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**The Iraq War 2003 Motivations and
Proposes**

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Abstract

The Iraq war involved coercive negotiations as well as, both a new and ancient definition of the use of force, since Operation Desert Storm the fight to liberate Kuwait had been real. The occupation process of Iraq or the punitive invasion began in 1990 with a core concept for the invasion of Iraq, in terms of preserving interests, stabilizing its partners, and governing the region. The conflict is examined with respect to US goals in the area. This research paper examines the true objectives of the 2003 war on Iraq. And again, the situation in Iraq is still a topic for debate as the war was controversial. This study focuses on one research issue that was chosen, which is; what was the real reason behind the war? The results of this study indicate that since the war lacks a clear moral foundation, it remains suspicious to solve the problem issue in Iraq as a legitimate policy instrument. Although war came under Republican rules and the foreign policy, as this study demonstrates, the consequences to that war are quite serious. The use of force and coercive diplomacy would have eventually led to tremendous instability in the region, with disastrous consequences not just for Iraq but also for the entire region.

Keywords: Al Qaeda, democracy, Middle East, oil, the Iraq war, weapons of mass destruction.

Dedications

To my Mother, Father, my family and my dearest supervisor whom I wish the full recovery.

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List of Abbreviations

WMD:	weapons of mass destruction
UN:	United Nations
U.S:	United states of America
UK:	United Kingdom
IAEA:	International Atomic Energy Agency
UNMOVIC:	United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission
UNSC:	United Nations Security Council
IIS:	Iraqi intelligent Service
IS:	Islamic State
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
OPEC:	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries

General Introduction

General Introduction

During 20th century and 21st century Iraq was involved in total of three wars: The Iran-Iraq, which triggered an eight years dispute between the two nations on 22 September 1980, and the Gulf War, which Iraq tried to invade Kuwait resulting to operation “desert storm”¹ in 1990. And the final war was the U.S. invasion, which took place in 2003. These are three different battles with various types. Iraq was invaded by the U.S. and its allies in 2003 for allegedly having weapons of mass destruction.

The invasion of Iraq initially started with the United States policy to overthrow Saddam Hussein from power, which led to the U.S. military occupation of Iraq. In fact, opinions on the Iraqi war of 2003 were profoundly divided among nations. There were places where Saddam Hussein and his dictatorship were among the greatest despots of the 21st century, and that the world had to strike down those barbaric regimes to introduce democracy. On the other hand, there had been claims that the Iraq war of 2003 was an act of aggression and that America went to this war simply to seize the oil of Iraq. Nevertheless, President Bush emphasized stating what follows: *“In Iraq, a dictator is building and hiding weapons that could enable him to dominate the Middle East and intimidate the civilized world -- and we will not allow it.”*²

After all those claims, the U.S. invaded Iraq to overthrow Saddam Hussein and his government for suspected close relations to the militant Al-Qaeda group, and to procure weapons of mass destruction (WMD). There was no proof to support Iraq's (WMD) presence. They were perhaps the most important factors provided by much of the United States media outlets promoting that the war was to establish peace, stability and democracy to the region.

Nevertheless, despite Iraq's growing ethnics, complex domestic politics, and large energy resources reserves, it remained strategically critical in the Middle East, and witnessed even more destruction, economical crisis, and human casualties.³

This study seeks to place this war back on the forefront so that the very critical question is posed as to how and why this war is being fought. This work discusses some of the problems that need to be addressed.

¹ Desert Storm was the 42-day U.S. led air offensive in response to Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait by President George H.W. Bush. www.history.com/news/history-vault-operation-desert-storm

² President George W. Bush reiterated his case for war against Iraq in a speech to the American Enterprise Institute. edition.cnn.com/2003/US/02/26/sprj.irq.bush.transcript/index.html

³ Hugh Kennedy, Gerald Henry Blake, Iraq, May 09.2019, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Iraq/Economy>.

General Introduction

This study's inspiration and passion are to investigate and explore the core reasons for the war as well as, the goals, and motives. Indeed, for the US policy to find an appropriate political solution in Iraq became increasingly necessary. My personal curiosity in political studies, and in particular in the Iraqi war, led me to wonder what would be the appropriate solution to the complicated situation.

Choosing a research question is essential in any study. Therefore, this research is focused on how the war on Iraq began. Thus, the issue is attached to the following questions below:

- A- What were the true intentions and motives of the Iraq invasion by the United States?
- B- Was the occupation of Iraq by the U.S. and its allies legitimate?

The actual invasion Iraq can be understood correctly only by putting together theoretical rates to the situation.

- A- The United States empirical ideology and strategy to secure the Middle East.
- B- The USA's interest in Iraq's natural resources.

First hypothesis: the U.S.A Invaded Iraq to destroy the alleged weapons of mass of destruction, and get rid of any threat that Iraq might pose on the American goal to control the Middle East.

Second hypothesis: the U.S.A occupied Iraq to take advantage of the country's resources such as Oil.

The thesis provides an insight into the US global political scenes in relation to the 2003war. So, the purpose of this research is therefore to define the war and why it took place.

This study is introduced in a total of 3 chapters for the purpose of investigating the motivations of the invasion of Iraq.

The research begins with the first chapter, which seeks to give an overview as well as, a background of the Iraq war of 2003. Moreover, it aims to provide the motivations which were publicly stated by the United States, and in the same time the reviewing of those motives.

The second chapter seeks to expose the secret purposes of the 2003 Iraq war and illustrate the presence if the US military in the region.

The third chapter deals with the general conclusion and the ultimate finding of this study on how the United States waged a war for its own goals and interests.

CHAPTER ONE

The Motives of the 2003 Iraq war Stated Publicly

Introduction

With the international political climate at that time, political figures from the United States and United Kingdom understood that diplomatic efforts were needed to abolish the Iraqi government regime and Saddam Hussein rule. President Bush intentions were clear to go to war with Iraq as he insisted for the existence of WMD. *“In the early 2000s, the administrations of George W. Bush and Tony Blair⁴ asserted that Saddam Hussein's weapons programs were still actively building weapons and that large stockpiles of WMDs were hidden in Iraq.”⁵* They both suggested that the U.S had intentions of invading Iraq for at least two years. Thus, after all the preparations the Bush administration and Blair Cabinet⁶ had, they decided to invade Iraq and to remove Saddam Husain replacing his entire regime in the name of democracy. These diplomatic efforts that decision makers were taking in great consideration were economic, military, political, and cultural elements, which helped them, take their actions. And of course, the military option was the better one in their eyes and was the only one they used. The U.S invasion started with operation «freedom Iraqi»⁷ with airstrikes on the 19th of March 2003, in Baghdad, which was called “shock and awe.”⁸ With US forces moving into the center of the region on 9 April 2003, Saddam Hussein’s government lost control over Iraq's Baghdad capital. Furthermore, this phase of war ended on the 1st of May, 2003, with the speech of President George W. Bush “mission Accomplished.”⁹

1. The American Political View of the 2003 War

To understand the dynamics and factors that led to the US final decision of the 2003 war, it is important to go back further and explore foreign countries after 9/11 Politics. There had been numerous intelligence reports that were believed that Al Qaeda will not be able to organize an assault without a State sponsor like the attack of 11 September. Many of them inside the Bush administration Felt that Iraq was involved.¹⁰ And Bush's style of decision-making was based on his hypothesis (or at least that was what he consciously intended it to look like) that somehow Saddam

⁴ Tony Blair was the former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

⁵ Rozeff, Michael. *A Few Major Hoaxes of the 21st Century*. August 28, 2019. www.lewrockwell.com/2019/08/michael-s-rozeff/a-few-major-hoaxes-of-the-21st-century/

⁶ First Blair ministry in the UK

⁷ Operation Iraqi Freedom with preemptive airstrikes on Saddam Hussein’s Presidential Palace in Baghdad.

⁸ Shock and awe is a tactic based on the use of overwhelming power and spectacular displays of force to paralyze the enemy's perception of the battlefield and destroy their will to fight.

⁹ The Mission Accomplished speech was a televised address by United States President George W. Bush on the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln on May 1, 2003.

¹⁰ Gompert, David. *Blinders, Blunders, and Wars: What America and China Can Learn*. 2014. P. 191

Hussein and his government were behind the 11 September attack, or perhaps they were planning a potential assault on the US.

In addition, President Bush and his advisor believed that the Iraqi government had WMDs, plus their worries about the possibility that the Iraqi state would be inclined to share WMD technologies with Al-Qaeda¹¹. Therefore, by that time, Bush had a new strategic mission named (Preventive War) as US President: to avoid another, maybe worse, attack. According to Jack Levy: *“Preventive war is a strategy designed to forestall an adverse shift in the balance of power and driven by better-now-than-later logic.”*¹²

Clearly, the war's objective was debatable, since there were many secret agendas discriminating against Iraq in the Bush administration. Assumptions regarding the aim of the attack although the real motivation behind the war still remains unclear, they were complex. Moreover, George Bush claimed that with this war, Iraq would transit to a democratic country to gain the trust of the American people and to fund the military sector. Bush said in a speech: *“The establishment of a free Iraq at the heart of the Middle East will be a watershed event in the global democratic revolution.”*¹³

2. The Universal and the Worlds View about the War

President Bush and Tony Blair agreed to wage war on Iraq, claiming that their acts were legitimate because of the sincerity of their motivations, where as the validity of the Iraq war of 2003 was regarded in many debates and as questionable.¹⁴ Although President Bush was ready to seek United Nation resolution when he made the initial decision to overthrow the Iraqi government, he did not want to change the war's main course. Indeed, the United States were planning for the war without the United Nations Security Council approval, and the international public opinion was strongly opposed to the military attack.

Furthermore, the Security Council was split into five permanent members and held a different view. For example, France was threatening to block any military strike proposal, while China and Russia opposed both the United States and the United Kingdom's stance. Similarly, the speeches of

¹¹ Smith, Steve, Hadfield, Amelia and Dunne, Tim. *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*. 2008. P. 318

¹² Levy, Jack. *Preventive War and Democratic Politics*. 2007. PDF file.

¹³ Dehghanpishheh, Babak. *A Democratic Iraq Is Emerging*. February 25, 2010: www.newsweek.com/democratic-iraq-emerging-75369

¹⁴ H. Daalder, Ivo. *Why Legitimacy in Iraq Matters*. January 27, 2004.

www.americanprogress.org/issues/security/news/2004/01/27/476/why-legitimacy-in-iraq-matters

opposition of the Security Council member states, such as China, France, and Russia. They insisted that the world should remain convinced that the UN inspectors should be given more opportunities and it was high time to complete their tasks there, because the Iraqi regime did not pose any immediate threat to stability and international security cooperation as well as, the priority is to avoid a war.¹⁵

3. Iraqi Government Involvements in the Conflicts

Iraq was involved Many conflicts before the 2003 war, and that's because of the Iraqi regime wanting to gain control and maximize its power in the Middle East. To achieve this goal, Iraq was researching developing biological and mass destruction weapons from early 1970s to 1991 which the Iraqi government used for wars.¹⁶

The first conflict was the Iran-Iraq war on 1980 over Territorial and diplomatic tension. The second conflict was the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait over the oil supply market.¹⁷ In these wars, especially against Iran, Saddam Hussein used chemical weapons which he was internationally condemned for.

Iraq submitted its complaint against Iran to the United Nation Security Council (UN) stating that in December 1973 and February 1974, Iran was engaged in attacks against it at its borders. Since then, the Iraqi regime wanted to remain dominant and the Iraqi President Saddam Hussein waged a war against Iran. The (UN) requested both parties to ceasefire with the establishment of resolution 598¹⁸ which became effective on 8 august 1980.

Regarding the Kuwait invasion, in the previous Iraqi conflict with Iran, Kuwait helped Iraq financially. At the end of the war, Iraq was unable to repay the loans that was received and asked for Debt forgiveness, which was refused by the government of Kuwait. Moreover, due to Iraq's failure to pay its debts, the government decided to increase the oil production to boost its economy. At the same time, Kuwait increased its production of oil, which affected the oil price in the market.

¹⁵ *Opposition to Iraq war widens*. 23 January. 2003: news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/2688117.stm

¹⁶ Cia.gov. Delivery systems-key Findings: www.cia.gov/library/reports/general-reports-1/iraq_wmd_2004/Comp_Report_Key_Findings.pdf

¹⁷ Pariona, Amber. *Why Did Iraq Invade Kuwait In 1990?* April 1. 2019: www.worldatlas.com/articles/invasion-of-kuwait-why-did-iraq-invade-kuwait.html

¹⁸ S/RES/598 : UN Documents : Security Council Report www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/document/chap-vii-sres-598.php

Iraq regarded this as an act of provocation. Indeed, it led to a war¹⁹, which begun on the 2nd of August, 1990.

Shortly after the war, the United Nations Security Council reacted to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait by authorizing the United States and its allies to end the occupation of Kuwait by Iraq. This authorization was passed with the resolution 678²⁰ after Iraq did not withdraw its military forces from Kuwait. The Council then addressed the issue of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), biological weapons program and the use of chemical weapons, which Iraq was accused of having.

After the war, the United Nations Security Council imposed sanctions and established the resolution 678 that ordered Saddam Hussein to destroy all of its (WMD), which Iraq had to comply with. This process was done under UN inspectors and an international supervision. President Hussein accepted the terms, though he went to violate it on the coming years. Here, and in especially after 11 September incident, American foreign policy has shifted dramatically from soft to hard line, particularly against the Iraqi regime. However, the Iraqi government was willing to take the hard line risks, which ultimately led to the 2003 war.

Conclusion

In particular after the Iraq-Iran 1980-1988 war and Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990, Iraq's foreign policy would have as its first aim to remain a dominant force in its region. This led Iraq to be targeted by the United States because it feared for its interest in the region. Thus, the Bush administration wanted to eliminate the threat and show its dominance and only warfare could demonstrate such power; no peaceful negotiation could achieve the same effect, not even a lopsided one. In accordance with that context, the US had been fighting Iraq mostly for its demonstration purpose, which would lead other States to fear the US and submit to their authority and global order.

¹⁹ Referring to the Iraq invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990.

²⁰ S/RES/687: UN Documents: Security Council Report April. 1991: <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/document/chap-vii-sres-687.php>

CHAPTER TWO

Reviewing the Motives of the United States on the 2003 War

Introduction

The United States decided to use military intervention against Iraq on the basis that it had nuclear weapons and links to terrorist organizations. The war was intended to deter terrorism, weapons of mass destruction and establish democracy. The accuracy of these claims had been globally debated and the war became one of the most controversial events in Western world history. To verify the authenticity of these motives, the three rationals must be deeply investigated trying to seek if the war was legitimate according to the claims. The U.S. invaded Iraq to overthrow Saddam Hussein and his government. After all the arguments, for supposed connections to the extremist Al-Qaida group, as well as for the possession weapons of mass destruction there was no proof that Iraq had (WMD) or had ties with Al-Qaida.

1. The Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)

One of the lead motivations that the Bush administration had to start a war against Iraq was that the Iraqi regime was still actively researching and developing Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). In a speech aired on television President George Bush said:

“Over the years, U.N. weapons inspectors have been threatened by Iraqi officials, electronically bugged and systematically deceived. Peaceful efforts to disarm the Iraq regime have failed again and again because we are not dealing with peaceful men.”²¹

In the same speech the President claimed that Iraq's government was still holding and hid some of most powerful weapons.

Under these allegations, an Iraq's representative said the Americans and the British kept trying falsifying facts, referring to Iraq's possession of weapons of mass destruction, but they had fallen short of convincing the international community. The inspectors had shown that these weapons did not exist and that the charges were false. From 27 November 2002 until 18 March 2003, UN arms inspectors served in Iraq. During this time, more than 900 inspections were carried out at more than 500 sites by International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors, and by UN supervision, verification, and inspection Commission (UNMOVIC). The inspectors found no chemical or biological weapons in Iraq or the re-construction of its nuclear weapons program.²²

²¹ Bush, W. George. "President Bush's Speech on Iraq." March 17, 2003.

²² *Disarming Saddam—A Chronology of Iraq and UN Weapons Inspections*. 2003. PDF file

In conclusion, the United States waged a war against Iraq based on weak allegations as the UNSC²³ inspections clarified that Iraq did not have any WMD or biological weapons before the 2003 war.

2. Iraqi Links with the Terrorist Group Al Qaeda

The Iraqi regime was accused of cooperating with al Qaeda to conspire on the United States. For months the Bush administration had been trying to link Iraq to al Qaeda, a terrorist's organization, which killed about 3000 people on 11 September 2001.²⁴

Saddam Hussein and al-Qaeda link allegations were created by United States government officials who claimed that the extremely secretive relationship was between Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and the extremist Islamist fighting establishment al-Qaeda between 1992 and 2003, specifically through the series of encounters affecting the Iraqi intelligent Service (IIS).²⁵ At that leading up to the Iraq conflict, President George W. Bush said that Saddam Hussein and al-Qaeda might collude to begin violent attacks on the United States, establishing the administration's rationale for war.

After the 9th of September events, the 9/11 Commission²⁶, was set up on November 27th, 2002 to investigate all the events leading up to the September 11th, 2001 attacks.

A 9/11 Commission staff statement in June of 2004 states: *"Two senior Bin Laden²⁷ associates have adamantly denied that any ties existed between Al Qaeda and Iraq. We have no credible evidence that Iraq and Al Qaeda cooperated on Attacks against the United States."*²⁸

To conclude, Fifteen of these nineteen September 11 hijackers were Saudi, and some of this wealth track had already been related to Saudi Arabia. By comparison, none of these hijackers were Iraqi, no one at that al Qaeda position is Iraqi, and none of the wealth track had been related to Iraq. Therefore the Bush administration failed to put out a convincing evidence that the Iraqi government had any connections whatsoever with Al Qaeda, which made the legitimacy of the war more complex.

²³ United nations security council

²⁴ *Al Qaeda linked*. Jan. 30, 2003: www.edition.cnn.com/2003/ALLPOLITICS/01/29/sprj.irq.bush.iraq/

²⁵ Hayes. Stephen F. Case Closed, *The Weekly Standard*. 24 Novembre 2003; Volume 009, Issue 11.

²⁶ The National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States.

²⁷ Founder of the Islamic militant organization al-Qaeda.

²⁸ National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States 9-11 Commission, "Overview of the Enemy," Staff Statement No. 15, 16 June 2004: govinfo.library.unt.edu/911/archive/hearing12/9-11Commission_Hearing_2004-06-16.htm

3. Changing Iraqi Regime and Establishing Democracy

One the motives of Iraq's occupation by the United States is to establish democracy and the task seemed to be straight forward enough: toppling Saddam Hussein 's regime, instilling democracy, restoring the nation to Iraqi people and returning home. But what occurred is 8 years of instability, casualties and cultural uncertainty. However, many saw the Iraq War as a defeat and evidence for American imperialism and democracy was a fig leaf, whereas others saw America's support for democracy as a purely recurrent solution to chaos. Moreover, during the war in Iraq America's democratic promotion mission was tremendously tarnished.²⁹

All these debates were rooted in democracy. U.S. people fundamentally believed as representatives of a prosperous democratic community that democracy would be beneficial for the Iraqis, too. The most ambitious of them had also given a dream for the Arab future of a prosperous nation that would promote democracy in and beyond the Middle East.

Nonetheless, there were plenty of skeptics. In Adam Garfinkle's³⁰ opinion, for example, it would not only fail but also promote more anti-Americanism in the Arab world, even in trying to construct democracy. In general, critics raised at least five various questions about the establishment of democracy, at first glance, of a democratic Iraq. First, they argued that there were suitable alternatives to democracy in Iraq which, if not ideal, would ensure stability and cohesion. Second, they said that Iraq was not politically ready. Third, they claimed that the Iraqi culture was too divided to hold onto democracy. And if Iraq had elections or other independent political entities, such a structure would, in fact, create an unilateral outcome such as a Shea denomination. Fourth, is that the transition to democracy in Iraq would be too risky and that the subsequent government would be too weak, thus failing to institutionalize democracy, particularly in federal terms. Critics frequently conjured up a vision of Iraq, in which civilians fought with rivals who sought revenge while, neighboring armies infiltrating the government. In addition, they argued that the United States was too wild and that the Iraqis were too vicious to allow a democracy room to develop and produce results.³¹

This direct correlation between the establishment of democracy and the guarantee of American national interests by the Government became important in order to justify its foreign

²⁹ *Is America's Democracy Declining?* December 22. 2016: www.politicalhype.com/political-storm/3780/

³⁰ Dr. Adam Garfinkle is a historian and political scientist and the founding editor of *The American Interest*.

³¹ Pollack, Kenneth and Byman Daniel. *Democracy in Iraq?* June 1. 2003: www.brookings.edu/articles/democracy-in-iraq

policy strategy in general and in particular the Iraq war. Democracy was the final remedy for each recognizable threat (terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, tyranny)

In conclusion, it seems like the Iraq war had always been treated as the first step towards creating democracy in the Islamic countries of the Middle East, but the Bush administration constructed the case for war almost solely on a perceived Iraqi threat to the United States. The goals of the Bush Administration's promotion of democracy and Human Rights were only when they failed to locate weapons of mass destruction or establish Iraqi ties with the terrorist network Al Qaeda.

4. Legitimacy of the War

The credibility of the Iraq conflict is still debated. The U S invasion of Iraq on March 20th 2003, the purpose of this war was to locate and eliminate weapons of mass destruction, but it appeared out they didn't exist. It was thought to be a little armed conflict, but rather it led to a longer occupation and gave the rise to other issues.³² One of the criticisms of this conflict leading from the attack on Iraq was lawful or unlawful. Was it legitimate or illegitimate? How did it shape into American "foreign policy"? How did it shape into this UN contract? Has the UN Secretary-General gained the purpose of earth order and administration? Was "global peace and protection" aided or hindered by the act of the American Led Organization that embarked on the use of force which remains to the moment?

The conflict is at the credibility of the 2003 invasion of Iraq. This discussion centers on the question whether this invasion was an unprovoked attack on an individual nation that might have violated international law, or if the UN Security Council authorized this invasion. Those arguing for its credibility were frequently taken to Congressional Joint Resolution 114³³, and UN safety Council resolutions, e.g., document 1441³⁴, as well as document 678. Those arguing against its legitimacy also cited some of the similar sources, saying they did not really allow conflicts but rather put out considerations that must be seen before war would have been declared. Furthermore, The Bush Administration's rationale for the Iraq War faced criticism from popular figures. The Center for

³² Barton, Jake. *The legitimacy of the Iraq War 15 years later*. March 20. 2018: www.america.cgtn.com/2018/03/20/the-legitimacy-of-the-iraq-war-15-years-later

³³ H.J.Res.114 - 107th Congress (2001-2002): Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/107th-congress/house-joint-resolution/114>

³⁴ S/RES/1441: Council Report : www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/document/iraq-sres1441.php UN

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Public Integrity³⁵ claims and that the Bush administration and seven of his administration's top officials made a total of 935 false statements between 2001 and 2003 about Iraq's accusations on its threat to the United States.³⁶

The Iraq war of 2003 was one of the most divisive modern wars and possibly will continue to be so. The world first superpower decision to go to war in Iraq had caused deep divisions within the international community and within States without an explicit authorization by the United Nations Security Council. The public justification for war was debated, in particular the level and immediacy of the threat posed by the Iraqi Biological, Chemical weapons programs, and whether the most effective way to deal with the threat was by using force.

Conclusion

Although the Iraqi armed forces were defeated, a massive civil war continued in most Iraqi cities over the years of insurgency and resistance. The war has brought Iraq into chaos, leading to the rise of the Islamic State (IS). Over the lengthy war, tens of thousands of Iraqis, thousands of US forces and British service members, and millions of Iraqi civilian casualties were killed. In addition, this conflict left on both thousands of wounded and disabled individuals. The results are that a war without legitimacy can lead to an unpredictable longer conflict without any progress and opposition. Legitimacy can bring national and international supports.

³⁵ The Center for Public Integrity is an American nonprofit investigative journalism organization

³⁶ Lewis, Charles. *False pretenses*. January 23, 2008: www.publicintegrity.org/politics/false-pretenses/

CHAPTER THREE

The Purposes of the 2003

Iraq War

Introduction

Historically, wars have been primarily fought for material gains: resources, treasure or land. In recent times, however, the motive for profit for war has diminished as life becomes more precious and conquest have become less necessary, while diamonds and other valuable commodities are still being fought for in parts of the world. In general, international laws forbid military intervention by one State against another, except for self-defense purposes.³⁷ So, what were the primary reasons for the 2003 Iraq Invasion? This study argues that, rather than the war on terror, the need to locate weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and to free the Iraqi people from the tyranny of Saddam Hussein was claimed by the government. There had been much more subtle purposes invasion of Iraq, such as massive quantities oil and to control the future market and oil supply.

During a campaign meeting Senator John Mc Cain issued the following statement *“I will have an energy policy which will eliminate our dependence on oil from Middle East that will then prevent us from having ever to send our young men and women into conflict again in the Middle East.”*³⁸ Mc Cain is essentially admitting that the war motive was not about establishing democracy throughout the Middle East, or finding weapons of mass destruction but simply for oil. There are additional objectives and motives for the 2003 war, and the purpose of this chapter is to illustrate them.

1. Controlling the Oil Market

The 2003 invasion of Iraq by the US military showcased the major stage of the US interests in the region. The war was the culmination of decades of strategic analysis and strategy on oil in the region of Iraq. As a result, the region's oil and war were quite related. Just prior to the occupation of Iraq by the United States and the UK, the two countries were suspicious of their oil plans. On the issue of the oil war in Iraq, Tony Blair said in an interview with BBC Newsnight, on February the 6th, 2003: *“Let me just deal with the oil thing... the oil conspiracy theory is honestly one of the most absurd when you analyze it. The fact is that, if the oil that Iraq has is our concern, I mean we could*

³⁷ Jenkins, Brain. *The Invasion of Iraq: A Balance Sheet*. March 22, 2013: www.rand.org/blog/2013/03/the-invasion-of-iraq-a-balance-sheet.html

³⁸ McCain, John. Townhall campaign meeting, 02 May 2008, Denver Colorado.

probably cut a deal with Saddam tomorrow in relation to the oil. It's not the oil that is the issue, it is the weapons."³⁹

Oil might not be the main goal of the war, but it certainly was the central attention as U.S. military and political officials demonstrated in the aftermath of the invasion. Former Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan says: *"I'm saddened that it is politically inconvenient to acknowledge what everyone knows: the Iraq war is largely about oil."*⁴⁰

The Bush Administration had firmly rejected an oil motive for Iraq's 2003 invasion, its war efforts had simply come from fear of petroleum supplies. However, the extraction of oil against Iraqis' wishes had been a clear US priority during the entire occupation between 2003 and 2011, and had been closely connected to military operations.

Petroleum is the most important mineral in Iraq, it has some of the largest known reserves in the world, and was the second largest oil exporting state before the Iran-Iraq War. Oil export accounts for the highest single share of GDP and is almost the entire Iraqi trade. Iraq is a founding member of the OPEC, but disputes about production rates and international oil markets had also contributed to Iraq being in dispute with other countries.⁴¹ Furthermore, the war is an oil currency battle in large part. The administration goal was to avoid the more petroleum exporting countries (OPEC) from joining the euro as a regular petroleum transaction currency. This is why Europe and America were exceptionally weak in their level of cooperation.

The US-UK occupation was strongly opposed by France and Germany, and disputes continued, long after the war was declared over, with regard to the lifting of sanctions. So, this was just a symptom of deeper relationship defects? I think that the war on Iraq first showed that continental Europe led by France and Germany no longer wanted to politically pursue the United States. So, what was the true role of oil in the Iraq War? Varying U.S. and UK government's officials had shown Iraq's rich oil reserves were a significant Anglo-American priority in the Middle East, and controlling Iraqi reserves had also been a large advantage to US and UK energy firms.

It becomes clear that the invasion of Iraq was less linked to the possibility of any WMD program for Saddam than to its strategic leverage of Iraq's hydrocarbons reserves. Joseph. Nye

³⁹ Blair, Tony. Interview with Jerney Paxman. 6 February. 2003.

⁴⁰ Greenspan, Alan. *The Age of Turbulence*. 2007. p. 446.

⁴¹ Woods, John, et al. Iraq. *"Petroleum and natural gas."* May 09. 2020: www.britannica.com/place/Iraq

claimed that: “*Oil is the most important raw material in the world, in both economic and political terms, and it is likely to remain a key source of energy well into this century.*”⁴² Moreover, the world's manufacturing potential was going to depend on oil as its key force on economy, which means that it is important for the United States to be present in the Middle East, which has the largest oil reserves. In this way, the US dollar is retained as the monopoly for the vital world oil market.

2. Hegemony of the United States in the Middle East

Hegemony is an attempt to achieve world dominance or expansionism by large nations.⁴³ The global Hegemony Strategy asserts that America's safety depends, not upon the lack of hostile hegemony in Europe, Asia and the Middle East but on America's permanent presence as Europe's, Asia's, and the Middle East as a military hegemony. In any such environment, the regional powers may well willingly agree to permanent U.S. control because the U.S. claimed its defense burdens reassurance or inadvertently because of the US military coercion deterrence.

The Middle East dominance is definitely a pillar of Washington's global hegemony mission. Washington had been taking the initiative for the decade to support the peculiar "Middle East Common Market" scheme, in which some countries of the Persian Gulf will be supplying resources while other Arab states supplied cheap labor. For several reasons, the redevelopment of the Middle East is the key to the success of this project. One of the key pillars of the US global supremacy is its protectorate of the "global" oil reserves in the Persian Gulf. Oil is an essential strategic commodity for the military, while securing its flow into the world economy will make US power globally crucial.

The United States' second interest in the Middle East region is to protect the State of Israel and to maintain its stability in the region which is often disturbed. In fact, retaining a stable Israel in the Middle East consolidates America's interests in national security. Since the mid-20th century, this outlook has dominated the American foreign policy and still forms the present policy. Palestine's historic land was under the Ottoman Empire until the end of World War One, after the fall of Ottoman Empire, Britain took a mandate for Palestine and took control of it on 1920.⁴⁴ In

⁴² Nye, Joseph. *The future of power*. 2001. P. 64.

⁴³ Definition of hegemony | Dictionary.com : www.dictionary.com/browse/hegemony

⁴⁴ British Mandate for Palestine | International Encyclopedia of the First World War (WW1): encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/british_mandate_for_palestine/2018-12-07?version=1.0

1948, the USA was the first one in the United Nations to recognize Israel as a new state.⁴⁵ This rapid action shows the significance of having an ally for America in the Middle East.

3. Maintaining the United States Regional Military Bases

The maintenance of military bases overseas is a peculiar American concern: the United States has about 800 military bases. The US Army is in service in more than 150 countries worldwide, with about 170,000 active staff outside the United States and its territories.⁴⁶ The implementation of this worldwide network of military bases began after World War Two. In contrast to the other major powers, the United States has largely been untouched by the conflict, accounting for over half of global manufacturing, and had two thirds of the world's gold reservoirs. It also had the highest production per capita, the largest conventional military in the world and nuclear weapons monopoly. This position was to be maintained by policymakers for as long as possible and to ensure U.S. security as well as, prosperity.⁴⁷

It is apparent that the military involvement of the United States in the Middle East had been limited before the Second World War. However, the United States retained a small military presence in Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain both during and after the Second World War. The US increased its military presence in the Gulf countries following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990, and spread its military footprint. In fact, military presence of the United States in the region helped to guarantee America and its ally's safe access to oil, to insure stability and security to friendly regimes. Furthermore, it helped offer a rapid response to domestic and external crises, to combat radical forces and Islamic extremist groups, which might threaten US interests in the region, and, lastly, to support short and long-term actions.

Conclusion

We have seen, US politicians make a large number of calls to achieve real national security to help them achieve greater influence in the world. This leads to the belief that America's absolute dominance would cause others to respond to America's needs and wishes, whether for cheap oil, ensuring security for its allies, in particular Israel, or for a greater number of military forces. The

⁴⁵ "Key Press Release on the Recognition of the State of Israel." *Social Education* 42, 6 (October 1978): 469.

⁴⁶ Vine, David. "Washington and the World." *Where in the World Is the U.S. Military?* July/August 2015: www.politico.com/magazine/story/2015/06/us-military-bases-around-the-world-119321

⁴⁷ Glaser, John. "Withdrawal from Overseas Bases: Why a Forward-Deployed Military Posture Is Unnecessary, Outdated, and Dangerous" July 18, 2017: <https://www.cato.org/publications/policy-analysis/withdrawing-overseas-bases-why-forward-deployed-military-posture>

2003 Iraq War made significant strides to US access of Oil and securing the region of the Arab Gulf through the involvement of thousands of US troops. Therefore, the purpose behind the presence of the United States military in the Middle East was hegemony, recourses, and interests for its allies.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

Based on the findings on this study, Explanation of the conflict in Iraq Despite contrary opinion, the Iraq War can be justified. The battle started in 2003 with the invasion of Iraq by U.S forces under control of former President George W. Bush. The invasion is justified for some reasons. The greatest is that Iraq was a serious threat to its own people because of the corrupt and twisted regime, spearheaded by the dictator, Saddam Hussein. Moreover, Iraq was a significant danger to other countries in the region. But at the same time, the invasion was not entirely based on liberating citizens of Iraq from the tyranny of Saddam Hussein regime or finding weapons of mass destruction, but rather a secret purpose that the abundance of Iraq's oil reserve was to be the main factor, and securing the region of the Middle East. Iraq was targeted because it of its history of engaging in wars and previously having nuclear programs, it was an easy target for the United States to wage a war against it and to make it as a base to go deeper in the Middle East.

George W. Bush's decision to invade Iraq in 2003 was the worst foreign policy decision made by an American President. It was an action that violated international laws and was based on false premises. Iraq had little to do with 9/11, a point eventually acknowledged by President Bush. The administration hoped to accomplish more than the disarmament and deposition of Saddam Hussein, even if chemical or nuclear weapons were identified. To put it simply, they wanted to illustrate to the Middle East that the US was not afraid to put their troops on the field. The intention was that other nations would be made aware of it. This means that, regardless of any consideration, America will pursue its interest.

This selfish behavior cost both countries thousands of casualties, the division of Iraq, and the rise of proxy war between Iran and Saudi Arabia. The war made the Middle East region even more chaotic than it already was rather than establishing democracy, which was one of the main reasons the Bush Administration claimed what the war was about.

Finally, the learned lessons are that the occupation of a nation is full of danger and that after the invasion ends, life and limbs will be lost, that a preventive war is ever higher than predicted and that it will continue over decades. A war should never start until the means of diplomacy are no longer an option. Accordingly, without a valid excuse any intervention in war is inappropriate. The UN Security Council, in line with its international legitimacy, should then adopt a War Resolution by means of international consensus.

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