

Kenneth M. Pollack

Kenneth M. Pollack is an expert on Middle Eastern political-military affairs, with particular emphasis on Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the other nations of the Persian Gulf region. He is currently a Senior Fellow and Director of the Saban Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution.

Dr. Pollack began his career as an Iran-Iraq military analyst at the Central Intelligence Agency, where he was an employee from 1988 until 1995. During that time, he was the principal author of the CIA's classified post-mortem on Iraqi strategy and military operations during the Persian Gulf War of 1990-1991. Dr. Pollack received the CIA's Certificate of Distinction for Outstanding Performance of Duty for work before and during the Persian Gulf War. He also twice received the CIA's Exceptional Performance award, also for work related to the Persian Gulf War.

Dr. Pollack has also twice served on the staff of the National Security Council. In 1995-1996, he was Director for Near East and South Asian Affairs, and in 1999-2001 he served as Director for Persian Gulf Affairs. In this latter capacity, he was the principal working-level official for U.S. policy toward Iraq, Iran, Yemen and the Gulf Cooperation Council States at the White House.

In addition to these positions, Dr. Pollack has also been a Senior Research Professor at the Institute for National Strategic Studies at the National Defense University where he principally worked on long-term issues related to Middle Eastern political and military affairs for the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He has been the Director for National Security Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations, and a Research Fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

Dr. Pollack is the author of five books, his latest *A Path Out of the Desert: A Grand Strategy for America in the Middle East* (Random House, 2008). His first book, *Arabs at War: Military Effectiveness, 1948-1991* was published in 2002 by the University of Nebraska Press in its Studies in War, Society, and the Military Series. His second book, *The Threatening Storm: The Case for Invading Iraq* was published in 2002 by Random House and has been a *New York Times* and *Washington Post* bestseller. *The Persian Puzzle: The Conflict between Iran and America*, was published in 2004 by Random House. His fourth book, *Things Fall Apart: Containing the Spillover from an Iraqi Civil War*, co-authored with Daniel Byman, was published by Brookings in early 2007.

Dr. Pollack received his B.A. from Yale University and a Ph.D. in Political Science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. His dissertation was titled, *The Influence of Arab Culture on Arab Military Effectiveness, 1948-1991*. He is married and lives in Washington, DC.

John W. Parker, Ph.D.

Visiting Research Fellow, INSS

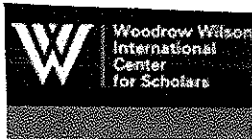
John W. Parker joined the Institute for National Strategic Studies (INSS) at the National Defense University as a Visiting Research Fellow in January 2010. He served previously in the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, where he was Deputy Office Director and Chief of the Division for Caucasus and Central Asia in the Office for Russian and Eurasian Analysis. His principal areas of expertise are Russia and the states of the former Soviet Union and Russian-Iranian relations. He has served two tours at the American Embassy in Moscow and was Deputy Director of the U.S. Information Agency's "Research and Development—USA" exhibit in the USSR in 1972. He has also been a Public Policy Scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and a Guest Scholar at the Brookings Institution. He holds degrees from Indiana University (B.A.) and Yale University (Ph.D.)

Publications:

Persian Dreams: Moscow and Tehran Since the Fall of the Shah, Potomac Books, 2009.

Kremlin in Transition: Gorbachev, Unwin Hyman, 1991.

Kremlin in Transition: From Brezhnev to Chernenko, Unwin Hyman, 1991.



Middle East Program

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Affiliation
Director, Middle East Program

Expertise
Democratic and political developments in the Middle East; Middle Eastern women's issues; contemporary Iranian intellectual currents and politics

Experience
Former Deputy Secretary General of the Women's Organization of Iran; journalist; Fellow at the Wilson Center, 1995-96; educator at Princeton University, 1980-94; frequent lecturer on current Iranian and Middle Eastern affairs



[Major Publications](#) | [Education](#) | [Honors](#)

Major Publications

- "Why 'Soft' Power in Iran Is Counterproductive," co-author with Robert S. Litwak, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, October 2007
- "Held in My Homeland," Outlook section, *The Washington Post*, September 2007
- "A View from the Region: Different Perspectives on Israel's War with Lebanon's Hizbullah," editor, Middle East Program Occasional Paper Series, Fall 2006

Education
Ph.D., University of Vienna

Honors
Recipient of the MacArthur Foundation Grant



Ambassador John Limbert

Ambassador John Limbert is currently a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs while on leave from a professorship at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. Prior to his retirement from the Foreign Service in 2006, Ambassador Limbert served as the Dean of Language Studies at the National Foreign Affairs Training Center.

A Senior Foreign Service Officer, Ambassador Limbert served as President of the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA) from 2003-2005. Prior to that assignment he served as U.S. Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania (2000-2003). He was one of the first civilian officials to enter Baghdad in April 2003, with the Organization for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance. He was responsible for cultural affairs, including restoration of looted items from the Iraqi Museum. In March -May of 2004 he returned to Iraq, leading a team in support of the

U.S. Mission there. Earlier, he had been the Deputy Coordinator for Counterterrorism in the U.S. State Department (2002) and a member of the State Department's Senior Seminar (1997-98).

A career Foreign Service Officer since 1973, Ambassador Limbert's overseas experience also includes tours in Sudan, Algeria, Guinea, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. From 1981 to 1984 he taught Political Science at the U.S. Naval Academy, and in 1991-92 he was a Senior Fellow at Harvard University's Center for International Affairs.

Ambassador Limbert graduated from Washington, D.C. public schools and holds his B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. from Harvard University, the last in History and Middle Eastern Studies. Before joining the Foreign Service, he taught in Iran, both as a Peace Corps Volunteer (1964-66) and as an English instructor at Shiraz University (1969-72). He has authored numerous articles on Middle Eastern subjects and three books: *Iran: At War with History* (Westview Press, 1987), *Shiraz in the Age of Hafez* (University of Washington Press, 2004), and most recently *Negotiating With Iran* (United States Institute of Peace, 2009).

Ambassador Limbert holds the Department of State's Distinguished Honor Award and the Award for Valor, the last received after fourteen months as a hostage in Iran. He holds the American Foreign Service Association's Rivkin Award for creative dissent. His foreign languages are Persian, Arabic, and French. He is married and has a son, a daughter, and four grandchildren.

Experts

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Michael Eisenstadt

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Michael Eisenstadt, currently on a temporary leave of absence, is a senior fellow and director of The Washington Institute's [Military and Security Studies Program](#). A specialist in [Persian Gulf](#) and [Arab-Israeli](#) security affairs, he has published scores of articles and monographs on the armed forces of the Middle East, irregular and conventional warfare and nuclear weapons [proliferation](#) in the region, and [U.S. policy](#).

Prior to joining the Institute in 1989, Mr. Eisenstadt worked as a military analyst with the U.S. government.

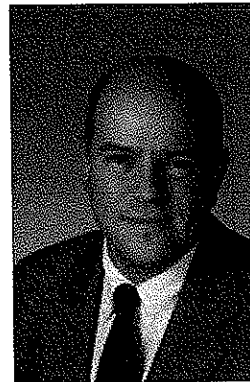
Mr. Eisenstadt is a reserve officer in the U.S. Army and served on active duty in 2008-2009 as a planner with the U.S. Security Coordinator for Israel and the Palestinian Authority in Jerusalem; in 2008 with the Human Terrain System Assessment Team in Baghdad; in 2001-2002 at U.S. Central Command headquarters and on the Joint Staff during Operation Enduring Freedom and the planning for Operation Iraqi Freedom; and in 1991 in Turkey and Iraq during Operation Provide Comfort.

He has also served in a civilian capacity on the Multinational Force-Iraq/U.S. Embassy Baghdad Joint Campaign Plan Assessment Team (2009) and as a consultant to the congressionally mandated Iraq Study Group (2006), the National Academies Committee on Defeating IEDs (2006), the Multinational Corps-Iraq Information Operations Task Force (2005-2006), and the State Department's Future of Iraq defense policy working group (2002-2003). In 1992, he took a leave of absence from the Institute to work on the U.S. Air Force *Gulf War Air Power Survey*.

Mr. Eisenstadt earned an MA in Arab Studies from Georgetown University and has traveled widely in the Middle East. He speaks Arabic and Hebrew, and reads French.

Expertise: [Military and security affairs](#), [Persian Gulf security](#), [proliferation](#), [Arab-Israeli security relations](#)

Current Research: Complex irregular/hybrid warfare; U.S. policy toward Iraq; implications of a nuclear Iran.



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Books By This Expert

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Barbara Slavin is the author of a 2007 book on Iran entitled "Bitter Friends, Bosom Enemies: Iran, the U.S. and the Twisted Path to Confrontation." Ms. Slavin was Assistant Managing Editor for World and National Security of The Washington Times from July 2008 through December 2009. Prior to that she was senior diplomatic reporter for USA TODAY, responsible for analyzing foreign news and U.S. foreign policy. Beginning in 1996, she covered such key issues as the U.S.-led war on terrorism and in Iraq, policy toward "rogue" states and the Arab-Israeli conflict. She accompanied three secretaries of State on their official travels and also reported from Iran, Libya, Israel, Egypt, North Korea, Russia, China, Saudi Arabia and Syria. Ms. Slavin, who has lived in Russia, China, Japan and Egypt, is a regular commentator on U.S. foreign policy on National Public Radio, the Public Broadcasting System and C-Span. She wrote her book on Iran, which she has visited seven times, as a public policy scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in 2006 and spent October 2007-July 2008 as senior fellow at the U.S. Institute of Peace, where she researched and wrote a report on Iranian regional influence, entitled "Mullahs, Money and Militias: How Iran Exerts Its Influence in the Middle East."



Prior to joining USA TODAY, she was a Washington-based writer for The Economist and the Los Angeles Times, covering domestic and foreign policy issues, including the 1991-93 Middle East peace talks in Washington. From 1985-89, she was The Economist correspondent in Cairo. She traveled widely in the Middle East, covering the Iran-Iraq war, the 1986 U.S. bombing of Libya, the political evolution of the Palestine Liberation Organization and the resurgence of Islamic fundamentalism. Earlier in the 1980s, she served as The Economist correspondent in Beijing and also reported from Japan and South Korea.

Prior to moving abroad, she was a writer and editor for The New York Times Week in Review section and a reporter and editor for United Press International in New York City. She got her BA in Russian language and literature at Harvard University and also studied at Leningrad State University. She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.



Alex Vatanka

Alex Vatanka is the Editor of Jane's Islamic Affairs Analyst (jiaa.janes.com). He was during 2001-2009 a senior analyst at Jane's, where he covered the Middle East, based in London and Washington. He joined the Middle East Institute as a Scholar in 2007, and also lectures as a Senior Fellow in Middle East Studies at the US Air Force Special Operations School (USAFSOS). His current area of focus is Iranian domestic, security and foreign policies. He has lectured widely for both governmental and commercial audiences, including the US Department State, various US military branches, US Congressional staff, and Middle Eastern energy firms. Beyond Jane's and the Middle East Institute, he has written for such outlets as *Christian Science Monitor*, *The World Today*, *Daily Beast*, the *Jerusalem Post* and the *Council of Foreign Relations* and he has frequently appeared in various US, European and Middle Eastern media outlets. He holds a BA in Political Science and an MA in International Relations, and is fluent in Farsi and Danish.