Role of US in the War in Iraq Case Study

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Abstract

To address the United States failure of diplomacy regarding international relationships formed with other countries. I plan to use several case studies of past wars that the US has been involved in to analyze the diplomatic problems of the US and the countries involved in the wars to find a correlation of US’s policy implementations in all case studies. I will then use that research into the analysis of the war in Iraq. After the evaluation is complete I plan on making recommendations on how to improve international relations and more specifically how the past case studies can help the US policymakers with the current war in Iraq.
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Introduction

The United States foreign policy promotes diplomatic relations with foreign countries. Throughout history, the US has conducted many peace treaties for other countries, and has resolved conflicts by stepping in and implementing its foreign relations diplomacy. But it has not been a smooth ride of foreign policy. In the three war study cases discussed below, the United States has played a more passive role in some instances, and rush into military action ignoring further diplomacy in other instances.

In the current war in Iraq, the US has touched upon all implementation areas from the first stages of diplomatic involvement to issuing final ultimatums threatening the country in conflict with military force and occupation. Since the start of the Iraqi War in 2003, the United States’ goal of establishing a democracy has proven more difficult than expected. Case studies of other conflicts including the breakup of Yugoslavia and the First Iraq War offer insights into the use of military force for achieving foreign policy goals. These studies suggest that the US may have substantial difficulty in achieving the objective of a unified, democratic Iraq.

Background

Iraq was under the rule of the Ottoman Empire for over four centuries. The country was under foreign authority until 1932 when the League of Nations granted it independence. Following World War I, Britain was appointed mandatory power under the new system of international trusteeship established by the League of Nations. Nationalism started in 1918 when an Iraqi nationalist movement rose against British rule. Shiite and Sunni Arabs, from central and southern regions, joined forces, while Iraq’s Muslims insisted that Christians and
Jews (the largest single ethnic group in Baghdad at the time) participate in the raging protest marches and demonstrations since they were integral to the fabric of existing society. As the notion of a new joined citizenship arose across the country after the independence, new professional institutions, national press, political parties, and the upcoming of a sophisticated social culture became the steppingstones of an upcoming new culture. This trend continued throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Almost every city in Iraq comprised a mixture of Muslims -- Shiite and Sunni -- Christians, and (until the late sixties, and mostly in Baghdad) Jews. Baghdad and Basrah, in particular, were the arch multicultural, multiethnic cosmopolitan cities on a par with many a current Western metropolis. The Iraqis seemed to have coexisted happily, socialized together, intermarried, lived within the same neighborhoods, studied at the same schools and universities and worked in the same offices. Because most books on Iraq are on the political history of Iraq and not the cultural and social movement of the 20th century Iraq, readers do not depict the other side of Iraq’s history on the growth of modernity and westernization. But the social harmony never translated into the political realm of Iraq.

The British aware of the nature of Iraqi society, struck a deal with Rahman an Naqeeb (a Sunni nobleman whose lineage was supposedly traced back to Muhammed, Islam's prophet) that formed the foundation for the hopeful political structure. This deal alienated the inhabitants of the North (Kurds) and those of the South (Shiites) in the political world.

A conglomerate of British, Dutch, French, and US oil interests pushed to create a social base for the monarchy by confirming suitable tribal leaders in full possession of what had previously been the customary holdings of their tribes. In addition, the British continued to exercise political and economic influence. Almost all of the authority established came from Iraq’s minority of Sunni Arabs and even some former Ottoman officers. Revolution finally got
rid of the last British occupation in 1958 and hope of addressing people’s needs was established. The opposition mainly came from liberal democrats, Arab nationalists, Kurdish nationalists, and communists. The communist trend had surfaced after World War II and was the largest influential political force in Iraq. A series of not so relevant governments came and went unsuccessfully until 1960. The three main groups that continued to play a political role during these small governments were the communists, the Kurds, and the pan-Arab nationalists who were divided into Nasserists and Ba’thists.

During this time, ‘Abd al-Karim Qasim was president and the military officer. He was mostly supported by the communists because of his progressive social and economic policies. The 1960s coups d'état and governments that followed had one primary interest in mind: how to gain control over the central government as forcefully as possible, and simultaneously subjugate or persuade Iraq’s inhabitants to unify into a peoples to overthrow the present government—especially in the more restive regions of the south and north. As a result of this thinking, president Qasim was overthrown in 1963. The group that had most to do with the overthrow was the Ba’thists. In the process of forming a new government, and in the country’s search of a new power figure General Abdul-Salam Aref, president from 1963 until 1966, had cruelly erected some of the most immoral projects to marginalize and repress the Shiites and Kurds.

The second political force, the Kurdish national movement, was somewhat effective in establishing some authority in Iraq, although it was mostly in the northern region where most Kurds reside. They were successful enough to have a leader for their formed Kurdistan Democratic Party. His name was Mulla Mustafa Barzani who died in exile in 1979. The Kurds have been known to be the ethnic minority within the Iraqi state. They originate from the mountainous north and northeast of Iraq, and form about twenty percent of the total population
of Iraq. The Kurdistan Democratic Party strove for autonomy in Iraq but the party did not side with the authority established in Baghdad.

The third main political group the Ba’thists rose in power round the early 1960s. In 1968, a small but effective Ba’athist group seized power becoming a formal political party. Although the constitution permitted opposing parties to operate, in practice the Ba’th did not tolerate any political opposition after 1976. Membership in other political parties became a capital offense as well. Ba’thism is a variety of pan-Arab nationalism, based on the general premise that there is a single Arab nation which has been divided artificially, first by the Ottomans, and subsequently by European and American imperialism and Zionism. Since the Ottoman Turks rose to power in the 14th century, there have been stirrings among Arabs for reunification as a means of reestablishing Arab political power. Their goal is to liberate themselves from these outside forces and to unite. Once this is achieved, it is believed social conflicts within particular states will subside. The rhetoric of Pan-Arab unity has been employed ad infinitum in place of any serious attention to social, economic, cultural, and political issues. Ba’thism has three main aspirations: unity (referring to a unified Arab nation), freedom (referring to be free from imperialism and Zionism), and socialism (referring to a state-directed economic development supported by a mixed economy). The defeat of the Arabs in the Arab-Israeli War of 1967 set back the cause of Pan-Arabism.

While serving as vice president in the 1970s, Saddam Hussein pacified left-leaning elements within the Ba’ath while annihilating Iraqi communists. In 1979, he became the president supported by the Ba’th Party. In the 1980s, he began a vicious campaign of deportations starting with the Faili Kurds and ending with the Shiite Arabs. The reshuffling of populations and the different treatments of ethnic groups resulted in sectarian frictions and
distrust towards different ethnic groups. With a divided ethnic and social community, it was easy for a dictator to rise and have solemn authority over them. Saddam Hussein was Iraq’s only commonality and unyielding structure the country needed. Another well thought out strategy that Hussein used was to secure Iraq’s borders by using paid constituents and providing them with positions such as army, business, and governmental to secure their wealth. In the 1980s, the Dulaimis, Kubaisis, and Jumailis, the principal tribes of Ramadi and Fallujah, grew omnipresent in government and in wealth. They were and still are hardy tribesmen who hold rigid religious and ethnic convictions. After the capture of Saddam Hussein in 2003, it was these tribes who lead in the insurgency against imperialism and reform. Portions of the local population have provided the logistical support for all the Islamic fundamentalist terrorists (al-Qaeda supporters and other foreign extremist elements) who have been infiltrating through Iraq's unguarded borders. Religious extremism and sectarian chauvinism, on the one hand, intertwined with fear of losing wealth and power have become potent and real reasons to hold uncanny alliances.\[x\]

In August 1990, Saddam Hussein attacked Kuwait which was fully opposed by the UN and all the principal regional actors. In the five months after the invasion, an array of forces from the US, Britain, France, Pakistan, etc headed in Saudi Arabia backed by the UN and all states of the Warsaw Pact. By November 1990, the UN issued Resolution 678, which authorized member states to use all means necessary to force Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait if it had not done so by January 15th, 1991. Saddam Hussein did not withdraw from Kuwait, therefore the US and allies began bombing Iraq. Hussein responded by launching missiles at Israel and Saudi Arabia. A ground offensive was launched on February 23 which ended with a destruction of much of the Iraqi army. Finally a cease-fire was declared. After the war, much internal resistance occurred inside Iraq. It seemed unlikely for the regime to be removed other than by a military coup.
Iraq’s history provides important context in understanding the country’s current situation. Because Iraq has only been under military rule from a foreign force or under a dictatorship, it is having a really hard time to transitioning into the democracy US intends it to be. Internal resistance between the ethnic groups still continues today and makes it more difficult for the US diplomacy to be successful in a country in turmoil.

Methods
Case studies are a way of researching qualitative rather than quantitative data. Rather than using large samples and following a rigid protocol to examine a limited number of variables, case study methods involve an in-depth, longitudinal examination of a single instance or event, a case. Social scientists, in particular, have made wide use of this qualitative research method to examine contemporary real-life situations and provide the basis for the application of ideas and extension of methods. They provide a systematic way of looking at events, collecting data, analyzing information, and reporting the results. As a result, the researcher may gain a sharpened understanding of the reasons the events happened as it did, and what might become important to look at more extensively in future research. Case studies lend themselves to both generating and testing hypotheses. They are used to analyze a public policy theory and determine if it will work for a current similar problem like that being analyzed in the case study. Sometimes the researcher tries to expand on or generalize an existing theory derived from a previous case study. As a result, the researcher will understand what and why the instance in the case happened the way it did, why the policy worked or did not work, and more importantly what could have been done differently to achieve an alternative result.

Case studies fall under three categories: exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory. An exploratory case is used when nothing or little is known about the phenomenon that the
researcher is trying to understand. In an exploratory case study the researcher observes the phenomenon and analyzes the qualitative data. In a descriptive case study the researcher is trying to find out information of what has happened in the particular situation and trying to figure out why it developed the way it did and what are the main variables that are present in the case. Lastly in an explanatory case which is the most common study case, the researcher is asking questions like how and why in the process of analyzing the events of the case, for example, how the policy implemented was carried out, and why the policymakers chose that policy form.

From the cases stated above the explanatory cases are the best for acquiring information because not only are they more complex in the sense of more actors and basic mechanisms being involved, but they also conclude ultimately if the policy implemented worked or not. When dealing with a social science case study, it is more important to clarify the deeper causes behind the problem and the implementation’s consequences rather than describe the indicators and how often they occurred. The descriptive or critical study case is used much less and it is used when the researcher is trying to formulate a generalization characteristic between two actors or events that are being observed.[xiii] Finally an exploratory or a paradigmatic case study can be defined as an exemplar. No predictive theory is formulated from this study case but an acknowledgement of how closely related this particular case is with other ones, can be depicted. Paradigmatic cases are usually used as references for the other two case studies that have already been discussed.[xiv]

Since case studies are so important, one must take the time to formulate the best research strategy to approach the case firsthand. Cases can be chosen with different values of an independent variable, but same values for important control variables. When selecting a case researchers usually use information – oriented sampling as opposed to random sampling.[xv]
This happens because in most cases it is hard to acquire a lot of desired information. Once the case selection is complete, one must choose an appropriate case approach so one can figure out why some existing theory that the researcher expected to work, failed in the process of implementation or on the contrary why the policy worked so well in that particular instance. It is often hard to pick one case where you can generalize a thesis from it that will work for other cases without using random and large sample method. That is because many times generalization works best when it is a critical case that is used to come to a conclusion that could relate to other cases. But to come up with a generalization from only one case study is quite hard especially when we are dealing with not so cut and dry social science policy cases.

Researchers use what is called the “falsification test” to evaluate how relevant the generalization is for all cases. Unlike a scientific study case where one can prove his hypothesis stating that leaves contain chlorophyll by doing a chemical analysis of the leaf proving that it does or it does not contain chlorophyll, social science cases have many gray areas. If we use generalization to try and analyze how well a policy is working for the health care system for example, it would be much harder to use the falsification test to evaluate if the implemented policy fulfilled the set requirements whatever they may be. There are many more variable values that may not be constant when it comes to policy implementation.

Another reason why case study may not be the best research analysis tool is because it takes time to sort through all the cases picked for supporting a theory or aiding a project. The researcher must be very careful when analyzing each case and understand all the variables that play an important role on the topic being researched. Once the variables are discovered, the researcher needs to sort out which ones are irrelevant to the specific study case and which ones relate to other case studies that are being used for the project. This is a tedious and sometimes
unsuccessful process where out of the ten cases that were picked by the researcher at first, only four might pertain to the variables needed for the hypothesis that the researcher is trying to prove or generalize.

Study cases seem to be a great tool to use for generalization of a current case and when the researcher is trying to analyze the effect of a policy in a social science. The most used study case is the explanatory one because it is so dynamic and most of the study cases fall under that category. There are setbacks with using case study design but just like any other research method, after some practice the researcher will be able to sort through the wrong cases and the difficulties associated with generalizing case studies.

In the case studies relevant to my research topic, the explanatory approach works best for a generalization of United States’ diplomatic role in the wars’ aftermaths and consequences. After researching Vietnam’s conflicts that led to the separation of North and South Vietnam after the war ended, I found that US administrative actions failed during the diplomacy stages on the brink of the Vietnam War because of poor relations between the North and South sides. The US picked a side in the war rather than staying neutral and working with both sides in peace talks. The Communist North saw US as an obstacle to their goal of making all of Vietnam a communist country.

In the Yugoslavia War study case, it was a little bit harder to pinpoint the generalization of US’s role because there were three mini-wars within the bigger conflict of Yugoslavia as a whole. It was hard at first to hypothesize the outcome with so many specific conflicts, but after reading through all of it, many of the catalysts of the war were the same as those of the war in
Iraq. The main catalyst was the ethnicity factor. Both countries had similar group tensions because of difference in ethnicity, traditions, and religion, and also language.

In the case of the First Gulf War, there was more international community activity than in the war in Iraq. The United Nations worked closely with the US and 34 other countries to make sure that Kuwait was not taken over by Iraq. US mainly focused on Saudi Arabia’s protection and Kuwait’s independence from Iraq’s dictatorship granted it also had economic interests in mind. The ethnic concerns surrounding the politics of the war in Iraq were not present in the First Gulf War. Rather than internal struggles between ethnic groups, the First Gulf War was more directed towards economic interests for Iraq and the coalition forces trying to keep a state (Kuwait) safe from invasion.

Case Studies

Vietnam War

Also known as the Second Indochina War and the American War for Vietnam, the Vietnam War started in 1959 and ended in April 30, 1975. From its history, it was a long and dreaded war that many Americans disapproved of. This was a war between the Communist North Vietnam and the Republic of Vietnam supported by the United States. As a result, North Vietnam won the war and the US troops withdrew from South Vietnam failing to unite the country as a whole. This war was a failure in the US foreign relations governance. Not only did the US lose the war and not restore the control back to the Republic of Vietnam, but from the three million Americans that served in the war, there were 1.4 million casualties.

The leader of the Vietnam Worker’s Party of South Vietnam, Lei Duan urged the country to take a stand for a unified Vietnam under the Communist rule in early 1950s. As a result, a
small level of insurgency began to arise which mainly consisted of terrorist attacks around 1956. The terrorist attacks were viewed as armed propaganda responding to the political struggle surrounding the country. Most of the violence was aimed at officials and professionals. One estimate purports that by 1958, 20% of South Vietnam's village chiefs had been murdered by the insurgents.[xvi] What was sought was a method of completely destroying government control in South Vietnam's rural villages in order to be replaced by an NFL (National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam) shadow government. The NFL was established in early 1959. It was made up of two distinct groups: the nationalists and the communists. These two groups emphasized patriotism, honesty and good government, while promising the reunification of Vietnam and an end to American influence.[xvii]

In the United States, John F Kennedy won the Presidential election of 1960. In his inaugural address, Kennedy made the ambitious pledge to "pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, and oppose any foe, in order to assure the survival and success of liberty."[xviii] He was very interested in using Special Forces against communist Third World countries bringing freedom to their people. Kennedy believed that the guerrilla tactics employed by Special Forces such as the Green Berets would be effective in a "brush fire" war in Vietnam. He saw the British success in using such forces in Malaya as a strategic template.

In 1961, the Pathet Lao communist movement continued to rise bringing some fear to the Republic of Vietnam in the South. President Kennedy was hesitant to act on fear of failure in ending communism in Vietnam. President Kennedy was against deployment of US troops in Vietnam fearing political and military consequences. In response, he sent Vice President Johnson to meet with the Leader of South Vietnam Diem, to assure him that more aid was to come, supporting a fighting force against the North. What came out of this meeting is what was called
the Strategic Hamlet Program of 1961. The program’s aim was to isolate the population from the insurgents, provide education and health care, and strengthen the government's hold over the countryside. The program worked in the short run but collapsed two years later. US presence in South Vietnam had become more apparent than one year ago with the initiation of the collapsed program. By mid-1962, the number of U.S. military advisers in South Vietnam had risen from 700 to 12,000.

In the midst of shaky US-Vietnam foreign relations, and domestic problems at home, the US faced another misfortune. President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in 1963. Vice President Lyndon Johnson took over the presidency and did not wait on taking action in Vietnam. On August 2, 1964, the USS Maddox, on an intelligence mission along North Vietnam's coast, started a gunfight with torpedo boats in the Gulf of Tonkin. However, the Maddox claimed that it was attacked. A second attack was reported two days later on the USS Turner Joy and Maddox in the same area. Johnson is believed to have used the incidents above to gain the support of the American people for a war in Vietnam. With that said, military operations in Southeast Asia began without the Congressional Declaration of War. The US traditional military tactics found it difficult to crush Vietnam insurgency groups. Johnson worked with the US military officials to make the war as short as possible and most importantly most effective as possible.

Around this time, Operation Flaming Dart and Operation Rolling Thunder commenced. The bombing campaign, which ultimately lasted three years, was intended to force North Vietnam to cease its support for the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam (NFL) by threatening to destroy North Vietnam's air defenses and industrial infrastructure. In the course of the bombings, many civilians lost their homes and the country’s non-target regions were also destroyed and bombed. The objective of forcing North Vietnam to stop its support for the NFL,
however, was never reached. As one officer noted "this is a political war and it calls for discriminate killing. The best weapon … would be a knife … The worst is an airplane."[xx]

The chaos of the dreaded war finally ended in 1973, when the US officials realized that the quest for a unified Vietnam had failed. The Paris Peace Accord, was agreed between communist Le Duc Tho, Henry Kissinger and was reluctantly signed in January 1973 by President Thieu. It produced a ceasefire and allowed for the exchange of prisoners of war. In 1974, North Vietnam violated the Paris Peace Accord by attacking a province in South Vietnam. By 1975 North Vietnam was a much better funded and more communist determined. The US was reluctant to help this time around, and therefore South Vietnam collapsed. In the morning of 29 April 1975 the evacuation from Saigon by helicopter of the last U.S. diplomatic, military, and civilian personnel took place.

As stated above, the effects of the war were tremendous. Hundreds and thousands of South Vietnamese officials were imprisoned. Up to 2 million civilians fled the country during the war. Without the presence of the United States, Vietnam showed itself to be of little economic or strategic value. Discussions followed as to whether America's withdrawal was a political defeat rather than military defeat for US. The decision to get involved in Vietnam was accounted as a bad move on Congress’s part to allow President Johnson to go to war. President Ford was quoted in a conference:

“Success rests not only on military progress but on correctly analyzing the nature of the particular conflict, understanding the enemy's strategy, and assessing the strengths and weaknesses of allies. A new humility and a new sophistication may form the best parts of a complex heritage left to the Army by the long, bitter war in Vietnam.”[xxi]
The ability to train foreign military forces and the quality of advice regarding war given to successive Presidents were questioned and found to be ineffective when dealing with guerilla wars and insurgencies in countries where the US’s role is mostly occupational. As far as economic consequences go, people in US experienced budget cuts to President Johnson's Great Society programs. As defense spending and inflation grew, Johnson was forced to raise taxes. United States spent $120 billion on the war ($700 billion in 2007 dollars) on a war that the US gained nothing but criticism from.[xxii]

Like the Iraq situation, the war on Vietnam was not fully supported by the American people. The administration got a lot of criticism for rushing into this war. Some critics may say that the war on Iraq is another Vietnam War just because of the US occupation of a foreign land that is only staining our name as a unilateral power in world relations rather than helping us with our image in the international community.

Yugoslavia War

The Civil War that occurred in Yugoslavia was another opportunity for US involvement. Yugoslavia has always been a multinational state that had ethnicity and nationality problems amongst the different groups. A post-World War II Yugoslavia included Serbs, Bosnians, Croatians, Macedonians, Slovenians, and Kosovars. The Federation was constructed against a double background: an inter-war Yugoslavia which had been dominated by the Serbian ruling class; and a war-time slaughter in which the Nazis made use of the earlier Serbian oppression to use Croatian fascism for barbarous acts against the Serbs and also exploited anti-Serb sentiment amongst the Kosovar Albanians and some elements in the Bosnian Muslim population - to bolster their rule.[xxiii] The US and USSR were both concerned with the future of Yugoslavia.
Many tensions rose in the 1970s mainly because of a series of weak governments and an unpromising economy. Both powers wanted Yugoslavia to remain a neutral state in Europe. It was the Reagan administration which, in 1984, had adopted a "Shock Therapy" proposal to push Yugoslavia towards a capitalist restoration.\[xxiv\] Around this time, strong social groups emerged within the Yugoslav Communist Party, allied to Western business, banking and state interests and began pushing towards neoliberalism. Neoliberalism is a political movement that espouses economic liberalism as a means of promoting economic development and securing political liberty. The movement is sometimes described as an effort to revert to the economic policies of the 18th and 19th centuries’ classical liberalism.\[xxv\]

The “Shock Therapy” program did undermine the socialist link between the Communist Party and the working class. This link was first seen in Kosovo in 1981, there was an uprising demanding full republican status for Kosovo, as well as unification with Albania, which at the time was a communist country. The program’s bankruptcy law to liquidate state enterprises was enacted in the 1989 Financial Operations Act which required that if an enterprise was insolvent for 30 days running, or for 30 days within a 45 day period, it had to settle with its creditors either by giving them ownership or by being liquidated, in which case workers would be sacked, normally without severance payments.\[xxvi\] This not only brought many companies bankrupt in Yugoslavia but more than twenty percent of the country’s workers were laid off.

With the “Shock Therapy” program failing, it created within the population an atmosphere of social despair and hopelessness. Nationalist appeals started surfacing as a result of the program’s downfall. The efforts of governments ignoring the monetary restrictions of the program began with Slovenia and Serbia. After Yugoslavia’s communist leader Tito's death in 1984, ethnic tensions grew in Yugoslavia. The constitutional crisis that inevitably followed
resulted in a rise of nationalism in all republics: Slovenia and Croatia made demands for looser ties within the Federation, the Albanian majority in Kosovo demanded the status of a republic, Serbia sought absolute, not only relative dominion over Yugoslavia. Added to this, the Croat quest for independence led to large Serb communities within Croatia rebelling and trying to secede from the Croat republic.[xxvii] Serbian communist leader Slobodan Milosevic sought to restore pre-1974 Serbian sovereignty. Other republics, especially Slovenia and Croatia, denounced this move as a revival of great Serbian hegemony. Milosevic succeeded in reducing the autonomy of Vojvodina and of Kosovo and Metohija. As a result of these events, the ethnic Albanian miners in Kosovo organized strikes, which dovetailed into ethnic conflict between the Albanians and the non-Albanians in the province. At 87% of the population of Kosovo in the 1980s, ethnic-Albanians were the majority. Meanwhile Slovenia, under the presidency of Milan Kucan, and Croatia supported Albanian miners and their struggle for formal recognition. This angered Serbia's leadership which proceeded to use police force, and later even the Federal Army was sent to the province by the order of the Serbia-held majority in the Yugoslav Presidency Council. In 1990, the newly established regional governments turned their efforts to break up the country. Some few European states and the US having their own strategic interests in Yugoslavia, favored fragmentation.[xxviii]

The war broke out when the new regimes tried to replace Yugoslav civilian and military forces by the secessionist forces. Croatia attempted to replace police in the Serb populated region by force. Uprisings occurred, and civilians organized an armed resistance. Similarly, Slovenia tried to do the same thing in some of its Yugoslav regions. Bosnia and Herzegovina commenced a war of their own that lasted for three years for similar ethnic reasons. The results of all these conflicts are almost complete ethnic cleansing of the Serbs from all three regions, massive
displacement of the populations in Bosnia and Herzegovina and establishment of the 3 new independent states.[xxix] The separation of the Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was peaceful.[xxx] On August 1990, Serbian uprisings began to surface in Croatia. The Serbs proclaimed the emergence of Serbian Autonomous Areas in Croatia. In fall of 1990, the republics of Slovenia and Croatia proposed transforming Yugoslavia into a loose confederation of six republics. By this proposal republics would have right to self-determination. However Milosevic, the Yugoslav leader, rejected all such proposals, arguing that like Slovenes and Croats, the Croatian Serbs should also have a right to self-determination. Once again uprisings against Milosevic occurred where the military and police had to be brought down to restore order.

On June 25, 1991, Slovenia and Croatia became the first republics to declare independence from Yugoslavia. During this time, the Brionni Agreement was signed by the republics. According to the Brioni Agreement, the international community pressured Slovenia and Croatia to place a three-month moratorium on their independence.[xxxi] During these three months, the Yugoslav Army completed its pull-out from Slovenia, but in Croatia, a bloody war broke out in the fall of 1991. In September 1991, the Republic of Macedonia also declared independence. Five hundred US soldiers were then deployed under the UN banner to monitor Macedonia's northern borders with the Republic of Serbia, Yugoslavia. As a result of the conflict, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted UN Security Council Resolution 721 on November 27, 1991, which paved the way to the establishment of peacekeeping operations in Yugoslavia.[xxxii] In Bosnia and Herzegovina in November 1991, the Bosnian Serbs held a referendum which resulted in an overwhelming vote in favor of forming Serbian republic in borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina and staying in a common state with Serbia and Montenegro.
On January 9, 1992, the self-proclaimed Bosnian Serb assembly proclaimed a separate "Republic of the Serb people of Bosnia and Herzegovina".\[xxxiii\]

The Bosnia – Herzegovina War followed right after. It started in March 1992 and it ended in November 1995. The main causes of war were ethnic discrepancies between the two republics and land ownership. In 1994, NATO became actively involved, when its jets shot down four Serb aircraft over central Bosnia on February 28 1994 violating the UN no-fly zone. March 1994 a peace agreement mediated by the USA between the warring Croats (represented by Republic of Croatia) and Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina was signed in Washington and Vienna which is known as the Washington Agreement. Under the agreement, the combined territory held by the Croat and Bosnian government forces was divided into ten autonomous cantons, establishing the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The involvement of NATO, during the 1995 Operation Deliberate Force against the positions of the Army of Republika Srpska internationalized the conflict, but only in its final stages. The war was brought to an end after the signing of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina in Paris on 14 December 1995.\[xxxiv\] Peace negotiations were held in Dayton, Ohio, and were finalized on 21 December 1995. The records are known as the Dayton Agreement. Research done by Tibeau and Bijak in 2004 determined a number of 102,000 deaths and estimated the following breakdown: 55,261 were civilians and 47,360 were soldiers. Of the civilians: 16,700 were Serbs while 38,000 were Bosniaks and Croats. Of the soldiers, 14,000 were Serbs, 6,000 were Croats, and 28,000 were Bosniaks.\[xxxv\]

Similar tensions led to clashes between the Serbian state and the Albanian population of Kosovo in 1999. Kosovo’s leader Ibrahim Rugova held a passive resistance in Kosovo during the war with Slovenia and the wars in Croatia and Bosnia in the early 1990s. Continuing Serbian
repression had radicalized many Albanians, some of whom decided that only armed resistance would effect a change in the situation. On April 22, 1996, four attacks on Serbian security personnel were carried out simultaneously in several parts of Kosovo. An unknown organization called "Kosovo Liberation Army" (KLA) subsequently claimed responsibility. Most Albanians saw the KLA as legitimate "freedom fighters" whilst the Yugoslav government labeled them as "terrorists" attacking police and civilians. The crisis escalated in December 1997 at the Peace Implementation Council meeting in Bonn, where the International Community (as defined in the Dayton Agreement) agreed to give the High Representative in Bosnia sweeping powers, including the right to dismiss elected leaders. At the same time, Western diplomats insisted that Kosovo be discussed, and that Serbia and Yugoslavia be responsive to Albanian demands there. The delegation from Serbia stormed out of the meetings in protest.

A new Serbian government was also formed at this time, led by the Socialist Party of Serbia and the Serbian Radical Party. In early April, Serbia arranged for a referendum on the issue of foreign interference in Kosovo. Serbian voters decisively rejected foreign interference in this internal affair. On May 31, 1998, the Yugoslav army and the Serb Ministry of the Interior police began an operation to clear the border of the KLA. This lasted several days and led to Western states threatening to attack, including reports which claimed summary executions and killings of civilians. NATO's response to this offensive was mid-June's Operation Determined Falcon, an air show over the Yugoslav borders. In early September, KLA was seen to be operating again, this time in northern Kosovo. In late September, a determined effort was made to clear the KLA forces out of northern Kosovo by Serbian forces. This time, Western states were pushing for the end of the KLA. This drive was tempered with Bosnia’s elections where the
Western states did not want Radicals and Serbian Democrats to win. On September 28, the international community got the reason for ensuring war when they discovered an estimated 300,000 Albanians displaced from Kosovo. 30,000 of these Albanians were in the woods without warm clothing or shelter, with winter approaching.

The international community demanded that the Serbs end their attacks against the KLA. In the meantime the US Ambassador for the Republic of Macedonia was attempting to convince Milosevic to permit NATO occupation in Kosovo. A ceasefire was discussed and bargained in the peace talks during this meeting. Finally on October 1998, the agreement was reached and the Kosovo Verification Mission was drafted.\[xxxix\] It allowed unarmed NATO forces to come in and monitor peace. They were inadequate from the start with the ceasefire period lasting only two weeks. Chaos resulted once again in December. By early March of 1999, US and NATO saw it imperative to discuss the situation once again in what was called the Rambouillet Conference. By the end of the conference the Albanian, British, American delegation signed the Rambouillet Accords while the Serbian and Russian delegations refused. The agreement called for NATO presence in Kosovo as an autonomous province in Yugoslavia. The Serbs came back with a revised Rambouillet Accords where they had drastically changed and deleted almost all the negotiations not allowing NATO’s rite of passage through Yugoslav territory and not agreeing to “peace” regarding Kosovo relations.

President Clinton and NATO responded by launching the NATO bombing campaign over Yugoslavia destroying Yugoslavia’s military aid zones and official buildings. Three months after the bombings began, the Serbs finally stopped the offensive against Kosovo. In June 11, 1999, Yugoslav troops finally pulled out of Bosnia and NATO got the victory it needed in the international community. The next day, Milosevic accepted the conditions of NATO and its
peacekeeping army KFOR entered Kosovo. Kosovo and Serbia were finally conflict free thanks to NATO and the international community. In 2006, international diplomatic relations began to figure out Kosovo’s fate. By 2008, the UN passed the UN Security Council Resolution 1244, and the province of Kosovo finally got its independence on February 17, 2008.

Yugoslavia’s War has been a much debated war in the Western States because of the complications of fragmentation of such a large country with many different ethnicities. As stated above, the end of Yugoslavia’s war brought eight new states all independent from one another: SFR Yugoslavia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, and Kosovo. All these states had different ethnicities, traditions, languages, and values from one another. The only unifying characteristic they all shared was fear and dictatorship. They were also unified in the fact that they all wanted independence from Yugoslavia. This war was different from that of Iraq in the sense of the presence of the international community and NATO working together, rather than the case of Iraq where only three other countries supported President Bush’s decision of occupation of Iraq. The international community was more unified and unanimous in their decisions regarding fragmentation and especially diplomatic relations between the provinces within Yugoslavia. Although this war was a very long war if we are to count Bosnia’s war and Kosovo’s war under Yugoslavia’s conflict, the results were successful in the sense of independence and autonomy. That is the key commonality of this war with the Iraq war. Both countries had and have different ethnic groups who do not get along with each other under one government unless it is a dictatorship with military presence. Autonomy is the unifying trait of these ethnicities. Guerilla wars and insurgent attacks were and are both present and there was and is resentment for outside forces.
The First Gulf War

The First Gulf War occurred in the period of six months, from August 2, 1990 until February 28, 1991. It was between Iraq and an alliance of thirty four countries led by the United Nations and the United States. The conflict was about Kuwait. Saddam Hussein of Iraq had interest in Kuwait because of an Iraq – Iran War grudge. Iraq accused Kuwait of stealing oil through slant drilling.[xli] Shortly after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, US President George H. W. Bush started to deploy US Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard units to Saudi Arabia, while at the same time urging other countries to send their own forces to the scene. This operation was called the Operation Desert Shield. In response to US’s deployment of troops, twelve other countries had come to the scene as well. Iraq might have been prepared for a Kuwait invasion, but not for fighting against a coalition. It had only a few gunboats and small missile craft to use for defense. On the other hand, some 1.2 million ground troops with about 5,800 tanks, 5,100 other armored vehicles, and 3,850 artillery pieces made for a lot more strength on the ground. Iraq also had 750 fighters and bombers, 200 other aircraft, and elaborate missile and gun defenses were ready to face Iraq.[xlii]

After the signing of the final peace agreement of the Iraq – Iran War in August 1988, Iraq saw itself bankrupt and with an economy that was spiraling down. Its vulnerability was made worse once Kuwait increased its oil production by forty percent causing oil prices to fall simultaneously damping Iraq’s oil economy dramatically. The Iraqi government reasoned that the invasion of Kuwait was a response to the economic warfare that had begun. By late July of 1990, Saddam Hussein had built up his troops and dispensed them across the Iraq - Kuwait border. With peace talks failing, Iraq invaded Kuwait on August 2, 1990. Within hours of the invasion, UN passed Resolution 661 placing economic sanctions on Iraq. On 23 August 1990
Saddam Hussein appeared on state television with Western hostages to whom he had refused exit visas. They were seen as human shields, though Saddam Hussein denied the claim. In the video he is seen ruffling the hair of a young boy named as Stuart Lockwood and asks through the interpreter if he is "getting his milk". He went on to say "We hope your presence as guests here will not be for too long. Your presence here, and in other places, is meant to prevent the scourge of war.”[xliii]

With the coalition on the offence, Iraqi forces found it very difficult to continue to hold ground in Kuwait and the Iraqi borders. Iraq’s ground and air campaign was not strong enough to keep up with the coalition’s air and ground offense. A few months later, and after many attacks on its infrastructure, Iraq finally retreated from Kuwait. A peace conference was held in Iraqi territory occupied by the coalition. At the conference, Iraq won the approval of the use of armed helicopters on their side of the temporary border, ostensibly for government transit due to the damage done to civilian transportation. The US tried to start some internal conflicts between the Kurds and the Ba’thist Party in control, but nothing came of it. Instead of greater involvement of its own military, the United States hoped that Saddam Hussein would be overthrown in an internal coup. This did not happen as planned and therefore the US stayed clear of occupying the state once again. The Central Intelligence Agency used its assets in Iraq to organize a revolt, but the Iraqi government defeated the effort. On March 10, 1991, Operation Desert Storm began to move 540,000 American troops out of the Persian Gulf.

Consequences of the war are mostly summed up by serious economic problems such as electricity, food, and clean water shortages. Iraq’s infrastructure suffered the most in the aftermath of the war. These consequences added to the ethnic hostilities and imperialistic resentment of foreign powers. But Saddam Hussein still stood strong in power. He was seen as a
hero by the Arab and Muslim populations and continued to have that image until his capture in 2003.

Since the present Iraq War is still in full throttle, the First Gulf War was not successful in controlling Iraq’s activity. This war particularly resembles the Iraq war because it is its perquisite in the sense that the conflict between Iraq and the US started since the early 1990s. The Iraqi people resented US occupation then, and they resent it now as well. The Iraqi people’s view of the US’s presence there is probably worse in this war since little progress has been made since Hussein was captured.

The First Gulf War differed from the Iraq War in the coalition forces’ involvement. In the Iraq War there are only two more countries by US’s side, England, and Australia. The UN did not support George W. Bush in his decision to invade Iraq in 2003 because the reasons stated were not applicable enough to start another war. US’s role in the First Gulf War was far less involved than in the war in Iraq. The US was mainly interested in protecting Saudi Arabia’s oil fields and keeping peace between Iraq and Kuwait in the First Gulf War. The intentions of US in the present war are far more involved in the establishment of a democracy with a government where the Iraqis have full control in organizing it. The war in Iraq is also taking longer to successfully end. That has to do a lot of lack of diplomacy on US’s side. Because there is so much turmoil between the different ethnic groups within Iraq, it is also very difficult to establish a government that is seen to be fair for all groups.

Discussion

Sociopolitical Iraq

A blurred vision persists, amongst many, regarding the opposition to the U.S. occupation of Iraq, on the one hand, and the nature of the insurgency in parts of the occupied country, on the
other. An uncritical stance of support for the current "resistance" in Iraq has dominated political discourse on the left, which has shied away from questioning its tactics, goals, backers, and, indeed, social formation which is necessarily linked to the vision -- or lack thereof -- it espouses. [xliv] Iraq is already a shaken culture from past three wars. As we have read and heard from various news reports for the past five years, the Iraqi people are not so fond of foreign military presence patrolling their streets. Fear of continuous resistance is turning into unnecessary suffering and killing of more innocent lives, turning from liberation to subjugation from foreign authority. This is where the notion of ethno-nationalism surfaces which means having strong ethnic ties to one’s country that one resists any foreign help/authority. This notion obviously intensifies when Iraqis are faced with outside invaders.

How is it that US officials believe that bringing occupation to Iraq will benefit the country’s sociopolitical future? “Since occupations are usually ugly. How can resistance be pretty?”[xlv] A lot of Iraqi intellectuals seem to be asking that very question and wondering what US’s real intentions are. In one interview one intellectual stated that:

“Only a fool would not recognize that the United States is a modern, unopposed imperial power that is making the world less safe by the minute owing to its pursuing ideologically-driven policies. We should reject both the Bush policy -- the rogue, imperial power that knows no limit -- and the more typical U.S. imperialism that adheres feverishly to a policy of containment, support of the ugly status quo in the Middle East, and strangulation of its peoples.”[xlvi]

There is the idea that the only way of escaping imperialism is by relying on local dictators to fully control the country. And that is exactly what different groups in Iraq are doing. They are relying on their ethnic tribe leaders or on their religious leaders to lead them. Iraq is
struggling not only because of the marginalization of the Sunnis, and Islamists, but because there is a dilution in local authority with a voice of unity like once before in the 1920s or the 1960s. The insurgents are prolonging the presence of occupying forces, and the latter are in turn lending "apparent" legitimacy to the Islamist and Saddamist claims that US interests are imperialistic. Iraqis are looking more for a stable authority figure to unify them in some way and keep the violence and uncertainly under control. If this happens then there is no need for foreign occupation, or assurance that under one powerful leader, Iraqis could drive out foreign forces. The best instance that exemplifies this thinking is the power trip of Saddam Hussein who ruled Iraq for over four decades. With his capture on December 13, 2003, Iraq lost the link that held Iraq together and protected the country from the double sword of Westernization.

With more time of no change in the chaos in Iraq, the more dangerous it is for the US forces to resist the growing insurgency coming from insurgents whose goal is to combat US imperialist expansion. The end justifies the means approach of the US has proved to have resulted in hegemony over the Middle East and the American occupation in Iraq. Only with a strong understanding of rational historical, sociological, and political readings of troubled third world regions can the antiwar movement in Iraq begin to resist imperialism.

“Only a peaceable means to regain (a semblance of) normalcy through the careful reestabishment of society's civil institutions and the mending of ethno-socio-political bridges amongst city and village and within northern, central, and southern regions of the country can lead to a strong, countrywide social movement to drive the occupier (and all its vestiges) out and begin to repair the country's shattered ethno-socio-political mosaic.” [xlvii]
Conclusion

In conclusion, the war in Iraq seems to not be a complete new environment for the United States. Even though it looks like US officials are dealing with a new genre of diplomacy in foreign relations, they are not. That is because most of the conflict characteristics that Iraq embodies are found in previous wars like the ones briefed in this paper. Yugoslavia for example, came closest to sharing the similarity of ethnic conflicts between different groups in the country each wanting its own country. In Iraq, the Kurds want autonomy from the rest of Iraq and the Shiites want separation from the Kurds, Muslims, and Arabs. Arabs as well are seeking their own unity with the notion of pan-Arabism.

The US’s role in Iraq and Yugoslavia is also similar to the extent of US intentions of peace keeping in each country and making sure there is no violence between the ethnic groups. Although in Yugoslavia the US and other Western nations pushed for the fragmentation of the groups, in Iraq the US is taking a step further in international relations and trying to establish a democracy that satisfies the US policymakers. The later has seen to be much more difficult than expected since the fighting between groups is still continuing because autonomy is not an option. Also this time the US is doing the policy implementation alone and without the help of UN or many other countries other than Australia and England.

In the Vietnam War, the criticism of US’s diplomacy and military strategies are similar to the case of the current war in Iraq. The US administrations that came and went during the Vietnam War were criticized for relying more on military policy than more diplomacy. The Johnson Administration, as stated above, was criticized for rushing its decision of the Congressional Declaration of War and getting into a war that they knew little about the makeup
of Northern Vietnam’s military tactics. The US military discovered the Vietnam guerilla tactics to be quite successful compared to the US’s traditional warfare strategies.

The same instance happened with the war in Iraq. After the invasion of Iraq that included aerial bombing which lasted about three weeks, the occupation of the state is what has killed US soldiers, because of guerilla tactics that the insurgents in Iraq are using against US soldiers. Since there is no Iraqi army to go against, the enemy is different insurgent groups who have their own separate bases and attack at different times from one another leaving US troops unprepared for the next attack and unaware of where it’s coming from.

In the First Gulf War case study, there are no real similarities between that war and the current one other than they both involved Iraq and that the First Gulf War was a perquisite for the current war in Iraq. In the First Gulf War, thirty-four nations were involved with the US in the coalition side where in the Iraqi War it is just two nations and the US. In the first war, the US was backed up by the UN where in this one we are not. Additionally the First Gulf War ended in almost less than six months while the current war is being dragged on to its fifth year for the lack of a stable established democracy. It seems that US diplomacy worked more effectively a decade ago than it is working now. A higher level of US resentment now seems to be a factor to that instance because it is not letting the policy implementation road be a smooth one. Critics of this war also do not help in this process. The US has invested more time, money, and military personnel (since less backup now) in the current war and sometimes the diplomacy investment fades into the background when compared with the rest.
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