

**CONTEMPORARY FOREIGN U.S. POLICY IN AFGHANISTAN AND
IRAQ, AND CONNECTIONS TO SYRIA**

An Undergraduate Research Scholars Thesis

by

ANNA MARIE SASAKI

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Dr. Sena Karasipahi

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ABSTRACT

Contemporary Foreign U.S. Policy in Afghanistan and Iraq, and Connections to Syria

Anna Marie Sasaki Department of
International Studies Texas A&M
University

Research Advisor: Dr. Sena Karasipahi
Department of International Studies
Texas A&M University

Thesis statement

In U.S. foreign policy after the Cold War, there have been various policies implemented in Afghanistan and Iraq, that has been proven to be ineffective in furthering U.S. objectives, and their continued usage in Syria would harm the goals of the United States.

Research questions

What were the details surrounding the United States policies implemented in Afghanistan and Iraq? What were the goals of each policy implemented? Were they successful in achieving the set goal? What factors contributed to the success or failure of each policy? What factors contribute to the outcomes of each policy in their continued usage in Syria?

Theoretical framework

This thesis has benefitted from the theories of Orientalism and rationalism. Edward Said's Orientalism provides an underlying purpose for this thesis - the importance of respecting and thoroughly understanding another culture while analyzing and reviewing data, as opposed to interpreting another culture through comparisons. The theory of rationalism, heavily influenced by the philosophers of Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibniz, lays the framework in which we will be criticizing the policies addressed in this thesis, in an attempt to make the analysis conducted as empirical as possible.

Methodology

This thesis will be based on secondary sources, focusing on utilizing statistics gathered from reports given by various entities, such as the United Nations reporting agencies, as well as other reporting agencies, such as the Middle East Research and Information Project. This thesis also focuses on making assessments through interpreting qualitative data. This research will benefit from statistical data, document archives, and international reports regarding themes of this thesis, and offers a critical analysis of the United States foreign policy in the Middle East.

Literature review

In order for these analyses of policies to be as empirical as possible, the literature analyzed in this thesis are based majorly on statistics. This thesis will utilize statistics provided by reports from the United Nations (UN) provide numbers collected by UN agencies, which are often a joint effort from various countries. Resolutions passed by the United Nations addressing various issues in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria elucidate the international opinions regarding the conflict, as well as overall goals of various international missions. Going further, the United States also has various agencies that keep records of statistics, such as the United States Agency for International Development.

DEDICATION

To Dad, Todd Sasaki, for his unconditional support throughout my life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge Dr. Sena Karasipahi for her guidance in writing this thesis, as well as providing a new perspective in U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. Without Dr. Karasipahi's willingness to educate and open up dialogue regarding misconceptions about the Middle East and American international affairs, I would not have the courage to begin this dissertation.

INTRODUCTION

This thesis will be examining the policies enacted in the contemporary period - contemporary defined as the time period after the events of the Cold War - and will do so empirically. This thesis will analyze contemporary the militarial and bureaucratic policies enacted by the U.S. government in Afghanistan and Iraq, and make a conclusion as to whether or not the policies have been conducive to quelling issues of war, terrorism, famine, political strife, among others, or if the policies have been detrimental to fixing such issues. The second aspect of this thesis is to determine if the U.S. government is utilizing akin policies in Syria, and address the possible effects with substantial evidence.

The aim of this thesis is to raise awareness to the policies surrounding U.S. foreign policy in a few key nations in the Middle East, and develop an understanding of whether or not these policies have been effective. Ever since the United States' first intervention in the Middle East during the Cold War, the Middle East has been a location of dire importance in terms of contemporary U.S. foreign policy. Not many can argue against the idea that the United States will continue to be thoroughly involved in the Middle East; therefore it is important to analyze the policies that have impacted U.S. goals and future endeavors, and determine whether or not our involvement has been effective.

A concept important to address before discussing U.S. foreign policy is the main concept of Edward Said's essay, "Orientalism," and the significance and necessity to understand what Orientalism is when discussing other nations and cultures. Dr. Said defines Orientalism as "the basic distinction between East and West as the starting point" regarding the study of the Middle East (Said (page number)). In his essay, Dr. Said emphasizes the concept of Orientalism, and the

manner in which the study of Orientalism almost always studies the Middle East solely in relation to Western civilizations, which often neglects and in some cases demonizes the culture that is being analyzed.

Since the catastrophic events that occurred on September 11th, 2001, the Middle East has been of utmost importance in discussing U.S. security and international relations. In this thesis, I would like to offer a non-Orientalist perspective to the ongoing issues in terms of U.S. relations with the Middle East, for the purpose of providing a more cohesive understanding of both sides of the conflict. In order to fully grasp the effects of U.S. foreign policy in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria, it is important to analyze the effects on the countries as well - socially, economically, and politically. To neglect to do so would contribute to the notion of the United States as an imperialist power, motivated solely by self-profit, and ignorant to the massive consequences of United States foreign policy.

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF AFGHANISTAN, IRAQ, AND SYRIA

Before delving into the details of the various policies that we will analyze in the following chapters, it is important to develop a historical background in order to be able to thoroughly and accurately draw parallels between the U.S. policies implemented in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria. The factors analyzed in the following historical backgrounds of each country are pertinent to the success or failure of any initiative in the country, and therefore, must be addressed in order to provide a cohesive understanding of the effectiveness of each policy.

Historical background of Afghanistan

The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is a landlocked nation in central Asia, and on the majority of its borders, neighbors Iran and Pakistan. Afghanistan is a largely mountainous region, containing a large portion of the Hindu Kush, a vast mountain range, that extends from the center of the country to its northwest boundaries. The country is diverse in its geographical regions, with deserts incapable of agriculture, to plains rich in fertile soil. Estimates show that the population of Afghanistan is 34,940,837, placing Afghanistan as the 39th most populous country in the world (Central Intelligence Agency, 2018).

Society of Afghanistan

There are a large amount of differing ethnic groups residing within Afghanistan's borders. The majority of the population is Pashtun, making up around 42% of all peoples in Afghanistan; the remaining population consists of Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek, Baloch, and numerous other ethnic groups (Central Intelligence Agency, 2018). The CIA World Factbook also details the numerous languages in Afghanistan, as many citizens are bilingual, with the lingua franca

being the language of Dari. With the presence of many various ethnic groups in Afghanistan, the nation has struggled with maintaining cohesion, as not only are there dozens of languages present in Afghanistan, the arduous terrain makes communication and unity even more difficult.

Going further, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan has a constitutionally established religion of Islam. According to the U.S. Department of State's International Freedom Report (2014), around 80% of the Afghani population are Sunni Muslims, while around 19% are Shi'a Muslims. Additionally, although the Afghan government states that all religious practices are permitted, the International Freedom Report notes on the extensive amount of discrimination the Christians, Jews, and other religious minorities face in Afghanistan. In the constitution of Afghanistan, it is explicitly stated that any legislation passed cannot "contravene the tenets and provisions of... Islam," demonstrating the importance of Islam in this nation (2004).

In terms of development, Afghanistan is categorized as a nation of "low human development," according to the UN Human Development Indices and Indicators 2018 Statistical Update. According to this report, 98.2% of the total employment in Afghanistan are classified as poor, working for \$3.10 (USD, purchasing power parity adjusted) per day. 40.9% of children under the age of 5 are malnourished, with the life expectancy at birth averaging at 64 years (2018).¹

Afghan government, and its changes

Afghanistan has had numerous leaders and governments over the past century. To provide a brief history of the various governments that ruled Afghanistan since the Cold War, we can begin with the Mujahideen's removal of Mohammed Najibullah, the former president of a Soviet-backed Afghan government in 1992 ("A Historical Timeline of Afghanistan," 2011).

¹ The United Nations Development Indices and Indicators 2018 Statistical Update contains a large amount of statistics regarding various categories of development, and goes further into detail than what is included here.

Since the invasion of the Soviets into Afghanistan, a large amount of dissidence erupted, with various warlords inciting locals to join efforts to repel the Soviet forces from the region. This group of fighters became known as the Mujahideen, committed to fight against forces not aligned with Islam, namely the Soviet Union.²

After the Mujahideen removed Najibullah from power in 1992, the capital of Afghanistan, Kabul, subsequently became occupied by various Mujahideen factions, and an unstable Islamic state was established in Afghanistan. The Taliban, an Islamic militia quickly rose to power stemming from the instability of the region, and the communities of Afghanistan welcomed the Taliban for representing the values that were widespread in Afghanistan, such as restricting the role of women, as well as carrying out the roles of a government, such as protection from violence.

During the Taliban's rule, Al-Qaeda, a terrorist organization that was headed by Osama bin Laden, quickly began attacking various international embassies, under the notion that they were fighting a jihad, or holy war. These attacks led the international community of the United Nations to impose sanctions on the nation of Afghanistan, as the Taliban were harboring Al-Qaeda. On September 11th, 2001, Al-Qaeda carried out their terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center Towers in New York, which quickly prompted the United States to invade Afghanistan, as the Taliban refused to extradite Osama bin Laden to face trial in the United States.

After months of the United States invasion, the Taliban was near defeat, with the Taliban losing control of the major cities in Afghanistan, and moving to the far boundaries of the nation. The United States assisted Hamid Karzai, an ethnic Pashtun, into power, and Karzai became the president of Afghanistan through a U.N. conference to create an interim government in the

² The Mujahideen was largely supported through the provision of weapons from the United States and the United Kingdom, for their efforts to stop Soviet forces.

December of 2001 (“A Historical Timeline of Afghanistan,” 2011). President Karzai maintained power for over a decade, receiving criticism for potentially interfering with the votes, and eventually Ashraf Ghani, the current president, was elected as the new president of Afghanistan.

Historical background of Iraq

The Republic of Iraq is an almost completely landlocked nation in the Middle East, bordering Syria, Turkey, Iran, Kuwait, and Jordan, with a small border touching the Persian Gulf. The climate of Iraq is mostly desert, with an abundance of fossil fuels. As estimated by the CIA World Factbook in 2018, the population of Iraq is 40,194,216, placing Iraq as the 36th most populous country in the world.

Society of Iraq

There is a clear majority and minority within the borders of Iraq. According to the CIA World Factbook (2018) the majority of the population identifies as Arab, making up around 75% of all peoples in Iraq; the minority of the population identifies as Kurdish at 15%. Arabic and Kurdish are the national languages, with a handful of regional dialects in use.

Although the population of Iraq is 98% Muslim, religion in Iraq plays a central role in the division within the nation, as there is a split between around 60% Shi’a and 40% Sunni. Renad Mansour, an academy fellow in the Middle East and North Africa Program at Chatham House, analyzes the divide between Shi’a and Sunni in Iraq through his paper, “The Sunni Predicament in Iraq, published in the Carnegie Middle East Center (2016). Mansour discusses that the leadership of the Shi’a and Kurdish populations has caused the Sunni population to “not trust the Shia-driven and Kurd-accommodated central government,” and additionally, do not believe that the government “represents their interests or welfare” (2016).

In terms of development, Iraq is categorized as a nation of “low human development,” according to the UN Human Development Indices and Indicators 2018 Statistical Update. According to this report, 31.6% of the total employment in Iraq are classified as poor, working for \$3.10 (USD, purchasing power parity adjusted) per day. 22.1% of children under the age of 5 are malnourished, with the life expectancy at birth averaging at 70 years.

Iraqi government, and its changes

Since the end of the Cold War to today, the nation of Iraq has seen two major governmental entities in power. In 1968, the Baathists rose to power, and placed Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr in power (“Iraq profile - timeline,” 2018). In 1979, Saddam Hussein rose to presidency, also belonging to the Baathist political party. During Hussein’s rule, he faced the first U.S.-Iraq war and the 1991 Gulf War. During this time period, there were numerous international efforts to rid Iraq of its weapons of mass destruction, such as the United Nations Special Commission to Oversee the Destruction of Iraq’s Weapons of Mass Destruction. When Iraq terminated its cooperation with the United Nations in the commission, the United States and the United Kingdom began Operation Desert Fox in order to destroy such weapons of mass destruction. This operation resulted in the removal of Saddam Hussein from power in 2003³, resulting in a power vacuum in Iraq, and continued U.S. intervention in the region.

Numerous leaders rose to obtain the positions of president and prime minister since Saddam Hussein’s removal of power. The United Kingdom ended control of southern Iraq in 2007, and the United States pulled out its troops in 2011. This time period in Iraq is characterized by Kurdish and Shi’a collaboration to maintain a stronger government and fight against the Islamic State, while the Sunni population are often left out of the discussion.

³ Hussein is later tried and executed for his crimes against humanity.

Historical background of Syria

The Syrian Arab Republic is also an almost completely landlocked nation in the Middle East, bordering Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey, with a small border touching the Mediterranean Sea. The climate of Syria is mostly desert, with an abundance of fossil fuels and agricultural land. As estimated by the CIA World Factbook in 2018, the population of Syria is 19,454,263, placing Syria as the 62nd most populous country in the world; however, the population is dwindling, as not only is Syria in the midst of a civil war, the amount of refugees fleeing persecution in Syria creates the largest refugee crisis the world has ever placed, displacing around 11 million Syrians since the beginning of the civil war in 2011.

Society of Syria

The differing ethnic groups residing within Syria's borders, according to the CIA World Factbook (2018,) are the majority of Arabs at 50%, with Alawites at 15%, Kurds at 10%, and Levantines at 10%. The national language of Syria is Arabic, through there are other regional dialects present in the nation.

Syria has been in a civil war since 2011, when pro-democracy protests stemming from the Arab Spring movement quickly turned violent, when security forces began firing at demonstrators (Rodgers, Gritten, Offer, & Asare, 2016). The conflict in Syria has caused produced millions of refugees, as almost all entities involved, such as the Syrian government headed by Bashar al-Assad, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), and other forces, have committed large amounts of war crimes. The United Nations has hosted numerous conferences in order to come to a resolution of this devastating civil war; however, with opposing views of the United States and the Russian Federation, draft resolutions have a difficult time being passed without veto by the two world powers.

In terms of development, Syria is categorized as a nation of “low human development,” according to the UN Human Development Indices and Indicators 2018 Statistical Update. According to this report, 62.5% of the total employment in Syria is classified as poor, working for \$3.10 (USD, purchasing power parity adjusted) per day. The adult mortality rate for females is 79 per 1,000 women, and for males, a staggering 270 per 1,000 men.

Syrian government, and its changes

Since the November of 1970, the Assad family has ruled over Syria, beginning when Hafez al-Assad staged a coup against the Syrian president Nur al-Din al-Atasi, co-founder of the Arab Socialist Baath Party (“Syria profile - timeline,” 2019). During his rule, Hafez al-Assad mandated in the Syrian constitution that all presidents of Syria must be Muslim, and further angered the citizens of Syria by appointing his brother to the position of vice president. Following the death of Hafez al-Assad, his son, Bashar al-Assad, rises to power and claims the presidency. Bashar al-Assad’s presidency has outraged many citizens in Syria for his oppressive tactics, and with his use of chemical weapons, has caused the international community to respond. Bashar al-Assad is currently the president of Syria; however, many international actors such as the United States and other western nations are demanding that he step down.

Importance of historical backgrounds

By noting the similarities and differences between the three countries that we will be analyzing, it is important to address the importance of understanding their historical backgrounds. This is not to state that what happens in one country will happen in all similar countries; however, this is to understand the nuances between each individual country that determines the success or failure of any policy implemented.

CHAPTER II:

U.S. MILITARIAL POLICIES IN AFGHANISTAN, IRAQ, AND SYRIA

To begin the bulk of this dissertation, one of the most critical and heavily discussed topics is the American use of military intervention regarding the Middle East. For purposes of this thesis, we will focus on the provision of small arms and light weapons into Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria, as well as the United States' use of unmanned aerial vehicles to conduct airstrikes in these three nations.

Policy I: the trade of small arms, light weapons, and weapon systems

To understand the history of providing small arms and light weapons, we can look at the instances in which the United States and the Soviet Union provided such materials during the proxy wars of the Cold War. Although the two rivalling countries of the Cold War didn't engage directly in battle, a new method of warfare was developed - the use of foreign affairs to promote a nation's own personal interests. These proxy wars often involved one of the Cold War powers supporting their foreign actors with whatever provisions were necessary in order to win the battle.

In the 1970s, the United States focused on providing the rebel forces against the Afghanistan government with ammunition and arms, in order to combat the Soviet troops that had invaded Afghanistan, and stop the spread of communism and Soviet control. When the dissolution of the Soviet Union occurred in 1989, resources state that there are still over one million American firearms circulating the Middle East in illicit trade, resulting from this mission (insert link). For purposes of this dissertation, we will focus on more recent instances in which

the United States provided small arms and light weapons to their allies, but it is vital to understand the history of such provisions.

International importance of small arms, light weapons, and weapon systems

The issue of the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons has caused international entities to discuss the topic. For example, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) hosted a conference in regards to the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons. In this conference, member states of the United Nations drafted up legislature, known as the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects (PoA) addressing the issue of this illicit trade (Programme of Action, 2001). In its first lines, the PoA addressed the international repercussions of the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons, such as the threat that this illicit trade poses on developing communities, as well as the human suffering that small arms and light weapons incurs. The PoA also lists measures that nations are recommended to take in order to inhibit this illicit trade, such as establishing and properly maintaining databases in order to keep account of the small arms and light weapons in the nations' stockpiles.

Going further, the United Nations has not only drafted the PoA to address the issue; there are numerous initiatives outside of the PoA that the United Nations has set to curb the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons. For example, the United Nations Disarmament and International Security Committee has produced resolutions by various sponsor countries in attempts to provide solutions to the issue. Outside of the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has also made attempts to prohibit the illicit trade of illegal weaponry.⁴

⁴ NATO has not only destroyed over 600,000 small arms and light weapons, but the methods used by NATO in controlling small arms, light weapons, and ammunition, are promoted by international entities.

U.S. sales of small arms, light weapons, and weapon systems in Afghanistan

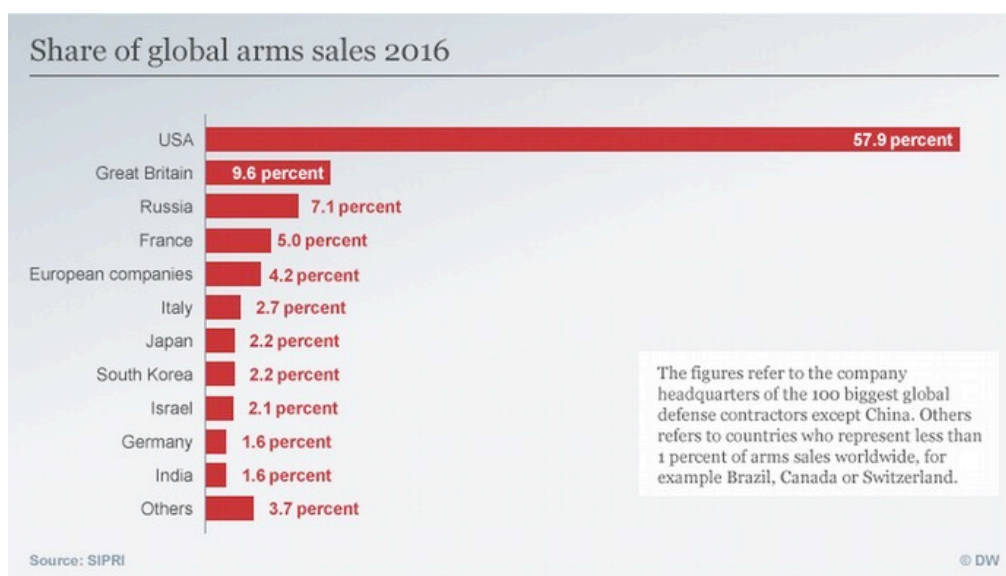
Since the United States began military intervention in Afghanistan, the United States has been pouring in military assistance in the form of small arms, light weapons, and weapon systems. Some of the arms trade includes thousands of tanks, artillery guns, and various aircrafts (SIPRI, 2018).⁵ The United States, in such exports, expected to aid the Afghan government with new military equipment, and provide further stability in the region. With the Taliban gaining momentum over the past few years, they have been able to break into the stockpiles of the Afghan military and steal an abundance of arms to further their goals. The Taliban have even managed to take advantage of the corruption within the Afghan military, as there is evidence showing that Taliban leaders have been purchasing American weapons, fuel, and ammunition, from the Afghan military (Kredo, 2017). This lack of security and accountability from the Afghan government, a major importer of U.S. small arms, light weapons, and weapons systems, causes thousands of arms to fall into the hands of the Taliban, further increasing the instability and war in Afghanistan.

U.S. provision of small arms, light weapons, and weapon systems in Iraq

A similar turn of events occurred in Iraq, where the Islamic State gained access to “decades of irresponsible arms transfers to Iraq” (“Iraq: ‘Islamic State’ atrocities fuelled by decades of reckless arms trading,” 2015). The stockpile weaponry in Iraq is lacking in security and oversight, which would prohibit the Islamic State’s acquisition of such trade; the Iraqi government’s lack of control over stockpiles and corruption contributes to the Islamic State’s stockpile. According to a report conducted by the Conflict Armament Research, Islamic State forces have stolen “significant quantities of U.S. manufactured small arms” (Conflict Armament

⁵ SIPRI has an entire database exhibiting in heavy detail the exports of arms into Afghanistan, such as stating the exact amount shipped, the date, and a description of the arm.

Research, 2015). Similarly to the case in Afghanistan, the lack of security caused the terrorist organizations to receive and utilize such weaponry against U.S. led forces. Without the proper maintenance and security of stockpiles, it is strikingly evident that the U.S. military aid may fall into the hands of those that the U.S. painstakingly pours millions of dollars to defeat.



Graph 1.1 Share of global arms sales 2016⁶

Implications of U.S. provision of small arms and light weapons

As graph 1.1 points out, the United States remains the largest seller of global arms, and beats its closest competitor by over 40%, with information gathered by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (2016). By noting the massive provisions of small arms and light weapons to unstable governments and non-state actors, it is evident that such provisions to entities that do not have the capability to manage and guard stockpiles contributes to the illicit flow of small arms and light weapons. This provision is counterintuitive for the United States, as the United States remains a spearhead in numerous initiatives to further control and even destroy small arms and light weapons.

⁶ SIPRI allows the free use of its graphs for non-profit purposes.

Policy II: the use of unmanned airstrikes

With the development of advanced military technology, the United States has been able to expand the limits of warfare, such as the use of technologically improved drones which has allowed unmanned airstrikes to be carried out, removing many American military personnel from imminent danger. However, many scholars are skeptical to the government's enthusiasm for unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), and identify the potential pitfalls in heavily relying on technology in order to carry out operations.

As pointed out in his article for *Global Security Studies*, Gabriel Margolis acknowledges that drones have been extremely useful in acquiring intelligence while protecting the lives of those that would otherwise have been put into danger by gathering intelligence on ground (Margolis, 2013). However, Margolis emphasizes the necessity of on ground intelligence personnel, and goes on to warn that reliance on drones and other UAVs can cause operations to be “susceptible to [counterintelligence] and other forms of failure when areas of [human intelligence] are not addressed” (Margolis, 2013, p.56). Delving further into the topic of UAVs, we can draw comparisons between Margolis' findings in the effectiveness UAVs for intelligence purposes and the effectiveness of UAVs for unmanned airstrikes.

U.S. use of unmanned airstrikes in war zones

The use of unmanned airstrikes in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria have raised international attention to the large amount of civilian casualties that many scholars suspect to increase. However, gaining such statistics has proven difficult, as the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has pointed out that while they are able to provide statistics on civilian casualties, it cannot distinguish the deaths caused by unmanned airstrikes without the United States providing information (Clark, 2017). Scholars and officials seem to have differing views in the viability of unmanned airstrikes; many international scholars claim that the use of

unmanned aerial vehicles in airstrikes causes a much higher civilian casualty rate, while high ranking officials in the United States military commend unmanned aerial vehicles for their precision and accuracy. If the United States decides to maintain statistics of civilian casualties stemming from unmanned airstrikes, it is very much likely that the findings would include higher rates of civilian casualties.

Implications of using airstrikes

One of the most important purposes of the United States' War on Terror is to eradicate terrorist organizations; therefore, it can be concluded that the United States would inherently desire to avoid radicalizing civilians to join terrorist efforts. Noting the potentially large amount of civilian casualties stemming from the use of unmanned airstrikes, and the indignance from the international community in using unmanned airstrikes, one can make the realization that the use of UAVs contributes to the anger, and even radicalization of the citizens of any country that unmanned airstrikes are employed. Regardless of eliminating various leaders of terrorist organizations, it is clear that by causing civilian casualties, many of the citizens who lost loved ones from these unmanned airstrikes may quickly join the ranks of terrorist organizations and fill in the vacant positions, stemming from anger and indignance towards the United States.

CHAPTER III:
U.S. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUREAUCRATIC POLICIES IN
AFGHANISTAN, IRAQ, AND SYRIA

After thoroughly identifying and analyzing the American military policies in the three countries, we can now move into identifying and analyzing the lesser known American administrative and bureaucratic policies implemented in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria. Firstly, we will discuss the use of U.S. provided police training programs, and then move into analyzing the implications of promoting Western based ideals in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria.

The use of U.S. provided police training programs

When it comes to maintaining a stable and prosperous nation, the importance of the strength and stability of government is undeniably heavy. This is why after the United States has for the most part subdued terrorist organizations in Afghanistan and Iraq, there were initiatives in order to establish and maintain a national police force. In theory, this provision of U.S. police training programs would contribute to the stability of the nation without the support from the United States, by training local citizens in order to maintain local security; however, these programs have been blindsided by the inattentiveness of American personnel and the overbearing focus instilled by such programs in combating terrorist organizations rather than providing stability.

U.S. training programs in Afghanistan

Beginning with the United States police training programs in Afghanistan, the first attempt at creating a police force was the creation of the Afghan National Auxiliary Police, where the Afghan government trained 11,000 villagers to serve as policemen and women,

receiving a miniscule 10 days of training, and due to its ineffectiveness, two years later the training program was cancelled (Chaterjee, 2017).

The United States has attempted to revisit this failure and implement a better revised program; however, it was met yet again with failure. The United States has begun utilizing private contractors in order to train citizens to join the police force. For example, DynCorp, an American private contractor, has attempted to train Afghan border police, to no avail. According to Chaterjee, this inadequacy and corruptness of the Afghan police has caused a large amount of Afghan citizens to rely on the Taliban, whose numbers have begun to increase, in order to provide security.

By noting the two ineffective yet expensive⁷ missions on providing the nation of Afghanistan with adequate and ethical police forces, this raises the question as to why such costly and time-consuming police training programs have failed. Without much need for explanation, it is evident that the initial police training program with a duration of 10 days would not be successful in a long-term police force that would be stable and law-abiding. However, for the private contractors employed in order to carry out such training, the explanation for failure is much more complicated.

“DynCorp Oversight in Afghanistan Faulted,” a report⁸ by Pratap Chatterjee, offers many explanations for the shortcomings of DynCorp in Afghanistan. In terms of incentives for Afghan citizens to join the efforts of the police force that DynCorp is attempting to train, there are virtually little to none (2010). According to this report, there is a low amount of enrollment, and an even lower amount of continued attendance to police training, with a quarter of the trainees

⁷ The provision of the private contractor DynCorp alone has cost the United States government \$1.6 billion for training police forces (Chatterjee, 2017.)

⁸ This report was posted by CorpWatch, an organization dedicated to monitoring multinational corporations and their actions.

dropping out each year - additionally, the Taliban, with large amounts of revenue stemming from illicit opium production and trade, is able to pay twice as much as the Afghan government for a citizen's work. In terms of functionality of the Afghans that choose to remain in the Afghan police force, training has been reported to be minimal, and more focused towards the combat against the Taliban, rather than the normal tasks that being a police officer entails.

The Department of Defense Report No. D-2010-042 goes on to state the inadequacies of the Department of State's allocation of funds to train the police forces in Afghanistan, stating that the

“[Department of State] did not maintain adequate oversight of Government-furnished property, maintain contract files as required by the Federal Acquisition Regulation, always match goods to receiving reports, or follow internal control procedures requiring in-country contracting officer's representatives to review contractor invoices to determine if the costs were allowable, allocable, or reasonable prior to payment and validate deliverables” (United States, Department of Defense, Report No. D-2010-042).

This report makes clear the source of the failure of the Afghan police training programs, as the program and all of its initiatives did not meet the organizational requirements and did not provide adequate reports in terms of success, limiting the amount of regulation that the Department of Defense could enable to ensure the success of this program. By understanding the failure of such police training programs in Afghanistan, we can see a similar version of events to train police in Iraq.

U.S. training programs in Iraq

Moving on to the nation of Iraq, police training programs have produced similar results to the police training programs in Afghanistan. From the beginning of the Department of State's

(DoS) police training program, the Police Development Program (PDP), Iraqi officials have criticized the program for overlooking Iraqi priorities - Adnan al-Asadi, a senior Iraqi official, goes as far to state that the program was “useless,” overstuffed, and focused on less important themes such as administration (Ackerman, 2013). The Iraq Ministry of Interior (MOI) has expressed little support in the program as well, calling for assessments of the program.

In 2012, the Special Inspector General for IRAQ Reconstruction drafted the report, “Iraq Police Development Program: Lack of Iraqi Support and Security Problems Raise Questions About the Continued Viability of the Program” (2012). The report states that:

“MOI support for the program has been weak, but recent reductions may bring consensus. The MOI does not want a broad-based training program targeted on improving its managerial and administrative skills. Instead it wants a much smaller program focused on specific technical and advanced policing skills. It has asked DoS to implement a program with 18 advisors in Baghdad and to terminate the police training program in Basrah” (“Iraq Police Development Program: Lack of Iraqi Support and Security Problems Raise Questions About the Continued Viability of the Program,” 2012).

With pressure from the Iraqi government to reassess and make changes to the PDP, the DoS consolidated its program into the Baghdad Police College Annex and spent \$108 million in its efforts, but the program was shut down within months in 2012. The police training programs in both Iraq and Afghanistan have received similar criticisms; however, after the failure in Afghanistan, similar mistakes were made in the implementation of the PDP in Iraq.

U.S. training programs in Syria

In the past two years, the United States has implemented a similar police training program with the purpose of training police forces designated to maintain stability in Raqqa, the capital of the Islamic State, after Raqqa falls into the hands of the U.S. led coalition (Perry & Ellis, 2017). The issue of consolidation has somewhat been addressed, as the United States program has focused on a specific city rather than an entire nation; however, the similar issues of mis-management and inadequacy of the training programs may affect the outcome of this police training program.

Implications of U.S. training programs

From the failures of the United States' police training programs in Afghanistan and Iraq, it is vital that the same mistakes that caused these failures are not made in the implementation of police training programs in Syria. We can not yet see the direct effects of such American programs in Syria due to the proximity in date; however, if the United States government fails to acknowledge the reasoning behind why previous police training programs have failed - and correct such mistakes - the efforts in Syria will most likely have been a waste of American resources.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the United States has engaged in policies that have been detrimental to the United States' ultimate goals. It is clear from the evidence provided above, that the certain policies addressed in this thesis have strong negative repercussions to the United States, as well as the nation that the United States is involved with.

These arguments do not state any opinion as to whether or not the United States should have intervened in Afghanistan, Iraq, or Syria; however, this thesis does provide arguments against certain policies enacted in these three nations. Moving forward, it is important and vital to keep in mind the reasons why certain policies were ineffective, in order to prevent the same incidents from occurring in the future.

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