What Went Wrong in the War on Terrorism in Afghanistan?

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IRIA Report No. 1

October, 2014

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS INSIGHTS & ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The 9/11 terrorist attacks changed the scenario of international politics; the U.S.-led western coalition initiated the war on terror in Afghanistan, mainly to eliminate threat of terrorism. However, after 13 years of struggle the U.S. failed to achieve its objectives. Today terrorism remains a global political agenda and terrorists pose a serious threat to world peace. Moreover terrorist organizations further expanded into other regions, causing more fear worldwide, with number of attacks and fatalities increasing drastically. The main reason behind writing this piece is to investigate that what went wrong in the war on terror in Afghanistan and suggest alternative solutions to counter terrorism. The first chapter gives a brief explanation of the issue and specifies the significance of this research. The second chapter evaluates the existing literature on this issue, and includes critical analysis. The third chapter clarifies the research methodology used in this paper. Chapter four evaluate the costs and benefits of the war, and analyze the experts opinion, as well as the Afghan, Pakistani, and American public opinion on the war on terror. The fifth chapter mainly examines the failures of war on terrorism and identifies key factors behind those failures, ranging from complexity of definition, lack of cooperation among the allies, failure of understanding the local situation, and motives and structure of terrorists. Finally, the last chapter summarizes the key findings, proposes an option of collaborative and cooperative approach towards terrorism, as well as recommends the revised counter-terrorism policy.

Keywords: Afghanistan   Pakistan   Taliban   U.S.   War on Terror

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List of Abbreviations

ANP:	Afghan National Police
CT:	Counter-terrorism
GWOT:	Global War on Terrorism
IMU:	Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan
NATO:	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OEF:	Operation Enduring Freedom
OIC:	Organization of Islamic Cooperation
OIF:	Operation Iraqi Freedom
ONE:	Operation Noble Eagle
PIPA:	Program on International Policy Attitudes
SCO:	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SEDCO:	Socio-Economic Development Consultant
START:	Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism
UN:	United Nations
UNPDF:	United Nations Peace and Development Force
UNSC:	United Nation Security Council
U.S.:	United States of America
WMD:	Weapons of Mass Destruction

CHAPTER 1   Introduction

1.1 Background

After the 9/11 incident, the United States of America and its Western allies initiated the war on terror by attacking Afghanistan in 2001 and later on Iraq in 2003. The U.S.-led invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq further fueled anti-Western sentiments not only in Afghanistan and Iraq but engulfed the whole region, especially in the entire Muslim world.

Although, during last 13 years the United States did succeed to avert any major terror attacks inside its territory but anti-Western in particular anti-American sentiments continued to spread rapidly in Asian and African continents. Despite the fact that dozens of top Al Qaeda leaders were killed or captured during the decade-old war on terror but it also resulted in the deaths of thousands of U.S. and allied soldiers with enormous cost estimated between four trillion dollars to six trillion dollars.[1] The net result is that today terrorism has spread all over Asia, Middle East, Africa and Sahara region and there is no hope for a long-lasting success against terrorism and durable peace and stability in the world.

Today the world is less secured from terrorism and more vulnerable to terrorist attack than it was in pre-9/11 period. Experts have concluded that the U.S.-led war on terror has given birth to a chain of terrorism cycle forcing the U.S. and NATO to withdraw from Iraq and Afghanistan leaving those nations in a more insecure environment. Terrorism today poses continued serious threat to the whole world but especially in the Arab-Asian and African regions. The end-result of thirteen years of war on terrorism is a failure to eliminate the terrorism threat and globally there has been a significant rise in terrorist attacks from Asia, Middle East and North Africa.[2]

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[1] Raphael Perl, "Combating Terrorism: The Challenge of Measuring Effectiveness", Congressional Research Service, (March 12, 2007).

[2] Global Terrorism Data, "Background Report: 9/11, Ten Years Later", START Background Report (2011). at: www.start.umd.edu/start/announcements/BackgroundReport_10YearsSince9_11.pdf

1.2 Significance of the Question

After 9/11, the U.S. initiated costly war on terrorism, without having an intense understanding of their newly emerged enemy. Consequently, after 13 years the U.S. and its allies faced an inevitable failure against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda. The United States not only failed to eradicate terrorism threat in the region, but also its occupation failed to produce a legitimate and stable government in Afghanistan. In fact, war on terrorism changed the whole scenario of international politics, and today every major power is extremely concerned about this rising menace. Terrorism is now considered a direct threat to international peace and security.

According to United States National Counterterrorism Center, after 9/11 incident and U.S.-led war, terrorist attacks have increased by 195%, incidents by 460% and injuries by 224%.[3] All in all, the number of terrorist incidents has increased by fourfold, which indicates the failure of war on terrorism and counter-terrorism (CT) strategies.

Therefore, the focus of this research will be to elucidate the reasons behind the failure of war on terrorism and then revise the counter-terrorism measures and policies. The central piece of the puzzle is to analyze why war on terrorism failed to reinstate stability in the region and what alternative solutions could be.

I consider this question to be worth researching because after finding out the key reasons behind the failures of the war on terrorism an improved set of strategies can be formulated and threat of terrorism can be decreased. This research will touch the issues, such as the root cause of terrorism, factors leading to radicalization and after having a better understanding of terrorists and their behavior, the paper is aimed to assist the allied forces to further improve their counter-terrorism policies, with the objective to reinstate the stability in the region and minimize the threat of terrorism.

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[3] United States of America The National Counterterrorism Center Report on Terrorism (2011). Accessed at: https://www.fas.org/irp/threat/nctc2011.pdf

CHAPTER 2   Literature Review

There are two groups of scholars, who evaluated the war on terrorism. Most of the scholars argue that the war on terrorism failed to eliminate the ongoing threat of terrorism; rather to some extent it has inflated terrorism in other areas. Although there are some researchers, who believe that the war on terrorism has been quite successful in achieving its goals, but those who back this theory, their numbers are comparatively smaller than those who consider war on terrorism as a mere failure. Therefore in this study, I will mainly focus on the portion of scholars, who consider the war on terrorism as failure. In order to explore the reasons behind the failure of the U.S.-led war on terrorism and examine the best CT measures, the existing literature has been examined through articles, journals, research and policy papers as well as some prominent books on the related issue.

2.1 Literature Review

The existing literature which explains the reasons behind the failure of war on terrorism has been categorized into four different criteria. The first approach is instrumental approach, which suggests that terrorists are rational actors and they have certain political goals, based on cost and benefit analysis. The scholars in this circle believe that terrorists are merely fighting the war of oppression against the West, especially the United States. The second approach is procedural approach, which mainly indicates the technical, military and intelligence failure of the United States against the terrorists. Yet another group of scholars investigate the issue from socio-economic approach, their main argument is that ethnic and racial discrimination, poverty and indiscriminative law, not only fueled anti-Western sentiments but also cultivated sympathetic behavior towards terrorism. And finally, the multi-causal approach, which analyzes the drawbacks of the U.S.-led Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). Multi-causal approach indicates different factors and causes behind the failure of the war, ranging from lack of cooperation between the allies, ever-changing definition of terrorism, to the violation of human rights.

The instrumental approach is mainly used by the scholars like Martha Crenshaw,

Robert Pape, Bruce Hoffman, Robert Trager and Dessislava Zagorcheva. This approach argues that terrorism is a rational behavior, and terrorists are rational actors, who mainly kill to achieve certain political goals. Hoffman argued that, terrorism is a threat mainly for political effect; the terrorists conduct "planned, systematic and well calculated" attacks, which are designed to achieve far-reached goals, and to create psychological impact on target or victim, as well as on the viewers.[4] Some scholars further argue that even the so-called fanatical terrorists, who are believed to be strongly motivated by religious ideas, are not irrational, and this makes the situation more complicated and impossible to deter their actions.[5]

Scholars believe that terrorism is a rational act because it is purposive. Robert Pape indicates that, almost all of the terrorist attacks, including the suicide attack have a specific strategic and worldly goal in common, which is to force modern democratic military forces out of their country or territory.[6] Furthermore, Martha Crenshaw views the acts of terrorism from socio-psychological approach and argues that, "there is a rising consent that suicide attacks are instrumental in or strategic from the perspective of a sponsoring organization."[7] She further argued that these terrorists serve the political interests of certain actors, who are mainly non-states actors and challenging well-armed states.

Consequently, according to the scholars studying terrorism from instrumental approach, the offensive military action hardly ever works against terrorism, and removal of the U.S. military from the Arabian Peninsula and other Muslim countries could be an effective solution to end offensive terrorist's attacks. As Pape argues that, "American offensive military policy in the Persian Gulf was probably the essential factor leading to September 11 attacks".[8]

Many scholars and politicians also argue that, the U.S. occupation of Afghanistan

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[4] Hoffman, "Inside Terrorism", New York: Columbia University Press, (1998), page 15.

[5] Robert F. Trager and Dessislava P. Zagorcheva, "Deterring Terrorism: It Can Be Done", International Security 30, (Winter 2005/2006), pp. 87–123.

[6] Robert Pape, "Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism", New York: Random House, (2005), pg. 4.

[7] Martha Crenshaw, "Explaining Suicide Terrorism: A Review Essay", Security Studies, Vol. 16 No. 1, (January 2007), p. 141.

[8] (Ibid, page 8-10)

and Iraq was clearly not welcomed by the local population. In this regard Taliban provide a bleak example of how mistaken policies and strategies during the war on terror have encouraged militants and extremists to gain political legitimacy, which they would have otherwise never achieved.[9]

As far as the first group of scholars' ideas regarding terrorism and counterterrorism is concerned, I believe it is true that most terrorists are rational actors with respective objectives. In most of the societies it is quite difficult to understand the act of killing innocent people and especially killing themselves (the acts of suicide terrorism) and put these actions on a rational scale. However, the aim of most the terrorists are not to kill many people but demonstrate the act to many people. As most of the terrorist attacks are well-planned and politically motivated, the terrorist organizations have certain ideological ideas to promote. Therefore, it is wise to assume that their actions are based on rational behavior, and most terrorists are fighting to accomplish their certain political, economic and religious goals.

The second approach is procedural approach, which mainly indicates the technical, military and intelligence failures, and the key authors in this circle are Baz Lecocq, Paul Schrijver, Seth G. Jones and Martin C. Libicki. This approach suggests that, the U.S. and its intelligence agencies did not have much pre-existing knowledge and experience of the terrains, from where terrorists mainly operate.

Some scholars have drawn evidence that, America's blind trust in technology, lacking direct input of local expertise as well as the failure of collaboration with local experts 'on the ground', left the U.S. and its allies with either flawed, or incomplete information that their experts were unable to interpret.[10] Moreover, it suggested that, the technology, such as drones, can be helpful, but it only generates raw data. The images taken from planes and information gathered by drones could easily have been faulty or misleading. In order to interpret data correctly intelligence and working forces need to have pre-existing knowledge and experience. Yet, the Americans, as well as their allies do not know the local situation or the terrain well enough to correctly read or understand

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[9] Security and Development Policy Group, "Chronic Failures in the War on Terror: From Afghanistan to Somalia", MF Publishing Ltd 59 Russell Square, London WC1B 4HP, (May 2008).

[10] Baz Lecocq and Paul Schrijver, "The War on Terror in a Haze of Dust: Potholes and Pitfalls on the Saharan Front", Journal of Contemporary African Studies, 25, (Jan 1, 2007), p. 144.

the collected data (Baz Lecocq and Paul Schrijver, 2007). At the same time, local partners and associates are selected on western based criteria on 'trustworthiness' which are fixed and predetermined – these local partners are not selected in terms of their 'native worth'.[11]

Furthermore, the overreliance on military force, technology as well as on the idea of battlefield solution to war on terrorism, eventually led to additional failures. Especially, the use of drone strikes and hard-line policies during the war on terrorism, in fact stimulated the terrorist attacks and fatalities in the region. This eventually led to the expansion of Al-Qaeda's geographic reach, and an evolution of its organizational structure.

The study also suggests that the use of aggressive military force has rarely been effective against terrorist groups in the past and policing and intelligence should form the backbone of U.S. efforts against Taliban and Al-Qaeda militants.[12] In fact, by utilizing the local forces and close cooperation with local army and native police – who often have more legitimacy to operate than the United States does, and even have better understanding of the operating environment – can provide a better and effective result against the terrorists.

Nowadays the U.S. policymakers also agree that, over-reliance upon conventional 'hard power' as a direct approach to eradicate terrorism has failed in Afghanistan and Iraq, and is also failing in Somalia. As U.S. military and policy communities have realized the imperative need for change in CT policies, and believe that, "it's about time, for a new strategic arrangement – which should also include diplomacy and development, along with defense – in order to prepare the allied forces for the emerging challenges."[13]

Many scholars suggest that overreliance on technology and hard-line policies had negative influence on fight against terrorism. I consider it to be partly true, since intelligence and military technology are an important aspect of counter-terrorism but it should go hand in hand with other aspects. The U.S. should limit the use of drones, as it

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[11] (Ibid, page 145)

[12] Seth G. Jones and Martin C. Libicki, "How Terrorist Groups End: Lessons for Countering al Qa'ida", RAND Corporation, (2008). http://www.rand.org/pdfrd/pubs/monographs/MG741-1/

[13] Craig Cohen, Joseph S. Nye and Richard L. Armitage, "A Smarter, more Secure America," Report of the Center for Strategic and International Studies Commission on Smart Power, (November 2007). http://csis.org/publication/smarter-more-secure-america

often leads to civilian deaths and injuries, has proved less effective and promoted radicalization. Instead of using drones, the home-grown approach with the participation of regional and local partners could yield better result since they have much understanding and knowledge of local terrain, language, culture and overall situation. Furthermore, I strongly agree with Jones and Libicki in their arguments that efforts against terrorism should not be branded as a war; instead it should be characterized as counter-terrorism.

The third, socio-economic approach explains that, ethnic & racial discrimination, poverty and indiscriminative law, promoted terrorism in the region, fueled anti-Western sentiments and cultivated sympathetic behavior towards the terrorists. The authors who investigate the issue from this perspective include James A. Piazza, András László Pap, Nathan Funk and Abdul Aziz.

The argument goes that, ethnic discrimination and law enforcement methods based on ethnic selection made the war on terror more complicated and confound. Racial discrimination, especially toward the Arabs and Muslims, has fueled ordinary citizens to develop anti-Western sentiments and more sympathetic behavior towards the Taliban. Even though not every Arab or Muslim is a terrorist, still many Western countries are likely to assume that every terrorist is either an Arab or at the very least a Muslim extremist.[14]

At the same time, the Taliban and Al-Qaeda extremists have been represented as genuine and authentic Muslims, and the practices and viewpoint of innocent and non-militant Muslims have been left unexplored. These misunderstanding between East and West draw victims of discriminative policies to support terrorists. As many terrorists, especially in the Middle East have repeatedly blamed the West for having discriminatory policies and for being against Islamic values.[15]

James Piazza argues that poverty and economic discrimination is also considered to be a major factor that motivates and fuels terrorist campaigns. The presence of minority economic discrimination in countries is also a positive predictor of the

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[14] András László Pap, "Ethnic Discrimination and the War against Terrorism", Fundamentum, Vandeplas Publishing, Human Rights Quarterly: Human Rights Series 1, USA, (2006), p. 31–46.

[15] Nathan C. Funk and Abdul Aziz Said, "Islam and the West: Narratives of Conflict and Conflict Transformation", International Journal of Peace Studies, Volume 9, (Number 1, Spring/Summer 2004), p. 20-22.

likelihood that a country will experience domestic terrorism.[16]

This approach suggests that, the West should change their hostile mindset and the law enforcement agencies should not be an aggressive, unjust, oppressive one, but a defender of nonviolent, respectable people, with the criminals and wrongdoers pitted as the enemy. Some scholars suggest that, a positive approach should narrow the gap between Islam and the West, and must highlight peace as a collective model of both civilizations (Funk and Said, 2004). Moreover, both the West and the Muslim countries should provide better living standards and economic opportunities to the people affected by terrorism. Spending more efforts on health, education, strengthening justice and rule of law will not only improve the economic status of people, but also socially rule out the groups who are more likely to engage in terrorism and extremism if aggrieved.[17]

Considering the argument of the third group of scholars, I believe economic and ethnic discrimination to some extent have made the fight against terrorism more complex. However, I consider Piazza's argument to be partly-false, as poverty and economic instability have not been always the cause to encourage terrorism. Many terrorist leaders and individuals, such as Osama Bin Laden or Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri were financially strong and have had numerous resources. It is also worth mentioning that, according to "Global Terrorism Index: Capturing the Impact of Terrorism from 2002 - 2011" report, low-income countries are less affected by terrorism than lower middle-income countries,[18] which indicates that poverty is not necessarily a main cause of terrorism.

Although the existing research and study suggests that terrorism does not have any direct correlation with poverty, economic instability, however it can be one of the stimulating factors. On the contrary most of the high level terrorist attacks have little to do with economics, and is a reaction of long-standing feelings of humiliation and dissatisfaction, mainly motivated by political ideas.

Nevertheless, in order to achieve their goals, many terrorist organization and insurgents often target and penetrate the poor or economically instable and uneducated

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[16] James A. Piazza, "Poverty, Minority Economic Discrimination, and Domestic Terrorism", Journal of Peace Research 48(3), (2011), p. 339–353.

[17] (Ibid, 351)

[18] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), "Global Terrorism Index: Capturing the Impact of Terrorism from 2002 - 2011", Institute for Economics & Peace, (2012).

people, and induce radical ideas into their minds and use these people as their tools.

The last, multi-causal approach examines the different causes of the failure of war on terrorism. Scholars like Ekaterina Stepanova, Daniel Byman, Lieberfeld, Zhao Huasheng and Joseph J. Collins analyze the malfunction of the U.S. approach towards terrorism, and points out multiple causes for this failure. Many scholars suggest that the chronic failure and the biggest mistake made by the U.S. were to take unilateral actions against terrorists, which simply serve the interests of the U.S. and consequently, isolated the U.S. on the global stage. The scholars further argue that the short-term approaches to extremely complicated and multifaceted problems have deepened existing hole in war on terrorism. Concurrently, the U.S. failure of establishing honest relationship with its allies on war on terrorism not only limited the cooperation among them, but also led to the failure of formulating effective policies against the terrorists.

Daniel Byman, a security studies expert, argues that the ultimate success depends not only on fostering new alliance, but also on managing them in the coming years. The United States needs to deal with their existing allies by coordinating and consulting with them, and they also need to make compromises, which is not an easy job for the U.S. government.[19]

At the same time, the public opinion in the region is also adversely against U.S. policies, which mainly include U.S. unipolar policies, hostile approach towards the Muslims and the Arab world, and last but not the least, its continuous support for aggressive policies of Israel in Palestine and India's policies in Kashmir. This also creates mistrust and affects the relations between the U.S. and its allies in the region. For instance, the U.S. government sees Pakistan as an unreliable partner in counterterrorism efforts.[20] On the other hand, Pakistan believes that the United States is not a reliable ally and merely concerned about its own objectives in the region. Such lack of cooperation between the counter-terrorism partners gives terrorists a strong position and makes counter-terrorism efforts less effective.

The United States and some of its allies are often accused by many international

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[19] Daniel Byman, "Remaking Alliances for the War on Terrorism", the Journal of Strategic Studies, Vol. 29, No. 5, (October 2006), p. 767–811.

[20] Ashley J. Tellis, "Pakistan — Conflicted Ally in the War on Terror", Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Policy Brief 56, (December 2007).

bodies, for violating human rights and conducting illegal operations during the war on terror. At the same time, the U.S. is also facing several allegations of serious violations of international and internal standards of conduct by its armed forces and civil contractors.[21]

Another important factor raised by Stepanova was that, the self-style definition of terrorism itself limits the cooperation between the allies. Especially after the 9/11 the term terrorism has become a combination of political and nonpolitical motives. At the same time the diversification of the organizations and their motives has also created confusion for the nations united against terrorism. Since the goal of establishing the Islamic Caliphate in Central Asia has been declared by two different militant organizations, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and Hizb-ut-Tahrir movement, and both of the organizations operates in the same region. However, the IMU has repeatedly used the violent and terrorist means, while on the other hand, Hizb-ut-Tahrir movement, emphasizes on non-violent means.[22] Under these conditions it is extremely difficult for the allies against terrorists to define terrorism.

Most of the scholars of this approach suggest that, internal reconciliation is the only path to resolving the Afghan issue.[23] Many believe that the acceleration of Afghanistan's reconstruction would not only benefit Afghanistan but also stabilize the whole region, as well as boost the economic potential of Central Asia. They further argue that the regional powers should also encourage various international and local groups to promote political negotiations, and urge for greater efforts to help stabilize Afghanistan and prevent wider regional disruptions.[24]

At the same time Joseph Collins propose that the U.S. should avoid unilateral actions in Afghanistan, and join hands with the local government for peace efforts. The U.S. should also make efforts for social and economic development, and provide better

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[21] Daniel Lieberfeld, "Theories of Conflict and the Iraq War", International Journal of Peace Studies, Volume 10, Number 2, (Autumn/Winter 2005), p. 8, 11, 15.

[22] Ekaterina Stepanova, "Anti-terrorism and Peace-building during and after Conflict", Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, (June 2003), p. 4-6

[23] Zhao Huasheng, "Chine and Afghanistan - China's Interests, Stance, and Perspectives", Center for Strategic &International Studies, (March 2012), p. 5, 7-8.

[24] Alexander Knyazev, "The Afghan Issue in the Politics of Eurasian Great Powers: Russia, China, India and Iran", China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly, (8/1, 2009), p. 14.

opportunities to the locals.[25]

2.2 Critical Analysis

From above reviewed literature it is apparent that not only did war on terrorism fail to reinstate stability in the region, but also many allied countries lost their trust in the U.S. initiated wars, and were reluctant to increase their roles in war on terrorism. It is also noticeable that the definition of terrorism has been frequently politicized and is ever-changing.

Uncertainty towards the U.S. intentions and lack of trust are also seen as some of the causes that blocked the success of war on terrorism, and failure of establishment of an effective international cooperation in the campaign. Eventually, the failure to achieve a proclaimed success also diminished the prime objective for stabilization in the region where terrorism menace looms over as a major threat.

Nearly all terrorist organizations in Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan are fighting to compel foreign military forces out of their region and demand an end to all kind of interference in their internal affairs by foreign forces particularly the western nations. Therefore it is logical to assume that most of the terrorists are aggressive for a purpose, and fighting a long war against such terrorists will not be effective at all. It has been witnessed that the presence of foreign forces often make these regions less stable and secure, promoting further stimulus to radicalization and deadly terrorist attacks.

I further believe that, as Taliban and other terrorist organizations firmly reject foreign military involvement in Afghanistan and their respective region, therefore, it is important for the international community to work more closely with provincial and district governments to bring long-term economic and civil social stability, as well as help the functioning government to perform basic security and welfare functions of a state.

I consider instrumental and multi-causal approach to be of great help for understanding the failures of war on terrorism. Since it clearly explains that the terrorist consider their struggle to be "war of oppression" against the Westerns powers or their allies. The terrorists' outfits have continuously demanded the withdrawal of U.S. forces

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[25] Joseph J. Collins, "Understanding War in Afghanistan", National Defense University Press Washington, D.C., (2011), p. 111-113.

from their lands and an end to interfere in internal politics of the Middle Eastern or Asian states.

The Western powers also lacked sincere cooperation with regional states and continued to try same old ineffective approach to deal with host governments. This go-it-alone strategy widened the gap of understanding between locals and foreigners and failed to achieve a real solution to the crisis resulting in the failure of war on terrorism and dangerously fragmenting the stability of the targeted country as the region as a whole.

On the contrary a sincere approach for acceleration of reconstruction and reconciliation process and inter-community harmony in Afghanistan would have achieved better results in the countries. Such moves would also be seen by the local population as more effective and friendly as advancement towards peace and stability to the whole region. In addition to that, curtailing military operation, retreat from hard-line policies, and endorsement of cooperative measures would have significantly reduced the threat of terrorism level.

CHAPTER 3   Research Methodology

A large portion of available literature on the issue indicates that for various reasons the U.S.-led war on terrorism failed to reinstate peace and stability, and the region became more chaotic as the number of terrorist attacks and casualties increased much more than the pre-war era.

According to "Global Terrorism Index" report, Iraq, Pakistan and Afghanistan are the three countries which are most affected by terrorism. The report also suggests that, there has been a significant increase in the total number of terrorist incidents over the ten year period with the number of terrorist incidents increasing by 464%.[26] Although, today terrorism is predominantly anti-western but the countries mostly affected by terrorism are in Asia. Yet terrorism studies are mainly dominated by the West, and most of the research and analyses regarding war on terrorism are based on the surveys conducted in the west. Therefore, the main purpose of this research is to also add the perspective of Pakistani and Afghani public, along with the American public opinion on war on terrorism. Since most of the terrorist groups are based in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and at the same time these two countries are mostly affected by terrorism, thus their opinion will also help understand the issue in much broader sense and provide better possibilities of formulating effective counter-terrorism policies.

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[26] START, "Global Terrorism Index: Capturing the Impact of Terrorism from 2002 - 2011", Institute for Economics & Peace, (2012).

Fatalities From Terrorism in Afghanistan

Source: LoonWatch.com
Generated by ChartGizmo.com

Fatalities From Terrorism in Pakistan
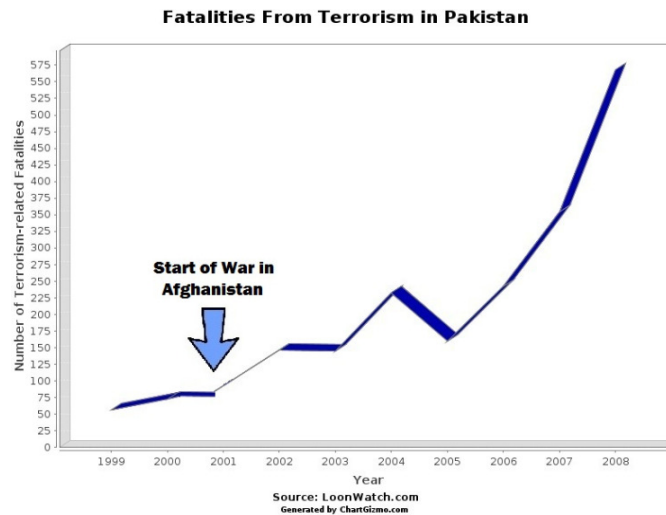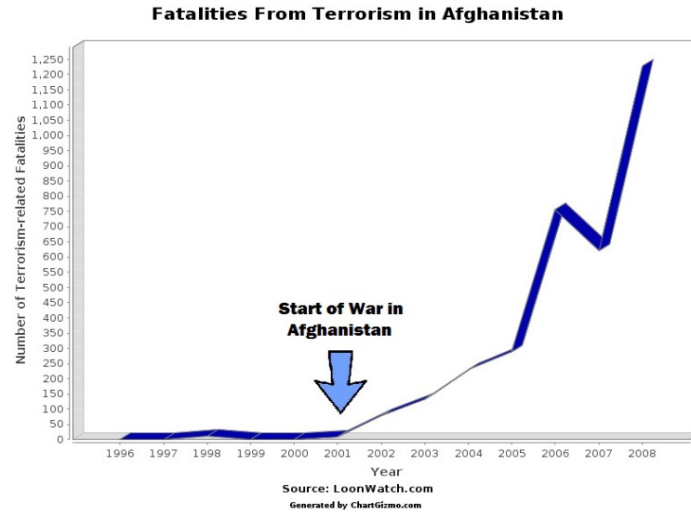
Source: LoonWatch.com
Generated by ChartGizmo.com [27]

The above mentioned charts indicate the increase in fatalities from terrorism in Pakistan and Afghanistan. The figure clearly shows that there has been a significant rise in terrorist attacks both in Afghanistan and Pakistan after the start of war on terrorism.

3.1 Research Design

The design used in this research is clear and simple yet consistent. The qualitative method has been used in this research, which mainly comprises questionnaire surveys and interviews.

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[27] LoonWatch.com, "Most Victims of Islamic Terrorism are Muslims… And Why America is to Blame For It" at:

http://www.loonwatch.com/2012/06/most-victims-of-islamic-terrorism-are-muslims-and-why-america-is-to-blame-for-it/

The definition of terrorism used in this research, is *"any act that is used to strike terror and involves violent threats or/and any form of harassment in a community can be described as terrorism."*

In order to analyze the affects and results of war on terrorism as well as its' failures, Afghan, Pakistani and American public opinion was added in this research. Since most of the terrorist attacks took place in this region therefore it is very important to include the public opinion of the people who are mostly affected by it.

Furthermore, in order to gain in depth understanding of this issue, the interviews and opinions of some prominent scholars and officials are also included.

3.2 Data Collection

In order to analyze the failures of war on terrorism from different perspectives, survey results compiled by different organizations and research centers are included in this research. The interviews and surveys were conducted in different cities of Pakistan, Afghanistan and the United States.

The questionnaire survey used in this paper is individual respondent level survey, in which the Pakistani public opinion is examined. The poll was originally carried out by SEDCO (Socio-Economic Development Consultants) and the questionnaire was developed by Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA, WorldPublicOpinion.org). The survey contained 37 questions, however only 10 questions related to this research were selected. The poll was conducted in Urdu (official language of Pakistan). A total of 1,000 people, ranging from 16 to 60 years of age, were interviewed across the 64 primary sampling units in rural areas and 36 in urban areas, in four provinces of Pakistan. 54% of the interviewed people were male and 46% of them were female. While 99% of them were Muslims and 1% of them were Christians. The margin of error is +/- 3.2 %.

In order to analyze the Afghan public opinion on the war and its consequences, some questions from an interview questionnaire conducted by the Asia Foundation Survey and Afghan Center for Socio-economic and Opinion Research in 2013, was added in this research. During the survey, a total number of 9260 people were interviewed in different cities of Afghanistan, with the margin error of +/- 2.25%.

Lastly, for observing American public opinion on war on terrorism in Afghanistan and Iraq, various polls and surveys were integrated in this research, including NBC

News/Wall Street Journal Poll, CBS News Poll, CBS News/New York Times Poll, ABC News/Washington Post Poll, CNN/Opinion Research Corporation Poll, Quinnipiac University Poll, and Pew Research Center/USA Today Poll

The main idea behind analyzing the problem from the personal experiences and insight situation of the victims of terrorists is to get critical understanding of the phenomenon, as well as to comprehend the issue from the perspective of people who are practically facing this issue and are major stakeholders. This will also help in suggesting the better counter-terrorism measures and policies.

Furthermore, some prominent scholars related to the field of terrorism and counter-terrorism studies have been interviewed and in order to make this research more exclusive their opinion and suggestions have also been added. Set of questions were emailed to these scholars and officials, whereas some questions and problems were discussed during the face-to-face interviews with them. During the interview success and failure of the global war on terrorism, the best possible counter-terrorism measures, and opportunities of restoring peace and stability to the region were discussed. However, it is important to notify that some of the officials and scholars (due to domestic reasons) have asked not to disclose their names, and preferred their identity to remain anonymous.

3.3 Analysis of the Data

After the data have been compiled, the results are carefully analyzed, important patterns and findings are extricated and the outcomes are consistently reviewed. The results of questionnaire survey indicate the public opinion and their attitude towards the terrorism issue and war on terrorism. The results of surveys are portrayed through charts and graphs, whereas interviews were examined by theoretical as well as practical perspectives.

After analyzing the results, the failures of war on terrorism have been categorized and the factors obtained high and low scores are framed in a relevant manner. Afterwards, the best counter-terrorism measures and revised policies, based on the results of collected data, have been suggested, along with the recommendations regarding the opportunities to reinstate peace and stability in the region.

CHAPTER 4   Data Analysis

4.1 Evaluating the War on Terrorism: Costs and Benefits

Soon after its invasion, the U.S. government had pledged to bring stability and democracy in Afghanistan and Iraq but after a decade of engagements both countries continue to rank very low in global rankings of political freedom. In fact they are less secured than they were in pre-war era, and threat of terrorism and radicalization has been increased several-fold. The Afghan warlords still brutalize the locals, Iraqis face great threat their security and are immune to ethnic clashes. Today both the nations are close to civil-war-like situation as gap of understanding between majority and minority has increased.

Considering the success and failure of the war, I think it is very difficult to identify the overall success and failures, as some benefits might be long-term and cost might be short-term. Dealing with this issue, Dominic Johnson and Dominic Tierney argued that, *"the war on terror is … one of the most inherently ambiguous conflicts in the history of the United States, with no precedent, and with much of the conduct of the war on both sides kept secret. This vagueness has allowed people to choose their own criteria for success [and failure], thus encouraging the selection of arbitrary or self-serving metrics."*[28]

Therefore, this chapter of the paper will evaluate the war on terrorism and will shed light to the cost and benefits of the war. In order to understand the cost and benefits of the war, different perspectives of the people are analyzed in this section, including the opinion of Pakistan, Afghani and American public, as well as the opinion of scholars who have made cost-benefit analysis of the war.

4.1.1 Pakistani Public Opinion on War on Terrorism

In order to analyze the success and failure of war on terrorism it is very important to add the opinion of Pakistani people, since they are directly affected by terrorism and is faced with greater threat by terrorists than the U.S. and its allies.

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[28] Dominic D P Johnson and Dominic Tierney, "Failing to Win: Perceptions of Victory and Defeat in International Politics", Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, (2006), p. 283.

To examine Pakistani public opinion, the survey was conducted in different cities of Pakistan, and was carried out by Socio-Economic Development Consultants Survey group, while the questionnaires were developed by Program on International Policy Attitudes. The poll was conducted from May 17th to 28th in 2009, and a total number of 1,000 male and female were interviewed during this survey in Urdu language. The original survey included thirty seven questions, however only ten related questions were selected to be added in this research.

Following the survey, the analysis suggests that the Pakistani public opinion on the U.S. war on terrorism is quite negative and people do not have much confidence in the U.S. led war. [29] As 72% of the people disapprove any NATO or U.S. missions in Afghanistan even with the aim to stabilize the country and fight against Taliban insurgents, whereas 18% of the population approves such missions and operations. Moreover 79% of the people think that NATO mission in the region should immediately be ended, and 13% believe that these missions should be continued till they achieve their goals.

When asked about their opinion on Taliban regaining the power in Afghanistan, majority (54 percent) of the people consider it as a very bad thing, 7 percent consider it as somewhat bad, 17 percent believe it will be somewhat good, 10 percent think it is neither good nor bad, while only 7 percent consider it as a very good thing. This survey also indicates that most of the people do not have much compassion for Taliban but some are half-heartedly supporting the insurgents and extremists for their efforts to drive foreign forces out of their homeland. As 22% of the people have somewhat positive feelings toward Al-Qaeda, 16% have mixed feelings, 23% have somewhat negative, 22% have very negative, while only 5% have very positive feelings towards the militants.

There is also a substantial dissatisfaction among the people regarding the U.S. actions and its attitude towards Pakistan and Islam. About 90% of the people believe that the U.S. treat Pakistan unfairly and abuse its greater power by force. Only 6% of the people think that the U.S. treats Pakistan fairly. When asked about the U.S. views of Islam, 34% of the people believe that the U.S. is often disrespectful to the Islamic world, but out of ignorance and insensitivity. While 55% of the population thinks that the U.S.

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[29] World Public Opinion Questionnaire, "Pakistani Public Opinion on the Swat Conflict, Afghanistan, and the US", (July 1, 2009).

purposely tries to humiliate the Islamic world.

Large number of population also has doubts regarding the U.S. motives and its objectives in the region. About 28% of the Pakistani people consider the U.S. as an important leader in promoting international laws and for following them, while 66% of the people share the belief that the U.S. tries to promote international laws for other countries but is hypocritical because it often does not follow these rules itself. Moreover around 75% of the people believe that maintaining control over the oil resources of the Middle East is definitely a goal of the United States, 17% believe it is probably their goal, while only 4% and 1% believe that it is probably not a goal and definitely not a goal, respectively.

On the other hand the continuous use of drones in Pakistan and Afghanistan has also fueled anti-United States sentiments in Pakistan as well as in the whole region. As 82% of the people think that U.S. drone attacks in northwestern Pakistan, near Afghan border, are not justified, and about 13% believe that they are justified. When asked about U.S. attacks and bombings on Al Qaeda training camps in Pakistan, 81% of the population consider it to be unjustified, while 13% regard it as justified. As people believe that drone strikes are killing innocent people of the region and are not at all productive in war on terrorism. The continuous use of drone and violation of Pakistan's sovereignty by the United States is creating negative attitude among the Pakistani people.

The results of the survey confirm the notion that the U.S.-led war on terrorism has lost the trust of majority of Pakistani people, and led to the negative attitude towards the United States, which to some extent further lead to support for Taliban and Al-Qaeda fighting against the U.S. and NATO in Afghanistan. At the same time, use of drones, indiscriminate killings, execution of hard-line and aggressive policies by the U.S. during the war on terrorism inspired negative feelings among the people of this region and developed sympathy towards the insurgents.

### 4.1.2 Afghan Public Opinion on War on Terrorism

In order to acquire the Afghan public opinion, a survey conducted by "The Asia Foundation" in 2013, has been included in this research. The survey suggests that majority of the Afghans are optimistic about their future. As 57% of the people believe that their country is moving in the right direction, while 38% think that Afghanistan is

moving in the wrong direction. The survey also indicates that majority of the Afghans are positive about the reconstruction progress and rebuilding of their country.[30]
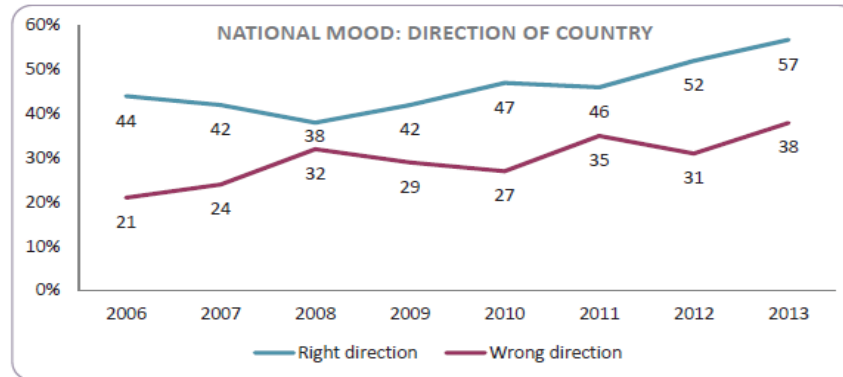
Source: A Survey of the Afghan People by The Asia Foundation, 2013

When asked about the biggest problem their country is facing on a national level, most Afghans (30%) believe that it is insecurity, 26% consider corruption as the biggest problem in Afghanistan, 25% of the people believe that unemployment is the biggest problem, 10% Afghans are not satisfied with their economic condition and think that poor economy is the biggest problem, while 9% of the people consider poverty as the biggest problem in their country.
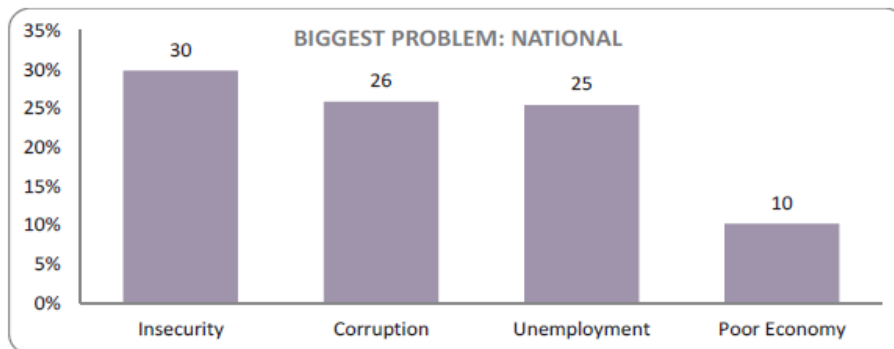
Source: A Survey of the Afghan People by The Asia Foundation, 2013

Regarding the stability of Afghanistan, 63% of respondents believe that reconciliation efforts between the government and armed opposition groups can stabilize

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[30] Nancy Hopkins and Keith Shawe, "Afghanistan in 2013 - A Survey of the Afghan People", The Asia Foundation, (2013).

their country, while 32% do not agree with the statement that there should be any settlement with the militants.

It is also worth mentioning that most Afghans believe that militants and Taliban are using violence and fighting against Afghan government because of the presence of foreign troops. As 22% of Afghans consider the presence of international community and foreign troops the main reason for the militants to adopt aggressive approach and fight against the Afghan government. At the same time, 20% of the people believe that the main goal of the militants is to gain power, 10% believe that armed groups are fighting against the Afghan government because they are supported by Pakistan, while other share the belief that there can be several reasons behind this, such as they are dissatisfied with the government, there is too much corruption in the country, militants support and promote Islamic ideas, and they are fighting to eradicate unemployment/poverty, etc.

However many Afghans (23%) believe that the main cause of crime in Afghanistan is unemployment, and lack of economic opportunities, 14% consider corruption as the main stimulating factor for crime, 9% consider illiteracy, 8% poverty and weak economy, 8% insecurity, while only 4% consider Taliban as the main cause for crime in Afghanistan.

The opinion of Afghanis indicate that the U.S. war on terrorism could not eliminate the threat of terrorism, and it failed to bring safety to the country, and moreover led to more insecurity and chaos in Afghanistan. Public opinion also suggests that presence of international forces is unhealthy for the stability of Afghanistan and U.S.-led Afghan government has proved to be ineffective and corrupt. Today, majority of the Afghans are unemployed and live below poverty line, dissatisfied with government's performance, worried about their own safety as well as the security of their family, and only about half of the people have some level of confidence that perpetrators of crime will be punished.

4.1.3 American Public Opinion on War on Terrorism

As far as the opinion of the American people is concerned, above mentioned NBC News/Wall Street Journal Poll conducted by the polling organizations of "Peter Hart and Bill McInturff" found that majority of the people (55%) believe that the U.S. forces have been somewhat successful against the Al-Qaeda and Taliban in Afghan war.

Only 7% think they have been very successful, 22% think that the war has been somewhat unsuccessful, while 13% consider it to be very unsuccessful (Fig 1). Regarding the Iraq war, "Pew Research Center/USA Today" found out that during November 2011 most of the Americans (56%) believe that the U.S. mostly succeeded in Iraq, while only 33% of them considered it as a failure. In March 2013, the percentage of people who considered that the U.S. succeeded in Iraq decreased to 46%, while 43% of them considered that it mostly failed. However, the same poll conducted in January 2014 suggests that the people were cynic about the U.S. success in Iraq war, and at that time, about 52% of the people thought that the U.S. has mostly failed to achieve its goals, and 37% of them believed that they have mostly succeeded in achieving its goals (Fig 2).

Do you think the war in Afghanistan against the Taliban and Al Qaeda has been very successful, somewhat successful, somewhat unsuccessful, or very unsuccessful?

- ■ Very successful
- ■ Somewhat successful
- ■ Somewhat unsuccessful
- ■ Very unsuccessful
- ■ Unsure
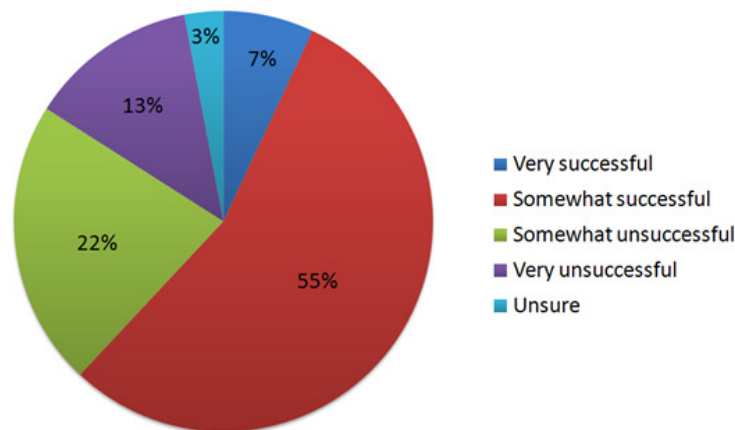
Do you think the U.S. has mostly succeeded or mostly failed in achieving its goals in Iraq?

- ■ Unsure/Refused
- ■ Mostly failed
- ■ Mostly succeeded
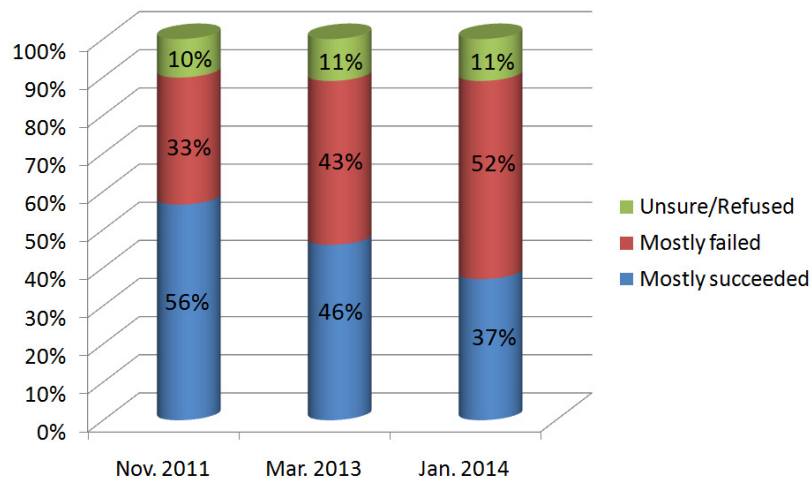
Considering the cost versus the benefits to the United States, the survey conducted by "ABC News/Washington Post" suggests that about 66% of the U.S. population believe that the U.S. war in Afghanistan was not worth fighting and 30% of them believe that this war was worth fighting (Fig 3). However as far as the Iraq war is concerned, another survey conducted by "CNN/ORC Poll" suggest that, 59% of the Americans think that it was foolish decision to initially send troops to Iraq in 2003, with 38% think it was a smart thing to do, while 2% have mixed feelings. At the same time, 51% of the people think that the United States' actions in Iraq are morally justified, and 49% believes that the U.S. actions were not morally justified (Fig 4).

Considering the costs to the United States versus the benefits to the United States, do you think the war in Afghanistan has been worth fighting, or not?

- Worth fighting
- Not worth fighting
- Unsure
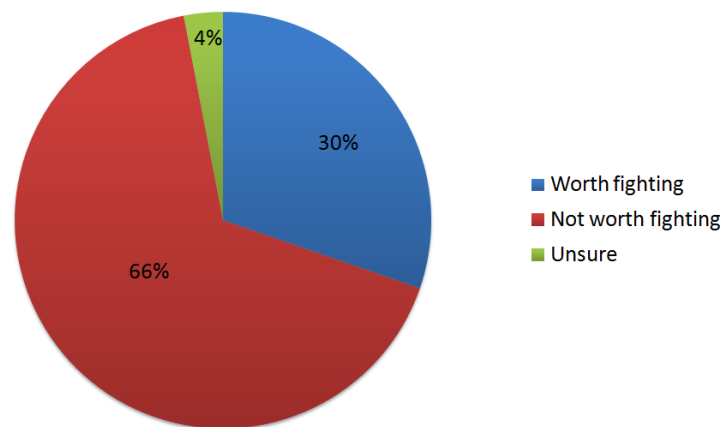
1. Would you say that the initial decision to send U.S. troops to Iraq in 2003 was a smart thing to do or a dumb thing to do?

2. Do you think the United States' action in Iraq is morally justified, or not?
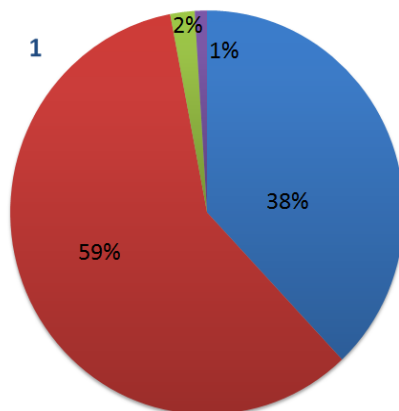
- Smart
- Dumb
- Mixed
- Unsure
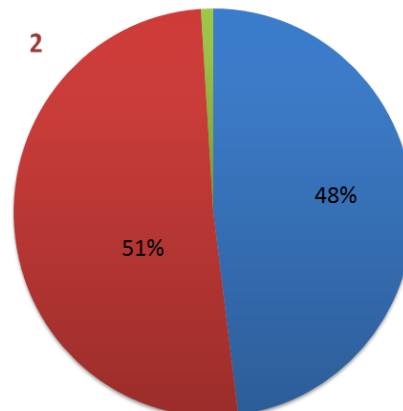
- Morally justified
- Not morally justified
- Unsure

Study also shows that majority of the people have negative feeling towards the future of Afghanistan. Around 30% of Americans believe that it is not likely at all that Afghanistan will become stable after the U.S. troops leave the country, 38% of them think it is not very likely, 24% think it is somewhat likely, while only 5% believe that it is very likely that Afghanistan will be stable country after the U.S. withdrawal (Fig 5). This indicates that people are not optimistic about the long-term benefits of Afghan war and consider it to be unsuccessful.

Moreover, when asked about the success and failure of the GWOT most of the Americans, about 55% are pessimist about the success of Afghanistan war, while 35% are optimistic about the results of war and believe that the U.S. will be successful in eliminating the threat from terrorists operating from Afghanistan. It is also worth pointing out that large number of people (65%) believes that after the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, the threat of terrorism against the U.S. will remain the same, and even after 13 years of struggle about 26% of population thinks that the threat of terrorism will continue to increase. Unfortunately only 6% of the people are positive that the threat of terrorism against the U.S. will decrease after U.S. withdraws its troops from Afghanistan (Fig 6).

1. **How likely do you think it is that Afghanistan will be a stable country after the U.S. troops leave?**
2. **When the U.S. withdraws its troops from Afghanistan, do you think the threat of terrorism against the United States will increase, decrease, or stay the same?**
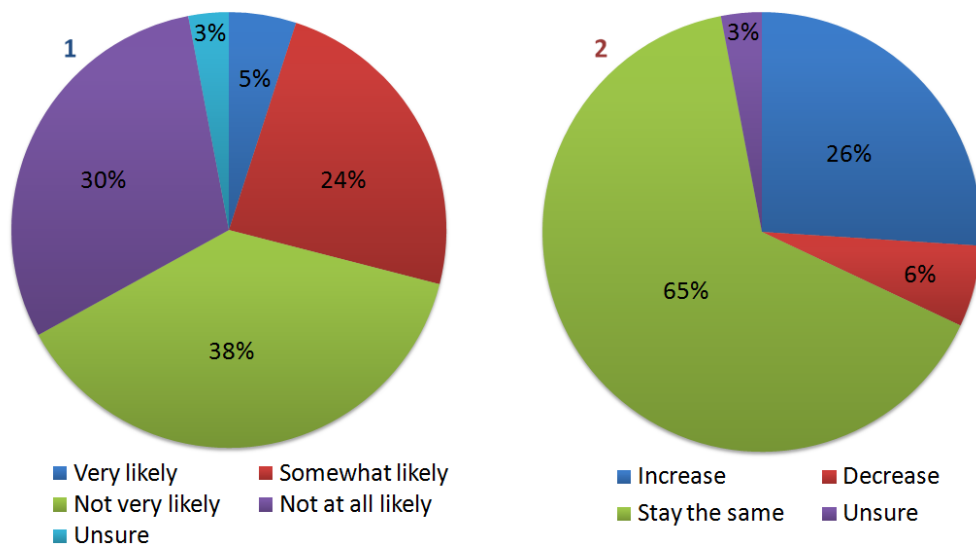
Another thought provoking poll conducted in March 2012 by "CNN/Opinion Research Corporation International", points out that only one-fourth of Americans favor the U.S. war in Afghanistan while 72% of the population oppose the war. On the other hand around two-third of the population (61%) believe that the United States is not winning the war in Afghanistan at all, while 34% think that their country is winning the Afghan war.

1. Do you favor or oppose the U.S. war in Afghanistan?
2. Do you think the United States is winning or not winning the war in Afghanistan?

U.S. Public Opinion on War on Terrorism
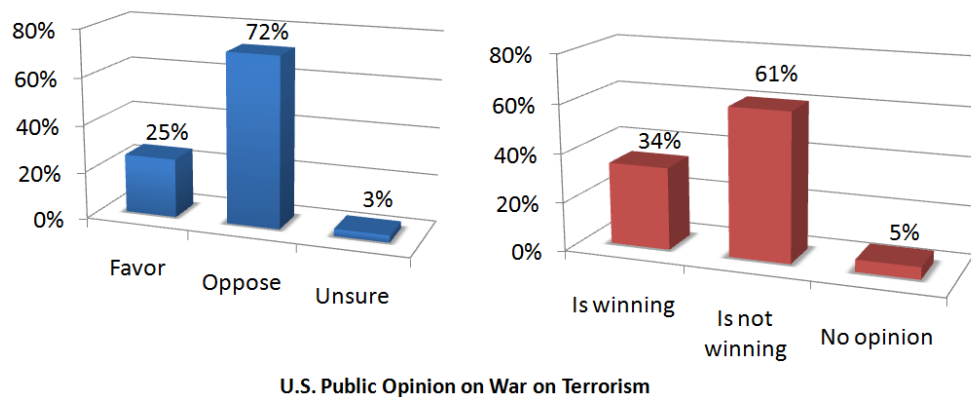
Source: CNN/Opinion Research Corporation International Poll, 2012

4.2 Experts Opinion on Cost and Benefits of Global War on Terrorism

The American experts in counter-terrorism and specialists in national security field have also been polled in 2006, on questions regarding the United States policies on the war on terrorism. The study suggests that these experts' opinion on war on terrorism were not very positive, as three out of four (75%) of them think that the U.S. was not winning the global war on terrorism and failed to formulate effective policies.[31]

Since the beginning of GWOT, the U.S. has initiated three main operations namely, Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) in Afghanistan, Operation Noble Eagle (ONE) for homeland security, and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) in Iraq. So far, the

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[31] "Center for American Progress and Foreign Policy", The Terrorism Index - Second Bi-annual, Nonpartisan Survey of Foreign Policy Experts from the Center for American Progress and Foreign Policy, (February 13, 2007), at: http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2007/02/terrorism_index.html

United States Congress has approved $1.283 trillion for these operations.[32]

In 2011, a remarkable research was conducted by a Brown University's Watson Institute for International Studies based nonprofit project called "Cost of War". The project was compiled by several political scientists, economists, lawyers, and anthropologists. The research released new figures of cost of human lives, as well as economic, social and political costs. This inclusive study suggests that, the total cost of wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan are estimated up-to 3.2 to 4 trillion dollars, and over 330,000 lives have been lost.[33]

330,000 Direct War Deaths, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan, 2001-Feb 2013*
***Does not include indirect deaths which may total many hundred of thousands more**
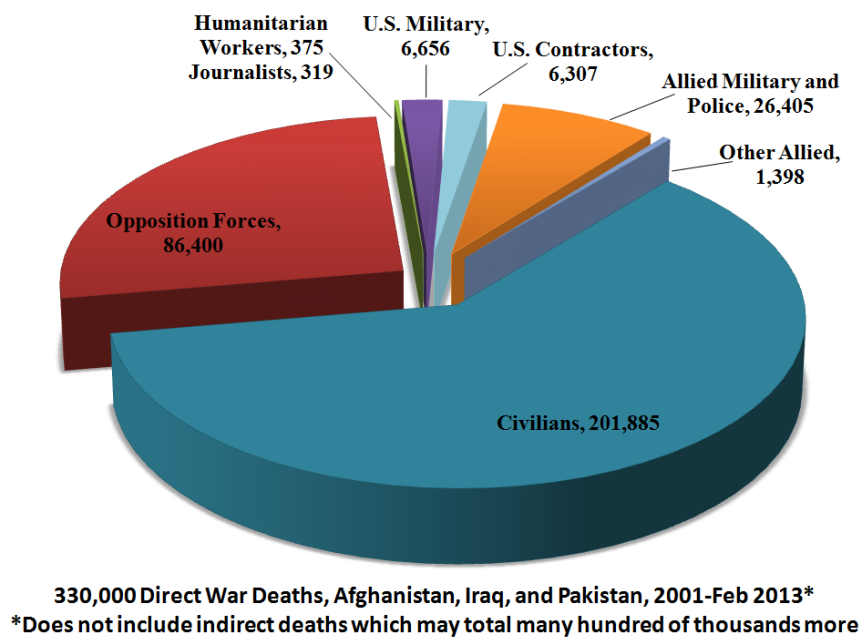
Source: Costs of War Project, at: http://www.costsofwar.org/

Moreover the research indicates that the war on terrorism has created more than 7.8 million refugees in the region (including Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan). According to a rough estimate, more than 200,000 civilians have been killed in the conflict. Around 6,600 U.S. soldiers have died in the wars, while "Veterans for Common Sense" report

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[32] Amy Belasco, "The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Global War on Terror Operations Since 9/11", Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, (March 29, 2011).

[33] Catherine Lutz, and Neta Crawford, "Over 330,000 Killed by Violence, $4 Trillion Spent and Obligated", the Costs of War Project - Brown University's Watson Institute for International Studies, (2013), at: http://www.costsofwar.org/

suggests that disability continues to increase and over 750,000 soldiers have been disabled.[34]

As far as the benefits of the war are concerned, the U.S. has successfully overthrown Saddam Hussein's regime, killed Al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden, and captured several top leaders of Taliban and other terrorist organization. From another perspective the U.S. also successfully established its military bases and increased its sphere of influence in the region, which would benefit the U.S. interest in the long term.

Furthermore after Osama's death, President Obama's popularity also increased. As "CBS News/New York Times Poll" indicate that most of the Americans (47%) consider the killing of Osama as a major victory for the America, yet 40% take it as a minor victory, and 11% consider it as not a victory at all. But when asked about the likelihood of decrease in terrorism, 27% of the people believe that threat of terrorism will increase, 26% believe that it will decrease in the long term, while majority (41%) think that even after the death of Bin Laden, the threat of terrorism will stay the same.[35]

Soon after Osama's killing, many scholars predicted that Al-Qaeda's backbone is already broken and the organization will soon collapse. However the death of Osama provoked his followers to incite more violence and fueled the terrorists to retaliate with more anger and eventually to further radicalize the region. All in all, today terrorism still remains a major threat to the region and to the United States and terrorist attacks have been constantly increasing.

4.3 Comparative Analysis of Public Opinion

This section analyzes the public opinion of Afghan, Pakistani and American public opinion on the U.S. war on terrorism, and compares their perspective on this issue. The analyses of public shows that the war on terrorism has different effects on the people of these countries, and public opinions are similar on some policies during the war, while different on the others. The study shows that the public of all three countries oppose the

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[34] Veterans for Common Sense (VCS), "Iraq and Afghanistan Impact Report," (January 2012), at: http://veteransforcommonsense.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/VCS_IAIR_JAN_2012.pdf

[35] CBS News/New York Times Poll, (May 4, 2011), at: http://www.cbsnews.com/htdocs/pdf/110504_news_poll.pdf
(The poll was conducted on May 2nd and 3rd 2011, by telephone among 532 American adults, interviewed by CBS News from April 28 to May 1, 2011. The margin of error in entire sample could be +/- 4 %.)

aggressive war against the terrorists, and believe that war on terrorism mostly failed to achieve its goals, and terrorist organizations are still a major threat to the region as well as to world peace. At the same time, the majority of the public in these three countries believe that the war has not been worth fighting and outcomes of the war are horrifying.

However it is observed that Americans are mainly concerned with the security of their country and allies, their interest in the region, and safety of their troops fighting never-ending war on terrorism. While majority of the Afghan population is not really against the Taliban or militants, but they are mainly concerned about their domestic problems, such as education, unemployment, insecurity, crime and corruption. On the other hand, Pakistani people believe that the U.S.-led war on terrorism, in fact gave a stimulus to terrorism in the region, and public is mainly concerned with the effects of war on Pakistan, the U.S. attitude towards Pakistan, with continuous use of drone strikes in Pakistan's territory.

It is noteworthy that the results of the polls indicate that, most Afghans and Pakistanis disapproved the NATO or U.S. mission in Afghanistan. In fact majority of the people believe that the invasion of Afghanistan by the U.S. and NATO forces led to the expansion of terrorist network and motivated them to implement aggressive attacks. The Pakistani government's decision to join the war on terrorism and conduct military operations against the militants in Pakistan's tribal areas further motivated the terrorists to retaliate with more anger. After joining the war against the Taliban and other terrorist organizations, both Pakistan and Afghanistan faced the wrath of Taliban and their supporters in this region, which further complicated the whole scenario and resulted in death of thousands of Afghan and Pakistani civilians and soldiers.

The results shows that all three nations consider terrorism as a threat to their security as well as to the region, however their approach regarding the counter-terrorism strategy differs from each other. The Afghans believe that terrorism can be eliminated by initiating peace talks and gradual removal of foreign troops from their country. The Pakistanis share the belief with the Afghans and demand withdrawal of troops from the region, with renouncing the hard-line and aggressive policies. While, the Americans also wish for the security of their troops and have realized that use of excessive force has not been very effective against the terrorist organization.

The security and stability is a common interest and desire of all three nations,

with dismantling the terrorists and bringing them to either justice or providing them with an option for peace. However there is a noticeable difference of opinion among the public of Afghanistan, Pakistan and the United States, over the military engagements and use of force against the terrorists.

The people of Pakistan are against the use of excessive force and consider it unjustified, as it results in civilian causalities and sympathetic behavior towards the terrorism. The Afghans believe that the terrorist attacks are increasing due to the presence of foreign troops in Afghan cities, which are in fact causing more deaths of innocent Afghan people than the foreign soldiers. On the other hand, Americans consider the deaths of innocent civilians as a collateral damage, and believe that this is a sacrifice they have to make in order to achieve the greater good and save the lives of millions.

Chapter 5   Assessing the Failures of War on Terrorism

This chapter analyzes the case of pre and post-war situation of the region, and categorized the dependent, control and independent factors, with regard to the threat of terrorism and its development. Afterwards important factors which limited the cooperation and made the situation more complicated are considered. The main reasons behind the failure of war on terrorism will also be explained.

Case	Independent factor	Constant factor	Dependent factor
Pre-war on terrorism situation and stability of the region	Before the United States of America and Western coalition initiated the war on terrorism	Terrorism remains a major threat and global political agenda	Terrorist attacks were comparatively less and terrorist organizations were mainly based in Afghanistan and Pakistan (Northern areas)
Post-war on terrorism situation and stability of the region	After the United States of America and Western coalition initiated the war on terrorism	Terrorism remains a major threat and global political agenda	Terrorist organizations spread into other regions, caused more fear worldwide, and number of attacks and fatalities have been increased drastically

Apparently, U.S.-led war on terrorism not only failed to eliminate the threat of terrorism but also stimulated the terrorists to conduct more lethal attacks and spread into other regions, causing the fight against terrorism more complicated and complex.

In pre-war era, before the U.S. initiated the war on terrorism, although terrorism was considered a major threat, but the terrorist attacks were comparatively less and terrorist organizations were mainly concentrated along the borders of Afghanistan and Pakistan, especially in the northern areas. In the post-war era following U.S.-led and allied forces war on terrorism, the terrorism was still a major threat, in fact the terrorist organizations crossed over to regions of the world, caused alarm worldwide, and number of terrorist attacks increased drastically.

**Terrorist Attacks Worldwide per Year,
pre- & post-2001**
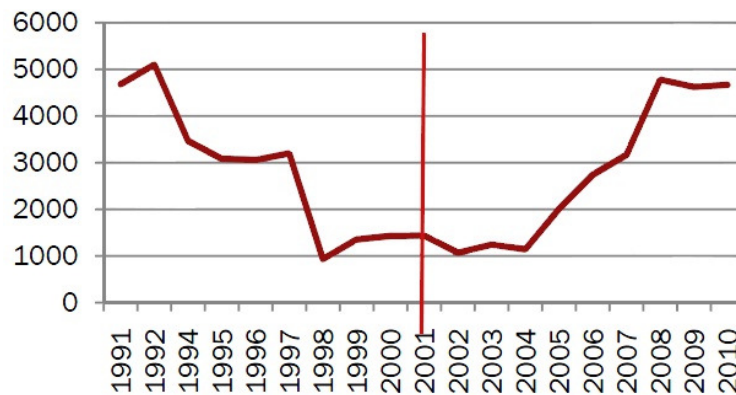
START Background Report: 9/11, Ten Years Later   © START, 2011

**Terrorism Fatalities Worldwide per Year,
pre- & post-2001**
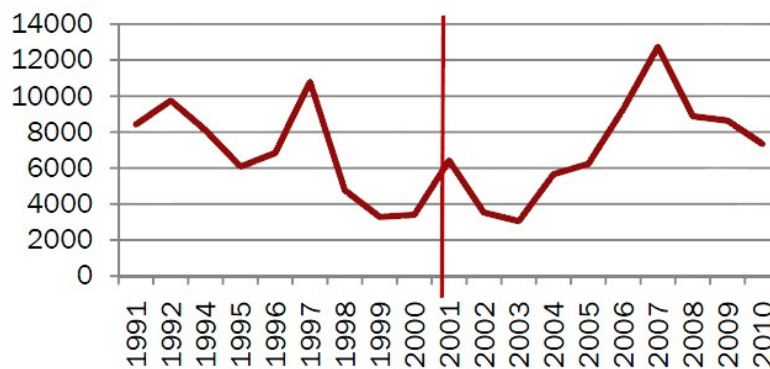
START Background Report: 9/11, Ten Years Later   © START, 2011   [36]

As above mentioned charts by "START Background Report: 9/11, Ten Years Later" show that the terrorist attacks as well as terrorism fatalities worldwide have been increased after the 2001, especially after the war on terrorism begin.

Soon after the September 11 attacks, the U.S. former President George W. Bush launched the "global war on terrorism", and led the invasion of Afghanistan, which was justified under the doctrine of collective security. Then U.S. President Bush stated that, *"Our war on terror begins with al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until*

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[36] "Terrorism Fatalities Worldwide per Year, pre- & post-2001", National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), "Background Report: 9/11, Ten Years Later", START Background Report, (2011).

every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated."[37]

However, after 13 years of fighting war on terrorism, the U.S. could not accomplish its stated goals and objectives, have now come to realize that they mishandled the overall situation and committed several mistakes during the war, which led to more chaos and radicalization in the region.

Many scholars and officials have pointed out various factors behind the failure of war on terrorism and examined this issue from different perspectives, therefore a number of important aspects have been analyzed in this chapter to identify the drawbacks of the war and reconsider the counter-terrorism policies, with regard to reinstate peace and stability in the region.

5.1 Complexity of Definition

The Oxford dictionary official definition of terrorism is: *"Any unauthorized or unofficial use of violence or/and threat with the aim to pursuit any political goal is terrorism."* [38] However, the term "terrorism", besides being subjective, remained constantly politicized by vested circles and became more complex and ever changing, especially after the 9/11 attacks.

The United States was profoundly eager to eradicate terrorism but did not realize the fact that there was no generally accepted definition of the term 'terrorism', which in fact limited cooperation among states. Although several regional countries were dragged into the U.S. led war on terrorism in Afghanistan and Iraq, but there was a clear difference in the vision and political agenda of each individual state.

The difference of interests and vision further lacked cooperation between the allied forces. The Islamic World and Muslims as well as several non-aligned states continued to consider militants inside occupied land as freedom fighters, particularly in Palestine, Afghanistan and Iraq while Western alliance continued to brand them as terrorists and Al Qaeda associates. As a result of forced occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq and play of Shiite-Sunni cards by the Western forces the Islamic world also

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[37] The White House, President George W. Bush, "Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People", (September 20, 2001), at:
http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html

[38] Oxford University Press, Oxford Dictionaries, "Definition of Terrorism",
http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/terrorism

remained divided on a clear definition of "terrorism" and one nation's 'freedom fighter' became another nation's terrorists.

Although, there have been numerous attempts by policy makers, scholars and the media to narrow down the definition of terrorism, however, the term itself is very complex that any attempt of reduction in the definition carries the risk of ignoring some of the important features (Ekaterina Stepanova, 2003). However, most commonly all kinds of violent activities as well as different forms of unbalanced warfare and political extremism are counted as terrorism.

A renowned scholar of terrorism studies, Alex Schmid's research suggests that there will never be a generally accepted definition of terrorism, and the term is ever-changing. Schmid has cited over 250 definitions of the term and indicates that the nature of terrorism, the organization motives and methods are also changing from time to time, which makes it impossible to create a universal definition of terrorism. It is also important to point out that in both politics and research field the definition of terrorism is likely to mirror the interest of the one defining the term.[39]

Concerning the definition of allied forces, the U.S. Army Command, as well as UK Terrorism Act defines terrorism as motivated by religious, political, ideological objectives.[40] However unlike the U.S. and UK the UN Resolution 1566 indicates that terrorism is often regard to be based on political, ideological, philosophical, racial, ethnic, and religious grounds.[41]

At the same time, a Pakistani former military officer urges that, the world should end the use of "war against terrorism" which is widely taken in Islamic world as a war against Muslims. The term "terrorism" should be re-defined in the United Nations (UN) and should be replaced with "Crime against Humanity". He further added that the international community should not only join hands in fighting against extremists and terrorists but should also fight equally against the killers of innocent civilians in Central African Republic to Myanmar, in order to prove that "international community is united against any crime not just the killing of westerners or the citizens of a particular

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[39] Alex Schmid, "Terrorism – The Definitional Problem", Journal of International Law, 36, 2&3, (2004), pp. 382-384.

[40] Alan O'Day, "Dimensions of Terrorism", Ashgate Publishing Limited UK, (2004), pg. xiii.

[41] Lord Carlile of Berriew Q.C., "The Definition of Terrorism", UK Parliamentary Report, (2007), pg. 19

super-power".[42]

Correspondingly an Afghan official also argues that, until now there is no clear definition of the term "terrorism" but the killing of people by militants are usually regarded as terrorism while the killings of women and children by occupying forces are neglected and ignored widely. This makes the situation worst and demand that the "terrorism" should be re-defined and replaced with crime against civilians. He added that, crime against humanity or civilians particularly women and children should be taken very seriously not only against militants or terrorist organization but also against any government or occupying forces, for example in Palestine, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya or Kashmir.[43]

5.2 Military and Intelligence Failure

After 9/11 the U.S. and its allies started the global war on terrorism by using military and intelligence with the aim to eliminate terrorist organizations operating in Afghanistan, and root out these terrorists from safe heavens in both Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Soon after the September 11 attacks, many Islamic Ulema (Muslim clerics) in Afghanistan presented their legal opinion on the issue, and expressed their grief and sorrow over the deaths of innocent people in the 9/11 attacks. They further insisted Osama bin Laden to leave Afghanistan in order to prevent further disorder, urged U.S. not to invade Afghanistan and asked the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the UN to carry out independent and fair investigation of the attacks. However the U.S. officially stated that, "It's time for action, not words," and made it clear that the attacks on Afghanistan are inevitable.[44]

Taking this sudden move, the United States and its allies underestimated the whole situation, as they believed they will be welcome by the Afghans and will be considered as the promoter of democracy and their savior from the evil Taliban. However, that was not the case, the Afghanis who have been victimized for decades, and in past

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[42] Interview with former Pakistani military officer, who requested anonymity

[43] Interview with Afghan official, who requested anonymity

[44] Edwin Chen and John Daniszewski, "Afghan Clerics Urge Bin Laden to Go", Los Angeles Times, (September 21, 2001), at: http://articles.latimes.com/2001/sep/21/news/mn-48175

regarded any foreign invasion as a crusade by the infidels, and in the same way considered the U.S. invasion of their homeland as a war against Islam and Afghanistan.

Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that militant organizations such as Al-Qaeda and Taliban on the one hand, and the Western alliance on the other hand, adopt the same strategy to malign each other, and follow the same ideology to describe their 'enemy' as evil and having immoral character. Both sides try to justify their actions as a promotion of noble cause aimed at eradication of evil system and both parties claim that peace can only be achieved by using force against them.

5.2.1 Failure of Understanding the Taliban/Al-Qaeda

The Americans completely failed to realize the fact that they did not understand the psychology and culture of Taliban, let alone the customs, religion, and territory of Afghanistan. This led to the indiscriminate killings and harassment of innocent civilians, as they often fail to distinguish the terrorists and the civilians. Simultaneously Afghanistan heavily suffered economic losses, society became more disrupt and causalities increased drastically. At the same time, stationing U.S./NATO troops near the civilian areas usually causes rage and frustration among the local Afghans, as it often lead to the increase in violence and killings of civilians.[45]

A renowned Afghan journalist Najibullah Quraishi, who filmed a remarkable documentary "Behind Taliban Lines", revealed unusual findings through his interview with insurgents and the local citizens of Afghanistan. His report suggests that, most of the local citizens in Afghanistan consider Taliban as "good people", helping Afghans to liberate their country from foreign invaders. The locals not only support Taliban and insurgents, but also offer them food and accommodation out of love and sympathy.

The film also reveals that many of the children and families, who are sympathetic towards Taliban, lost their fathers and loved ones during the jihad against Russia, and against NATO or foreign-backed Afghan forces. When asked about, why do they support the insurgents or Taliban, they said that, "because [Taliban] they really care about the civilians and local people", however "NATO, [Afghan] government and Americans don't

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[45] Anand Gopal, "Karzai Aides, Tribal Leaders Say Surge Is Wrong Strategy", The Wall Street Journal, (December 1, 2009), at: http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB125960550353170023

care about the civilians and they just kill everyone."[46]

Describing the mentality of Taliban fighters, the filmmaker observed that, all of them, including their leaders were "just ready to die." When he asked them the reason behind not being afraid of death, they responded confidently that, "We just don't care about life. All we want to be is martyred, to be killed, to fight the non- believers."

Najibullah also disclosed that, Taliban (including Hekmatyar and Mullah Omar) wants the U.S. and NATO forces to leave Afghanistan and vows to continue their fight against what they call 'invaders' until all the foreign forces leave Afghanistan and the region. The Taliban also indicated that they wished to join the Afghanistan government through reconciliation process only after the withdrawal of foreign troops.

The above mentioned facts indicate that the U.S. intelligence failure of understanding the popularity of Taliban and militant fighters, as well as to understand the people of Afghanistan and their way of thinking.

5.2.2 Failure of Cooperating with the Locals

Soon after the war began, the U.S. and NATO forces realized the fact that they lacked the local expertise and did not have much information about the local terrain and culture. Thus they hired local interpreter and looked for the support of local police and officials of installed government to help them to achieve their objectives. However they again failed to understand the psyche of the people and initially underestimated the ability of Afghan National Police (ANP) and government, which further led to betrayal by locals and disinformation to the foreigners by locals.

As for the Islamic world opinion on this issue, in case of any attack on the Muslim land by the infidels, it is obligatory for the Muslims to fight against them, and conduct jihad (holy war) to expel them.[47] Thus when U.S. invaded Afghanistan, many

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[46] Najibullah Quraishi Films, "Behind Taliban Lines", (2010), at: http://quraishifilms.com/films.php?p=29

[47] "Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress, for Allah loves not the transgressor. Fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you, but begin not hostilities… But if they desist, then lo! Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. And fight them until persecution is no more, and religion is for Allah. But if they desist, then let there be no hostility except against wrongdoers." (Al-Baqarah 190-193)

Religious Scope, "Defence of the Muslim Lands, The First Obligation After Iman", at
http://www.religioscope.com/info/doc/jihad/azzam_defence_3_chap1.hmt

Afghans considered it as crusade against Islam and they regarded any supporter or accomplice of the invaders (U.S. and NATO forces) as a spy who will also share same destiny as foreigners and will be punished.[48]

Concerning the fate of the Afghans who work for the U.S. and NATO forces as an interpreter and support their incentives, have to face the anger and criticism of the local population. Most of the interpreters believe that Taliban would eventually seize the power in Afghanistan and at that time, they fear that they will become the first target of the militants.[49] As many Afghan interpreters working for the U.S. have been assaulted, the supporters of the U.S. and its allies eventually have to leave Afghanistan with no hope of ever returning back to their homeland.

A European diplomat, who has been involved in counterterrorism efforts, accepted the failure of establishing effective partnership with the locals and realized the difficulties of continuing their policies in Afghanistan. He argued that, "there is no overall partnership between us and the Afghans. Although we have some partners in the country [Afghanistan], however there are many Afghan government officials who want us to leave."[50]

Study also shows that civilian casualties, indiscriminate killings and lack of development in Afghanistan are considered as the main reason why the Afghans denounce U.S. and NATO presence in the region. Consequently the U.S. faces a serious obstacle in advocating their strategies during the war, in conducting search operations as well as in cooperating with the locals.

At the same time, a number of unethical and inhuman activities carried out by U.S./NATO soldiers in Afghanistan and Iraq, such as night shooting rampage, killing and raping innocent civilians, burning Quran (the holy book of Muslims), and urinating on Taliban corpses has also triggered rage among the locals and further damaged the image

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[48] The Guardian News, "The Taliban clerics' statement on Bin Laden", (20 September 2001), at: http://www.theguardian.com/world/2001/sep/20/afghanistan.september115

[49] Eishiro Takeishi, "Open to interpretation: The fate of Afghans who helped U.S. forces", (August 19, 2013), at: http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/politics/AJ201308190010

[50] Interview with a European diplomat, who requested anonymity

of foreign forces and workers in the region.[51] There is also a growing perception among most of the Afghans and Iraqis that American and NATO soldiers are evil and brutal, and they do not respect the culture and religion of the Muslims.[52] Such incidents and misconducts have further gapped the cooperation among the locals and allied forces, as well as their Afghan supporters.

5.2.3 Use of Excessive Force and Drones

Most of the interviewed officials and scholars believe that the way 'war on terror' is being fought has resulted in the massive spread of terrorism and anger against Westerners and their allies. The air strikes and drone attacks have forced the Afghans, their Pakistani supporters and Al Qaeda militants to hit 'soft targets' and slip to other areas such as Arab and African states such as Syria, Iraq, Libya and Yemen.

The GWOT has resulted in more terrorism and the main reason behind it was that the war gradually developed from what should have been a short CT operation and attack against its prime target (the old Taliban regime) to an intervention that resulted in an operation with other objectives (mission creep). Dr. Edwin Bakker, Director Centre for Terrorism and Counterterrorism at Leiden University, suggests that the U.S. should use rule of law as their main approach instead of military action in tackling with Taliban and Al-Qaeda insurgents.[53]

According to a Pakistani army official, most of the partner countries disagree with the U.S. military approach towards the terrorism problem and it was mainly the U.S. that conducted operations during war on terror. Consequently it not only failed to establish stability in the region but has further destabilized additional countries and region (such as Iraq, Libya, Syria and Yemen).[54]

An Afghan official argued that, the continued use of military power such as night

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[51] David Zucchino, "U.S. troops posed with body parts of Afghan bombers", Los Angeles Times, (April 18, 2012), at:

http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-afghan-photos-20120418,0,6471010,full.story#

[52] Emma Graham-Harrison, "Bye-bye, Miss American Pie – then US helicopter appears to fire on Afghans", The Guardian News, (July 6, 2012), at:

http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/jul/06/bye-bye-american-pie-afghanistan

[53] Interview with Professor Dr. Edwin Bakker, Director Centre for Terrorism and Counterterrorism, Leiden University

[54] Interview with Pakistani Military and Intelligence officer, who wishes to remain anonymous

bombardment or drone attacks have further complicated the war against terror. The local population which is also hit by crime, corruption, nepotism and worst economic conditions had no choice but to support the militant outfits. He believes that, "the support for militant groups also increases when the U.S. and NATO use extra-ordinary military might against militants and cause heavy collateral damage."[55] He further added that, the best way to reinstate peace is to end crime, corruption and nepotism in Afghan society, and ensure basic health, educations services, employment to the youths, and cut support for corrupt politicians, warlords and drug dealers.

The evidence also suggest that majority of the Afghans are skeptic about the U.S. war on terrorism, as many Afghans regard it as war against Afghanistan and believes that their country is being occupied by the U.S. and NATO forces. An Afghan tribal elder Muhammad Qasim believes that, "the U.S. won't be able to solve any problem by using military force," and further urged that "the problem can only be solved by using local tribal leaders to negotiate with the Taliban".[56] At the same time, a young Afghani construction worker expressed his opinion on this issue by saying that, "Only Afghans understand their own geography, culture and way of life, and even if all the American troops will come to this country, they still would not be able to stabilize Afghanistan."[57]

Regarding the U.S. strategies in Afghanistan, an Afghan parliamentarian Shukriya Barakzai expressed her views by stating that, the American President Barack Obama is very far away from the reality and truth in Afghanistan. She further argued that America propagates the hypocritical strategy, and has nothing to do with Afghan nation-building, helping civilians and promoting democracy and human rights."[58]

At the same time, indiscriminate killings of civilians during the war on terrorism in Afghanistan and Iraq also motivated the terrorists to retaliate with more anger.[59]

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[55] Interview with Afghan official, who requested anonymity

[56] Frank James, "Some Key Afghans Oppose U.S. Surge", NPR News Blog - the two-way, (December 1, 2009), at: http://www.npr.org/blogs/thetwo-way/2009/12/some_key_afghans_oppose_us_sur.html

[57] Zaid Jilani, "Views from the Ground: Afghans Offer Mixed Reactions to Obama's Surge Strategy", Think Progress, (December 2, 2009), at:
http://thinkprogress.org/security/2009/12/02/71800/afghans-respond-to-surge/

[58] Sayed Salahuddin, "Afghans unimpressed by Obama's troops surge", Reuters, (December 2, 2009), at: http://www.reuters.com/article/2009/12/02/idUSSP236797

[59] Patrick B. Johnston & Anoop K. Sarbahi, "The Impact of US Drone Strikes on Terrorism in Pakistan and Afghanistan", RAND Corporation, (January 3, 2013).

Concurrently, serious concerns about the efficacy and counter-productive nature of drone strikes have also been raised. As the number of high-level targets killed by drones is extremely low—estimated at just 2% of the total casualties (Peter Bergen & Megan Braun, 2012). Nonetheless, the U.S. continued the use of drones in the region, which not only made the fight against terrorism more complicated and complex, but also increased the public sympathy and support for the Al-Qaeda and Taliban militants, who are now increasingly considered as the righteous soldiers fighting against the foreign invaders.

All the evidence points to the fact that the U.S. and NATO forces should avoid hard-line policies and focus more on diplomatic and reconciliation efforts, with the focus on education, social and economic development.

The repetitive use of excessive force and unsuccessful strategies resulted in more terrorist attacks and now terrorism became a world-wide threat. By understanding the culture and mindsets of locals, identifying causes, realizing the whole situation, with becoming more aware of terrorist organizations and their structure, we can prevent history from repeating itself. Such implications can also help create better counter-terrorism policies, prevent the terrorist attacks, and eventually dismantle terrorist organizations in the region.

5.3 Lack of Cooperation and Failure of Confidence-building Measures

Apparently the U.S. and its allies joined hands to eliminate the common threat of terrorism; however the lack of trust and difference of opinions among the allies and partners limited the cooperation, with each country having its own strategic interest and economic cost and benefit formula to work on. This mistrust has not only created confusion but also encouraged the terrorists and militants to assemble on a single platform and consider all foreign elements as their targets.

Currently, there are two ongoing wars on terrorism; the one is to eliminate terrorism and threats of terrorist organizations, and the second is to destroy the terrorist organizations based in Afghanistan, such as Taliban and Al-Qaeda. It is impossible to eliminate the overall threat of terrorism and eliminate all the terrorist organizations operating in the region; however by using effective policies, efforts can be made to dismantle terrorist organizations.

The ground realities also suggest that it is very difficult to be successful against

terrorism, whatever strategy one uses. The more united the better, but there are differences of opinion among allies and it is politicized so we can only strive to more unity. At the same time, the U.S. sees the issue of terrorism differently than EU member states and they have different ideas than for instance the Afghans or Pakistanis and within Pakistan there are also many different views and voices." Therefore, it is difficult for allies to make an effective partnership and cooperate with each other against the terrorists.

Some scholars also argue that the dual-policy of the Western nations driven by the quest for oil and energy from Gulf region made it more difficult for other nations to constitute a common counter-terrorism strategy.[60]

The study reflects that the U.S. and its allies (mainly, U.K., Poland, Germany, France and Italy) are divided on the issue whether to maintain their troops in Afghanistan. However, the Americans and many EU members approve the stationing of their troops in Afghanistan with the task to train Afghan army and ANP, and contribute to the peace building efforts. However, there is also a difference of opinion between the U.S. and EU members regarding drone attacks, as most of the Americans (71%) approve drone attacks in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and majority of the Europeans (53%) disapprove it.[61]

There is also mistrust and clear lack of cooperation between the allied forces and Afghan government, and further within the government and institutions in Afghanistan itself. As some Afghans and allied forces propose a complete withdrawal from the country, while others believe that the country as well as the whole region will be more destabilized after the withdrawal. At the same time, Afghan government blames the U.S. and allied forces for running illegal torture and detention facilities in their bases and accuses them of continuous violation of the sovereignty of Afghanistan.[62] On the other hand, the U.S. and NATO are strongly critical to the alleged corruption in Afghan

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[60] Harlan Ullman, "Is the US winning or losing the global war on terror and how do we know?",
Australian Journal of International Affairs, Volume 60, Issue 1, (2006), pg. 29-41.

[61] The German Marshall Fund, "Transatlantic Trends - Key Findings 2013", (2013), at:
http://trends.gmfus.org/files/2013/09/TTrends-2013-Key-Findings-Report.pdf

[62] Rahim Faiez, "Afghanistan says UK, US still keeping 'illegal' detention centers on their bases",
Associated Press, (April 29, 2014), at:
http://news.yahoo.com/karzai-uk-us-still-run-illegal-detention-centers-161109929.html

government, considering it as the worst threat than Taliban in Afghanistan.[63] Western allies further argue that the real challenge for the government is to prevent corruption, develop the economy, and protect civil and women rights.

The EU Ambassador to Afghanistan, Franz-Michael Mellbin also argues that the Afghan government had completely failed to promote women's rights, and Afghanistan still remain as one of the worst places for the women.[64] He further criticizes that Afghan government for being careless and reluctant regarding women's rights and moral crimes in the country.

Furthermore within the United States, there is also a growing internal debate over Afghan issue amid different perceptions by various American leaders. Former U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates accused President Barack Obama for losing faith in his own Afghanistan strategy and Iraq policy. He claimed that rapacious U.S. politicians often trample the recommendations of military professionals, who have indeed better understanding of harsh realities on the ground.[65] This criticism showed the differences among American leadership over strategies on Afghanistan and Iraq.

Moreover the U.S. and NATO forces also failed to initiate any confidence-building measures in Afghanistan and Iraq and remained unsuccessful in taking the local population into confidence. The study also suggest that the Al-Qaeda or other militant groups cannot be defeated unless the hearts and minds of local population are won and terrorist leaders are either punished or offered a general amnesty with condition to work for peace, progress and development of their own people and society. As long as the militant leaders remain on wanted list they have no choice than to continue fight and spread their belief.

The scholars also propose that the best options are to encourage the terrorist leaders and militants to surrender after general amnesty and condition them to work for

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[63] Deb Riechmann, "US gen: Corruption is top threat in Afghanistan", Associated Press, (May 2, 2014), at: http://news.yahoo.com/us-gen-corruption-top-threat-afghanistan-173749532--politics.html

[64] Emma Graham-Harrison, "Afghanistan still one of the worst places to be a woman, says EU ambassador", The Guardian News, (March 7, 2014), at: http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/07/hamid-karzai-afghanistan-women-eu-mellbin

[65] Spencer Ackerman, "Obama, Gates and the trouble with the Afghanistan blame game", The Guardian News, (January 8, 2014), at: http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jan/08/obama-gates-memoir-trouble-war-afghanistan

their own people or be isolated from local population. Instead of seeking support from corrupt governments, local war-lords, drug dealers and rival militant groups in conflict areas, the United Nations must be allowed to arrange a general amnesty except for those directly involved in murder of innocent people and give them a chance to return to normal life. At the same time the UN should also take an initiative to punish all soldiers or government forces that are accused of serious human rights violations or have killed innocent people during the GWOT.

Currently many local Afghans are suspicious about the influence and ability of ANP and worry about the security conditions after the withdrawal of international forces, as the U.S. and its allies failed to take the much needed confidence-building measures and neither mobilized locals into the confidence. Parwiz Kawa, the chief editor of Hasht-e-Sobh newspaper, suggests that the U.S. and allied forces should take all the stakeholders into confidence, especially the youth of Afghanistan, who are about 70% of the Afghan population, and are suffering most from the economic crises in the country.[66]

5.4 Failure of Understanding the Motives and Structure of Terrorists

The United States as well as the alliance in the war on terror not only failed to configure the motives and structure of militant organization, but also did not clearly understand their methods of operation.

The study suggests that terrorist and militant groups in Afghanistan are directly motivated by religious ideas, considering themselves as victims of discrimination, and fighting a war of oppression. Use of aggressive and excessive force against these militants and their sympathizers or followers not only provoked them to retaliate fiercely with more aggression and heavy use violence, but also sparked addition tensions within the country.

5.4.1 Configuring the Structure of Militant Organization

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[66] Howard LaFranchi, "Why Afghanistan is nervous about the US troop withdrawal", The Christian Science Monitor, (May 17, 2013), at:
http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Asia-South-Central/2013/0517/Why-Afghanistan-is-nervous-about-the-US-troop-withdrawal

One important reason behind the spread of militancy in youth is the misunderstanding of religion of Islam, and the lack of basic education among economically hit poor lot of the population in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Arab world. A close study of militant organization's structure reveal that it can be divided into three categories: First, the top leadership or the master-brains are the rich and intelligent individuals, who wanted to become an authority and influence the Muslim majority. Secondly, the middle-ranking leadership consists of close relatives and/or loyalists of the master-brains, who are honestly dedicated themselves to the top-leadership. Thirdly, the main fighting force of the terrorists is comprised of lower-middle class, or poor youth who have limited access to education and do not see any future for themselves in society.

The top leadership or their loyalists provide their fighters with adequate financial incentives and a security to their families. The top leadership of militant organizations exploit the Muslim youth by twisting the verses of Holy Quran according to their own visions and objectives, with assurance to their followers that their struggle is aimed at promoting the religion and cleaning the society from sins.

By coincident or design, the western alliance against terrorism initially gave an impression to the Muslim population that the war is between two major civilizations. This misconception further pushed the justification of the objectives of terrorist leaders.

Another major objective of the leadership of Al-Qaeda or Taliban is to present themselves as freedom fighters and saviors of the people, and the occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq further promoted and justified the causes and grounds of terrorist organizations.

5.4.2 Apprehending the Modus Operandi of Terrorists

As far as the modus operandi of terrorist organizations in Afghanistan is concerned, their main objective is to compel foreign forces and gain influence, as well as to get maximum publicity and media attention. To achieve these goals these organizations often target government officials, military, police, business individuals, NGO workers, as well as educational institutions. The type of attack these terrorist groups uses are kidnapping, armed assault, bombing or explosion, and assassination. While their weapon type are mainly different types of firearms, incendiary, explosives, dynamites and bombs.

The militant organizations often select three types of target: The first objective is to hit the Western high value targets and receive overwhelming coverage in the news hungry media. The second objective is to aim at the less-secured soft targets, such as women, NGOs, media, and social activists. The third and more common acts of terrorists are aimed at rich people whose kidnappings can generate huge ransom as well as big media coverage.

The alliance against terrorism did little to counter the main objectives of terrorists and failed to offer a counter-strategy to frustrate the plans of militants. Despite the fact that the over propagation and over coverage of terrorist leadership had been furthering terrorist agenda, yet the Western alliance failed to formulate a media strategy to contain the coverage.

At the same time, Al-Qaeda's main objective is to harm the citizens of U.S. and their allied countries, with the aim to ultimately force U.S. to pull out from international politics and end its dominance behavior. While, the use of excessive force against these terrorists pushed them to further justify their claims and actions.

5.5 Crises of Confidence in the U.S.-led War on Terrorism

The U.S. justified the invasion of Afghanistan as a mission to eradicate Al-Qaeda and Taliban, while the U.S. launched its offensive strike on Iraq with carpet bombing followed by ground operation. The U.S. policy-makers argued that they had rights of pre-emptive strike against any hostile country or regime that harbor or support terrorists, pose a security threat to the U.S. or its allies, and is in the quest of acquiring weapons of mass destruction (WMD). The U.S. made it clear and proved that it is prepared and could use aggressive force against its designated enemies with or without the support of other countries or the United Nation, while insisting to remain immune from the international law or the UN charter for intervention in another country or region.

The unilateral and self-justified actions, failure of forming an effective alliance as well as to gain the trust of allies, by the U.S., led to the increase in crisis of confidence in the U.S.-led war on terror, with many partners doubting the U.S. motives, and losing faith in counter-terrorism strategies in Afghanistan.

Commenting on the United States objectives in war on terrorism, former U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel Robert R. Leonhard argued that the United States wanted to

achieve security from future acts of terror, this objective is a difficult one to achieve, not to say impossible. Leonhard adds that "first, it is a negative goal—we want something to not happen. The problem with a negative goal is that it remains achieved—until something happens. In other words, it is never permanently achieved." He believes that "the prevention of terrorism is accomplished only as long as an act doesn't happen. Hence, security from future terror is unattainable and unachievable."[67]

Former head of the British Armed Forces, General David Julian Richards believes that Islamic militants and Al-Qaeda can only be contained, and urges that defeating them is "unnecessary and would never be achieved." He further suggested that only counter-terrorism measure can be made against terrorism and British military as well as its' government realized their mistake of using aggressive force in Afghanistan and they are responsible for not completely understanding the situation and dangers in Afghanistan. He also admitted that and admitted that the U.S. and NATO are incapable of stabilizing the region and delivering its promises and Afghans are already exhausted of the war on terrorism.[68]

Former British Foreign Secretary David Miliband also denounced the U.S. counterterrorism policy after the 9/11 attacks and said that, "[the] belief that the correct response to the terrorist threat was a military one: to track down and kill a hardcore of extremists" was misleading and mistaken, and ...the War on Terror declared by [the] former [U.S.] President George W. Bush had been entirely counterproductive."[69] This indicates that even the allies of the U.S. considered hard-line policies as a mistake and accept the fact that GWOT failed to achieve its goals.

The United States foreign policy expert and former national security advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski believes that U.S. government and mass media is creating hype and

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[67] LTC(R) Robert R. Leonhard, "The Evolution of Strategy in the Global War on Terror", the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, (2005).

[68] Sean Rayment, "Britain's top soldier says al-Qaeda cannot be beaten", The Telegraph, (November 13, 2010), at:
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/afghanistan/8131651/Britains-top-soldier-says-al-Qaeda-cannot-be-beaten.html

[69] Geraint Hughes, "The Military's Role in Counterterrorism: Examples and Implications for Liberal Democracies", Strategic Studies Institute U.S. Army War College, (May 2011), at:
http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/PUB1066.pdf

over-reacting towards the issue of terrorism.[70] According to him, the U.S. should concentrate on improving its' intelligence capabilities and enhance their understanding of terrorists and root cause of problem. This suggest that the U.S. is creating fear inside the U.S. as well as in the society as a whole, by exaggerating the threat of terrorism, so that if any unexpected attack might occur, they can justify their apprehension, and if not then they can prove that their security measures are effective and they are doing a good job protecting world from terrorism (Walter Russell Mead).

The results of war on terrorism in Afghanistan and Iraq, and hard-line policies in Yemen, Libya and Syria, also indicate that a continued fight against faceless Al-Qaeda or other Islamic groups will only result is unnecessary and perhaps futile. The only effective way to prevent future Al Qaeda attacks would be for the United States to take all its forces out of the Middle East (Robert Pape, 2005). As far as the U.S. interest and security is concerned, the U.S. does not need to deploy ground forces in Afghanistan. The U.S. should form effective alliances with the regional countries, and in case of any serious crises it can rely on its' military bases, and naval and air power in the region.[71]

Moreover the U.S. should utilize confidence building measures and strengthen its alliances in Asia, especially with Pakistan, China, India and Central Asian countries. By exchanging information with allies and strengthening their support for the partners in war on terrorism, the U.S. can not only prevent the future attacks, but can also ultimately dismantle terrorist organizations. The interoperability, mutual trust and confidence are the basis of any alliance, which allow all the parties to focus on common strategy and merge their efforts in terms of military, economics and diplomacy.

The future of stability in Afghanistan also depends on the arrangement and maintenance of coalition between the U.S., regional countries, and the EU. It is also important to promote the strengthening the relationships between the different allies. For instance, both India and Pakistan should be encouraged to cooperate with each other and overcome their longstanding differences through peace and dialogues.

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[70] Jim Lehrer, PBS Newshour, "Brzezinski and Mead on Terrorism", (March 20, 2003), at: http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/middle_east-jan-june03-terrorism_03-20/

[71] Robert A. Pape, "Cutting the Fuse: The Explosion of Global Suicide Terrorism and How to Stop It", University of Chicago Press, (2010). pp. 328-330.

CHAPTER 6   Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusion:

Counterterrorism operations are subject to change according to the nature of the terrorism threat. Indeed, international terrorism remains persistent and adaptive. While terrorism is a tactic that cannot be entirely eradicated, steps can be taken to disrupt, dismantle, and finally defeat the organizations that use terrorism as a tool. I believe that, the U.S. should not use force against the force, the aggressive and hard-line policies by the U.S. is creating more terrorism in the region and causing the spread of terrorism.

The study shows that there is not one single approach that does the trick to eliminate terrorism; neither should we call the struggle against terrorism a war. A mix of approaches ranging from good intelligence to preventive measures and targeted action against the leadership of terrorist organizations (with the aim to put them in front of a court) should be adopted. Dr. Bakker propose that the U.S. and its' allies should almost completely pull-out their forces out of Afghanistan after 2014. It will initially lead to more chaos, but it is up to the Afghans to do something about that and should decide over their future, only with the little help from other countries. At the same time, the establishment of well functioning government that upholds the rule of law to all its citizens and residents can ensure the restoration of a long-lasting peace and stability in Afghanistan and elsewhere.

On the other hand some scholars argue that the U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan should not pull out completely until and unless a United Nations Peace and Development Force (UNPDF) or a Regional Peace and Development Force can be deployed in Afghanistan. The Afghans in general, including Taliban, do not want to see continued chaos in the country but free from foreign dictation. At the same time, Afghans are equally against the return of terrorists or warlords either linked with Taliban, or foreign elements who often used "Taliban Card" to win Western financial support. The people in terrorism affected countries particularly Afghanistan are interested to get rid of fundamentalists, corrupt politicians and mafia gangs who are eager to return to power in the name of war on terror or fight against Taliban.

Series of the interrogations of arrested terrorists in Pakistan and Afghanistan

revealed that majority of militant youths were directly hit by crime and corruption and unemployment in society and had no choice but to join "a movement for justice and punishment". Majority of the militants of terrorist organizations also still believe that the war on terror is actually aimed at Muslims and Islam. Therefore by necessary confidence building measures and revision of strategies the U.S. and its allies could concentrate on economic opportunities for unemployed youths and provide a platform to some-what educated and semi-educated (Madrassa) children to play a role in fight against crime and corruption, satisfy their ego and earn living for themselves as well as for their family.

Consequently the U.S. and allied forces should also engage the militants in talks and give them a chance to join struggle for peace and justice and turn the "war on terror" into a set of strategy i.e. war against crime and corruption, though mass participation and with opportunities of employment for youths. This will not only send them a message that the war on terror is not aimed at Muslims but will also prove that it is against oppressors and those who have exploited the poor and neglected population.

It is also possible for the International Community under the UN to join hands and fight all sorts of crime (whether by terrorist groups or government), end corruption and nepotism not only in particular and targeted area or society but at all level. However, it doesn't seem possible in current scenario as every country cares for its own interests and undermines others. So the only way out is a sincere unified approach and not just guided by one particular super-power or country to address terrorism related issue and not just hitting the militants.

6.2 A Cooperative Approach against Terrorism

Terrorism in Afghanistan is not limited to one country or nation, but it is also directly affecting the neighboring countries as well as the whole region. Since terrorism is a global menace therefore it can only be dealt by developing an effective alliance and sincere partnership, and addressing the basic root causes of terrorism. A formulation of successful partnership with broad capacity of cooperation and collective interests can be achieved by gaining mutual trust and strengthening broader unity. At the same time, long-term stability and security of Afghanistan can also achieved by taking care of the interests of the other regional countries such as Iran, Pakistan, India and China.

Many regional countries are highly concerned about the instability and chaos in Afghanistan. For instance, China is worried about Afghanistan's insecurity and its spillover effects on the other regional countries, especially Pakistan. China's interest for a stable Afghanistan is also directly linked with the stability of China's Xinjiang region which borders Pakistan as well as Afghanistan.

Pakistan is eager to establish stability in Afghanistan due to the fact that such a peace and harmony there can directly calm down unrest and militant activities along Pakistan-Afghan border region and particularly Pakistan's tribal areas where thousands of Afghans have settled since last three decades.

At the same time it is also in the greater interest of India that stabilization returns to Afghanistan, as terrorism poses a serious threat to the security and stability of the whole region including India where Muslim majority in Kashmir looks for their rights of self-determination and often draws sympathies from militants. On the other India is struggling to increase its influence in the region, and is worried that after the withdrawal of U.S. and NATO forces the militant groups in Afghanistan would fill the vacuum and endanger India's interest in the region.

Another important regional country and neighbor of Afghanistan, Iran is also affected by any chaotic situation in Afghanistan. Iranian Government sees an unstable Afghanistan as serious hurdle to its influence in the region and an ultimate threat to its own internal security due to the fact that majority of Afghans are Sunni Muslims and influenced by pro-Sunni radical scholars who see Iran as threat.

Perhaps, Pakistan has paid the highest cost due to terrorism, war on terror and the reaction of unrest Afghanistan. Until 2003, Pakistan was free from suicide bombings and concentrations of militants. But after U.S. lead offensive in Afghanistan most terrorists and militants were pushed into Pakistan's tribal areas vulnerable to security breach. Experts agree that had there been pre-emptive measures to contain the militants within Afghan borders during war on terror Pakistan would not have faced the terrorist attacks in such scale.

Most of internal threats in Pakistan are directly related to the disorder in Afghanistan or the region's occupation first by the then Soviet Union and later by U.S.-led alliance. Therefore it is imperative for Pakistan to seek secure and prosperous

Afghanistan.

Since stable and safer Afghanistan is beneficial for all regional countries, therefore it is logical that allies in war on terror and regional countries together should formulate a joint strategy to counter terrorism. Combined efforts of NATO, Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and other regional organizations could prove highly successful for combating terrorists and reconstruction process in Afghanistan.

At the same time, the regional countries, such as Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, and Iran, should also consider SCO and other regional organization's role as an effective regional instrument in ensuring stability in Afghanistan and a right forum to address the terrorism threat. The SCO as a regional body can play an important role and make a more positive contribution against overall threat to the region. The SCO can also address many destabilizing factors including economic challenges and commercial collaboration that can bridge the gap between rich and poor. At the same time, The SCO and other regional should also institutionalize their role and involvement in Afghanistan under the UNSC resolution.

A cooperative approach against terrorism can become a reality, if all state actors follow the status quo and formulate an effective partnership. At the same time, a practical and efficient approach backed by economic incentives can also offer an alternative way for the no-future youths of the region who often fall into the inducement offered by militants.

The rising challenges posed by terrorism to the world in general and the region in particular demand a practical formulate based on mutual interests and aimed at long-termed security and safeguarding the territorial integrity of all the regions. The sense of collective interests and responsibilities can offer an opportunity to all the allies and stake-holders to work sincerely for enhancing international cooperation against terrorism and encourage a genuine move to ensure stability and economic development of Afghanistan.

At the same time, the Afghans should also be provided with an opportunity to elect or select a government model of their own choice without a foreign intervention or influence in their country. However, the Afghans should be offered a limited help and assistance by international community to improve the governance.

6.3 Recommendations

An effective partnership and cooperation can emerge only when all countries and people will enjoy equal rights which are not possible under the current set of the United Nations. The Big Five (permanent members of the United Nations Security Council) have veto powers and can reject anything which don't suit them. Militarily strong countries can deny the basic rights to area or people under their occupation or control while one country's terrorists are another country's freedom fighters. Only after addressing the basic issues that breed terrorism the world will be safe and secure, and free from terrorism.

The facts indicate that military operations against terrorist organizations have a very low success rates, and in the past, use of force has rarely been an effective policy against terrorist groups. Therefore the U.S. should also bring an end to the hostile and aggressive policies against terrorists and should focus more on politicization and/or policing.

Some policy recommendations which can help minimize the threat of terrorism and counter terrorism are as follows:

1. Establishment of a new organization comprised of representatives of UN member countries that can sincerely and freely address and define the "terrorism", identify the "root-cause behind terrorism" and prepare a new agenda to propose punishment for crime against humanity (terror acts or use of force against civilians) by any individual, group or country.

2. A South Africa-style "Reconciliation Process" which may include a general amnesty for militants who are ready to say good bye to terrorism and give up violent activities, this will provide an opportunity to make a fresh start for misguided youths.

3. Establishment of an International Fund to help finance and re-settlement program for the victims of terrorism and war on terror, occupation and repression by any group, country or occupying forces.

4. An International Project to provide health, education and employment to local soldiers of terrorist outfits.

5. Establishment of local/regional peace force to implement a balanced political system in conflict hit countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Somalia etc. that can ensure the rule of majority population with proper and due participation of all minorities and ethnic groups.

6. A fast-track campaign should be launched to uplift the miserable conditions of poor people, particularly youngsters in the tribal areas as the region is still deprived of most basic necessities of life.

7. Measures should be taken to minimize the propagation of terrorists, and media should be trained in a way so that they do not intentionally or unintentionally encourage the terrorists and militancy. While an effective 'media strategy' should be formed, with the aim to disrupt the publicity of terrorists and their actions in electronic, print and social media.

8. The U.S. as well as other regional countries should join hands in combining their counter-terrorism strategies and formulate an honest and sincere partnership with each other. Interoperability between the alliance partners should also be enhanced, with strengthening the supportive relationship between allies as well as regional countries.

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Appendices

Appendix A - Interview Questions

1. In your opinion what are the top three approaches that can achieve the objectives in war on terrorism?

2. Do you share the belief that 'war on terrorism' in this region (Afghanistan) has resulted in the spread of terrorism to other regions of the world such as Middle East and Africa? If so what went wrong?

3. Do you believe that the 'war on terrorism' has failed to reinstate peace and stability in Asian-Arab region (Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq and Yemen etc) and why?

4. Should the United States and its' allies pull-out their forces completely out of Afghanistan after 2014 and will that help restore stability or invite more chaos? Please explain?

5. According to a RAND Corporation (U.S. think-tank) report "How Terrorist Groups End - Lessons for Countering Al-Qaeda", the use of military force has rarely been effective against terrorist groups in the past. In your opinion what should be the approach?

6. The term "terrorism", besides being subjective, remained constantly politicized by the vested circles against a particular section of people and areas. How do you think we can address the issue and do you believe there is any clear definition of "terrorism"?

7. General Sir David Richards, Chief of Defense Staff of the British Armed Forces (2010), expressing his opinion, regarding defeating Al-Qaeda and Islamist militancy argues that "it is unnecessary and would never be achieved", what are your opinions on this issue?

8. Do you believe that mistrust, lack of cooperation and difference of opinions on war on terror are the main reasons that has stalled a success against terrorism. Is it possible to merge the common approach in the formulation of an effective and unified strategy against threat of terrorism?

9. How allies can make effective partnership and cooperate with each other against the terrorists?

10. What are the best possible counter-terrorism measurements that can ensure the restoration of a long-lasting peace and stability in the world?

Appendix B: "Pakistani Public Opinion on the Swat Conflict, Afghanistan, and the US" by Socio-Economic Development Consultants Survey, the questionnaires were developed by Program on International Policy Attitudes (WorldPublicOpinion.org), May 17-28, 2009. N=1,000, Country=Pakistan, Margin of Error: +/- 3.2 %.

Q1. As you may know the UN has authorized a NATO mission in Afghanistan, manned by forces from the US and other countries. This mission is meant to stabilize Afghanistan and help the government defend itself from Taliban insurgents. Do you approve or disapprove of this mission?

NATO mission should be continued	18%
NATO mission should be ended now	72%
Refused/Don't know	10%

Q2. Do you think the NATO mission in Afghanistan should be continued or do you think it should be ended now?

NATO mission should be continued	13%
NATO mission should be ended now	79%
Refused/Don't know	8%

Q3. If the Taliban were to regain power in Afghanistan do you think this would be very good, somewhat good, somewhat bad or very bad?

Very good	7%
Somewhat good	17%
Somewhat bad	7%
Very bad	54%
Neither good nor bad	10%
Refused/Don't know	5%

Q4. Which of these two views is closer to yours?

The US tries to promote international laws for other countries, but is hypocritical because it often does not follow these rules itself	66%
The US has been an important leader in promoting international	28%

laws, and sets a good example by following them	
Refused/Don't know	5%

Q5. In our government's relations with the US, do you think the US more often treats us fairly, OR abuses its greater power to make us do what the US wants?

Treats us fairly	6%
Abuses its greater power	90%
Refused/Don't know	5%

Q6. Which of the following three views is closest to yours?

The US mostly shows respect to the Islamic world	7%
The US is often disrespectful to the Islamic world, but out of ignorance and insensitivity	34%
Definitely not a goal	55%
Refused/Don't know	4%

Q7. Do you think that U.S. wants to maintain control over the oil resources of the Middle East?

Somewhat positive	75%
Mixed	17%
Somewhat negative	4%
Definitely not a goal	1%
Refused/Don't know	3%

Q8. Overall, would you say your feelings toward al Qaeda are very positive, somewhat positive; mixed, somewhat negative, or very negative?

Very positive	5%
Somewhat positive	22%
Mixed	16%
Somewhat negative	23%

Very negative	22%
Refused/Don't know	12%

Q9. Do you think the current US drone attacks that are aimed at militant camps in northwestern Pakistan, near the Afghan border, are justified or not justified?

Justified	13%
Not justified	82%
Refused/Don't know	5%

Q10. If the US were to identify training camps of Al Qaeda operating in Pakistan, do you think the US would or would not be justified in bombing these camps?

Would be justified	13%
Would not be justified	81%
Refused/Don't know	6%

Demographics of the survey

Gender

Male	62%
Female	38%

What religion do you follow?

Christian	1%
Muslim	99%

Would you say you are?

Very religious	45%
Somewhat religious	42%
Not very religious	6%
Refused/Don't know	6%

Age

16-29	41%
30-39	27%
40-49	20%
50-59	9%
60+	4%

Geographic stratum by province:

Punjab	56%
Sind	24%
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Northwest Frontier Province)	14%
Baluchistan	6%

Appendix C: Interview Questionnaire, "Afghanistan in 2013 - A Survey of the Afghan People", by The Asia Foundation Survey in association with Afghan Center for Socio-economic and Opinion Research (ACSOR), Kabul. N=9260, Country=Afghanistan, Margin of Error: +/- 2.25%.

Q.1 Overall, based on your own experience, do you think things in Afghanistan today are going in the right direction, or do you think they are going in the wrong direction?

Base: All Respondents	9260
Right direction	57%
Wrong direction	38%
Refused (vol.)	*
Don't know (vol.)	5%

Q.2 In your view what are the two biggest problems facing Afghanistan as a whole?

	1st mention	1st & 2nd mention
Base: All Respondents	9260	18520
Insecurity/attacks/violence/terrorism	17%	30%
Corruption	15%	26%
Unemployment	13%	25%
Poor economy	5%	10%
Poverty	4%	9%

Q.3 Do you think reconciliation efforts between the Afghan government and armed opposition groups can help to stabilize the country, or not?

Base: All Respondents	9260
Yes	63%
No	32%
Refused	*
Don't know	4%

Q.5 In your opinion what is the reason that the armed opposition groups are fighting against the Afghan government?

Column percents	Base: All Respondents
Base: All Respondents	9260
Presence of foreign troops/international community	22%
To gain power	20%
They are supported by Pakistan	10%
Too much corruption in the government	5%
They are dissatisfied with the government	5%
To support Islam	4%
For money	3%
Unemployment/poverty	3%
They are against democracy	2%
To create insecurity	2%
To establish security	2%
Illiteracy	2%
Fighting is their way of life	1%
Lack of attention to their desires	1%
Injustice	1%
Ethnic problems	1%
To defend the country	1%
To destroy our country	1%
Creating fear/terror	1%
They implement law	1%
They are brutal/cruel	1%
They are supported/motivated by foreign countries	1%
Don't know (vol.)	7%

Q.5 In your view what is the biggest cause of crime in Afghanistan?

Base: All Respondents	9260
Unemployment	23%
Corruption	14%
Illiteracy	9%
Poverty/weak economy	8%
Insecurity	8%
Lack of government attention/Weak government	5%
Taliban	4%
Drugs	3%
Existence of irresponsible armed groups	3%
Lack of law implementation	3%
Discrimination	3%
Presence of international forces	3%
Pakistan's interference	2%
Injustice	2%
Terrorism	1%
Murders	1%
Robberies	1%
Criminals released without punishment	1%
Family problems	1%
Suicide attacks	1%

Demographics of the survey

Gender

Male	62%
Female	38%

Age

18-29	38%
30-39	26%
40-49	19%
50-59	8%
60+	4%

Ethnicity

Pashtun	43%
Tajik	32%
Hazara	10%
Uzbek	7%
Turkmeni	2%
Arab	2%
Other	4%

Appendix D: American public opinion on war on terrorism in Afghanistan and Iraq.

D-1 NBC News/Wall Street Journal Poll conducted by the polling organizations of Peter Hart and Bill McInturff, Jan. 12-15, 2013. N=1,000 adults in the United States.

Q. Do you think the war in Afghanistan against the Taliban and Al Qaeda has been very successful, somewhat successful, somewhat unsuccessful, or very unsuccessful?

Very successful	7%
Somewhat successful	55%
Somewhat unsuccessful	22%
Very unsuccessful	13%
Unsure	3%

D-2 CBS News Poll, March 20-23, 2014. N=1,097 adults in US, Margin of error ± 3.

Q. Most U.S. troops are expected to leave Afghanistan by the end of 2014. From what you know, how likely do you think it is that Afghanistan will be a stable country after U.S. troops leave: very likely, somewhat likely, not very likely or not at all likely?

Very likely	5%
Somewhat likely	24%
Not very likely	38%
Not at all likely	30%

Unsure	3%

D-3 CBS News/New York Times Poll, June 24-28, 2011. N=979 adults in the U.S., Margin of error ± 3.

Q. When the U.S. withdraws its troops from Afghanistan, do you think the threat of terrorism against the United States will increase, decrease, or stay the same?

Increase	26%
Decrease	6%
Stay the same	65%
Unsure	3%

D-4 ABC News/Washington Post Poll, Dec. 12-15, 2013. N=1,005 adults in the U.S., Margin of error ± 3.5.

Q. All in all, considering the costs to the United States versus the benefits to the United States, do you think the war in Afghanistan has been worth fighting, or not?

Worth fighting	30%
Not worth fighting	66%
Unsure	4%

D-5 CNN/ORC Poll, March 24-25, 2012. N=1,014 adults in the U.S., Margin of error ± 4.5.

Q1. Do you favor or oppose the U.S. war in Afghanistan?

Favor	25%
Oppose	72%
Unsure	3%

Q2. Do you think the United States is winning or not winning the war in Afghanistan?

Is winning	34%
Is not winning	61%
No opinion	5%

D-6 CNN/Opinion Research Corporation Poll, Aug. 6-10, 2010. N=1,009 adults in the U.S., Margin of error ± 3.

Q. How much confidence do you have in the ability of the government of Afghanistan to handle the situation in that country? Are you very confident, somewhat confident, not very confident, or not confident at all?

Very confident	6%
Somewhat confident	23%
Not very confident	35%
Not confident at all	36%

D-7 Quinnipiac University Poll, July 13-19, 2010. N=2,181 registered voters in the U.S., Margin of error ± 2.1.

Q. Do you think the United States will be successful in eliminating the threat from terrorists operating from Afghanistan or not?

Will be successful	35%
Will not be successful	55%
Unsure	9%

D-8 Pew Research Center/USA Today, Jan. 15-19, 2014. N=765 adults in the U.S., Margin of error ± 4.1.

Q. Overall, do you think the United States has mostly succeeded or mostly failed in achieving its goals in Iraq?

Year	Mostly succeeded	Mostly failed	Unsure/Refused
1/15-19/14	37%	52%	11%
3/14-17/13	46%	43%	11%
11/9-14/11	56%	33%	10%

D-9 CNN/ORC Poll, March 15-17, 2013. N=1,021 adults in the U.S., Margin of error ± 3.

Q.1 Would you say that the initial decision to send U.S. troops to Iraq in 2003 was a smart thing to do or a dumb thing to do? N=513 (Version B), margin of error ± 4.5

Year	Smart	Dumb	Mixed (vol.)	Unsure
3/15-17/13	38%	59%	2%	1%
12/16-18/11	45%	51%	2%	2%

Q. 2 Do you think the United States' action in Iraq has been morally justified, or not?"

2008 & earlier: "Do you think the US' action in Iraq is morally justified, or not?"

Year	Morally justified	Not morally justified	Unsure
3/15-17/13	48%	51%	1%
12/16-18/11	48%	50%	2%
3/14-16/08	45%	52%	3%
6/22-24/07	42%	54%	4%
6/8-11/06	45%	47%	8%

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