on December 4, 2002, Haas pled guilty to a mild version of the allegation that U.S. policy towards the region was hypocritical because it coupled platitudes about the importance of democracy with cosy relationships with semi-authoritarian and authoritarian regimes. In his speech, Haas stated:

At times, the United States has avoided scrutinizing the internal workings of countries in the interests of ensuring a steady flow of oil, containing Soviet, Iraqi and Iranian expansionism, addressing issues related to the Arab-Israeli conflict, resisting communism in East Asia, or securing basing rights for our military. Yet by failing to help foster gradual paths to democratization in many of our important relationships – by creating what might be called a “democratic exception” – we missed an opportunity to help these countries become more stable, more prosperous, more peaceful, and more adaptable to the stresses of a globalizing world (Haas 2002).

The U.S.'s conduct during those sixty years was also concisely considered by Lisa Anderson when she made the point that:

The United States has generally colluded with Arab misrule based on 'fixed elections' and 'human rights fakery', thus

providing ‘a fig leaf’ for both patron and clients ‘to continue in the game’ (Anderson 2001).

This theme of self-criticism was bravely adopted by Bush when he announced a brand “new policy” toward the Middle East region to commemorate the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the National Endowment for Democracy. In his speech in Washington D.C. in November 2003, Bush stated that:

Sixty years of Western nations excusing and accommodating the lack of freedom in the Middle East did nothing to make us safe – because in the long run, stability cannot be purchased at the expense of liberty. As long as the Middle East remains a place where freedom does not flourish, it will remain a place of stagnation, resentment, and violence ready for export. And with the spread of weapons that can bring catastrophic harm to our country and to our friends, it would be reckless to accept the status quo. Therefore, the United States has adopted a new policy, a forward strategy of freedom in the Middle East (Bush 2003).

Also in his memoir, *Decision Points*, Bush reflected on the U.S.’s missed opportunity to address the deficit in freedom he had identified in the Arab world. With a sense of purpose, he states that:

For most of the Cold War, America’s priority in the Middle East was stability. Our alliances were based on anticommunism, a strategy that made sense at the time. But under the surface, resentment and anger built. Many people turned to radical clerics and mosques as a release. Amid these conditions, terrorists found fertile recruiting ground. Then nineteen terrorists born in the Middle East turned up on planes in the United States. After 9/11, I decided that the stability we had been promoting was a mirage. The focus of the freedom agenda would be the Middle East (Bush 2010:398).

The desire for change was advanced by Bush when he raised the subject of political reform in meetings and press conferences with Arab leaders notably during visits by former presidents Mubarak of Egypt and Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali of Tunisia in spring

2004. Later, in his second inaugural speech on January 20, 2005, Bush set out what became known as his ‘freedom agenda’ declaring that:

America is a nation with a mission, and that mission comes from our most basic beliefs. So it is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world (Bush 2005).

Bush’s Middle East policy re-orientation notably broke new ground because it was the first time that a U.S. president had publicly criticized some of America’s Arab allies for their authoritarian ways and had mentioned democratization as explicitly as a leading objective of U.S. Middle East policy (Hawthorne 2004:4). According to Larbi Sadiki, President Bush will go down in history as the only U.S. President to summon the courage to engage in self-criticism about American aiding of autocracy and, by implication, inaction on democracy promotion in the Middle East for sixty years (Sadiki 2009:165).

In political discourses, interviews and speeches, some of Bush’s officials voiced the President’s ambitious democracy agenda towards the Arab world. Despite there being a sense of uneasiness and concern amongst key defence officials about Bush’s strong language on democracy promotion, formal policy declarations and speeches characterised a major element of the Bush administration’s ‘stepped – up line’ on democracy promotion. Through a spate of speeches and other public remarks by key members of the administration, and then by highlighting the issue at the 2004 G-8, European Union, and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) summits, the Bush administration placed the promotion of political reform and democratization in the Middle East region firmly on the U.S.’s foreign policy agenda.

In a major policy speech addressing government officials and academics at the American University in Cairo on Monday, 20 June 2005, Condoleezza Rice delivered a forceful call for democratic reform in the Arab world. Referring to Bush's second inaugural address in which he said his aim was to help people find their democratic voice and not to impose a U.S.-style government on them, Dr. Rice stated purposefully that:

For 60 years, the United States pursued stability at the expense of democracy.....and we achieved neither. Now, we are taking a different course. We are supporting the democratic aspiration of all people⁵².

As mentioned earlier, the Administration's rhetoric on democracy promotion did not receive the full approval of key Defense officials who saw the danger in using strong language to make simplistic references to democracy. For some, such as Douglas Feith, the fear was that the Administration's emphatic language on democracy promotion would become synonymous with the success of the war effort – that is to say that America's success depended on whether Iraq became a model democracy – an accomplishment which Feith believed, was beyond the Administration's ability to guarantee. Feith also saw strategic, political, and even legal drawbacks to the notion that the United States was considering war not for self-defence but for the purpose of implanting democracy in Iraq (Feith 2008: 285). He states in his memoir that:

The statement that the United States aimed to create democracy in Iraq struck both Rumsfeld and me as off base. The proper way to think about this, we believed, was that the Iraqis would have to create their own democracy; the United States should not do it for them.(Feith 2008: 284).

Feith argues:

⁵² US Department of State Archive – accessed via <http://2001-2009.state.gov> – on 16/11/2012;

Democracy is complex; it is a lot more than just organising an election. We both [together with Rumsfeld] worried that loose talk about democracy might lead foreigners to think we intended to impose an American model on them. Our democratic system worked well for us, but it might be altogether wrong for people in different geographies, with different histories, cultures, and other circumstances (Feith 2008: 287)

He stated further that:

Rather than talk simplistically of creating democracy, we concluded, U.S. officials should think of creating democratic institutions, calling attention to the building blocks of democracy and freedom: the rule of law (that is law that constrains not just ordinary citizens, but also the highest officials); the decentralisation of power; an independent judiciary; a free press; and private property (Feith 2008: 287).

In summing up, following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the U.S. placed a premium on fighting terrorist groups and states that harbour terrorism, while every other interest took a back seat to this drive including the steady supply of oil from the Arab world. At the same time, the U.S. also launched a political offensive to democratize Iraq and the wider Arab world and it began to shift its role in the region from an enabler of authoritarian rule to an advocate of gradual, but genuine, democratic change and a supporter of human rights. This new policy was spearheaded and spelled out clearly by George W. Bush Jnr. and some members of his administration. They claim that the time had come for the United States to fully live up to its support for democratic principles and, after some sixty years of support for authoritarian Muslim regimes, to opt for the establishment of functioning democratic systems of government throughout the region. The ambition to forge a new Middle East by igniting mounting aspirations for

democratization in Iraq was pursued aggressively, and it commenced with the U.S.-led invasion of that country.

On 1st May 2003, George W. Bush dressed as a fighter pilot and standing before a huge banner proclaiming “Mission Accomplished” addressed the crew of the USS Abraham Lincoln just off the coast of San Diego. With Saddam gone from power, the U.S.’s central objective became helping the Iraqis develop a democracy that could govern itself, sustain itself, defend itself, and serve as an ally in the war on terror. George W. Bush admits that this objective was ambitious, but that he was optimistic it could be achieved (Bush 2010: 257).

In the next chapter, this thesis will present evidence of how the continuing tensions, turf wars and bureaucratic infighting between U.S. agencies choked cooperation and coordination on the ground in Iraq, effectively derailing Bush’s freedom agenda in that country.

CHAPTER THREE

‘U.S. STYLE DEMOCRACY’ PROMOTION IN IRAQ POST-9/11 AND THE 2003

IRAQ WAR

The ideal of government coordination – lively debate leading to unity and teamwork – was not achieved in the George W. Bush administration. In particular, Iraq policy making in the Bush Administration did not conform to a pattern of collaboration and mutual cooperation. Following on the turf wars which were a predominant feature of interagency relationships during the pre-Iraq War era, various senior State Department, CIA and Defense officials continued to disagree with each other’s analyses and proposals in the aftermath of the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq. There were many stories in the U.S. media of policy disagreements in the Bush administration descending into bureaucratic backstabbing. These bureaucratic disagreements and infighting contributed to the failures that marked the post-invasion period of the war.

The argument in this chapter will draw on the personality clashes between Bush’s key officials, and the internecine bureaucratic turf wars that characterised their interagency relationships. It will show how these interagency conflicts filtered down the bureaucratic chain and choked cooperation on the ground in Iraq. The point being made in this chapter is that collectively, U.S. political decision-making, development initiatives, programmes and activities were not sufficiently coordinated or synchronised at the best of times as diverse actors had competing and conflicting agendas which they failed to coordinate from a vantage point.

POST- WAR PLANNING – THE FUTURE OF IRAQ PROJECT AND BUREAUCRATIC POLITICS

The U.S.'s post-war planning for Iraq began on 9th April 2002, when Thomas S. Warrick, a veteran civil servant in the State Department's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs held the first meeting of the grandly titled, Future of Iraq project which brought together experts at State and the CIA as well as Iraqi exiles in the United States and Europe with professional experience in fields ranging from transitional justice to oil policy. The initiative had researched and assessed various post-war reconstruction issues that the United States would confront after Saddam's reign ended and it aimed at joining Iraqi exiles with public administration experts by forming working groups on topics such as health, finance, water, and agriculture. The State Department, it did seem, was adopting a more sober approach to the impending likelihood of a post-Saddam era in Iraq. Condoleezza Rice states that the launch of the Future of Iraq Project by Powell's State Department indicated that there was a sense of urgency by the Administration to do something about Iraq which the United States wanted to get right (Rice 2011: 177). Indeed the State Department effort was dubbed in U.S. media circles as "*the earliest and most comprehensive planning undertaken by the U.S. government for a post-Saddam Iraq*" (cited in Rumsfeld 2011: 486).

Notwithstanding the optimism that surrounded the State Department's Future of Iraq project, some commentators argue that it was plagued from the start by bureaucratic wrangling and turf wars with the Defense Department. For instance, Allawi argues that Chalabi's INC was firmly against any such State Department-led initiative, fearing that it would lead to strengthening the hand of the State Department's protégés in the struggle for supremacy inside the Iraqi opposition. According to Allawi, the INC's

position coincided with Defense Department's own suspicions about the groups that were being sponsored by the State Department. Allawi states that, the Future of Iraq project moved in fits and starts as a result (Allawi 2007: 83). Bradley Graham also wrote in the *Washington Post* that many senior State Department officials were bitter about what they saw as the Pentagon's failure to take seriously their planning efforts, particularly in the 'Future of Iraq' project⁵³. Rumsfeld disputes these arguments and the criticism levelled at his Defense Department. In his memoir, *Known and Unknown*, he states that senior Defense officials did review and consult the papers relating to the State Department's initiative and found some of them to be helpful (Rumsfeld 2011: 486). Notwithstanding, Rumsfeld argues that the initiative - which outlined broad concepts - did not constitute post-war planning in any sense of the word. According to Rumsfeld, the project did not outline operational steps or any detailed suggestions about how to handle various problems (Rumsfeld 2011: 486). CPA Chief, Paul Bremer shared a similar view about the State Department's initiative. According to Bremer, "*the project did not provide a comprehensive plan for post-war Iraq. Rather, [i]ts purpose was to engage Iraqi-Americans thinking about their country's future after Saddam was ousted*" (Bremer 2006:25). For some commentators, the project "*produced an extremely long and somewhat unfocused set of papers*"⁵⁴. One Iraqi exile who participated in the project's democratic -principles working group characterized the endeavour as "*mostly busywork for Iraqi exiles whom [the State Department] wanted to guide and control*"⁵⁵. Ryan Crocker, himself a former State Department official and a future ambassador to

⁵³ Bradley Graham, "Prewar Memo Warned of Gaps in Iraq Plans," *Washington Post*, August 18, 2005;

⁵⁴ Michael E. O'Hanlon, "Iraq without a Plan", *Policy Review* 128 (December 2004 – January 2005):36;

⁵⁵ Reul March Gerecht, "Now What?" *New York Times Book Review*, July 10, 2005, p.9;

Iraq, who was heavily involved in the project also later acknowledged, “*It was never intended as a post-war plan*”⁵⁶. According to Rumsfeld, if the initiative had been intended as a post-war plan, it could at least have given his department a blueprint to discuss and consider [Rumsfeld 2011: 486]. Professor George Joffe of Cambridge University who was part of a group of academics - all experts on Iraq and Middle East and international affairs dubbed the “six wise men” - summoned to Downing Street in November 2002 to advise the former British Prime Minister Tony Blair on what could happen if Britain and the United States invaded Iraq, stated that the State Department spent a year preparing a detailed briefing about how the post-invasion scenario should be handled but all that was “*junked as officials were making up policy on the hoof*”⁵⁷. Allawi accepts that the ‘Future of Iraq Project’ was a half-hearted and unreal attempt to tackle the issues that would confront the overseers of a country with a devastated economy and a dictatorial political culture. He points out that most of the groups assembled by the State Department dealt with issues on which the participants had no up-to-date information, or any immediate experience. He makes the point that the real importance attached to the project was reflected in the State Department’s allocation of a single basement office to act as the ‘control’ centre (Allawi 2007: 84).

Notwithstanding, Allawi argues that the tug of war between the State and Defense departments over control of the administration and governance of Iraq masked a far more serious issue. He argues that the entire process of planning for a post-war Iraq was

⁵⁶ John Ware, “Blair Was Warned of Looming Disaster in Iraq”, *The Telegraph*, 28th October 2007;

⁵⁷As reported by *The Independent*, “Iraq invasion 2003: The bloody warnings six wise men gave to Tony Blair as he prepared to launch poorly planned campaign” – Accessed via <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/Iraq-invasion-2003-the-bloody-warnings-six-wise-men-gave-to-tony-blair-as-he-prepared-to-launch-poorly-planned-campaign-10000839.html> - on 04/03/2015.

mired in ineptitude, poor organisation and indifference. Professor Joffe endorsed Allawi's views. He stated that the people who were put in charge in Iraq had very little knowledge or experience of the Middle East. According to Joffe there was nobody in leadership with any practical experience of how to handle a transition to democracy like that. Joffe also states that those in charge were quite childish in somehow believing that democracy would bloom in Iraq. According to Joffe the behaviour of U.S. officials displayed ignorance not only of the region but also of the way politics works⁵⁸. Jeff Bridoux shares a similar view. According to Bridoux, while efforts were made to identify Iraq's inside – actors that could play a role in the post-invasion period, there was an over-reliance on opposition groups in exile, which quickly realised the gap between those who stayed and those who left Iraq. Bridoux states that no efforts were made to understand what the political realities in Iraq might be without the iron grip that Saddam had on the various ethnic and religious groups in the country – no serious thoughts were given to the possibility that ousted Sunnis might revolt against the new order or that disenfranchised Shi'as might swiftly drive for power, opposing the American ideal of introducing capitalism and democracy in Iraq (Bridoux 2011: 92).

Allawi suggests that the lack of clarity about the administration's true intentions in post-Saddam Iraq may have also contributed to the confusion about the plans for the governance of the country. According to Allawi, by the time the military option appeared to have been definitively selected, it was too late to start seriously thinking about the administration of a post-war Iraq (Allawi 2007: 84). This point is endorsed by other commentators who argue that the late start of the post-war planning and the consequent obvious shortcomings that resulted constitute an indictment of those

⁵⁸ Ibid;

policymakers whose optimism proved lethal to U.S. reconstruction efforts (Diamond 2005: 284 and Galbraith 2006: 88 – 90).

Douglas Feith Undersecretary of Defense for Policy (2001 – 2005), concludes that although post-war planning for the reconstruction of Iraq existed, “*The teamwork did not develop, however. Nor were the old divides transcended*” (Feith 2008:277). Bush’s Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld (2001 – 2006) echoed Feith’s comments in his memoir, *Known and Unknown*. Rumsfeld stated that:

Post-war planning for Iraq lacked effective interagency coordination, clear lines of responsibility, and the deadlines and accountability associated with a rigorous process. I suspect that the failure to fashion a deliberate, systematic approach by which the President could establish U.S. policy on the political transition in post-Saddam Iraq was among the more consequential of the administration (Rumsfeld 2011: 487).

Rumsfeld added:

the lack of resolution on issues relating to the administration’s Iraq strategy at the NSC level had been a major contributing factor to the problems in the first place (Rumsfeld 2011: 525).

Indeed, against this background, it did seem that most of the planning for the post-invasion phase was poor and lacked coordination and leadership.

BUREAUCRATIC POLITICS - PERSONALISED CONFLICTS AND THE WAR OF WORDS

Bureaucratic politics was a significant feature of the post-invasion phase of the 2003 Iraq war. In the aftermath of the U.S. led invasion of Iraq, key departments of the U.S. government with special emphasis on those who worked abroad (State Department, Defense Department, CIA, et al) were called into action to implement Bush’s post-war plans for Iraq. During the implementation process, interdepartmental tensions and the

war of words between key Administration officials intensified and at times filtered into the public domain.

According to David Mitchell and Tansa George Massoud, conflict within the Bush administration reverberated from top to bottom, including the deputies in each bureaucratic office. There were disagreements between Secretary of State Colin Powell on one side and Vice President Dick Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld on the other on the handling of Iraq. There also seemed to be an independent centre of power in Cheney and his office (Mitchell and Massoud 2009:273). Bob Woodward states that, Powell once remarked: “*Things didn’t really get decided until the president had met Cheney alone*” (cited in Woodward 2004:392). According to Mitchell and Massoud, the coalition between Rumsfeld and Cheney was successful in using the bureaucracy to limit options considered and thereby influence the outcome, all of which was at Powell’s expense (Mitchell and Massoud 2009: 273). They argue that Department of Defense did everything it could to protect its influence when it came to the control of post-war Iraq (Mitchell and Massoud 2009: 276).

The bureaucratic “pulling and hauling” between Powell on one side and Cheney and Rumsfeld on the other was further reflected in the relationship among deputies and undersecretaries with Richard Armitage, Bush’s former Deputy Secretary of State (2001 – 2005) and a close ally of Powell, doing battle with Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz (2001 – 2005) and Cheney’s Chief of Staff I. Lewis “Scooter” Libby (2001 – 2005) while Marc Grossman, Bush’s Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs (2001 – 2005), clashed with Douglas J. Feith (DeYoung 2006: 416).

There were allegations being made against the State Department and its key officials were charged with leaking perverse stories to the U.S. media. According to Rumsfeld,

President Bush was aware of these leaks and also of the personalised conflicts between his top brass. Bush had concerns about the effect interagency conflicts would have on his Administration's post-war plans for Iraq. Rumsfeld stated that:

Several months later the subject of leaking came up in a meeting with the President and White House Chief of Staff Andy Card in the Oval Office.....As the meeting closed, Bush raised the issues between the State and Defense Departments that were being leaked to the media. "The controversy between DoD and State is hurting. It needs to stop" the President said. (Rumsfeld 2011: 504).

Feith blames State and CIA officials for leaking news stories to the media in an attempt to gain public support for their own views. According to Feith, high-level State and CIA officials were being frequently cited (anonymously) in news stories, leaking their criticisms of President Bush, his supporters and his policy (Feith 2008: 250). In his memoir Feith states that:

Instead of arguing their positions boldly within the Administration, however, some leading officials chose to air their dissent outside. They supplied journalists and former officials with a stream of mutually reinforcing stories – full of inaccuracies – designed to make the President and his supporters look unreasonablethey did not facilitate teamwork – the energetic, unified, government – wide action the President needed to implement his decisions (Feith 2008: 273).

Rumsfeld also confirmed in his memoir that the interdepartmental policy differences that had not been decisively resolved came to the surface. For instance, according to Rumsfeld, the handling of the appointment of CPA chief Paul Bremer added another layer of difficulty. Bremer's selection was apparently leaked to the media and *the New York Times* promptly announced "*The choice of Mr. Bremer is a victory for the State Department*

over the Pentagon”⁵⁹. The *New York Times* added “Some administration officials were so concerned that the move not look like a setback for Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld that they were considering having him announce it upon his return from Baghdad on Friday night, to make it look like a Pentagon initiative”⁶⁰. Rumsfeld stated that he did not know who “some administration officials” were, but that from within the Pentagon it looked like Richard Armitage was again feeding the press his version of events. Rumsfeld stated that Armitage’s leaks were so brazen that he finally mentioned them to Powell. “Colin, we have a problem, Rich Armitage has been badmouthing the Pentagon all over town. It’s been going on for some time and it’s only gotten worse” he said in one such conversation with Powell on 31st March 2003. Rumsfeld stated that he asked Powell to try to manage his deputy because the President was facing rearguard disloyalty from a small band of “senior State Department officials” who were attacking the administration and the effort in Iraq in the press as anonymous sources. Rumsfeld stated that he told Powell “I don’t know what the hell is in Armitage’s craw but I’m tired of it” (Rumsfeld 2011: 503).

Notwithstanding President Bush’s warning, the war of words between Defense and State Department officials continued to intensify. Notable Defense officials aimed passing shots at Secretary of State Colin Powell’s State Department blaming it for the ineffective implementation of Bush’s post-war plans for Iraq. Danielle Pletka, who ran the foreign policy and defense section at the American Enterprise Institute and was the

⁵⁹ Steven R. Weisman, “U.S. Set to Name Civilian to Oversee Iraq,” *New York Times*, 2nd May 2003 – cited in Rumsfeld 2011:503.

⁶⁰ Ibid

Senate Foreign Relations Committee's top staff member on the Middle East took aim at Powell's State Department and stated that "*The world is such a different place after 9/11, and the State Department hasn't caught up*". "*Iraq is one of the first real tests of a new vision of the threat to the United States and of a new Middle East, and it's one that was resisted very strongly by the State Department*," Pletka said. She said the agency had a "*go along to get along attitude*" that no longer served the national security (cited in Foundation for Defense of Democracies 2014). P.W. Singer, a former expert on modern warfare at the Brookings Institution who also worked for the Balkans Task Force in the U.S. Department of Defense stated that with military victory in Iraq, "*you see an increased swagger coming out of the Pentagon. We were right and therefore we should have a broader mandate*" (cited in Foundation for Defense of Democracies 2014). Also, Clifford May, President of the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, a U.S. based non-profit policy institute focusing on foreign policy and national security, urged Secretary of State Powell to examine the U.S.'s diplomacy:

My view is that the military learns from its mistakes and is always trying to do better in the next battle," May said. "*I don't think you see the same thing at the State Department, which seems unwaveringly committed to the policies of the past* (cited in Foundation for Defense of Democracies 2014).

May's comments were echoed by Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, an ally of Rumsfeld who advised the Pentagon as a member of its Defense Policy Board. Gingrich lambasted the State Department stating that "*six months of diplomatic failure were followed by one month of military success in Iraq*" (cited in Foundation for Defense of Democracies 2014). To this, Armitage responded, "*It's clear that Mr. Gingrich is off his meds and out of therapy*" (cited in Foundation for Defense of Democracies 2014). Armitage further claimed that the Pentagon conducted its own foreign policy, often undercutting the State Department (DeYoung 2006).

Personal criticisms were also levelled against Powell and Armitage by Defense officials. Douglas Feith criticised Powell for acting as an operator or crisis manager and not as a strategist or innovator within Bush's cabinet (Feith 2008: 60). Feith argues that media accounts that describe Powell as "dovish" suggest, wrongly, that he advocated a solution other than war in Iraq. According to Feith, Powell became the leader of the neither-fish-nor-fowl faction. Feith states that whilst acknowledging that the Iraqi regime was dangerous, Powell tended to downplay the degree and urgency of the threat and caused disagreements in the Situation Room by proposing tactical measures – for example, reviving United Nations inspections of Iraq – that could impede President Bush's evolving strategy of regime change. Despite all his ideas, Feith states that Powell did not propose a different solution to the Iraq problem (Feith 2008: 246). Furthermore, it was during the run-up to the Gulf War in 1990-91, after Saddam had invaded Kuwait, that Powell earned his reputation as a "reluctant warrior". The *Washington Post* reporter Rick Atkinson, in his book *Crusade: The Untold Story of the Gulf War*, uses the term to describe Powell's political inclinations. Feith argues that the term "reluctant warrior" was ironic and not flattering. He makes the point that the term could also be taken without irony as a political win-win for Powell. According to Feith, the term had allowed Powell (and his many admirers) to emphasize either the warrior part or the reluctant part, depending on the circumstances and the audience. Feith states that Powell reprised his role as a reluctant warrior in the George W. Bush Administration (Feith 2008: 247). In his book *Plan of Attack*, Bob Woodward wrote that Powell urged restraint but he did not argue for leaving Saddam in power. He had not said to Bush don't attack Saddam's Iraq. Woodward states that perhaps Powell had been too timid and felt able to talk only within the confines of the preliminary goals set by his

boss (Woodward 2004). Taking together the points attributed to Powell's arguments, Feith argues that, America would have been better served if Powell had provided strategic rather than just tactical advice. He states that because Powell blew an uncertain trumpet, U.S. diplomacy on Iraq lacked consistency, conviction, energy, or creativity (Feith 2008: 248 - 249). Bush's Vice – President Dick Cheney also jumped on the bandwagon of criticism levelled against Secretary of State Powell. In his memoir, *In My Time*, Cheney stated that:

I'd been sorry in 1992 when Bill Clinton's election brought an end to my working relationship with Powell at the Pentagon, but when President Bush, after his re-election in 2004, accepted Powell's resignation, I thought it was for the best (Cheney 2011:425 – 426).

In his defence, Powell's supporters said he considered the global impact of using American might. They argued that Rumsfeld was impulsive and created unnecessary problems with other countries, including allies. Against this background of institutional hostilities, bureaucratic infighting and personalised conflict, the ensuing discussion argues that the interdepartmental conflicts between Bush's top brass had a negative impact on U.S. policy on the ground in Iraq.

U.S. MID-EAST DEMOCRACY POLICY IMPLEMENTATION IN IRAQ

The Bush Administration's "democracy promotion" programs in Iraq involved several tiers of policy design, funding, operational activity, and influence. A range of governmental and non-governmental actors were tasked with constructing a rudimentary democratic framework in Iraq in the aftermath of the 2003 War. The two main executive branch agencies allocated hundreds of millions of dollars and tasked with administering U.S. democracy aid programs in Iraq were the U.S. Department of State and USAID. The main recipients of U.S. democracy aid channelled via the State

Department and USAID were the non-governmental U.S. organizations which included the self-described “non-profit, non-governmental, bipartisan, grant-making organization”, the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) and the U.S. Institute for Peace (USIP). The NED was created in 1983 as a central organ, or clearinghouse, for new forms of “democratic” political intervention abroad⁶¹. Its stated purpose is to “help strengthen democratic institutions around the world”⁶². The organizations that received USAID and NED funds in Iraq are extensive and they include a series of ostensibly “private” U.S. organizations that are in reality closely tied to the U.S. policymaking establishment and aligned with U.S. foreign policy. These include amongst others: National Democratic Institute (NDI) and International Republican Institute (IRI) described as ‘*officially the foreign policy arms of the U.S. Democratic and Republican parties respectively*’ (Robinson 2004:442-447). The other tier of private American organisations contracted by USAID to implement its programmes on the ground in Iraq include the American Development Foundation (ADF), International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), America – Mideast Educational and Training Services, Inc. (AMIDEAST), Research Triangle Institute (RTI) and the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE).

Additionally, U.S. universities, private contractors, and intellectuals were also contracted to promote U.S. style “democracy programmes” on the ground in Iraq. For

⁶¹ Prior to the creation of the NED, the CIA had routinely provided funding and guidance for political parties, business councils, trade unions, student and civic groups in the countries in which the U.S. intervened. In the 1980s a significant portion of these programmes were shifted from the CIA to USAID and the NED and made many more times sophisticated than the often-crude operations of the CIA. See Robinson, William I., (2004) What to Expect from U.S. Democracy Promotion in Iraq, *New Political Science*, Volume 26, Number 3 (UC Santa Barbara: Global and International Studies) pp.442 -447.

⁶² [Internet source: Available from: <http://www.ned.org/>].

instance, the *Los Angeles Times* of 20th March 2004, reported that Larry Diamond was brought into Iraq in January to lecture on “*democracy*” to “700 Iraqi tribal leaders, many of them wearing Western business suits underneath their robes” (cited in Robinson 2004:444). Other institutions such as DePaul’s University College of Law International Human Rights Law Institute (IHRLI) and University of Albany’s Center for Legislative Development (CLD) were also contracted to carry out USAID’s work on the ground in Iraq. Most of these private U.S. organizations provided “grants” in the form of funding, guidance and political sponsorship to a host of local organizations in Iraq. Some of these local organizations existed prior to U.S. efforts to promote democracy in Iraq but were penetrated through “democracy promotion” programmes and incorporated in new ways into U.S. foreign policy designs (Robinson 2004:444). Other local organisations were created entirely from scratch. These local organizations took the form of local political parties and coalitions, trade unions, business councils, media outlets, professional and civic associations, human rights groups and so on. Many of these groups touted themselves as being “non-partisan” (Robinson 2004:445).

PROMOTING DEMOCRACY IN IRAQ: U.S. ‘STYLE DEMOCRACY PROMOTION’

The Bush administration and the plethora of U.S. agencies and NGOs tasked with ‘democracy promotion’ in Iraq, resorted to the use of checklists – comprised of the essential elements constituting a liberal democratic political system - to implant democratic traditions in this country. Because liberal democracies in the West have constitutions, parliaments, independent judiciaries, free and investigative media, women’s organisations, vibrant civil societies and human rights groups, U.S. democracy promoters on the ground employed this blueprint design on the basis that Iraq presumably required a similar set of institutions and organizations. It is within this case

–specific and one-size-fits-all methodological approach to democracy promotion that this study reveals evidence of competing and conflicting agendas amongst U.S. actors tasked with initiating the installation of ‘Western style’ liberal democracy in Iraq. The relevant elements in the liberal democratic canon to be examined within the context of this discussion include free and fair elections; free and investigative media; respect for human rights and free and independent civil society.

Free and Fair Elections

In the aftermath of the 2003 Iraq war, the Bush Administration placed an incalculable value in Iraq having a more or less free electoral contest that would establish a representative government in that country as elections are the first evidence turned to in assessing democratization in a particular region. In its September 2005 Report to U.S. Congressional Committees entitled “*Rebuilding Iraq: U.S. Assistance for the January 2005 Elections*”, the United States Government Accountability Office (GAO) concluded that “*Elections are a critical goal for achieving the U.S. policy objective of a peaceful and stable Iraq*” (GAO 2005:11). Donald Rumsfeld also makes the point that:

We (U.S.) had a priceless advantage in an ideological struggle against the enemy. We could offer the Iraqis a future the majority of Iraqis wanted – a future of self-government and national pride. We could also finally disprove the notion that the Americans were occupiers there to steal their oil. Elections would be a critical step toward that goal (Rumsfeld 2011: 676).

During the Bush Administration, the Iraqi Government, with the assistance of USAID and other international organizations, organised and conducted a series of national and regional elections and referendums that took place on the following dates: 30th January 2005 (elections for the Transitional National Assembly, along with elections for the Kurdish Regional Parliament and Iraq’s 18 Governorate Councils); 15th October 2005 (a national referendum on a draft constitution); 15th December 2005 (parliamentary

elections of 325 members to the newly formed Iraq's Council of Representatives which replaced the Transitional National Assembly). These electoral events provide the first focus for the search for democratization in Iraq. Whilst largely overseen by the main occupying force, the United States, these elections were intended by the Bush administration to induct not only Iraqis but also the rest of the Arab Middle East into Western pluralism.

The Bush Administration assigned the task of achieving its electoral objectives in Iraq to USAID. To help strengthen the Iraqi electoral system, USAID/Iraq entered into a cooperative agreement, totalling \$40 million, with IFES to implement the Electoral Technical Assistance Programme (OIG 2012). IFES is an independent, non-governmental organisation providing professional support to electoral democracy⁶³. USAID had previously employed IFES to implement its electoral sub-programmes in Bosnia and Afghanistan. Through fieldwork, applied research and advocacy, IFES strives to promote citizen participation, transparency and accountability in political life and civil society⁶⁴. IFES's USAID-funded programme in Iraq was intended to coordinate and work closely with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI) to establish and strengthen the Iraqi electoral system during the various election cycles. The agreement covered the period 1st September 2004 to 30th September 2011 (OIG 2012). With funding provided by USAID, IFES's policies in Iraq focused on two main components: to develop an Iraqi-owned electoral administrative body to conduct and run elections and to educate the population on how to vote and the importance of voting (Hill 2011:148). It was also a principal objective of USAID's

⁶³ Available from: <http://www.ifes.org> (accessed on 11/12/13).

⁶⁴ *ibid* – organizational background;

electoral technical assistance programme to help the Iraqi-owned electoral administrative body to become a sustainable, self-sufficient entity (OIG 012).

Regarding the first goal, IFES helped establish the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq (IECI) in September 2004 and tasked it with administering and regulating elections fairly for the Iraqi people. IFES provided the IECI with “a legal review of elections regulations, training staff, planning logistics and procuring ‘needed items’, (such as printer voter registration forms) for the 30th January [2005] elections” (GAO 2005). In February 2007, Iraqi Law Number 11 replaced the IECI and established the permanent Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) to announce, organise, and supervise Iraqi elections (OIG 2012). The IHEC has been involved in all national and regional elections in Iraq since the January 2005 National Assembly Elections.

In cooperation with the United Nations, IFES provided technical election assistance to the IECI during the 30th January 2005 and 15th December 2005 elections to increase its staffing, skills, and capacity. The technical election assistance rendered include: helping to prepare a comprehensive plan and cost estimate for voter registration for election events; embedding 14 technical experts within the IECI who worked in full partnership with the UN; providing legal expertise, which led to the establishment of the electoral legal framework that defines Iraq’s electoral systems; and providing training for commissioners and IECI employees on election administration, logistics, voter education, public outreach, and conflict mitigation (USAID: December 2005: 9 - 10).

The January 2005 Iraqi election installed a National Assembly charged with drafting a new constitution – emphasizing democracy, rule of law, the private sector, and human rights. IECI was also the electoral authority running the 15th October 2005 referendum on Iraq’s draft constitution. The Iraqi constitutional drafting commission/committee

received technical assistance and support from USAID through its implementing partners on the ground, namely, ADF and members of the Consortium for Elections and Political Party Strengthening (CEPPS); NDI, IRI, and IFES. The NDI supported the Drafting Committee by providing expertise in legislative and constitutional issues, national surveys, and in-depth issue studies. Together with the IRI, NDI provided results from over 111,000 national surveys covering key issues. The IRI also assisted in the development of a public communications strategy for the Constitutional Committee, trained public relations officers, and helped produce press releases on the constitutional process. In addition to the technical assistance rendered to the Constitutional Drafting Committee, ADF, NDI and IRI supported constitutional workshops across Iraq. Under the Constitutional Awareness Initiative, NDI conducted over 3,000 sessions in all 18 Iraqi governorates for the benefit of over 140,000 participants of which one-third were women. IRI in turn produced 500,000 constitutional supplements in Arabic and Kurdish with a foreword by the Chairman of the Constitutional Committee. The supplement was inserted into national, regional, and local newspapers, reaching Shi'a, Sunni, Kurdish communities nationwide (USAID: Assistance for Iraq – Supporting Iraq's Constitution)

USAID's second electoral ambition was to educate the Iraqi population on how to vote and the importance of voting. To realise this goal, USAID allocated nearly \$24 million to IRI to develop an NGO network, the Civic Coalition for Free Elections (CCFE), to design and implement a national voter education campaign to inform and mobilize voters. According to IRI, this network, made up of 63 NGOs, developed public service announcements for television. For example, IRI reported that the coalition organized Iraq's first televised candidate debates in the run-up to the January 2005 elections. CCFE and other civic groups developed and disseminated thousands of election brochures, t-shirts, and posters. CCFE also assisted the *Rafadin Women's Coalition*

with a voter education campaign to emphasize the message that women should vote according to their own beliefs. IRI further reported that it worked separately in collaboration with eight Sunni organizations and five women's organizations to execute voter education activities targeting specific groups and geographic regions to ensure that all sectors of the community are reached. For example, according to IRI, an Iraqi coalition member organized an elections conference for 130 women civic leaders from Kirkuk and Mosul (GAO 2005).

USAID in Iraq also provided \$1 million to Voice for Humanity to implement a voter education campaign through the use of media players with pre-recorded messages and programming. These messages and programmes emphasized elections as a path to security and peace. According to the Voice for Humanity, it distributed 15,000 such devices throughout Iraq through social networks that included tribal sheikhs, religious leaders, and political leaders in the latter half of January 2005. Further, Voice for Humanity estimated that 20 percent of the devices were provided to Sunnis (GAO 2005).

USAID also supported programmes which assisted Iraqi NGOs capacity to systematically monitor elections – related violence. To this end, USAID allocated \$14.2 million, approximately 11 percent of the nearly \$130 million in U.S. assistance for Iraqi elections, to IFES to build an Iraqi NGO network that would identify and monitor elections-related violence. According to IFES officials, 45 days before the January 2005 elections, IFES-trained monitors were operating throughout Iraq gathering information on elections-related violence. Once the monitors verified the information, they aggregated these incidents into a Web-based database designed to track information about where, when, and who had been involved in elections-related violence (GAO 2005).

Additionally, USAID supported programs which assisted Iraqi NGOs capacity to monitor and report on electoral events. To this end, USAID allocated \$14 million, approximately 11 percent of the total U.S. assistance for Iraqi elections, to develop an Iraqi NGO domestic elections monitor network and train party agent elections monitors. This second type of monitoring was organised by NDI. NDI reported having provided training and assistance to help form the Iraqi Election Information Network (EIN) comprised of over 150 NGOs. According to EIN, more than 8,000 domestic monitors were deployed on 30th January to approximately 80 percent of polling stations (GAO 2005). The IRI was also contracted by USAID to produce an educational manual with IECEI that taught party officials the rules and regulations regarding party monitors at elections (Hill 2011:149).

The 30th January 2005 Iraqi elections received considerable media coverage in Western world as international journalists descended on Iraq to witness a historic day in the country's political history. Anthony Shadid of the *Washington Post* reported that: "*Over the course of the day, fear gave way to elation. Men and women danced in the streets and waved their purple fingers in the air*"⁶⁵. Shadid quoted the director of one polling station in a Sunni neighbourhood in Baghdad rejoicing: "*It's like a wedding. I swear to God, it's a wedding for all of Iraq.....No one has ever witnessed this before. For a half-century, no one has seen anything like it. And we did it ourselves*"⁶⁶.

The January 2005 election installed a National Assembly charged with drafting a new constitution – emphasizing democracy, rule of law, the private sector and human rights. USAID provided technical assistance to the Constitutional Drafting Commission in the

⁶⁵ Anthony Shadid, "Iraqis Defy Threats as Millions Vote" *Washington Post*, 31st January 2005;

⁶⁶ Ibid;

form of international constitutional expertise to support the drafting process. USAID also assisted in the development of a public communications strategy for the Constitutional Committee, trained public relations officers, and helped produce press releases on the constitutional process (USAID: Assistance for Iraq – Supporting Iraq’s Constitution).

The above accomplishments and efforts to enhance the democratic process in Iraq were cited by the Bush administration as evidence to show that U.S. foreign policy towards Iraq post-9/11 and the 2003 Iraq war was driven by a genuine desire to promote democracy in that country. The U.S. Department of State’s Report of February 2006 entitled ‘*Rebuilding Iraq, U.S. Achievements through the Iraq Relief & Reconstruction Fund*’ argued that there was some significant evidence that Iraq has started advanced steps towards the path of becoming a democratic country. The report cites the December 2005 elections which were held to elect a four – year government as an important step towards democratic advancement in the aftermath of the 2003 war. These elections were reported to have proceeded smoothly, although there were reports of insurgency and violence. Also, the International Mission for Iraqi Elections (IMIE), an international non-governmental body established in 2004 (comprising of independent electoral management bodies as well as the league of Arab States as an observer) assessed the 2005 Iraqi elections and concluded in its final report in 2006 that the design of the legal framework, institutions and procedures governing the December 2005 elections conformed with international standards. According to the IMIE’s Report, the December 2005 elections, widened the scope of participation, and voter turnout was high. The Report adds that despite the ongoing armed violence and bad security conditions, the Iraqi people voted in numbers which would do credit to democracies in more settled parts of the world (IMIE 2006).

In spite of these advances in electoral participation, and despite being certified as free and fair by international monitors (Freedom House 2007), the International Crisis Group (ICG) reported that the January 2005 elections were boycotted by the Sunni and Shiite ‘urban – slum underclass’ populations on the orders of their political leaders (ICG 2009). Consequently, the impact of ‘key constituencies’ deciding not to vote, meant that there were significant imbalances in the parliament and the regional councils (Hill 2011:154). These imbalances led to dissatisfaction with the political system and along with other factors ultimately to civil war during 2005 to 2007 (Hill 2011:154).

The IMIE Report of 2006 also noted that amidst the significant advances in electoral participation during the 2005 elections, shortcomings appeared in the management of the elections as reflected in the inadequate numbers of polling centres, shortage of ballots and problems with the voters’ list. Some 2000 complaints were submitted, alleging a wide range of electoral violations and irregularities that include ballot stuffing and theft, tally sheet tampering, intimidation, violence and multiple voting. In its 2006 report, the IECI argued that it did not have at its disposal the technical and human resources to adequately and expeditiously investigate and resolve the volume of complaints it received.

In addition, much has been said by U.S. implementers of democracy in Iraq about the achievements surrounding the process of election monitoring. According to Iraq specialist Rahman Aljebouri, a Senior Programme Officer, Middle East & North Africa, with NED in Washington, the reality of the situation is that the volunteers who turned up in numbers to assist in this process were only participating in the democratic process because they were getting paid on average, about a \$100 to a man per day. This, according to Aljebouri, was the main incentive for volunteering as an election

monitor⁶⁷. The U.S. made it out to look as if Iraqis had overnight become enthused by the spirit of democracy and that their efforts were voluntarily rendered. But the issue of payment for volunteering was hardly mentioned by U.S. implementers who were more intent to popularise the manner in which Iraqis generally had embraced U.S. efforts to advance the prospects of democracy in their country.

EVIDENCE OF A LACK OF STRATEGIC COOPERATION OR CONVERGENCE AMONGST DEMOCRACY ACTORS

The lack of cooperation between IFES and the U.N. organization, UNAMI

Starting off with USAID's electoral technical assistance programme, the audit report of the Office of Inspector General found that there was insufficient coordination between USAID's implementer, IFES and the U.N. organization, UNAMI. According to the cooperative agreement between USAID/Iraq and IFES, IFES was required to work with UNAMI on a donor coordination team, called the International Elections Assistance Team. This team was established by U.N. Security Council Resolution 1546 to provide election support to the Government of Iraq. The idea was to ensure that the resources provided under the award were used in the most efficient manner and to address the most critical requirements of Iraq's electoral system. In fact, USAID/Iraq designed the electoral program to optimize available resources, including financial and technical support from UNAMI. This close coordination between IFES and UNAMI was supposed to identify institutional gaps in IHEC and to develop an effective strategic plan that would result in a sustainable administrative body for elections (OIG 2012).

⁶⁷ Aljebouri, R. (2013). Interview on 21st November 2013. NED office, Washington D.C.;

Despite these agreements and requirements, the audit report of the Office of Inspector General found that coordination was not sufficient and that IFES did not coordinate with UNAMI to identify institutional gaps in IHEC, and did not determine which gaps each organisation would work on to develop an effective strategic plan which would address the most critical requirements of Iraq's electoral system. The audit report cites as an example in its findings that although IFES coordinated with UNAMI to provide technical assistance and training in developing IHEC's voter registration database, IFES did not coordinate with UNAMI to identify gaps in IHEC's administrative support areas, such as financing, procurement, and human resources. The audit report confirms that IFES officials stated that they worked with UNAMI to conduct elections, but did not keep track of which tasks each organisation performed. UNAMI officials stated that for the past several years they had only informal discussions with IFES about work plan activities (OIG 2012).

Furthermore, in September 2009, IFES broke away from UNAMI-led donor coordination team and signed a memorandum of understanding with IHEC. In it, IFES agreed to advise IHEC independent of UNAMI. However, USAID/Iraq did not modify its agreement with IFES to revise the relationship between IFES and UNAMI in advising IHEC. The memorandum between IFES and IHEC was non-binding and ended on 31st December 2010. According to IFES officials, IFES and IHEC verbally extended their memorandum until the end of the program on September 30, 2011. The mission did not have a memorandum of understanding under the follow-on agreement, which began on October 1, 2011. In addition, according to both IFES and UNAMI officials, personality conflicts existed between them, and they disagreed about the roles each organisation would play in advising IHEC. Subsequent to issuance of the Office of

Inspector General's audit report, USAID/Iraq provided emails showing communication between mission officials and IFES discussing the difficult relationship with UNAMI. The emails did not show that USAID/Iraq directed IFES to break away from UNAMI and establish a memorandum of understanding with IHEC, but it was clear from these emails that USAID/Iraq was made aware of the difficulties existing between IFES and UNAMI. Furthermore, an IHEC official stated that IFES and UNAMI disagreed on how to count votes. USAID/Iraq, IFES and UNAMI officials did not provide any additional information to the audit team concerning this matter (OIG 2012).

As a result of the lack of strategic cooperation or convergence between USAID/Iraq, IFES and UNAMI, on approaches to implement the mission's electoral technical assistance programme, the audit report concluded that USAID/Iraq did not know whether IFES and UNAMI duplicated efforts, or whether the programme's \$102 million spent over seven years was used efficiently to address the most critical needs of Iraq's electoral system. In its recommendation to help USAID/Iraq improve various aspects of the electoral technical assistance programme, the Office of Inspector General, urged the mission to require IFES to (1) coordinate with the UNAMI in Iraq and the IHEC to identify institutional gaps in writing, (2) determine and document which gaps each organization will work on, and (3) continually coordinate with the UNAMI to avoid any duplication of efforts. In response, USAID/Iraq agreed with the audit findings and with the recommendation. It stated that under the new Elections Support Programme, UNAMI and IHEC have identified institutional gaps and determined which of these each organisation will work on to avoid duplication of effort (OIG 2012).

Some commentators argue that the Bush administration deliberately rejected the idea of collaborating with international organisations such as the UN. General Abizaid viewed the rejection of the UN as a costly mistake. Abizaid wanted the U.S. to join forces with international organisations to assist its reconstruction efforts in Iraq. As he puts it, “*we [the U.S.] are an anti-body in their [Iraqi] society [.....] The key thing is to internationalise the problem. We really need the U.N. stamp of approval. It would be crazy to keep the U.S. government in charge [of Iraq] for too long*” (cited in Gordon and Trainor 2007: 187). Jeff Bridoux also points out that the Pentagon moved away from previous U.S. – led nation-building experiences by refusing to include the UN in the projected occupation and reconstruction of Iraq (Bridoux 2011:92). According to Bridoux, the role of the UN was considered in early drafts but later frowned upon condescendingly because the Bush administration considered earlier UN-led nation building projects as failures and the Security Council’s letdown regarding retaliation against Saddam’s Iraq as proof of its inefficiency (Bridoux 2011: 93).

Writing the Iraqi constitution

There was also a clear lack of strategic cooperation between Washington and Bremer’s CPA during the process of the writing of the Iraqi constitution. The major issue here was the timetable that had been created by the CPA and the Iraqi leadership for the constitution process. TAL stipulated 30th January 2005 elections for a Provisional Assembly that would elect a Provisional Government. Much more importantly, within six months, the Provisional Assembly was to draft a constitution. The draft constitution had to be completed no later than 15th August of that year, followed by a popular referendum on the constitution to be held on 15th October and thereafter, the holding of new elections for a permanent Assembly on 15th December. If the Provisional Assembly did not request an extension, and did not complete a draft of the constitution by 15th

August, TAL called for its dissolution and a “start-over” from the beginning. Whilst the CPA Administrator, Bremer believed unquestioningly that it was essential to meet the prescribed deadlines in order to “*maintain the momentum of the political process*” in Iraq, he explains in his memoir that key members of the Bush Administration did not share his standpoint (Bremer 2006:289-290). As Bremer puts it “*some major Washington players went wobbly on our ‘etched in stone’ deadlines*” (Bremer 2006: 289 - 290). On this point, Bremer refers to a conversation he had with Condoleezza Rice in which the then National Security Adviser told him that “*some people here are still leaning toward handing sovereignty to an appointed government in April with no constitution*” (Bremer 2006: 217). Bremer stated that to him, it sounded like these people being referred to were people in the Pentagon’s policy office. He stated in his memoir that he told Rice that he strongly recommended against the route proposed by Pentagon staff as it did not serve the President’s or America’s interests in Iraq (Bremer 2006: 217). Bremer recollects that during an NSC meeting on 13th February, Donald Rumsfeld suggested that since the United States now had so much leverage in Iraq, it should consider divesting sovereignty “*in pieces*” or ‘*sliding*’ the date. Bremer stated that during the same meeting Colin Powell added that it would not be a failure if the U.S. transferred sovereignty on the 1st of August instead of the 30th of June in order to be sure the Iraqi provisional government was ready to exercise power. According to Bremer, President Bush himself said that although it would be a defeat if the date slipped, the U.S. could perhaps “*calibrate sovereignty*” in some way (Bremer 2006:289-290). The views of key White House staff left Bremer thinking that a real threat to the complex political structure that he and other like-minded individuals were struggling to build in Iraq existed in the form of a lack of strategic cooperation emanating from the corridors of power in Washington. Indeed, Bremer found it difficult to hold the Iraqis to

carry out the 15th November Agreement if Washington was ‘wobbly’ over the issue or was not firm. He felt that it was vital that U.S. public statements regarding the 30th of June handover remain unwavering. Bremer also felt that any delay in meeting the prescribed timetable would ignite doubts about the U.S.’s ultimate intentions in Iraq which in turn could cost American lives (Bremer 2006:289-290). It did seem that, Bremer was committed to meet the prescribed deadlines, even if every milestone only marked a hollow achievement. As the man in the field, Bremer had been given great latitude to gauge the situation on the ground and craft out workable solutions.

The Chain of Command: Transfer of Sovereignty, Broken lines of authority and communication, and the tug of war between the CPA and the U.S. Defense Department

The issue of restoring Iraq’s sovereignty and transferring authority to Iraqis was also at the centre of the problems that evolved between Bremer’s CPA, Rumsfeld’s Defense Department and Powell’s State Department which effectively obscured the Bush Administration’s post-war plans in Iraq. Before and during Operation Iraqi Freedom, the Defense Department did work on post-war political planning to keep the U.S. out of the role of military occupier. The capstone of this effort was the U.S. plan for the Iraqi Interim Authority (IIA), which became official U.S. policy when it received President Bush’s formal endorsement on 10th March 2003. Feith states that, “*The IIA was the official U.S. policy for post-Saddam governance of Iraq, a plan developed through the interagency process and approved by the president*” (Feith 2008: 413).

The State, CIA officials and Bremer’s actions and views were at odds with IIA policy of early transfer of authority. According to Feith, State and CIA officials had difficulty reconciling their opposition to occupation with their opposition to an early Iraqi

government, which would be dominated by externals. Feith states that despite President Bush's approval, the State Department and the CIA never resigned themselves to the IIA concept. According to Feith, in May 2003, Colin Powell once again began advocating a go-slow approach to transferring sovereignty in Iraq. Feith states that at that point, it became clear to him that the Administration's Iraq policy was becoming dangerously ambiguous. Although President Bush never reversed his 10th of March decision to create the IIA "as soon as possible", Feith states that neither Condoleezza Rice nor Colin Powell reaffirmed the policy when Powell denied the need for urgency (Feith 2008: 436). In this regard Feith wrote that:

[T]he chief mistake was maintaining an occupation government in Iraq for over a year – even though the dangers of occupation had been recognized throughout the Bush Administration, and even though the President's policy had called for the early creation of an Iraqi interim authority. The central task of liberation was to bring about political transition in Iraq, but this was impeded, beginning months before Saddam's overthrow, by self-induced anxieties at State and CIA about the externals' presumed lack of "legitimacy" (Feith 2008: 516).

On his part, Bremer later explained that he developed a different understanding in the days before his departure for Iraq, during meetings with President Bush, Powell, and Rice and in the Principals Committee and NSC meetings he attended. Bremer was under the impression that he was simply following orders. According to Feith, Bremer related that he understood that he was free to set the IIA plan aside, because Bush wanted him to "Get over there and give us your recommendation" (cited in Feith 2008: 437). Acting on the instructions he claimed he had received from President Bush, Bremer published in the op-ed page of the *Washington Post* on 8th September 2003 an article headlined "Iraq's Path to Sovereignty" which Feith stated set tongues wagging as it declared that

the CPA would stay in existence and would remain Iraq's occupation government – until the country had achieved the 'seven steps' on the path to full Iraqi sovereignty as set out in Bremer's article (Feith 2008: 453). Feith added that together with Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz, they had no idea that Bremer opposed the IIA policy. He stated that no one in the Pentagon seemed aware that Bremer had concluded, even before he left Washington, that an early transfer of power to the Iraqis was a "reckless fantasy" (Feith 2008: 441). Bridoux argues that by the time an IIA was ready to act, CPA judged that the conditions on the ground were not conducive to a transfer of any parcel of power to Iraqis. According to Bridoux, the CPA was of the view that the U.S. had to be in charge, reinforcing further the perception of the Iraqi population that they were now an occupied people, and hence burying further the possibility to rally the population to the making of a new Iraq (Bridoux 2011:92).

Mitchell and Massoud also argue that Bremer did not have high regard for the leadership of the external Iraqis. They state that Bremer believed that power should be handed over to a representative authority in Iraq after elections had been held. According to Mitchell and Massoud, Bremer's op-ed piece in the *Washington Post* on 8th September 2003 was not cleared with Rumsfeld or others at the Department of Defense. They state that in fact, the plan resembled the State Department's vision for handing over power to Iraqis (Mitchell and Massoud 2009: 276). Feith agrees with Mitchell and Massoud's view and he argues that what Bremer was outlining in his *Washington Post* article was not the Administration's policy of early transfer of authority in Iraq but a timetable which corresponded, in fact, to the State Department's original proposal for a transitional civil authority, which was designed to keep authority out of Iraqi hands for several years (Feith 2008: 453). Bremer later wrote "*what would*

have happened if the U.S. government had turned over Iraq to the exiles in May, as some in Washington had wanted? (cited in Feith 2008: 499). Suffice to say, Bremer's *Washington Post* article triggered considerable controversy over the full extent of Bremer's authority as CPA chief in Iraq.

Rumsfeld stated in his memoir that Bremer's ambitions went far beyond the limited role for the United States that the Department of Defense and the interagency process had planned for and well beyond the role that had been resourced. He stated that CENTCOM had planned to liberate Iraq and set up the rough framework for the country to govern itself. The military, according to Rumsfeld, had not planned to occupy every corner of Iraq with an American soldier or to try to impose a Western-style democracy on the country. Rumsfeld stated that the result was that the CPA and Iraq ended up with the downsides of an occupation strategy and few of the benefits – and without the resources that might have allowed some mitigation. The means, according to Rumsfeld, were not well linked to the ends. Rumsfeld stated that it took several months before he and others in Washington fully recognised that a shift in policy had occurred (Rumsfeld 2011: 513).

Reflecting on the shift in policy Bremer sought to advance on the ground in Iraq, Douglas Feith argued that *“The United States would have been in a far better position to help Iraqis fulfil President Bush's vision of a new, free, and benign Iraq if we had been able to work with them as partners rather than as overlords”* (Feith 2008: 501). Feith's argument was endorsed by Isam al-Khafaji, former Iraq Reconstruction and

Development Council (IRDC)⁶⁸ member, who resigned from his post in protest stating that: “*We have reached a point where we started asking ourselves: are we informers or advisers? Being an adviser means that you sit around the committee table devising the orders, but we were implementing orders without being consulted in their devising. So we were not seen as advisers, let alone as decision-makers. All the big decisions – dissolving the Iraqi army and the security apparatus, privatisation, oil policy, the banking system, the restructuring of the media – were made [by the CPA] behind closed doors*” (Allawi 2007: 190).

Condoleezza Rice also expressed concerns over Bremer’s actions following the publication of his *Washington Post* article. Rice stated:

Obviously, we had to help the Iraqis find a path to sovereignty. Jerry (Bremer) understood this very well and proposed a road map that he published in the Washington Post on September 8, 2003. The problem was that he did so without fully consulting Washington. The seven-point plan he presented in the paper’s op-ed pages touched off a firestorm in Iraq and consternation in the White House and State Department. Jerry had suggested that a new constitution be written through a process organised by the Iraqi Governing Council, with elections to follow. That drew a rebuke from perhaps the most powerful man in Iraq, Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, who objected to the sequence Jerry (Bremer) had outlined. Sistani believed that Iraq’s constitution had to be written by representatives elected by the Iraqi people, not through a process devised by an organisation that emanated from the CPA (Rice 2011: 241).

⁶⁸ IRDC (Iraq Reconstruction and Development Council) was a group of 150 Iraqi expatriates —most of whom were American citizens— recruited by the Pentagon in March 2003 to assist the Coalition Forces with post-war reconstruction planning. The group was headed by Emad Dhia, a former Pfizer Corporation executive. The group was dissolved in June 2004 and some of its members preferred to stay in Iraq.

According to Rice, Bremer's 'unauthorised' actions left her convinced that there had to be better connectivity between the CPA chief and Washington. Together with Colin Powell, Rice stated that she talked to Donald Rumsfeld about the problem of pronouncements coming out of Baghdad without due consideration in the NSC (Rice 2011: 242). But Rumsfeld, it would seem had very little leverage or control over Bremer despite Bush's appointment letter to Bremer clearly instructing him [Bremer] to work under the "authority, direction and control of the Secretary of Defense"⁶⁹. In taking on the CPA job, Feith stated that Bremer made a point of presenting himself as a decisive, bureaucratically clever chief executive – eager to take charge and impatient with what he [Bremer] calls the Defense Department "squirrel cage" and the "bureaucratic hamsters" (Feith 2008: 441). Despite stating in his memoir that, "*as the senior American in Baghdad, I would be President George W. Bush's personal envoyMy chain of command ran through Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and straight to the President*" (Bremer 2006), Bremer chose to think of himself as working not for Rumsfeld, but for the President (Feith 2008: 441). Indeed, Bremer sometimes talked directly to President Bush and the White House, which disturbed Rumsfeld. Bremer stated that in a meeting in Baghdad in December 2003, Rumsfeld pulled him aside and said: "*Look, it's clear to me that your reporting channel is now direct to the president and not through me*" (Bremer 2006:245). Rumsfeld stated that he discussed with Bremer the need to work closely together and that he had decided he would give Bremer considerable latitude for decision – making, since he was the man on the

⁶⁹ Bremer was designated as President Bush's special envoy but he was supposed to report to and through the Secretary of Defense, Rumsfeld (Memo from Secretary of Defense for Presidential Envoy to Iraq, "Designation as Administrator of the Coalition Provisional Authority", 13th May 2003. See also Letter from President George W. Bush to Bremer, 9th May 2003 appointment letter– cited in Dobbins et al 2009: 16).

ground. According to Rumsfeld, Bremer however had a robust definition of the term “latitude”. Rumsfeld stated that Bremer assumed that he had direct access to President Bush from the start and that it became clear that Bremer intended to not be exclusively connected to any cabinet official. Rumsfeld stated that Bremer was encouraged to adopt this approach by President Bush and Rice who both not only accepted but facilitated Bremer’s unfiltered contact with them. Bremer later wrote that after one of his private meetings with President Bush, “*Bush’s message was clear. I was neither Rumsfeld’s nor Powell’s man. I was the president’s man*” (Bremer 2006: 36 – 37). According to Rumsfeld, such actions contributed to a confused chain of command. Rumsfeld argues that this imprecision damaged Washington’s communications with the CPA throughout the period of Bremer’s tenure. He states that the muddled lines of authority meant that there was no single individual in control of or responsible for Bremer’s work. As Rumsfeld puts it: *There were far too many hands on the steering wheel, which, in my view, was a formula for running the truck into a ditch* (Rumsfeld 2011: 506 – 507). Rumsfeld was clearly not able to get the formal chain of command altered. On paper, Bremer continued to work for Rumsfeld, though in fact he never really did, and he did so less and less over time. Bremer came to report directly to a number of people, which meant that he effectively had no boss. This, according to Feith was not how the interagency process was supposed to work (Feith 2008: 471).

Bremer, for his part, found that his reports to the Pentagon were initially not getting through to other U.S. agencies. According to Mitchell and Massoud, up until July 2003, Bremer had been sending his reports to Rumsfeld and counting on Rumsfeld or the Pentagon to relay such reports to the NSC, but Rumsfeld was holding on to the reports (Mitchell and Massoud 2009: 277). Bremer stated that “*it became a serious problem*

that reports I was sending to Secretary Rumsfeld and the Pentagon were not being shared outside of the Pentagon” (cited in Dobbins et al 2009: 16). Bob Woodward makes the point that by withholding material information, Rumsfeld was throwing his weight around, and the rest of the NSC was just too weak to do anything about it (Woodward 2006: 236). Barton Gellman also depicts Rumsfeld as having little respect for the office of the National Security Adviser and provides many examples of Rumsfeld deliberately refusing to attend NSC meetings summoned by Condoleezza Rice (Gellman 2008).

Furthermore, when Bremer arrived in Baghdad on 12th May 2003, he immediately made it clear that he was in charge. As the administrator of Iraq, Bremer exercised supreme executive, legislative and judicial powers. He could issue decrees and he began his tenure as Head of the CPA with two controversial orders to dissolve the Iraqi Baath party (CPA Order 1 which entered into force on 16th May 2003) and disband the Iraqi army (CPA Order 2 which entered into force on 23rd May 2003). Bremer had informed Bush and the other members of the NSC of his intended actions prior to executing the orders but it would seem that no – one from the Pentagon had brought this information to the attention of other key officials. In his memoir, Bremer makes it clear that his order to dissolve the Iraqi military and security forces was communicated to Rumsfeld and the president (Bremer 2006:57). Bremer also stated that he told his staff, “*The White House, DOD and State all signed off on this*” Bremer (2006:40). According to Frank Miller, the senior NSC staffer responsible for coordinating Bush’s policy toward Iraq, Bremer’s decrees were ‘*blown through the system*’ with ‘*advanced warning*’ (cited in Dobbins, J et al 2009: 58). CIA Chief, George Tenet also stated that he was not consulted on CPA Order No. 2 which Bremer issued on May 23 dissolving Iraq’s

military and national security entities. Feith admits in his memoir that he did not bring the matter to the Deputies Committee because he “*missed some important communications at this time*” – for example, how Rumsfeld responded to the Memo from Bremer dated 19th May 2003 on the dissolution (Feith 2008:433). He accepts that it would have surely been better if the decision to issue the order had been debated throughout the government particularly because the decision became associated with a number of unnecessary problems and proved to be a mistake (Feith 2008: 433 - 434). Rice writes in her memoir that there has been a good deal of retrospective examination of whether the order to disband the Iraqi army was adequately reviewed by and coordinated with Washington. She confirms that a post-mortem conducted by the late Peter Rodman, the assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs, shows that the Pentagon was aware of Bremer’s intentions to issue an order dissolving Iraqi security organizations, including the army as a part of the de-Baathification effort. Rice confirmed that Rumsfeld received a memorandum to this effect on 19th May 2003, but he did not bring it to her attention or that of President Bush. According to Rice, Bremer has said that he raised the issue at the NSC on 22nd May 2003. Rice states that several participants remember that the issue was brought up only in general terms during a discussion of de-Baathification. Rice does not remember these discussions as being constitutive of a request for permission to issue the order of disbanding Iraq’s army (Rice 2011:238). Partly for this reason, Condoleezza Rice asked her staff to use their informal contacts in the Pentagon to find out what was going on in Baghdad, since she was receiving so little information through formal channels (cited in Dobbins et al 2009: 16).

Against this background, Mitchell and Massoud argue that the whole interagency process seemed to have broken down and with president Bush not really being in charge

of resolving conflicts, the picture that emerged was one of disorganization and disarray (Mitchell and Massoud 2009: 277). Feith also states: “*Looking back on the interagency decision-making process, I am stuck by its lack of clarity. On issue after issue, where there were disagreements they were not brought to the surface to be presented to the President for decision. Rather, basic disagreements were allowed to remain unresolved – as long as a degree of consensus could be produced on immediate next steps*”.

Overall, it is fair to say that the differences between Bremer’s CPA, and more broadly between State and Defense Departments, regarding the transfer of authority and the restoration of Iraq’s sovereignty via the processes of constitution-making and elections were never clearly or firmly resolved by the principals in the NSC. In particular, the CPA’s views on Iraqi governance and occupation did not reflect those of Rumsfeld’s Defense department to which the CPA was answerable by way of presidential order. Communication lines were also blurred and at times almost non-existent which portrayed a severe case of interagency and personalised conflict amongst Bush’s top brass.

Free and Investigative Media

The Iraqi media suffered decades of brutal suppression of opinion and submission under Saddam’s regime. During Saddam’s rule, the Iraqi media was completely state-controlled. Allawi states that “*Variety, topicality, critical and investigative reporting were all absent in the media of the Ba’ath regime* (Allawi 2007: 153). Reporters Sans Frontieres described Saddam as a ‘*predator of press freedom*’ who managed the Iraqi media with ‘*an iron fist and has given them the single mission of relaying his propaganda*’ (Reporters Sans Frontieres 2003). Nada Shawqat who served as the

editorial supervisor for *Az-Zaman* newspaper⁷⁰ in Baghdad in the aftermath of the U.S. – led invasion explains that under Saddam, she had some freedom to write until his two sons, Uday and Qusay, took an interest in the press. “*Then we started getting instructions every day from the Minister of Information, telling us what to write and what not to write – it just got worse and worse over the last 13 years*” explains Shawqat (cited in Fisk 2003b).

After 35 years of Saddam’s rule, Iraqis were suddenly faced with the task of creating a professional and independent media to convey reliable facts, support responsible debate and represent the diversity of communities and views within their country. The removal of controls on a free press was an essential component of the political strategy of the CPA in Iraq. Bridoux states that the CPA identified the establishment of a free press as essential to spread ideas and values congenial to the whole American project of re-formatting the Iraqi society along democratic lines. Indeed, according to Bridoux, the establishment of a free press was an essential element of the CPA’s attempt at manufacturing consent among the Iraqi population (Bridoux 2011: 123). The virtues of an open and tolerant society could be easily demonstrated by guaranteeing free and uncensored journalism, which it was thought, would more endear Iraqis to the ways of a liberal democratic society (Allawi 2007: 153). More than 100 newspapers sprung into operation in Baghdad in the aftermath of the war to accept this challenge, and in addition to *Az-Zaman*, two other newspapers – the Iraqi National Congress’s *al-Moutamar* and the Kurdish *Al-Ittihad* – also came out of exile to print in Baghdad (cited in Fisk 2003b). Shawqat explains in the aftermath of the U.S. liberation of Iraq that:

⁷⁰ *Az-Zaman* which, roughly translated, means The Age, is run by Saad al-Bazaz, the former Iraqi diplomat who fell out with Saddam and published his paper from London through the long last years of Baathist rule. Bazaz was himself the former editor of Saddam’s *Al-Jumhuriya* newspaper. *Az-Zaman* was printed in London for many years whilst Al-Bazaz was in exile.

It's good to feel like a real journalist at last..... We have a circulation of 50,000 in Baghdad, another 15,000 in Basra, each edition carrying 12 pages of foreign and Arab news and eight of local news (cited in Fisk 2003b).

The Freedom House, Country Report on Iraq 2007 also reported that in the aftermath of the U.S. liberation of Iraq, over a dozen private television stations operated, major Arab satellite stations were easily accessible - as roughly one-third of Iraqi families owned a satellite dish - and internet access was not restricted by the authorities (Freedom House 2007).

Allawi also observed:

One of the immediate and most noticeable changes after the fall of the Ba'athist regime was the explosive growth of a newly free press and media. The stultifying media that had existed for decades, a key element in Ba'athist control, were swept away. Within weeks of the occupation, tens of newspapers were started, and there were at least eighty-five new titles by the end of June 2003 (Allawi 2007: 153).

The task of creating an independent media in the aftermath of the liberation of Iraq however faced serious obstacles as censorship remained a fundamental issue.

Abdulzahra Abdulsahib of *Al-Mada* newspaper which was founded by the former Iraqi communist Fakhri Karim, and Sahar Muhammad of the daily *Al-Sabah* explained that the situation on the ground in Iraq at the time prevented them from delivering what was urgently needed – ‘*unbiased, factual information – to make democracy, transparency and accountability work*’⁷¹. For example, it was ‘unthinkable’ to criticize political or religious leaders like Muqtada Sadr or Nouri al-Maliki or the Shiite Ayatollahs in Najaf. Sahar Muhammad further explained that besides the lack of independence confronting journalists, there were still no laws protecting the press freedom and the rights of

⁷¹ Musharbash, Yassin (2004), *Der Spiegel* in Pirouz, Rouzbeh and Nautre, Zoe (2005), *An Action Plan for Iraq: The Perspective of Iraqi Civil Society* (London: Foreign Policy Centre);

journalists and that working conditions for Iraqi journalists had not improved and were still the same as they were under Saddam's regime⁷².

Article 38 of the 2005 Iraqi Constitution was drafted with these notable challenges in mind and it aimed to guarantee press freedom and the rights of journalists. It states that:

The State shall guarantee in a way that does not violate public order and morality:

- (a) Freedom of expression using all means;*
- (b) Freedom of press, printing, advertisement, media and publication;*
- (c) Freedom of assembly and peaceful demonstration, and this shall be regulated by law (Iraqi Constitution 2005).*

Also, Article 40 of the 2005 Constitution notes that:

Freedom of communication and correspondence, postal, telegraphs, electronic, and telephonic, shall be guaranteed and may not be monitored, wiretapped, or disclosed except for legal and security necessity and by a judicial decision (Iraqi Constitution 2005)..

Moreover, Article 42 of the 2005 Constitution states that:

Each individual shall have the freedom of thought, conscience, and belief (Iraqi Constitution 2005).

USAID supported the development of free media in Iraq following the collapse of Saddam Hussein's regime in 2003. Developing an independent media in Iraq was part of a wider project called the Iraqi Civil Society and Independent Media Support Programme (ICSP). ADF was contracted by USAID to implement the ICSP from 16th August 2004 through to 30th June 2007. ADF implemented the media assistance component both directly and, from March 2005 through October 2006, through a

⁷² Ibid;

subcontract with International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX), a self-described international non-profit organisation ‘*providing leadership and innovative programmes to improve the quality of education, strengthen independent media and foster diverse civil society*’⁷³.

The ICSP Independent Media component was designed to strengthen Iraq’s independent media and its independent news and public affairs reporting capacities (USAID 2007). ADF worked with journalism schools to improve the formal training journalists receive and it also trained in excess of 1,000 journalists and media-based workers (USAID 2007). The total number of participants in the workshops and training courses represented 50 percent of the active journalists on the ground in Iraq. Training topics included features such as basic news writing; editorial management, coverage of constitutional processes and elections; specialized journalism (human rights, gender, economic issues, court reporting, and corruption); and professional standards (USAID 2007).

Furthermore, ADF provided technical assistance to the Iraqi Media Network (IMN) in its development to become a public broadcasting network. The IMN was operated by a defence contractor, the San Diego-based Science Applications International Corporation, under a \$108 million contract from the Defense Department (Allawi 2007: 473). The idea was that the IMN would be the cornerstone of Iraq’s new media efforts. ADF also supported reform of the legal and regulatory system through advocacy for sound Public Broadcasting and Freedom of Speech Laws, as well as the adoption of ethical standards by the media (USAID 2007). Institutions for reform, such as *Iraqis for Public Broadcasting* (a media watchdog that monitored broadcasts for fair and objective

⁷³ International Research and Exchanges Board, Support for Independent Media in Iraq. Available from: www.irex.org;

reporting) and the *Iraqi Association for Defending Journalist Rights*, were strengthened in the process. One of ADF's most significant achievements was the establishment of the independent, nonpartisan National Iraqi News Agency (NINA). NINA had a national network of correspondents producing independent, balanced and quality news reports and stories on politics, security, transparency and other information for news clients including radio, television and newspapers. It operates 24 hours a day and it serves as a window on Iraq for international media and their correspondents in Baghdad and the region. ICSP provided significant technical assistance to enhance the management and future sustainability of NINA, as well as its infrastructure and ability to conduct business (USAID 2007).

Another project aptly styled "The Support for Independent Media in Iraq" (SIMI) was supported by a grant from the U.S. Department of State, the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labour. The SIMI project supported Iraqi media outlets, journalists, media managers, and free-press advocates in their efforts to build a sustainable and professional media system⁷⁴. The project provided operational, training, and consulting support to improve NINA and it developed a professional press centre in the Media Department of the Council of Representatives (CoR) which allowed Iraqi journalists to follow breaking news, conduct interviews, and file their reports directly from parliament. In addition, the project developed Iraqi trainers through a Training of Trainers (TOT) program in investigative reporting, election coverage, and a new media resulting in over 270 trained trainers across Iraq⁷⁵.

⁷⁴ International Research and Exchanges Board, Support for Independent Media in Iraq, 2008. Available from: www.irex.org

⁷⁵ Support for Independent Media in Iraq (SIMI). Available from <http://www.irex.org/project/support-independent-media-iraq-simi> (accessed on 12/12/12);

On the surface, it is clear that Iraq's media in the aftermath of the U.S.-led invasion bore no relation or comparison to that which operated under Saddam's rule. Indeed, the U.S. it would seem, played a positive role that helped Iraqis to establish an independent and free media. In the post-Saddam era, the U.S. boasted of a thriving new free press and a diversity of media outlets in contrast to the status of the media during Saddam's rule, where governmental censorship was noticeable and only one political orientation prevailed. Paradoxically however, nowhere in the world are journalists less free to practice their craft without the morbid fear of disastrous personal consequences as in Iraq. The concerns which surround violence negatively affected the jobs of Iraqis and foreign journalists in the aftermath of the 2003 U.S.-led invasion. Freedom House's Country Report on Iraq 2007 argued that *'whilst freedom of expression is protected by the Iraqi constitution and generally respected by the authorities, this freedom has been seriously impeded by sectarian tensions and fear of violent reprisals'*. The report also states that, *'although the Iraqi media are not subject to direct government censorship, violence against journalists has hindered their ability to report widely and objectively'* (Freedom House 2007).

EVIDENCE OF A LACK OF STRATEGIC COOPERATION OR CONVERGENCE AMONGST DEMOCRACY ACTORS

USAID's programme and activities to support and promote free and investigative media in Iraq were not coordinated from a vantage point as diverse democracy actors worked at cross-purposes at the best of times.

According to ADF's final report on USAID's ICSP, the pairing of the media component with the civil society component created unnecessary competition for resources and confusion over the extent to which these two components should interface (USAID 2007). The Report explains that by its very nature, a programme to develop an

independent media needs to foster independence and instil the values of impartiality and independence whilst on the other hand civil society programmes teach Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) how to use the media for expanding their profile, conducting advocacy, and educating the public (USAID 2007). With the media unit housed in the same structure as the civil society units, the Report explains further that there was pressure on the media unit to utilize its contacts to facilitate the connection. This, according to the Report resulted in some cases in the blurring of boundaries because the media programme became focused on “advocacy” for human rights and other civil society functions rather than helping journalists learn the skills to cover civil society as it should cover politics, corporations, religion or government – by being impartial observers and champions of truth (USAID 2007).

Furthermore, and given all that has been said about the Bush Administration’s efforts to advance the independence and freedom of the media in Iraq, the foregoing discussion of the progress made in that direction is seriously questioned by the allegations which strongly suggests that the CPA suppressed alternative voices in the Iraqi media. As it is known, many Iraqi television channels and newspapers took a hostile view of the U.S. occupation of their country in the aftermath of the 2003 U.S. – led invasion. The journalist Robert Fisk points out that, in the aftermath of the war, many sections of the Iraqi media called for a *jihad* against the Americans with some newspapers blatantly publishing untruthful stories about the occupation army, claiming that U.S. soldiers have been involved in distributing pornographic pictures to school girls or taking Iraqi women to the bedrooms of the Palestine Hotel (Fisk 2003b). The U.S.’s occupation of Iraq placed it in a strategic and prime position to sanction Iraqi efforts aimed at building a free media in their country. Fisk argues that Bremer’s CPA sought to stifle and discourage the growth of a free and investigative media by suppressing public opinion

and criticism of the U.S. presence in Iraq. *Al-Jazeera* – along with its rival channel, *al-Arabiya* – were denounced by the U.S. appointed “Governing Council” prompting the Iraqi columnist, Hassan Fattah to remark that:

The council and the interim will be silent for two weeks, throughout much of the Arab world, including Iraq itself. The resistance and the terrorists, meanwhile, will still be able to say what they want. What a perfect opportunity to pour their footage onto the airwaves and capture the hearts and minds of Iraqis desperate for stability and some leadership (cited in Fisk 2003b).

According to Fisk, in the face of public criticism propagated by the Iraqi media, Bremer’s CPA imposed heavy-handed censorship when it listed – through its mouthpiece, the “Iraqi Governing Council” – a series of “do’s” and “don’ts” for all the media which ranged from a prohibition on inciting violence all the way to a ban on reporting on the rebirth of the Baath party or speeches by Saddam (cited in Fisk 2003b). The U.S. censorship of the Iraqi media took the form of the CPA controversially issued Order 14 in June 10, 2003, which prohibited media activities aimed at inciting violence, civil disorder, rioting, or action against Coalition forces or CPA personnel. The order also gave Bremer sole authority to close media organizations. One of the first radio stations closed down by the CPA was *Sawt Baghdad* (Voice of Baghdad) only one month after its launch (Reporters Sans Frontieres 2003). On 12th June 2003 Coalition forces closed down *Sada al-Uma* (The nation’s echo) newspaper in Najaf stating that it incited violence against coalition troops by inviting the people of Najaf to join the Sunni resistance in Ramadi city in Anbar province (Rohde 2003). Also, the CPA ordered the closure of *Al-Mustaqila* (independent) newspaper in July 2003 after publishing an article ‘proclaiming the killing of spies who cooperate with the United States to be a religious duty’ (Freedom House 2004). By far the most publicised and controversial heavy handed display of authority by the CPA was the March 2004 closing of *Al-Hawza*

al-Natiqa al-Sharifa, a weekly newspaper seen as the mouthpiece for the Shiite cleric Muqtada Al-Sadr, on grounds that it incited violence against American forces in Iraq. U.S. forces confiscated the weekly newspaper's last edition together with the editions of a quarterly journal called *al-Mada*. The closure of the newspaper for sixty days led to weeks of violence between Shiite militias and coalition forces (Freedom House, Press Release 2004). Fisk states that Iraqi writers felt at the time that the Bremer "code of conduct" – forbidding "intemperate speech that could incite violence" – was an example of "selective democracy", similar in spirit if not in effect to the censorship under Saddam (Fisk 2003b). Referring to the CPA's Order 14, the journalist Khadhim Achrash lamented that, "*the decision doesn't fit with the U.S. announcement that they came here to liberate Iraq and set up a democratic system*" (cited in Fisk 2003b). According to Fisk, many Iraqi journalists believed that the semi-legal "press syndicate" which took shape in Iraq under Bremer's stewardship was still Baa'thist at root (Fisk 2003b). Veteran network news foreign correspondent Don North who worked for the IMN for almost three months as a senior TV advisor and trainer and who was also hired by the CPA to rebuild the official Iraqi TV Al-Iraqiya, observed that U.S. forces started to visit the headquarters of offending Iraqi newspapers and caused great damage to their property. North went as far as stating that: "*If the Washington Post reported terrorist threats or Bin Laden statements in Baghdad today, it would probably be closed down*" (North 2003).

In addition, and as mentioned earlier, ADF provided technical assistance to the IMN in its development to become a public broadcasting network or public service media outlet like the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). Writing in *The New York Times*, Richard Opel states that the IMN's original goal was to be 'an information conduit' instead, it became 'just rubber-stamp flacking for the C.P.A.' (Opel 2003) because U.S.

authorities could not resist manipulating and tainting the real stories. Allawi also makes the point that the conundrum which confronted the IMN was whether it was an arm of the CPA or a genuine, independent public broadcaster. According to Allawi, whilst the IMN claimed to be modelled on public broadcasting stations in the USA and the UK, in truth it was a mouthpiece for the CPA (Allawi 2007: 154). Indeed, many IMN staff members felt disillusioned as a result of the CPA's overt interference in its media operations and by its apparently double standards. For instance, Don North called Al Iraqiya 'Project Frustration' when he quit in July. North also wrote that:

IMN has become an irrelevant mouthpiece for CPA propaganda, managed news and mediocre programs. I have trained journalists after the fall of tyrannies in Bosnia, Romania and Afghanistan. I don't blame the Iraqi journalists for the failure of IMN. Through a combination of incompetence and indifference, CPA has destroyed the fragile credibility of IMN (North 2003).

North subsequently testified before the U.S. Senate Democratic Policy Committee, stating that Al-Iraqiya had been provided with a 'laundry list of CPA activities to cover' and that CPA officials had informed him that 'we were running a public diplomacy operation' (cited in Margask 2005). Also, Jalal al-Mashta, who first worked as an editor-in-chief of the veteran Iraqi politician and diplomat, Adnan al-Pachachi's newspaper, *al-Nahdha*, was nominated as IMN's head in May 2004, but he resigned after six months due to the lack of support and the CPA's overt influence over IMN (Haner 2004).

The allegations surrounding the Bush Administration's efforts to shape public opinion in Iraq intensified following the emergence of reports in 2005 which accused the Pentagon of negatively influencing the Iraqi print media by providing financial incentives to newspaper editors, to publish supposedly independent articles in fact

written by the U.S. military. As first revealed by the *Los Angeles Times* in December 2005, the U.S. military allegedly paid editors of Iraqi newspapers to publish pro-American stories written by U.S. information troops. The *Los Angeles Times* reported that:

As part of a psychological operations campaign that has intensified over the last year, the [U.S. Information Operations Task Force] had purchased an Iraqi newspaper and taken control of a radio station, and was using them to channel pro-American messages to the Iraqi public. Neither is identified as a military mouthpiece (cited in Mazzeti 2005).

A December 11, 2005 New York Times publication also revealed the existence of the secret Pentagon Military Analysis Programme, which paid Iraqi media outlets to publish articles favourable to the U.S. invasion and occupation. Three years later, the same paper obtained thousands of pages of emails, briefings, tape recordings, and letters that revealed the grand scope of the operation. It reported that the Pentagon had selected retired military officers – who were working as “news analysts” for various television networks and magazines in the United States – to act as a propaganda machine for U.S. policy in Iraq and elsewhere (Ehrenberg 2010:301).

The above alleged wrongdoing was reportedly carried out under a contractual arrangement between the Washington-based government contractor Lincoln Group through its subsidiary company Iraqex, and the U.S. military’s Information Operations Task Force in Baghdad. According to Andrew Buncombe, the Lincoln Group was the recipient of a \$100m (£56m) contract from Donald Rumsfeld’s Department of Defence for allegedly buying space in Iraqi newspapers to place deliberately one-sided stories written by U.S. “psy-ops” troops. Buncombe states that this was happening at a time when the chaos of Iraq “*makes genuine journalism all but impossible and when journalists risk their lives on a daily basis to report the truth*” (Buncombe 2005).

According to former Lincoln employees, under this arrangement, their main task was to take news dispatches, called *storyboards*, which had been written by specially trained psy-ops troops, have them translated into Arabic and then distribute them to the newspapers. They would also deal directly with members of the Iraqi media through something called the ‘Baghdad Press Club’, a group of journalists who were paid to write and publish positive stories. Typically, Lincoln paid newspapers between \$40 and \$2,000 to run the articles as either news or adverts (Buncombe 2005). These revelations created a furore. President Bush was said to be "very troubled" by the news, while on Capitol Hill members of both the Senate and House armed services committees demanded inquiries prompting the Pentagon to launch an immediate investigation (Buncombe 2005). The inquiry, which was not made public, was ordered by Gen. George W. Casey Jr., who served as the Commanding General, Multi-National Force in Iraq from June 2004 to 8th February 2007. The inquiry found that Lincoln did not violate military policy by paying Iraqi news outlets to print positive articles. The inquiry findings did however prompt the Defense Department to introduce new rules to govern such activities.

Whilst General Casey’s investigation and none of the published items reviewed by the Los Angeles Times and New York Times disclosed a point blank connection to the U.S. military, the strong suspicion of masked transgressions or improprieties occurring in a secret military programme that pays Iraqi newspapers to publish information favourable to the U.S. mission triggered some very strong responses from the U.S. Congress. U.S. Senator John Warner, then Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, promised at the time that he would continue to press the Pentagon for more details about the operation after being told by military officials that articles and advertisements placed in Iraqi news outlets by a defence contractor were identified as U.S. government

products (Mazzeti 2005). “*I remain gravely concerned about this situation,*” Warner said after the meeting with Pentagon officials. “*This apparently has got some elements in it that bear closer scrutiny and maybe stopping it altogether*” he added (cited in Mazzeti 2005). Briefed by Warner, Lawrence DiRita, the former special assistant to Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, also acknowledged that U.S. military troops or Lincoln Group employees might have acted improperly. “*I am willing to believe that there were some transgressions along the way, and that’s what we’re trying to figure out,*” said DiRita (cited in Mazzeti 2005). Following the scandal surrounding the Lincoln Group and its subsidiary, Iraqex, Gary Gambill, the former country report analyst for Freedom House who has published widely on U.S. democratization efforts in the Middle East, made the point that:

The most astonishing aspect of the scandal was not the breach of ethics on the part of the U.S. military (which also paid monthly stipends to bonafide Iraqi journalists in return for favourable coverage), but the fact that a very broad cross-section of publications, including independent newspapers that had hitherto earned a measure of international respect, were revealed as willing to publish thinly disguised propaganda for a price (Gambill 2009).

Away from the spotlight, it would seem that there was a lot more to the media scandal in Iraq than was initially reported. Western media reports unravelled the many links and connections between the Lincoln Group and Bush’s Republican Party. Among the lobbyists registered to represent the Lincoln Group was Charles Black, an adviser to Presidents Ronald Reagan and George Bush Sr., and Marlin "Buzz" Hefti, who served as a director at the Pentagon. The Lincoln Group also listed as a partner the Virginia-based private intelligence group WCV3 Security. In 2004, that company's executive vice-president took unpaid leave to produce *Stolen Honour: Wounds That Never Heal*, a film that, at a critical time in the presidential election campaign, condemned the

Democrat John Kerry and questioned his version of events in Vietnam (Buncombe 2005). Furthermore, in September 2005, Lincoln's subsidiary, Iraqex, won a \$6m Pentagon contract to design and execute "*an aggressive advertising and PR campaign that will accurately inform the Iraqi people of the Coalition's goals and gain their support*"(Buncombe 2005). According to the aforementioned 2005 *New York Times* article, Iraqex formed a partnership with another American PR firm called Rendon, famous in Washington for having promoted Ahmed Chalabi and his Iraqi National Congress (INC).

In addition to these stories relating to the Pentagon's covert operations, the Bush administration reportedly attempted to shape U.S. and Iraqi public opinion in other ways, such as with the 2004 launching of a domestically based satellite television channel called *al Hurra*, "the Free One", which broadcast pro-U.S. information exclusively in the Middle East (Ehrenberg 2010:301).

Against this background of alleged wrongdoing and suspicions of U.S. influence in shaping Iraq's media, it can be argued that the good faith efforts by the U.S. State Department and USAID to bolster and promote the professionalism and ethics of the Iraqi media and carry the banner of media freedom and democracy, were discreetly undermined by the Pentagon. This supports the argument that U.S. government agencies pursued competing and conflicting agendas in their formulation of the 'democratisation project' with perplexing and perverse results. The Iraqi writer and novelist, Iqbal Hassoon al-Qazwini endorses this point when she accused the U.S. authorities of following '*their own agenda, paying lip service to the concept of a proper public broadcasting system, while doing what they feel is good for the Coalition, not for the Iraqi people*' (Al-Qazwini 2004).

Respect for Human Rights

Until its fall in 2003, Saddam Hussein's regime murdered, tortured, and caused the disappearance of many thousands of Iraqis suspected of or related to persons suspected of opposition politics and a variety of other activities. After the overthrow of the Ba'thist regime, the CPA encouraged the incorporation of human rights principles during Iraq's constitutional and legal reconstruction leading to the adoption of the TAL document which expressly prohibited torture and other cruel human or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 37 of the 2005 Iraqi Constitution incorporated the TAL's human rights safeguards and it states that:

- (1) the liberty and dignity of man shall be protected;*
- (2) No person may be kept in custody or investigation except according to a judicial decision;*
- (3) All forms of psychological and physical torture and inhuman treatments are prohibited. Any confession made under force, threat, or torture shall not be relied on, and the victim shall have the right to seek compensation for material and moral damages incurred in accordance with the law (Iraqi Constitution 2005).*

Human rights awareness and education was also treated as a cross-cutting theme interwoven throughout USAID's Civil Society Programme. ADF incorporated the issue of human rights awareness and education in civil society, civic education, women's advocacy, anti-corruption and media components. In the latter half of its contract, ADF created an ICSP management unit for human rights. Human rights protections were not well understood by many Iraqis, including public officials, and the number and severity of human rights violations increased with the rising of insecurity in the aftermath of the U.S. liberation of Iraq. As a result, ICSP strengthened human rights CSOs using

training, technical assistance and forums as a means of institutional strengthening, skills enhancement, expanding understanding of human rights as a concept, advancing knowledge of specific topics, and developing increased levels of joint action. Under ICSP, CSOs undertook expanded actions such as massive public education campaigns to educate the Iraqi public and government institutions about human rights and also to advocate human rights, including the rights of children and detainees. These public education campaigns included workshops, mobile theatre, posters, banners, art shows and festivals. More focused advocacy actions targeted the Iraqi security sector, including police and prison officials and employees of the Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Defence. ICSP Human Rights staff and CSO implementing partners made successful efforts in different regions to raise police awareness of human rights, developing partnerships with police departments in Basra, Mosul, Kirkuk, Hilla, Karbala, Diwaniyah, and elsewhere. ICSP also established a strong working relationship with the Ministry of State for Human Rights and Parliament's Committee on Human Rights. ICSP provided technical assistance and guidance to these institutions, including assisting the Ministry of Human Rights in the development of a draft law which would establish an independent Human Rights Commission according to the Paris Principles for national human rights institutions (USAID 2007:5-6 & 15).

Notwithstanding the Bush Administration's efforts to strengthen and clarify human rights guarantees, the status of human rights in Iraq is one of the most controversial issues that critics of the Bush administration have relied upon to dismiss the U.S.'s push for democratic advancement in that country. The evidence supporting the contradictions between the Bush administration's rhetoric claims of promoting human rights in Iraq and its practices in that country became irrefutable following the release in late 2004 of the first photographs showing U.S. military personnel humiliating, torturing, and

otherwise mistreating detainees at the infamous Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq. Dick Cheney reflects on that fateful day on 10th May 2004, when he went with President Bush to the Pentagon to view photos that had recently been made public, as well as some that hadn't been released, of American soldiers abusing Iraqi detainees at Abu Ghraib prison. Cheney describes the photos in his memoir as deeply disturbing. He reflects further that the behaviour recorded in them was cruel and disgraceful and certainly not reflective of U.S. policy (Cheney 2011:420).

In his book *Chain of Command: The Road from 9/11 to Abu Ghraib*, Seymour Hersh states that the United States committed human rights violations including torture of detainees in Iraq in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. Hersh refers to an internal U.S. Army report written by retired Major General Antonio M. Taguba – best known as the Taguba Report - which reviewed the torture perpetrated towards detainees by U.S. soldiers in the Abu-Gharib prison in Iraq. The report concluded that the U.S. is guilty of horrible violations of human rights contrary to its obligations under the Geneva Convention and the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment (“CAT”). With reference to the Taguba report, Hersh outlines the following human rights violations perpetrated by US forces:

breaking chemical lights and pouring the phosphoric liquid on detainees; pouring cold water on naked detainees; beating detainees with a broom handle and a chair; threatening male detainees with rape; allowing a military police guard to stitch wound of a detainee who was injured after being slammed against the wall in his cell; sodomizing a detainee with a chemical light and perhaps a broom stick; and using military working dogs to frighten and intimidate detainees with threats of attack, and in one instance actually biting a detainee (Hersh 2004:22).

The Human Rights Watch report “*The Road to Abu –Ghraib*” 2004 also argues that after President Bush declared the end of major combat in Iraq in May 2003, more than 120,000 Iraqis were taken into custody by U.S. forces and detained for weeks or months. The U.S., according to the 2004 report, employs coercive methods designed to extract information from detainees. These methods include holding detainees in painful stress positions, depriving them of sleep and light for prolonged periods, exposing them to extremes of heat, cold, noise and light, hooding and depriving them of all clothing (Human Rights Watch 2004). An Amnesty International Report published in 2006 entitled - “*Abu Ghraib torture victims still seeking redress*” - argues that the U.S.-led coalition forces detained thousands of people after the invasion of Iraq in March 2003. According to the 2006 Report, most of these people were interned for over two years whilst others were released without an explanation or apology after spending months in detention (Amnesty International 2006). Furthermore, another report of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) notes that the main human rights violations in Iraq include “*brutality against protected persons upon capture and initial custody, sometimes causing death or serious injury. The ICRC’s report also points out that psychological coercion was used during interrogation to secure information*” (ICRC 2004). In addition, Amnesty International report on Iraq published in 2007 confirms that “there were frequent allegations that U.S. forces committed human rights violations against Iraqi civilians, including unlawful killings”. According to the Report, in December 2006:

Four US soldiers were charged with unpremeditated murder and faced trial before a military court. The charges related to the deaths of 24 men, women and children in Haditha, north of Baghdad. In November 2006, a US soldier pleaded guilty before a military court to raping and killing Abeer Qasim Hamza, a 14

year old girl. He was sentenced to life imprisonment (Amnesty International 2007).

The documentary evidence and the visual images of human rights atrocities committed by U.S. soldiers in Abu – Ghraib prison had a profound effect on the credibility of the U.S.’s freedom agenda in the Middle East. The photographic evidence relating to human rights atrocities perpetrated by U.S. soldiers in Abu-Ghraib was circulated globally and it caused the U.S. administration much embarrassment. Overnight, the U.S. became synonymous with torture and humiliation and it lost its credibility, already suspect in the eyes of many Arabs, as a staunch and committed proponent of democratic advancement in Iraq and the entire region. In the executive summary and the conclusions of the Committee’s report of its inquiry into the treatment of detainees in U.S. custody, Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman, Democrat Senator Carl Levin from Michigan made the salient point that:

The abuse of detainees in U.S. custody compromised our moral authority and damaged both our ability to attract allies to our side in the fight against terrorism and to win the support of people around the world for that effort (Levin 2008).

Condoleezza Rice shared Levin’s views in her memoir. She stated:

[T]he few people responsible for those acts became, for some, the public face of U.S. military forces. It was a stain that should never have touched them but did, and regrettably the image of the U.S. soldier around the world became associated with the depravity of Abu Ghraib (Rice 2011: 274).

Rice goes on to say:

We never fully recovered from Abu Ghraib, which quickly became muddled in the press – and perhaps in people’s minds – with the detention facility in Guantanamo, Cuba, and the administration’s broader detention and interrogation policies (Rice 2011: 274).

The former U.S. Congressman John Patrick “Jack” Murtha, Jr., member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Pennsylvania’s 12th district (1974 – 2010) also announced:

*We are not going to recover from this damage. This one incident has destroyed our credibility in Iraq and in all the Arab world*⁷⁶.

The late Edward Moore “Ted” Kennedy, the former senior Senator from Massachusetts and member of the Democratic Party (1962 – 2009) declared on the floor of the United States Senate:

*Shamefully, we now learn that Saddam’s torture chambers reopened under new management – U.S. management*⁷⁷.

Rumsfeld states in his memoir that: “*For some in the United States and around the world, Abu Ghraib was a metaphor. The pictures from the prison had come to symbolize the war many had come to oppose*” (Rumsfeld 2011: 547). He argued that critics expanded their attacks by taking the inexcusable acts at the Abu Ghraib prison as the basis of a systematic critique of the Bush administration’s war policies. An article in *The New Yorker*, citing anonymous sources, asserted that the abuses were part of official and systematic coercive interrogation methods⁷⁸. These charges were repeated by others. “*What happened at the prison, it is now clear, was not the result of random acts by a few bad apples,*” stated Al Gore. According to Gore, “*It was a natural*

⁷⁶ Tom Curry, “Will Rumsfeld Survive Abuse Scandal?” MSNBC, 6th May 2004 - cited in Rumsfeld 2011: 546;

⁷⁷ Edward Kennedy statement, “The Prisoner Abuse Resolution,” 108th Cong., 2d sess., Congressional Record, vol.150, no. 64, May 10, 2004, p. S5058 - cited in Rumsfeld 2011: 546;

⁷⁸ Seymour M. Hersh, “Torture at Abu Ghraib,” *The New Yorker*, 10th May 2004 – cited in Rumsfeld 2011:776;

*consequence of the Bush administration policy*⁷⁹. *The Economist* went as far as placing a picture of a detainee on its cover under the headline “*RESIGN, RUMSFELD.*” Similar calls came from the *New York Times*, the *Boston Globe*, and Democratic members of Congress⁸⁰.

Notwithstanding the above charges against his office, Rumsfeld points out that after twelve nonpartisan independent reviews and investigations of Defense Department detainee policies did not unearth evidence that abuse had been encouraged or condoned by senior officials in the Defense Department – military or civilian. (Rumsfeld 2011: 552 & 777).

EVIDENCE OF A LACK OF STRATEGIC COOPERATION OR CONVERGENCE AMONGST DEMOCRACY ACTORS

In the immediate aftermath of the Abu Ghraib scandal, the Bush Administration sought to portray the abuse as an isolated incident, the work of a few “bad apples” acting outside the scope of their authority and duties. On May 4, 2004, Rumsfeld, in a formulation that would be utilised repetitiously by U.S. officials, described the Abu Ghraib scandal as “*an exceptional, isolated*” case (Human Rights Watch 2004). In a nationally televised address on May 2004, Bush also spoke of “*disgraceful conduct by a few American troops who dishonoured our country and disregarded our values*” (cited in Human Rights Watch 2004).

According to Rumsfeld, the Abu Ghraib atrocities were the senseless crimes of a small group of prison guards who ran amok in the absence of adequate supervision (Rumsfeld 2011: 545). Dick Cheney also states that one of his greatest regrets about Abu Ghraib is

⁷⁹ Al Gore, remarks, New York University, New York, 26th May 2004 – cited in Rumsfeld 2011:776.

⁸⁰ Rumsfeld 2011: 776;

the focus it put on a relatively small group whose actions were in such marked contrast to the deep and enduring commitment to duty and honour that he had observed time and again in the men and women of America's military. According to Cheney, the wanton abuse committed by those few soldiers did lasting damage to America's image, but they do not represent the United States or the men and women who defend it (Cheney 2011: 422).

Despite claims by Rumsfeld to be "stunned" by abuses in Abu Ghraib, and that these were an "an exception" and "not a pattern or practice", Hersh argues that the scandal of Abu-Ghraib was not limited to the acts of U.S. soldiers that committed crimes against humanity on Iraqi detainees but represented a strategy of coercion and torture employed by Bush and his Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld in their war on terror (Hersh 2004:22). Also in the aforementioned Committee's report of its inquiry into the treatment of detainees in U.S. custody, Senator Carl Levin and Ranking Member Republican John McCain from Arizona blamed U.S. officials, mainly, Rumsfeld, for the mistreatment and physical abuse carried out by U.S. forces on detainees in U.S. custody. The report concluded inter alia:

The abuse of detainees at Abu – Ghraib in late 2003 was not simply the result of a few soldiers acting on their own. Interrogation techniques such as stripping detainees of their clothes, placing them in stress positions, and using military working dogs to intimidate them appeared in Iraq only after they had been approved for use in Afghanistan and at Guantanamo. Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld's December 2, 2002 authorization of aggressive interrogation techniques and subsequent interrogation policies and plans approved by senior military and civilian officials conveyed the message that physical pressures and degradation were appropriate treatment for detainees in U.S. military custody.

*What followed was an erosion in standards dictating that detainees be treated humanely*⁸¹.

Furthermore, Amnesty International directed consistent allegations of brutality and cruelty by U.S. agents against detainees towards the highest levels of the U.S. government, including Bush's White House, Rumsfeld's Department of Defense, and the State Department (Amnesty International Press Release 2004). In July 2003, Amnesty International raised allegations of torture and ill-treatment of Iraqi detainees by U.S. and Coalition forces in a memorandum to the U.S. Government and CPA in Iraq. Despite repeated requests, Amnesty International was denied access to all U.S. detention facilities prompting the then Secretary General of Amnesty International Irene Khan to strongly criticize the Bush Administration's commitment to the advancement of human rights in Iraq. Khan stated that:

If the administration has nothing to hide, it should immediately end incommunicado detention and grant access to independent human rights monitors, including Amnesty International and the United Nations, to all detention facilities. The U.S. administration has shown a consistent disregard for the Geneva Conventions and basic principles of law, human rights and decency. This has created a climate in which U.S. soldiers feel they can dehumanize and degrade prisoners with impunity. What we now see in Iraq is the logical consequence of the relentless pursuit of the 'war on terror' regardless of the costs to human rights and the rules of war (Amnesty International Press Release 2004).

Against this background of inexcusable human rights violations carried out by U.S. soldiers in Iraq, it was argued that the well-intentioned efforts by USAID and other U.S. agencies to strengthen and clarify human rights guarantees in Iraq were once again undermined by the Pentagon. This point supports the argument that one of the systemic

⁸¹ Senate Armed Services Committee Inquiry into Treatment of Detainees in U.S. Custody (2008). Available from: www.levin.senate.gov.

problems that impeded U.S. efforts to democratize Iraq and plan for the post-Saddam era was the lack of strategic cooperation or convergence between U.S. agencies tasked with ‘democracy promotion’ on approaches to democratisation ‘on the ground’. The Pentagon it would appear worked at cross-purposes with other U.S. agencies by being in favour of strong arm tactics and aggressive post-war controls. Administrative experience and knowledge of Iraq and its people it would seem, were less important than the crude pursuit of dominance on the ground.

Civil Society Reform

In his presentation to NGO leaders at the Convention Center in Baghdad on February 10, 2004, Larry Diamond, then Special Adviser to the CPA in Iraq, spoke about the role that civil society could play in building and strengthening democracy in the country. He explained that by ‘civil society’, he meant the entire range of organized groups and institutions that are independent of the state, voluntary, and at least to some extent self-generating and self-reliant. This, Diamond stated, included non-governmental organizations like the ones who attended his presentation, and also independent mass media, think tanks, universities, and social and religious groups. Diamond advised his audience that to be part of civil society, groups must meet some other conditions as well. He stated that in a democracy, civil society groups have respect for the law, for the rights of individuals, and for the rights of other groups to express their interests and opinions. He explained that part of what the word “civil” implies is tolerance and the accommodation of pluralism and diversity. Diamond concluded his presentation by asserting that a democratic state cannot be stable unless it is effective and legitimate, and has the respect and support of its citizens. Civil society, he advised further, is a check, a monitor, but also a vital partner in the quest for this kind of positive relationship between the democratic state and its citizens (Diamond 2004).

Before the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, civil society and participatory politics in Iraq was notably under-developed. In June 2004, Oxford Research International (ORI) interviewed 2,912 people across Iraq and the feedback obtained exposed not only the relative under-development of Iraqi Civil Society but also the transformational and developmental difficulties it faced. The lack of trust in government was notable when interviewees were asked ‘*which national leader, if any, do you trust most*’ to which 34 per cent answered ‘*none*’. In response to the question ‘*which political party would you vote for in a national election*’, 41.5 per cent of Iraqis interviewed did not know and 23.8 per cent refused to answer⁸². Toby Dodge makes a similar point and he argues that:

Before the liberation of Bagdad it was impossible to talk about civil society in Iraq.....autonomous collective societal structures beyond the control of the Ba’athist state did not survive. In their place society came to be dominated by aspects of the shadow state, flexible networks of patronage and violence that used to reshape Iraqi society in the image of Saddam and his regime⁸³.

Dodge argues further that:

By the late 1980s, Iraqi society had been effectively atomised, with intermediate institutions, political, economic or social, broken by the military and economic power of the regime. Those societal institutions the regime thought useful were reconstituted under government patronage to serve as vehicles for mobilisation, resource distribution and control. Trade unions and social organisations external to the state were either co-opted or dismantled. Individuals found their welfare and economic needs depended upon their own unmediated relations

⁸² Department of Sociology, University of Oxford, June 2004;

⁸³ Dodge, Toby, testimony before the Committee on Foreign Relations, Committee’s hearing on ‘The Iraq Transition: Civil War or Civil Society?’ on 20th April 2004 – cited in Pirouz, Rouzbeh and Nautre, Zoe (2005) *An Action Plan for Iraq: The Perspective of Iraqi Civil Society*, p.4 (London: The Foreign Policy Centre);

with the state. Put simply, there was no functioning civil society in Iraq before regime change in 2003 (Dodge 2005:46).

Following the liberation of Iraq, and after the post-Saddam transitional government was replaced by Council members elected in January 2005, change seemed evident as there was a rapid proliferation of political and social movements on the ground. Thousands of independent citizen-based organizations sprung up within Iraq to take advantage of the open political and social space afforded by the collapse of the Ba'ath regime. Dodge notes that:

By July 2003 this new space for political action had given rise to at least 140 different interest groups and political parties mobilising popular opinion and lobbying the occupying authorities. In addition, 170 daily, weekly and monthly publications sprung up, giving a platform to the diversity of views that could be openly expressed in post-Saddam Iraq (Dodge 2005:708).

U.S. Army Captain, A. Heather Coyne, who was deployed to Iraq after the 2003 U.S.-led invasion, and who spent fifteen months in Iraq assigned to the CPA as Civil Society Officer for the Baghdad region, similarly noted that after the invasion, Iraqis formed hundreds of new NGOs. According to U.S. Captain Coyne, whilst some NGOs wanted to benefit directly from the donor money, most however, just wanted to be involved in rebuilding the society and to help their fellow Iraqis. Captain Coyne points out that however well-intentioned the majority of Iraqi NGOs were, all were very weak and had no capacity to plan or implement projects which necessitated the U.S.'s capacity building efforts (Coyne 2010:225-237).

The Bush Administration aimed to establish a functioning civil society in Iraq by encouraging and promoting the early signs of its development. The presence of a free, independent and vibrant civil society was seen by the Bush Administration as the key to protecting and maintaining Iraq's anticipated established freedom, liberty and

democracy for generations to come. A United States Department of State Working Group Report entitled “*The Future of Iraq Project: Civil Society Capacity Building*” stated that it is important for Iraqis to start thinking and imagining their country without Saddam Hussein and to set in motion the seeds for a robust, independent and free civil society. The Report argued that:

Freedom, liberty and democracy are noble goals that are only achieved through dedication and struggle by segments of the society that believe in these ideals and are willing to work hard to achieve them. However, achieving freedom, liberty and democracy in a society are dear accomplishment that requires a mechanism in place to protect and maintain, lest lost to political upheaval, ideology competition or worse hijacked by an officer through military coup. The safety valves to prevent the above from happening are embedded in the tenets of a free and independent civil society outside the control of the government, a civil society that is empowered by the people to act as the checks and balance to the government⁸⁴.

Andrew Natsios, the former USAID Administrator (2001 – 2006) and former U.S. Special Envoy to the Darfur region in Sudan (2006 – 2007), argued further that: ‘*If a new democratic ethos is to replace that of autocracy, it must be built from the ground up in Iraq and made part of the ordinary operations of Iraqi society*’ (Natsios 2005).

The reform of civil society in Iraq was addressed by the Bush Administration primarily through USAID’s ‘Iraq Civil Society Programme’ (ICSP). The ICSP was a \$43 million U.S. Government initiative intended to “*promote an informed, sustainable, and active indigenous Iraqi civil society that effectively and responsibly participates within a democratic system of governance*” (USAID 2007). The ICSP was implemented by America’s Development Foundation (ADF) on behalf of USAID from 2004 through to

⁸⁴ United States Department of State, Working Group Report “The Future of Iraq Project: Civil Society Capacity Building”, 09/08/2003;

2007. The project’s objective was to build the organizational and advocacy capacity of CSOs. This was realised through the establishment of four Civil Society Resource Centres (CSRCs) in Erbil, Baghdad, Hillah and Basrah. The CSRCs served as regional hubs for the delivery of training and technical assistance and their work was aimed at helping Iraqi CSOs serve their constituents and mission. Special effort was paid to Iraqi CSOs engaged in civic education, women’s advocacy, media, anti-corruption, and human rights. A small grants fund was reserved for specific actions in support of these issue areas (USAID 2007).

The ICSP reportedly engaged approximately 2,000 Iraqi CSOs, awarded 391 grants worth over \$6 million in small grant support, and delivered roughly 3,600 training and technical assistance sessions reaching over 30,000 CSO members. The project’s awareness raising activities which included forums and regional and national conferences reportedly reached another 13,000 Iraqis of which 38 percent were women (USAID 2007). According to ADF, the ICSP’s impact on Iraqi Civil Society was manifested in the independent actions of Iraqi CSOs in response to training or technical assistance from ICSP resource centers, small grant assistance, or both (USAID 2007).

In March 2006, ICSP officially documented 449 instances of CSOs exercising their right to assembly, awareness raising, and advocacy that is the hallmark of a vibrant civil society within a pluralistic and democratic Iraq (USAID 2007). Furthermore, in its December 2006 bulletin entitled “Top Strategic Accomplishments in Iraq”, USAID published a summary of the ICSP’s accomplishments specific to the targeted issue areas as follows (USAID, Iraq 2006):

Issue Area	Notable Accomplishments
Anticorruption	Supported CSOs lobbying for the addition of 13 anticorruption provisions

	to the Iraqi Constitution
Women's Advocacy	Supported women's rights CSOs lobbying for the adoption of 12 constitutional provisions benefiting women
Human Rights	CSOs developed partnerships with police departments, human rights departments and other government agencies to support the protection of human rights
Civic Education	Assisted CSOs who mobilized citizens to participate in Iraq's constitutional referendum and the electoral processes

To further assist Iraq in building a framework for a democratic and civil society, USAID operated three other major programs for community development in Iraq. These programs, namely, The *Local Governance Programme* (LGP), the *Community Action Programme* (CAP) and the *Civil Society Capacity Building Programme* were all aimed at establishing and strengthening the conditions, institutions, capacity, and legal and policy framework for a democratic local governance system.

Starting off with the LGP, USAID awarded two cost-plus-fixed contracts to the North Carolina based contractor RTI between 2003 and 2005. The RTI is often tasked with the implementation of USAID's international development programmes around the world and it describes itself as an independent, non-profit research organisation offering innovative research and technical solutions to governments and businesses worldwide in the areas of international development, economic and social policy and education and training among other services (Cravens & Brinkerhoff 2013). The first of the two contracts, known as the Local Governance Programme – 1 (LGP1), was awarded to RTI with an effective date of 26th March 2003, to procure and provide technical and other

assistance to strengthen local administrations, civic institutions, and processes in Iraq (SIGIR 2003). According to the USAID Regional Inspector General (USAID/RIG) during its first year of the contract “the local governance programme focused on:

- Restoring basic services through the use of rapid response grants;
- Developing transparent and accountable local and provincial governments by providing technical assistance, and;
- Strengthening civil society organizations by providing training (SIGIR 2003).

In its second year, the LGP-1 programme focused on facilitating Iraq’s transition to a sovereign state, with an emphasis on institutional capacity building to enable local governments to take responsibility for providing services to citizens effectively and efficiently” (SIGIR 2003). The LGP-1 programme ended in May 2005.

The second of the two contracts, known as Local Governance Programme-2 (LGP-2), was intended to build the capacity of representative councils and sub-national offices of the central government ministries to manage more effective, efficient, and responsive customer services. The contract was awarded with an effective date of 9th May 2005 for a base period of two years with three option years. The objectives of the LGP-2 activities were to consolidate gains made during the first LGP-1 from 2003 – 2005, and to continue to work with Iraqis to establish and strengthen the conditions, institutions, capacity, and legal and policy framework for a democratic local governance system. The programme focused on creating the capacity to govern at the provincial and lower levels through the following activities:

- Promote policy reform in support of local governance;
- Support clarification of the roles and responsibilities of different levels of government;

- Promote increased efficiency of local service delivery;
- Assist in the development of regularised mechanisms of citizen participation in governmental decision-making processes;
- Capture learning through systematic study and reflection (USAID, OIG 2009).

In carrying out these activities, LGP-2 focused primarily on training members of provincial and local councils along with other local government officials (USAID, OIG 2009). A set of basic and intermediate training courses were offered to council members. Course titles included among others, Introduction to Council Services, Public Budgeting and Auditing, Strategic Planning, and Government –Media Relationship. In its audit findings the Office of Inspector General reported that the provincial councils benefited from these courses, and that 16 of 18 councils met the relevant functioning criteria. In addition, each of Iraq’s 18 provincial councils had finalized provincial development strategies for use as their provinces’ public investment plans, and 16 of the 18 councils had invested in projects listed in their respective provincial development strategies. The LGP-2’s activities effectively ended on 31st December 2008 (USAID, OIG 2009).

USAID’s other project, the CAP, aimed at giving ‘*Iraqi citizens a voice in decisions affecting their communities*’ by supporting community action groups to first ‘*identify and prioritize local needs*’ and second, to ‘*develop and implement projects that address those needs*’ (USAID Contracts and Grants: Iraq). Under Saddam’s reign, Iraqis experienced the hardships of three wars and harsh economic sanctions. As a result, unemployment levels rose, income eroded, and productivity decreased. This economic decline, coupled with lack of investment, affected the quality and capacity of the provision of social services (Barton & Bathsheba 2003). To aid resolving this problem,

CAP aimed at encouraging Iraqi citizens to become involved in addressing the issues that affect their communities. CAP identified Iraqi community associations and encouraged them to prioritize their needs, mobilize community and other resources, and monitor project implementation. This process provided a vehicle for empowering communities, building community cohesion, and providing evidence that the U.S. is committed to improving Iraqi lives (USAID, OIG 2005). The CAP project was managed by USAID/Iraq's Democracy and Governance Office and it was implemented under USAID's Strategic Objective 4.2, "Increase Citizen Participation in Local Government Decision-Making" (USAID, OIG 2005).

To carry out the CAP effort in Iraq, USAID drew on five of its traditional allies delivering development and relief programs around the world: Mercy Corps, International Relief and Development, Agricultural Cooperative Development International and Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance (ACDI/VOCA), Cooperative Housing Foundation (CHF) International, and Save the Children. USAID awarded cooperative agreements to each of the five organisations (USAID 2003).

With funding from USAID, CHF International (now renamed Global Communities) began operating in Iraq in June 2003 and initiated its efforts in three governorates in southern and central Iraq namely, Babil, Karbala and Najaf because these regions were identified as areas in Iraq most affected by decades of oppression, conflict, poverty, and systematic neglect, which had left their infrastructure in an advanced state of decay (CHF 2008). CHF International focused on building the capacity of civil society groups as a grassroots movement for democracy. Its programmes aimed to promote the voices of women, youths and other minority groups by organising them to communicate with local government offices and request services and facilities (CHF 2008). CHF International operated USAID's CAP project in three stages. CAP I was contracted out

to a number of organisations and ran its course from May 2003 to late 2006, early 2007, depending on the organisation. CAP II ran from September 2006 to December 2008 and CAP III operated from the final months of the Bush administration (October 2008) through to March 2010 (Hill 2011:151). According to CHF International, the main highlights of its involvement in the first two phases of CAP (from May 2003 to June 2008) are as follows:

- \$55.4 million – the value of CHF’s USAID funded CAP projects;
- 639 community associations formed and trained in the CAP process;
- 845 projects completed;
- 90,000 Iraqis actively participated in democratic activities and processes;
- 11.3 million Iraqis directly benefited from CHF CAP projects (51% women) (CHF 2008).

Notable CHF International CAP success stories include: the Solid Waste Removal Project in Babil which not only created a highly mechanized solid waste management facility but also 1,350 jobs; and the vocational training courses in Najaf which included a electrician’s training course that helped some of its participants to open their own electrical workshops and electrical equipment shops (CHF 2008).

Also through USAID’s funded CAP, Mercy Corps partnered with local communities in Iraq to strengthen Iraqi civil society and to promote sustainable development (Mercy Corps in Iraq). Mercy Corps CAP – funded programmes in south-central Iraq provided community and local government leaders with the requisite skills to ensure that the needs of communities are prioritized and met through projects they themselves initiated and implemented. These projects included building infrastructure, raising women’s

awareness, providing support for people with disabilities, and celebrating community achievements (Mercy Corps in Iraq).

ACDI/VOCA also undertook quick impact projects which it implemented through a participatory process whereby town meetings were called with community leaders to decide the most pressing needs. The types of projects implemented by ACDI/VOCA were mainly focused on supply of material, rebuilding, repairs or renovations to schools, public halls, provision of water, electricity – geared towards the rebuilding of public infrastructure that had suffered from years of deprivation and/or the effects of war (USAID ICAP 2003). Notable ACDI/VOCA CAP success stories include the building of the Khabat Cultural Centre, and the provision of water supply to the Sosokan village, three kilometres from Tawella, in the region of Sulaymaniyeh in September 2003.

In the case of the construction of the Khabat Cultural Centre, when ACDI/VOCA asked the community members of Khabat, a town located 50 km west of the city of Erbil in northern Iraq, about their greatest development needs; they identified a cultural centre for women and youth as a top priority. A small town with a population of about 45,000, Khabat is very conservative; women are not allowed to mix freely with men. In addition, local youth had no place to come together to participate in constructive activities. To deal with both of these issues, the community members requested ACDI/VOCA's assistance in constructing a community centre. ACDI/VOCA provided the materials and labour for the construction of a centre with one large hall and six smaller rooms. The community members and local government also contributed to the project by providing the land, electricity and sewage connections and by fully furnishing the centre (USAID ICAP). Furthermore, with USAID backing, ACDI/VOCA programmes helped Iraqis attain financial independence by setting up their own

businesses and creating job opportunities. For example, through the Marla Ruzicka Iraq War Victims Fund, small-businesses which were started and established helped change the lives of innocent war victims, people whose stories are often inspiring (USAID CAP).

Reflecting on the U.S.'s above efforts to promote and develop Iraq's civil society, it would seem that the various initiatives - albeit being well-intentioned and beneficial to some extent - had a limited and patchy localised impact. Indeed, the overall achievements of USAID'S CAP projects could perhaps be best summarized in the following words from Save the Children's Semi-Annual Report of June 2004:

These often small victories – some actually quite major – were instrumental for instilling confidence and a sense of accomplishment in the communities to encourage their further commitment and growth. Although often an untidy process, it can be said that it did achieve the purpose – communities were recruited, projects were completed, needs were met (USAID ICAP 2006).

These views expressed in Save the Children's Semi-Annual Report were endorsed by U.S. Captain Coyne. According to Coyne, CAP was very successful as it resulted in the development not only of individual leaders, but of small groups of people who organised themselves around a project (Coyne 2010:225-237). In essence, this was indeed the main goal of USAID's CAP project. Having people work together toward a common goal ensured that the targeted community as a whole felt accountable for the programme. Through the participation process, decisions were made about which projects were a priority. Community members thus had a vested interest in completing the planned projects and at the same time they felt a sense of ownership over what they had built or created. Because of their engagement at every stage of the process, community members learned what democracy and citizenry means in practice.

Finally, USAID's third project, the *Civil Society Capacity Building Programme* (CSCBP) was designed to help new grassroots organizations develop and implement projects of their own. The CSCBP helped the other CAP programs to move to the next level of organisation, namely to apply for donor funds and to start work on the next highest priorities identified by their communities (Coyne 2010: 225). The project aimed at shifting power away from the central government to the people through empowering their private establishments.

The above 'well-intentioned' initiatives however did not engineer a civil society in Iraq that could support the development of democratic institutions. The U.S.'s promotion of civil society reform was dependent on it being embraced by the main stream of Iraqi society. As a result of the decades of brutal suppression of opinion under autocratic rule, Iraqis remain understandably suspicious of the state. A culture of 'rights and duties' towards the state failed to blossom as structural problems such as sectarian and ethnic violence made it difficult for Iraqi society to tackle the instability that affects the political and social environment. Against this background, U.S. efforts aimed at gaining the trust of the Iraqi populace were largely unsuccessful. Captain Coyne explains that the major reasons for the U.S.'s failure to gain local support were: the lack of follow-up efforts to what were good initial efforts including a lack of continued support for newly established institutions such as local councils and women's groups; failure to translate rebuilding funds into visible, long term institutional development; failure to publicise good works performed by the local councils; failure to tie nuts-and-bolts reconstruction projects to a larger vision of progress; poor targeting of funds among other reasons (Coyne 2004). Thus, we see that traumatised by decades of oppression and wars, and then torn apart by invasion and occupation, Iraqis struggled to rediscover a shared national narrative.

EVIDENCE OF A LACK OF STRATEGIC COOPERATION OR CONVERGENCE AMONGST DEMOCRACY ACTORS

The U.S.'s efforts to bolster Iraqi's civil society also revealed how U.S. agencies on the ground worked at cross-purposes with each other and also with the local populace.

Captain Coyne makes the point that, whilst the three major community programmes run by USAID in Iraq namely, the LGP, the CAP and the CSCBP were all run from the same USAID department, they were not co-ordinated or synchronized and they not only failed to reinforce each other, but in fact undermined each other (Coyne 2010: 225-237).

Rahman Aljebouri, Senior Programme Officer at the NED endorses this view and he explains that whilst it is the case that the Bush administration's efforts to strengthen Iraq civil society did seem well-intentioned, a great variety of U.S. projects on the ground in Iraq were designed with a specific focus notwithstanding the fact that Iraqi society as a whole required an overall coordinated strategy to enable it to accommodate the host of U.S. democratic initiatives being implemented⁸⁵. Aljebouri adds that the U.S. embarked on a campaign to democratize Iraq but failed to firstly provide the essential landscape for such a governance system to flourish. He states that the democratic system like any political system requires certain prerequisites to be in place for it to prosper and that the U.S. faced insurmountable obstacles and challenges because of this lack of vision in Iraq. Crucially, Aljebouri points out that there were instances where Iraqis themselves would identify a specific need or project that would benefit their communities but the U.S. would choose to implement its own version of that need or project. By way of an example, Aljebouri notes that Iraqis would complain about not having basic necessities such as healthcare or housing but the U.S. would emphasise the need to urgently hold elections. He points out that on the occasions when U.S. implementers consulted Iraqis

⁸⁵ Aljebouri, R. (2013). Interview on 21st November 2013. NED office, Washington D.C.

about their specific needs, the need once identified and realised became meaningless because Iraqis were unable to sustain and maintain the project following the immediate withdrawal of U.S. funding upon completion. According to Aljebouri, this was the major problem underlying the vast majority of U.S. initiatives on the ground in Iraq which aimed at fostering a vibrant civil society. He states that Iraqis were left deflated when U.S. funding which set up, for example, infrastructure, was withdrawn after the project had been completed. Iraqis could not maintain and sustain completed projects because of funding withdrawal. In the end, Aljebouri argues that the U.S.'s good work came to nothing and was largely in vain in most instances.

The issue of sustainability of the programmes implemented impacted negatively on U.S. efforts to strengthen Iraq civil society. To this Captain Coyne adds that the U.S. military in particular had little experience in sustainable development (Coyne 2010:225-237). Coyne explains that, Military Commanders were looking at the immediate needs of the communities, and attempting to address these needs straight away. For example, Coyne states that U.S. implementers would identify a community that needed health care and decide to build a clinic. Soon they would have a shiny brand new clinic but empty shelves and no doctors, because they had not built or factored in operating costs for medicines or figured out how to hire doctors to work there (Coyne 2010). Aljebouri also explains that Iraqi NGOs experienced budgetary deficits which impacted on the feasibility of their programmes. He points out that, some U.S. implementers of democracy had little expertise in budgeting and contracting. Aljebouri describes a situation such as where U.S. implementers of democracy would make a contract with a local Iraqi NGO to refurbish a school. However, because of the security situation, the project which was awarded a grant of, for example, \$100,000 would spend the bulk of

that money to secure the safety of its personnel who would perhaps be required to travel to and fro and in safety to the designated project site. Securing the safety of personnel, Aljebouri points out, would for instance require the purchase of an armoured vehicle or Humvees and/or the hiring of security staff. For a project that was awarded a small grant these additional project expenses significantly reduced the amount that was needed to be spent to enhance the prospects of success of the intended programme or initiative. Again, it would seem that operating costs for ancillary expenses were crucially neglected. In this way, Aljebouri concludes that U.S. projects on the ground in Iraq were not providing long term solutions to the basic problems and needs of the Iraqi people as the bulk of them were short-sighted and uncoordinated at the best of times⁸⁶.

In addition to the above observations, Coyne also refers to the Commanders Emergency Response Program (CERP) which aimed to provide a better sense of the systemic shortcomings brought about by the U.S.'s implementation capability and strategy on the ground in Iraq. CERP was created to tackle the problems associated with the 'slow-thinking- civilian-bureaucracy' and it was funded to carry out community projects independently. Coyne explains that CERP received a lot of credit for being flexible and having an immediate impact, but three major problems bedevilled it.

First, the military has little expertise in sustainable development. According to Coyne, Military Commanders were looking at the immediate needs of the community, and attempting to address these needs straight away. They were in such a hurry to help that they did not prepare the analysis that might have indicated that what was actually

⁸⁶ Aljebouri, R. (2013). Interview on 21st November 2013. NED office, Washington D.C.;

needed was needed. In this way, Coyne states that the projects were not really helping solve problems.

The second problem Coyne identified was that the units that were running CERP also had little expertise in budgeting and contracting. Put altogether, Coyne states that there was no integration with other projects to create a sense of a building momentum. CERP's projects were all ad hoc, unconnected to each other or to any sense of a well thought-out process of decision-making. Coyne states that Iraqis simply saw a few improvements here or there, which only fed a mentality of "what have you done for us lately", instead of creating local involvement in and ownership of community development activities (Coyne 2010:228). According to Coyne, the various branches of the U.S. government consistently bought the wrong items, empowered the wrong people, and sent the wrong messages. Coyne's view is that the lack of expertise on the ground was exacerbated by the overreliance on the military, which did not have the necessary skill sets or even the appropriate organisational culture for such a mission (Coyne 2010:228).

Rumsfeld also states in his memoir, that he learned later from his senior military assistant, retired U.S. Navy admiral Edmund P. Giambastiani, that Bremer was uncomfortable with CERP. According to Rumsfeld, CERP was an enormously valuable way to allow American military commanders across Iraq to help fund small-scale development projects in their area of responsibility (AOR). The local military commanders knew which projects were needed to earn local support to make headway against the insurgency. Rumsfeld claims that U.S. military commanders were convinced the funds were often more valuable than bullets, but Bremer refused to allocate CERP

money to the military from the Saddam government's seized assets (Rumsfeld 2011: 512).

CONCLUSION

Bureaucratic infighting, particularly between the U.S. State Department and Defense Department, was most evident in post-war planning of the reconstruction of Iraq. The Bush administration was split internally regarding post-war planning as key members of the Administration competed with one another to advance their preferred policy positions. The formation of bureaucratic politics created animosities between Bush's top brass causing them to disregard the perspectives of each other.

Aided by a checklist comprising of the essential facets of the liberal democratic order, this chapter sought to evaluate the effectiveness of the Bush Administration's efforts to engineer sustainable 'Western style' liberal democracy in Iraq in the aftermath of the 9/11 suicide attacks and the 2003 Iraq war. Within this context, research results significantly show that one of the systemic problems that impeded U.S. efforts to democratize Iraq in the aftermath of the 2003 Iraq war was the lack of strategic cooperation or convergence between U.S. agencies on approaches to democratisation on the ground. The discussion that unfolded along these lines underscores the argument that U.S. government agencies and the plethora of non-governmental organizations and private organizations tasked with democracy promotion in Iraq often worked at cross-purposes with at times competing and conflicting agendas which produced perplexing and perverse results. The audit reports issued by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) together with the primary research material advanced – in the form of political memoirs, biographic material, interviews and the views and opinions of U.S. personnel

on the ground - paint a sobering picture of uncoordinated planning and execution on the part of the U.S. government agencies, NGOs and private organizations tasked with democracy promotion in Iraq. Against this background, the results of this analysis also show that, whilst the Bush administration's efforts to foster democracy was widely implemented by a range of governmental and non-governmental actors in Iraq, these efforts yielded far less than the 'democratic revolution' that was promised.

The next chapter will focus on the U.S.'s efforts to export 'Western style' liberal democracy to Lebanon. The ensuing discussion will aim to show that notwithstanding the non-aggressive approach the Bush administration pursued in Lebanon through 'democracy support' or 'democracy assistance', its efforts still fell short of the 'high flown' rhetoric which accompanied the shift in U.S. foreign policy toward democracy promotion in this country in the aftermath of 9/11 and the 2003 Iraq war.

CHAPTER FOUR

‘U.S. STYLE DEMOCRACY’ PROMOTION IN LEBANON POST - 9/11 AND THE 2003 IRAQ WAR

Background

The shift in Washington’s policy towards Lebanon in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the 2003 Iraq war demonstrated the new salience of promoting democracy in the Arab world.

Indicators of change in U.S. foreign policy toward Lebanon became apparent around 2003 – 2004, on the heels of Syria’s inclusion by Bush into his administration’s list of countries which made up the so-called ‘Axis of Evil’. From this perspective, U.S. foreign policy toward Lebanon was determined by Washington’s perceptions of the role played by Syria in that country as well as the Bush administration’s declared commitment to isolate and apply pressure on states that sponsor terrorism to force them to change their behaviour. In its *Patterns of Global Terrorism 2002 report*, the U.S. State Department lists Syria as one of seven states supporting terrorism⁸⁷.

Thus, whereas the U.S. had avoided intervening in Lebanese politics between 1992 and 2003, U.S. foreign policy toward Lebanon witnessed a change between 2004 and 2008, when the administration of George W. Bush expressed enthusiastic support for Lebanon’s freedom and sovereignty away from the political clutches of Syrian domination. For instance, during his visit to Damascus on 3rd May 2003, Colin Powell

⁸⁷ U.S. State Department Report, *Patterns of Global Terrorism*, Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, 30th April 2003 – accessed via <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2002/pdf/index.htm> - on 01/01/14;

presented then Syrian President, Bashar al-Assad with a long list of U.S. demands aimed at, among other things, loosening Syria's grip on Lebanon⁸⁸.

It did seem that it was only when the United States acknowledged its inability to elicit Syrian cooperation in the 2003-led invasion of Iraq and support for Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories that it decided to depart from its policy of ignoring Syria's continuing dominance of Lebanon's political system and for the first time took significant diplomatic measures to express its concerns with the situation in Lebanon. This argument complements the view of most commentators who argue further that U.S. pressure on Syria was part of a more ambitious strategy to reshuffle the geopolitics of the Middle East and neutralize Israel's Arab adversaries⁸⁹. Writing in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Warren Strobel makes the point that the Bush administration considered a "*post – [Saddam] Hussein pivot that would make Syria – also on the U.S. list of terrorist-sponsoring states and a long time enemy of Israel – the next focus of U.S. action in the region*" (Strobel 2002). The Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act introduced by the U.S. Congress on 12th April 2003 were believed to be part of this strategy.

The U.S.'s foreign policy shift towards the Syrian presence in Lebanon after 9/11 and the 2003 Iraq war climaxed with the promulgation of the UNSC Resolution 1559 on 2nd September 2004, which effectively called for Syria to withdraw from Lebanon or to face international sanctions. Commenting on UN Security Council Resolution 1559, the U.S. representative asserted that Syrian actions in Lebanon:

⁸⁸ See "The Road to Damascus." *Foreign Affairs*. Available from: <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/59898/steven-simon-and-jonathan-stevenson/the-road-to-damascus>; - accessed on 01/01/14;

⁸⁹ See John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt (2007) "*The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*", New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux: 229 -79;

had made a 'crude mockery' of the principle of a free and fair presidential electoral process, [and that] the Syrian government had imposed its political will on Lebanon and had compelled the Cabinet and Lebanese National Assembly to amend its constitution and abort the electoral process by extending the term of the current President by three years. Clearly, the Lebanese Parliament had been pressured, and even threatened, by Syria and its agents to make them comply (UN Press Release, SC/8181).

The assassination of Rafik Hariri on 14 February 2005, only a few months after the passing of UNSC Resolution 1559 was another key event that ultimately led to Syria's exit from Lebanon. Hariri's death catalysed an unexpected popular uprising in Lebanon. In the aftermath of Hariri's death, approximately one million people from all parts of Lebanon raised their voices by going to the streets of Beirut to demonstrate for a free and independent Lebanon as they had been waiting for many years for the opportunity to end Syrian occupation. Those protesting demanded to know the truth behind Hariri's assassination as they blamed Syria for his murder. Following Hariri's assassination, the American ambassador to Syria was recalled home for "consultations". Assistant Secretary of State for the Middle East, William Burns, who attended Hariri's funeral, declared that his death "*must give renewed impetus to achieving a free, independent and sovereign Lebanon*" (US Department of State 2005). Burns also called for the immediate and complete implementation of UNSC Resolution 1559 and specifically the complete and immediate withdrawal by Syria of all its forces from Lebanon.

The push for Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon was much welcomed by the Bush administration. In his remarks at a news conference at the White House on Wednesday, 16th March 2005, Bush stated that:

Our policy is this: We want there to be a thriving democracy in Lebanon. We believe that there will be a thriving democracy but only if Syria withdraws not only her troops completely out of Lebanon but also her secret service organisations, intelligence

organisations – not secret service – intelligence organisations. I am concerned and the world should be concerned that the intelligence organizations are embedded in a lot of government functions in Lebanon, and there needs to be a free election. And we will – this Government will work with elected leaders of a free, truly free Lebanon, and looking forward to it⁹⁰.

The next day, Paula J. Dobriansky declared in her speech on 17th March 2005 at the opening of the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva that:

In Lebanon and elsewhere in the Middle East, the people have raised their voice for a true democracy with free and fair elections and a sovereign nation free from foreign occupation and influence. There is now enormous momentum for democracy to reach every corner of the globe (Dobriansky 2005).

The following month President Bush declared in an interview with the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation on 18th April 2005 that:

There's a movement toward freedom around the world and the Lebanese people have made it clear that they want to be free of Syrian influence; they want there to be free elections. And the United States stands squarely with the people of Lebanon⁹¹.

Following the Bush Administration's public support for democratic reform in Lebanon, the U.S. sought to practise democracy promotion and implement its brand of democracy in this country in a more modest, realistic and incremental way. Compared to Iraq, the U.S.'s investment in democracy promotion in Lebanon was insignificant as democracy assistance towards this country paled in comparison to the huge military, security and reconstruction effort in post-Saddam Iraq.

⁹⁰ Accessed via <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/> - on 12/01/2015;

⁹¹ George W. Bush interview with the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation on 18th April 2005 in the Map Room at the White House – accessed via <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=73663> on 13/12/2014;

PROMOTING DEMOCRACY ON THE GROUND IN LEBANON

In Iraq, the Bush Administration went as far as to involve direct American military engagement to install democratic government in that country. Bridoux and Kurki argue that the use of violence to remove Saddam Hussein from power and build a new democratic Iraq constituted an extreme example of democratic intervention (Bridoux and Kurki 2014: 54-55). Indeed, Iraq was an extraordinary instance of democracy promotion unlikely to be repeated. In contrast, and to achieve its objective to implant democracy in Lebanon, the Bush Administration pursued a “bottom-up” approach by funding international organizations to help strengthen the bases for gradual democratic transition. Different U.S.-funded projects focused on engaging civil society, political party training, and other strategies such as promoting female political participation. In Iraq, the Bush administration participated in an internationally controlled democratisation effort which pursued ‘top-down’ institutional and civil society reforms. Operating as an occupying force in Iraq afforded the U.S. far more leverage to introduce its brand of liberal democracy in that country. This was not the situation in Lebanon where the political tools used by the Bush Administration to promote democracy were explicitly non-coercive in nature. According to Bridoux and Kurki, these are arguably the same tools most states and international organizations use today to promote democracy – all the more so since the Iraqi intervention (Bridoux and Kurki 2014: 54 - 55). Thus Lebanon, with all of its peculiarities, represented perhaps the germane approach the U.S. would pursue to promote democracy abroad. In line with this approach, the U.S. deliberately operated in a multilateral and collaborative manner with local democracy support actors on the ground in this country.

In correlation with the U.S.'s democratic efforts in Iraq, the discussion in this chapter will aim to prove the disconnection between the Bush administration's rhetoric and its efforts to promote democracy in Lebanon. Accordingly, this chapter will examine the particular dimensions of the gap between the U.S. rhetoric and the evidence of political reform taking shape on the ground in Lebanon. To do this, and to correspond structurally with the examination of the U.S.'s efforts in Iraq, the discussion to follow will employ the use of a checklist comprising of the essential elements constituting a liberal democratic political system.

Free and Fair Elections

The right of every Lebanese citizen to hold public office and contest elections is guaranteed by Article 12 of the Lebanese Constitution promulgated on May 23, 1926 (hereinafter referred to as the '1926 Constitution') (as amended by the constitutional law of November 9, 1943) which states that:

Every Lebanese shall have the right to hold public office; no preference shall be made except on the basis of merit and competence, according to the conditions established by law. A special statute shall guarantee the rights of civil service in the departments to which they belong (Lebanese Constitution 1926).

During the tenure of the Bush Administration, elections and political participation took place in Lebanon in 2005. The holding of parliamentary elections on time, free of Syrian influence, became the Bush Administration's rallying cry for democracy in Lebanon following Syria's withdrawal from that country in the aftermath of the Lebanese 'Cedar revolution' in 2005. Against this backdrop, the U.S. pressed for swift parliamentary elections. Speaking at the National Defense University in Washington on 8th March 2005, President Bush welcomed free and fair elections in Lebanon. He stated

that the Lebanese people had the right to determine their future free from domination by a foreign power and to choose their own parliament free of intimidation⁹².

The effect of the political mobilisations in Lebanon, and the Bush Administration's urgent call for the formation of a new Lebanese government, resulted in the first elections held in Lebanon without a Syrian military or intelligence presence in over three decades.

Leading up to the 2005 election days, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) sought to promote a democratic electoral process and to encourage citizen participation through domestic election monitoring. NDI's objectives were aimed at strengthening the capacity of Lebanese civil society organizations to monitor the integrity of the electoral process and effectively communicate their findings to the Lebanese public and international community and also to foster regional cooperation in support of democratic development by encouraging the establishment of a regional election monitoring network. To achieve these objectives, NDI issued a \$200,000 sub-grant to The Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (LADE)⁹³ to increase civil society's ability to observe elections and increase public confidence and participation in the electoral process (CEPPS/NDI 2005). NDI's DC-based senior sub-grants

Administrator travelled to Beirut from 3rd May to 8th May to finalize the terms of the

⁹² Transcript of Bush Speech on Terrorism, Tuesday, 8th March 2005 – accessed via <http://edition.cnn.com/2005/ALL/POLITICS/03/08/bush.transcript/>

⁹³ The Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (LADE) was founded in Lebanon by a number of activists in the public sector on 13th March 1996. LADE describes itself as a civil, independent and non-profit organization specialising in elections and how closely they are linked to democracy. The association is concerned with monitoring the elections in their different forms as well as studying the electoral systems and laws according to the international democratic electoral standards, especially standards that guarantee free, fair and transparent elections. LADE advocates the introduction of the desired reforms to the electoral law by exerting pressure on the political parties to adopt the standards needed to ensure democratic elections – accessed via <http://www.lade.org.lb/LADE/About.Us.aspx> on 13/13/2014;

agreement between NDI and LADE and to assist LADE in understanding and developing efficient mechanisms to implement NDI accounting procedures. NDI's sub-grant allowed LADE to open and run 9 regional offices throughout the country and refurbish its Beirut headquarters (CEPPS/NDI 2005). Through NDI assistance, LADE was able to professionalize a part of its all volunteer operations during the elections in order to ensure a quality monitoring effort as well as timely response to developments and external queries. LADE also coordinated the efforts of 37 organizations under the umbrella of the Coalition for the Observation for Elections (CLOE) (CEPPS/NDI 2005). Furthermore, LADE trained 1,150 observers by the end of the election cycle and deployed on average 500 observers on each election day (CEPPS/NDI 2005). In addition, LADE trained 4,000 candidate and party agents (CEPPS/NDI 2005). Through sample templates of observation tabulation sheets provided by NDI, LADE was able to develop observer forms to facilitate their reporting and analysis. LADE produced maps using districting software purchased with the help of NDI, and produced all components of the observers' toolkits and uniforms for election days (CEPPS/NDI 2005). Following each round of elections, LADE drafted preliminary statements of observer findings and disseminated them via their website, which was updated and maintained with the help of NDI (CEPPS/NDI 2005). NDI's sub-grant to LADE allowed the organization to purchase news broadcasts, bulletins, and political programs on television, radio, newspapers for media monitoring and analysis (CEPPS/NDI 2005).

The 2005 parliamentary elections in Lebanon also marked the first time international observers officially observed an electoral process in Lebanon. Furthermore, it marked the first time national observers were accredited to observe election activities in Lebanese polling stations. Because it was the first time electoral authorities in Lebanon

had to manage international and national observers on this scale, the Ministry of Information requested international assistance in coordinating observer related activities. IFES provided the services of an Election Observation Specialist to the Director General of the Ministry of the Interior. The specialist was available to assist the Director General with planning the accreditation of observers, providing information to observer groups, and coordinating the activities of different observer groups. On each of the four election days, the Election Observation Specialist, together with IFES staff members, accompanied senior Ministry of Interior officials on visits to the governors responsible for implementing the elections in the various electoral districts (IFES 2005). During these visits different issues relating to the implementation of elections in the various electoral districts, including coordination of observer activities were discussed (IFES 2005).

From early April to late May 2005 IFES also conducted an electoral “mapping” mission in Lebanon to enable the development of an effective follow-on electoral assistance strategy in a political environment where none had previously been provided (IFES 2005). IFES deployed a five member team of elections and regional experts in the areas of election law, management and administration, security, representation systems design, voter education, communications and outreach, delimitation of constituency boundaries, Lebanese history and political processes (IFES 2005). They conducted an assessment and provided a detailed analysis of the current political situation in Lebanon. The electoral mapping mission was followed by the Lebanon Electoral Assistance Program. One of the objectives of the Lebanon Electoral Assistance Program was to rapidly respond to the changing electoral environment and in turn address changing voter education needs. After the first round of voting, IFES met with various Lebanese and international groups, including USAID, NDI and IRI, to discuss voter education

needs for the subsequent rounds of voting (IFES 2005). Following these discussions, it was agreed that voter education messages during the final weeks should remind voters to make an independent choice, based on the credibility of candidates, and discourage illegal practices such as vote selling and buying (IFES 2005).

The organizations also endorsed IFES support for a public awareness campaign focusing on the need to make the process accessible to disabled citizens. The Lebanese Physical Handicapped Union (LPHU), in conjunction with the Youth Association of the Blind, had launched an awareness campaign, “My Rights” to inform disabled persons, targeted groups, and the general public, of the rights of disabled persons in the electoral process (IFES 2005). The campaign generated considerable media attention and drew the attention of top government officials. It resulted in significant improvements in accessibility to polling stations and accommodation of the needs of the disabled during the second set of elections in the South. Upon instruction from the Ministry of the Interior, governors responsible for elections in the southern electoral districts cooperated with the LPHU to identify polling centres where voters with handicaps were due to vote, and ensured that those polling centres were more accessible for voters with disabilities, for instance by installing ramps to ensure wheelchair access (IFES 2005). IFES’ support not only enabled the LPHU to continue its campaign into the final round of the elections, but allowed them to produce billboards, posters, and brochures. The brochures include guides for media, observers, and polling staff on various accessibility issues for the disabled. Materials produced by LPHU were used after the election to educate other organizations and political leaders within the country on the rights of the disabled. These materials were also made available to organizations in the region wishing to launch similar advocacy campaigns (IFES 2005).

IFES support also enabled the Lebanese Transparency Association (LTA)⁹⁴ to augment its election-related media campaign with three television spots emphasizing the independence of voter choice and discouraging corrupt practices, such as vote-buying (IFES 2005). The television spots, which aired on three networks -- LBC, New TV, and Future reached 98% of the country and were broadcast during the most critical point in the electoral process (IFES 2005). The message for the first video clip was, *“It’s your right to know your right.”* This message aimed to stress the need for voters to make informed choices. The message for the second spot was, *“Hold responsible those who are responsible.”* The ad featured people laughing with a voiceover saying, *“They laughed at you in the past. Don’t let them laugh at you now.”* The message aimed to stress the need to hold elected officials accountable (IFES 2005). The final spot in the series showed voters with price tags on their foreheads. It was a dramatic anti-vote selling, vote buying visualization. The spots were intended to be used for future elections as the messages they sought to drive home will continue to be relevant (IFES 2005).

Whilst being pronounced free and transparent, the 2005 elections were notably governed by old laws which violated international standards and provided room for manipulation, voter intimidation, and fraud (Safa 2010). Despite taking place after the Syrian military withdrawal, these elections were governed by an electoral law – the Syrian 2000 Elections Law which manipulated the size of electoral districts and the formation of candidate lists - that reflected heavy Syrian influence. After the 2005

⁹⁴ The Lebanese Transparency Association (LTA) was established in May 1999 and it is the first Lebanese NGO which focused on curbing corruption and promoting the principles of good governance through civil society. The organisation resorts to all appropriate means to fight corruption, improve the quality of life, and encourage civil society to take measures towards transparency and accountability – see <http://www.transparency-lebanon.org>;

elections, a National Commission on Election Law was established and presided over by former minister Fouad Boutros, with the aim of drafting extensive electoral reforms. In September 2008, Lebanon's parliament passed the new election law which introduced a number of safeguards against election fraud such as:

- the establishment of a permanent and much improved voter register; the use of indelible ink to limit the possibility of multiple voting;
- the provision of transparent ballot boxes and serialised envelopes for ballots and the provision for storing ballots rather than burning them directly after counting;
- the prohibition of campaigning materials or activities in the immediate vicinity of polling centres and the establishment of a full day without campaigning through the media directly before election day;
- the right of election observers to accompany the electoral process to ensure transparency; and the decision to count blank ballots rather than qualify them as invalid to allow for valuable recognition of citizens who use their vote to express their dissatisfaction (EU Election Observation Mission 2009).

There were also some other achievements phased in by the new election law such as the holding of elections on only one day; more transparency for campaign financing, and an attempt for equal media coverage for all the political contestants, as well as the creation of a Supervisory Commission (EU Election Observation Mission 2009).

Overall, the conduct of the 2005 elections in Lebanon paved the way for the country's 2009 electoral contest. The 2009 elections, whilst not held during the period of the Bush administration's tenure in office, benefited from the improved legal framework provided for by the new election law. These elections were hailed as an important step

in the democratic development of the country as it confirmed Lebanon's commitment to democracy (Council of EU, Press Release 2009). The Bush administration was credited with this political development in Lebanon's electoral history. *The New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman stated with reference to the 2009 elections that: "*We must give credit where it is due for this triumph of free elections (and of Washington): Without George Bush standing up to the Syrians in 2005 – and forcing them out of Lebanon after the Hariri killing – this free election would not have happened. Mr. Bush helped create the space. Power matters*"⁹⁵.

Despite the apparent success of the 2005 parliamentary elections, which gave a majority to a large, anti-Syrian bloc known as the Bristol Gathering⁹⁶ or the March 14 Coalition Movement, headed by Saad Hariri, the son of the late Rafik Hariri, the electoral system resulted in a mixed government, which complicated its ability to adopt clear policies (CRS 2011: 19). For the first time in Lebanese history a member of Hezbollah made up the 24-member cabinet which also contained 15 members of Hariri's bloc. The prospects for stability in Lebanon were soon jeopardized by months of protracted political crises and renewed sectarian violence (CRS 2011: 19). From mid-2007 until the agreement in Doha in May 2008, Lebanon's political environment was paralyzed by a number of interrelated disagreements (CRS 2011: 20).

⁹⁵ Thomas L. Friedman, *Ballots Over Bullets*, published 9th June 2009 – accessed via <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/10/op.....ofriedman.html> - on 12/11/2013;

⁹⁶ So-called because the March 14 Coalition held its meetings at the old Bristol hotel in Beirut where prior to Lebanon's 'Cedar Revolution', the opposition gathered and voiced its disapproval over incessant Syrian involvement in Lebanese domestic affairs;

Free and Investigative Media

Freedom of the press and expression is guaranteed under the Lebanese constitution and enshrined in law (Media Sustainability Index 2009).

Article 13 of the 1926 Constitution (as amended) states that:

The freedom to express one's opinion orally or in writing, the freedom of the press, the freedom of assembly, and the freedom of association shall be guaranteed within the limits established by law (Lebanese Constitution 1926, Art.13).

The Lebanese press was restricted and censored on a large-scale during Syrian military and political domination of Lebanon. According to a 2005 report on the country by Reporters Sans Frontieres (RSF) a spate of politically motivated attacks on journalists restricted press freedom in Lebanon to a large extent⁹⁷. Lebanon plummeted 52 places in the media watchdog's global index of press freedom during the period 2002 to 2005. It was ranked to 108th out of 164 nations listed by RSF in its published 2005 annual report⁹⁸.

The Bush administration aimed to guarantee press freedom and investigative media in Lebanon through its launch in 2001 of the AMIDEAST – administered, USAID-funded Transparency and Accountability Grants (TAG) Program which provided small grants to local NGOs and media organisations. The cooperative agreement which USAID awarded to AMIDEAST to administer the TAG Program ended in December 2010 (AMIDEAST TAG Project 2001 - 2010), a year after Bush left office. The main grant

⁹⁷ IRIN Middle East – Beirut, Lebanon, 18th October 2005 “LEBANON: The press is free but journalists remain intimidated by violence” – accessed via <http://irinnews.org/report/25603/lebanon-the-p on 17/01/2015>;

⁹⁸ Ibid;

recipients during the period 2001 – 2010 included organisations such as *Al Sohof* - a journalism review dedicated to press freedom and investigative reporting - which received a grant from the TAG project for the period 2001 – 2002 to develop and launch a bi-lingual, bi-weekly electronic magazine to encourage press accountability, transparency, and investigative reporting (AMIDEAST TAG Project 2001 - 2010). The *Tewfik Mishlawi* organisation⁹⁹ also received a grant from the TAG project for the period 2001 – 2002 to launch the “Lebanon Journalism Review” (LJR), a critical media publication, which aimed at monitoring the Lebanese press, and encourage improved accuracy, fairness, balance, and unbiased reporting by the local news media. As a media watchdog, LJR highlighted areas within the sector which needed improved transparency, accountability, and professionalism (AMIDEAST TAG Project 2001-2010). Another grant from the TAG project was awarded to Lebanese Center for Civic Education (LCCE) organisation¹⁰⁰ for the period 2007 – 2008 to train senior young journalism students at the Faculty of Media of the Lebanese University on the principles of investigative journalism. After their training, the students were provided a space to publish their investigative articles in *Annahar* newspaper. The trained students also organized investigative journalism days at the Lebanese University campus to share the

⁹⁹ The Tewfik Mishlawi organisation is named after the late Tewfik Mishlawi, a veteran naturalised Lebanese journalist who was well known and respected in the Middle East and the Arab world. Mishlawi served as deputy editor in chief of Lebanon’s only English language daily newspaper, the *Daily Star* from 1963 – 1973. He also worked as Special Middle East correspondent for the *Wall Street Journal* and the *London Times*. He died on 24th January 2012.

¹⁰⁰ In its Mission Statement, The Lebanese Center for Civic Education (LCCE) states that its mission is to spread the concepts of democracy, human rights and responsible citizenship in the Lebanese society.

LCCE builds on the postwar experiences of finding common grounds, acceptance of the other, conflict resolution in a diverse society, and building coalitions as a foundation for a new democratic experience – see <http://www.lccelebanon.org>;

lessons learned from the training and investigations with their colleagues (AMIDEAST TAG Project 2001 - 2010). *The Daily Star* newspaper was also awarded a grant by the TAG project during the period 2005 – 2006 to produce a weekly one-page supplement under the title of “Reform and Transparency” both in their printed and on-line editions for a period of 26 weeks (6 months). The supplement covered and investigated the Lebanese economic, social, judicial, and governmental sectors news (AMIDEAST TAG Project 2001 – 2010). Furthermore, in recognition of the fact that the role of the Lebanese media as a provider of information is critical in the fight against corruption and transparency and accountability, the Daily Star newspaper was again awarded a grant by the TAG project during the period 2009 – 2010 to produce a weekly one-page section in both its printed and on-line editions for a period of 20 weeks (6 months), serving as a cornerstone for transparency, accountability, and good governance issues in Lebanon. The subjects covered by the Daily Star’s weekly publications focused on non-political, non-polarized issues in the period prior to the 2009 parliamentary elections – such as education, environment, access to health, women’s empowerment and rights, specific consumer concerns, protection of minorities, migrant workers, electoral reform etc. (AMIDEAST TAG Project 2001 - 2010).

Notwithstanding the Bush Administration’s efforts to promote free and investigative media in Lebanon, reports surfaced in August 2007 accusing the U.S. of inhibiting and negatively influencing freedom of speech in Lebanon contrary to its rhetoric to foster the same in that country. As reported by Asad Abu Khalil, a popular Lebanese-American blogger and professor at Stanislaus University in California in his blog, *The Angry Arab News Service*, the U.S. used its political humanitarian tool, USAID, to coerce Lebanon's English newspaper *The Daily Star* into writing pro-government articles. According to the *Angry Arab blog*, the Daily Star had published a damning,

investigative report by Lysandra Ohstrom on the gigantic real-estate group, Solidere. Solidere is Rafik al-Hariri's legacy – a company that rebuilt one section of Beirut (the predominantly Sunni Downtown Beirut) allegedly through monopoly, extortion, illegal confiscation of private property, exploitation of workers (underpaid Syrian labour). Ohstrom's article explored Solidere's alleged unscrupulous transactions aimed at enriching Hariri. With Saad Hariri (son of Rafik) becoming the leader of Lebanon's governing pro-American March 14 alliance, the Bush administration, according to *Angry Arab blog* became quite passionate about victory in Lebanon and pursued every possible policy to ensure that Saad Hariri was on top of the other political contestants. The *Angry Arab blog* claims that Bush's insistence to hold onto the March 14 alliance was conspicuously reiterated when he declared that he would target anyone that tried to undermine the Siniora Government. So when *The Daily Star* published an article charging Hariri's Solidere with corruption, the U.S. was quick to respond. The *Angry Arab blog* quotes USAID as stating that “*the USAID funders have requested that the coming pages (of Daily Star examiner section) all have their writers submit synopses of their pieces for vetting ... the political agenda of the donors is not to undermine the Fouad Siniora government*”¹⁰¹. USAID's stance underlined a serious issue in another perceived episode of American double standards. The *Angry Arab blog* concluded that after seven years of ‘erratic’ rule by George W. Bush that the American agenda in the world was never about freedom or democracy. It goes on further to lament that, there is something particularly cynical about using a grant to develop investigative journalism and micro-manage a paper's coverage¹⁰².

¹⁰¹ Available from: <http://angryarab.blogspot.com> (accessed on 19/01/2012).

¹⁰² Ibid;

Allegations of U.S. double standards and hypocrisy aside, and despite being constitutionally unhindered in principle, freedom of the press and expression is subject to restrictive regulations in Lebanon. For instance, article 9 of Press Law of 1962 which states that journalism is “the free profession of publishing news publications” also forbids publishing of material deemed dangerous to national security or insulting to high –ranking Lebanese officials (Media Sustainability Index 2009)¹⁰³. An additional statute, the Audiovisual Media Law passed in 1994 (No. 382/1994) effectively restricted ownership of television and radio stations to influential politicians and heads of communities despite being designed to prevent political parties from owning TV networks. Almost all Lebanon’s major television stations are owned by or affiliated with a particular party or politician. Al Manar, is operated by Hezbollah; OTV is allied to General Michel Aoun’s Free Patriotic Movement; NBN is linked to the Shia speaker of parliament and leader of the Amal party, Nabi Berri; MTV is owned by Lebanese politician Gabriel Murr, who is allied to the March 14 coalition; and the Lebanese Broadcasting Company (LBC) is allied to the Lebanese forces and the March 14 coalition (Media Sustainability Index 2009). Indeed, Lebanon’s nine private television stations and fifteen daily newspapers are divided among the various political factions and cater to their respective needs.

There is also an unspoken rule against directly attacking religious leaders in the media for fear of inciting sectarian conflict, though that does not prohibit media outlets from

¹⁰³ Post – George W. Bush era, and on 11th August 2010, Hassan Allek, a reporter for the daily *Al-Akhbar*, was detained and interrogated by the Lebanese defence ministry for alleging in a story that certain Lebanese government and military officials were cooperating with Israel intelligence services. Allek’s detention and interrogation was a flagrant violation of media law and it prompted *Reporters Without Borders* to raise doubts about a readiness to respect the rule of law on the part of those who are supposed to uphold it in Lebanon – see article entitled “*Al-Akhbar* Reporter Held And Interrogated Illegally By Defence Ministry”, 13th August 2010 – accessed via <http://en.rsf.org/al-akhbar-reporter-held-and-13-08-2010 - on 11/02/2015>;

using a sectarian discourse or having a political agenda¹⁰⁴. While the media broadcast law bars incitement and sectarianism, television stations aired divisive, polarizing coverage during street clashes in February 2007 and January and May 2008. The 1994 law imposes onerous licensing fees and taxes on media outlets, making the establishment of new ones a costly enterprise. According to the Media Sustainability Index report of 2009, the state-owned channel Tele Liban is underfunded and dull, faring poorly in competition with private stations. The state media do not receive preferential legal treatment, but they rarely challenge the ruling authorities (Media Sustainability Index 2009).

Furthermore, whilst freedom of speech is guaranteed in the constitution, there is no freedom of information law, meaning journalists must rely on leaks and anonymous sources. The 1994 Media law allows censorship of pornography, threats to national security, political opinion, and slander against religion (Safa 2010). Individuals are free to criticize the government but are legally prohibited from publicly criticizing the president and foreign leaders (US Department of State 2010). In 2008, the General Directorate of State Security prohibited the circulation of three films and censored one foreign publication (cited in Safa 2010). Impunity for violent attacks against journalists also presented a serious problem. Investigations into the 2005 car-bomb assassinations of prominent journalists Gebran Tueini and Samir Kassir, and an attack the same year that left television journalist May Chidiac permanently injured have made no headway in recent years, and no arrests have been made (Safa 2010). Lesser attacks, such as the beating of journalists from one political camp at their opponents' rallies, went unpunished. Journalists are restricted from reporting from some Hezbollah-controlled areas without the group's explicit permission and oversight. In addition, during the May

¹⁰⁴ Ibid

2008 factional fighting, opposition forces shut down two newspapers, a magazine, a television station, and two radio stations; the outlets resumed operation shortly afterward following a public outcry (Safa 2010). Internet access is unrestricted, though the government reportedly censored some internet sites such as pornographic and religiously provocative websites. In June and July 2010, the government applied libel and defamation laws to Internet communication for the first time and arrested four men for setting up a Face-book page critical of President Suleiman (US Department of State 2010).

The law provides for freedom of assembly and association, but the government sometimes restricts these rights in practice. The Ministry of Interior required prior approval for rallies and it sometimes did not grant permits to groups that opposed government positions. There were however no reported cases of security forces abusing demonstrators or failing to prevent violence against them (US Department of State 2010).

The law also provides for freedom of association, but the government imposed limits on this right. The law requires every new organization to submit a notification of formation to the Ministry of Interior, which then issues a receipt. The ministry sometimes imposed additional and inconsistent restrictions and requirements and withheld receipts, turning the notification process into an actual approval process. In some cases the ministry sent notification of formation papers to the security forces to initiate inquiries on an organization's founding members. Organizations must invite ministry representatives to any general assembly where members vote on bylaw amendments or positions on the board of directors. The ministry must then validate the vote or election; failure to do so could result in the dissolution of the organization (US Department of State 2010).

Respect for Human Rights

Article 8 of the 1926 Constitution (as amended) states that:

Individual liberty is guaranteed and protected by law. No one may be arrested, imprisoned, or kept in custody except according to the provisions of the law. No offense may be established or penalty imposed except by law (Lebanese Constitution 1926, Article 8).

USAID-funded Transparency and Accountability Grants (TAG) Programme provided small grants to local NGOs and media organisations to clarify and strengthen human rights guarantees in Lebanon. The Association for the Defense of Law and Liberties (ADDL) organisation received a grant from the TAG project for the period 2003 – 2004 to produce and distribute information guides on freedom of expression and freedom to publish and the launching of an interactive website which were all aimed at achieving better accountability and transparency in various legal rights associated with human rights (AMIDEAST TAG project 2001-2010). Another TAG project launched in 2003 – 2004 under the auspices of Center for Middle Eastern Strategic Studies (CESMO)¹⁰⁵ aimed at promoting and enforcing implementation of important clauses in the “Convention on the Rights of the Child” in North Lebanon to children (AMIDEAST TAG project 2001-2010). Justice without Frontiers (JWF)¹⁰⁶ also received a grant from the TAG project for the period 2005 – 2006. JWF organised outreach activities and lectures in the regions to discuss specific issues that are important to the public and hold

¹⁰⁵ In its Mission Statement, CESMO states that it implements specific development and education to democracy projects aimed at reaching a more equalitarian and fair society – see <http://www.cesmo.org/index.php> - on 13/11/2013;

¹⁰⁶ JWF is a secular, non-political, non-profit, non-governmental, juristic civil organisation incorporated in November 2005 and headquartered in Beirut. It focuses on the principles of Human Rights and international humanitarian and criminal law, and works towards prosecuting violators and supporting victims at the national, regional, and international levels – see <http://justicewithoutfrontiers.org> – accessed on 13/11/2014;

a major launching event during the International Human Rights week (AMIDEAST TAG project 2001-2010). Justicia Foundation for Development and Human Rights (JFDHR)¹⁰⁷ was another TAG grant recipient during the period 2009 – 2010. By expanding its “Equal Under the Law: Know Your Rights” project, JFDHR aimed to help citizens gain access to legal information on key issues. This project authored, published and distributed three new legal rights guides: “Municipal Rights”, “Bank Customer Rights”, and “Children’s Rights”. The assumption was that providing Lebanese citizens with knowledge about their rights under Lebanese law would better empower citizens (AMIDEAST TAG project 2001-2010).

Notwithstanding U.S. efforts to foster a culture of respect for human rights in Lebanon, Human Rights Watch report entitled “*Lebanon’s 2009 Parliamentary Elections – A Human Rights Agenda*”, states that Lebanon’s human rights record is abysmal, with torture and ill-treatment remaining a serious problem in Lebanese detention facilities and jails (Human Rights Watch, Lebanon 2009). The 2009 Report states that documented cases of torture and ill-treatment range from security forces beating a janitor suspected of theft during his interrogation, to members of the intelligence services subjecting individuals, suspected of membership in violent Islamist groups, to systematic torture over many days.

While Article 401 of the Lebanese Penal Code criminalizes the use of violence to extract confessions, the Report stated that the Lebanese judiciary rarely, if ever, investigate or prosecute allegations of torture (Human Rights Watch, Lebanon 2009).

The 2009 Report acknowledged however that since 2007, Lebanon had taken some

¹⁰⁷ Justicia Foundation for Development and Human Rights (JFDHR) is a non-profit Lebanese Civil Society organisation. Its main objective is to protect and promote human rights. It also works to empower marginalized individuals, strengthen democracy and encourage good governance – see <http://www.justiciah.org> – accessed 13/11/2014;

steps to counter torture such as granting the International Committee of the Red Cross access in February 2007 to all Lebanese detention facilities, including those run by the Ministry of Defense (Human Rights Watch, Lebanon 2009). Such a pro-active step was quickly followed by the Internal Security Forces' (ISF) creation in February 2008 of an internal unit tasked with monitoring human rights violations by its members.

Furthermore, on December 22, 2008, Lebanon ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OPCAT) (Human Rights Watch, Lebanon 2009).

Notwithstanding these evidences of commitment towards the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, the 2009 Report pointed out serious concerns that the fate of OPCAT will be similar to that of the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) which Lebanon ratified in 2000. Despite being a signatory of CAT, Lebanon has yet to comply with its provisions. Already, Lebanon has failed to set up a 'national preventive mechanism' to help prevent torture through visiting and monitoring places of detention. According to OPCAT, signatories have one year following ratification to enact a national preventive mechanism (Human Rights Watch, Lebanon 2009:6).

Religious Freedom

The Lebanese Constitution provides for freedom of religion and the freedom to practice all religious rites provided that public order is not disturbed. The Constitution requires the state to respect all religions and denominations and guarantee respect for the personal status and religious interests of persons of every religious sect (US State Department report 2010).

Article 9 of the 1926 Constitution (as amended) states that:

There shall be absolute freedom of conscience. The state in rendering homage to the God Almighty shall respect all

religions and creeds and shall guarantee, under its protection the free exercise of all religious rites provided that public order is not disturbed. It shall also guarantee that the personal status and religious interests of the population, to whatever religious sect they belong, shall be respected (Lebanese Constitution 1926, Art.9).

According to the U.S. Department of State, International Religious Freedom Report 2010 on Lebanon, the Bush Administration actively promoted religious freedom with the Lebanese Government as part of its overall policy to promote human rights. The 2010 Report confirms that the U.S. Embassy in Beirut was tasked with advancing this goal through contacts at all levels of society, public remarks, embassy public diplomacy programs, and the funding of relevant projects. The Report states that the Bush Administration supported the principles of the 1989 Ta'if Agreement, and that embassy staff regularly discuss the issue of sectarianism with political, religious, and civic leaders (US Department of State report 2010). The U.S. Ambassador and embassy officers met regularly with leaders of religious communities and regularly discussed matters related to religious freedom and tolerance (US Department of State report 2010).

Notwithstanding the positive statements enunciated in the State Department report it is difficult to imagine how the Bush administration was able to effectively reach out to all levels of Lebanese society in its efforts to foster religious freedom in Lebanon. Indeed, it is highly unlikely that the U.S. embassy staff would have engaged in consultations with Hezbollah. The U.S. government considers Hezbollah to be a global terrorist threat and a menace to the stability of the Middle East region. The two are sworn enemies who insist they will never work together. Indeed, the US State Department designated Hezbollah a foreign terrorist organisation in October 1997.

Whilst the Lebanese government generally respects religious rights, there are however some notable restrictions. First, the country's constitutional provision for apportioning political offices according to religious affiliation can be viewed as discriminatory as it is based on confession rather than merit. The constitution declares equality of rights and duties for all citizens without discrimination or preference but stipulates a balance of power distributed among the major religious groups. The 1989 Ta'if Agreement, which ended the country's 15 – year civil war, reaffirmed the arrangement stipulated by the 1943 “National Pact” for the distribution of political power at both the national and local levels of government. The political establishment is reluctant to change this “confessional” system, because politicians perceive it as critical to the country's stability. The Ta'if Agreement calls for the eventual elimination of political sectarianism in favour of “expertise and competence” but little progress has been made in this regard (US Department of State report 2010).

Some religious groups do not enjoy official recognition, such as Baha'is, Buddhists, Hindus, and unregistered Protestant Christian groups. These groups are disadvantaged under the law in that their members do not qualify for certain government positions. For example, a Baha'i could not run for parliament as a Baha'i candidate because there is no seat allocated for the confession, nor could such an individual hold senior positions in the government, since these are also allocated on a confessional basis. Representatives from the lesser represented, or “minority”, Christian groups, such as Syriac rite Christians, stated that the government discriminated against them because no one from their religious classification had been appointed a minister. While they have served in some high-level civil service positions, such as director general, these groups stated that most positions were filled by Maronites and Greek Orthodox. These groups further

stated that while they estimated their population at 54,000, they were allocated only one representative in parliament (US Department of State report 2010).

Gender rights (specifically women's rights)

Article 7 of the 1926 Constitution (as amended) states that:

All Lebanese shall be equal before the law. They shall equally enjoy civil and political rights and shall equally be bound by public obligations and duties without any distinction (Lebanese Constitution 1926, Art.7).

The major vehicle through which the Bush Administration tried to promote this aspect of its democratization policy in Lebanon was the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI)¹⁰⁸. On the heels of the publication of the United Nations Development Programme's *Arab Human Development Report 2002*, President Bush argued that: "*No society can succeed and prosper while denying basic rights to the women of their country*" (cited in Ottaway 2004:3). Colin Powell echoed the sentiment, arguing that: "*Until the countries of the Middle East unleash the abilities and potential of their women, they will not build a future of hope*" (cited in Ottaway 2004:3).

From 2007, MEPI sought to empower Lebanon's women through projects totalling over \$42 million (US Embassy Beirut, Press Release 2009). Through its partnership with Catholic Relief Services (CRS), MEPI provided support to a group of Lebanese NGOs - including the Lebanese Council to Resist Violence against Women (LECORVAW) - working to empower women through training and advocacy. LECORVAW's goal is to

¹⁰⁸ Created in 2002 to provide direct support to non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and academic institutions, as well as governments in the Near East and North Africa, the MEPI aims to expand political participation, strengthen civil society and the rule of law, empower women and youth, create educational opportunities, and foster economic reform throughout the region.

confront the issue of gender-based violence publicly, educate Lebanese women to see the signs of abuse, and offer practical social and legal aid when needed.

USAID funded AMIDEAST – administered Transparency and Accountability Grants (TAG) programme also awarded small grants to various Lebanese NGOs to promote women’s rights in Lebanon. NGOs such as the Non-Governmental Committee for the Follow-up of Women’s issues were notable recipients in 2003 - 2004. This activity aimed at promoting women’s legal rights in Lebanon. Beginning with a review of current Lebanese laws and documents for articles that discriminate against women, the group organised focus group meetings and drafted new laws or amendments to those that discriminate against women. These draft laws and amendments were presented to Parliament in a national conference, followed by lobbying of Parliamentarians until the laws are amended and adopted (AMIDEAST TAG project 2001 – 2010). Also, the Lebanese Council of Women (LCW) received a grant award for the period 2005 – 2006 to launch a public awareness campaign promoting a quota for women in the new parliamentary election law, debated in January 2006. LCW produced and aired 30 second TV public service announcements on all key Lebanese TV stations (LBCI, FTV, NBN, TL) over a period of one month (30 days) in an advocacy campaign promoting fair participation and inclusion of women in the national decision making process (AMIDEAST TAG project 2001 – 2010).

The Committee for Women Political Empowerment was another grant recipient during the period 2005 – 2006. This activity lobbied for the adoption of a transitional quota system for women’s representation in the Lebanese Parliament (12 extra seats) within an overall framework of achieving better representation of women in the different decision-making bodies in Lebanon. The Committee lobbied to secure support from current members of Parliament for a quota system. Simultaneously, it worked to build

support prior to the Parliamentary elections in May 2005 with a campaign including regional meetings, billboards, and a petition drive.

The Non-Governmental Committee for the Follow-up on Women's Issues (CFUWI) also received a grant award for the period 2007 – 2008 to follow-up on its development of a simplified guide focused on abolishing discrimination against women in Lebanese law. It mobilized the public and empowered local communities throughout Lebanon to advocate for the rights of women and lobby for change. Twenty-four community meetings were organized by a team of local facilitators to discuss the specific problems of most concern to each community and to develop an action plan to lobby and advocate for change. The lobbying and advocacy activities implemented throughout the project, such as composing and sending letters to government authorities, signing petitions, production of lobbying materials, etc., were determined by the local communities with support and coordination from the project team (AMIDEAST TAG project 2001 – 2010).

The Beyond Organisation also received a grant award for the period 2009 – 2010 to establish a woman's rights monitor to gather information, monitor violations, and launch a website with an on-line forum as part of ongoing effort to eliminate gender discrimination in Lebanon. Furthermore, a network of NGOs working on women's issues, rights, and needs was also established to form a "Women's Protection Network" nationwide. After conducting a gender baseline analysis on selected women's issues to be monitored in Lebanon, Beyond Association trained 26 women from *qazas* (districts) across Lebanon to establish this monitoring system and reporting of violations to the Monitor. Findings of the baseline analysis and of the monitor were disseminated widely through media and activities to both key stakeholders and the general public. This project enhanced social inclusion and participation opportunities for women in

Lebanon, through information sharing, networking, advocacy, awareness raising and enhanced community and civil society engagement (AMIDEAST TAG project 2001 – 2010).

USAID also sought to help remove obstacles to women’s rights in Lebanon. USAID’s \$9.3 million Transparency and Accountability Grants Program awarded to the Institute of Progressive Women (IPW) for the period 2009 – 2010 helped to promote Lebanese women’s legal rights and empowerment on the level of access to financial services (AMIDEAST/TAG project 2001 – 2010)¹⁰⁹.

USAID’s assistance to women extended to support for increased women’s participation in elections. USAID’s *Shariky* (“Participate”) project helped to more than double the number of Lebanese women elected to municipal offices, from 201 in 2004 to 531 in 2010 (USAID/Lebanon 2011).

Notwithstanding the U.S.’s efforts to eliminate gender discrimination, Lebanese women continue to suffer domestic violence and face considerable obstacles which hinder their ability to play a greater part in the governance of their country. According to the 2010 U.S. Department of State Human Rights Report on Lebanon, the Lebanese legal system does not specifically prohibit domestic violence which remains a problem. The Report

¹⁰⁹ Post – George W. Bush era, and on 11th June 2010, the USAID/Lebanon Mission Director Denise Herbol attended the closing ceremony for the “Custodial Bank Accounts – End Gender Discrimination” project that marked a new milestone on the road to ending discriminatory practices against Lebanese women. Funded by USAID through AMIDEAST, the IPW project promoted and advanced women’s legal rights through increasing access to financial services. The project enabled mothers to open, as guardians, bank accounts in the names of their minor children, without the signature of the child’s father as was previously required by banks. Using constructive legal interpretation, IPW mobilized thousands of people at the grassroots level to lobby for this right. IPW also mobilized female bank customers who, in turn, pressed their case with the Association of Banks and individual banks. During the life of the project, the Lebanese media played a critical role through extensive coverage of advocacy activities conducted during the project (AMIDEAST/TAG project 2001 – 2010).

states that despite the operation of a law that sets a maximum sentence of three years in prison for battery, some religious courts may legally require a battered wife to return to her home despite physical abuse. The Report adds that, women are sometimes compelled to remain in abusive marriages because of economic, social, and family pressures (US Department of State, Human Rights report, Lebanon 2010). It states further that the Lebanese government provided legal assistance to domestic violence victims who could not afford it, but in most cases police ignored complaints submitted by battered or abused women (US Department of State, Human Rights report, Lebanon 2010). The failure of Lebanon's state protection mechanisms to afford women the requisite protection they require from abusive partners has an adverse impact on women's participation in the public sphere as it restricts women's empowerment, and can act as a significant impediment to civil, political, and economic, social and cultural rights.

Furthermore, the Report notes that the Lebanese legal system practices discrimination in its handling of 'honour killings'. In 2008, the CEDAW committee, the UN Expert body that supervises implementation of the Convention on the elimination of all forms of violence against women called upon Lebanon to enact legislation on violence against women¹¹⁰. At the time, and according to the Lebanese penal code, a man who kills his wife or other female relative may receive a reduced sentence if he demonstrates he committed the crime in response to a socially unacceptable sexual relationship conducted by the victim. For example, although the penal code stipulates murder is punishable by either a life sentence or death, a defendant who can prove the killing was an honour crime receives a commuted sentence of a maximum of seven years'

¹¹⁰ See Human Rights Watch report, *Lebanon: Law Reform Targets 'Honour' Crimes*, 11th August 2011 – accessed via <http://hrw.org/news/2011/08/11/Lebanon-law - on 12/12/13>;

imprisonment (US Department of State, Human Rights report, Lebanon 2010). This position has now changed as on 4th August 2011, the Lebanese parliament annulled article 562 of the criminal code which mitigated the sentence of people who claim they killed or injured their wife, daughter, or other relative to protect the family honour¹¹¹.

Lebanese women suffer further discrimination under the provisions of Lebanon's laws and in their practice. Despite women's active participation in all aspects of Lebanese society, discriminatory provisions continue to exist in personal status laws, nationality laws, and penal laws relating to violence in the family (Human Rights report, Lebanon 2009). In particular, current Lebanese law does not allow Lebanese women to confer nationality on either their spouses or children¹¹². As a result, thousands of children born to Lebanese mothers and foreign fathers are denied full access to education, healthcare, and residency¹¹³. In the event of separation, it is the father who gains automatic custody, according to Lebanese nationality law¹¹⁴. Furthermore, the Election Law promulgated in 2008 consolidates civil registry rules by stating that on marriage, a woman's location of registration is to be transferred to her husband's¹¹⁵. These rules clearly discriminate against women as they restrict their enjoyment of civil and political rights. As a result of

¹¹¹ Ibid;

¹¹² In January 2013, Lebanon's Daily Star newspaper cited that leaked documents revealed that the Lebanese ministerial committee studying the draft nationality law rejected it in its entirety – The Daily Star, Lebanon, “*2nd Class Citizens*”. Available from: www.dailystar.com.lb/ArticlePrint.aspx?id=202706&mode=print (accessed on 21/01/2013).

¹¹³ Ibid

¹¹⁴ The Nationality Law was established in 1925 and partially reformed in 1994 in a complex decree. According to a 2008 report by the NGO Frontiers Association, the 1994 amendment allows the child of a Lebanese mother and foreign father to gain Lebanese citizenship after the child's marriage to a Lebanese, and at least five years uninterrupted residency in the country, including one year after marriage.

¹¹⁵ Articles 25 and 26, Registration of Personal Status Documents Dec 7th 1951 and Article 32, Parliamentary Election Law 2008

sustained efforts by Lebanese women's rights groups, the issue of amending Lebanese citizenship law to grant Lebanese women the right to confer nationality has gained momentum and has received the endorsement of many political leaders (Human Rights Watch report, Lebanon 2009). However, certain Lebanese officials and politicians have suggested that any amendment to the law on citizenship should exclude Lebanese women married to Palestinian men, pursuant to the Lebanese constitution's prohibition on the "nationalization" of Palestinians (ostensibly to avoid undermining their "right of return") (Human Rights Watch report, Lebanon 2009). Some politicians have argued further that to allow Lebanese women to nationalise the children they have with non-Lebanese, such as Syrians and Palestinians, would be to shake up the delicate sectarian demographic on which the country's political system is founded. But according to the activist Roula Masri, figures from the Interior Ministry from 2001 indicate that only 1,000 Lebanese women are married to foreigners, although she admits that these figures need to be updated with field research, Masri asserts that the issue is not about how many women are married to Palestinians, Syrians or other foreigners but that the Nationality Law should be amended to ensure respect to women's human rights (Rousseau 2008). The exclusion of Lebanese women married to Palestinian men from the proposed amendment to the Nationality Law would be discriminatory and would replace one form of discrimination (between Lebanese men and women) with another (between women married to non-Palestinians and women married to Palestinians) (Human Rights Watch report, Lebanon 2009).

Further evidence of gender discrimination is reflected in the fact that whilst Lebanese women today enjoy senior positions in the private sector, political appointments have all but eluded them. Despite the fact that Lebanese women were granted suffrage in 1953, the number of women who have been elected is extremely low. There is a saying in

Lebanon that the only woman you will see in parliament is the one wearing black, mourning for the death of her husband or brother, whose political mantle she has inherited. Four such examples are Myrna Boustani, who became the first Lebanese woman in parliament upon her father's death; Nayla Mouawad, who entered parliament as a widow after the death of her husband, former President Rene Mouwad; former Industry Minister Leila Solh who joined after her father's death; and Solange al-Gemayel, the wife of slain President Bashir al-Gemayel. But even when a female politician arrives in parliament without the help of tragedy – such as Bahia al-Hariri in 1992, well before the assassination of her brother and five – time prime minister, Rafik al-Hariri – it still seemed to be a requirement that she hail from a rich and traditionally political family (Mahdawi 2009). According to some commentators, it is virtually impossible for independent, self-made women to enter Lebanon's political arena (Mahdawi 2009).

Overall, the experience of women's participation in politics and the outcome of the parliamentary elections demonstrated the male chauvinistic mentality held by the leaders of the parliamentary blocs. Most party leaders limit the presence of women to the second and third ranks of the parties and refrain from appointing a woman to a position within the party's inner circles even if her aptitude and competence over her male peers is unquestionable.

Independent Judicial System

Historically, the independence of the judiciary in Lebanon has been weakened by the authorities vested in the Government of Lebanon's executive branch. The recognisable Western standards for the separation of powers between the judicial, legislative, and executive branches are not the norm in Lebanon. The Lebanese executive branch of government includes the President, Prime Minister, and cabinet of ministers. Within the

judicial branch, the Supreme Judicial Council is a 10-member council that is responsible for appointing, promoting, and transferring judges but is subject to the approval of the Minister of Justice. The Minister of Justice, as a member of the executive branch, approves the appointments made by the Supreme Judicial Council, but the council, as a part of the judicial branch, is supposed to function independently. On an institutional level, the President and the cabinet jointly approve appointment of 8 of the 10 council members (OIG/USAID 2010).

The Lebanese judiciary is also subject to pressure by parochial sectarian interests, particularly in nominations to the Constitutional Council and the Judicial Council whose seats must be apportioned by confession. Judges and other officials in the judiciary are appointed in a similar manner, based on a sectarian quota defined in advance. The delicate sectarian balance makes it difficult to completely protect the judiciary from interference by religious leaders. For example, the mostly Sunni suspects jailed after the attack on the Danish consulate in 2006 were quietly released following protests by the Mufti of the Republic (Safa 2010).

Further evidence of political interference in the Lebanese judiciary was obvious in 2006, when the March 14 Coalition majority in the parliament amended Law No. 250/1993 to disband the Constitutional Council before its official term expired, purging the judiciary of what were considered pro-Syrian judges. Legal experts considered this action then as unfair and a dangerous precedent for heavy-handed political interference in the judiciary (Safa 2010).

To encourage judicial independence and promote an effective court system in Lebanon, USAID/Lebanon launched the *Strengthening the Independence of the Judiciary and Citizen Access to Justice (SIJCAJ)* project in 2007. USAID/Lebanon awarded a three

year, \$8.2 million cost-plus-fixed fee completion task order to the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) to implement a rule of law project which began on December 11, 2007 and ended on December 9, 2010. NCSC designed its rule of law programme, with one broad objective and three components, to increase the effectiveness and independence of the Lebanese judicial system with (1) better educated judges, (2) more efficient and transparent courts and legal processes, and (3) frameworks that support judicial independence and impartiality (OIG/USAID 2010). NCSC hired the non-profit organisation America – Mideast Educational and Training Services, Inc. (AMIDEAST) as a sub-contractor to help implement USAID/Lebanon’s rule of law program.

U.S. efforts also spearheaded the formal launch of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon in 2009 to bring to justice those responsible for financing, planning, and carrying out the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri. This was an important indication of the international community’s determination to see this case solved. As evidence of the Bush Administration’s commitment towards promoting justice in Lebanon, the United States contributed \$14 million and pledged a further \$6 million for the second year of the Tribunal’s operations (US Embassy, Beirut, Press Release 2009).

Notwithstanding the above efforts by the Bush Administration, the audit findings of the Office of Inspector General on NCSC’s rule of law programme in Lebanon confirm that USAID/Lebanon’s rule of law program did not achieve its main goal of increasing the effectiveness and independence of the Lebanese judicial system. The audit verified that the program had not achieved any results during fiscal (FY) 2008 and had achieved only three of the five results during FY 2009. Moreover, from January 2008 to December 2009, the program completed 50 percent of its activities. In fact, the audit findings confirm that the \$8.2 million program achieved only 7 percent of its results in 2008 and 43 percent of the results in 2009. In addition, USAID/Lebanon significantly overstated

results for 10 or 12 of the program performance measures that the mission reported to Congress and stakeholders during FY 2008 and 2009 (OIG/USAID 2010). The Office of the Inspector General's audit of USAID/Lebanon's rule of law programme documented 14 recommendations for USAID's action which the mission addressed by way of corrective action. Against this background of underachievement, the 2010 report of the U.S. Department of State on Lebanon's human rights, reports that influential politicians and intelligence officers intervened at times and used their influence and connections to protect supporters from prosecution (US Department of State, Human Rights report, Lebanon 2010).

Civil Society

Civil society aid was also a valuable component of U.S. democracy promotion in Lebanon during the Bush years. Seen as a fundamental building block of democracy, and critical to promoting transparency, good governance, and citizens' access to their government, the Bush Administration showed its strong support for Lebanon and its citizens by funding civil society organizations in that country. U.S. financial assistance to community - based service NGOs in Lebanon dates back to the 1990s when USAID spent several million dollars to help local communities rebuild in the aftermath of civil war. Because government agencies were very weak, community – based organizations and NGOs were considered to be better aid partners. The U.S.'s aid for Lebanese civil society gained momentum during Bush's tenure of office as U.S. policy makers identified Lebanon's civil society as the missing piece of Lebanon's democracy puzzle.

On March 27, 2008 the U.S. Embassy in Beirut announced that the U.S. Congress had allocated \$5 million to enhance the engagement of civil society organisations in a range of issues important to Lebanon (US Embassy, Beirut, Press Release 2008). Five U.S. NGOs formed partnerships with various local NGOs to develop Lebanese citizens'

involvement with their government. The American Bar Association (ABA) and CIPE promoted rule of law by focusing on strengthening government accountability and transparency through freedom of information and whistleblower protection. In addition, the ABA and the CIPE worked collectively with various organizations to advocate for anti-corruption reforms; and, they helped raise awareness among small businesses of their lawful rights and how this knowledge can protect businesses (US Embassy, Beirut, Press Release 2008). CRS and the International IREX both enhanced community decision – making. CRS provided community decision-makers and municipal leaders with practical skills to address diverse community issues, thus forming more consensus minded communities. IREX focused on youth who will be able to bridge divisions in their communities and advance governmental transparency and accountability (US Embassy, Beirut, Press Release 2008). Another non-governmental organisation, Internews, funded innovative media projects with local organizations, and trained media owners and managers in business management techniques (US Embassy, Beirut, Press Release 2008).

From 2007, USAID’s Office of Transition Initiatives promoted peace and stability through the Lebanon Civic Support Initiative (LCSI). The LCSI catalyzes youth activism in marginalized areas, enhances the ability of civil society organizations to advocate for local or national issues, and mitigates tensions in conflict-prone areas¹¹⁶.

Lebanese civil society is organized overwhelmingly along confessional lines, with groups serving primarily as patronage vehicles to protect community interests (Kingston 2001). Because of its deeply rooted communalism, Lebanese society is not an integrated civil society in the modern sense. The loyalty of the Lebanese first to family and then to

¹¹⁶ USAID: Lebanon: Programs Overview. Available from: <http://transition.usaid.gov/lb/programs/index.html> (accessed on 21/01/2013).

religious community has produced a unique 'democratic' structure in Lebanon. As a political entity, Lebanon lacks central cultural values (Kliot 1987). The weakness of the Lebanese state-idea, and the mal-integration of the Lebanese people as a socio-cultural community, spreads throughout the country's political system (Kliot 1987). The ethnic-religious schism prevents the evolution of a common political culture, and loyalty to the Lebanese central political institutions is very weak.

CONCLUSION

In the aftermath of 9/11 and the 2003 Iraq war, the Bush administration deviated from its policy of ignoring Syrian hegemony over Lebanon to show full support for the country's sovereignty. This change of policy effectively served Lebanon's sovereignty and independence as well as the U.S.'s strategic goals as it aimed at being consistent with the U.S.'s strategy of promoting democracy and defending human rights in the Arab world. At the time, success in Iraq was proving to be elusive and difficult to achieve and as well as curtailing Syria's regional influence and power, Lebanon it would seem fitted the profile of a more expedient and realistic candidate to achieve democratic and economic success in the region.

Through diplomatic initiatives and special new democracy aid funds, the Bush Administration exerted pressure for internal political change in Lebanon. The pressure included a special effort in 2005 to bring an end to Syria's influence in Lebanon, which triggered the resulting 'Cedar Revolution'. From this perspective, Lebanon was a verifiable success for the Bush administration. Bringing Syrian presence to an end in Lebanon was something which the Bush administration successfully pushed for. Whilst Bush received help from the Lebanese in 2005 when they took to the streets in hundreds

of thousands to demand a Syrian pullout, his administration stuck with its promise afterwards to help the Lebanese establish a democratic government.

The U.S. strategy assisted Lebanon in bolstering its internal strength and stability. With the assistance of USAID, nominated NGOs collaborated with local actors to make contributions to the process aimed at strengthening Lebanese state capacity. There was a strong focus on partnership based instruments (political dialogue, democracy assistance) that relied on the Lebanese NGOs consent or active cooperation for implementing measures.

Despite the hope for political reform which accompanied Syria's exit from Lebanon and notwithstanding USAID's efforts to promote democracy on the ground, evidence gathered in this chapter shows that similar to the Bush administration's efforts to promote democracy in Iraq, U.S. policies in Lebanon did not sufficiently support the advancement of 'Western style' liberal democracy in this country. Indeed, as in Iraq, albeit for different reasons, the reality of U.S. democracy promotion in Lebanon did not live up to the bold proclamations of the Bush Administration. In Lebanon, the implementation of 'soft' democracy promotion instruments, such as political dialogue and democracy assistance, fundamentally depended on the willingness and capacity of the Lebanese government and the U.S.'s Lebanese partners' on the ground to actively cooperate and engage in external democracy promotion efforts. Such cooperation and engagement was achieved to a limited extent as the U.S.'s support for democracy projects in the Lebanon depicted a scattergun approach meaning that it supported a disjointed collection of individual projects rather than pursuing a serious strategy for boosting reform movements across the country. U.S. democracy projects shied away from controversial areas such as the delicate balance of Lebanon's confessional system (possibly because of the memory of Lebanon's civil war and a fear that any attempt to

alter the political system could reignite the tensions that led to the country to fracture along sectarian lines in 1975) by repeating the mantra that ‘democracy cannot be imposed from the outside’. The U.S. instead preferred to take refuge in generic priorities – such as NGOs, women’s rights and human rights legislation – rather than tackling the specific challenges of political reform facing Lebanon. The promotion of women’s rights for instance, was a straightforward and easy goal for the U.S. to announce as besides lending itself to emphatic rhetorical statements, it had the added advantage of being relatively cheap and easy to implement (Ottaway 2004:3). These small albeit concrete projects did very little to engineer political reform in Lebanon and in essence there was reform without fundamental change as the Bush administration’s attempts to promote democracy in this country was stuck in a no man’s land - neither ineffective nor effective.

The discussion in the next chapter will examine Iraqi and Lebanese perspectives on the U.S.’s role as a promoter of democracy in their countries in the aftermath of the events of 9/11 and the 2003 Iraq War. It will argue that the Bush enterprise was effectively compromised by a prevalent anti-American sentiment borne out of the deep and pervasive suspicions of U.S. motives which many Iraqis and Lebanese harbour and share with large sections of the Arab world.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE PROBLEM OF U.S. CREDIBILITY

General perspectives from across the Middle East region

The contention that the United States lacks credibility as a promoter of democracy in the Arab world revolves around several factors.

First, it is argued that the U.S. has no credibility when it calls for respect for democracy and human rights because of its support for Israel against the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and other Arab nations. The second factor commentators cite is America's historic support for Arab autocrats. Next is the issue of the U.S.'s perceived unwillingness to accept democratic outcomes regarded as potentially harmful to its strategic interests. Finally, there is the issue of the U.S.'s conflation of democracy with the 2003 Iraq war. All of these factors provoke accusations of double-standards and questions about the U.S.'s commitment to democracy in the Arab world.

Turning to the first factor, the United States is widely perceived in the Arab world as a co-belligerent with Israel in its war with the Palestinians (Rowswell & Crocker 2004). The issue of Palestine is so important to Arabs that it serves as a "litmus test" for their evaluations of Western countries. Thus, besides Israel itself, the country most widely perceived as failing this 'litmus test' is the United States due to its exceptional levels of moral, military, economic and diplomatic support for Israel (Furia and Lucas 2006). Many Arab commentators have written on how far reaching the U.S.'s support for Israel is and on what they perceive as U.S. double standards on the whole issue of the protection of human rights in the Arab world. Their comments include strong references to the plight of the Palestinian people.

For instance, writing in 2002, Fahed Fanek, a prominent Jordanian economist and journalist who writes for the *Jordan Times*, asked rhetorically:

And what does Bush have to say about the so-called Israeli democracy, which has produced the worst kind of far – right, extremist government, led by General Ariel Sharon, who is committed to continued occupation, the demolition of more Palestinian houses, the expropriation of Palestinian land, the assassination of Palestinian activists, ethnic cleansing and all-out state terrorism? (Fanek 2002 cited in Ottaway 2003:10).

Much of the Arab intelligentsia consider that it is not “regime change” that will bring democracy to the Arab world, but a just solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Saudi Prince Turki bin Faisal Al Saud, a member of the Saudi Arabia royal family who served as ambassador to the United Kingdom and the United States sums up the Arab attitude thus:

In the West maybe freedom for the Palestinians comes second, third or fourth, but for us it is central. But this wound which is over more than 60 years old or more doesn't only affect us psychologically it also affects the way we behave [as political systems] (cited in Hammond 2007:11).

Prince Turki's view is shared by some Western commentators. The veteran Middle East journalist, Andrew Hammond, for instance, makes the point that once there is no conflict, it will be time to end authoritarian military rule, which has had as one of its main aims guarding against the transnational movements with pro-Palestinian sentiments that threaten the stability and order of the existing map of nation-states in the Arab world (Hammond 2007:10).

The above comments were put into perspective by the 2006 Iraq Study Group Report which acknowledged in its findings that:

The United States cannot achieve its goals in the Middle East unless it deals directly with the Arab-Israeli conflict and regional instability.

According to the 2006 Report:

There must be a renewed and sustained commitment by the United States to a comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace on all fronts: Lebanon, Syria and President Bush's June 2002 commitment to a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine (Baker et al 2006).

The argument that is seemingly being made about Arabs generally putting their democratic rights on hold pending a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict must however be considered against the background of the Arab uprisings of 2011. Notably, these rebellions were characterised by popular chants for freedom and democracy which were influenced by the deep-seated grievances of Arab populations towards ruling elites in their countries. Once the tipping point was reached popular contempt triggered courageous demands for political reform. Indeed, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was not the driving force behind the potent popular demonstrations which demanded freedom and democracy.

Turning to the second factor, the attitude of many people in the Middle East region toward the United States has been affected by America's long track record of supporting authoritarian regimes. As conceded by Bush himself in the aftermath of 9/11, U.S. policy in the Middle East traditionally favoured the stability of friendly regimes, no matter how autocratic, over the promotion of democratic change. Marina Ottaway states that this acceptance of friendly autocrats was based in part on security considerations, in part on dependence on Arab oil, and in part, finally, on the fact that the United States had little leverage to force reforms on regimes whose cooperation it needed to maintain peace in the region and to secure access to abundant and cheap oil. As a result, the democracy aid directed to the region financed cautious projects, carefully designed to avoid angering or destabilizing incumbent regimes (Ottaway 2003). Many other

commentators, including former highly-ranked U.S. administration officials, have expressed their views on the U.S.'s record of embracing autocratic regimes in the Arab world at the expense of fostering true democratic change. In his speech in 2002 to the Council on Foreign Relations in Washington, D.C., Richard Haas remarked that before the invasion of Iraq, both Democratic and Republican administrations practiced “*democratic exceptionalism*” in the Arab world, subordinating democracy to other national interests such as accessing oil, containing the Soviet Union, and grappling with the Arab – Israeli conflict (cited in Esposito & Mogahed 2007:59). For this reason, Hassan Nafaa, an Egyptian journalist and political scientist at Cairo University, questioned the sincerity of Washington’s newly espoused belief that democracy is the way forward in the Arab world. According to Nafaa,

The U.S. is not the country that people of this region can rely upon to generate a foreign climate conducive to fostering and supporting a true process of democratization. The U.S. has a long record of supporting dictatorships and of plotting to overthrow democratically elected governments. Whenever the defense of democratic values has come into conflict with the defense of U.S. interests, the latter always win out (Nafaa 2002 cited in Ottaway 2003:10).

The charge that America tolerated Arab autocrats and continually backed repressive governments to safeguard its interests in the Middle East is underscored by the Halabja incident in Iraq in March 1988 when Saddam Hussein used poison gas to kill five thousand Kurds. In the midst of Saddam’s brutal assault on the Kurds, the U.S.’s official response was mild as at the time the policy had been to support Saddam’s regime since it served U.S. interests to do so because Saddam’s war against Iran prevented the revolutionary Islamism of the Ayatollah’s Iran from extending its influence further into the Gulf, a move that the U.S. perceived was capable of undermining the stability of the Gulf elite states. Reflecting on the Halabja incident,

Haim Bresheeth, a Jewish academic opposed to the Zionist movement and ideology and its impact on both Palestinian and Jews, remarked sarcastically:

Now we are being told that Saddam is not a democrat, is not nice at all really, is actually a tyrant who gasses his own people. How nice to hear this two decades after the event in Halabja, from the very governments who supported him in his first Gulf War against Iran. It did not seem to bother them then, or at any time in the past two decades (Bresheeth 2002 cited in Ottaway 2003:10).

In addition to the Halabja incident, the U.S.'s historic support for authoritarian Arab regimes was illustrated by more recent events in Egypt which served to place in question the U.S.'s pro-democratic credentials.

The first event relates to Condoleezza Rice's cancellation of a scheduled visit to Egypt in 2005 in protest at the arrest of Ayman Nour – a leading liberal, democratic politician and Mubarak's closest challenger in the 2005 presidential elections. In doing so, Rice appeared to send a clear message that the Bush administration was serious about its rhetoric on democratization in the Arab world. Earlier, and on the day of Nour's guilty verdict and sentencing, the White House Press Secretary, Scott McClellan (2003 – 2006) released the following strong statement denouncing Mubarak's action:

The United States is deeply troubled by the conviction today of Egyptian politician Ayman Nour by an Egyptian court. The conviction of Mr. Nour, the runner-up in Egypt's 2005 presidential elections, calls into question Egypt's commitment to democracy, freedom, and the rule of law. We are also disturbed by reports that Mr. Nour's health has seriously declined due to the hunger strike on which he has embarked in protest of the conditions of his trial and detention. The United States calls upon the Egyptian government to act under the laws of Egypt in the spirit of its professed desire for increased political openness and dialogue within Egyptian society, and out of humanitarian concern, to release Mr. Nour from detention (Bush 2005e).

In February 2006, Rice visited Mubarak yet never spoke Nour's name publicly. When asked about him at a news conference, she referred to his situation as one of Egypt's setbacks. Days later, Mubarak told a government newspaper that Rice "*didn't bring up difficult issues or ask to change anything.*" From prison, Nour stated "*I pay the price when [Rice] speaks [of me], and I pay the price when she doesn't,*" Nour said. "*But what's happening to me now is a message to everybody*" (cited in Spolar 2006). When Rice returned to Egypt a year later in 2007, she reportedly made no public mention of Egypt's regression on democracy and reform. Rice instead described Egypt's authoritarian regime as part of "*an important strategic relationship, one that we value greatly*" (cited in Shadid 2007).

The second event relates again to Egypt and the unprecedented, revolutionary and momentous events that followed the protests in Cairo on 25th January 2011.

Commentators argue that U.S. ambivalence in the face of genuine and popular demands for democracy in Egypt lend support to the allegation that the pattern in recent years has been to rhetorically celebrate popular emancipation while operationally defending political continuity. It is well documented that initially, the U.S. government did not think Mubarak's hold on power was threatened. "*Our assessment,*" remarked Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on January 25, 2011 "*is that the Egyptian government is stable and is looking for ways to respond to the legitimate needs and interests of the Egyptian people*"¹¹⁷. On Sunday morning talk shows, Mrs. Clinton ignored Mubarak's main political opponent, Mohamed El Baradei's proposal for a transitional council and said the administration supported an "*orderly transition*", which became the U.S.'s

¹¹⁷ Brownlee, Jason (2011), "The Transnational Challenge to Arab Freedom", *Current History, A Journal of Contemporary World Affairs*, Vol. 110, No. 739: 317 – 323;

watchword for the remainder of the uprising¹¹⁸. Even when a change of regime appeared suddenly within reach in Egypt, the U.S.'s diplomatic machine was uncharacteristically quiet, with White House officials calling for less haste and warning instead, that democracy must be balanced with security in the region. Indeed, President Barack Obama seemingly defended Mubarak by saying: *I believe that President Mubarak cares about his countryHe is proud, but he is also a patriot*¹¹⁹. In light of the U.S.'s initial 'soft' response to Egypt's fight for freedom, many Arabs felt that America was willing to betray its self-professed democratic principles for fear of its impact on U.S. interests in the region.

Turning to the third factor, two events are usually cited by Arab commentators and critics of U.S. foreign policy in the Arab world to underscore the point of the U.S.'s perceived unwillingness to accept democratic outcomes in the region.

Firstly, the U.S.'s vacillating credibility as a promoter of democratic reform in the Arab world was reinforced by what took place in Algeria in 1991. As mentioned earlier (see page 74), the George H.W. Bush administration responded mildly to the Algerian military's undemocratic intervention in seminal multi-party elections in which the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was poised to win. The Islamist threat perceived in Algeria, along with continuing concerns about the Islamic Republic of Iran, underlined America's conservatism when it comes to indigenous regime change in the Middle East.

The second event took place in early 2006 when Hamas won the elections for the Legislative Council in the Palestinian occupied territories. Hamas's electoral victory

¹¹⁸ Ibid;

¹¹⁹ "Egypt: Demonstrations and political pressure, but Hosni Mubarak clings on", *The Guardian*, Saturday, 5th February 2011 – accessed via <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/Feb/05 - on 11/11/13>;

was historic and significant as 78 percent of the electorate cast their vote. As a self-professed champion of democracy and the most vocal advocate for political expression and participation in the Middle East, the U.S. might have reasonably been expected to acknowledge Hamas's electoral triumph as a victory for its 'freedom agenda' policy. The U.S. instead denounced the significance of Hamas's victory and withheld its recognition of the newly elected authority under the pretext that the U.S. administration considers Hamas to be a terrorist organisation (Kazziha 2008). Regarding the U.S.'s refusal to recognize the democratically elected Hamas government, Kenneth Roth, Head of Human Rights Watch, told *The Financial Times* that:

They (U.S. officials) are all for democracy as long as they like the results (cited in Dinmore 2007).

Roth believes that America's mission to promote democracy has become equated with "regime change" and has lost credibility in the Muslim world. "It's [the U.S.'s] *push for democracy is over now*," he said (cited in Dinmore 2007).

In the aftermath of the U.S. decision to cut off funding to the Palestinian government after Hamas was elected, the Arab press became increasingly vocal in pointing out U.S. "double standards" in its promotion of democracy. An editorial in the English – language *Syria Times* said:

*Bush and his neo-conservative aides are still determined to fight the whole world using false mottos and hypocrisy. In practice, they are standing far away from the principles of freedom, independence and democracy*¹²⁰.

Writing in the state-owned Syrian newspaper, *Tishrin*, Izz al-Din al-Darwish accused the United States of meddling in Palestinian politics to ensure Fatah's victory despite voters' support for Hamas. His opinion piece read:

¹²⁰ Syrian Press Highlights (29th January 2007) *BBC Worldwide Monitoring*.

In the Palestinian territories, this administration wants to stop the interaction between the leaders and the grassroots, besiege the resistance, and drive a wedge between the elected government and the people, in harmony with Israeli occupational plans. The result was this fighting between the brothers¹²¹.

Abdel-Bari Atwan, the Palestinian editor of the London-based *Al-Quds al-Arabi* also pointed to the fact that in Lebanon, the then beleaguered U.S. backed government of the former Prime Minister Fouad Siniora, which took power in 2005 was resisting an opposition drive by Hezbollah, to hold new parliamentary elections. The U.S.'s accusation of Hezbollah as attempting a "coup" against a democratically elected government prompted Abdel – Bari Atwan to write:

The U.S. opposes the toppling of the elected Siniora government in Lebanon, but is in favour of toppling Hamas's government which is also an elected one, and more dangerously, is even starving over four million Palestinians to punish them for electing it. What kind of hypocrisy is that? (cited in Blandford 2006:1).

Also, writing in *The Washington Post*, Salameh Nematt, a Jordanian analyst and former Washington bureau chief for the Arabic –language newspaper, pointed out that:

It's a success story for al-Qaeda, a success story for autocratic Arab regimes that made democracy look ugly in their people's eyes. They can say to their people: "Look at the democracy that the Americans want to bring to you. Democracy is trouble. You may as well forget about what the Americans promise you. They promise you death (cited in Shadid 2007:1).

The final issue which relates to the U.S.'s conflation of democracy with the 2003 Iraq war was played out in the Arab world as a costly example of America's neo-colonialist tendencies. Most commentators saw the case for "creating democracy" as a retroactive

¹²¹ Syrian Press Highlights (2007, January 29) *BBC Worldwide Monitoring*.

rationale for invading Iraq only after WMDs in that country did not materialize (Esposito & Mogahed 2007:59).

There was also an impression that the United States was orchestrating an “acceptable” American version of democracy in Iraq with its own hand-picked “George Washington”, Ahmed Chalabi, as it aimed to transfer power quickly to the exiles it had collaborated with before the invasion to steer Iraq in the direction it had mapped out (Esposito & Mogahed 2007:59).

Predictably, the invasion of Iraq by the U.S.-led coalition in 2003 did not succeed in reversing the U.S.’s lack of credibility as a pro-democratic actor in the Arab world.

Why Do They Hate Us?

The question ‘*Why Do They Hate Us?*’ was posed by many Americans including George W. Bush in the aftermath of the events of 9/11. Indeed, Bush’s “*War on Terror*” was premised on the foregoing question. Whilst American political commentators and analysts speculated widely on the sources of apparent Arab resentment towards the United States¹²², Bush strongly affirmed that the most obvious answer to this question was that Muslim radicals “.....*hate our freedoms – our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other*” (Bush 2001). Translated within Muslim societies, Bush’s explanation read

¹²² American and other political commentators have speculated widely on the sources of apparent Arab resentment toward the U.S. The question “Why Do They Hate Us?” is now the subject of journalistic and scholarly interest. For instance see: Zakaria, Fareed (2001) *The Politics of Rage: Why Do They Hate Us?* *Newsweek*, 15 October; Kristof, Nicholas (2002) *Why Do They Hate Us?* *The New York Times*, January 15; Sardar, Ziauddin, and Merryl Wyn Davies (2002) *Why Do People Hate America?* New York: Disinformation; Brumberg, Daniel (2002) *Arab Public Opinion and US Foreign Policy: A Complex Encounter*, testimony prepared for the Subcommittee on Government Reform of the Committee on Government Reform, U.S. House of Representatives, 08 October; Stokes, B. and McIntosh, M. (2002) *How They See Us*, *National Journal*, December 21, pp.3720 – 6.

that Muslims do not believe in ‘freedom and democracy’ and do not strive to uphold Western values and ideals. Tellingly, Bush’s affirmation appeared less convincing when a report published in 2005 by the non-partisan Government Accountability Office (GAO) cited amongst a host of other factors, unpopular U.S. foreign policy decisions, such as the U.S.- led invasion of Iraq, as a major root cause of ‘*anti-Americanism*’ in the Arab world (GAO 2005). The GAO’s 2005 report was based upon foreign public opinion polling data collected by organisations such as the Pew Research Center and Zogby International. The polling evidence advanced by these organisations also demonstrated that the United States has a chronic and widespread image problem in the Arab world. Pew Global Attitudes surveys of 50 nations in 2002 and 2003 found that the United States was less popular in the Middle East than in any other part of the world. Two years later, a Pew Survey conducted in 2005 found that whilst America’s favourability rating had increased slightly, there was still considerable antipathy toward the United States in Arab and Muslim countries (Pew Global Attitudes Project 2005). In his testimony before the U.S. House International Relations Committee in 2005, Andrew Kohut, Pew Research Center President stated that opposition to American policies and leadership is spreading and deepening around the world and that it threatens the national interests of the United States. According to Kohut, record levels of ‘*anti-Americanism*’ could be becoming entrenched (Kohut 2005).

A further Gallup Poll which surveyed half a million Muslims in 2007 in more than thirty-five Islamic states also produced evidence contrary to Bush’s presidential rhetoric. Posing questions such as, “*Why is there so much ‘anti-Americanism’ in the Muslim world*”¹²³, the Gallup Poll data revealed that though only seven per cent of

¹²³ Gallup posed other pertinent questions that are on the minds of millions such as “*Is Islam to blame for terrorism?*”; “*Who are the extremists? Where are the moderates?*”; “*What do Muslim*

Muslims condoned the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the broader Arab Public generally viewed the U.S. as rapacious and seeking to colonize the Middle East region¹²⁴. In the U.S. House of Representatives, Gary L. Ackerman, then Chairman of the Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia of the Committee on Foreign Affairs also disagreed with Bush's presidential rhetoric when he stated at a Joint Hearing before the Subcommittee on the important issue of Arab opinion about the U.S. that:

Our real problem in the Arab and non-Arab Muslim world is not, as the President has suggested, that people hate us because of our freedoms; it is that they do not trust us to work for and support theirs. Arabs and the broader Muslim world have simply listened to our language for too long and then watched us as we repeatedly failed to deliver on the rhetoric. It is fairness and justice that they are after, and they do not believe that they will receive it from us (Ackerman 2007).

The negative polling data on Muslim opinions of the U.S., and Ackerman's comments, were later endorsed by a U.S. congressional report published in June 2008 and entitled "The Decline in America's Reputation: Why?"¹²⁵ The congressional report pointed out that despite an initial show of world-wide sympathy for the United States in the

women really want?" – Cited in John L. Esposito and Dalia Mogahed (2007) *Who Speaks for Islam? What a Billion Muslims Really Think*, (New York: Gallup Press).

¹²⁴ The Gallup Poll results are cited in Esposito & Mogahed (2007) *Who Speaks for Islam? What a Billion Muslims Really Think*, (New York: Gallup Press). Based on a massive multi-year research study, the largest and most in-depth study of its kind, this book introduced data-driven evidence and analytical points of view of more than ninety percent of the global Muslim community. Between 2001 and 2007, Gallup conducted tens of thousands of hour-long, face-to-face interviews with residents of more than 35 nations that are predominantly Muslim or have significant Muslim populations (approximately 1.3 billion Muslims).

¹²⁵ The Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights, and Oversight – part of the US House Committee on Foreign Affairs – issued the report on 11th June 2008 after ten hearings on the decline of US image. The data presented at these hearings made it clear that people in other nations do not hate America because of its values but rather they were disappointed with the U.S. because it does not act in a manner consistent with the values it seeks to promote and advance.

immediate aftermath of 9/11, the U.S.'s Middle East policies and its "perceived war on Islam"- Bush's so-called "*war on terror*"- contributed to America's unfavourable image in many Islamic countries.

Bush's concern about the U.S.'s unpopularity in the Arab world and beyond prompted him in September 2005 to appoint Karen Hughes - a former Texan local TV presenter, and Bush's long-time communications adviser during his spell as Governor of Texas - as first Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy. The appointment of Hughes who had very little experience of working in the Middle East did seem symptomatic of policy dysfunction. Notwithstanding, and on the back heel of the GAO's 2005 unfavourable report, Hughes was despatched by the U.S. State Department as special envoy and tasked to promote America's values and confront ideological support for terrorism around the world. However, despite the fanfare and hope that accompanied her mission, Hughes's endeavour was far from successful as she struck many Arab intellectuals and commentators as naive when she commented following her return to the U.S. as to how surprised she had been to find out that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is considered so important in the Arab world¹²⁶. Hughes also came face-to-face with Muslim anger over the U.S. - led invasion of Iraq. Generally, from the point of view of many Arab commentators, Hughes's trip to the region was pointless for a number of reasons.

First, the Arab media regarded U.S. policy in the Arab world with disdain. The *Gulf News*, an independent English language newspaper based in Dubai, was very vocal about the contempt for U.S. Middle East policy and it posed this question on 28th September 2005 during the period of Hughes's visit to the Middle East:

¹²⁶ ABC news headlined "Bush Loyalist Karen Hughes Resigns". Available from: <http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/politics/2007> - (accessed on 03/08/2013).

So why is Hughes on her visit? Anyone who has even a limited understanding of events in the Middle East can spell out loud and clear exactly what aggrieves people in the Middle East with regard to the U.S. It is their policy. Therefore, if the avowed intent prior to Hughes visit is for “no change, steady as we go” then it is best for Hughes to return home¹²⁷ .

Along similar lines, the journalist Salamah A. Salameh also wrote in the Cairo based newspaper, *Al-Ahram*, on 3rd October 2005 that:

Karen Hughes, the U.S. envoy to the Middle East and Muslim countries, clearly hopes to patch up the U.S. image. Her instructions are to promote U.S. policy as one might any new consumer durable. She hopes to overcome the hostility that Muslim and Arab nations feel toward U.S. policy — a hostility that is on a par with that felt by the United States toward Osama bin Laden. What the United States should be doing is changing policy, not dressing it up to look better. We notice the harassment that millions of Muslim Americans had to deal with. We notice the indefinite detention of hundreds of suspects in Guantanamo. We notice the horrors committed in Abu Ghraib. We notice things that no one — not even Hughes — can justify.¹²⁸

The anger directed by the Arab media towards Hughes Middle East visit was also based on the whole issue surrounding the U.S.’s attempt to implant its own brand of democracy in the Arab world. The Jidda-based *Saudi Gazette*, a business English language newspaper, featured an opinion piece on 1st October 2005 which read as follows:

[In her] recent visit to Saudi Arabia ... Hughes appears to have predicated her presentation on the assumption that everyone in the world wants to live as Americans do and was clearly bemused to find not everyone present agreed with her ... Saudis,

¹²⁷ Viewpoints, “*Karen Hughes: Selling Bush to the World*”, Comment and analysis from Dubai, Jerusalem, Jidda, and Cairo posted on 8th October 2005. Available from: <http://www.worldpress.org/Americas/2159.cfm> (accessed on 03/08/2013).

¹²⁸ Ibid;

in common with other Muslims, want to enjoy the technological benefits of the modern age while retaining their religious and cultural identity. They want progress without the associated social ills that bedevil so many economically developed countries. It doesn't seem an unreasonable point of view ... Islamic values may not accord with the prevailing attitudes in places such the United States but then why should they?¹²⁹ .

Overall, the Arab media critique surrounding Hughes 'purposeful' visit negated the U.S.'s attempts to 'clean up' its image in the Arab world. The virulent anti-American ideology that 'took hold' of Arab societies led American policy makers to suspect with good reason that their efforts to promote democratic reform in the Arab world generally is limited in its effectiveness, simply because it is 'they' who are the proponents of democratic change. According to the 9/11 Commission Report, America's public diplomacy problems in the Middle East, in particular its credibility, impacts adversely upon even positive messages and initiatives, such as the effort to promote reform, freedom, democracy, and opportunity in the region (9/11 Commission Report 2001:37). The hostility toward U.S. efforts aimed at promoting democracy is expressed in the behaviour of governments, in the actions of individual political, religious, and community leaders, and in the attitudes of the ordinary citizens of these countries. Bearing this in mind, Amaney A. Jamal makes the point that the most immediate mechanism of facilitating the path to democracy in the Arab world is to reduce anti-American sentiment across the region. She points out that whilst U.S. policy makers often argue that there is little room for winning the hearts and minds of ordinary Arab citizens, the substantial variation in evaluations of the United States within and across the Arab world tells us a different story (Jamal 2012: 243). For this reason, Jamal argues that the United States can no longer afford to talk about democracy while turning a blind eye to democratic and human rights abuses. According to Jamal, it is not sufficient

¹²⁹ ibid

to withdraw from Iraq without a firm commitment to Iraqis that they will not become yet another Arab country with an authoritarian leader who is friendly toward the United States. (Jamal 2012: 243). Given the conditions of U.S. presence in the Arab world, Jamal argues that the road to democracy must address and mitigate the root causes of anti-Americanism. (Jamal 2012: 244).

Notwithstanding Jamal's views, a small number of Arab commentators argued that U.S. initiatives aimed at promoting democratic change should not be rejected simply because they have been proposed by the United States. Amongst the few dissenting voices that were willing to go beyond the anti-American diatribe is the former editor-in-chief of the London-based daily *Al-Hayat*, Jihad Al-Khazen. Al-Khazen argues that: "*The American proposals for reform are not bad unless you take into account the intentions of the Bush Administration*". He states further that: "*They should not be rejected only because they were proposed by the U.S*"¹³⁰. Along similar lines, the dissident Syrian Christian writer Akram al-Bunni argued passionately in defense of the America's pro-democratic endeavour when he wrote:

Why do we fault democracy, and its advocates, if the United States finds it in its interest to support the democratic struggle? Is it not utterly unfair to associate every call for liberty and pluralism with the United States and its policies; and to accuse those who campaign [for democracy and human rights] of loyalty to the foreigner and of sowing discord and undermining national unity? (Al-Bunni 2004 cited in Baroudi 2007:413).

¹³⁰ Cited in Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) – "Positive Reactions in the Arab Media to the Greater Middle East Initiative" - accessed via www.memri.org/report/en - on 12/12/2012;

Another Arab commentator, Salah Eddin Hafez, a veteran columnist in the prestigious Egyptian newspaper, *Al-Ahram*, was more blatant in his attack on intellectuals who oppose democratic change simply because it has become part of the U.S. Middle East agenda. Writing in *Al-Ahram*, Hafez succinctly asked “*Is it enough to reject their democracy?*” (cited in Ottaway 2003:13).

It does seem reasonable to assume that the above mentioned dissenters favoured U.S. democracy promotion efforts in the Arab world if meaningful and well-intentioned. Certainly, in view of the fact that the prospects for Arab democracy or democratic reform are slim at best if left entirely in the hands of the ruling Arab elites, the call for U.S. democracy promotion efforts to be embraced was supposedly borne out of the fear that Arab regimes could not be trusted to develop and advance the democratic aspirations of their own populations. Indeed, Arab elites have been accused of adopting and mastering sophisticated techniques of authoritarian rule to dampen domestic demands for reform. These techniques, as Augustus Richard Norton points out, included a combination of limited political reforms, middle class co-optation, patronage, surveillance, and coercion (Norton 2012:14). Accordingly, from the point of view of the dissenters, the U.S. ought to be given the benefit of doubt to advance democracy’s cause.

That aside, and notwithstanding the support for U.S. democracy promotion efforts, Arab commentators who challenged the collective wisdom regarding the ‘ill-intentions’ of the Bush Administration, and the inappropriateness of its proposed reforms for democratic change in the region, are perceived to be in the minority as revealed by public opinion polls measuring anti-American attitudes in the Arab world. These polls admittedly did not capture nuances of viewpoint, nor did they measure the intensity of individuals’ anti-American attitudes or their propensity to act upon those views. However, despite

their shortcomings, these polls did usefully document the fact that there had been a marked rise in anti-American attitudes in Iraq and Lebanon in the aftermath of the 9/11 suicide attacks and the 2003 Iraq war. One of the best sources of foreign public opinion data on Iraqi and Lebanese attitudes towards America comes from the Pew Global Attitudes Surveys. The extensive research carried out by the Pew Research Centre featuring Iraq and Lebanon, amongst other countries, demonstrates a pronounced rise in unfavourable opinions of the U.S. in the aftermath of 9/11 and the 2003 Iraq war. Coupled with, and linked to the resentment towards the U.S., is the sobering reality that substantial majorities in Iraq and Lebanon question the U.S.'s credentials as a bona fide pro-democratic actor. According to David M. DeBartolo, this widespread distrust is a legacy of the U.S.'s historic support for Arab autocrats, its conflation of democracy promotion with the Iraq war, and the perceived unwillingness of the West to accept democratic outcomes (DeBartolo 2008).

Against the above regional background, the U.S.'s stated goal to oversee the emergence of stable and democratic regimes in Iraq and Lebanon faced enormous challenges with the rise of anti-American attitudes being touted as the main cause. The U.S. strategy to promote democracy did not meet with a particularly warm response in either Iraq or Lebanon in the aftermath of 9/11 and the 2003 Iraq war. From the outset, the distrust of U.S. intentions in the immediate aftermath of the 2003 invasion of Iraq triggered domestic resistance in Iraq to American attempts to create stability, restore order and unify disparate factions in that country. For instance, during a demonstration in April 2003, the radical preacher, Ahmed al-Kubaisi, encouraged Iraqis to take to the streets of Baghdad in thousands to demand the immediate withdrawal of U.S. forces. The demonstrators put up posters which read "*Leave our country, we want peace*" and chanted "*America is God's enemy*", "*No to America, we want an Islamic State*" (Blair

2003). In his sermon to the Iraqi protesters, Al-Kubaisi also accused the U.S. of invading Iraq to pacify Israel. Also, speaking to Nir Rosen of the *Asia Times* in October 2003, Sheikh Mudhafar al-Ani, Imam of a mosque in al-Qaim, Anbar province stated that:

We reject this occupation.....No country would accept an occupation. We have lost our dignity. Until now we have not seen anything.....except killing, searches and curfews. There is a reaction for every action. If you are choking me, I will also choke you. We have a resistance just like the Palestinians, Chechens and Afghans (cited in Allawi 2007: 163).

The scene in Iraq in the immediate aftermath of the U.S. – led invasion is best described by Ali Allawi as follows:

Within a few weeks of the invasion and occupation, the reflex action of Iraqis, honed over generations of dealing with tyrants and occupiers, began to kick in. Americans began to experience the ambivalence of the Iraqis in their different guises; the impenetrability of what they truly thought; the bursts of spontaneous violence; the delight in getting the better of the occupierThis was hardly the vision of the neo-conservatives, or of the starry-eyed dreamers who wanted to 'bring democracy to the Arabs', or of the quick-in-quick-out champions of 'shock and awe'. (Allawi 2007: 11 – 12)

Suffice to say, Iraqis distrust of U.S. intentions presented U.S. democracy promoters with difficulties which they found difficult to overcome. Against this background, the ensuing discussion will focus on the factors responsible for the apparent resentment towards the United States in Iraq and Lebanon.

The factors responsible for the resentment towards the U.S. in Iraq

Firstly, the negative image of America permeating Iraqi society is the product of the history of U.S. foreign policy towards Iraq. Iraqi 'anti-Americanism' evolved from the rejection of Western colonialism and imperialism which initially targeted Britain as the

Mandatory power (Faath 2006:124). For example, after the 1958 Revolution, Iraq demonstratively withdrew from the Baghdad Pact which had been initiated by the United States and founded in 1955 in its capital in response to the perceived Soviet threat to the region. The perceived inconsistency of U.S. foreign policy in particular, towards Iraq and Israel contributed to the intensification of Iraqis animosity toward the U.S. The perception amongst Iraqis that a double standard existed in the U.S.'s application of international law and justice toward their country created a negative image of the U.S. in Iraq. The fact that Israel continues to occupy Palestinian land whilst Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1991 was condemned and reversed militarily was seen as a graphic demonstration of this double standard. Similarly, the post-War Iraqi regime was put under U.S. – directed sanctions, whereas Israel has routinely been sheltered from United Nations Security Council action by the exercise of the U.S. veto (Furia & Lucas 2006:596).

Secondly, the persistent U.S. efforts following the annexation of Kuwait on 2nd August 1990, to force Iraq to reverse its act of military aggression and to disarm Saddam's regime permanently fuelled a new wave of anti-Americanism (Faath 2006:117). At the centre of the resentment was the sanctions regime, which the Americans persuaded the United Nations Security Council to impose on Iraq after Saddam's attack on Kuwait, and to maintain after the war was over. The UN imposed sanctions were established by Resolution 687 on 3rd April 1991 and their stated purpose was to force Saddam to comply with UN demands which required him to dismantle his weapons of mass destruction. However, the effect of the sanctions was to push millions of Iraqis into poverty and ruin the country's basic services. The sanctions hit Iraq very hard, resulting in the material impoverishment of the majority of the population. Faath states that the Iraqi population 'fell' victim to the embargo and its grave effects which took the form

of malnutrition and epidemic illnesses resulting from lack of medical facilities and clean water (Faath 2006:118). The people of Iraq closely associated the sanctions regime with the United States (Faath 2006:118). The suffering experienced by Iraqis fed a growing outrage combined with a sense of despair. Given the helplessness and hopelessness of their particular circumstances, and their inability to tackle the crisis, Iraqis channelled their anger through the 'vent' they found in 'anti-Americanism'. Jamal makes the point that the Clinton administration's devastating sanctions on Iraq resulted in the suffering of ordinary citizens and that with children being denied basic medicines like antibiotics, the sources of anti-Americanism continued to grow in Iraq (Jamal 2012: 242).

In addition to sanctions, the U.S. launched sporadic air attacks, with the heaviest strikes hitting Iraq in December 1998 as part of Operation "Desert Fox". These attacks repeatedly claimed civilian lives leading many Iraqis to blame the U.S. for their misery. The hardship they experienced as a result of the economic sanctions and the subsequent loss of innocent civilian lives emerged as a main root cause of anti-Americanism in Iraq (Faath 2006:118). As we shall examine later, this sense of loss, particularly of civilian lives, was to be experienced again during the period of the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003.

Thirdly, Saddam Hussein was also instrumental in fanning the flames of the rampant Iraqi anti-Americanism that was rapidly mounting in his country after 1991. He skilfully employed propaganda against the United States which acquired a negative connotation by association with the most manipulative and jingoistic examples of U.S. attitudes and behaviour towards Iraq. According to Rowswell and Crocker, years of Saddam Hussein's propaganda left an indelible mark on the perceptions of Iraqis (Rowswell & Crocker 2004:2). Saddam's propaganda machine underscored the image of a starving and ailing nation and it served to stir public sentiment against the United States.

Negative propaganda was dispersed in a wide variety of media in order to create the desired result in Iraqi attitudes. Under Saddam's reign, the only broadcasts Iraqis were allowed to hear told them that the United States was bent on world domination and on the theft of Iraq's oil resources. These criticisms of the United States received unsolicited support in the form of broadcasts into Iraq by non-Baathist news channels such as *al-Jazira* and *al-Arabiya* (Rowswell & Crocker 2004:2). The fact that these news channels were not Baathist organs but rather owned by Saddam's foes, namely the Qataris and Saudis respectively, inadvertently added credibility to the propaganda that Saddam aimed to perpetrate against the U.S. The propaganda achieved its goals among the Sunni Arab elite who were the main losers under the sanctions regime. The Sunni Arab elite held the U.S. responsible for the systematic degradation of their material, often even physical and mental well-being. They accused the U.S. of orchestrating the destruction of Iraq. Anti-Americanism was also rampant amongst the Kurdish and Shiite populations with the Shiites arguing that the sanctions regime did not affect Saddam's regime but specifically them, as they were the weakest and most victimised group under Saddam's rule. Amongst the Kurds, numerous broken promises by the U.S. administration in the past regarding Kurdish ambitions for gaining independence and/or autonomy created a sense of political scepticism toward the U.S. As examined later in this chapter, these ethnic public opinions became varied following the US-led occupation of Iraq and the insurgency that accompanied it.

Anti-American agitation in Iraq was also spurred on by Osama bin Laden following the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Bin Laden's statements led to a sustained increase in anti-Americanism in Iraq. His propaganda message was designed to persuade Iraqis to think and behave in a certain manner aimed at casting the United States as the villain acting against the interests of the Iraqi people. He thrust the sanctions regime and the U.S.

military presence in the Islamic region (in places like Afghanistan) into the spotlight of anti-American agitation also stressing the fact that Israel enjoyed America's security guarantee (Faath 2006:122). In a TV interview, responding to the beginning of U.S. air attacks against Afghanistan on 7 October 2001, Bin Laden held the U.S. responsible for the suffering of the Iraqi people. Such statements were made against the backdrop of the *fatwa* he issued earlier in 1998 when referring to the sanctions regime, he condemned the "on-going aggression against the Iraqi people" (Faath 2006:122). Faath points out that, consciously or unconsciously, Saddam's regime absorbed Bin Laden's propaganda (Faath 2006:122). The day after the terrorist attacks on the United States, Saddam addressed the Iraqi people proclaiming - in reference to the terrorist strikes - that the U.S. was reaping the harvest it had sown (Faath 2006:122). The centrally controlled Iraqi media immediately picked up on this accusation. The next day, Saddam Hussein's son, Uday, sided with the finger - pointing saying in his newspaper *Babil*, that U.S. foreign policy and not the 'terror' was the core of the problem (Faath 2006:122). Such positions and statements graphically illustrated the deep-seated anti-Americanism among the Baath leadership¹³¹.

The fourth factor responsible for the resentment towards the U.S. in Iraq is the Arab - Israeli conflict. Because a majority of Iraqis show a strong feeling of belonging to the Arab and Islamic world, they share the staunch opinion held in the entire region that the United States is giving preferential support to Israel in the Middle East conflict. In addition, the widespread perception of the United States as a co-belligerent with Israel in its war with the Palestinians further poisons opinions (Rowswell & Crocker 2004:2).

¹³¹It is important to note however, that when Saddam recognized that such statements were fuelling positions in parts of the U.S. administration aiming at a quick and violent toppling of his regime, he refrained from any actions and propaganda that could provoke and initiate U.S. military action against his leadership.

Needless to say, the Israeli – Palestinian conflict resonates with the public in Iraq, and many other parts of the Arab world.

Next, the 2003 U.S. led invasion of Iraq fuelled resentment towards the U.S. in Iraq. Regarding the invasion of their country in 2003 and the U.S.'s conflation of democracy with the war, a bishop of the Syrian Orthodox church in Mosul emotionally summed up the Iraqi mood by critically explaining in the presence of government minders, that he did not want a war and that the Bush administration was bringing the law of the jungle to the world, even if its stated goal was to “liberate” Iraqis. “*What are they going to liberate us from? Ourselves?*” he asked, rhetorically. He added: “*I can't imagine someone foreign coming to rule us*” (cited in Hammond 2007:103). Indeed, much of the rhetoric relating to the U.S.'s commitment to advance democracy sounded very familiar to Iraqis who recalled the 1920s when upon their arrival, the British promised the right to self-determination and liberation from Ottoman colonial and repressive rule¹³². When asked about American plans for their country, Iraqis display sensitivities about their colonial past. They evoke the Sykes-Picot agreement which carved up Arab lands and led to the death of early Arab nationalist dreams. Specifically, they point out that within a matter of years after their arrival in Iraq, the British shifted their policy from treating Iraqis as a liberated, not conquered people, to deciding that the most suitable option for governing Iraq was direct colonial rule. Understandably, the arrival and presence of Bremer's CPA in the immediate aftermath of the 2003 Iraq war was perceived as a historical re-run by many Iraqis as it reflected the existing patterns of U.S. and Western interference in the regional politics of the Middle East region. These feelings later

¹³² General Sir Frederick S. Maude's Proclamation to the people of Baghdad on March 11, 1917 - cited in Fisk, R. (2003) *The West Has Been Liberating the Middle East for Centuries: Will We Never Learn?* *The Independent* March 7.

fuelled the basis for the insurgency that followed which brought Iraq to the brink of collapse. Some commentators argue that the Iraqi feelings of being occupied following the arrival of the CPA should have been foreseen by the United States. Allawi makes the point that:

Iraq is one of the most invaded and violated territories in the history of the world, and over a long period of time the people who lived in the country had developed survival and accommodation skills that would confound the most determined of occupiers. None of this should have come as a surprise. There were enough pointers in Iraq's recent past to show the likely response of Iraqis to the massive jolt of a physical occupation by foreign powers, and the effects that a violent upending of apparently stable relationships would have on the varied components of society (Allawi 2007: 12).

Donald Rumsfeld states that the broader impression of an overbearing U.S. authority issuing edicts to the Iraqi people buttressed the anti-coalition arguments of militants like Muqtada al-Sadr and Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. According to Rumsfeld, this played well into the propaganda that the United States was trying to dominate and exploit Iraq rather than liberate it and return it promptly to Iraq control (Rumsfeld 2011:514). Also, in September 2003, when the Gallup Organization asked residents of Baghdad why the U.S. and Great Britain decided to invade Iraq, 60% of them listed oil and other resources as the motivation. Only 4% believed that the invasion was prompted by concerns about weapons of mass destruction or indeed the promotion of democracy (Gallup 2003). Furthermore, a January 2006 World Opinion poll found that 80 percent of all Iraqis believe that the United States plans to maintain a permanent military presence in Iraq¹³³. Bush administration officials had earlier refuted these allegations.

¹³³ "Poll of Iraqis: Public Wants Timetable for U.S. Withdrawal but thinks U.S. Plans Permanent Bases in Iraq", 31st January 2006 – accessed via <http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/articles/> - on 17/02/2013;

In his prepared statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 11th February 2003 on the post-war planning of Iraq, Douglas Feith stated: “*But it is important to stress also that the United States would have a commitment to leave as soon as possible, for Iraq belongs to the Iraqi people. Iraq does not and will not belong to the United States, the coalition or to anyone else*”¹³⁴.

The War did also trigger a rethinking among the Iraqis who had become increasingly wearisome of the UN sanctions. Earlier, and as a first approximation, Iraqi public attitudes regarding the occupation could be understood in terms of the effect of the U.S.’s sanctions regime and broken promises by the United States in the past. In the immediate aftermath of the invasion, Iraqis hatred of Saddam Hussein and their rejection of the United States in particular, were balanced. Iraqi opinion regarding the occupation, and later the insurgency that accompanied it, varied significantly among the nation’s three major ethno-religious communities. The Western and Middle Eastern press covered the different expressions of the Iraqi people in response to the sudden fall of Baghdad. The Western press focused on the expressions of happiness and celebrations in the southern and northern parts of Iraq (the Kurdish and Shia areas). The dominant view among the Kurdish and Shia populations had been the satisfaction at seeing the removal of Saddam Hussein. The people were jubilant and they expressed their joy in many ways. Some of them shouted to the American soldiers ‘*welcome Sir*’, ‘*thank you*’, ‘*we are all on your side*’, ‘*Good, George Bush*’ and ‘*Down Saddam*’¹³⁵.

¹³⁴ Prepared Statement of Douglas J. Feith, Undersecretary of Defense, Post –War Planning Hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 11th February 2003 – accessed via <http://www.iraqwatch.org/government/US/Hearings - on 12/03/2014;>

¹³⁵ See Andrew Buncombe, “No Regrets, just wild cacophony of cheers in a Shia slum” , the *Independent*, Thursday, 10th April 2003 (accessed via <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/> - on 12/03/2014) and *The International*

Some Kurds even expressed their happiness through dancing and listening to music¹³⁶.

In the aftermath of the 2003 Iraq War, Carl Conetta observed that,

By almost every measure, the Kurds stand apart as uniquely positive in their attitudes about the occupation and the post-war situation in Iraq. They strongly support the US troop presence and tend to have good relations with the coalition forces, who the vast majority of Kurds see as having behaved “well” or “very well” (Conetta 2005:15-16).

Conetta points out that, by contrast, the Sunni Arab community exhibited the strongest oppositionist views, being least satisfied with post-war conditions, the foreign troop presence, and the behaviour of the U.S. forces (Conetta 2005:15-16). Amongst them there was strong opposition to the continuation of a substantial U.S. presence in Iraq in the aftermath of the invasion. This Sunni disapproval undermined any approval of the original ousting of the Baa’th regime. With regards to the Shiite community, Conetta observed that the Shiites represented a midway position between Sunni and Kurdish views but on other specific issues such as whether the war did more harm than good, the distribution of opinion in the Shiite community was much closer to that held by the Sunnis (Conetta 2005:15-16). In his memoir, *The Occupation of Iraq: Winning the War, Losing the Peace*, Ali Allawi captured the various sentiments of Iraq’s major tribes during the immediate aftermath of the U.S. – led invasion in the following words:

The first weeks after the fall of Baghdad had set the stage for the drama that had only just started. The mostly Shi’a population of the South had stubbornly refused to make the connection between the overthrow of a hated regime and the invasion and occupation of the country. The Sunni Arabs were alienated, sullen and resentful, and bided their time for an appropriate response. The Kurds were determined to maximise their gains

New York Times, 10th April 2003 – The Fall of Baghdad (accessed via <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/04/10/opinion/the-fall-of-Baghdad/> - on 12/03/2014);

¹³⁶ Reported in the Lebanese newspaper, *al-Nahar*, on 11th April 2003;

and to set themselves up as the Coalition's indispensable allies
(Allawi 2007:95).

With particular reference to the Shi'a community, Allawi states that:

The post-war era opened up the prospect for changing the political circumstances of the Shi'a of Iraq. They suddenly found that their nemesis had been removedThe key shift in Shi'a thinking, however, was a move from the politics of 'victimisation' to an insistence on their rights as a majority.....All these currents, most still in the formative stage, emerged into the light of day after the fall of the Ba'ath regime
(Allawi 2007: 137).

Overall and what is clear also, is that at no point did Iraqi support for Saddam's removal from power translate into a fully fledged support for the U.S. presence in Iraq. Eric Herring and Glen Rangwala point out that many commentators have observed that there seemed to be a window of goodwill for the U.S. presence in Iraq that lasted only a few months (Herring & Rangwala 2006). Indeed, in his testimony before the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Peter W. Galbraith, a U.S. academic and former diplomat who advised the autonomous Kurdish regional government in northern Iraq in 2003 predicted that in his judgment, the United States may have an especially short window of goodwill in Iraq. Galbraith stated:

Any occupying power has a relatively short window before the goodwill generated by liberation is replaced by anger and frustration at the inevitable lack of progress in improving the quality of life for the people of the country (Galbraith 2003).

According to Herring and Rangwala, the opinion poll evidence shows that there was a great deal of suspicion amongst Iraqi Arabs from the outset, and the mere fact, and the conduct, of the occupation rapidly turned the suspicion to hostility among most of them (Herring & Rangwala 2006). In the aftermath of the 2003 U.S. – led invasion, Iraqis generally harboured suspicions about the U.S.'s stated efforts to democratize their

country. Dr. Salam Saadi, an Iraqi communist and a prominent member of the Association of Iraqi Academics UK makes the point that these suspicions of U.S. motives obviously had historical links and were fuelled by incidents such as the U.N. resolution which empowered the U.S. as an occupying force in Iraq; the use of caucuses which reflected past-colonialist tendencies; and the siege of Fallujah by U.S. marines¹³⁷. The incident that took place in Fallujah on 29th April 2003 is particularly notable because Fallujah is a Sunni City which had a population then of about 200,000 and which unlike most of Iraq, had benefited under Saddam's regime and was part of the so-called Sunni Triangle. Describing the incident that took place in Fallujah, the journalist and author, Aaron Glantz states that:

U.S. troops opened fire in Fallujah and killed more than a dozen demonstrators who had gathered to celebrate Saddam's 66th birthday and protest against the fact that the U.S. Army had taken over one of their schools and turned it into a military base. American troops said that the protesters shot first, but local community leaders denied this, and no American soldiers were hurt (Glantz 2006:20).

Glantz points out that Sunni Muslims from the west of Iraq had formed the backbone of Saddam's regime in Fallujah and had ruled over both Shiites and Kurds who together had made up three-quarters of the population. According to Glantz, if there was any place in Iraq where support for armed resistance might be found, it would be Fallujah (Glantz 2006:20).

Iraqi public opinion was also polled repeatedly in the immediate aftermath of the U.S.-led occupation of Iraq by a variety of firms. Their findings, as Carl Conetta points out, left no doubt about the main contours of Iraqi sentiment regarding the U.S.'s occupation

¹³⁷ Saadi, S. (2013). Interview with on 3rd July 2013. Senate House, School of Advanced Study (London: University of London).

of their country (Conetta 2005). Indeed, as early as 2004 Gallup Organization asked Iraqis whether they primarily thought of coalition forces as liberators or occupiers. Seventy-one (71%) said occupiers (Kull 2008). Also, in another poll in June 2004, ORI found 58 percent of Iraqis somewhat or strongly opposed the presence of coalition forces in Iraq. The ratio of those strongly opposed to those strongly supporting the Coalition presence had increased to 3-to-1 (ORI 2004). Confirming these results, the Iraq Centre for Research & Strategic Studies (ICRSS), established in 2003 by Saadoun al-Dulaimi, a British – educated Sunni Arab politician who served as a minister in successive Iraqi governments from 2005, found in a June 2004 poll that 66 percent of Iraqis strongly or somewhat opposed the presence of Coalition forces, while 30 percent supported it. The ratio of those strongly opposed to those strongly supporting the Coalition presence was greater than 6-to-1 (ICRSS 2004). On balance, Iraqis opposed the U.S. presence in Iraq, and those who strongly opposed it greatly outnumbered those who strongly supported it (Conetta 2005). Moreover, U.S. troops were viewed broadly as an occupying force, not peacekeepers or liberators (Conetta 2005).

It was not simply the military power of the United States that confronted Iraqis in the aftermath of the invasion of their country. American economic power was strongly felt and visible in the developing presence of U.S. firms throughout Iraq. Rowswell and Crocker point out that the vast investments of companies such as Bechtel and Kellogg and Brown & Root which were deployed to revitalize the Iraqi economy gave rise to concerns amongst Iraqis about foreign ownership of Iraqi assets (Rowswell & Crocker 2004:3). These developments also created anxiety amongst Iraqis, and in turn, generated a degree of resentment toward the perceived source of that change. Speaking before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 11th February 2003, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Marc Grossman, sought to appease Iraqi fears about the U.S.

presence in their country. Grossman stated that: “*We will demonstrate to the Iraqi people and the world that the United States wants to liberate Iraq, not to occupy Iraq or control Iraqis or their economic resources*” (cited in Allawi 2007: 96).

Finally, the 2003 invasion brought with it economic strife and lawlessness which in turn activated the violence – prone elements within Iraqi society. Iraqis who applauded U.S. forces as they toppled a statue of Saddam Hussein in central Baghdad marking the end of the Baath Party’s iron-fisted rule were left distraught as their nation shortly descended into vicious sectarian warfare in which tens of thousands died. Carl Conetta points out that the 2003 Iraq war – related fatalities caused tens of thousands of Iraqi families to bear a grudge against the Coalition, a resentment amplified by wider village, tribal, and friendship ties (Conetta 2005). In an interview conducted by the International Crisis Group (ICG), a former Iraqi officer and tribal leader estimated that 10 – 20 percent of the Iraqi military personnel killed in the war had strong tribal ties (ICG 2003). Overall, the fact is, many Iraqis blamed the U.S. occupation forces for eliciting insurgent violence, or for failing to prevent it, or both¹³⁸. In the aftermath of the invasion, *The New York Times* quoted a worried Iraqi citizen, Hussein Abdul-Hussein, as saying ‘.....*I also worry about the chaos that seems to be rising in Iraq, with the looting in Baghdad and the death yesterday of a prominent Shiite cleric in Najaf*¹³⁹. Iraqi sentiments towards the U.S.’s handling of the post-war situation was summed up by the first interim president of Iraq, Ghazi al-Yawer, who stated that,

¹³⁸ See Carroll, Jim (2005) Ordinary Iraqis bear brunt of war, *Christian Science Monitor*, 15 April, p.6; Fairweather, Jack (2004) Iraqis blame US for bomb attacks on army recruits, *News Telegraph*, 2 December; Galloway, Joseph L. et al (2004), Blunders worsened America’s problems in Iraq, *Knight Ridder*, 18 October; and Fisher, Ian (2003) As Iraqis Become the Targets of Terrorists, Some Now Blame the American Mission, *New York Times*, 17 December.

¹³⁹ Reported in the *New York Times* on 11th April 2003 – <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/04/11/> - accessed on 13/02/2014;

We blame the United States 100 percent for the security in Iraq. They occupied the country, disbanded the security agencies and for 10 months left Iraq's borders open for anyone to come in without a visa or even a passport (cited in Wong 2004).

The final factor responsible for the resentment towards the U.S. in Iraq is the Abu Ghraib scandal. The reception of the prisoner abuse images from Abu Ghraib in 2004 was surprisingly low-key in Iraq. Part of the reason was that rumours and tall stories, as well as true stories, about abuse, mass rape, and torture in the jails and in coalition custody were common currency. Indeed, compared to what Iraqis had been talking about, and suspected, the pictures appeared quite benign. It did seem that, the reported abuses at Abu Ghraib were somehow expected. Indeed, what most Iraqis were asking is: why were these abuses only reported now? Iraqis were always suspecting that there was some scheming going on, some agenda on the part of the United States in releasing the pictures when it did, and that the timing of it all was part of a carefully conceived plan (Said 2004). What followed these revelations was that, in an unprecedented damage-limitation exercise, Bush went on Arab TV Alhurra - an Arab-language network funded by the U.S. government - and told Arab viewers that the treatment of prisoners by some members of the U.S. military in Iraq had been "abhorrent" and would be thoroughly investigated. Bush stated that Americans were appalled by the pictures and allegations. He promised that "justice will be delivered". Furthermore, he urged Arabs to understand that what took place in Abu Ghraib did not represent the United States he knew. Bush assured Arab viewers that, the United States he knew is a compassionate country that believes in freedom and cares about every individual¹⁴⁰. Despite Bush's apologetic stance, CNN reporter Ben Wedeman reported that Iraqis reaction to his apology was "mixed":

¹⁴⁰Available from: <http://www-foxnews.com/story/2004/05/07/bush-apologizes-for-Iraqi-Prisoner-Abuse> (accessed on 13/12/13).

Some people react[ed] positively, saying that he's come out, he's dealing frankly and openly with the problem and that he has said that those involved in the abuse will be punished. On the other hand, there are many others who say it simply isn't enough, that they – many people noted that there was not a frank apology from the president for this incident. And, in fact, I have a Baghdad newspaper with me right now from – it's called 'Dar-es-Salaam.' That's from the Islam Iraqi Islamic Party. It says that an apology is not enough for the torture of – yes, the torture of Iraqi prisoners¹⁴¹.

Indeed, few Iraqis appeared convinced of Bush's sincerity. Many did not believe that the perpetrators of the hideous crimes at Abu Ghraib would ever face jail or indeed be punished. For many Iraqis, the shocking revelations surrounding the Abu Ghraib abuses encouraged the negative image in their country of the United States as an arrogant neo-colonial power whose human rights rhetoric was little more than a cover for wider geopolitical aims. The U.S.'s pro-democratic credentials suffered a serious blow as a result of these revelations.

The factors responsible for the apparent resentment towards the U.S. in Lebanon

Firstly, religious orientation is a significant predictor of attitudes toward the U.S. in Lebanon. Specifically, being a Muslim is consistently associated with unfavourable attitudes towards the U.S. in particular, and its policy in the region. Lebanese non-Muslims, in particular the Christian population, have favourable opinions towards America partly because U.S. policies in Lebanon tend to favour them. Marc Lynch explains that Lebanon offers a clear case in which attitudes toward America are filtered through domestic politics and religious identity. According to Lynch, Lebanese Christians tend to have overwhelmingly positive views of America, while Lebanese Muslims – especially Shia – express profound distrust (Lynch 2007: 196-226). It is

¹⁴¹ Live At Daybreak, Transcript, CNN.com, 6th May 2004 – accessed via <http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0405/06 - on 02/02/2014>;

widely perceived that the U.S. supports Lebanon's constitutional power-sharing arrangements because it fears that free and open elections could lead to the rise of an Islamic – controlled government hostile to Israel and the United States. Furthermore, U.S. policy makers suspect that free and open elections could open the door to Hezbollah to gain more power in central government, as Hamas did in Palestine. The present constitutional power-sharing arrangements do not account for the significant demographic shifts after 1943 and thus provide Christians with disproportionate power compared to Muslims, who are now the numerical majority. The distribution of seats in Lebanon's Chamber of Deputies continues to be fixed according to the population figures for the 1932 census resulting in a degree of political and economic inequality. As a result of this inequality, many Muslims feel like second-class citizens in a state that many feel will always have a predominantly pro-Western and Christian orientation (Najem 2012: 32). The Shi'a feel like third-class citizens since their population has increased very significantly and they have no increased representation to show for it, while the Sunni community at least has control of the office of Prime Minister (Najem 2012:32). Consequently, anti-American sentiments remain pervasive in Lebanon among the more politically disadvantaged Muslim populations while the Christians recognize their tenuous demographic position and seek to work with the U.S. to preserve their power within Lebanon.

The second factor responsible for the resentment towards the U.S. in Lebanon has its origins in the 1958 U.S. military intervention in the country and the presence of U.S. troops in Lebanon during the period 1982 – 1984. William B. Quandt points out that the United States was widely seen as a power broker in selecting Lebanese presidents, as during the American military intervention of 1958 it foreclosed a second term of office for President Camille Chamoun and arranged the election of Army Commander General

Fuad Shehab as president (Quandt 1978:222-228). Most of the Lebanese factions and leaders already believed that the United States was deeply involved in Lebanon and that the United States was actively backing certain key ‘players’. Because the United States was perceived as the primary supplier of arms to Israel, many Lebanese and Palestinians in Lebanon counted the United States as an active player in Lebanon on the side of Israel. The belief that America was the tacit accomplice of Israel in Lebanon engendered hatred in Lebanese and Palestinian extremist circles. The United States was also widely believed to be supporting the Lebanese Christian militia (called the “Lebanese Forces (LF)”) which received assistance and equipment from Israel. In addition, the United States was perceived in the 1970s as having a close relationship with the intelligence arm of the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) and backing Lebanese President Elias Sarkis (Quandt 1978:222-228).

Thus, despite the best of intentions or assertions in Washington, the United States was not viewed in Lebanon as a neutral actor in the Lebanese equation. These various perceptions of the United States’ role in Lebanon gave rise to violent expressions of anti-Americanism.

Thirdly, although the United States has continually attempted to play a significant role in Lebanese affairs, in the light of its connection with Israel, U.S. relations with Lebanon have been particularly unstable. Because a significant number of Lebanon’s conflicts have in some way been related to Israel, many Lebanese hold Israel responsible for much of the devastation experienced in their country. The notable Israeli invasions of Lebanon referred to as “Operation Peace for Galilee” (1982), “Operation Accountability” (1993) and “Operation Grapes of Wrath” (1996) inflicted considerable damage to Lebanese property in Southern Lebanon and other parts of the country. The experience of dealing with Israel’s long occupation of Southern Lebanon (1982 – 2000)

is still deeply rooted in the national consciousness. The resistance against the Israeli occupation evokes hostile feelings toward the Jewish state's staunchest ally, the United States. America's patronage of the former occupying force has in turn unified anti-Israeli and anti-American sentiments leading to a systemic rise in a shared hatred for both countries among large parts of the Lebanese population. Much of this anti-American resentment was evident in the immediate aftermath of the July 2006 Israeli-Hezbollah war. Writing shortly after the cessation of hostilities, the journalist Leila Fadel points out that many Christians and Druze as well as Shia and Sunni Muslims, felt deserted by America as Israeli warplanes bombarded Lebanon for four weeks with American-made weapons which destroyed apartment blocks, bridges and roads (Fadel 2006). Leila Fadel quotes the Greek Orthodox Lebanese politician and former Minister of the Environment, Yaacoub al-Sarraf, as saying "*Bitter is an understatement about American politics in Lebanon. We're not bitter about them sending bombs; we're bitter about them covering up for murder*" (cited in Fadel 2006). Another former Lebanese Minister of Trade and Economy, Sami Haddad, a Protestant Christian close to the anti-Syrian (and pro-Western) March 14th Alliance was quoted as saying "*The cost and toll in human suffering is enormous, and it's undermined the capital that the U.S. has in Lebanon and other places, not to mention it's undermining of pro-Western governments across the region*" (cited in Fadel 2006).

Graphic illustrations in the form of anti-American posters also became commonplace in shopping districts in Beirut in the immediate aftermath of the July 2006 war. Fadel describes these graphic images explicitly and she tells us that in one of these images, a large banner in central Beirut depicted the former U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice staring intently, with piercing fangs of blood dripping from her lips. The message on the banner referred to the massacre of at least 28 civilians and many children in an

Israeli airstrike on 30th July 2006 on the southern Lebanese town of Qana. It read simply: *“The massacre of children in Qana is a gift from Rice”* (cited in Fadel 2006). In another poster, a man lifts a dead child covered in dust with a blue pacifier hanging from his shirt, an image from the July 30 Qana bombing. The poster read: *“March 21st Mother’s Day, June 18th U.S. Father’s Day, July 30th Bush’s Children’s Day”* (cited in Fadel 2006). Needless to say, the Israeli-U.S. alliance has undermined the United States’ agenda in Lebanon and it remains the cause of much popular anger and discontent among the Lebanese population. Misbah Ahdab, a Sunni Muslim politician who also belonged to the March 14th Alliance was quoted as saying, *“You [U.S.] cannot see the Middle East only through the eyes of Israel. Either this [Israeli-Hezbollah conflict] is settled immediately and we hurry and work to rebuild, or it will be a mini-Iraq and all the extremists will come to Lebanon to fight Israel”* (cited in Fadel 2006).

There is also the issue relating to the conflict with Syria for which many Lebanese blame the U.S. for failing to prevent Syria from establishing a coercive political structure in Lebanon in the aftermath of the civil war. Because of the Israeli-Syrian conflict and the delicate balance of regional security, the U.S. is accused of standing by for over a decade and watching Syria penetrate almost all civil, political, and security institutions and organisations in Lebanon. It was understood by many Lebanese that, as long as the Israeli-Syrian dispute remained unresolved, the U.S. would tread carefully and avoid policies that might alienate Syria and damage the prospects of an eventual settlement. It did appear that everyone, with the possible exception of the Lebanese themselves, seemed content to wait for a settlement of the Israeli-Syrian dispute before placing substantial pressure on Syria about its effective hegemony in Lebanon. Indeed, it is widely believed that it was only when the United States acknowledged its inability to elicit Syrian cooperation in Iraq and the occupied Palestinian territories that it

decided to depart from its policy of ignoring Syria's continuing dominance of Lebanon's political system and for the first time took significant diplomatic measures to express its displeasure with the situation in Lebanon. Most commentators argue that U.S. pressure on Syria was part of a more ambitious strategy to reshuffle the geopolitics of the Middle East and neutralize Israel's Arab adversaries (Mearsheimer & Walt 2007).

The Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act introduced by the U.S. Congress on 12th April 2003 was part of this strategy. Similarly, on 3rd May 2003, then U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell presented Bashar al-Asad with a long list of U.S. demands aimed at, among other things, loosening Syria's grip on Lebanon (Nasif 2004). This U.S. pressure on Syria climaxed with the promulgation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559 on 2nd September 2004, which effectively called for Syria to withdraw from Lebanon or to face international sanctions. Pierre Maroun, a political analyst and the chairman of the American Lebanese Center for Cultural Research, sought to explain the obvious reasons why the U.S. could not use military force against the Syrian presence in Lebanon. According to Maroun, the objective of the Bush Administration was to free Lebanon's democratic system from foreign influence. To do so, the U.S. had to use political pressure only. This was in part due to the fact that the Syrian presence in Lebanon was legally and politically covered by the U.S. as well as by the Arab League. Maroun explains when the war broke out in Lebanon in the 1970s and the PLO controlled large parts of Lebanon, from which it launched its attacks against Israel, the U.S. secretly negotiated an agreement, known as "The Redline Agreement" between Israel and Syria, in which it regulated the Syrian presence in Lebanon. Maroun argues that the main aim of the agreement was to control the PLO's activities. Furthermore, after the war broke out in April of 1975, The Arab League established the Arab Deterrent Forces, which were predominantly composed of Syrian

troops at the beginning and later on Syria became the only power on the ground after all other Arab nations withdrew their troops¹⁴².

Whilst U.S. diplomatic pressure helped set the stage for the Cedar Revolution in 2005 that ultimately led to Syria's exit from Lebanon, many Lebanese recall that during the period in which International human rights watchdogs, such as Amnesty International, tried in vain to call attention to the perpetration of significant human rights abuses by the Syrian-backed Lebanese government against its political opponents, the U.S. strategically stepped aside and chose to ignore the plight of the Lebanese people. Consequently, the U.S.'s strategy then, and to date, is understandably viewed with open distrust by many Lebanese.

The next factor is the Arab-Israeli conflict even though it is argued that amongst the Middle Eastern states, Lebanon was arguably the least moved by the liberation of Palestine as a political issue. This attitude is attributed to the involvement of Palestinians in the 15 – year Lebanese civil war and, more specifically, to negative perceptions of the repercussions of having hosted Palestinian refugees in Lebanon for over six decades¹⁴³. Logically enough, and however, diminished sympathy for Palestinians by no means translates into favourable Lebanese evaluations of Israel (which occupied parts of Lebanon from 1978 until 2000) (Furia & Lucas 2006: 585-605) or indeed the U.S.'s pro-democratic efforts.

Writing in 2002, Talal Salman, a Lebanese journalist and the founder of the independent leftist newspaper, *As Safir*, argues that:

¹⁴² Maroun, P. (2013). Email correspondence with candidate on 5th July 2013.

¹⁴³ See Fisk, Robert (1992) "Pity the Nation: Lebanon at War", (Oxford: Oxford University Press); Collings, Deirdre, (Ed). (1994) "Peace for Lebanon? From War to Reconstruction", Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

The United States cannot claim today to be the champion of freedoms while it is waging 'vicious' wars against the Arabs in most of their countries, from Egypt to Saudi Arabia, and from Iraq to Yemen.....This superpower, which protects and sponsors Sharon's mass killings and systematic destruction of Palestinian life, cannot emerge as an 'angel' in Lebanon, calling for virtuous work and looking after the seeds of democracy!
(Salman 2002 cited in Ottaway 2003:10).

Also, speaking at the Arab Strategy Forum in Dubai in December 2004, Ghassan Salameh, a respected academic and former minister of culture in Lebanon who was an adviser to the UN in Iraq in 2003 stated that:

If you have globalization across the Arab world, if you have democratic government, you will find that the normal Arabs are more interested in Palestine than the governments. The idea that it's because of the governments that most Arabs are interested in the Arab-Israeli conflict is not true. It's exactly the opposite. I know it's very fashionable at the moment in Washington to think that it will go away if you have democracy. Most Arabs are genuinely and legitimately concerned about this conflict.....the answer is not to say 'no, let's forget about Palestine'¹⁴⁴.

Needless to say, the Israeli-U.S. alliance gives rise to suspicion of the U.S.'s democracy promotion motives amongst sections of the Lebanese intelligentsia. The views of the Lebanese commentators show the extent to which they recognised the political importance of tackling the issue of Palestine. The recurring theme is the call for the United States to place the Arab-Israeli conflict on its most urgent agenda and address it with the same sense of fairness and justice that it claims is the driving force behind its ambition to promote the spread of democracy in the Arab World.

Finally, the U.S. evaluation of Hezbollah as a terrorist organisation is a source of controversy in Lebanon. Hezbollah has existed in Lebanon as the only military force

¹⁴⁴ Forum on "The Arab World: Between the Realities of Today and the Promises of Tomorrow", 14th December 2004 – accessed via:
http://www.godubai.com/citylife/press_release_page - accessed on 11/11/2013;

able to stand up to Israel and the U.S., and as a result, has gained considerable support from a variety of Lebanese citizens. Because Hezbollah enjoys a high standing in Lebanon, many Lebanese denounce the U.S.'s criminalization of the so-called 'Party of God'. The support for Hezbollah among the Lebanese is not necessarily an expression of support for Hezbollah's fundamentalist values, but rather an expression of a shared hatred for Israel. In an interview with Gaby Jamal, a Palestinian political analyst and documentary film maker born in Lebanon, he pointed out that because the U.S. sides with Israel, its condemnation of Hezbollah has led to the profound rejection of its proposals for Western-style liberal democracy among the Lebanese population¹⁴⁵.

Regarding the US's conflation of democracy with the Iraq war, many Lebanese viewed the invasion as an attempt by the United States to impose its tutelage upon the Arab world and not as was much publicised, to neutralize Saddam's armoury of chemical and biological weapons. Many Lebanese opposed the invasion of Iraq and sections of the population organized various protest marches against a possible Iraq war in 2003. One such event attended by 6,000 demonstrators took place in Tripoli in early March 2003.

It featured slogans such as:

Bush, the criminal, a shame for humanity.....Boycott American interests and American and Israeli terrorism (Faath 2006: 152).

The occupation of Iraq was widely seen by many Lebanese, as well as Arabs generally, as a neo-colonialist adventure aimed at securing American interests. The Lebanese journalist Michael Young, a frequent columnist for the Beirut *Daily Star* newspaper, summed up Lebanese perspectives when he commented that:

The American agenda has completely changed. What Iraq was set out to be has been supplanted by a completely different

¹⁴⁵ Jamal, G. (2013). Interview with candidate on 5th January 2013 (Hamra, Beirut: Lebanon).

agenda – containing Iran and containing Iran’s allies.....The democracy debate has ended today, and I regret that (cited in Shadid 2007).

Certainly, the various communiqués issued by the late Lebanese Shi’a religious authority, Sayyed Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah on the occupation of Iraq by US-led forces also had a negative effect on Lebanese perspectives. In a statement issued in which he referred to a study undertaken by a non-profit American centre for studies which stated that George W. Bush made “259 false statements” about Iraqi weapons and al-Qaida, Fadlallah labelled Bush as an ‘*apostle of lies and a preacher of destruction and terrorism*’. Fadlallah further called for Bush to be tried as the number one liar in the world who has caused the death of tens of thousands of people (Fadlallah 2008a). In another communiqué on developments in Iraq, Fadlallah stated that:

The entire world knows that the Iraqi people repudiate the occupation.....The United States, and its administration, is a country that seeks to secure its strategic interests in the world. It won’t be a sincere friend to any country unless the latter secures its empire and hegemony. Even in this case, this friendship is temporary and is contingent upon the continuance of this interest (Fadlallah 2008b).

The U.S.’s credibility as an effective advocate of democratic ideals was also tarnished in many Lebanese eyes following the release of photographs on 28th April 2004 showing the degradation and torture of Iraqi prisoners by U.S. service personnel. These publicised human rights abuses called into question the morality of the 2003 invasion of Iraq and the occupation of that country by U.S.-led forces.

In his testimony to U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee on 19th May 2004, retired U.S. Army Central Commander, General John P. Abizaid, an American of Lebanese Maronite Catholic descent, who succeeded General Tommy Franks in Iraq as Commander of US CENTCOM on 7th July 2003, stated that following the Abu Ghraib

scandal he talked to many Iraqis before he left Iraq who expressed shock, disgust and disappointment over the images of human rights abuses. Abizaid admitted that: “*No doubt, we [U.S.] have made mistakes in Abu Ghraib. We have suffered a setback*”¹⁴⁶.

Referring also to the abuses carried out by U.S. soldiers, Ghassan Salameh, argues that:

A superpower that calls for respecting human rights but permits its troops to act the way they did at Abu Ghraib has no moral authority (Salame 2004 cited in Baroudi 2007: 402).

Omar Nashabe, director of the research unit of the Lebanese newspaper *Al-Akhbar*, also noted the effects of Abu Ghraib on Lebanese and Arab perceptions of the United States and stated that:

Images of torture at Abu Ghraib have destroyed the credibility of the US Administration. These images also revealed as hollow the arguments for democracy, freedom, and human rights that the Americans have raised [in] their ongoing military, cultural, political, and social onslaught on our Arab world (Nashabe 2004 cited in Baroudi 2007: 403).

¹⁴⁶ [Internet source]: Available from: [http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-108shrg96600 –](http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-108shrg96600/) (accessed on 30/08/2014).

Comments such as those from Salame and Nashabe substantiate long-standing assumptions by the Lebanese population regarding the low value that the U.S. seemed to place on Arab lives. Crucially also, such comments led many Lebanese to question U.S. motives and objectives for it would seem that the U.S. did not practise what it preached.

The remainder of this chapter will examine the reactions of the Lebanese towards notable U.S. policy initiatives which aimed at promoting political reform in the Arab world in the aftermath of 9/11 and the 2003 Iraq war. In particular, my discussion will draw attention to the Bush Administration's campaign to effect democratic change in the Arab world articulated in the Administration's most prominent initiatives namely the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) launched in December 2002 and the Broader Middle East and North Africa Partnership Initiative (BMENA) launched in June 2004¹⁴⁷. Both of these initiatives were formulated in response to regional deficits in 'democracy' identified in the Arab Human Development Report published in 2002 and as a follow-up to the mild and hesitant U.S. democracy promotion efforts that formed part of U.S. foreign policy in the Arab World in the 1990s. Throughout the ensuing discussion I will aim to show how instead of embracing the U.S.'s democratization agenda, Lebanese commentators in particular demonstrated deep suspicions of American motives with many articulating vociferous criticisms of U.S. initiatives aimed at promoting democratic reform.

¹⁴⁷ The BMENA was launched in partnership with the G-8 and it was a product of a flurry of transatlantic meetings held in June 2004 – the G – 8 meeting, the brief U.S. /E.U. summit, and the NATO summit.

The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI): Background, contents, and Iraqi and Lebanese reactions

The first meaningful attempt by the United States to “win Arab hearts and minds”, which followed the U.S.’s hesitant and subdued efforts to democratize the Arab world prior to 9/11, took the form of a public diplomacy campaign namely, the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI). The MEPI was launched by the U.S. State Department and officially unveiled by then Secretary of State Colin Powell in December 2002. Powell’s official launch of the U.S.’s MEPI had been postponed several times leading up to its announcement. A day before Powell’s statement, then CIA Chief George Tenet spoke about the same issue. During his remarks at the Nixon Center Distinguished Service Award Banquet, Tenet stated that the war on terrorism cannot be won by merely defeating and dismantling Al-Qaeda, but by dealing with the circumstances that fuel desperation, weaken governments, and create a power vacuum, which extremists rush to fill. Tenet also called for encouraging moderate Islam and providing opportunities for people, especially women (Tenet 2002). A week prior to Tenet’s statement, Richard Haas proposed similar ideas when he admitted, albeit cautiously, that successive U.S. administrations had made mistakes over the past fifty years by failing to promote the spread of democratic principles in the Arab world.

MEPI was explained in a speech delivered by Colin Powell to the conservative right-wing Heritage Foundation on 12th December 2002. In his speech, Powell stated that he was pleased to announce an innovative set of programs and a framework for future cooperation called the U.S.-Middle East Partnership Initiative. He stated that:

The initiative is a bridge between the United States and the Middle East, between our governments and our peoples, that spans the hope gap with energy, ideas, and funding (Powell 2002).

Powell added further that:

Our Partnership Initiative is a continuation, and a deepening, of our longstanding commitment to working with all the peoples of the Middle East to improve their daily lives and help them face the future with hope. Just as our decision to rejoin UNESCO is a symbol of our commitment to advancing human rights and tolerance and learning, so this Initiative is a concrete demonstration of our commitment to human dignity in the Middle East (Powell 2002).

In sum, the MEPI aimed to promote entrepreneurship, political change, educational reform and women's rights in the Middle East¹⁴⁸. Specifically, the initiative was designed to encourage “*expanded public space where democratic voices can be heard in the political process, the people have a choice in governance, and there is respect for the rule of law*”¹⁴⁹. Jeremy Sharp, Middle East specialist with the US Congressional Research Service explains that:

In order to meet these goals, MEPI officials, in conjunction with Arab governments, invest[ed] funds in programs geared toward strengthening Arab civil society, encouraging micro-enterprise, expanding political participation, and promoting women's rights (Sharp 2005).

Despite the ‘loud noises’ and heightened U.S. rhetoric that paved the way for the MEPI's launch, the initiative failed to appease the anger against the United States. Its central features were vehemently criticized by Lebanese commentators in particular¹⁵⁰.

¹⁴⁸ G8 Research Group: Interim Compliance Report, February 28, 2005, p.9;

¹⁴⁹ Middle East Partnership Initiative, U.S. Department of State. Available from: <http://mepi.state.gov/mepi/> (accessed on 20 May 2012);

¹⁵⁰ The central component of the MEPI was a series of mini-TV documentaries entitled “Shared Values”, produced at a cost of \$15 million. The programs aimed to show that Arabs and, more generally, Muslims in the United States were free to live according to their values and pursue their religion but at the same time were accepted and well integrated into mainstream society. The series aired from October 28 to December 10 on pan-Arab television stations and in Indonesia, Kuwait, Malaysia, and Pakistan.

The press media in Lebanon greeted the MEPI with scorn and angrily dismissed it as a misguided public relations exercise which added insult to injury by proposing to interfere in internal Arab politics and only earmarking puny resources for this exercise. Compared to the tens of billions the United States would spend on a war in Iraq, the sum set aside to advance MEPI's democratic programmes, was seen by Iraqi and Lebanese commentators as a clear sign that the United States only pretended to care about the transformation of the Arab world and that its real priorities lay elsewhere¹⁵¹. Funded at a trifling \$29 million for the entire region for 2003, with \$7 – 8 million earmarked for women's rights and civil society support (with the rest going to education and development programs), MEPI was perceived as an extension of the cautious U.S. democracy promotion policy of the 1990s¹⁵². Powell stated during his aforementioned speech to the Heritage Foundation that the U.S. was initially dedicating \$29 million to get the MEPI off to a strong start. He added also that in collaboration with Congress, the Bush Administration would seek significant additional funding for the following year. These funds, he stated, would be over and above the more than \$1 billion the U.S. provides in economic assistance to the Arab world every year (Powell 2002).

In summing up of the Arab press reaction to the MEPI, the U.S. State Department's International Information Programme wrote:

¹⁵¹ The overall sum of \$293 million dollars for MEPI over four fiscal years compared to the bilateral economic assistance of over \$1 billion extended annually to BMENA countries was dwarfed by US expenditure in Iraq and the war on terror globally, which ran into tens of billions – see Dalacoura, K. (2001) US democracy promotion in the Arab Middle East since 11 September 2001: a critique, *International Affairs* 81, 5(2005) 963-979.

¹⁵² The MEPI's objectives are divided into four overarching categories: political reform, economic reform, educational reform and women's empowerment - see Jeremy M. Sharp, "The Middle East Partnership Initiative: An Overview", CRS Report for Congress, February 8, 2005, p.2;

Arab media panned MEPI as a misguided effort to improve the U.S.'s image in the Arab world and gain legitimacy for a war against Iraq” and “critics dismissed MEPI as ‘peanuts’ compared to U.S. military expenditures in the region¹⁵³.

This theme was quickly picked up by the Lebanese media. For some, the U.S. had clearly failed to demonstrate any seriousness toward its self-proclaimed priority to democratize the Arab world. The fact that there was a significant mismatch between funds allocated for the Iraq war and that which was earmarked and set aside for democracy promotion, angered Lebanese journalists leading to allegations of U.S. manipulation and a lack of seriousness on its part. Reporting for the *El-Shark* newspaper, the Lebanese journalist Awni Kaaki wrote:

The United States has allocated \$29 million for [MEPI], while the supposed war against Iraq will be costing it \$100 billion dollars...This is what falls within the frame of subduing the Arab world and controlling its capabilities to force it into accepting a new Middle East order¹⁵⁴.

The allocated sum equated to only 10 cents to be spent on every Arab man, woman, or child to teach them about the basic notions and principles of democracy. While the allocations to the MEPI were later increased, reaching \$98 million in its first 15 months, the programme still remained very cautious, and focused “*less on political change than on improving the performance of Arab governments, economies, and schools*” (Wittes 2004). Media reactions in Iraq, Lebanon and the wider Arab world remained undiluted following the increased allocations as larger calculations based on a projected ten-fold

¹⁵³ Department of State, International Information Program, Foreign Media Reaction, “Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI): Arab Press Wary”, 20th December 2002 – cited in Ottaway 2003:12;

¹⁵⁴ Awni Kaaki, *As-Sharq* (Lebanon), quoted in Department of State, International Information Program, Foreign Media Reaction, “Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI): Arab Press Wary”, 20th December 2002 – cited in Ottaway 2003:12;

increase in the initial sum of \$29 million revealed that only \$1 (one dollar) would be spent on each Arab for the U.S.'s declared goal.

The Beirut – based *Al-Safir* newspaper's editor Joseph Samaha summed up Lebanese Media and official reactions toward the MEPI when he wrote in an editorial in that newspaper that the purpose of MEPI was to link "*the ambitions of some people in the Arab world to the objectives of the United States, not the objectives of the United States to the ambitions of the people in the Arab world*"¹⁵⁵. Samaha's critical analysis of the MEPI's purpose aimed at showing the disconnection between the U.S.'s stated objectives and the ambitions of Arabs generally. He contended that there was a disparity between U.S. funding levels and Arab needs and seemed to suggest that despite its financial contribution towards political reform in the Arab world, it was clear that the United States is working at cross-purposes with local Arab reformists. Ghazi al-Aridi, a prominent Druze politician and the Minister of Information in Rafik Hariri's government, stated during an interview reported by the *Daily Star* newspaper that Powell's initiative on U.S. involvement in the Middle East was an attempt to "*consecrate American hegemony over the region*" (cited in Flayhan 2002). Al-Aridi also told the Egyptian Middle East News Agency (MENA) correspondent in Beirut that the move was tantamount to a "*formal announcement of a desire to interfere in all internal affairs of the region's countries and establish regimes in harmony with American policies*" (cited in Flayhan 2002). The former minister added that:

the American initiative aims to lay hands on the region's resources and consecrate Israel's strategic superiority.....[and that] it was out of place, as it came from a country that was

¹⁵⁵ "Pennywise Commitment to Arab Democracy", *Asia Times*, January 9, 2003 – cited in Jeremy M. Sharp, "The Middle East Partnership Initiative: An Overview", CRS Report for Congress, February 8, 2005, p.6;

leading the way in corruption, not good government (cited in Flayhan 2002).

According to Al-Aridi, American officials had been implicated in “*huge corruption*” scandals at firms such as Enron and WorldCom, “*which led to the fall of some financial empires*” (cited in Flayhan 2002).

Al-Aridi’s scathing remarks encapsulate several themes which have served to undermine the U.S.’s pro-democratic credentials in the Arab world. He asserts that the U.S.’s objective via its flagship initiative is aimed at consecrating American hegemony over the Arab world and Israel’s regional superiority. He argues further that the underlying motive of the MEPI is to interfere in Arab domestic politics, and he accuses American officials of being corrupt, which he argues, renders them unfit to pioneer the democratization of the Arab world. Al-Aridi’s comments echoed similar allegations levelled against the U.S.’s democracy promotion efforts by other Iraqi and Lebanese politicians and commentators. Indeed, altogether, the criticisms levelled against the MEPI constituted a comprehensive rebuttal of the U.S.’s pro-democratic credentials. There is little dispute that many Lebanese commentators viewed the MEPI with suspicion from its inception. With issues of the U.S.’s lack of credibility as a pro-democratic actor still abound and apparently still fresh in Iraqi and Lebanese minds, it was clear that, the U.S.’s flagship initiative would require a dramatic change of Arab hearts and minds for it to successfully pursue its ultimate goal to help usher in more democratic systems in the Arab world.

The Broader Middle East and North Africa Partnership Initiative (BMENA) or The Greater Middle East Partnership (GMEI) (hereinafter “the BMENA” or “the GMEI”): Background, contents, and Iraqi and Lebanese reactions

The U.S.’s BMENA was unveiled at the 2004 Sea Island Summit in June. The initiative was motivated by the U.S.’s desire to stifle the threats of political instability, economic stagnation and terrorism in the wider Middle East region. The plan was based upon earlier initiatives aimed at democratization in the region, including the afore-mentioned MEPI¹⁵⁶. According to the official statement released by the G-8, the BMENA’s plan to support reform was focused on the need to deepen democracy and broaden public participation, build a knowledge society, and promote economic development.

Accordingly, the BMENA focused on three areas, namely the political, social/cultural and economic spheres. In the political sphere, the BMENA aimed to foster progress toward democracy and the rule of law. In the social sphere the emphasis was on promoting education for all, freedom of expression, equality between men and women, as well as, securing and providing access to global information technology which is deemed crucial to modernization and prosperity. The BMENA aimed to create jobs as a number one priority in the economic sphere. Within this sphere, the BMENA aimed to work with governments and business leaders to promote entrepreneurship, expand trade and investment, increase access to capital, support financial reforms, secure property rights, promote transparency and fight corruption (ICG 2004).

The initial reaction in Iraq and Lebanon to the BMENA was also largely negative. The flagship initiative received vociferous criticism and Lebanese commentators again furiously repeated charges against of lack of consultation and neglect of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The U.S.’s perceived support for Israel is a recurrent theme which lies on top

¹⁵⁶ G8 Research Group: Interim Compliance Report, 28th February 2005.

of a pile of criticisms continually levelled against the U.S.'s democracy promotion efforts in the Arab world. Many Arab commentators continue to articulate and reiterate that the United States wants to impose its own priorities on the region, get rid of "undesirable" regimes, achieve hegemony over Middle East states and integrate Israel into the "Greater Middle East" before an agreed resolution to the Palestinian issue is reached. According to an editorial in the Lebanese newspaper *Al-Akhbar*, the BMENA aims at integrating Israel into the Middle East, "*something the Arab countries oppose as long as Israel continues with its aggressions against the Palestinian people*"¹⁵⁷. Writing in the Lebanese newspaper, *Al-Mustaqbal*, George Masri also notes that the term "Greater Middle East" is not innocent, for it has the political purpose of weaving Israel into "*the region's political and cultural fabric and thus legitimizing its presence*" (Masri 2004 cited in Baroudi 2007:410). He adds further that "*the GMEI is a mere rationalization for the Zionist presence and a justification for the culture of apartheid*" (Masri 2004 cited in Baroudi 2007: 411).

Other commentators believed that the United States took advantage of the pro-US feelings that swept Western capitals in the wake of 9/11, to carry the war against terrorism to its alleged breeding ground: the Islamic world. The respected late Lebanese journalist and editor, Joseph Samaha was a proponent of this view and saw the BMENA as part of the post-9/11 American campaign on terrorism. Writing in the Lebanese newspaper, *Al-Safir*, Samaha argued that the BMENA, "*exonerates and exalts*" the United States and its ally Israel, depicting both as good countries confronting "*an axis of evil which inherited Nazism and Communism, and which is responsible for all kinds*

¹⁵⁷ "*Kalma al-Yawn: Kalam Ma' qul wa Maqbul min Wazir Britani Mas'ul*" ["Today's Thought: Reasonable and Acceptable Talk from a Responsible British Minister"] - reported in *Al-Akhbar*, March 3, 2004, <http://www.elakhbar.org.eg/issues/16180/0205.html>

of evil deeds". He went on to state that – according to the Americans – this alleged “*axis of evil*” comprises:

fundamentalist terrorism that threatens civilization, freedom, and the American way of life and failed Arab regimes and dictatorships who seek to direct public anger towards Israel and the West in order to deflect attention from the calamities they have inflicted on their people (Samaha 2004 cited in Baroudi 2007:407).

Writing also in the Lebanese newspaper, *Al-Nahar*, ‘Imad Shayya, stated that the attacks of 9/11 represented a “*critical historic juncture in the American hegemonic experience*”. In the aftermath of the attacks, Shayya argues, the United States “*abandoned liberal thought, and slipped to religious –nationalism, with a taint of racism towards other people and nations*” (Shayya 2004 cited in Baroudi 2007: 407).

Another journalistic piece which featured in *Al-Nahar* and written by Samir Abou Hamid argued that:

It is evident that the new directions [in American foreign policy] in the region are based on fighting radical Islamic forces and demolishing the foundations that give rise to and sustain them under the slogan of ‘those who are not with us are against us (Hamid 2004 cited in Baroudi 2007: 407).

Given this backdrop, Lebanese politicians and journalists predictably labelled the BMENA as a mere smokescreen to foster the U.S.’s aggressive stance on the ‘war on terror’. They also alleged that the BMENA was created to conceal America’s geopolitical ambitions and its plans to gain unimpeded access to the Arab world’s vast oil resources. Bassem Yamout, a pro-Syrian member of the Lebanese Parliament between 2000 and 2005, argued that one aim of the BMENA was to provide the United States with control over Middle Eastern oil, which it would use to “*manipulate the economies of its rivals for global leadership*” (Yamout 2004 cited in Baroudi 2007: 406). Whilst these allegations remain unproved they are supported by a historical

precedent which argues that, with the onset of the Cold War, access to the oil resources of the Middle East was, from the U.S.'s point of view, a crucial strategic interest in the struggle with the Soviet Union. For Joseph Samaha, U.S. foreign policy was based on cold-blooded calculations rather than on emotions. He compared the United States to a “*cold-blooded animal*” that gives priority to protecting its interests over everything else (Samaha 2004 cited in Baroudi 2007:402). Talal Salman saw in the BMENA,

an embellished and stepped up version of earlier U.S. projects dating back to the Eisenhower Doctrine to dominate the region under the avowed goal of inheriting the old [European] imperialism that had its death blow during the Second World War (Salman 2004 cited in Baroudi 2007: 407 - 408).

Other writers still begged the question of how could the United States be a force for good in the world, if it did not really apply within its own borders or in its international conduct the values it preached. A proponent of this view is the Lebanese author ‘Adnan Haydar Ahmad. Writing in the Lebanese newspaper, *Al-Mustaqbal*, Haydar Ahmad opened his opinion piece with a popular Arab proverb that translates as “*you cannot offer what you do not have*” in order to emphasize that the United States cannot offer democracy to the world because it does not have it in the first place. According to Haydar Ahmad, money buys U.S. presidential elections, while only those candidates loyal to Israel win congressional seats (Ahmad 2004 cited in Baroudi 2007:399). In his opinion piece reported in *Al-Safir*, the Lebanese Maronite Christian politician Wadi’ al-Khazen, took the argument further by criticizing the abrogation of Arab Americans’ civil rights in the wake of 9/11 (Al-Khazen 2004 cited in Baroudi 2007:401). It would seem that Lebanese commentators tested the U.S.’s pro-democratic credentials by examining the U.S.’s modelling of itself by words and actions. For many, it did seem that it was not just about what the U.S. proposed to do to bring about political reform in the Arab world but also whether the qualities and benefits it aimed to convey via its

democracy promotion efforts were manifestly evident within American society itself. The results of their examination did not convince Lebanese commentators that the U.S. practiced what it preached. Consequently, the criticisms levelled against the BMENA aimed to expose U.S. officials as image managers, posers and hypocrites.

The BMENA was also regarded as an extension of the aggressive and imperialist nature of U.S. foreign policy. In this regard, the Lebanese Christian writer Ilyas Sahhab wrote sarcastically:

As if the Arabs in the twenty-first century needed the present U.S. Administration to coin the expression 'Greater Middle East' in order to be reminded that the entire Arab region, since the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, is still placed in the morgue of global politics, under the knives of major powers, which slice it according to their interests and expansionist and imperialist projects (Sahhab 2004:19 cited in Baroudi 2007: 408).

A substantial majority of commentators in Lebanon also raised the problem of credibility and consistency as the main issue limiting the impact of U.S. policy initiatives, with many agreeing that reform in the Arab world was none of America's business. Salim Al- Hoss, the prime minister of Lebanon during the years 1976 -80, 1987-90, and 1998-2000, remarked that America cannot be equally serious about democracy promotion and about maintaining friendships with Arab autocrats. Al-Hoss's comments draw upon the U.S.'s subdued and hesitant democracy promotion efforts during the years leading up to 9/11 and the 2003 Iraq war. He advanced his critique of BMENA by denouncing America's suitability as a promoter of democratic reform. Al-Hoss challenged America's pro-democratic credentials when he stated that:

I invite the US to reflect on its actions throughout the Arab world and find one single act it has done to promote democracy. Democracy promotion needs more than a declaration [GMEI].....It needs principled US AdministrationsSince Bush Senior the Arab world has been made weaker, more divided,

more autocratic, and increasingly more in the hands of the rich few not the moral publics who struggle for dignity, equality and liberation from dependence and occupation.....Plus America has nothing to teach the Arab world in democracy when it ignores world public opinion and invades a sovereign Arab state [Iraq] in the name of democracy promotion. That is not democratic¹⁵⁸.

Within this context, Ghassan Salameh provided one of the most articulate and thorough-going critiques of US foreign policy to emanate from the Arab world when he wrote that:

The Neoconservatives in the United States have spearheaded a campaign [BMENA] to divert attention from the real causes of terrorism. They try to trace the conflict with the West to cultural reasons that derive from Islam and contemporary Arab history. By posing the question, 'why do they hate us?' the Neoconservatives dismiss the role of specific American policies in provoking Arab resentment as if hatred to America is embedded in our culture and not caused by US conduct (Salameh 2004 cited in Baroudi 2007: 402).

According to Salameh, the objectionable international conduct of the United States strips it of any moral authority to call on the Arab world to democratize. He writes further:

Whoever is asking us to make a quick transition to the rule of law, democratic life, and respect for human rights should be above all reproach, like Caesar's wife.... A superpower that calls on us to inhale the sweet breezes of freedom but prevents the application of the Geneva protocols on the detainees at Guantanamo has no moral authority, a superpower that calls for respect of international law but allows itself to sidestep the opinion of the majority of members of the Security Council and refuses to sign the treaty establishing the International Criminal Court and the Kyoto accords has no moral authority....a superpower that believes Israel has the right to assassinate one

¹⁵⁸ Al-Hoss, S. (2005). Interview with Larbi Sadiki on 23 June 2005, Beirut, Lebanon. Cited in Sadiki, Larbi (2009) "Rethinking Arab Democratisation: Elections Without Democracy", (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p.183.

Palestinian leader after the other and build a separation wall that cuts through Palestinian villages and groves has no moral authority (Salameh 2004 cited in Baroudi 2007: 402).

Again referring to U.S. detainees at Guantanamo Bay military base, the former Lebanese Information Minister, Ghazi al-Aridi disapprovingly asks:

What is America doing about the prisoners at the Guantanamo Bay military base? Where is the 'civil society' that they talk about? America is ruling through military justice which gives absolute authority to the person of the United States president (cited in Flayhan 2002).

The themes expressed by the above-named Iraqi and Lebanese writers and politicians are echoed by dozens of Arab writers. Nader Fergani, the principal author of the 2002 and 2003 Arab Human Development Reports, also dwelt on the lack of U.S. credibility in the Arab world. With a great deal of emotion, triggered perhaps by a sense of betrayal and disappointment at how the United States used the reports to market its policies in the region, he wrote:

This initiative [BMENA] suffers from the lack of credibility of its authors.....The Arabs have every right to question the qualifications of the authors of this reformist project, for the hallmark of their history has been one of sowing discord in Arab lands and undermining the interest of the Arab nation. Does the devil suddenly turn to an angel by penning a document declaring all sorts of good intentions? (Fergani 2004: 10 cited in Baroudi 2007:403).

Conclusion

Against the background of the Arab world's perspective of the U.S.'s pro-democratic credentials, this chapter has sought to show that large sections of the Iraqi and Lebanese populations harboured deep suspicions of U.S. efforts to advance 'Western style' liberal democracy within their societies. The chapter also argues that, the "American ideal" of promoting democracy which was ambitiously espoused by the George W. Bush

administration, faced difficult and insurmountable challenges as a result of the widespread distrust and suspicion surrounding U.S. motives. The discussion of the specific factors responsible for the negative image of the U.S. permeating important sections of Iraqi and Lebanese societies traces the historical origins of anti-Americanism in Iraq and Lebanon, and it shows how U.S. foreign policy towards both countries gradually served to cultivate deep and pervasive suspicions of U.S. motives amongst many Iraqis and Lebanese. Furthermore, widespread and sustained criticisms of the U.S. flagship initiatives, namely, MEPI and BMENA, reflected the extent to which anti-U.S. sentiments served to undermine the Bush administration's democracy efforts in the aftermath of 9/11 and the 2003 Iraq war. Regarding the Lebanese perspectives, it is noteworthy that the critics of the U.S. have diverse religious backgrounds with Christians (who are generally perceived to have favourable attitudes towards the U.S.), Sunni, Shia and Muslims all voicing strong criticisms of U.S. democracy promotion motives. This is a significant observation as it highlights the extent to which the U.S.'s credibility as a pro-democratic reformer had been tarnished across different sections of the Lebanese population.

In the next chapter, I will show how the hypotheses and research questions set out at the beginning of this study have been addressed. Having examined the adverse impact upon the U.S.'s post-war Iraq and Middle East 'democracy policy' caused by turf wars and conflicting U.S. agency agendas on the one hand, and the impact of the negative Iraqi and Lebanese perspectives on the U.S.'s democracy promotion efforts on the other, I will now seek to advance suitable questions requiring further research.

CHAPTER SIX – CONCLUSION

The reasons for the George W. Bush administration's bungled attempts to initialize the installation of successful democracies in Iraq and Lebanon have been documented and debated extensively elsewhere. Political analysts generally focus on a host of prominent factors such as whether the type of democratic political system that was being exported by the United States was capable of being embraced and accepted in these countries. Also put forward; is the argument that democracy cannot be fostered by outside powers even in the absence of military intervention, if they simply aim to transfer a set of Western institutions. In the case of Iraq, political analysts focus mainly on failures in post-war planning, and the higher order of decisions that had the most impact, such as troop levels, the CPA's twin orders of '*de-Ba'athification*' and the dissolution of the army, and even whether a nation-building or democratisation effort in Iraq was possible in the first place given the country's background of sectarian and multi-ethnic tensions. Regarding Lebanon, the discussion often surrounds other independent variables such as the country's complex political system – the so-called confessional system – which is based on the premise that a careful balance in all aspects of political life must be maintained among the seventeen recognized religious communities. Commentators argue that while this confessional system has spared Lebanon the authoritarianism experienced by many regimes in Arab world, paradoxically it has stifled the transition to a truly democratic state. In addition, it is widely accepted that any strategy for political reform in Lebanon cannot start until the complex issue of Hezbollah's disarmament is resolved.

While the above factors shaped – and perhaps doomed – the course of the U.S.’s post-9/11 democracy ambitions in Iraq and Lebanon, analysis often neglects the impact of two other factors which form the focus of this study and, which helped derail Bush’s democracy campaign in these countries. First is the adverse impact on the Bush administration’s Iraq democracy policy caused by the conflicting agendas of U.S. agencies tasked with promoting democracy in this country. Second is the prevalent anti-American sentiment which many Iraqis and Lebanese harbour and share with large sections of the Arab World.

In addressing the first research question, focused on the gulf between the rhetoric and substance of political reform, it is argued that coordination and cooperation between U.S. agencies was of crucial importance to efforts to democratize Iraq in light of Bush’s post-9/11 foreign policy ambitions and the U.S.’s prominent military posture in the aftermath of the 2003 Iraq war. Within this context, the need in particular, for an effective collaborative effort, and joint enterprise between the two main protagonist institutions, U.S. State Department and Defense Department (Pentagon), cannot be overemphasised. This thesis presents evidence of competition and turf wars between the U.S. State Department and the Pentagon - and at times, the U.S. intelligence community - which impeded U.S. efforts to plan for the 2003 Iraq war and the post-Saddam period.

The evidence of a lack of strategic cooperation or convergence between U.S. agencies and actors took many shapes. First, in the build-up to the invasion of Iraq, research carried out reveals evidence of bureaucratic in-fighting between competing U.S. agencies. There is evidence of conflict about decisions, ideas, directions and actions and also personalized conflict fuelled by a blatant lack of consistency and cooperation between the Departments of State and Defense which served as a political divide. In the first instance, Secretary of State Colin Powell believed in strengthening multilateral

alliances to promote national security whilst Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and his top aides were more hawkish on foreign policy issues than the moderate Powell and saw international institutions not only as a nuisance but also as a threat. Those in favour of Donald Rumsfeld's strong arm tactics say he understood the urgency of the global terrorist threat, and that he faced up to problems at the Pentagon, improving the place through transformation. As the gulf between the two departments grew, the Bush Administration faced mounting challenges in its attempts to formulate a unified Iraq policy. Whilst Washington's leaders – State versus Defense - have had clashes in the past, they were never so publicly played out in times of national crisis as they were in the build up to the 2003 Iraq war and during the era of the CPA in Iraq. The actual history of the Bush administration's pre-war work and post-war planning efforts in Iraq is a story of substantial discord, with the discord sometimes undermining the Administration's best laid plans. Much of the discord had its origins in the arguments and disagreements about cooperating and working with the Iraqi oppositionists or externals such as Ahmad Chalabi and his INC party. The interagency discord gave rise to broken lines of communication and authority leading to a tug-of-war between George W. Bush's top brass. As a consequence, and during the post-war occupation of Iraq, the turf battles between Washington's major players filtered down the bureaucratic chain, choking-off cooperation on the ground in Iraq. This made it impossible to implement President Bush's strategic idea that the United States should assume the posture of liberator rather than occupier in Iraq. Against this background, this study presents evidence of a lack of strategic cooperation or convergence on approaches to democratisation on the ground in Iraq on the part of the plethora of U.S. agencies and NGOs tasked with promoting 'Western style' liberal democracy in this country.

Starting off with USAID's electoral technical assistance program, the Audit Report of the Office of Inspector General, styled Audit of USAID/Iraq's Electoral Technical Assistance Programme, revealed evidence of divergence and insufficient coordination between USAID's implementer, IFES and its international partner, the U.N. organization, UNAMI. Notably, the obstacles that hindered U.S. interagency cooperation in Iraq, were present, and often multiplied, when the U.S. dealt with foreign governments and international organisations. Although this thesis does not discuss it in depth, international cooperation in post-war reconstruction matters represents a third dimension of interagency relationships affecting the U.S. government. Indeed, according to the testimonies of both IFES and UNAMI officials, personality conflicts characterised their relationships, and they were mostly at odds with each other about the role each organisation should play in advising IHEC. As discussed at page 163, this lack of strategic cooperation or convergence between U.S. agencies and their international partners such as the UN caused the most critical needs of Iraq's electoral system to remain unaddressed.

There was also a clear lack of strategic cooperation regarding the time frames for the writing of the Iraqi constitution and the handover of sovereignty back to the Iraqi people. Bremer was of the strong view that the timetable that had been created by his CPA and the Iraqi leadership must be strictly adhered to. Whilst Bremer considered it essential to comply with prescribed deadlines in order to maintain the momentum of the political process in Iraq, the evidence shows that the views of key White House staff were at complete odds with the CPA's proposals. Within this context, there was also uncertainty over the chain of command as Bremer and Rumsfeld's Defense Department tussled over the former CPA chief's authority on the ground in Iraq.

The U.S.'s efforts to strengthen and bolster Iraq's civil society also provide evidence of a lack of a coordinated and collaborative effort on the part of U.S. agencies on the ground in Iraq. The three major community development programs run by USAID in Iraq namely, the LGP, the CAP and the CSCBP, albeit all being run from the same USAID department, were not coordinated or synchronized as they not only failed to reinforce each other, but in fact inadvertently undermined each other. Additionally, there was also evidence of duplication of donors' efforts which did not support long-term development work.

Furthermore, and with regards to the promotion of human rights in Iraq, a case in point is the evidence of prisoner abuse carried out by U.S. soldiers in Iraq. The 'liberators' whose job was to 'liberate' the Iraqi people and 'induct' them into democracy were themselves exposed as the perpetrators of grotesque human rights violations at the Abu Ghraib prison facility in 2003 and 2004. The human rights abuses in Abu Ghraib prison badly tarnished the positive image of democracy many Iraqis held prior to the 2003 U.S. led invasion of their country. This scandal underscores the point being made about the adverse impact on Bush's Mid-East democracy policy brought about by conflicting U.S. agency agendas which produced perplexing results. There was an almost complete militarization of the post-war situation in Iraq which facilitated the Pentagon's exercise of strong armed tactics and aggressive post-war controls. The Pentagon's dominance of the post-war situation effectively ended the State Department's role as a significant Washington player in Iraq as USAID and other U.S. agencies operating under the banner of the State Department watched powerlessly as their efforts to safeguard human rights in Iraq were in essence undermined by the Pentagon - albeit as Rumsfeld's points

out, by American soldiers acting outside the ambit of their authority and whose actions were unreflective of U.S. policy in Iraq.

The U.S.'s efforts to promote free and investigative media in Iraq also showed conflicting agendas amongst U.S. agencies which had an adverse impact on Bush's Iraq democracy policy. Contrary to the 'good faith' efforts by the U.S. State Department and USAID to carry the banner of media freedom and democracy in Iraq, there were strong substantiated allegations that Bremer's CPA and the Pentagon sought to influence Iraqi public opinion and the media. Indeed, control over the CPA's media policy by the Defense Department became a serious talking point on Capitol Hill during Bremer's reign as CPA chief in Iraq.

Similar U.S. political manoeuvring was experienced in Lebanon when reports surfaced in August 2007 accusing the U.S. of inhibiting and negatively influencing freedom of speech in Lebanon contrary to its rhetoric to foster the same. The accusation that the U.S. used its political humanitarian tool, USAID, to coerce Lebanon's English newspaper *The Daily Star* into writing pro-government articles in August 2007 is a case in point. Notwithstanding, the Bush Administration pursued a predominantly 'positive' approach to democracy promotion in Lebanon relying on capacity building instead of coercion or negative incentives. This supported the bold proclamations made by the Administration in the aftermath of the Cedar revolution when it stated that it would help Lebanon to establish a democracy and a Government that responds to the people. Whilst an assertive democracy policy was not pursued in the case of Lebanon, the research shows that the Bush Administration's efforts still fell short of the 'high-flown' rhetoric which accompanied the shift in U.S. foreign policy toward democracy promotion in this country in the aftermath of 9/11 and the 2003 Iraq war. The evidence gathered on Bush's efforts to democratize Lebanon mirrors his administration's efforts to promote democracy in Iraq, as U.S. policies on the ground

in Lebanon did not sufficiently support the advancement of ‘Western style’ liberal democracy in this country either.

In addressing the second research question regarding the Arab perceptions of the U.S., the case studies of Iraq and Lebanon show that the U.S.’s democracy promotion efforts faced insurmountable challenges as a result of the widespread distrust and suspicion of U.S. motives amongst a substantial portion of the Iraqi and Lebanese populations who despise U.S. foreign policy not only towards their respective countries, but across Middle East region as a whole. Such distrust and suspicion is reflective of the broader issues of credibility and trust which have bedevilled U.S. democracy promotion across the region. For this reason, Bush’s policy of seeking to spread democracy quickly became incoherent in practice in Iraq and Lebanon where it did seem to the majority that the desire to carve out a political system exactly like the one operated by the United States and other Western countries implied arrogance or overbearing presumptuousness on the part of the U.S. about the virtues and benefits of its own system of governance.

Regarding Iraq, even prior to the 2003 invasion, the possibility that a U.S.-led coalition, backed by its military, might exert daily administrative control over a swath of Iraqi soil touched a raw nerve among Iraqis. There was a deep fear among Iraqis that if the United States attacked Iraq, it would go on to impose long-term military control. The prospect of hosting an occupation force for an indefinite period triggered angry emotions among Iraqis as they resented being ruled for a long time by foreigners.

Predictably, the occupation of Iraq by the U.S.-led coalition in 2003 did not succeed in reversing anti-U.S. attitudes among the Iraqi people. From an Iraqi perspective, the 2003 US-led invasion could be viewed as a costly example of America’s neo-colonialist tendencies. The war was seen as an act of extraordinary colonialism, which used

slogans of bringing democracy and removing Saddam simply in order to implement a grand plan to advance American geopolitical and economic interests. In the aftermath of the 2003 war, there was the widespread perception among Iraqis that Western occupation of their country aimed at securing oil supplies, and effectively taking over control of Iraq's proven oil reserves. The immediate manifestation of this belief could be seen in the days and weeks that followed the toppling of Saddam from power. In addition, Iraqi sentiment reflected anxiety over the power that a foreign country had over Iraq. The U.S. - led occupation of Iraq fed into a sense of humiliation felt by many Iraqis who became worried about the extent of U.S. control. This in effect caused the rampant looting and lawlessness in the early days of the U.S.'s presence and also consequently fuelled the insurgency in Iraq. To some extent, it also retarded post-war Iraq's political development.

In Lebanon, the adverse commentary which emanated from amongst the ranks of important sections of the Lebanese media, intelligentsia, and individual political, religious, and community leaders and was directed towards the Bush administration's flagship democracy initiatives in the form of the MEPI and GMEI also underlines the point being made about the widespread distrust of U.S. motives to promote democracy in this country. U.S. credibility as a bastion of democratic standards had already been undermined in Lebanon following the U.S.'s actions in Iraq, the Abu Ghraib scandal and as well as the Bush's administration's positions towards Hamas and the Israel-Arab conflict. Lebanese commentators sought to identify various themes that characterise the negative image of the United States within their society, and also across the Arab world. By vehemently denouncing the U.S., and articulating vociferous criticisms of U.S. initiatives, Lebanese commentators contributed to delegitimizing U.S. efforts aimed at promoting democratic change in their country.

It would seem however that although the power of nationalistic feelings, distrust and suspicion of U.S. motives was clearly evident amongst the populations of Iraq and Lebanon, the Bush Administration resisted the conclusion that U.S. policy or behaviour was implicated in these feelings. The underlying reason for the U.S.'s failure to confront squarely the harsh reality of local resistance on the ground in both countries was the belief that the goal of U.S. democracy promotion efforts was humanitarian and benign. U.S. policy-makers found it difficult to accept that their much publicized 'good-will' and 'well-intentioned' initiatives towards Iraq and Lebanon could attract so much suspicion and rebuke. They erroneously assumed that their pro-democratic efforts would bring about pro-American attitudes – regardless of U.S. policies in the region. The deep resentment harboured by the Iraqis and Lebanese towards the United States was an outcome the Bush Administration had been less prepared for. The fact that Bush and his team struggled to comprehend the main contours of Iraqi and Lebanese anti-U.S. sentiment regarding U.S. policy imperilled U.S. democracy promotion efforts in both countries.

While this study has made a number of important contributions which are representative of the Iraq and Lebanese case studies, it also raises a variety of larger questions which require further research. The questions raised explain the reasoning behind the choice of the two factors which the thesis hypothesises as being responsible for derailing Bush's democracy enterprise in Iraq and Lebanon.

The first question is what tangible advancements can be made to improve, expand and possibly institutionalize collaboration between the U.S. State Department, the Defense Department and other U.S. agencies tasked with implementing the United States' foreign policy?

In considering this enquiry, it is worthwhile as a start, to summarise the constitutional roles assigned to the State Department and Pentagon in particular. The U.S. Secretary of State is vested with constitutional responsibility for the conduct of foreign affairs and is the U.S. President's principal foreign policy advisor. The mission of the Department of Defense is to provide the military forces needed to deter war and preserve the security of the United States. The Secretary of Defense is the principal defence policy adviser to the President of the United States. Under the direction of the U.S. President, the Secretary of Defense exercises authority, direction, and control over the Department of Defense. With this in mind, the expanding role of the U.S. military in support of non-combat activities and humanitarian programmes has given rise to concerns about the Pentagon's foreign policy role. There are concerns about the creeping 'militarization of U.S. foreign policy' and of the Pentagon's leadership role in implementing U.S. foreign policy which is constitutionally perceived to be the exclusive province of the State Department, civilian agencies and organisations. Whilst this is not a new development - as the literature on U.S. foreign policy raises similar questions in respect of Vietnam and Afghanistan - there is a perception that the U.S. military sometimes overstepped and created, rather than solved, problems in the civilian reconstruction effort.

With regards to Iraq, the U.S. State Department, the Pentagon and the CIA, worked at cross purposes with each other and produced various plans in readiness to deal with the situation on the ground in the aftermath of the 2003 Iraq war. But as late as December 2002, President Bush eventually authorised the Pentagon to take the lead regarding post-war planning in Iraq. Bush's decision set the scene for bureaucratic infighting and it prompted the formation of bureaucratic politics. The fact that President Bush chose the Defence Department to head the U.S.'s reconstruction effort in Iraq renders

questionable the level of priority his Administration really placed in promoting democracy in this country. By directing the Pentagon to work on an invasion plan and engineer Iraq's post-war reconstruction, Bush elevated the pro-war faction in his administration to a position of official superiority. This effectively meant that the State Department's influence in the foreign policy-making process was instantly marginalized. As a consequence, the Defense Department disregarded the authority of the State Department and pursued its own agenda on the ground in Iraq. First, it tried to undemocratically install Ahmed Chalabi in power only to encounter strong opposition from Iraq's domestic political leaders. Next, it undemocratically appointed Bremer as Iraq's chief administrator. The result was a U.S. directed rather than a U.S. – facilitated reconstruction process which was untenable as it led to an advisory council being appointed. The State Department was unable to assert control over the Pentagon on political grounds partly because in assessing the post-war reconstruction of Iraq, the Bush administration decided that within the U.S. government, no organization except the military could deploy and sustain qualified people in large numbers to undertake reconstruction projects. As a result the State Department's concept of nation-building in Iraq turned largely on encouragement of American democratic reforms which proved difficult to apply to the treacherous conditions existent on the ground in Iraq.

The Pentagon assumed control of humanitarian aid, public diplomacy, information dissemination, civil reconstruction, and state building – tasks not normally undertaken by the military. Administrative experience and knowledge of Iraq, it would seem, were less important than ideological correctness. The Pentagon arguably moved away from previous U.S.-led nation – building experiences by ignoring and vetoing projects such as the State Department's Future of Iraq Project which brought in Iraqi exiles – lawyers,

business people, engineers, educators, and civil administrators, for example – to draw up plans for post-Saddam projects to reconstitute civil society and reconstruct the country. Instead, the Pentagon favoured strong post-war controls, disbanding the Iraqi military and security forces and banning Ba’ath party members from government, civil service, and teaching posts. It relied on known quantities – Iraqis, mostly political exiles many of whom represented extreme sectarian or ethnic positions, but ‘faithfully’ professed loyalty to the U.S.’s aims and objectives. The complete militarization of the post-war situation in Iraq did very little to foster effective interagency coordination and cooperation. Important actors in Washington and on the ground in Iraq found it extremely difficult to coordinate their efforts and execute their specific roles. U.S. agencies needed to work together to achieve Bush’s objectives in Iraq but they found it difficult to do so. As a result, U.S. post-war efforts to reconstruct Iraq and implant a model of ‘Western style’ liberal democracy in this country suffered a huge blow.

The difficulties that arose from the State versus Defense turf war in Iraq should be placed into proper context. Overall, it must be appreciated that inter U.S. interagency coordination is of great importance because the United States conducts not only a global foreign policy but also a global military posture. The partnership between the two pillars of the U.S.’s national security strategy - Department of Defense (military) and U.S. State Department (diplomacy) - canvasses the entirety of regional and functional diplomacy. Counterterrorism, counternarcotics, counter proliferation, energy security, and counter trafficking are just some of the areas in which the work carried out by the two departments overlap and coincide (Shapiro 2012). Indeed, the interaction between the two departments occurs almost daily and crosses the broad spectrum of activities as they are increasingly thrust together in peacekeeping, peace enforcement, and humanitarian missions – as they were in Bosnia, Haiti, and Somalia – to develop and

implement agreements or programmes for achieving U.S. foreign policy goals. In the broad area of foreign policy in the security sector, it is almost unthinkable not to find an instance where State-Defense dialogue is not occurring (Shapiro 2012).

The second question requiring further research is the serious impact the lack of credibility will have on the U.S. in the Arab world as it continues to present itself as a pro-democratic actor. The U.S.'s lack of credibility as a pro-democratic actor highlights a problem of fundamental importance. If left unaddressed, this credibility gap, as most commentators speculate, will undermine even the most well-intentioned efforts by the U.S. to promote positive political change in the region. Suffice to say, the United States can no longer afford to talk about democracy while downplaying its negative image in the majority of the Arab world. Given the conditions of U.S. presence in the Arab world, the U.S.'s aim to win the hearts and minds of ordinary Arab citizens must address and mitigate the root causes of anti-Americanism. Indeed, what is conclusive about the two factors focused on in this study as being responsible for the failure of Bush's plans to democratize Iraq and Lebanon post-9/11 and the 2003 Iraq war, is that they are inextricably linked as it is U.S. policy-making or decision-making in the Arab world that has given rise to the rampant prevalence of anti-Americanism in this region. Iraq in particular created a real headache for democracy promoters and analysts of democracy promotion. The intervention in this country (justified in the first instance by security rationales but later strongly linked to the notion of advancing freedom and democracy) was responsible for creating an immediate and long-lasting suspicion of U.S. motives to promote democracy in the Middle East region. The promotion of war in defence of democracy, many democracy promoters have argued, is actually perverse and a difficult foreign policy position to maintain. It is also a policy, which in the long term can only serve to undermine the credibility of U.S. foreign policy

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