SECURITY OF IRAQ AFTER THE SECOND GULF WAR (2003)

Lt Col K.H. Aljadan

JCSP 41

Exercise *Solo Flight*

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By Lt Col K.H. Aljadan

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INTRODUCTION

9/11 saw a radical change in the international security environment and how it is being fought till today. The National security doctrine enacted by President Bush in 2002 highlighted neo-conservative policy of preemption.[1] As a result the, US entered Iraq in early 2003 in search of Weapons of Mass Destructions (WMD) and to eliminate this threat to world peace. Just a decade earlier America had fought a war against Iraq in which US forces allowed the smashed remnants of the Iraqi Army, which had thoroughly pillaged Kuwait, to flee the oil rich Gulf emirate. The regime's elite Republican Guards had escaped north to fight another day, and more importantly, the man at helm of affairs was untouched[2]. Having learnt a lesson, this time President Bush was determined to make a change in the Iraqi regime and smash the elite forces thereby manifesting a credible measure of victory to the world. In search of WMDs, a unique procedure unfolded under a US led coalition to overthrow a rogue state dictator. Whether the war was justified and inevitable remains a question of debate, but one thing emerged in later years that America certainly was unprepared for: the upheaval that quickly followed Saddam's downfall. The sectarian rivalry and the general collapse of law and order were the ensuing problems to which the USA required a solution. With plenty of social, political, religious and democratic experimentation, all hybrids in nature, the US troops departed theatre in December 2011.[3]

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[1] Kylie Baxter and Shahram Akbarzadeh, *United States Foreign Policy in the Middle East*. (Routledge, USA, 2008), 165.
[2] Carter Andress, Malcolm McConnell. *Victory Undone : The Defeat of Al Qaeda in Iraq and its Resurrection as ISIS*. (Regency Publishing, Washington D.C. 2014), 258.

The aim of this paper is to ascertain the impacts on regional security and stability in general and Iraq in particular, after the second Gulf war (2003). The paper will argue that despite US attempts to bring peace, the region has become more insecure in the last decade.

CONSTITUTION AND GOVERNMENT

> *"[Saddam] was a builder, but Maliki has done absolutely nothing…The political process is going…towards dictatorship. People are not going to accept that, and most likely they are going to ask for the division of the country. And this is going to be a disaster. Dividing the country isn't going to be smooth, because there is going to be a war before that and a war after that…There will be a day whereby Americans will realize that they were deceived by Al-Maliki and they will regret that"*
>
> *– Saleh M. Al Mutlaq, Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister, interview to Cable News Network (CNN)[4]*

In 2003, the US selected the entire Interim governing council of Iraq[5] disregarding national sectarian divide and thereby depicting a dire lack of understanding of local cultural, political and religious dynamics. This first strategic mistake gave birth to numerous problems. Due to the prevailing shock and chaos in Baghdad immediately after the fall of Saddam's regime in April 2003, a pause actually prevailed in which everyone in Iraq had a policy of 'wait and see'. No one actually took up arms against the Americans, including the Baathists, the tribes or fragmented military pockets. The American formulation of a Shia dominated Governing Council that actually turned the misrepresented Baathists and Sunnis to pick up arms. It also encouraged politically deprived tribes to form Islamic resistance groups to let Al Qaeda In Iraq (AQI) evolve to fight against Americans.[6]

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[3] *Ibid.* , xiii
[4] Joel Rayburn, *Iraq After America* (Hoover Institution Press, Stanford, California, 2014), 221-2.
[5] *Ibid.*, 250.

In 2005, the USA set parameters for the Iraqi constitution.[7] These efforts aimed to achieve an apparent consensus amongst politico religious factions by maintaining deliberate ambiguity in the constitutional process – again disregarding local concerns.[8] Sunni Arabs felt misrepresented in American efforts and therefore boycotted the first Iraqi elections for Transitional National Assembly (TNA).[9] When the constitutional haziness became evident to everyone, it proved disastrous for a nascent Iraqi democracy. It paved the way for disputes in which opposing political factions genuinely believed that their own stance and demands were truly in line with the constitution. Most notable among these political disputes were planned the law for future oil investment and the differences on the level of constitutional authority enjoyed by the Prime Minister.[10] It was this Sunni boycott and consequent Shiite-Kurdish victory in elections that became the political basis of ensuing sectarian tensions.[11] Moreover the Sunni Arab community was extremely concerned about the controversial nature of the constitution due to fear of federalism threatening the very unity of Iraq.[12]

In 2006, the US backed Noori Al-Maliki and blocked the return of Ibrahim Jaffari for heading Iraqi government, in line with her own perceived interests.[13] The meddling in free electoral and government making process had consequences. Maliki probably got an impression that he enjoyed unconstrained American patronage - a notion that helped him turn into a ruthless

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[6] *Ibid.*, 105.

[7] *Ibid.*, 250.

[8] Ali A. Allawi, *The Occupation of Iraq: Winning the War, Losing the Peace* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 2007), 190

[9] Claire Spencer, Jane Kinninmont and Omar Sirri, *Iraq Ten Years On* (The Royal Institute of International Affairs, Latimer Trend, UK, May 2013), 4.

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] International Crisis Group, *The Next Iraqi War? Sectarianism and Civil Conflict*,(Middle East Report, Feb 2006), 12

[12] Noah Feldman and Roman Martinez, *Constitutional Politics and Text in the New Iraq: An Experiment in Islamic Democracy* (Fordham Law Review, Volume 75, Issue 2, Article 20, 2006), 883

[13] Joel Rayburn, *Iraq After America* (Hoover Institution Press, Stanford, California, 2014), 250.

authoritarian. He centralized political power initially in his party and then in his own hands. His despotic rule, seen positively by Shias as a symbol of greater national security after civil war of 2006–07,[14] had enormous repercussions for national harmony. Within hours after the US departure from Iraq in December 2011, Maliki embarked on a dangerous political purge. He ordered the arrest of high ranking Sunni leaders in his own government including Vice President Hashemi, Deputy Prime Minister Saleh Al Mutlaq and Finance Minister Issawi by raiding their homes and detaining dozens of their staff. A horrific blood bath was expected, which was only averted by frantic phone calls made by desperate Sunni leadership to Washington. The Iraqiyah coalition responded by boycotting parliament and cabinet. Unfortunately, the political crisis that ensued did not subside for quite a long time.[15] Iraq thus moved to the exact opposite of the Arab democracy dream which the USA had tried to achieve through the removal of Saddam.

American interference continued in the 2010 elections. Despite the fact that ruling Maliki did not enjoy majority votes against Iraqiya party, his party was favoured to gather a majority vote along broken ethnic and sectarian lines after a long struggle of 8 m0onths.[16] The US meddling was not over yet. The call for Maliki to step down from the Prime Ministerial 2014 elections is yet another example of interference in the free political process of Iraq, albeit to counter their two previous failed attempt at interference. While the effort to change political leadership may be productive this time, the turmoil inherent in changing the leader of an unstable state is likely to create discontinuity in the strategy of containment against the Islamic State of

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[14] Claire Spencer, Jane Kinninmont and Omar Sirri, *Iraq Ten Years On* (The Royal Institute of International Affairs, Latimer Trend, UK, May 2013), xii

[15] Joel Rayburn, *Iraq After America* (Hoover Institution Press, Stanford, California, 2014), 221. An Iraqi politician had predicted in last days of 2011 that "Many Americans think that this means the end of power struggle in Iraq. It does not. Now that the Americans are leaving, we will see the start of struggle for power in Iraq, not the end". *Ibid.*, 253.

[16] Carter Andress, Malcolm McConnell. *Victory Undone : The Defeat of Al Qaeda in Iraq and its Resurrection as ISIS*. (Regency Publishing, Washington D.C. 2014), 274.

Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and may inadvertently profit the terrorist organization by providing a much

needed respite and resultantly embolden them.

The American led occupation government of Iraq, Coalition Provisional Authority

(CPA), took control of Iraqi sovereignty in May 2003. Headed by a retired US foreign services

officer Paul Bremer, the CPA did work towards a viable Iraq with a vision of establishing the

rule of law, democracy and free market economy. The CPA's idea to implement market reforms,

however, was never materialized. In the words of Iraqi Finance Minister Ali Allawi:

> *"The CPA did nothing but compound the operating problems of these [Iraqi]*
> *companies by denying them access to their own funds… These and numerous*
> *other cases of policy reforms that were shelved, marked the huge gap between the*
> *CPA's liberalizing rhetoric and the actual policies that were pursued. It was a*
> *marked failure of will and betrayed the hopes of those Iraqis who had*
> *championed the cause of market reforms. The original radical reformist agenda*
> *of the CPA was abandoned as soon as the political costs began to appear in the*
> *calculations[17]"*

The CPA's working, in fact was based on ludicrously optimistic assumption that Iraqis

would view Americans as liberators, anxiously embracing a US-style democracy and leaping

into a global market economy. The CPA completely lacked any understanding of the

complexities of Iraq and didn't show any interest in learning about the 'real' Iraq and its

problems. It thus proved a completely inept at executing or managing Iraqi reconstruction

programs. Another crucial area that needed the CPA's attention was the distorted public food and

rationing system called the Public Distribution System (PDS).[18] The US political implant – CPA

– was neither accustomed to, nor prepared for such a task. After making considerable attempts to

improve the system, it miserably failed to deliver and finally aborted all of its efforts to improve

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[17] Ali A. Allawi, *The Occupation of Iraq: Winning the War, Losing the Peace* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 2007), 264.
[18] *Ibid.*, 264.

the PDS as "it was no longer the US's policy to introduce any major reforms into the Iraqi economy.[19]" Clearly, after preempting against a state based on incontrovertible evidence of WMDs (which later proved false); shirking away from "economic" responsibility was a grave error that undermined US credibility in the region. It wasn't that the Americans didn't spend money or did not want to expend money. Their per capita spending is much more in a decade in Iraq, than they spent on the Marshall plan after the world war two. The spending, however, was misdirected and without a coherent strategy because it involved people who were oblivious to the realities of Iraq and unconcerned to the strategic progression of the Iraq's national institutions.[20]

Furthermore, the inter-agency cooperation and civil-military working relationship that was needed to run an occupation government in a chaos-stricken country was absent. The CPA had a tenuous relationship with the US Department of Defence (DoD) and US Military, which proved to be "poisonous[21]" to the mission of running a smooth government. Beyond this, the relationship that Bremer had with Iraqi Governing Council was 'fragile and frequently acrimonious.[22] Bremer's distaste and confrontations, as evidenced in his own memoirs, resulted in disorganized statecraft that definitely retarded Iraqi progress, if not reversing it. A small example is the confused operational history of Office of the Reconstruction and Humanitarian Affairs (ORHA) whose ambiguous mandate, is reflected by contradictory statements from Washington regarding the nature and degree of autonomy of the new Iraqi administration.[23] The US government miserably failed to connect with the local population as well as political

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[19] Told by Olin Wetherinton, Senior Adviser on the Iraqi economy in the US Treasury to Ali Alawi, Iraqi Finance Minister. *Ibid.*, 264.

[20] Ali Allawi, "Iraq Got the Worst of All Worlds", Middle East Forum Quarterly, Fall 2010, 73.
[21] Major Matthew R. Hover, *The occupation of Iraq: A military perspective on lessons learned* (International Review of the Red Cross, Vol 94, Number 885, Spring 2012), 344
[22] Ali A. Allawi, *The Occupation of Iraq: Winning the War, Losing the Peace* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 2007), 192.
[23] *Ibid.*,98.

leadership. Isam al Khafaji, a former Iraqi Reconstruction and Development Council (IRDC) member, resigned from his post in protest in August 2003 saying that "We were not seen as advisers, let alone as decision makers."[24] He further explained that all the major decisions including disbanding the Iraqi security apparatus, national oil policy, national media policy and other major decisions about the state banking system were being made by the CPA without consultation based upon instructions from Washington who didn't have even an iota of understanding of the Iraqi people's values.[25]

Despite the negatives, American efforts did help by developing elements of some democratic culture in Iraq. The Americans facilitated the first two elections in Iraq's history[26] - both of them UN certified democratic parliamentary elections.[27] Despite all the ad-hoc experimentation involved in the establishment of the Iraqi government, the Americans did succeed in some political achievements and resolved some long standing issues. Most notable amongst them is the emergence of the Kurds as a political reality, not only in the country, but arguably in the region as well. It thus created an astonishing positive change in regional affairs, the Kurds achieving commensurate weight and influence in Middle East affairs. The Kurds had previously seen unimaginable levels of oppression and acts of genocide under the previous regime,[28] so their empowerment, legalized by constitution of Iraq, was a significant advancement. How much the Kurd narrative fits into Middle East regional security remains debatable as the Kurds are also seen as a threatening and subverting entity in politics dominated

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[24] *Ibid.*,190

[25] *Ibid.*
[26] Carter Andress, Malcolm McConnell. *Victory Undone : The Defeat of Al Qaeda in Iraq and its Resurrection as ISIS*. (Regency Publishing, Washington D.C. 2014), 262.
[27] *Ibid.*, 273.
[28] Claire Spencer, Jane Kinninmont and Omar Sirri, *Iraq Ten Years On* (The Royal Institute of International Affairs, Latimer Trend, UK, May 2013), 25.

by a narrative of strong Arab nationalism.[29] Moreover, the solution it's not just in injecting

Kurdish text in the Iraqi constitution, but in keeping peace among all the major factions in the

process. For example, despite the fact that 17% of the national budget is allocated to the Kurdish

territories, it hardly receives this amount owing to its political troubles with Baghdad.[30]

Despite American efforts to decentralize and democratize since 2003, Iraq, under

American influence reverted back to being an Arab oil power ruled by one sect, one party and

one man.[31]

NATIONAL AND REGIONAL SECURITY

On the internal front, due to the political democratization experiments of the US without

understanding the roots of conflict and it's linkages with local and national politics,[32] post war

Iraq emerged into a state so tolerant of Shia militancy that it lead to Sunnis to preferring ISIS

over Baghdad, (according to a research of global non-profit media organization).[33] Moreover, in

the process, Iraq moved towards fragmentation under Iranian sphere of influence[34], exactly away

from being US conventional strategic partner in the region.

With long term intention of staying in Iraq, the USA should not have destroyed

strategically important assets. By an executive order, Bremer completely disbanded the national

security apparatus including "all formal armed and security units of state." With a stroke of his

pen, all regular forces including the elite Republican Guards, intelligence services and even the

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[29] *Ibid.*

[30] *Ibid.*, 26.
[31] Joel Rayburn, *Iraq After America* (Hoover Institution Press, Stanford, California, 2014), 243.
[32] *Ibid.*, 249.
[33] PRI, "*Film traces how Nouri al-Maliki's treatment of Iraqi Sunnis helped ISIS get stronger*", 28 Oct 2014. http://www.pri.org/stories/2014-10-28/film-traces-how-nouri-al-malikis-treatment-iraqi-sunnis-helped-isis-get-stronger
[34] Joel Rayburn, *Iraq After America* (Hoover Institution Press, Stanford, California, 2014), 252.

governmental headquarters and ministries connected with defence employment, administration

and supervision were dissolved.[35] It had far more serious and lasting repercussions than the

removal of top ranking Baathists from office. The Iraqi government lost all capability of force

employment and generation and was now totally naked and dependent on foreign security

assistance. Consequences were bound to come after the American withdrawal from Iraq.

Bremer's rationale was that the military's traditional bias against Shias made it necessary to

dismantle Iraqi defense infrastructure for durable peace.[36] He lacked a basic understanding of the

population who saw their national Armed forces as preserver of nation's core values in a heroic

mythical narrative. It therefore proved difficult, even for Iraqi Shias, to accept the wholescale

dissolution of the armed forces leaving the country bereft of an Army.[37] The collapsed state

security apparatus coupled with the shock of the American invasion led loose jihadi groups to

gain local strength and seize territory. Even though the Americans did train numerous Iraqi

security personnel to deal Counter Insurgency (COIN), it hardly helped. No one thought that the

US would leave Iraq so early, especially when the troop surge of 2007 was being politically

planned against the military advice of senior US commander in the Middle East, General John

Abizaid.[38] A vulnerable Iraq later became "strategically blind" without any intelligence

capability after the Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) withdrawal the next year (2012).[39] This

weakness invited aggression from Syria.[40] The AQI, which had quickly matured during the

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[35] Ali A. Allawi, *The Occupation of Iraq: Winning the War, Losing the Peace* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 2007), 155.

[36] *Ibid.*

[37] *Ibid..*

[38] Mohammad El-Shibiny, *Iraq : A lost war* (Palgrave MacMillan, New York, USA, 2010)166

[39] Carter Andress, Malcolm McConnell. *Victory Undone : The Defeat of Al Qaeda in Iraq and its Resurrection as ISIS*. (Regency Publishing, Washington D.C. 2014), xiv

[40] *Ibid.*

national security blackout, could have been dealt by Iraqi government had the Republican

Guards been spared.

Moreover the decision to refuse to arm neighboring Syrian rebels paid off heavily in

destabilizing regional security chessboard according to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton,[41]

Secretary Defence and Director CIA Leon Panetta[42] and various other renowned scholars[43]. As a

matter of fact Iraqi Sunni tribes provided material and moral support to Syrian opposition tribes

– Shammar, Obeid and Dulaim – who reciprocated the favour to their sunni brothers during

Iraqi insurgency.[44] The US decision to arm and train Syrian rebels now, shows that it was an

inevitable step for security which was unnecessarily delayed. The intellectual groundwork for

fighting in all-encompassing regional security perspective was simply absent in the American

military hierarchy.[45]The US Political leadership by voting for a regime change in Congress with

large bipartisan majority, probably failed to anticipate the quick war potentially effecting the

whole regional security equilibrium. This eventuality, for which the US forces were not

prepared, now seems so obvious in retrospect.[46] Through poor anticipation, opportunities were

missed and victory against the AQI wasn't achieved which now stands as more potent ISIS.

A positive security outcome from US direct interference was seen in Iraq in 2007. Using

her enormous influence, the US successfully averted a political deadlock and possibly an Arab-

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[41] The Atlantic, "*Hillary Clinton: 'Failure' to Help Syrian Rebels Led to the Rise of ISIS*",10 Aug 2014, http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2014/08/hillary-clinton-failure-to-help-syrian-rebels-led-to-the-rise-of-isis/375832/
[42] Mail Online, "*Former Defense Secretary Leon Panetta says Obama helped ISIS grow by ignoring national security team's advice to arm Syrian rebels*", 22 Sep 2014, http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2765276/Former-Defense-Secretary-Leon-Panetta-says-Obama-helped-ISIS-grow-ignoring-advice-entire-national-security-team-arm-Syrian-rebels.html
[43] Carter Andress, Malcolm McConnell. *Victory Undone : The Defeat of Al Qaeda in Iraq and its Resurrection as ISIS*. (Regency Publishing, Washington D.C. 2014), xiii
[44] Joel Rayburn, *Iraq After America* (Hoover Institution Press, Stanford, California, 2014), 231.
[45] Carter Andress, Malcolm McConnell. *Victory Undone : The Defeat of Al Qaeda in Iraq and its Resurrection as ISIS*. (Regency Publishing, Washington D.C. 2014), 259.
[46] *Ibid.*

Kurd civil war by preventing the referendum process of Kirkuk.[47] The USA also tacitly

supported her North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) ally Turkey, via airstrikes on the

Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).[48] On the other hand, the USA continuously kept siding

strategically with its conventional rival Iran, making Iraq a proxy extension of the Iranian

government. The strategic direction made majority Arab states feel threatened by a rising Iranian

sphere of influence in the region and helped to develop regional political and military instability

in the region. As a result, Iran emerged strengthened which disrupted the regional balance of

power against the Gulf States.[49]

OTHER LONG TERM EFFECTS

The Iraq war divided Europe as France, Germany, Belgium, and Luxembourg did not

particularly agree in the emerging Pax Americana.[50] These cold transatlantic relations were more

than a difference in policy opinion[51], rather symbolized a strategic foreign policy gap with

relation to third party dealing, in a post 9/11 security milieu.[52]

The Iraq invasion gave dangerous signal to the rogue states, which according to Steven

Miller, Director of a global think tank "International Security Program", was very simple:

Nuclear Weapons might be last resort to help against US aggression.[53] When Bush labelled Iraq,

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[47] Joel Rayburn, *Iraq After America* (Hoover Institution Press, Stanford, California, 2014), 250 & 146.
[48] *Ibid.*
[49] Steven Miller, Symposium on Iraq's impact on the future of US Foreign and Defence Policy (Oct 6, 2006). Available at http://www.cfr.org/content/meetings/Iraq_Symposium_10-6-06.pdf
[50] Norrie MacQueen and Trine Flockhart, *European Security After Iraq* (Perspectives on European Politics and Society, Vol 5, No 3/2004, Brill Leiden, Boston 2006),14
[51] Dana H. Allin, Symposium on Iraq's impact on the future of US Foreign and Defence Policy (Oct 6, 2006). Available at http://www.cfr.org/content/meetings/Iraq_Symposium_10-6-06.pdf
[52] Norrie MacQueen and Trine Flockhart, *European Security After Iraq* (Perspectives on European Politics and Society, Vol 5, No 3/2004, Brill Leiden, Boston 2006),14

North Korea and Iran as "axis of evil[54]" and organized a preemptive invasion based on incorrect

evidence on Iraq, the question was simply reduced to matter of survival for remaining two.

Moreover, invasion of Iraq also indirectly became a worldwide cause of radicalization and

strengthened the idea of jihad.[55]

While it is understood that an average length of full blown modern counterinsurgency

campaign has been well over a decade (Malaya, Algeria, Vietnam, Moros, El Salvador, Fatah,

Polisario) with a hazy notion of victory at best,[56] US achievements still seem very little when

seen in comparison to the human and financial cost of war. There hardly is any worthwhile

achievement in regional security or social uplift of Iraq, especially when seen in the backdrop of

human and financial cost of war. Senator James McGovern declared it to be approximately $246

Million per day in the US House of Representatives.[57] A careful estimate of the cost of war is

over $1.7 Trillion directly paid by US Treasury Department,[58] which would cross $2 Trillion, if

benefits to the veterans are also included.[59] This does not include human cost and other indirect

financial costs which are enormous. Iraqi social fabric is completely destroyed.[60] There were at

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[53] Steven Miller, Symposium on Iraq's impact on the future of US Foreign and Defence Policy (Oct 6, 2006). Available at http://www.cfr.org/content/meetings/Iraq_Symposium_10-6-06.pdf

[54] President George Bush speech on 29 Jan 2002. Nathan Gonzalez, *Engaging Iran, The rise of Middle East Powerhouse and America's strategic choice* (Praeger Security International, USA. 2007), 79.

[55] Steven Simon, Council on Foreign Relations, Symposium on Iraq's impact on the future of US Foreign and Defence Policy (Oct 6, 2006). Available at http://www.cfr.org/content/meetings/Iraq_Symposium_10-6-06.pdf

[56] Carter Andress, Malcolm McConnell. *Victory Undone : The Defeat of Al Qaeda in Iraq and its Resurrection as ISIS*. (Regency Publishing, Washington D.C. 2014),260.

[57] Youssef Bassil, The 2003 Iraq War: Operations, Causes, and Consequences (*IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (JHSS)Volume 4, Issue 5, 2012*), 37

[58] Business Insider – Military and Defece, The Staggering Cost Of The Last Decade's US War In Iraq — In Numbers, Report by Michael B Kelley and Geoffrey Ingersoll on 20 Jun 2014. Available at http://www.businessinsider.com/the-iraq-war-by-numbers-2014-6

[59] Reuters, Iraq war costs U.S. more than $2 trillion, 14 Mar 2013, Available at http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/03/14/us-iraq-war-anniversary-idUSBRE92D0PG20130314

[60] Joel Rayburn, *Iraq After America* (Hoover Institution Press, Stanford, California, 2014), 247.

least 4 million Iraqi migrants within the first three years of war.[61] Corruption and violence is rampant which still hinders investment.[62] The state of national infrastructure is pitiable. Approximately 60 per cent of Iraqi population does not have access to at least one of the three elementary requirements of drinking water, sanitation or availability of 12 hours of power supply a day.[63] The facts clearly indicate that despite US attempts to bring peace by waging war, the country and the region have become worse off in the last decade.

CONCLUSION

Going to Iraq was a clearly war of choice in the hysteria of the aftermath of 9/11 and therefore makes the US solely responsible to bring peace and stability to the region. Be it the US attempts to appoint handpicked ministers and councils, helping to bring a particular government or party at the expense of other or installing Americans as the legitimate sovereigns of the country; their efforts did not bring political stability. Lack of deep understanding of ethnic, social, cultural and sectarian fault lines and their implications were missed and therefore the result was again an autocratic rule despite all democratic experimentations. Winning the battle at Baghdad was probably confused with the winning the war for Iraq[64] and winning the peace. The vaccum in the country developed due to destruction of national security apparatus helped rise of extremism in the region. It was fueled by deliberate targeting of Sunnis and lack of corresponding power struggle in Syria, which all accrued to the re-emergence of AQI into ISIS.

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[61] Youssef Bassil, The 2003 Iraq War: Operations, Causes, and Consequences (*IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (JHSS)Volume 4, Issue 5, 2012), 37*

[62] Claire Spencer, Jane Kinninmont and Omar Sirri, *Iraq Ten Years On* (The Royal Institute of International Affairs, Latimer Trend, UK, May 2013), xii

[63] *Ibid.*

[64] Antulio J. Echevarria II, *Toward an American Way of War*, (US Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, March 2004), as quoted in Matthew Hover, *The occupation of Iraq: a military perspective on lessons learned.* (International Review of Red Cross, Volume 94 Number 885, 2012), 344.

The strategic aim of democratic and developing Iraq was either never envisioned or never pursued with coherent strategy. Billions of dollars were pumped but still most of the Iraqis are without basic life amenities and are on the verge of another social disaster.

The only real and genuine objective of war, "peace" is yet to be truly embraced by mankind. Or even if it is embraced, it is severely set back by the failure to understand war and its strategic realities, clearly manifested by the fact that United States attempt to bring peace and stability to the country, region and the world has left the Middle East in general and Iraq itself in particular in much more unstable state than before.

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