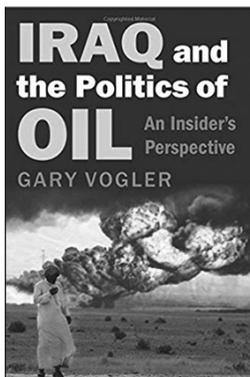


ethics of war at all. As long as death and destruction are occurring, regardless of the means, the same questions arise—such as, whom can you kill, what can you destroy, where, why, and when?” Hence, what is needed is not a new warrior code but rather, warriors committed to acting properly with respect to these timeless questions.

French imparts a fresh reality to her discussion of always difficult and sometimes esoteric questions by inviting us into her own classroom to witness interactions with her U.S. Naval Academy students, hear their discussions, and read their written responses. As the students wrestle with what it means to be a warrior worthy of the title, the reader may indeed feel himself or herself cheering on those students—and hoping that both that they will get the hard questions right and that, when push comes to shove, they will find the right balance between courage and restraint.

In sum, *The Code of the Warrior* is in its second edition because it is an enduringly valuable work that can be profitably read by thoughtful, reflective members of the profession of arms and by other true professionals as well. **IAJ**



Iraq and the Politics of Oil: An Insider's Perspective

Gary Vogler

University Press of Kansas, 2017, 318 pp.

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Just when you thought you had a handle on the Middle East crisis, with all its permutations, along comes a chronicle of political intrigue, danger, and the gutsy resolve of dedicated Americans showing another side to the conflict that had our country's best fighting units engaged in combat for eight years.

In author Gary Vogler's latest book, *Iraq and the Politics of Oil*, we learn that in late 2002, a small group of U.S. government officials, senior retired military officers and private sector experts, gathered in Washington, D.C. to do contingency planning for the rehabilitation of Iraq's collapsed oil industry. Vogler was included in the planning group because of his having a highly desirable combination of qualifications: a retired U.S. Army Reserve lieutenant colonel, and a 1973 West Point graduate, with 21 years' experience in the oil industry.

Later, when a coalition of allied forces attacked Iraq, Vogler saw another opportunity to serve our country by volunteering to deploy in Iraq with the first contingent of civilians. While most of his allied colleagues served short tours, Vogler was to become the longest serving member.

Overview

His book is based upon that extensive experience, his family's personal sacrifices, and his ultimate conclusions about the justification for the entire enterprise. So, it's not just a trip down memory lane, it is a well-documented, fully-footnoted account of the triumphs and tragedies of the

coalition's Iraq experience from his point of view. It includes the unsuccessful search for Weapons of Mass Destruction, the folly of de-Baathification, the military surge, and a 2015 re-examination of the story with the benefit of hindsight.

The book's graphics are exceptional: a glossy color photo spread; black and white, relevant pictures throughout – many taken by the author; supporting tables, graphs and maps, including an abbreviation chart to facilitate reading the many acronyms used.

While the author's principal focus was initially upon the mandate given him, as a Department of Defense (DoD) independent contractor, he tells about the remarkable flexibility he was given to interact with Iraqi officials at the highest levels, and his frequent liaisons with U.S. military leaders familiar to most historians.

Consequently, his book is a reliable reference for those wishing to gain a thorough grasp of the parallel fight to re-establish a stable Iraqi government amidst sectarian violence and tribal favoritism.

The author's knack for developing strong personal contacts among Iraq's political aristocracy and coalition leaders, including American ambassadors to Iraq, is central to his maintaining his mission's momentum. And he interjects anecdotes to lighten things up.

For example: His transition from DoD independent contractor to temporary Iraqi Oil Minister, an astonishing role enhancement; even if only possible in the process of re-vamping the political structure of a defeated nation, is fun to read about.

Some Somber Issues

We learn a lot about each player in an extraordinarily dizzying rotation of leaders within the coalition and Iraq's infrastructure. Vogler, habitually, gleans their principal biographies, adding that salient, fascinating information to his story.

Some readers may view these biographies as a tedious diversion from the story; others will be grateful for the deep perspective they provide.

Also, the casual reader may have difficulty tracking Vogler's employment arrangements, which admittedly were complex, highlighting the author's ingenuity and ability to carry on despite insidious attempts to sideline him from significant involvement in the oil team's mission.

His having sought and landed subcontractor positions with companies contracted through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, kept him in the game for five years beyond his original DoD mandate.

The careful reader will notice a secondary theme of repetitious references to an operative, who becomes the source of disharmony between Vogler and members of the Office of the Secretary of Defense he refers to as "neocons." Vogler is bedeviled by "black-listers," from that department that have him in their sights when they fear he suspects an oil-to-Israel gambit, occasionally speculated by the press. He is denied important job opportunities, as a result, which is why he is forced to look beyond DoD for another contract.

After reading what amounts to his detractor's dossier though, readers won't be able to resist joining the author's team, in spirit, to help him celebrate the comeuppance of his neocon naysayers at the end of the story.

Operations

Meanwhile, there was plenty of action in his areas of operation, which the author seems almost reluctant to record, since he was mindful of coalition casualties among coalition military units

struggling to deal with the insurgency spawned by de-Baathification.

Oil field pipelines, pumping stations and refineries were frequent dissident targets.

His operations' enemies were the same as those of the coalition, but his operatives lacked the capacity to do more than defend and take the hits.

Even elaborate security measures could not stop rocket and mortar attacks that delayed and set back oil industry rehabilitation progress, according to Vogler. The author frequently relates his involvement in operations to repair damaged facilities and was often accompanied by coalition units that provided security. Even so, he tells us, the entire coalition civilian force was constantly at risk.

Anxious to keep readers in touch with that danger, the author describes the assassination of a prominent Iraqi official at a bus stop, while seeing his child off to school, and the death of an American colleague during a rocket attack, both of whom were the author's friends. Throughout this story, security from insurgent attacks is a constant need. Even Vogler starts packing a weapon, and occasionally dives into a bunker or under a bed to stay alive. This for a man who earlier tells the reader that "the active Army was not for me!"

While the author is somewhat self-effacing, and heaps credit upon others, the reader becomes aware that Vogler has exceptional courage, and instills that valuable quality in others. An example is his having overcome the fear and discouragement felt by a refinery manager being blamed for power failure in the surrounding area:

"Mr. Gary, those people at the gate want to kill me. They have threatened me and my family. I can't do this anymore, I quit, Mr. Gary."

By the time Vogler leaves him, the manager's confidence has returned, and through Vogler's extraordinary connections, power is soon restored.

A Powerful Presence

It becomes apparent that in the end, Vogler's sheer determination to prevail, his penetrating intellect and his powerful ability to influence important people shores up the entire oil industry rehabilitation effort.

Even in chapters devoted, primarily, to derailing Iraqi political two-stepping and Washington, D.C. foot-dragging, Vogler's role is central to the inexorable drive toward achieving the ultimate success. There is never a paucity of purpose.

His concluding chapters and his epilogue are explosive: in them the author calls into question the integrity and the patriotism of those closest to the president as well as the Office of the Secretary of Defense. He also, introspectively and rhetorically examines his own. Clearly, Vogler is a man who refuses to accept the unacceptable; he is also a man of uncommon integrity.

A Valuable Resource

Recent events in Iraq make Vogler's book vital to Middle East observers and shouldn't be missed by any. Moreover, this book will enhance enormously any military or foreign affairs reference library. **IAJ**