



# The US governments use of soft power to combat terrorism: A strategy of political communication in Iraq

SAUD ALWAJAAN AL-SHAMMARI \*

Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

## Abstract

**Aim:** This research paper evaluates the effectiveness of American political communications abroad in the fight against terrorism through the lens of soft power. Furthermore, this article explores the government's potential media use on the front lines of the anti-terrorist struggle. It also discusses the various definitions of soft power and offers advice to any leader concerned about the potential damage to their country's international standing due to a failure to employ such strategies.

**Methodology:** A case study methodology was used for the data collection and analysis in this study, indicating that it is a qualitative investigation. This paper thoroughly examines the case study of the Iraq invasion. The study focused on the two most widely read US news outlets. Because of their prominence in reflecting the views of the two largest political parties in the United States, the Democrats and the Republicans, CNN and Fox News are chosen.

**Findings:** Summary of the case study results on the use of soft power in the 2003 invasion of Iraq following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. Research results on how specific countries and media outlets use communication to advance soft power are also included.

**Implications/Novel Contribution:** The research paper has successfully provided data on the adverse effects of using hard power, as seen in the fallout from the invasion of Iraq in the years 2001-2005. This was an act of vengeance for the attacks on September 11 that rocked the United States to its core. Discusses the effectiveness of employing soft power in combating terrorism.

**Keywords:** Soft power, Hard power, Strategic, Political communication, Terrorism

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## INTRODUCTION

This paper analyzes how well the United State's more lenient security measures have fared in the global war on terrorism. Furthermore, it demonstrates how media and communication have contributed to developing effective strategies for fighting crime. It will emphasize the importance of an invasion of the mind over the body in the fight against terrorism. The findings of this study will show why the United States must bear this in mind when formulating its soft power strategies. They need to make better use of their influence in the media. This research aims to define "soft power" and explore the media's role in utilizing soft power to promote a more peaceful world as opposed to using the complex ability to combat terrorism.

Many countries worldwide view terrorism as a serious threat to national security. As a result of their increased influence as a result of globalization, many countries contribute to the fight against terrorism in a variety of others. Terrorism has been linked to states like Iraq and Iran. The United States has taken the lead in developing strategies to bring stability to war-torn areas around the globe. Intending to combat terrorism, they have implemented foreign and international security policies.

The political and economic structures of the United States are vulnerable as a result of the terror attacks on their soil. In the fight against terrorism, the United States has long relied on soft power and other forms of communication. The term "soft power" was coined by Joseph Nye, Assistant Foreign Minister under President Clinton, in his 2004 book, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. Therefore, countries can use soft power by cultivating relationships with other allies, as described by J. J. S. Nye (2004) as "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments" (p.211). The provision of resources, sharing cultural practices, and providing backing in times of war all contribute to developing such bonds. It's also worth noting that

\* Corresponding author: Saud Alwajaan Al- Shammari

† Email: [sntw@windowslive.com](mailto:sntw@windowslive.com)

a well-established nation will have both military and cultural resources. There must be harmony between these factors for either strategy to be successful.

One of the dangers to world peace is terrorism. The United States is among the nations that have developed counter-terrorism measures utilizing both soft and hard power. Iraq is one of the countries whose culture promotes the kind of aggressive worldview that fuels terrorism. The country's politics have been wildly unstable for decades. Numerous lives have been lost, and numerous social institutions have been annihilated. The United States has used modern means of communication to promote ideas of liberty and human dignity. The United States also quotes examples where it has done something adorable for Muslim Americans. The people of the Middle East will finally live in peace and harmony. In its fight against crime in Iraq, the current administration has relied heavily on soft power tactics.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The literature review shows the studies that is about the definition and importance of soft power in the terrorism. However, this study differs from the previous studies in that it examines the use of soft power by the U.S. government in the war on terrorism in Iraq. Moreover, the study seeks the best strategy of media and communication in soft power that has been used in the war on terror, and the difference between soft power and strategic communication.

J. Nye and Joseph (2008) gives the meaning of soft power as the means by which we can influence other people by creating an attraction. This process affects both the behavior and action of other individuals or groups making it easy to achieve some objective without the use of coercion. There is no need to use the military and or financially related methods which may infringe pain and suffering on other people. Also, Nye admits that these soft powers can be developed by the growth of relations with allies to exchange and learn cultures, cultures, as well as economic integrations. Any country that uses soft culture is characterized by the useful resources such as culture, local policies, values, as well as international relations. As the World War ended, many nations admired in learning from some of the cultural practices of the US. This process helped them to build secure systems and structures enabling them to benefit from peaceful co-existence.

Also, there are several benefits that people gain as a result of close interactions with other allies. Countries support each other during the times of need making it possible for people to live in harmony. Here long quote explains why soft power is so important. British diplomat Anthony Parsons served as an artillery officer during the Second World War and was awarded the Military Cross at the end of the war said:

If you are thoroughly familiar with someone else's language and literature, if you know and love his country, its city, its art, its people, you will be instinctively disposed, all other things being equal or nearly equal, to buy goods from him rather than from a less well known and well like source, to support him actively when you consider him to be right and to avoid punishing him too fiercely when you regard him as being in the wrong (Coombs & Mitchell, 1986).

It not only helps to bring disputes to a peaceful end; it also helps to prevent the disputes in the first place. Thus, use of peaceful relations shows some of the important features of soft powers in dispute resolution as well as in other social, economic situation that may require agent attention. There are frequent events such as World Cup tournaments and Olympics which are used to unite people with the aim of reducing conflicts.

### **Hard Power**

Soft power is a recent concept that was introduced as a remedy to the application of some harsh methods used in conflict resolution. Being the opposite of soft power, hard power is one of the historical concepts that were used to suppress the effects of terrorism. Even if both methods deal with the creation of influence to make people act in a certain way, there are distinct differences in their results. According to McClory (2016) hard power deals with the creation of influence by the employment of coercive diplomacy, economic sanctions, and military intervention. The primary role of hard skills is to create an imposition of some costs on some given targets (p. 15). Similarly, Henry (2005) wrote that the behavior of hard powers deals with inducement and coercion. Military forces use pressure as a threat by enforcing some bans on some desirable actions (p. 2). There is an analogy called the carrot and stick where hard power is defined as the stick while the softer side of it is the carrot.

### **Strategies Used in Hard Power**

Hard power is not something that can be used lightly. It is an application of force that must be reserved for the most serious of issues. It is used comes in action then all the other methods such as diplomacy seem to fail. There are those leaders in the United States government who advocate for hard power frequently. The fact that the US has the deadly military usually persuades people to react in the way that is harsh. However, in recent years, a new type of enemy has emerged. These are those people seeking martyrdom through terrorism in support of their hard line religious agenda.

In other words, they do not care if the United States attacks the enemies back. For them, dying for their cause will earn them a reward in the afterlife and stick tactics do not work well with them. Henry (2005) says that those who advocate for hard power think that if the United States does not use its military force against some of the most provocative enemies, they will invite further attacks. The US has the responsibility to spread their form of government to the betterment of others throughout the world, although that clearly sounds as if they believe that their methods are the only right ones, and that is part of the issue. That is why soft power is so important for the United States.

### **Soft Power**

Soft power is an element of foreign policies that is presently used in by many countries such as the United States for pursuing and achieving their agenda such as in the fight against terrorism and drug trafficking. It is a method where a given country explores the possible ways of persuasion in foreign countries to advance its foreign agenda without having to resort to forceful means or coercion. Soft power is advanced through the use of such institutions such as universities, foundations, churches and the civil society. Furthermore, the country can also have soft power implemented through integrating the elements of soft power in the countrys ideals, values and culture for the purpose long terms execution of soft power (Lieber, 2008). Soft power is different from hard power in that in hard power, relations with other countries are advanced through ways that involves the use of economic power and the use of military to insert control and influence over the behavior and interests of other political groups and countries.

The use of hard power favors those countries with strong economic capacity and powerful military as compared to those which have no such mighty. In advancing g of soft power however, communication strategies have to be employed. The most important strategy in soft power is foreign negotiations, the use of inclusive and accommodative means in dealing with issues of collective interest such as the fight against terrorism. This involves diplomatic missions where a countries senior government officials, diplomats and NGO officials working in the foreign country of interest (Azhar, 2015; Lieber, 2008). They communicate the messages through state visits and holding meetings at the sidelines of major conferences and annual assemblies, organizing programs and dialogue to promote cultural and ideals exchanges. Both the domestic and foreign media is also applied in implementing soft power through reporting decisions and plans of the country. This uses the planned campaigns and symbols that communicate the message of a particular issue.

### **Strategies used in Soft Power**

According to Mattern (2005) it is argued that many world leaders should apply this approach in the event of disagreement between countries. This strategy has a suitable appeal given that it is cheap as it does not encourage people to engage in warfare (Mattern, 2005; Prasad, 2017). When hard power is used, people are forced to conform. When soft power is used, people are persuaded to follow, or at least to compromise. This is often the reason why people do not want to use soft power: they do not desire understanding but victory.

In contrast, Smith (2010) noted in, *Soft Power and U.S. Foreign Policy*, offers a different approach that includes soft power. Creating a favourable international environment with this instrument, a nation can more easily claim legitimacy as it seeks to shape international rules that are consistent with its interests and values and so achieve its foreign policy objectives (pp. 166- 167). Erickson and Norman (2011) offer the example of how the soft power that the United States used during the Cold War eventually resulted in the objectives that the

strategy hoped to achieve. Soft power aims at diplomacy rather than military might, but during the Cold War, neither side could demonstrate its military might without a nuclear war ensuing, so both sides refrained and that necessitated soft power. Perhaps a better example is what happened during Bush's second term in office. More emphasis was put on public diplomacy and its budget has been somewhat strengthened. The 'soft power' concept also started to appear in the statements of senior officials of the administration. Former Secretary of State Colin Powell and his successor, Condoleezza Rice, on occasion explicitly embraced 'soft power' as a concept with positive connotations, symbolically linked to concepts such as democracy and freedom, and civilisation as a universal concept (Erickson & Norman, 2011). The change from the more hawkish tone may have been a direct result of the Bush administration's failure in Iraq.

### **The Role of Soft Power in Fighting Terrorism**

In 2009, the United States had lost a lot of its credibility as a world leader because of the events that had occurred during the previous eight years. J. S. Nye (2009) talks about public opinion polls showing a serious decline in the popularity of the United States in Europe, Latin America and the Muslim world. Poll respondents have generally cited the United States' policies, more than its culture or values, to explain this decline. Since it is easier for a country to change its policies than its culture (p. 161). Nye urged the then new President Obama to choose policies more wisely. Ping and Li (2015) note the costly lesson that the neglect of soft power taught the United States. They point out, Now states no longer hold absolute monopoly over previous coercive means and non-state actors could threaten national security through the proliferating transnational channels (p. 156). The United States no longer has the market cornered on soft power. Kai (2014) of *The Diplomat* points out that China has increased its domestic propaganda about China's long history and impressive culture, yet they still have minority cultures that do not feel well represented. Frustrations could lead some to commit terrorist acts. If China's own citizens do not commit terror, there is no reason to think that they will always be immune to terror attacks from outside enemies either (Kai, 2014). Kai urges China to develop an internal soft power strategy and by implication, the United States and every other world power as well (Kai, 2014).

### **Media and Communication in Soft Power Strategy**

Terrorists use soft power strategies often to win people to their cause. Raman (2009) Analysis posits that they particularly use the media to generate anger and motivate those who are already angry at the United States or some other entity that the terrorist can hold up as the object of the anger. The goal of U.S. soft power strategies is to use the media and communication with other countries and groups to reduce and contain the people who are already angry of the U.S. However, Raman (2009) also says that those who need to be removed, should be removed, which is just a euphemism for killing those terrorist leaders who generate the largest following and the most hate (Raman, 2009). Zaharna (2007) attributes the rise of soft power among terrorists to technology, state sponsorship and political dynamics (p. 214). At the same time, the diplomacy of the United States was relying mostly on mass communication while terrorists were using Facebook, Twitter and other social media sources.

After the U.S. military began to pull out of Iraq on the Bush administration's timeline, Kroenig, McAdam, and Weber (2010) note that the United States launched an information campaign that included the writing and planting of media stories chronicling the good that the U.S. occupation was doing for Iraqi society (p. 13). The United States also trained its military to interact using soft power strategies with Iraqi villagers. Some of this type of this new soft power strategy began in the last years of the Bush administration. Pamment (2015) of *Communications Theory* says one of the strategies was to adopt media technologies as a cornerstone of the strategy (p. 189). This may have been because terrorist groups were by that time recruiting online. This soft power strategy of ISIS proved very successful as over and over Americans heard of young people from the United States traveling to the Middle East to join ISIS. The United States was forced to develop counter strategies such as making phony ISIS websites that redirected people who accessed it to a website that talked about how dangerous it was to join ISIS.

### **Media and Soft Powers in the Anti-Terrorism War**

The media has a great deal to do with the way soft power is presented. When the Bush administration

decided they wanted to invade Iraq, they used the phrases they had coined after the 9/11 attacks, Homeland security and war on terror and began to insert Iraq into the use of those words. In a paper delivered at the International Communication Association 54th annual conference, [John, Domke, Coe, and Graham \(2004\)](#) said, These strategic communications allowed the president to dominate U.S. news content, helped Republicans gain control of Congress, and propelled the United States toward war with Iraq (p. 1). Even with something as unpopular as invading another country, the Bush administration was able to harness soft power in the form of propaganda to achieve their agenda, which was to remove Saddam Hussein from power. The exact method that was used began with the president taking his case directly to the American citizens and also tapping the media to generate positive news content in association with the ideas that the Bush administration was trying to propagate.

[Phillips \(2016\)](#) of International Journal of Contemporary Iraqi Studies says that using visual imagery helps to achieve the goals of propaganda. Visual images play a central role in political communication, that much of modern life takes place on-screen and through the medium of the visual image, that this proliferation of visual images has made film and television entertainment the United States second largest export after aerospace, and the claim that visual images have sensual immediacy: an undeniable impact on first sight that a written text cannot replicate (p. 244). [Phillips \(2016\)](#) says that visual images reflect and construct the truth of politics (or any other subject) in the United States frequently. One could cite the example of the Vietnam War. When the police action first began in the late 1950s, most Americans were unaware of the issues involved in the conflict. As the years went by and the conflict grew, news cameras went to Vietnam and started photographing the horrors of that war. Americans would be sitting down to dinner with television images of dead U.S. soldiers and bombed out Vietnamese villages. Those images helped to turn the tide of the war in the states quickly. People saw how awful it was and they turned against it. One could also cite the beheadings that ISIS carried out on national television. They were so gruesome that surely ISIS lost more followers than they won in airing them, and the airing of those atrocities also made Americans more resolved to defeat ISIS.

With the proliferation of the various types of media and the hundreds of cable channels and avenues that people can communicate with nowadays, it is no wonder the United States loses the soft power war; Western governments historically were able to monopolize or dominate global news flows and the consequent global views flows which that dominance enabled. They can no longer do that in an age of regional news players. For all the military talk about taking command and control of the battle space, when the battle space is the global media sphere in which an individual with a cell-phone camera can access a global audience on the worldwide web, full spectrum dominance is nigh impossible ([Taylor, 2010](#)). To combat this, Taylor suggests a new focus on soft power messages, but there can be no mistakes made and no stepping off the path in a soft power campaign to win hearts and minds of those that have been lost in the Middle East since the Iraq invasion.

## METHODOLOGY

This section explains how the topic of soft power and terrorism was approached in this paper. The research starts with a literature review and then uses the Iraq case study. Case studies make use of content analysis, arising from a Key-Word-In-Context analysis (KWIC). The literature review began with looking for sources by using the key words soft power, strategic political communication, propaganda, terrorism, Iraq invasion and Iraq War. These terms were searched several different databases including Academic Search Premier (EBSCOhost), JSTOR, Google Scholar, Research Gate, local and university libraries and. This quest used a mixed methodology, in that the pursuit of literature included looking for both qualitative and quantitative sources; however, there were few purely quantitative sources that provided numerical data. Some of the quality sources contained empirical evidence that has been cited in the report. The review used sources of soft power written within the last 20 years from different perspectives such as political science, journalism, public policy, etc.

The methodology in this research will be a qualitative approach, a case study design was employed in the collection and analysis of data. This decision was based on the fact that such models are known to give a deeper understanding of a single study problem making the audience/leaders gain a greater scope to a particular topic under investigation.

Case studies are used in the investigation of contemporary situations that exist in the daily lives of people [Zainal \(2007\)](#). In this research, an analysis of a case study of Iraq is used to examine some of the narratives



associated with soft power in the media on the war on terrorism in Iraq between years 2001 to 2005. This time span has been selected because it covers September 11, 2001, terrorist attack on American soil, and immediately after the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

Therefore, by examining a random sample out of the pool of news stories, a better view of the details of the topic is provided. The case study method also highlights certain aspects that might have been lost in the broad literature related to the topic. It is critical to answer how soft power was used in the war on terrorism in Iraq, at a time when the 9/11 attacks had created tensions in the whole world. The case of Iraq offers a good example to see how US policies were conducted to avoid extra costs, bad reputations, and unwanted consequences. The case study method is an excellent investigation of at least one single case to examine the literature, rather than an overview of general data.

### **Data Collection**

Two most popular media outlets in the US were select in this study. CNN and Fox are selected because they are the primary news sources reflecting ideas of two the largest political parties in the US, Democrats, and Republicans respectively. Certain key words related to soft power and terrorism are used to pick the articles and news stories. 10 items get selected from those that have the keywords, to avoid biases. These materials and then analyzed with the interpretative method to see answer the research question. And the Data analysis on this case study will rely on a review of all relevant documents that will be gathered from the sources.

### **FINDINGS**

The findings of the case study regarding soft power in the invasion of Iraq in 2003 after the terrorist attack of September 2001. It also contains the findings on the communication strategies that involves the particular countries and media in advancing soft power. Soft power is the use of aspects including diplomatic missions, communication strategies and discussions with the stake holders especially through the use of the foreign policies of the United States. This entails accommodative and inclusive principles and proper communication channels with states of interest to the US.

The findings will also be based on the information that is provided by the recognized and established media channels. This is to provide a random sample of examination of a pool of news stories that are reported about the subject especially on information regarding the invasion of the Iraq and information on various foreign diplomatic and policies that the United States government has instituted in dealing with terrorism. The two media channels that are used in this case in extracting the findings are the CNN and FOX news. The primary findings that are related to the political environment where both the Democrats and Republicans views and ideas on combating terrorism through both soft power and hard power that are reported on the news stories and articles and which are not biased are recorded.

### **Limiting the Places of Operation by the Terror Groups**

This is the strategy that was reported in the findings by the Fox news which was documented in a text dubbed the talking point memo. This strategy saw the then US President Mr. Bush make several visits to the Middle East and Arabic countries such as Pakistan and India thereby creating structures for proper and constructive channels of good communication. This strategy was perceived by the president as a long term strategy which was meant to establish a strong foundation in dealing with terrorism. It was a part of the soft power strategy that was employed to deal with the worsening situation of terrorism following the September 11th attack on the United States soil. It was meant to deny the terrorists and their groupings such as Al Qaeda sanctuary which is the spaces to conduct their activities freely. The invasion of Iraq was a strategy by the Bush administration to use hard power on the country so as to create friendliness with the bordering countries of Syria and Iran. However due to the subsequent conflict that ensued afterwards the use of hard power proved to be ineffective and unfavorable than when soft power is incorporated.

As a result, there has been a growing number of friendly nations in the Arab countries particularly in the Mideast. They are consist of Afghanistan, Egypt, Kuwait, the Arab Emirates, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. These are the allies of the United States in the war on terror and they enable reduce to a large extent the playing field of the terrorist as they offer the United States capacity to carry out its surveillance and be able to monitor the activities

of the terrorist. In so doing they will be able to take responsive measures to combat the attacks when they are still at their point of initiation. Cooperating more with the US is also attributed to this strategy where the United States protects the interests of those countries or groups such as the Saudi royal family which is under the threat of terror groups and countries such as Al Qaeda and Iran. This serves to weaken the unity of the terror groups and countries such as Pakistan which is bordered by the two US allies. Furthermore, the use of proper US intelligence and responsive military action has seen the terror group pinned down almost to their death a proof that the use of soft power can be effective in the fight against terror.

### **Iraq Invasion Case Study: Iraq Invasion Attracted Fierce Criticism**

This was extracted from a segment of CNN reporting on the case study findings of the US invasion of Iraq. The invasion is said to have been not approved by the United Nations and had shaken the concept of multilateral system (CNN, 2003b). As the US president George W Bush sought the international help to assist in the reconstruction of Iraq, the invasion itself continues to attract sharp criticism such as from French president Jacques Chirac who called for self-rule to be restored in Iraq. The criticism pertains to the United States policy on Iraq and interference with the system of governance and sovereignty of the people of Iraq. The other parties vehemently called for the handing of power to the people of Iraq. It was therefore argued that the use of hard power undermines the power of other world institutions such as the United Nations that has the responsibility to bring order in the world through use of approvals for any decision arrived at by the member states.

The use of hard power is also thought to bring about element of anarchy and a society that does not adhere the rule of law. It led to other leaders of the world calling for the reformation of the United Nations to restore its lost glory after the invasion of Iraq. The argument that followed then was on the future of the world in resolving conflicts:

The countries with the obligation and right to use force in preemption of what is likely to happen in future with regard to terrorism were to first of all take in to consideration the threats that were perceived to the people of a given nation. Cite/Page number check for this error throughout the document and revise This act had a fundamental challenge to the world peace and the existence of the principles that brought about stability in the world for time before the invasion. The invasion therefore brought about sharp divisions amongst the states of the world with members of the Security Council divided on the unauthorized invasion was effective in its mission. It can therefore be deduced form this case study of the invasion Iraq is not an effective means of dealing with terrorism since the reconstruction of the invaded country, the criticism and sharp divisions on the opinions of the interested parties is unhealthy with respect to the aftermath effects. The next section explains the evidence supporting this claim.

#### *Invasion of Iraq has scarce international support*

It was realized in the wake of plans to invade Iraq that the use of hard powers has no or little international support from the associated countries and other international agencies such as the United Nations and its wing of the Security Council. The expectations of the world is for the peaceful coexistence and use of peaceful means in the disarming and inspections of weapons that are hidden by such countries to be hideouts for the terrorists and US enemies. Many of the members states of the United States and the Security Council were always opposed to any military action before all the possible peaceful means have not been exhausted.

#### *Military action has far reaching consequences*

The sky was full of lifeless shards, the picture of tanks being ferried to Baghdad inflicted fear especially to the innocent citizens of Iraq and the world at large (CNN, 2003b). This would ignite panic among the many people of the world and any happening that seems to be an attack would be associated with terrorism. This is an indicator the consequences of using hard power where use of heavy weapons sends shivers and panic amongst the people in many countries. Fear is an element described as tempered victory for the terrorists which then brings in to question the significance of using hard power to the people being protected and the terrorists being fought.

The cost of military actions is also another consequence of using hard power in pursuing terrorists in their hideouts and places of training and funding. It was reported that the Arabic Gulf War cost the United States in

excess of \$50 billion. This revelation raised concern and more questions as what exactly would the use of the military action in Iraq cost the United States people. The estimate on the cost of invading Iraq by the US military made by the former White House economic advisor Larry Lindsay was a whopping \$200 billion. Although this figure was disputed and Congressional Democrats placed the figure at \$93. The figure however didnt include the expenses on economic impact such as in case oil prices shot, expenses in foreign assistance, those of loan forgiveness and peace keeping efforts. Nonetheless, this figure was still a huge burden to the people of the United States who were still struggling with other issues such as poverty and social injustice that were still unresolved.

#### *Launching an endless war*

It was then believed that by President Bush refusing to engage in dialogue and proceeding with his military action in Iraq, he will have created an endless war like no any other in the past (Fox News, 2002). The invasion may achieve its intended mission of eliminating dangerous weapons and facilitating regime change. Many of the enemies of the United States might unite towards the United Sates and launch organized terror attacks against the innocent US citizens. The United Nations was also further perceived by other states of the world to have been emasculated by the US and rendering it ineffective in seeking diplomatic channels of resolving conflicts and branding the use of military and war as legitimate. The United States is additionally likely to have its relations with the enemies and some of the closest allies in the Middle East even more strained than before leading to the growing training field that will be a fertile ground for the new generation of terrorists to thrive. The use of hard power has a direct impact in shifting the global politics as the opinions of the whether such action is right or wrong. In addition, just like the Arabic Gulf War, invading Iraq and not occupying it afterwards leads to the development of weapons in secrecy that will be meant for retaliation against the United States. The military that is involved in execution of the attacks and subsequent follow up activities of maintaining peace and offering reconstruction activities may also be faced with fatigue. This will render the military ineffective in the future operations that will make susceptible for terror attacks to the people who are supposed to be protected.

#### **Preparedness to Deal with the Threat of Eco-Terrorism Alternative Strategy**

The agencies that are tasked with the mandate of information gathering such as FBI has to be prepared to provide updates and warning to the actions that might embolden the threat of terrorists (Fox News, 2004). This is the case that was reported by Fox news outlet on the warning by the FBI on combating crimes and terror activities as a strategy of soft power. In this article the FBI undertakes its role effectively in delivering warnings to the law enforcement agencies on dealing with the threat that emerges domestically. The case of fighting eco-terrorism is when the FBI were following links where the supporters and followers of the convicted arsonist and anarchist Jeff Luers had called for his support by declaring an international day of action and support to him to be on 12th June 2004 where they were to show solidarity with the convict.

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### **Resolution for Unity and Work With Allies for Justice to the Victims**

In the findings the US president delivered a speech to the US Congress which sought to address the escalating threat of terrorism to the United States. In his speech he vowed to seek justice for the victims of war through cooperation with its friends such as the Great Britain in dealing with the perpetrators of terror. This was meant to punish the terrorists who were in countries such as Afghanistan where the terror groups had a much bigger space to organize their terror activities and unleash it to the people of United States. In the resolution to seek justice especially from the Taliban group of Afghanistan which was seen as the hideouts of the terror group members, the US made the following resolutions:

1. Have the leaders of Al Qaeda delivered to the US authorities or be captured through organized surveillance with the use of military coming as the last resort.
2. Release American nationals and those of American allies that were unjustly imprisoned or face forcibly action from the United States and the allies.
3. Exercise restraint and protection of the aid workers, diplomats and foreign journalists who work in the hideouts of the terrorists.
4. The existing training camps for the terrorist had to be closed in Afghanistan their support structures exterminated.
5. The United States had to be granted access to the hideouts and the training.

Grounds of the terrorist in order to have their space of operation, training and organizing of the terror activities reduced.

### **It is Difficult to Win the War On Terrorism through Hard Power**

It was thought the Bush administrations pledge of securing the United States from the terrorists and terror by pursuing individuals and groups that subjected the people of the United States to danger and insecurity was impossible. Analysts and professors of political science such as Roy Licklider of the University of Rutgers in New Jersey poked holes and doubted the implementation of the pledge as it was as good as declaring war on murder which is impossible to win. Roy Licklider said that declaring war on terror is as good as having the country in a constant war. The declaration of war on terrorism was not perceived as the best strategy by the analysts as it only resonated well with the public but its achievement was in doubt especially with the declaration of war being a final means to be taken.

The war on terrorism was related to the other wars that the United States had engaged in and failed to win them miserably such as the wars on domestic crime, social injustice, poverty, and the use of drugs. The fear with such a declaration was the likelihood of failure to win it which will be seen like a win for the terrorists. The doubt was also attributed to the fact that faceless enemies are often only interested in tempered success and therefore difficulty to be defeated. In addition, the capture of Osama Bin Laden according to the analysts would have neutralized the mission.

## **DISCUSSION**

Discussion of the findings research study are revealed. This chapter provides extensive analysis of the case study concerning the invasion of Iraq where both the positive and negative implications of the invasion were considered to underscore that the use of soft power is much more effective in dealing with terrorism as compared to the use of hard power. In addition, the chapter also encompasses the discussion and analysis of the findings that were made based on information obtained from reputable media sources with regard to the use of soft power against the use of hard power.

It will further have other sections like the study evaluation, the section on the research stance and recommendations made on how the United States government will effectively employ the use of soft power and abandon the hard power with respect to the case study of invasion of Iraq. Additionally, the chapter will constitute the section on the prospective studies and the section on the considerations for the future on the way forward in the tackling of the challenge of terrorism to the United States without having to create new enemies and escalate the existing enmity with the foes. Lastly the chapter will seek to summarize the findings and the discussions of the study in the section of conclusion of the research study.

The research paper has been able to provide information on a) the negative impact that is associated with the use of hard power as it is indicated by the ramifications that came with the invasion of Iraq between the years 2001-2005. This was a retaliation to the September 11th attack of the United States that left the country deeply shaken (Moody, 2006); and b) The use of soft power and how it is effective in dealing with the issue of terrorism as the country only need to initiate and develop rapport with the Arab and Middle East countries through diplomatic and friendly foreign policies and values. This will directly aid the United States in tackling terrorists from their play field and deal with their financiers through strategic and organized surveillance from locations of the United States allies.

### **Consequences of Using Hard Power Are Immense**

The use of military action in dealing with the threat of terrorists came to the limelight when the United States with the assistance of Great Britain invaded the Iraq country ignoring the request by the members of the Security Council and those of the United Nations to delay the attacks. Delay was meant to wait for diplomacy and investigations into the existence of the weapons of mass destruction WMDs which the United States believed were in Iraq and were supplied to Al Qaeda group members to attack the United States. The United States decided to invade Iraq without the full approval of the United Nations. The resultant of this action by the United States was divisions in the United Nations especially amongst the members of the Security Council such as Germany, Russia, China and France.

It was evident at the end of the invasion that members of the Security Council were opposed to the invasion and the invasion had not received approval from majority of member states. This was demonstrated when the former French president fiercely criticized the US decision to invade Iraq stating that it was not approved by the council. The French president Jacques Chirac called for the subsequent restoration of self-rule in Iraq after the United States had called for international aide to assist in the reconstruction of Iraq after the war (CNN, 2003b). The other countries felt the United States had interfered with the sovereignty of the people of Iraq and therefore subjected to injustice denial of their right for self.

The use of hard power in dealing with threats from the terror groups therefore creates the perception of anarchy and the notion of the society lacking in the adherence to the rule of law in dispute resolution (CNN, 2001). The divided United Nations was eventually faced with the calls of its overhaul following the invasion of Iraq as it was perceived to be powerless in exercising its mandate hence resolutions made for it to be reformed.

### **United Nations Resolutions after Iraq Invasion**

The States that had the mandate of using preemptive measures in dealing with the foreseen situation such as a terrorist attack on its soil had to consider the threat to the citizens of the invaded nations and the concerns of the world at large. The use of military action or force in resolutions should be able to preserve the world peace and stability. This is through undertaking measures such as seeking approvals of the key players in the Security Council and the United Nations at large so as such a decisions does not leave the world sharply divided on the impact of such an action.

It is the findings that the use of military action arises global divisions and disrupts the existence of world peace and the stability of the world that renders it an ineffective method of tackling the threats of terror. It therefore calls for means of dealing with the terrorists using ways that will not leave the world divided and the stability of the world remain intact as well. This is despite the fact the citizens might support the idea (Blanton, 2003).

### **The Use of Hard Power Attracts Little International Support**

The findings on the invasion of Iraq reveals that invading Iraq has a little support amongst the people of and countries of the world. This is evident starting from members of the United Nations and those of the Security Council. The world and member states representing key world institutions often expect peaceful co-existence within the countries of the world and expect disputed resolutions that will be peaceful. Regarding the threat of terror, states and their people expects that searching for the terrorists in their hideouts, training grounds, source of weapons and the friendly countries that hide and give them space to operate has to be handled in a manner that will

not instill fear and disrupt the lives of other innocent ones and cause massive destruction of property. The world all over expects that the use of military action will only be green lighted in the event that other diplomatic mechanisms have failed. The use of hard power is rendered unfavorable in the context of the case study of US invasion of Iraq (Fox News, 2003). This is evidenced by the long-term allies of the United States such as France and Germany all holding reservations on the significance of invading Iraq as the best option to achieve the mission of stopping the threat of terror groups. Straining relationships with the allies because of the military action that is meant to defend own country is actually creating another problem after solving another. This is clear indication that such as method does not augur well with the majority hence the need for soft power.

### **Hard Power is Associated With Huge Costs And Mass Destructions**

Destructions that are brought about by heavy military action such as the one which was employed by the United States on Iraq are enormous as the aftermath is characterized with lifeless shards after tanks have swept the standing obstacles to the side (CNN, 2003c) creating fear among the people of whom some of them, their lives would have been disrupted though either deaths or destruction of their property (Ilgen, 2006). Fear serves the interests of the terrorists hence the use of hard power does not seem to be the right solution to the threat of terror to the people of the world and particular the United States citizens.

The costs in terms of expenditure are even more enormous where the United States is thought to spend an estimate of huge amount of money in pursuing the terrorists through the use of hard power. The evidence in the findings indicated the US spend in excess of \$50 billion in the Persian Gulf War. This was followed by the revelations from the estimates of what the invasion of Iraq could go as much as costing. The Congressional wing of the Democrats placed the estimate at \$93 billion, a figure that excluded other expenses such as foreign assistance, peace keeping missions, a possible rise in the world prices and loan forgiveness (CNN, 2003d).

### **Hard Power Can Represent The Onset of Unending War**

The invasion of the US in Iraq had the potential of escalating the enmity that existed between the US and member states associated with Iraq and believed to be accomplices of the terror group Al Qaeda. The US might also pick up new enemies from its old allies that assisted her in the fight against the same terrorists (Lieber, 2008). The aftermath of this is the broadening of the area and space for which the terrorist will have to conduct their activities in the event that the US will not leave their troops behind in aiding the process of transition. The increased space for the terrorists planning, training and launching of their activities will pave way for the emergency of terrorists of this generation who will be able to launch attacks such as suicide bombings in the United States and target her people and property in retaliations (Fox News, 2002). This is the war that might not end since the US will continue to use military action as the terrorists target the soft target which are the innocent people. This will result to fear among the people and curtail their freedom of free movement with the fear of being attacked looming large in the peoples daily life. The war on terrorism may not take a short time and be precise as the organizers of the use of hard power may seem to envision (CNN, 2003a).

### **The Use of Soft Power and Communication is Effective in Tackling Terrorism**

Findings reveal the use of soft power as the most effective way of dealing with terrorism as compared to the use of hard power. Soft power is in the form of the United States devising strategies such as the use of public relations, favorable international environment, coercion and even use of payments in order to seek the aid of a foreign country to enable achieve a given mission which in this case is to be able to defeat the enemy (Parmar & Cox, 2010). This is a strategy that the United States started using after the experiences of the aftermath of the invasion of Iraq. The then US president Mr. Bush resorted to seeking friendly ties with the likes of India and Pakistan for purposes of coercing them and creating a favorable rapport with them so as to be friendly in dealing with the large network of terrorists that had spread in the Arabic countries (Fox News, 2017).

Soft power has the capacity of limiting the space of operation of the terrorists since it denies the terrorists, such as the Al Qaeda group, sanctuary which are used in their own operations involving training, planning, and launching of assaults towards their targets (Parmar & Cox, 2010). This strategy is accompanied with accommodative

and inclusive mechanism which were pegged on communicating with the nations involved in the fight of terrorism. Communication has to include means that will be perceived as legitimate, tend to persuade and coerce the enemies and allies so as to win their trust and cooperation. Terror activities are often well organized and therefore can be alleviated if the source of the attacks are first dealt with to make the planning and organizing ineffective for the terrorists. Through the use of soft power which is a strategy for the future in dealing with terrorism, the United States was able to find allies in the form of Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Kuwait and the Arab Emirates. This growing list of the states that are allies to the United States has made it possible for the United States to carry out organized form of surveillance and operations in the activities of the terror groups and quash them before they can be launched on to the US. The use of soft can best be complimented by the best strategy at home where law enforcement agencies will swiftly act on data and information shared by FBI as in the case of information on the Earth Liberation movement that was headed by the convicted Jeff Luers responses for several arsons (Fox News, 2004).

The perfect execution of the strategy is in the example when the United States protects the interests of groups such as the Saudi royal family that was under the threat of the Al Qaeda group. The Saudi royal had to cooperate with the United States for its safety from the groups while at the same time allowing the United States space for surveillance to be able to deal with the terror groups in their hideouts.

### **CONCLUSION**

In summary to the research study, the use of soft power in fighting terrorism is referred to the capacity of coercing other nations to cooperate with the US for realizing what is in the best interest of the US. This is the power of persuasion which dependent on the emulation and attraction of the resources of soft power which are institutions, ideology, culture and even foreign policies. Soft power as indicated in the study is based on the legitimacy of the actions that are taken by the United States in the aim to seek cooperation from the allied nations in the Muslim world. This means that the activities of the US in the allied country has to be seen to be legitimate in for the use of soft power to succeed. Comparisons deduced from this study pitting hard power and soft power against one another indicate that the use of military (hard power) requires little time for the outcome to be realized as the sources used in accomplishing the mission are tangible. However, the dimension of gain from this strategy is proportionate with the time it takes to execute it. This is because the gain from the use of hard power only a short duration solution to the threat of terrorism. On the hand, soft power has been demonstrated in this study that persuasion and attraction for the purpose of cooperation to achieve the US target of eliminating terrorism has the potential of long terms solution to the problem.

### **Strengths and Limitations of The Research Study**

This research study was instrumental in providing information on the different ways of dealing with terrorism. In particular the case study on the United States invasion of Iraq is a typical case of facilitating the comparisons that regard the use of hard power and soft power in tackling the threats that are related with terror in the world and most specifically the people of the United States. The case study of the US invasion of Iraq had in particular the specific and relevant strengths: the case study enabled us to be able to realize the impact that is related to the use of force in searching for the terrorists in their hideouts. Furthermore, it allows for the importance of using soft power in fighting terrorism and also provides the platform on to which comparisons relating to the use of soft power and hard power can be made.

The most important strength of the case study of this research study involving the US invasion of Iraq is being able to realize the impact of the use of hard power in fighting terrorism. It was demonstrated by this case study that fighting terror groups through the use of hard power has the implication of creating disharmony and divisions in the world especially among the allies of the United States. Furthermore, the invasion of Iraq had the potential of further increasing the threat of terrorism as it creates more of the enemies and escalates the enmity that exists between the USs already enemies. The study therefore provides information on how the continued use of hard power such as the use military in fighting terrorism can have the repercussions of unending war with the terror groups. It informs the public and stakeholders of how this use of hard power will make the terror groups work in cahoots with the enemies of the United States and resort to other forms of terrorism such as the use of suicide

means in causing mass destruction and loss of lives to the people of the United States.

Additionally, the research study also potentially provides information to the general public and the stakeholders in fighting terrorism, on the means of using soft power and how it can be applied to the advantage of the United States in fighting terrorism without necessarily resulting to the aftermath consequences such as divisions within global states, destabilizing the world and further causing fear among the people of the world. The study therefore provides ways of using soft power, the successes in the use of soft power as it was adopted by the United States after the invasion of Iraq had attracting fierce criticism amongst the member states of the United Nations. The study is therefore informative on the importance of using soft power to both the United States in terms of reducing the aftermath effects and the costs of funding the military and other expenses incurred by the US in the fight against terrorism.

The third strength of the study is that it creates a platform for drawing comparisons pertaining the use soft power and hard power in dealing with terrorism. The study puts in to perspective the use of soft power and hard power, compares the execution of the two and their aftermath effects. The comparison is based on the amount of expenditure and preparation related to the use of soft power and hard power. Furthermore, the study compared the long term success of applying the two methods of fighting terrorism. The comparisons favor the use of soft power hence rendering the research study relevant to fighting terrorism in the world by the United States and other nations as well.

Despite of the research study having the strengths relevant for the fight of terrorism, it also has the shortcomings. The most specific shortcoming with this study is that it does not provide the future prospect on the success of using soft power in achieving the intended mission of fighting terror in the world. This leaves the future of using soft power bleak and risky as the terrorism may also change tactics and use improvised strategies to sustain their terror activities. The study does not enumerate the limitations of using soft power as a method of fighting terrorism. This leaves it bare to those interested with the use of soft power, and the application of the strategy may be risky.

The second shortcoming related to this research study is that conclusive information is not provided on how the use of hard power can be incorporated with the use of soft power to successfully fight terrorism. The suggestion of using soft power and hard power, with the impact and aftermath of hard power reduced as much as possible to achieve the needed success in the fight against terror. However, the study does not seem to inform on how the two methods can be used simultaneously leading to information void that the audience has to content with for the study.

### **Recommendations on The Effective Use of Soft Power and Communication**

The first recommendation in the use of the soft power and suitable communication is liaising with the allies of the US in conducting surveillances that will target those who recruit the terrorists, train them and equip them to unleash terror in the United States. The target should be remotely on the grassroots level where the lynchpins are exterminated and their terrorist activities, influence and circulation undermined (J. S. Nye, 2009). This can be more effective when working with the local communities through use of suitable means of communication channels in identifying the local recruiters and financiers and disempowering them to render them ineffective with their appeal and reach severely hampered.

The second recommendation involves the US government using its friendly allies in the Middle East and other Arabic countries and their governments to share critical data that will be helpful for the United States to strategize and use proper surveillances that will be appropriate and accurate in attaining the target. The governments need to be effectively coerced to renege to sharing contents of the primary data where they will apply analytical and methodological skills using the USs intelligence agencies. This is the data that they will use to accurately target specific areas where the terrorists hide and their source of their weaponry. This is the method that will lead to denial of sanctuary to the terrorist and severely undermine their capacity (J. S. Nye, 2009). For the success of this recommendation however, the US has to seek effective means of communicating with the allies and enemies to facilitate accommodative interactions.

### **Future Study on the Us Government Using Soft Power to Fight Terrorism**

The research on the future of use of soft power and suitable communication channels is related to the US



foreign policy. It is evident that the influence and attractiveness of the US has declined across the world not only for the entire Muslim world but also for the rest of Europe and Latin America (J. S. Nye, 2009). The future research in the use of soft power therefore should be based on the USs foreign policies, cultural values and other resources that determine the soft power. The research should also base on how the policies will be used in manner that will be perceived to be all inclusive and legitimate in the eyes of the allies and enemies of the US. The future administration of the US should therefore explore foreign policies that will seek to amend the ties and restore the lost soft power that the current administration squandered.

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