IN COURSE PITCH, SCOOTER AND WOLFIE ADMIT IRAQ WAR FAILURES, BUT MAKE NO MENTION OF IRAQI CASUALTIES

While I was gone, the NeoCon Hertog Foundation announced an "advanced institute" featuring Scooter Libby and Paul Wolfowitz describing the "unexpected events, rivalries, counter-moves, mistakes, and imperfect understandings" behind the Iraq War, which also appears to offer some second-guessing about how the Iraq War still made sense even in light of the catastrophe it wrought.

It seems Judy Miller is not the only Iraq Hawk trying to relitigate her Iraq failures (the timing may not be unrelated, as Roger Hertog, has funded all three Iraq Hawks, among others).

I'm particularly interested in this paragraph, seemingly admitting the failures of Iraq while weighing it against what is portrayed as the failure of the first Gulf War.

> Twice in the last quarter century America has gone to war with Iraq, and the two were in a state of low-level conflict during the interim. Both times America went to war with Congressional authorization, at the head of an international coalition, and in support of U.N. Resolutions. The 1990–1 Persian Gulf War ended quickly with minimal U.S. casualties, but left a brutal dictator in place and American interests at risk. The U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003 quickly removed the regime that had repeatedly defied America and gave Iraqis a chance to devise their own

> future. However, the war soon devolved
> into a messy combination of insurgency
> and sectarian fighting that brought
> thousands of U.S. casualties, sapped
> American will and credibility, and
> worked to the benefit of America's other
> regional nemesis, Iran. These events
> occurred not in isolation, but against
> the backdrop of broader international
> developments, particularly the ending of
> the Cold War, the attacks of 9/11/2001,
> and the on-going U.S. confrontation with
> radical Islam.

Iraq War 2.0 removed the defiant Saddam, who purportedly threatened American interests — Scooter and Wolfie judge — but it helped out "America's other regional nemesis," Iran.

At least the Iraq War architects are willing to admit their blunders made Iran stronger.

But the assessment of the impact on Iraq is the signature here: America generously gifted Iraqis with "a chance to devise their own future" — Scooter and Wolfie judge, making no mention of America's past role in Saddam's rise and success against Iraq — but it brought a "messy combination of insurgency and sectarian fighting … and thousands of U.S. casualties [that] sapped American will and credibility," as if American will and credibility should have any role in the matter of giving Iraqis a chance to devise their own future, which was only granted, according to this description, because America's formerly favored dictator threatened its interests.

Not only does the passage make no sense, but it obscures the other horrible thing about Scooter and Wolfie's legacy: half a million Iraqi dead, or more.

Twelve years after these policy makers brought us to war on a pack of lies, their conception of failures doesn't even account for the hundreds of thousands of purportedly liberated Iraqis they killed.