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ABSTRACT

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The “Construction” of the American Public Opinion towards the War in Iraq

This paper aims to examine the American public opinion's dynamics, which formatted at the period before and during the Iraq war was conducted. Also, we demonstrate as a significant factor for the public opinion's formation the coverage of the Iraq crisis by the American news-networks. We believe that the predominance of the Iraq issue in the daily agenda setting and the tendency to prefix war as the only “*right and fair choice*”, contributed in “*manufacturing*” consent to this war.

Our analysis is grounded on the empirical data, which appeared in the polls that were conducted in the USA and to which we shall refer. In particular, we have to notice that:

- A significant part of the American public opinion ranked the war with Iraq as a major national priority and supported a military resolution of the conflict. Specifically, the percentage of those who favoured taking military action against Iraq rose under the condition of multilateral support (approval or participation by the UN and the Allies). Let it be noted that even after the beginning of the war the majority supported the Government's decision for war with Iraq.
- A majority of Americans seems that was gradually convinced for the sufficiency of the evidence that the government had presented in order to justify the war (existence of WMD, Iraq's linkage with terrorism). This begins to overturn, as evidence for non existence of WMD in Iraq are revealed.
- While the majority of the American society was accepting President Bush's handling of the situation in Iraq initially, later it's questioned.