

Shaping the Plan for Operation Iraqi Freedom: The Role of Military Intelligence Assessments

May 18, 2005



In-Depth Reports

The aftermath of the war in Iraq has generated a great deal of second-guessing about Washington's prewar planning and intelligence efforts. Largely missing from this debate has been a thorough examination of the actual military intelligence efforts conducted by professional analysts and war planners outside Washington.

In The Washington Institute's newest Military Research Paper, Gregory Hooker provides a detailed narrative of the war planning process headed by U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) in Tampa, Florida, spanning the military's initial attempts to refocus on regime change and the government's ineffective preparation for the postwar environment. Throughout, he describes specific prewar intelligence estimates and assesses their accuracy. He also discusses the various problems that CENTCOM had to overcome, including rampant media leaks, unrealistic strategic proposals by policy advocates in Washington, and time constraints caused by competing assumptions between senior policymakers and military planners.

Supplemented with satellite imagery, informative tables, useful maps, and a detailed timeline, this study provides invaluable insight into challenges that may confront future U.S. war planning and intelligence efforts.

- **114 pages**



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