

Reflecting on the Iraq War and the Death of Ahmed Chalabi

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Reflecting on the life and recent death of Mr. Chalabi, as Americans, it is only natural that we see him [as we saw him](#). Most Americans have forgotten the hideous impact the Washington regime of Bush, Clinton, Bush and Obama had on the people, government and economy of Iraq. Most never cared anyway.

The name of the [current Iraqi Prime Minister](#) may not matter, but who he is might. Apparently, [Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi is unreasonable optimist, with an overbroad definition of his role vis a vis the people of Iraq](#). And oh, those people! Ungrateful for the trillions in American “help,” they’ve been rioting in the streets of Baghdad, over poor utility service and corrupt government, a lack of economic recovery, and continue terror inflicted by enemies within and nearby, including the [American-created ISIS](#).

[Who could have predicted this?](#) [Who can understand it?](#)

Haider al-Abadi recently appointed the late Mr. Chalabi to head a corruption inquiry into Iraqi state finances, his new position described as “[that of an auditor of Iraq’s finances](#).” Iraq’s finances. That concept takes a moment to get one’s head around, given that it has been a puppet state, filled with Washington-approved insiders and compromised Iraqis of all religious and secular persuasions, united in a common desire for access to oil revenue and desire for power, which is to say oil revenue.

War and economic destruction brings the right mix of desperation and creativity, institutional, moral and monetary breakdown within the guise of a new glorious state to replace the old glorious state, and the conditions where the meek huddle in a refugee camp. These environments are playgrounds for criminals, state gangs, and people like Chalabi have roamed these circles for decades. But that doesn’t mean Iraqis or their various would-be leaders are throwing in the towel, to use an American sports idiom. It’s their country, their territory, their homeland, they love it even as they may curse it.

Most Americans can’t understand this. We still love our government, adore the state, crave Washington’s approval, and when a citizen complains, he or she better be ready to “Get the hell out, if you don’t like it!” The Iraqis may be far more sophisticated in this regard than we know.

But not their government, that cruel combination of US-approved and US-tolerated political whores and survivalists, with a healthy number of the kind of political opportunists that invariably rise to the occasion, when whole systems are destroyed, murderously and chaotically.

So Prime Minister al-Abadi appoints the infamous Chalabi – still the energizer bunny of global intrigue, still standing after all these years as a political figure in Iraq, and importantly, intimately familiar with both US and Iraq politics, and intimately knowledgeable about financial crime and banking fraud – to lead a corruption investigation.

Where or where might his investigation lead? We certainly don't know, because at age 71, this happy "hero in error," this well-connected conversationalist, with his vivid mind and grasp of history, a health nut and physically fit man who above all was able to enjoy life in spite of himself, had a deadly heart attack last week.

Look, many die at 71, even rich, healthy, self-actualized people. Bad hearts happen. So do shocks to the system, as Chalabi may have had as he began looking into the US-supported repeat Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, al-Abadi's predecessor in office. Al-Maliki, of course was CIA-vetted and State Department-approved, and it was he who signed the Saddam Hussein death warrant on December 30, 2006, and ensured his immediate execution, before the interested parties (clearly the United States was not one of those) could interview and debrief Saddam Hussein about where the financial and intelligence bodies were buried. Recall, of course, that Saddam was our man in the region, until just before he wasn't, in August 1990. It was a fine display of Maliki's loyalty to the US and British leadership of the time, and his own sense of political survival.

We know Maliki remained in government, in one post or another, and was known for little things, [like avoiding investigations, and firing inspector generals](#), especially eliminating any close looks into the oil industry – which by the way was a key area of Maliki's efforts [during his first term as Prime Minister, and his efforts with the 2007 hydrocarbon framework law](#).

If you want to see how financial fraud and political paybacks happen, between politicians and their corporate backers around the world, closely watching how these documents and frameworks are put together is a good place to start. In the case of Iraq, we already know that the Iraq "Constitution" was put together in Washington, including all of the first ten amendment "rights" [except the right to bear arms](#). [Funny how that worked.](#)

In any case, Maliki was once our man, and perhaps wasn't again. [Mike Whitney has a great explanation for the U.S. Iraq policy last year](#) – just last year – Washington still meddling in Iraqi political affairs!

Ahmed Chalabi had a final and very interesting job for his country, a job that might have brought the Dons to their knees, and raised his national popularity among tired Iraqis in a way that had never happened before. A position that would make perfect use of his own history as a fraudster, his deep knowledge of all sides of the issues, all flavors of the alliances, the British, the Americans, the Iraqis and the Iranians, the Sunni and the Shia, and his belief in his own ability to make a difference, most likely, like we all do, for our children and grandchildren. He was a crook among crooks, and manipulator among greater manipulators, and a researcher into the fraud of his political enemies, and perhaps his friends too.

[I have to ask, who, or what, killed Ahmed Chalabi?](#) His American equivalent, in some ways, is Dick Cheney, a man who has suffered many heart attacks, a man who ran in many of the same circles as Chalabi over his life, oil, war, intrigues, king-making. When Cheney was 71, never an icon of good health habits or a positive attitude, he received a heart transplant. As his cardiologist said, ["it would not be unreasonable for an otherwise healthy 71-year-old](#)

[man to expect to live another 10 years.](#)" I have to agree!

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