

Report criticizing Iraq planning censored

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- The U.S. Army funded but delayed the publication of a broad criticism of post-war planning in Iraq, saying it was "of limited value in informing Army policies." The Army commissioned the think-tank Rand Corp. to conduct the 18-month review of the postwar strategy. A draft copy obtained by The New York Times blames former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld for a "lack of capacity" in planning the postwar reconstruction, former Secretary of State Colin Powell for producing similar reports of "uneven quality," and former Central Command chief Gen. Tommy Franks for his "fundamental misunderstanding" of the security needs in a postwar Iraq. Army officials told the Times it asked RAND to delay publication because the findings "were determined to be ... of limited value in informing Army policies, programs and priorities." The RAND report faults the Bush administration for assuming the postwar reconstruction requirements in Iraq would be minimal and said little was done to question that presumption, the Times said Monday. The report says the failure to produce a postwar strategy had "the inadvertent effect of strengthening the insurgency," in the subsequent security vacuum. Army officials said the report "lacked the perspective needed for future planning by the U.S. Army," though newly drafted operations manuals place winning the peace on equal footing with winning the war.

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