

# **U. S. Nation Building: An Iraq Case Study**

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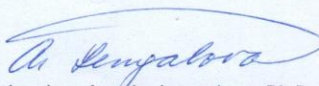
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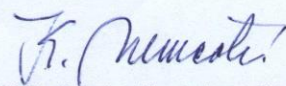
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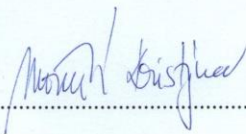
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## **ABSTRAKT**

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá případovou studií Iráku a to především z pohledu tamějšího amerického budování nového národa. V první části práce jsou popsány motivy, které vedou Spojené státy americké k zásáhnutí a působení na Blízkém Východě. Druhá část je zaměřena na důvody, proč Američané selhali, když chtěli nastolit v Iráku demokracii a taktéž se zaměřuje na následky tohoto selhání.

Klíčová slova: Spojené Státy, George W. Bush, Saddám Hussein, Organizace spojených národů, NATO, Islámský Stát, ISIS, zbraně hromadného ničení, ropa, demokracie, 11. září 2001, Kurdové, Sunnité, Šiité, Kuvajt

## **ABSTRACT**

This bachelor's thesis provides an Iraq case study of U.S. nation building efforts, describing U.S. motives for intervening and rebuilding nations and charting American efforts in the Middle East. It then documents the reasons Americans failed to form a stable democratic Iraq, as well as the consequences of this failure.

Keywords: United States, George W. Bush, Saddam Hussein, United Nations, NATO, Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, ISIS, weapons of mass destruction, oil, democracy, September 11, 2001, Kurds, Sunnis, Shiites, Kuwait

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# CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>1 MOTIVATIONS FOR U.S. NATION BUILDING.....</b>	<b>11</b>
1.1 City upon a hill .....	12
1.2 The White Man’s Burden .....	13
1.3 Manifest Destiny and the Need for Frontiers .....	13
1.4 Democratic experiment .....	14
1.5 Economic Motivation .....	14
1.6 Israel – A U.S. Ally.....	16
<b>2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.....</b>	<b>17</b>
2.1 Iranian hostage crisis and its causes .....	17
2.2 Hussein’s Genocide against Kurds .....	17
2.3 The First Iraq War.....	18
2.4 Iraqi “No fly zones”.....	19
2.5 September 11, 2001 .....	20
2.6 9/11 and Prague .....	21
2.7 Second Iraq War .....	21
2.8 The End of Saddam .....	22
<b>3 WHY AMERICA FAILED.....</b>	<b>23</b>
3.1 Regime change .....	24
3.2 Are Iraqis worth democracy?.....	26
3.3 Security and the Rise of ISIS .....	28
3.4 Economic consequences.....	31
3.5 Sectarianism still continues .....	34
3.6 Iraqi Women’s Rights.....	37
<b>CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>WORKS CITED.....</b>	<b>43</b>



## INTRODUCTION

In 2003, President George W. Bush stated that, “unlike Saddam Hussein, we believe the Iraqi people are deserving and capable of human liberty. And when the dictator has departed, they can set an example to all the Middle East of a vital and peaceful and self-governing nation.”<sup>1</sup> This statement notes one reason why the United States decided to attack Iraq – to establish a democracy in the Middle East. However, Bush did not tell the whole story. The United States had other motives, including Iraq’s oil supply and the threat, in the form of weapons of mass destruction, which Iraq supposedly posed towards the United States and her regional ally, Israel. The United States succeeded in deposing Saddam Hussein and establishing a puppet democratic regime, but thirteen years after the U.S. invasion, Iraq is still in turmoil, as is the entire Middle East. Iraq is certainly not the example of a peaceful democracy that Bush so desired. Indeed, a war is currently being waged in Iraq, huge swaths of which are now under the control of the Muslim extremist group known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. The very existence of ISIS in Iraq is proof positive that the United States failed in its nation building efforts. As this thesis will document, this failure occurred because the Bush Administration dissolved the Hussein-era Iraqi army and police forces and was never able to adequately replace them with new recruits, which led to a security void in Iraq that ISIS later filled. Furthermore, the United States ignored ISIS when it first developed, largely because the United States had its own troubles in the form of the global economic crisis of 2008-2012. And Barack Obama was elected president of the United States in November 2007, partly on his promise to pull American troops out of Iraq, a promise that he kept despite a plethora of evidence that the new democratic republic of Iraq was not yet able to protect itself. This thesis also demonstrates that establishing a democracy in a former Middle Eastern dictatorship was not as easy as Americans imagined, largely because of the religious and cultural differences between Arabs and westerners. And it highlights other influences of U.S. nation building efforts in Iraq, related to sectarianism, economics and women’s rights. Although, U.S. intervention had mostly negative impacts on Iraq, the Kurds seem to have benefited in that they now have more rights and an improved economic situation. Although

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<sup>1</sup> “Full Text: Bush's Speech,” *Guardian*, accessed April 2, 2016, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2003/mar/18/usa.iraq>.

they are still occasionally discriminated against by the federal government in Baghdad, and they are now having to fight against ISIS, they are freer now than they were under Hussein.

## 1 MOTIVATIONS FOR U.S. NATION BUILDING

Nation building is a foreign policy tool used by a more powerful country to alter the culture, politics or economy of a weaker country, often to increase the similarities between the two.<sup>2</sup> Proponents argue that it can improve the economies of both countries.<sup>3</sup> The United States has independently made at least six nation building attempts which it has referred to as “stabilization and reconstruction operations.”<sup>4</sup>

Reasons for such attempts have varied. In countries like Somalia where the United States intervened in 1992-93, Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1992, and Haiti in 1994, the reasons were mainly humanitarian, which means that these countries were given necessities, such as food, shelter or water. However, the United States intervened in countries like Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003 mainly because of national security. After the terrorist attacks on New York City and Washington D. C. on September 11, 2001, the majority of Americans felt their country must intervene in nations that harbored terrorists. In these cases, the United States decided that it would attempt to reorganize the governments and societies, including the reworking of constitutions.<sup>5</sup>

U.S. nation building is closely connected to imperialism, which in turn is closely tied to the history of America.<sup>6</sup> At the end of the eighteenth century, President George Washington wanted Americans to embrace isolationism, meaning the avoidance of foreign affairs. But future Americans did not heed his advice, as demonstrated by nineteenth century wars against the United Kingdom, Mexico, and Spain. By the end of the nineteenth century, after “manifest destiny” had been fulfilled, the United States began competing over markets and resources.<sup>7</sup> Yet, as the rest of this chapter demonstrates, economic gain

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<sup>2</sup> Ellyn Creasey, Ahmed S. Rahman, and Katherine A. Smith, “Nation Building and Economic Growth,” American Economic Association, accessed January 3, 2016, <https://www.aeaweb.org/aea/2012conference/program/retrieve.php?pdfid=272>; Francis Fukuyama, *Nation-Building: Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 3; Carolyn Stephenson, “Nation Building,” Beyond Intractability, accessed January 3, 2016, <http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/nation-building>.

<sup>3</sup> Creasey, Rahman and Smith, “Nation Building and Economic Growth.”

<sup>4</sup> Brendan Ballou, “Why America’s Nation Building Office Failed and What Congress Had to Do With It,” *Stability*, September 24, 2014, accessed January 3, 2016, <http://www.stabilityjournal.org/articles/10.5334/sta.ec/>.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Jeff Wallenfeld, *U.S. Imperialism and Progressivism: 1896 to 1920* (New York: Britannica Educational Publishing, 2013), 9.

<sup>7</sup> “Should the Government Intervene in the Affairs of other Nations?,” *Dakota County Star*, accessed January 27, 2016, [http://www.enterprisepub.com/dakotacountystar/opinion/columns/should-the-government-intervene-in-the-affairs-of-other-nations/article\\_42385bae-30ed-11e3-aa44-001a4bcf6878.html](http://www.enterprisepub.com/dakotacountystar/opinion/columns/should-the-government-intervene-in-the-affairs-of-other-nations/article_42385bae-30ed-11e3-aa44-001a4bcf6878.html); Henry R.

was not the sole motive for imperialism, and by extension, nation building. Some of the strongest motives were ideological.

### 1.1 City upon a hill

“Wee shall be as a City upon a Hill, the eyes of all people are upon us;”<sup>8</sup> These words, from the 1630 sermon “Model of Christian Charity” by Puritan leader John Winthrop, initiated the concept that Americans are unique and God-blessed with a responsibility to show others how to live. In the nineteenth century, this concept came to be referred to as American exceptionalism. According to Richard Land, American exceptionalism is a conviction that this nation has been blessed by God but at the same time tasked by God with the responsibility to spread freedom and democracy among different.<sup>9</sup> According to Loren Baritz, Americans revision the world in their own image and take pride in their beliefs that their plans are genuine and motives are favorable.<sup>10</sup>

American leaders have repeatedly invoked Winthrop’s idea, especially in times of war. At the Paris Peace Conference that ended World War I, President Woodrow Wilson called the United States “the savior of the world!”<sup>11</sup> President John F. Kennedy used it during his 1961 inauguration when he said that “the energy, the faith, the devotion which we bring to this endeavor [defending freedom] will light our country and all who serve it-and the glow from that fire can truly light the world.”<sup>12</sup> Winthrop’s sermon was often referred to by Ronald Reagan in discussing his vision for America. In his farewell speech in January 1989, he referred to the United States as “a tall, proud city built on rocks stronger than oceans, windswept, God-blessed, and teeming with people of all kinds living in harmony and peace; a city with free ports that hummed with commerce and creativity. And if there had to be city walls, the walls had doors and the doors were open to anyone with the will

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Nau, *At Home Abroad: Identity and Power in American Foreign Policy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002), 46-47.

<sup>8</sup> “John Winthrop's City upon a Hill, 1630,” Mount Holyoke College, accessed January 3, 2016, <https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/winthrop.htm>.

<sup>9</sup> Richard Land, “A God-blessed America: Obligations and Responsibilities,” Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, accessed January 3, 2016, <https://erlc.com/article/a-god-blessed-america-obligations-and-responsibilities/>.

<sup>10</sup> Alan Shapiro, “Vietnam, Iraq and ‘City upon a Hill’,” Morningside Center for Teaching Social Responsibility, accessed January 3, 2016, <http://www.morningsidecenter.org/teachable-moment/lessons/vietnam-iraq-city-upon-hill>.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

and the heart to get here.”<sup>13</sup> Reagan also saw the United States as a symbol of freedom – in terms of religion, expression and enterprise. <sup>14</sup> Finally, President George W. Bush said of Iraqis in 2003 that they are worthy and able to live in a free, self- governing country and that the United States had a moral responsibility to help the Iraqi people achieve this potential.<sup>15</sup>

## 1.2 The White Man’s Burden

The poem “White Man’s Burden,” written by British poet and journalist Rudyard Kipling in 1899, provided a motive for American imperialism, encouraging the United States to become an empire like Britain. President Theodore Roosevelt appreciated this poem’s vision, but a century later, many Americans had come to disagree with him.<sup>16</sup> For instance, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said in 2003 that America was not a country with imperialistic intentions. Likewise, that same year after the U.S. invasion of Iraq, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld dubiously claimed that America had never had and never would have colonial aspirations. He was wrong. In 1898, the United States took the Philippines from Spain and held the country until 1946. During the American control of the Philippines, over two million Filipinos died fighting for independence from the United States.<sup>17</sup>

## 1.3 Manifest Destiny and the Need for Frontiers

Another document that supported American imperialistic motivations was *Annexation* by journalist John O’Sullivan. In 1845, in reference to a conflict with Mexico, he mentioned “manifest destiny” in relation to his belief that the United States had the God-given right and responsibility to seize and civilize North America. Americans embraced this idea for the rest of the century.<sup>18</sup> In 1893, Frederick Jackson Turner documented the conquering of the frontier and the fulfillment of “manifest destiny.” He pointed out that it

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<sup>13</sup> Jackie Gingrich Cushman, “Winthrop’s ‘City on a Hill’ Endures,” Newsmax, accessed January 29, 2016, <http://www.newsmax.com/JackieGingrich/Winthrop-City-Hill-Reagan/2012/06/22/id/443194/>.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Shapiro, “Vietnam, Iraq & ‘City upon a Hill’.”

<sup>16</sup> “‘The White Man’s Burden’: Kipling’s Hymn to U.S. Imperialism,” History Matters, accessed January 4, 2016, <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5478>.

<sup>17</sup> Johan Höglund, “Taking up the White Man’s Burden? American Empire and the Question of History,” *European Journal of American Studies* 2 (2007): 2, accessed January 4, 2016, <https://ejas.revues.org/1542>.

was the frontier that had defined the American character, but that by 1890 the frontier was no more.<sup>19</sup> Americans responded to his lecture by seeking globally for new frontiers, and by extension, as William A. Williams pointed out, new capitalist markets.<sup>20</sup>

#### 1.4 Democratic experiment

A motive for American nation building has been the overthrow of authoritarian regimes and the establishment of democracies.<sup>21</sup> Five factors challenged the establishment of a democracy in Iraq: demography, religious and ethnic diversity, neighboring states, culture, and Islam.<sup>22</sup>

#### 1.5 Economic Motivation

Along with helping Iraqis and deposing Saddam Hussein, who supposedly had weapons of mass destruction and aided and abetted terrorists, oil was possibly a motivation for the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003.<sup>23</sup> U.S. army general John Abizaid said, “Of course it's about oil; we can't really deny that.”<sup>24</sup> Thanks to U.N. sanctions established after the First Iraq War in the early 1990s, Iraqi oil was used only by Iraq itself.<sup>25</sup> According to Paul O'Neill, Iraqi invasion plans were in place as early as February 2001, before the September 11 attacks. A 2001 U.S. State Department report stated that Middle Eastern countries should be spurred to share their oil with foreign countries. In 2003, oil companies started

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<sup>18</sup> “Manifest Destiny: Creating an American Identity,” Teachinghistory.com, accessed January 4, 2016, <http://teachinghistory.org/history-content/ask-a-historian/25502>.

<sup>19</sup> Tim McNeese, *American Frontier* (St. Louis, MO: Milliken Publishing, 2002), 94.

<sup>20</sup> Adrianus Arnoldus Maria van der Linden, *A Revolt against Liberalism: American Radical Historians, 1959-1976* (Atlanta: Rodopi, 1996), 18.

<sup>21</sup> Carl L. Brown, Review of “*Uncharted Journey: Promoting Democracy in the Middle East*,” by Thomas Carothers, and Marina Ottaway, *Foreign Affairs* (May/June 2005): accessed January 4, 2016, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/reviews/capsule-review/2005-05-01/uncharted-journey-promoting-democracy-middle-east>.

<sup>22</sup> Ghassan Atiyah, “Iraq: Instability and Social Integration,” Heinrich Boell Stiftung, accessed February 14, 2016, <https://www.boell.de/de/internationalepolitik/internationale-politik-2127.html>.

<sup>23</sup> “Is Oil or Big Business an Undisclosed Motive for the War on Iraq?,” *The Debate*, accessed January 11, 2016, <http://www.thedebate.org/thedebate/iraq.asp>.

<sup>24</sup> Antonia Juhasz, “Why the War in Iraq was Fought for Big Oil,” CNN, accessed January 11, 2016, <http://edition.cnn.com/2013/03/19/opinion/iraq-war-oil-juhasz/>.

<sup>25</sup> “Is Oil or Big Business an Undisclosed Motive for the War on Iraq?”

to create strategies related to the Iraqi oil industry. Some of representatives from these companies worked for the Iraqi government.<sup>26</sup>

However, not everyone thinks the invasion was oil-motivated. For example Muhammad Idrees Ahmad claims that “if Iraq was invaded for oil then the US was remarkably negligent in securing the prize.” In 2009, Iraq decided to sell some its oil to other countries like France, Norway, Russia or China, but not to the United States. Only one American oil company –Exxon Mobil– received an Iraqi oil contract. Ahmad also provides evidence that oil companies were not lobbying for Iraq’s invasion. Instead, the companies were lobbying for increased sanctions which would have been bad for business.<sup>27</sup>

Yet, getting their hands on some Iraqi oil was not the only economic motive for a U.S. invasion of Iraq. Another reason was to re-create the Iraqi economy in the American economy’s image, thus facilitating business. In May 2003, President George W. Bush announced his economic vision relating to free trade, internal reforms and economic openness in Iraq. This confirms U.S. plans to rebuild the Iraqi economy even before the invasion and can be considered as a dominant impulse for the Second Iraq War. Some conservatives claimed that Iraq was a test to see if capitalism and free market economies could be established in Arab countries.

Due to American influence, Iraq became one of the most open countries in the world in terms of business and flows of capital, and Iraqi taxes were among the lowest worldwide. “A broad-based Mass Privatization Program” led to the sale of many Iraqi state-owned companies. Bush advocated privatization as a necessary tool for increasing Iraqi prosperity, but the *Wall Street Journal* warned that privatization could result in disorder in job positions and services, and increased corruption, which later turned out to be true.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Juhasz, “Why the War in Iraq was Fought for Big Oil;” Danny Postel, “It Wasn’t about Oil, and It Wasn’t about the Free Market: Why We Invaded Iraq,” *In These Times*, accessed January 11, 2016, [http://inthesetimes.com/article/17626/what\\_the\\_Iraq\\_war\\_teaches\\_us](http://inthesetimes.com/article/17626/what_the_Iraq_war_teaches_us).

<sup>27</sup> Postel, “It Wasn’t about Oil, and It Wasn’t about the Free Market.”

<sup>28</sup> William Van Wagenen, “Killing for Ideology: A Brief History of US Efforts to Establish a Free-Market Capitalist Economy in Iraq,” *The Mormon Worker*, accessed February 11, 2016, <https://themormonworker.net/past-issues/mw-issue-6/killing-for-ideology-a-brief-history-of-us-efforts-to-establish-a-free-market-capitalist-economy-in-iraq/>.

## 1.6 Israel – A U.S. Ally

American general Omar Bradley once suggested that Israel could police the Middle East. This suggestion went unheeded, because the United States wanted to cooperate with Egypt and Iraq, two traditional enemies of Israel. Israel also saw its desire to be in NATO go unfulfilled. In 1967, the United States sold warplanes to Israel,<sup>29</sup> an action which paved the way for a U.S.–Israeli military intelligence alliance.<sup>30</sup> Since then, the United States has depended on Mossad, the Israeli intelligence agency, for information on Middle Eastern extremist Islamists.<sup>31</sup>

The Israeli prime minister said that the United States should help Israel to remove Saddam Hussein and his regime from power mainly because of the worry that he might use weapons of massive destruction against Israel. Israel was bombarded many times by Hussein's scud missiles during the First Gulf War in 1991.<sup>32</sup> The goal of removing Hussein from power was supported by the Bush administration and was one of the main reasons for the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003. As U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice stated in 2003, the "security of Israel is the key to security of the world."<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Mitchel G. Bard, "U.S.-Israel Strategic Cooperation: Evolution of Strategic Alliance," Jewish Virtual Library, accessed January 11, 2016, [https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/US-Israel/evolution\\_of\\_strategic\\_coop.html](https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/US-Israel/evolution_of_strategic_coop.html).

<sup>30</sup> Mitchel G. Bard, "U.S.-Israel Strategic Cooperation: The 1968 Sale of Phantom Jets to Israel," Jewish Virtual Library, accessed January 11, 2016, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/US-Israel/phantom.html>.

<sup>31</sup> "U.S.-Israel Strategic Cooperation: Intelligence Collaboration," Jewish Virtual Library, accessed January 11, 2016, [https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/US-Israel/intell\\_coop.html](https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/US-Israel/intell_coop.html).

<sup>32</sup> Gwynne Dyer, *The Mess They Made: The Middle East After Iraq* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 2009), 61.

<sup>33</sup> Mark Weber, "Iraq: A War for Israel," Institute for Historical Review, accessed January 11, 2016, <http://www.ihr.org/leaflets/iraqwar.shtml>.



## 2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Iranian hostage crisis and its causes

Iran was America's enemy, mainly due to the 1979 Iranian Hostage Crisis, during which more than 60 Americans who worked at the U.S. embassy were held as hostages in Tehran for 444 days. It was a reaction to the ousted Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlavi being allowed into the United States for medical treatment. It was also a student protest against the seemingly constant intervention of the United States in Iranian affairs. Taking Americans hostages was a means to support the leader of the revolution against America - Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini - whose political beliefs opposed those of Pahlavi. Pahlavi was anti-communist and pro-western while Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini was anti-American. Pahlavi's sympathy for America was probably why he was overthrown.<sup>34</sup>

This crisis made allies of the United States and Iraq.<sup>35</sup> Iraq decided to fight Iran mainly because Hussein, who's Baath Party was helped into power by the United States in 1963, had expansionist desires, and Khomeini's regime stood in his way.<sup>36</sup> Some contend that the American aid to Iraq was initiated by the CIA. Evidence exists that CIA director William J. Casey met with the half-brother of Saddam Hussein in Baghdad in the 1980s. Also, a Reagan administration official later claimed that Iraq and the United States were sharing information.<sup>37</sup>

### 2.2 Hussein's Genocide against Kurds

The United States and Iraq were allies during the Iraq-Iran war. But when Hussein came into power with U.S. help in 1979, he threatened the Kurds who lived in the northern part of the country and "clamped down on insurgents among them." Hussein believed that the Kurds were trying to divide Iraq.<sup>38</sup> The Kurds of northern Iraq and Shiites from

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<sup>34</sup> "Iran Hostage Crisis," History, accessed January 11, 2016, <http://www.history.com/topics/iran-hostage-crisis>.

<sup>35</sup> James G. Blight et al., *Becoming Enemies: U.S.-Iran Relations and the Iran-Iraq War, 1979-1988* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2012), 4.

<sup>36</sup> "The Arab/Muslim World: Iran-Iraq War (1979-1988)," Jewish Virtual Library, accessed January 11, 2016, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/arabs/iraniraq.html>.

<sup>37</sup> Seymour M. Hersh, "U.S. Secretly Gave Aid to Iraq Early in Its War against Iran," *New York Times*, accessed January 11, 2016, <http://www.nytimes.com/1992/01/26/world/us-secretly-gave-aid-to-iraq-early-in-its-war-against-iran.html?pagewanted=all>.

<sup>38</sup> "Saddam Defends Killing of Kurds," *The Guardian*, accessed January 17, 2016, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2006/sep/11/iraq1>.

southern Iraq cooperated with Iran during the Iran-Iraq War, which lasted from 1980-1988. Iran's troops often defended these two groups. As a result, the Iraqi government decided to use its chemical weapons on Kurds in 1988, killing and injuring thousands of them. Saddam Hussein then ordered that all Kurdish males aged 18 to 55 be killed. As a result, approximately 100,000 males vanished and about 4,000 Kurdish villages were destroyed, some with chemical weapons. Because of these attacks, "Kurds suffer from high levels of congenital birth defects, cancers, respiratory problems, and infertility."<sup>39</sup>

At the time, the United States supported Hussein by claiming that it was actually Iran that was responsible for the genocide against the Kurds. According to Allan D. Cooper, the Reagan administration actually gave chemical and biological weapons to Iraq, as well as military aircraft and intelligence. It was only when Iraq became an enemy of the United States in 1991 that the United States blamed the Kurdish genocide on Hussein and claimed it as evidence that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction.<sup>40</sup>

### 2.3 The First Iraq War

In 1990, Hussein accused Kuwait, Iraq's neighbor, of stealing Iraqi oil.<sup>41</sup> Hussein also claimed that Kuwait and Saudi Arabia were manipulating oil prices to Iraq's disadvantage. Iraq was also heavily indebted to Kuwait. For these reasons, Hussein invaded Kuwait on August 2.<sup>42</sup> The United States, Britain and Russia denounced the invasion, and the United Nations Security Council insisted on a quick Iraqi retreat. King Fahd of Saudi Arabia pleaded with the U.S. secretary of defense for help. On August 8, Iraq declared victory over Kuwait. After that, U.S. planes were sent to Saudi Arabia in order to prevent Saudi Arabia from being attacked. Not only did America send air planes, but NATO troops were also sent to the country. The U.N. gave Iraq until January 15, 1991 to leave Kuwait.<sup>43</sup>

When the deadline passed, a U.N. coalition, led by the United States, attacked Iraq and drove the Iraqi forces out of Kuwait. On February 28, President George Bush declared the

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<sup>39</sup> Allan D. Cooper, *The Geography of Genocide* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2009), 173.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> "Persian Gulf War," History, accessed January 19, 2016, <http://www.history.com/topics/persian-gulf-war>.

<sup>42</sup> "Persian Gulf War," *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed January 19, 2016, <http://www.britannica.com/event/Persian-Gulf-War>.

<sup>43</sup> "Persian Gulf War," History.

war over. Iraq accepted Kuwait as a sovereign country and also agreed to give up all of its weapons of mass destruction.<sup>44</sup> Iraq was also sanctioned from exporting oil. But according to Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, the biggest strategic mistake made by the Bush administration was that they did not force Hussein out of power. He was still governing, and he was still attacking Iraqi Kurds and Shiites.<sup>45</sup>

## 2.4 Iraqi “No fly zones”

After this Gulf war, Hussein kept attacking the northern part of Iraq where Kurds lived and also kept striking southern Iraq, home to the Shiites.<sup>46</sup> Kurds and Shiites were constantly repressed by Hussein because of their disagreement with his regime.<sup>47</sup> The bombing of Shiites, who comprised the Iraqi majority, was ordered by Hussein in part because he was part of the Sunni minority, which had used its money and influence to gain political power. Hussein felt so threatened by the Shiites that he even established against them an embargo of medicine and food.<sup>48</sup>

In response to this repression, in the 1990s the United Nations, urged on by the United States, created a “no fly zone” over areas where Kurds and Shiites lived. Although the main purpose of these “no-fly zones” was the defense of Kurds and Shiites, these zones also placed pressure on the Iraqi government to cooperate with U.N. inspectors in their search for and destruction of forbidden weapons, biological and chemical. Iraq did not cooperate.<sup>49</sup>

According to Matthew C. Waxman, the southern no-fly zone was created mainly “for domestic political reasons and by that measure it was clearly a success. It helped sustain domestic support for the U.S. presence in the region, by portraying Washington as on the side of the angels.” Regarding the northern one, it did not protect Kurds as much as it

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<sup>44</sup> “Persian Gulf War,” History.

<sup>45</sup> Robert M. Gates, *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014), 26-27.

<sup>46</sup> “Persian Gulf War,” *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

<sup>47</sup> “Flashback: the 1991 Iraqi Revolt,” BBC, accessed January 19, 2016, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle\\_east/2888989.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/2888989.stm).

<sup>48</sup> Margaret Thatcherová, *Umění vládnout: Strategie pro svět v pohybu* (Praha: Prostor, 2003), 206.

<sup>49</sup> ““The No-Fly Zone War” (U.S./U.K.-Iraq Conflict) 1991-2003,” History Guy, accessed January 19, 2016, [http://www.historyguy.com/no-fly\\_zone\\_war.html#.Vp5P-TbSnIU](http://www.historyguy.com/no-fly_zone_war.html#.Vp5P-TbSnIU).

should.<sup>50</sup> After Hussein refused to subordinate Iraq to the U.N., the United States and Britain repeatedly bombed Iraq.<sup>51</sup>

## 2.5 September 11, 2001

As Noam Chomsky wrote, “the “war on terror” was redeclared on 9-11.”<sup>52</sup> The 9-11 attack surprised almost all Americans. Even though there were some signals from al-Qaeda that it would be attacking the United States, the probability was too low. Americans had emergency plans in place for biological or chemical weapon attacks, but they were not when terrorists hijacked civil airplanes and crashed them into high profile targets.<sup>53</sup>

When 9-11 happened, Bush’s plans for his presidency went out the window.<sup>54</sup> Although there was not any concrete proof that Iraq had cooperated with al-Qaeda, the Bush administration immediately began contemplating retaliation against Iraq. According to the White House counter-terrorism chief, Richard A. Clarke, the administration was discussing only one topic on September 12: an invasion of Iraq. According to Gwynne Dyer, Donald Rumsfeld and Paul Wolfowitz immediately began to promote this invasion. U.S. diplomat Joe Wilson quoted Rumsfeld as stating, “There are no targets worth striking in Afghanistan, go strike Baghdad.”<sup>55</sup> Before any invasion of Iraq could take place, however, Afghanistan, which harbored Al-Qaeda, needed to be held accountable. Plus, the Bush administration needed time to establish a connection between al-Qaeda and Hussein, so that an invasion of Iraq would be justified.<sup>56</sup>

For his part, President George W. Bush used religion to justify the post-9/11 actions of his administration. He said that the United States should use foreign policy to fulfill the will of God. He used the New Testament as proof that the United States has a God-given

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<sup>50</sup> Daniel L. Byman, and Matthew C. Waxman, *Confronting Iraq: U.S. Policy and the Use of Force Since the Gulf War* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2000), 52.

<sup>51</sup> “Persian Gulf War,” *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

<sup>52</sup> Noam Chomsky, *Hegemony or Survival: America’s Quest for Global Dominance* (London: Penguin Books, 2003), 96.

<sup>53</sup> M. Kent Bolton, *U.S. National Security and Foreign Policymaking after 9/11: Present at the Re-Creation* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2008), 174.

<sup>54</sup> Chomsky, *Hegemony or Survival*, 109.

<sup>55</sup> Mike Hanna, “The Connection between Iraq and 9/11,” *Al Jazeera*, accessed January 24, 2016, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/spotlight/the911decade/2011/09/201197155513938336.html>.

<sup>56</sup> Gwynne Dyer, *The Mess They Made: The Middle East after Iraq* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 2009), 41-55.

responsibility to help weaker countries, such as Iraq. And he began comparing the coming “War on Terror” to the medieval Christian Crusades.<sup>57</sup>

## 2.6 9/11 and Prague

The United States believed Iraq funded a Prague meeting that was 9/11 attack-related. Mohamed Atta, one of the 9/11 hijackers, supposedly met at least once in Prague with Hussein’s espionage chief, Ahmed al-Ani. This supposed meeting served as the needed link between al-Qaeda and Hussein,<sup>58</sup> justifying the Bush administration’s plans to attack Iraq.<sup>59</sup> The Bush administration used this information to manipulate public opinion in favor of an Iraq invasion.<sup>60</sup> It turns out that the meeting never happened, but this was not known until years later. In fact, the Center for Public Integrity determined that, in the two years after 9/11, the Bush administration made about 900 incorrect statements in relation to Iraq, mostly related to justifying the invasion by stating that Iraq was involved in 9/11 and was still a threat to the United States.<sup>61</sup>

## 2.7 Second Iraq War

During his first state of the union address, President Bush identified Iraq, North Korea and Iran as members of the “axis of evil,” which could provide weapons of mass destruction to terrorists who “could attack our allies or attempt to blackmail the United States.”<sup>62</sup> In March 2003, the United States gave Hussein two days to leave Iraq. When he failed to comply with this ultimatum, the United States and its allies bombed Hussein’s Baghdad headquarters. This was the first salvo of the Second Iraq War, the goals of which

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<sup>57</sup> Thomas Banchoff, *Religious Pluralism, Globalization, and World Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 306-308.

<sup>58</sup> William Safire, “Mr. Atta Goes to Prague,” *New York Times*, accessed January 24, 2016, <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/05/09/opinion/mr-atta-goes-to-prague.html>.

<sup>59</sup> Paul Berman, “Totalitarianism and the Role of Intellectuals,” Free Republic Browse, accessed February 17, 2016, <http://freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/1048757/posts>.

<sup>60</sup> James Risén, “Iraqi Agent Denies He Met 9/11 Hijacker in Prague before Attacks on the U.S.,” *New York Times*, accessed January 24, 2016, <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/12/13/international/europe/13INQU.html>.

<sup>61</sup> “Timelines: 9-11 and the Iraq War,” Investigating Power, accessed January 26, 2016, <http://www.investigatingpower.org/timelines/9-11/>.

<sup>62</sup> James Fallows, *Blind Into Baghdad* (Toronto: Vintage Books, 2006), 51.

were to destroy Iraqi weapons of mass destruction and overthrow Saddam Hussein and his dictatorial regime.<sup>63</sup>

From a military perspective, winning the war was a foregone conclusion. But as James Fallows noted, “The day after the war ended, Iraq would become America’s problem,” for Iraqis would ask Americans for protection and economic aid. Even though the United States was somewhat able to support Afghanistan after its invasion, Iraq would prove different.<sup>64</sup>

## 2.8 The End of Saddam

Hussein was captured alive by American troops on 13 December 2003 and imprisoned.<sup>65</sup> In an Iraqi court, he was subsequently found guilty of crimes against humanity and genocides against the Kurds and Shiites. According to Malaysian minister Mahathir Mohamad, Hussein’s trial “was a mockery of justice, no less a Kangaroo Court. Defence counsels were brutally murdered, witnesses threatened and judges removed for being impartial and replaced by puppet judges. Yet, we are told that Iraq was invaded to promote democracy, freedom and justice.”<sup>66</sup> The guilty verdict and death sentence were foregone conclusions, planned and directed by the United States.<sup>67</sup> Furthermore, political analyst Caleb Maupin claims that Hussein was doomed to die because of the Iraq state-owned oil company was a competitor of American capitalism.<sup>68</sup> To the relief of many Iraqis, Hussein’s two sons were also killed by American troops, and the United States provided photo evidence of their demise.<sup>69</sup> With their deaths, Iraqis faced a post-Hussein reality.

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<sup>63</sup> “Iraq War 2003-2011,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, accessed January 26, 2016, <http://www.britannica.com/event/Iraq-War>.

<sup>64</sup> Fallows, *Blind Into Baghdad*, 8-9.

<sup>65</sup> “Saddam Hussein Captured,” History, accessed January 26, 2016, <http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/saddam-hussein-captured>.

<sup>66</sup> Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya, “Saddam Hussein’s Last Words: ‘To the Hell that is Iraq!?’,” Global Research, accessed February 17, 2016, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/saddam-hussein-s-last-words-to-the-hell-that-is-iraq/4620>.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> “Execution of Saddam Hussein Wasn’t about Justice, but about US Profits,” *RT*, accessed January 26, 2016, <https://www.rt.com/op-edge/230579-saddam-hussein-execution-rope-auction/>.

<sup>69</sup> “Qusay and Uday Hussein Killed,” History, accessed January 26, 2016, <http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/qusay-and-uday-hussein-killed>.

### 3 WHY AMERICA FAILED

After September 11, 2001 critics, such as Republican presidential candidate Pat Buchanan, argued that the United States had opened itself up to attack through its caustic foreign policy.<sup>70</sup> Yet, other critics suggested that the United States had fallen victim on 9/11 because it had not done enough to combat extremists. They also suggested that America should be much stricter and more assertive in the countries that harbored these extremists. As proof that the United States was not strict and cautious enough, they offered the fact that it provided weapons and training to the *mujahedeen*, Cold War-era Islamic soldiers. After the Cold War, the *mujahedeen* had turned against its benefactors, resulting in the 9/11 attacks.<sup>71</sup>

According to Max Boot, America failed when it withdrew from Afghanistan after 1989. When the Soviet Union fell and Soviet forces withdrew from the war-torn country, American forces quickly pulled out, leaving Afghans to take care of themselves. The Taliban, a militant fundamentalist Islamic regime, filled this power vacuum, with devastating results.<sup>72</sup> According to the 9/11 Commission report, Saddam Hussein cooperated with the Taliban and al-Qaeda in the 1990s, even sending a delegation to Afghanistan to meet with them in order to discuss what to do about their common enemies, the United States and Britain.<sup>73</sup>

Defeating terrorist organizations, such as the Taliban and al-Qaeda, became important goals for the United States and Britain, both of which grew increasingly worried that Iraq could be used as a staging ground for a terrorist attack on the West. In response, George W. Bush announced his “National Strategy for Victory in Iraq,” the goals of which were the removal of Hussein from power, to aid Iraqi forces until they could provide adequate protection for their people, and to destroy the nest of terrorists then in Iraq.<sup>74</sup> Once these

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<sup>70</sup> Max Boot, “The Case for American Empire,” *The Weekly Standard* (2001), accessed February 3, 2016, <http://www.weeklystandard.com/article/1626>.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Kyle Orton, “Saddam and the Taliban,” *The Syrian Intifada* (2015), accessed February 3, 2016, <https://kyleorton1991.wordpress.com/2015/06/29/saddam-and-the-taliban/>.

<sup>74</sup> “President Discusses War on Terror and Rebuilding Iraq,” *The White House*, accessed February 3, 2016, <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2005/12/text/20051207-1.html>.

goals were accomplished, the United States would assist the United Nations and other world organizations in helping to restore the Iraqi economy as well as its infrastructure.<sup>75</sup>

Another mistake that the United States made was not entering Baghdad and assisting Iraqi rebels in 1991.<sup>76</sup> Gates said that an invasion of Baghdad was not part of the United Nations Security Council resolutions, and thus it might have torn apart the broad coalition, which would then have to be rebuilt later. Gates also notes that Hussein would not have surrendered to American forces, which would have then required a costly occupation and manhunt.<sup>77</sup> This mistake was finally rectified in 2003 with the execution of Saddam Hussein and the establishment of a federal democratic republic.<sup>78</sup>

### 3.1 Regime change

“Iraq can become a beacon of democracy in the Middle East,” said George W. Bush one month before the 2003 invasion of Iraq.<sup>79</sup> Regime change had already been decided upon. In American minds, Iraq needed a government that would be beneficial for the Iraqi people and a Middle Eastern ally of the United States.<sup>80</sup>

According to Larry Diamond, the United States prefers a quick in, quick out nation building strategy, but the Bush administration realized full well that Iraq was a unique challenge that would require more time and effort. It would be worth it, though, for unlike in other Arab countries, the Iraqi people supposedly favored democracy, especially when the alternative was Baath Party rule.<sup>81</sup>

When we went in (to Iraq), my view -- and I thought it was a broadly held view -- was that the goal was to have Saddam Hussein not be there, and to have what replaced Saddam Hussein be a government that would not have weapons of mass destruction, that would not invade its neighbors, and that would be reasonably respectful of diverse ethnic groups -- meaning the Sunni, the Shia, the Kurds,<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> “President Discusses War on Terror and Rebuilding Iraq.”

<sup>76</sup> Boot, “The Case for American Empire.”

<sup>77</sup> Gates, *Duty*, 26-27.

<sup>78</sup> Boot, “The Case for American Empire.”

<sup>79</sup> “Beacon of Hope Fades,” *The Guardian*, accessed February 4, 2016, <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2005/aug/24/iraq.iraq>.

<sup>80</sup> Chomsky, *Hegemony or Survival*, 33.

<sup>81</sup> Larry Diamond, “The Long Haul for Democracy in Iraq,” Stanford University, accessed February 4, 2016, <https://web.stanford.edu/~ldiamond/iraq/WSJ021904oped.htm>.

<sup>82</sup> Jake Tapper and Tom LoBianco, “Rumsfeld Defends Remarks about Democracy in Iraq, Says He Wasn’t Criticizing Bush,” *CNN*, accessed February 4, 2016, <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/06/09/politics/rumsfeld-no-democracy-in-iraq/>.



said Bush's defense secretary, Donald Rumsfeld. These motives, strongly supported by the U.S. Congress, were probably the main reasons to establish democracy in Iraq. It was believed that Iraq, with its strategic position, size, history and resources, could become a role model for Muslim countries to become free and democratic.<sup>83</sup> On the other hand, in 2015 Rumsfeld was overheard saying that he did not believe that a democratic Iraq was attainable in 2003 when Saddam was overthrown.<sup>84</sup>

That Iraq was not such a democratic country was proven when some Iraqi candidates were not allowed to take part in free elections as a part of "de-Baathification" campaign. The Baath Party was under Saddam's leadership for several years, and this is probably the reason why people remain afraid of this party. The paranoia of Iraqi people led to the interdiction of the Baath Party by the Commission of Accountability and Justice. The Commission was led by Ahmed Chalabi and Ali Faysal al-Lami. They are supposed to be closely connected to Iraqi National Alliance, which is dominated by Shi'a Islamist Parties – the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq and the Al-Sadr Trend. It is probable that this commission banned the Sunni politicians Saleh al-Mutlaq and Dhafir al-Ani. This discrimination was a result of U.S. intervention in the formation of the new Iraqi government. Although the United States were trying to establish a democracy, banning the Baath party in a supposedly democratic election negated it. Craig Considine compares the ban on the Baath Party to banning Republican candidates in future elections because of crimes committed by the Bush administration. For sure, such an action would lead to protests. The banning of the Baath Party was tantamount to the United States banning Democratic voters after the Civil War, or not allowing women, blacks or Amerindians to vote in elections. Democracy is functioning in a state when everybody is allowed to be part of it, not just the chosen ones.<sup>85</sup>

Among the official motives given by U.S. administration for getting into Iraq and establishing a democracy were removing Hussein and taking power away from "undemocratic elites." Those undemocratic elites were a big problem during the regime

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> "Donald Rumsfeld: George W. Bush Was Wrong about Iraq," MSNBC, accessed March 20, 2016, <http://www.msnbc.com/msnbc/donald-rumsfeld-george-w-bush-was-wrong-about-iraq>.

<sup>85</sup> Craig Considine, "U.S. Brings Democracy to Iraq? Hardly," The World Can't Wait, accessed February 4, 2016, <http://www.worldcantwait.net/index.php/features-mainmenu-220/the-war-of-terror/6197-us-brings-democracy-to-iraq-hardly>.

change. When Saddam was overthrown, it created new complications because new authoritarian leaders came into power. According to David Ghanim, the Iraq War, the goal of which was to get rid of Saddam, just created a government as aggressive as Saddam's. Even though, the United States started to cooperate with the opposition as proof that they wanted to help Iraqi people, it turned out that the opposition had the same goals as the old government – control over wealth and power. So Iraqi people gained nothing. Ghanim also wrote that the connection between the United States and “Iraqi ethnic and sectarian elites” created an Iraq rather weaker than democratized. And no matter what people thought about the Iraq war, democracy should be a means to improve the social situation, which in the case of Iraq was characterized by aggression and cruelty.<sup>86</sup>

### 3.2 Are Iraqis worth democracy?

Some complaints have been appearing that Middle Eastern countries are not worthy democracies and that it was a mistake of the United States to try it there. For example, when Hilary Clinton was made of Secretary of State, she suggested that the Libyan dictator Omar Gadhafi should be overthrown in much the same way that the Bush administration ordered the deposing of Hussein. But what happened after Gadhafi was overthrown echoed what had happened in Iraq, proving to some politicians that Arab countries need authoritarian regimes. When Hussein or Gadhafi led their countries, they were able to control their people, albeit through violence. When the dictators fell, the resulting power vacuums led to civil unrest, wars and increased terrorism in the Middle East.<sup>87</sup>

U.S. senator Rand Paul said that regime change is not a means to decrease terrorism, as regime changes just lead to the empowerment of radical Islam. He claimed that, for most Iraqis, Iraq was a better and safer place under Saddam Hussein's rule.<sup>88</sup> Moreover, Chris Maume, who lived in Saddam's Iraq, confirms that life there was not so bad. There was little repression, unless you were a Kurd. Furthermore, life was much safer than after the U.S. invasion; people received health care and education. Some Iraqis even adored

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<sup>86</sup> David Ghanim, *Iraq's Dysfunctional Democracy* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2011), 3-4.

<sup>87</sup> Cathy Burke, “Rand Paul: It Was a 'Mistake' to Overthrow Saddam Hussein,” *Newsmax*, accessed February 21, 2016, <http://www.newsmax.com/Newsfront/Saddam-Hussein-mistake-topple-Jewish/2015/04/27/id/641101/>.

<sup>88</sup> Kim Norvell, “Paul: Regime Changes Haven't Worked in Middle East,” *USA Today*, accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/onpolitics/2016/01/30/paul-regime-changes-havent-worked-middle-east/79586814/>.

Hussein, but it could have been a psychological consequence of living in a totalitarian regime.<sup>89</sup>

For most people from liberal democracies, it is hard to understand the Iraqi mentality. Western countries do not realize the impossibility of recreating their political and mainly social systems in the Middle East. According to Tom G. Palmer, neoconservatives assumed that if they got rid of a dictator, liberal democracy would naturally follow. This turned out to be incorrect. Iraqis long lived under authoritarian regimes, making it quite difficult to adjust. They were not used to a free press, and they trusted rumors more than journalists. Some Iraqis still erroneously believe that their country is rich and is a target of foreign countries which want to purloin their oil, and the only way to spread the Iraqi wealth is via a powerful leader. For many Iraqis, conspiracy theories influence their understanding and interpretation of current events.<sup>90</sup>

Democratic values are often found to be damaging in non-western countries, like Iraq. And establishing democracies in non-western countries leads to global instability. Forcing democracy into a country where an authoritarian regime was in past is difficult, because the new ideology tends to be unnatural. The people are losing their identities, mentalities and cultural values, leading to increased suffering and an unstable society. Even though the people slowly accept their new democratic values, they tend to prefer the former authoritarian system and wish for its return. As a result, the U.S. peacekeeping operations and humanitarian aid did not work either.<sup>91</sup>

The United States created an Iraq Study Group to analyze the situation in Iraq. The group should have identified Iraqi interests, but it failed. Only one survey focused on Iraqis' opinions. Otherwise, the study was focused on the U.S. benefits. When the lack of interest relating to the opinions of Iraqis was revealed, Congress was blamed for it.<sup>92</sup>

Despite the opinions that Iraqis are not able to live in democracy, some evidence exists that democracy has started to function in Iraq, albeit not smoothly. Elections in Iraq

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<sup>89</sup> Chris Maume, "It Was Better to Live in Iraq under Saddam," *Independent*, accessed February 21, 2016, <http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/comment/it-was-better-to-live-in-iraq-under-saddam-9532742.html>.

<sup>90</sup> Tom G. Palmer, *Realizing Freedom: Libertarian Theory, History and Practice* (Washington, D.C.: Cato Institute, 2009), 414.

<sup>91</sup> Mahmoud Musa, and Yana Korobko, *The Shifting Global Balance of Power: Perils of a World War and Preventive Measures* (XLibris, 2014), 48-51.

<sup>92</sup> Hamid Karimianpour, *Nation Building, Or Democracy by Other Means* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2011), 9.

in 2005 took place, and almost 60 percent of Iraqis who were allowed to vote participated. They elected a government, consisting of a president, vice president and cabinet officials, which has been able to function. A new constitution was written and adopted in 2005, and new institutions and political parties came into existence. According to Eric Davis, democracy in Iraq was not the work of foreign countries but the work of many Iraqi people who fought for it. In 2005, Iraqis expressed their opinions in public surveys. They declined a form of government that would again forbid freedom of speech and assembly.<sup>93</sup>

### 3.3 Security and the Rise of ISIS

Although there were some speculations whether the invasion was legal, Bush opposed them by saying that the United States is a sovereign power which can use force to protect its security, which was threatened by Iraq. He also claimed that the United States did not need authority to protect itself.<sup>94</sup> However, U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan pointed out that the war was neither in agreement with the U.N. Security Council nor with the U.N. founding charter. The U.S.-led coalition was advised against invasion because it would be against the U.N. charter. But the invasion was seen as self-defense against Hussein's possession of WMDs and because Hussein violated U.N. Security Council resolution 1441 by this possession.<sup>95</sup> The possession of WMDs by Iraq was a touchy topic in 2002. Reportedly, the Second Iraq War hinged on them. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice warned Iraq that if it used WMDs, the American response would be swift and massive.<sup>96</sup>

Robert M. Gates claimed that the United States failed in security when they intervened in Iraq but did not replace U.S. troops with multinational peacekeeping forces like NATO. He realized that the post-war situation would be much more complicated than the war itself. The United States did not recognize the great influence of Shiites, who comprised the majority of Iraqis. Shiites would promote an Islamic fundamentalist Iraq. Moreover, Kurds would dominate the northern part of the country and Sunni Muslims would start to be repressed by those two.

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<sup>93</sup> Eric Davis, *Special Report: Strategies for Promoting Democracy in Iraq* (Washington, D. C., United States Institute of Peace, 2008), 2-3.

<sup>94</sup> Chomsky, *Hegemony or Survival*, 33.

<sup>95</sup> Ewan MacAskill, and Julian Borger, "Iraq War Was Illegal and Breached UN Charter, says Annan," *Guardian*, accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2004/sep/16/iraq.iraq>.

Iraq's 2005 elections were expected to create a coalition consisted of a few Shia parties, Kurdish parties and Sunnis. The bargaining took a long time, and terrorist bombings made the situation worse. Sectarian violence broke out across the country, and thousands of Iraqi civilians died every month and attacks on American forces were increasing.<sup>97</sup>

"The regime-change," noted David Harsanyi, "was supposed to produce security, not another kind of insecurity."<sup>98</sup> Probably the main strategic mistake the United States made was the dismissal of the Iraqi army and police, which had a catastrophic impact thanks to the rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and Greater Syria (ISIS). The Bush administration decided to dissolve the Iraqi army without fully considering the consequences of the decision.

Bush named Paul Bremer chief of the Coalition Provisional Authority in 2003. His task was to create a new army, not affiliated with the old regime, which would bring security to Iraq and, by extension, the Middle East and the whole world. However, the original plan was to maintain the Iraqi army but reorganized it. According to Mark Thompson, nowadays specialists guess that "more than 25 of ISIS's top 40 leaders once served in the Iraqi military."<sup>99</sup>

"The decision to dissolve the Iraqi army robbed Baghdad's post-invasion military of some of its best commanders and troops," says Mark Thomson. The Sunnis who were fired from there and were replaced by Shiites could join the Sunni rebellion which later would evolve into ISIS. Some former military officers, who were trained when Saddam was in power, were fighting against the United States and Baghdad's Shiites. Jack Keane said that the United States was trying to put the security force back together, but it took way too long and, allowing the rebellion started to increase.<sup>100</sup>

The United States is partly responsible for the existence of ISIS and therefore for the increased volume of terrorist attacks as well. The United States thought it got rid of ISIS before it left Iraq. Since then, the Islamic State has become more brutal and more fearsome

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<sup>96</sup> Chomsky, *Hegemony or Survival*, 34.

<sup>97</sup> Gates, *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014), 28-29.

<sup>98</sup> David Harsanyi, "No, the World Isn't Better Off Because of the Iraq War," *Federalist*, accessed February 21, 2016, <http://thefederalist.com/2015/05/27/no-the-world-isnt-better-off-because-of-the-iraq-war/>.

<sup>99</sup> Mark Thompson, "How Disbanding the Iraqi Army Fueled ISIS," *Time*, accessed February 26, 2016, <http://time.com/3900753/isis-iraq-syria-army-united-states-military/>.

than al-Qaeda. The United States, which aimed to build from Iraq's ruins a more secure country, did not want to admit that civil wars in the Middle East created ideal conditions for formation and strengthening of ISIS. The United States waited to see how the situation would develop; however, it did not react to it.<sup>101</sup> One of the reasons of this lack of interest was a global economic crisis of 2008 which was more important to focus for Americans than the wars in the Middle East. Matthew Yglesias wrote that a U.S. government spends 100 billion dollars per year for the war in Iraq, and the war could be one of the factors caused economic crisis in 2008.<sup>102</sup>

Another mistake made by the United States was when Saddam Hussein was executed, it did not pay enough attention to the soldiers and bureaucrats who were under his Baath Regime. Therefore, Zarqawi, who acted as a leader of the IS, used this chaos in Iraq after the death of Hussein and America's lack of reaction to the development of ISIS. He also used Baath adherents to help create the terrorist group. Zarqawi was killed by a U.S. airstrike, but he was quickly replaced by Baghdadi.<sup>103</sup>

ISIS became more dangerous after Baghdadi became its leader. Some wrongly blame Obama for releasing Baghdadi and other terrorists, but in fact, these releases were the result of an agreement made by Bush before he left office in 2008 that America's military prisoners in Iraq would be turned over to Iraqi forces. Based on this agreement, Baghdadi was released and later became the ISIS leader.<sup>104</sup>

Baghdadi was a prisoner in the U.S.-based prison known as Camp Bucca in Iraq. Radical Islamists were sentenced to prison in Camp Bucca after the Second Iraq War. Americans, by mistake, created a place which provided a base for creating and training of members of current ISIS. According to Maj. Gen. Douglas Stone, the prison was a good

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> "The Origins of ISIS," *Week*, accessed February 26, 2016, [http://cdn.app.theweek.com/editions/com.dennis.theweek.issue.issue747/data/39365\\_35b0ad6444e1c4b130f2fb457ba3bc73/web.html](http://cdn.app.theweek.com/editions/com.dennis.theweek.issue.issue747/data/39365_35b0ad6444e1c4b130f2fb457ba3bc73/web.html).

<sup>102</sup> Matthew Yglesias, "How does Iraq Play Into the Economic Crisis?," *The American Prospect*, accessed April 11, 2016, <http://prospect.org/article/how-does-iraq-play-economic-crisis>.

<sup>103</sup> "The Origins of ISIS," *Week*.

<sup>104</sup> Erika Eichelberger, "How the Top Iraqi Terrorist Was Helped by a Bush-Signed Agreement," *Mother Jones*, accessed February 23, 2016, <http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2014/06/abu-bakr-al-baghdadi-release-george-bush>.

place for creating army because the prisoners had a health care, food and were protected.<sup>105</sup>

However, President Obama is responsible for the failure because his foreign policies were focused on cutting U.S. military forces in the Middle East. Obama was persuaded that a U.S. military presence in Iraq was too costly, especially during an economic crisis.<sup>106</sup> He chose not to deal with ISIS, which is a threat not only to Iraqis but to the whole world. His inadequate leadership probably stemmed from a desire not to interfere in Iraq, against ISIS, which his administration originally considered more or a regional issue than a global one. After all, ISIS was killing Muslims in the Middle East, not Americans in the United States.<sup>107</sup> That ISIS threatens Iraqis is proof that the United States, which promised to improve Iraqi conditions, failed in its nation-building effort. Indeed, the security situation in Iraq is worse now than it was under Saddam Hussein's despotism.

### 3.4 Economic consequences

Iraq used to be a wealthy country. It lost money during the Iran-Iraq war, but it regained it thanks to U.S. political and financial support. However, American support ended abruptly when Hussein attacked Kuwait as a reaction to Kuwait reducing oil prices, which would hurt Iraqi's post-war economy. Saddam further defended his decision by stating that, historically, Kuwait had been part of Iraq. Although, the United States and Iraq were allies Hussein's decision to attack Kuwait made an enemy out of the United States. In the 1990s, after the First Iraq War, the Iraqi economy fell apart, leaving Hussein increasingly desperate.<sup>108</sup>

In hindsight, probably one of the biggest American failures was leaving Iraq after the First Iraq War, in favor of U.S. sanctions on Iraq, authorized by the Iraq Sanctions Act. The United States also encouraged U.N. sanctions. The sanctions, which limited imports and regulated exports of oil, sentenced Iraqis to varying degrees of hunger, poverty, and illness.

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<sup>105</sup> "The Origins of ISIS," *Week*.

<sup>106</sup> Marc Lynch, "Obama and the Middle East," *Foreign Affairs*, accessed April 11, 2016, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/middle-east/obama-and-middle-east>.

<sup>107</sup> Rusty Weiss, "Hume: Obama's ISIS Strategy Designed to Fail Slowly," *Political Insider*, accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.thepoliticalinsider.com/hume-obamas-isis-strategy-designed-to-fail-slowly/>

<sup>108</sup> Wael Al-Sallami, "I Grew Up in Iraq during Saddam's Worst Days – Here's What Life Was Like," *Business Insider*, accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.businessinsider.com/heres-what-life-in-iraq-was-like-under-saddam-husseini-2014-7>.

According to Thomas R. Mockaitis, the sanctions caused the deaths of over a million Iraqis, and the level of children's mortality was the highest it had been in forty years.

As a result of the massive mortality, the United Nations decided to establish the Oil for Food Program in 1995. It permitted Iraq to sell certain amounts of oil so that the basic needs of Iraqis could be met. But the first export of oil was executed in December 1996, and the first food delivery arrived in March 1997, which was too little and too late to save many Iraqis from deprivation and sometimes death.

The U.S. sanctions lasted until 2003 when the U.S. invaded Iraq. In May 7, 2003, when Saddam Hussein was overthrown, President George W. Bush stopped enforcing the Iraq Sanctions Act of 1990, but the United Nations countered with UNSC Resolution 1483, which ended the Oil for Food Program and increased sanctions on the country.<sup>109</sup>

The Bush administration's project, called National Strategy for Victory in Iraq, identified several ways to improve Iraq's economy. The main goal was to help the newly-formed Iraqi government to restore the basis of a healthy economy and provide necessary services. This, the Bush administration believed, could be achieved by three actions: renew the country's infrastructure so that demand would be increasing and the needs would be fulfilled, transform the whole economy and political structure, so that Iraq could work independently in the future, and create competent establishments, which would be able to maintain the new infrastructure and improve the welfare system for the Iraqi people.<sup>110</sup>

The United States did not help as much as it wanted. In 2003, it established privatization in Iraq, thinking it would make Iraq more open to foreign investments. As a result of the change, the unemployment rate increased. Soldiers and police lost their jobs. Paul Bremer, who was in charge of the Coalition Provisional Authority, ordered the dissolution of the army, resulting in the unemployment of approximately 350,000 men. Afterwards, Bremer signed the privatization act, which ultimately led to the closure of 192 companies and the loss of 500,000 jobs.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Thomas R. Mockaitis, *The Iraq War Encyclopedia* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2013), 219.

<sup>110</sup> National Security Council November 2005, "National Strategy for Victory in Iraq," *New York Times*, November 2005, accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.nytimes.com/packages/pdf/international/20051130military-text.pdf>.

<sup>111</sup> Tristan Thorn, "Revisiting the Iraq War," *International Policy Digest*, accessed April 18, 2016, <http://intpolicydigest.org/2013/06/09/revisiting-the-iraq-war/>.



On the other hand, in 2007, reconstruction began, and its objective was to improve post-war Iraq, including its economy and reduce unemployment caused by privatization. Officials from the U.S. Defense Department tried to reopen some of the shuttered companies, but Bremer disagreed. He believed that renovating some of the shuttered companies would cost hundreds of millions of dollars, so he preferred private investors to buy these factories and renovate them. This did not happen. Some of the unemployed people found new jobs, however some are believed to have become rebels.<sup>112</sup>

Reconstruction was overseen by the U.S. government. That it was U.S.- oriented meant that the Iraqi government was not allowed to favor Iraqi companies over American companies. More than 150 American companies were awarded valuable contracts, e.g., Halliburton received a contract worth more than \$11 billion. Reconstruction should have served as a tool for reducing unemployment,<sup>113</sup> which stood at about 28 percent.<sup>114</sup> However, instead of offering jobs to Iraqis, Americans, fearing Iraqis, rather employed Asians. But the reconstruction did lead to small improvements in services like electricity, water, or health care. Yet, the unemployment rate stayed just as high.

The Paris Club was a group of various governments, including the United States, to which the Hussein regime had owed about 38 billion dollars. So in 2004, the Paris Club decided to persuade the new Iraqi government, created by the United States, to privatize the oil industry. But many Iraqis disagreed, thinking that such an action was not beneficial to Iraq. While the United States and the “Iranian-backed Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri Al-Maliki” proposed a law in 2007 that would have made Iraqi oil privatized, the law was rejected in 2008.<sup>115</sup> Technically, Iraq still owns its oil fields, but foreign companies have gained control over many of them through backhanded means. ISIS also controls some of them.

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<sup>112</sup> Rajiv Chandrasekaran, “Defense Skirts State in Reviving Iraqi Industry,” *Washington Post*, accessed April 20, 2016,

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/wpdyn/content/article/2007/05/13/AR2007051301165\\_2.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wpdyn/content/article/2007/05/13/AR2007051301165_2.html).

<sup>113</sup> William Van Wagenen, “Killing for Ideology: A Brief History of US Efforts to Establish a Free-Market Capitalist Economy in Iraq,” *Mormon Worker*, accessed February 26, 2016, <https://themormonworker.net/past-issues/mw-issue-6/killing-for-ideology-a-brief-history-of-us-efforts-to-establish-a-free-market-capitalist-economy-in-iraq/>.

<sup>114</sup> “Iraq Economic Data (1989-2003): Regime Finance and Procurement –Annes D,” Central Intelligence Agency, accessed February 26, 2016, [https://www.cia.gov/library/reports/general-reports-1/iraq\\_wmd\\_2004/chap2\\_annxD.html](https://www.cia.gov/library/reports/general-reports-1/iraq_wmd_2004/chap2_annxD.html).

<sup>115</sup> Van Wagenen, “Killing for Ideology.”

Although the oil industry was not privatized, many state-owned companies were. So America's failure in Iraq stems from this quick change to a capitalist economy, which caused Iraqis to lose their jobs in large numbers, or to leave them employed with reduced salaries that could not sustain them.<sup>116</sup>

The United States also failed to reduce Iraqi poverty and malnutrition. Before the war in 2003, child malnutrition was about 18 percent, but afterwards it increased to 28 percent. This was a result of the decision of U.S. Commerce Secretary Carlos Gutierrez to curtail food rations for Iraqis on the grounds that, as Bremer noted, the ration system "embodied socialism at its worst, . . . promoted corruption, wasted government money, discouraged domestic agriculture and interfered with the CPA's plans to promote capitalism."<sup>117</sup> So instead of helping Iraqis, the United States caused them to lose jobs, food and money.

### 3.5 Sectarianism still continues

George W. Bush said before the invasion that he would like to establish religious freedom, which is part of democratic system typical for western countries. Other officials said about the Iraqi population that it would like to be like Americans. But the media described Iraqis as a fierce, brutal and extremely religious nation.<sup>118</sup> When the United States defeated Hussein's forces in 2003, it was facing a complicated situation: a civil war between multiple armed ethnic-religious groups, including the Kurds, Shiites and Sunnis, each of them with different goals.

The Kurdish goal was autonomy across Iraq. Sunnis and Shiites are more complex being split in a "complex array of rival factions of nationalists, sectarian zealots, and Islamic fundamentalists."<sup>119</sup> Shiites were waiting for revenge, while Sunnis wanted to keep power in Iraq. In the end, there was al-Qaeda, which lead a jihad together with other local allies against the United States. And because the United States removed Saddam Hussein

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<sup>116</sup> Asad Ismi, "Iraq Nation Destroyed, Oil Riches Confiscated. Surviving Iraqi Population Impoverished," *Global Research*, accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/iraq-nation-destroyed-oil-riches-confiscated-surviving-iraqi-population-impoverished/5375905>.

<sup>117</sup> Van Wagenen, "Killing for Ideology."

<sup>118</sup> Susan A. Brewer, *Why America Fights: Patriotism and War Propaganda from the Philippines to Iraq* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 234.

<sup>119</sup> James Peoples, and Garrick Bailey, *Humanity: An Introduction to Cultural Anthropology* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2011), 401.

from power, these religious and ethnical groups were fighting to take a certain position so that they would have a certain influence.<sup>120</sup>

“Wars of religion” were fought in Iraq:<sup>121</sup> one by the West, the other by Muslims. Bush originally wanted to make Iraq a democratic and peaceful country. Rumsfeld believed that the United States was not an initiator of the Iraq War. He believed that the Middle East became unstable because of the Shia-Sunni war.<sup>122</sup> The U.S.-led war against Iraq was for the majority of Muslims not a war about overthrowing Hussein but “rather a phase in the divine recurrence of Islam’s historic struggle.”<sup>123</sup>

Even though the United States had a goal to establish religious freedom, the 2010 Annual Report to Congress notes that, since 2003, half of the Christians in the country have left, forecasting a possible “end of Christianity” in Iraq.

In 2003, there were about 1,4 million Christians in Iraq; nowadays there are about 500,000. This implies that religious freedom is still a concern, especially for the Christian minorities like the Yazidis, Chaldo – Assyrians and others.<sup>124</sup> They are receiving miserable and often violent treatment, nowadays especially at the hands of ISIS which constantly attacks and kills Christians and Yazidi minorities across northern Iraq and Syria.<sup>125</sup>

Shiite and Sunnis Iraqis are still fighting among each other.<sup>126</sup> After 2003 when the United States toppled Hussein, it created a Governing Council which consisted of 13 Shiite and only a few Sunnis. As a result, the Iraqi population generally believed that the United States wanted to give Iraq to Shiites. This caused increased fighting between Shiites and Sunnis in 2005 and 2006, especially around Baghdad.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Fawaz A. Gerges, “Will U.S.-Iraq War Lead to Religious War?” *ABC News*, accessed February 26, 2016. <http://abcnews.go.com/International/story?id=79617&page=1>

<sup>122</sup> Adrienne Mahsa Varkiani, “Rumsfeld Blames Iraq’s Instability on Religion, Instead of the War He Started,” *Think Progress*, accessed February 26, 2016, <http://thinkprogress.org/world/2016/01/26/3742874/rumsfeld-iraq-instability-religion/>.

<sup>123</sup> Yossef Bodansky, *Secret History of the Iraq War* (New York: Regan Books, 2004), 7.

<sup>124</sup> United States Department of State, “2011 Report on International Religious Freedom - Iraq,” *UNHCR*, accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/502105b24b.html>.

<sup>125</sup> Patrick Wintour, “MPs Unanimously Declare Yazidis and Christians Victims of ISIS Genocide,” *The Guardian*, accessed April 22, 2016, <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/apr/20/mps-unanimously-declare-yazidis-victims-of-isis-genocide>.

<sup>126</sup> United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, *International Religious Freedom* (2010): Annual Report to Congress (Washington: 2010), 68.

<sup>127</sup> C.J. Werleman, “Can We Finally Admit the Sunni-Shiite Conflict Has Nothing To Do With Islam?,” *Middle East Eye*, accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.middleeasteye.net/columns/can-we-finally-acknowledge-sunni-shiite-conflict-has-nothing-do-islam-1582292215>.

The newly created Iraqi forces, supposed to spread peace, were rather spreading violence. Even though Americans were training new forces, it was found out that these forces were not religiously or ethnically diverse: mainly Kurds functioned in the northeast part of country, while the southern part was still controlled by Shiites. A number of Shiites claimed they enlisted in the security forces only to take legal revenge on Sunnis. Repression of Sunnis by Shiite security forces was evident. In response, Sunnis turned suicide bombings to kill Shiites. Obviously, religious freedom was not achieved.<sup>128</sup> An Annual Report to Congress in 2010 recognized this, stating that the United States as well as Iraq should have been more focused on the protection and peaceful cohabitation of various religious groups.<sup>129</sup>

Americans did not understand the Sunni-Shiite conflict, which is probably one of the reasons why the nation building failed. According to Eli McCarthy, the United States was focused too much on the improvement of local politics rather than on social and religious rapprochement. The American Institute of Peace was not including religious attachés in diplomatic missions which they could have tracked and examined movements and created connections with religious leaders. If they had, the outcomes might have been better.<sup>130</sup> The U.S. politicians meant to fight terrorism, but they tried to do so without understanding the importance of religion in Iraq, and without realizing that Iraqis naturally preferred Islamic eastern values to Christian western values.

The United States has not recognized or responded to the fact that conflicts between religious sects and ethnicities in Iraq have increased since 2004. Firstly, Sunni rebels who first attacked the Coalition later started to attack mainly Kurds and Shiites. Later, these attacks led to acts of revenge from Kurds and Shiites in the form of violence, kidnapping and killings. The United States was not able to react to those minorities who were forced to become refugees. In the city of Kirkuk, Kurds were insulted by ethnic segregation and in Basra, Shiite puritans were forcing other groups and also some Shiites who would not hold

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<sup>128</sup> "Prejudice in Iraq: Shiites, Sunni, and Kurds," Gale Cengage Learning, accessed February 26, 2016, <http://ic.galegroup.com/ic/whic/ReferenceDetailsPage/DocumentToolsPortletWindow?displayGroupName=Reference&u=oak30216&u=oak30216&jsid=fae4b04032e26ba13d20936d83f263e2&p=WHIC%3AUHIC&action=2&catId=&documentId=GALE%7CCX2831400028&zid=037dd07f1e4cdd3d254af0bd710d1124>.

<sup>129</sup> United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, *International Religious Freedom (2010): Annual Report to Congress*.

<sup>130</sup> Eli Sasaran McCarthy, *Becoming Nonviolent Peacemakers: A Virtue Ethic for Catholic Social Teaching and U.S. Policy* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2012), 193.

their beliefs to leave.<sup>131</sup> However, there are opinions that Iraq was not so ethnically divided before the U.S. invasion in 2003. It happened when the Iraq Coalition Provisional Authority led the country and ordered its citizens to admit their sects in all state documents so that the quotas for the Iraqi governing council could be set. According to surveys from 2013-15 the subsequent government then occasionally mistreated people because of their sect, which the government had forced them to declare.<sup>132</sup>

That the United States did not understand ethnic or religious divisions in Iraq is confirmed by the appointment of the Shiite government after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein. The Sunnis lost their jobs, and some of them lost their political power. Despite America's desire to improve the religious situation in Iraq, it just got worse in the division of sects, which led the Sunnis to create Al-Qaeda in Iraq, which then gave way to ISIS.<sup>133</sup>

However, the situation of Kurds is probably one of the few positive results achieved by the Second Iraq War. Kurds gained more power after in the post-Hussein Iraq, despite arguments with the government in Baghdad. They also received more human rights, for example, Kurdish can now be taught in schools. Moreover, the economy has grown in Kurdish areas, and urban development has increased since the U.S. intervention.<sup>134</sup>

### 3.6 Iraqi Women's Rights

When the United States arrived in Iraq in 2003, many changes and improvements were promised. However, no changes were made related to human's rights, particularly women's rights. According to Zainab Salbi, Iraqi women were much less free and more dependent even ten years after the American invasion of Iraq. When women received some power, but mostly on the paper. They probably lost more after after the fall of Hussein than they have received. In 2013, they could be elected, but they could not campaign publicly, which set them at a great disadvantage. Women could be legislators, but the Iraqi Prime

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<sup>131</sup> Anthony H. Cordesman, "American Strategic and Tactical Failures in Iraq: An Update," Center for Strategic and International Studies, accessed February 26, 2016, [http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/060808\\_iraqfailures.pdf](http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/060808_iraqfailures.pdf).

<sup>132</sup> Paul D. Shinkman, "Study: Iraq Violence Not Caused by Sectarian Tensions," *US News*, accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2016-01-05/study-violence-in-iraq-that-bolstered-isis-not-caused-primarily-by-sunni-shiite-rift>.

<sup>133</sup> Garikai Chengu, "America Created Al-Qaeda and the ISIS Group," *Global Research*, accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/america-created-al-qaeda-and-the-isis-terror-group/5402881>

<sup>134</sup> Abdel Hamid Zebari, "After 10 Years of Iraqi Conflict, Only Kurds Emerge as Winners," *Al Monitor*, accessed April 15, 2016, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/03/iraq-war-frees-kurds.html#>.

minister, Nouri al-Maliki, has not named a woman to his senior cabinet, even though there is a constitutional regulation requires it. In stating that Iraqi women now have equal rights, the U.S. media has reportedly focused its attention on regulation rather than reality. A regulation ensures that women should hold 25 percent parliament seats, but they do not, and the only ministry headed by a woman is the Ministry of Women's Affairs. This has led Rania Khalek to criticize the media that, "this token statistic has repeatedly been trotted out to cover up the regime's crimes against women."<sup>135</sup>

Nevertheless, women ensured Iraqi citizenships for their children who had fathers who were not citizens. This concession is probably the only victory for Iraqi's women, because there is no guarantee of equal treatment of women, in terms of divorce, marriage, heritage and custody. Such a law was incorporated into the Family Statutes Law but an amendment gives local leaders the right to control family affairs based on their religious beliefs and preferences. Because of this change, women are treated differently in the same legal affairs only because of their religion or sect.<sup>136</sup>

Regarding women's employment in the 1980s, they worked mainly in agriculture, marketing and the service sector. In 2003, Iraq was a big producer of food and had a significant industrial sector. Thanks to that, many women had jobs. Women could work as managers of factories, artists, doctors and other highly qualified professions. However, this has now changed, and they are very rarely employed because Iraq now imports almost all of its foods and industrial products.<sup>137</sup>

Women are becoming more frequent targets of violence and their legal protection is decreasing. Some women's rights groups see this result of the economic and social problems plaguing families and the country. They believe that the public as well as politicians are not interested in dealing with the violence towards women. Moreover, religious conservatism vindicates the violence.<sup>138</sup>

However, Zainab Salbi contends that conditions for women started to degrade even before the U.S. invasion, when Iraq was under economic sanctions. According to Salbi, at

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<sup>135</sup> Rania Khalek, "Was Life for Iraqi Women Better Under Saddam?," *Muftah*, accessed February 27, 2016, <http://muftah.org/was-life-for-iraqi-women-better-under-saddam/#.VtHN7jbSnIV>.

<sup>136</sup> Zainab Salbi, "Why Women Are Less Free 10 Years after the Invasion of Iraq," *CNN*, accessed February 26, 2016, <http://edition.cnn.com/2013/03/18/opinion/iraq-war-women-salbi/>.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

least women's participation in politics cannot be expressly forbidden in a democratic Iraq.<sup>139</sup>

"Every woman in Iraq is better off because the rape rooms and torture chambers of Saddam Hussein are forever closed,"<sup>140</sup> claimed Bush in 2004. He continued in his speech by stating that, thanks to the United States, Iraqi women are "learning the blessings of freedom". Bush's comments were wishful thinking, but they have been embraced and reiterated by Obama.<sup>141</sup> Rania Khalek recognizes this, noting, that Iraqi women were once more independent and secure than women in any other Arab country. They had the right to vote, to educate and be educated, to own property, and to be a political candidate. Those rights, set in the Iraqi Constitution of 1970, were done away with the U.S. - led Iraqi government in 2013.<sup>142</sup>

When Iraq was sanctioned by the United States and the United Nations in 1991, women lost their access to food, education and also health care, and in many cases employment. This was further aggravated after the U.S. invasion, when many women were impelled to start working in sex industry, just to provide for themselves and their children.<sup>143</sup>

Even when the United States promised protection of human's rights in Iraq, it failed. Human Rights Watch's 2013 Iraq Report stated that violence against women detainees in pre-trial detention worsened under Prime Minister al-Maliki, and the United States has been partly to blame: "The failure of the US and UK to hold their troops accountable for abuses in detention and extra judicial killings during their presence in the country seems to have paved the way for the current government to make excuses for abuses, failure of law and order, and lack of accountability."<sup>144</sup>

When the Iraq War was over, Bush believed he had freed Iraqi women and improved their standard of living. However, many disagree with him. For example, Yanar Mohammed claimed that women have become the main victims of this war, largely

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> Khalek, "Was Life for Iraqi Women Better Under Saddam?,"

<sup>141</sup> Zillah Eisenstein, "'Leaning in' in Iraq: Women's Rights and War?," *Al Jazeera*, accessed February 27, 2016, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2013/03/2013323141149557391.html>.

<sup>142</sup> Khalek, "Was Life for Iraqi Women Better Under Saddam?,"

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

because Bush entitled some extremist religious parties to abuse them and treat them like secondary citizens.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> Ibid.



## CONCLUSION

Even though, President George Washington desired that the United States remain isolationist, in the late-nineteenth century when Manifest Destiny had been fulfilled, the United States, seeking new frontiers, began intervening elsewhere. Justification for intervention was found in the Puritan utopian ideal of “City upon a hill,” the idea that Americans were God’s chosen people, tasked with the responsibility of showing others the way. This way of thinking is led to American exceptionalism, the idea that the United States is different and better than all other countries. With this ideological toolkit in hand, the United States became increasingly involved in global affairs, including wars, in order to make other countries more like the United States. Iraq is one of those countries. The original relationship between the United States and Iraq was mainly positive, because the United States supported Iraq in its struggle against Iran, an American enemy in 1970s. However, this did not last for long, because Saddam Hussein’s regime turned on some Iraqis and also bit the American hand that fed it. In response, the United States engaged in nation building in Iraq. Although Americans were optimistic that they could establish a Middle Eastern society in their image, the consequences were mostly negative. The United States promised Iraqis a free, secure country but as this thesis proves, this did not happen. Instead of creating a strong democratic nation, the United States created an unstable nation and then abandoned it, leaving it susceptible to extremism and terrorism. The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria soon filled the void left by the U.S. departure. ISIS now threatens not only Iraqi sovereignty but the entire world, and the U.S. nation building efforts in Iraq are partly responsible for its formation and rise to power. Now the United States has been pulled back into the fray and is helping Kurds in northern Iraq fight against ISIS. It is also attacking ISIS from the air. Thus, the Iraqi war, which Americans thought they had won, has simply entered a new phase of interminable length. One of the few positives in a generally bad situation is that the situation of the Kurds improved after Hussein, who had long oppressed them, was overthrown. From the economic point of view, democracy did not help to improve the Iraqi economy: it rather got worsened. Iraq’s largest and most profitable natural resource -oil- is indirectly in hands of private hands. Also, despite U.S. good intentions, the women have lost rights. During Hussein’s rule, women had limited rights, including the right to work and to receive an education. Nowadays, thanks to Muslim paternalism and extremism, these rights are endangered. After careful

consideration, clearly the United States erred in its amerocentric belief that everybody wants to live in a western-style, democratic capitalist country. Democratic capitalism should not be force fed to a people who do not have a taste for it. The United States should respect the cultural identities and histories of other countries and not try to remake them in the American image. Doing so would be better for all parties involved, and for the world as a whole.

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