

The U.S. Supply of Military Assistance to Iraq, post Mosul: Pursuing Interests at the Cost of Influence

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Military assistance is a foreign policy tool that has been employed by rulers, warriors, and politicians since ancient times. Gaius Octavius (Augustus) is said to have pursued a strategy of economy of force by seeking assistance from clients in exchange for subsidies to defend the Roman Empire.¹ The Byzantine, Ottoman, and European empires maintained donor-recipient relationships in their conduct of imperial politics.² Britain for example successfully leveraged military assistance to European powers as they fought Napoleon's army in the Peninsular Wars (1808-1814).³ Pre-World War I, Germany supplied military assistance in the form of weapons and training to Brazil. Within this South American context, the U.S., by seeking to displace European powers and their supplies from the continent, began dispatching assistance overseas in the form of military and naval missions.⁴

U.S. Presidential Doctrines and Military Assistance

The basic premise of the Lend-Lease Act of 1941, the first formal military assistance programme of the U.S., was that arms and military advisors would be made available to those Latin American countries that provided access to military bases and strategic assets.⁵ In the wake of World War II amidst the changing tides of history for European powers, the U.S. adopted the Truman doctrine, which provided for the extension of military assistance, including money, troops, and equipment to both Greece and Turkey, with a view to

containing the Soviet Union.⁶ President Jimmy Carter introduced human rights considerations into foreign aid decisions, although military inducements (i.e. the needs of potential aid recipients combined with the extent to which countries could be a military asset) remained the primary determinant.⁷

Iraq at the beginning of the 1950's, was neither aligned to, nor supplied militarily by the U.S., but Great Britain. At this time, the U.S. was only beginning to expand its influence in Iraq. However, like the Shah in Tehran, the pro-Western Iraqi monarchy feared Communist expansionism in the Middle East.⁸ Thus, in exchange for agreement to participate in a regional anti-Soviet alliance, the Iraqi government under Nuri Al-Said obtained a U.S. military assistance package inclusive of financing to procure weapons, training, and military advice.⁹

Since the Nixon administration's Twin Pillar policy towards Iran and Saudi Arabia, the U.S. had identified the Shah as the primary guardian of U.S. interests in the Persian Gulf, but Iran's Islamic Revolution and the U.S. hostage crisis of 1979 changed that. Where the Carter Doctrine had proclaimed that any external aggression against the Gulf was to be regarded as an assault on U.S. interests, the Reagan

¹ W.H. Mott, *Military Assistance: An Operational Perspective* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999), p. 64.

² W.H. Mott, *United States Military Assistance: An Empirical Perspective* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), p. 1.

³ Mott, *Military Assistance*, p. 64.

⁴ Mott, *United States Military Assistance*, p. 90.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, 'Milestones: 1945–1952: The Truman Doctrine, 1947', <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/truman-doctrine> (last accessed 07 February 2015).

⁷ J.H. Lebovic, 'National Interests and US Foreign Aid: The Carter and Reagan Years', *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 25, No.2 (1988), p. 128.

⁸ T. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance: The Secret Dealings of Israel, Iran, and the U.S.* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2007), p. 21; D.C. Williamson, 'Exploiting Opportunities: Iraq Secures Military Aid from the West, 1953-56', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 36 (2004), p. 90.

⁹ Mott, *United States Military Assistance*, pp. 166-7; Williamson, 'Exploiting Opportunities', pp. 95-7.

doctrine included threats to internal stability and the territorial integrity of Gulf countries.¹⁰ While military inducements continued to play a substantial role in determining military assistance' allocations under Reagan, alignment more so than in the Carter years was a determining factor.¹¹ Thus, after President Carter's initial declaration of neutrality, when Reagan came to power within months of the Iran-Iraq war breaking out and with the U.S.-Iranian alignment ended, the Reagan administration chose to support the Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein by means of bank guarantees, military support, and arms.¹²

Fearing an attack on its Gulf allies, the U.S. objective was to contain the new Islamist regime in Tehran and prevent the emergence of a Shiite led government in Baghdad in order to maintain the balance of power in the Gulf.¹³ Thus, when the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq brought a Shiite led government to power in Baghdad, an objective which Iran had failed to achieve over the previous twenty years, Iran expanded its influence in Iraq strategically inconveniencing the U.S. The Maliki years (2006-2014) were viewed as politics from the right arm of Tehran.¹⁴ The extent of Iranian influence in the corridors of power in Baghdad and on the ground at least in those areas still under Baghdad's control became increasingly evident after the capture of Mosul, Iraq's second largest city, by Islamic State (IS) forces on 10 June 2014.

Henceforth, the objective of this paper is to determine what U.S. military assistance to Iraq

after the loss of Mosul tells us about the emerging landscape and what determines military assistance. Today, Iraq receives military assistance under a multitude of programmes, all consisting of the transfer of defence articles and services via sale, lease, or grants and levied to further national security and foreign policy objectives. The next part of this paper maintains that U.S. military assistance even after the loss of Mosul forms part of the long term strategy to secure U.S. interests, although the long-term success of such a strategy seems doubtful in view of the pro-Iranian tendencies that have taken hold in Baghdad. The second part of the paper maintains that U.S. foreign military sales (FMS) to Iraq decorated in human rights concerns are driven by the U.S. global war on terror, but that these aims do not align with those of the Iraqi Federal Government (IFG), which leads the latter to diversity suppliers.

Strategic Assistance in the Form of U.S. Basing Attempts: Unwanted and Likely Short-Term

"The primary document governing political, economic, and security relations between the U.S. and Iraq" is the Strategic Framework Agreement (SFA) signed in 2008.¹⁵ One of the principal provisos is that the U.S. will not use Iraqi land, sea, or air as a launching or transit point for attacks against third countries, nor seek permanent bases nor a permanent military presence in Iraq.¹⁶ Despite fears that the U.S. sought to carve out a base in Iraq to complete a military encirclement of Iran, this proviso limits Iraq's strategic value to any U.S. administration.¹⁷

A second document, the U.S.-Iraq Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), until its expiration on 31 December 2011, governed the U.S.

¹⁰ W. Safire, 'Essay: The Reagan Corollary', *New York Times*, 4 October 1981,

<http://www.nytimes.com/1981/10/04/opinion/essay-the-reagan-corollary.html> (last accessed 19 February 2015).

¹¹ J.H. Lebovic, pp. 123-4.

¹² P. Razoux, *La guerre Iran-Irak : Première guerre du Golfe, 1980-1988* (Paris: Perrin, 2013), pp. 95 & 293.

¹³ *Ibid*, pp. 95 & 293.

¹⁴ A. Khadery, 'Why we Stuck with Maliki – and lost Iraq', *The Washington Post*, 3 July 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/why-we-stuck-with-maliki--and-lost-iraq/2014/07/03/Odd6a8a4-f7ec-11e3-a606-946fd632f9f1_story.html (last accessed 22 March 2015); S. Henderson, 'The Battle for Iraq is a Saudi War on Iran', in *Foreign Policy*, 12 June 2014, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/06/12/the-battle-for-iraq-is-a-saudi-war-on-iran> (last accessed 22 March 2015).

¹⁵ A.H. Cordesman and S. Khazai, *Iraq in Crisis* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), p. 9.

¹⁶ *Ibid*.

¹⁷ S. Peterson, 'Behind Diplomacy, Iran Sees a Fight Coming', *Christian Science Monitor*, 31 March 2005, <http://www.csmonitor.com/2005/0331/p06s01-wome.html> (last accessed 23 March 2015); K.L. Afrasiabi, 'How Iran will Fight Back', in *Asia Times*, 16 December 2004, http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Middle_East/FL16Ak01.html (last accessed 24 March 2015).

security relationship with Iraq. Specifically, the SOFA covered the U.S. presence, activities, and eventual withdrawal from the country. It was perceived by the Iranians as a U.S. attempt to encircle Iran, to secure bases to attack Iran's nuclear facilities, and to send covert operatives and Special Forces into Iran.¹⁸ Failure to renegotiate an extension resulted in an end to the deployment of all U.S. troops and a strategic setback in Iraq. While a blame game amongst U.S. officials emerged, over the reasons for its non-renewal, following the collapse of ten of the fourteen divisions of the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) as the IS advanced on Mosul, the crux of the problem lay with a pro-Iranian block in the Iraqi parliament, hence pressure from and a strategic gain for Iran.¹⁹

Withdrawal included no intelligence support to assist in targeting Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), no air support, and inadequate training assistance. As U.S. and Iraqi officials were left renegotiating a rapid re-entry into Iraq in June 2014, securing U.S. interests more than providing air support and training to combat IS militants was prioritised by the Obama administration. The initial response stage consisted of protecting U.S. embassy personnel, remaining American contractors, and U.S. facilities; a military assistance needs assessment and establishment of three joint operation centres, with the first one in Baghdad, for intelligence sharing and coordination efforts; and securing critical infrastructure at Baghdad

¹⁸ Kenneth Katzman, interviewed by Linda Wertheimer, 'Al-Maliki Demands Timetable for Iraq' *Withdrawal Weekend Edition*, 12 July 2008, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=92489073> (last accessed 24 March 2015).

¹⁹ C. Kahl, 'No, Obama Didn't Lose Iraq', in *Politico Magazine*, 15 June 2014, <http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2014/06/no-obama-didnt-lose-iraq-107874.html#.VRICMC403VE> (Last accessed 24 March 2015); J. Cole, 'Sadrist to Demonstrate in Baghdad against US Troops Remaining', *Informed Comment*, 8 September 2011, www.juancole.com/2011/09/sadrist-to-demonstrate-in-baghdad-against-us-troops-remaining.html (last accessed 24 March 2015).

International Airport.²⁰

The subsequent establishment of operation centres in Erbil, the regional capital of Kurdistan, close to the Iranian border, and in Anbar province, in western Iraq, which borders Syria and Jordan demonstrates a continuation of the U.S. goal to maintain the unity of Iraq. Describing IS as a regional threat, U.S. administration officials defined U.S. interests as maintaining Iraq's stability and establishment of a national unity government before action was to be taken against IS.²¹ These interests serve the longstanding U.S. strategy dating back to the Nixon administration of maintaining the traditional balance of power in the Gulf.

While unlikely in the current instability, the possibility that the Iraqi parliament would bring an end to this basing-intelligence gathering combo should not be unanticipated. Despite the U.S. having the Baghdad centre fully operational by the end of June, the Head of the Iraqi National Intelligence Service, General Qassem Atta, criticised initial U.S. efforts, and maintained that the Iraqi's had no choice but to go to Iran [for arms]; yet Iran's own vast intelligence networks failed to foresee the rapid advance of IS.²² Kurdish leaders of pro-

²⁰ U.S. Department of Defense, 'DOD Provides Security Help for Baghdad Diplomatic Facilities', *DoD News*, 15 June 2014,

<http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=122482> (Last accessed 24 March 2015); U.S. Department of Defense, 'DOD Continues Security Assistance at State Department's Request', *DoD News*, 16 June 2014, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=122489> (Last accessed 24 March 2015); Jim Garamone, 'Dempsey: Leaders Wait to Hear From Iraq Assessment Teams', *DoD News*, 2 July 2014, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=122578> (Last accessed 24 March 2015).

²¹ 'The White House Remarks by the President on the Situation in Iraq', Press Briefing, 19 June 2014, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/06/19/remarks-president-situation-iraq> (last accessed 25 June 2015); Jim Garamone, 'Chairman Describes U.S. Interests in Iraq', *DoD News*, 3 July 2014, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=122609> (last accessed 25 June 2015).

²² T.C. Marshall Jr., 'Baghdad Joint Operations Centre at Full Capacity', *DoD News*, 30 June 2014, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=122578> (last accessed 25 June 2015).

western tendencies called the U.S. response selfish.²³ Closer examination reveals that the joint operation centres rather than a specific response to supporting the ISF form part of a worldwide initiative of the U.S. Defense Department begun under former Defense Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, in order to 'meet 21st century military needs'.²⁴

Current legal protections and immunity for the 3,100 U.S. troops deployed to Iraq are based on diplomatic notes, which are a formal means of correspondence between governments and grant the same level of protection that President Obama was unwilling to accept when attempting to negotiate the SOFA's renewal in 2011.²⁵ These notes epitomise neither parliamentary nor constituency support, which leaves the U.S. on frail footing. The Iraqi government has already threatened to cancel the SFA, which was in response to a delivery delay of an initial eight F-16 fighter jets due to insecurity at Balad airbase to where they were been delivered.²⁶

B. Daragahi, E. Solomon, 'N. Bozorgmehr and G. Dyer, Battle for Iraq: The Iranian Connection', *The Financial Times*, 10 November 2014, <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/18136ee6-68c2-11e4-af00-00144feabdc0.html#slide0> (last accessed 25 June 2015).

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ G.J. Gilmore, 'DoD to Set up Joint Intelligence Operations Centers Worldwide', *DoD News*, 12 April 2006, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=15475> (last accessed 25 March 2015).

²⁵ Kahl, 'No, Obama Didn't Lose Iraq'; J.E. Barnes, 'U.S., Iraq Agree on Legal Protections for Military Advisors', *Wall Street Journal*, 23 June 2014, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-iraq-agree-on-legal-protections-for-military-advisers-1403567387> (last accessed 25 March 2015).

²⁶ AirForce Technology, 'Iraq Threatens to Cancel Sale Deal with US over F-16 Supply Delays', *AirForce Technology.com*, 7 July 2014, <http://www.airforce-technology.com/news/newsiraq-threatens-to-cancel-sale-deal-with-us-over-f-16-supply-delays-4311755> (last accessed 25 February 2015); AFP, 'Unrest in Iraq Could Delay Delivery of US F-16s', *AFP*, 30 June 2014, <http://news.yahoo.com/unrest-iraq-could-delay-delivery-us-f-16s-184127828.html> (last accessed 23 February 2015); Eli Lake, 'ISIS Tries to Grab its Own Air Force', *The Daily Beast*, 25 June 2014, <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2014/06/25/isis-threatens-iraq-s-largest-air-base.html> (last accessed 23 February 2015).

Historically, Iraqi governments have been known to reverse leverage in negotiating basing options with the West. In the early 1930's, Iraqi nationalists opposed to a continued British presence in the country after independence sought at least to modify and at best reject outright the terms of the 1930 Anglo-Iraqi Treaty. This treaty provided Britain with a series of commercial and military rights after independence including maintaining Habbaniya airbase in Anbar province and Shaiba airbase near Basra in southern Iraq.²⁷ Nuri's government at that time, despite extracting concessions from Britain in the form of military financing failed to placate Iraq's nationalists; the airbases were relinquished by replacement of the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty with then Anglo-Iraqi Special Agreement in 1955.²⁸

Humane Weapons' Sales? Losing Out on Cost & 'Urgency' to the Competition

FMS granted under the Arms Export Control Act (AECA) constitute the majority of U.S. military assistance to Iraq. According to a Pentagon official, FMS to Iraq are one of the highest of all countries.²⁹ At the onset of the Mosul crisis, there were 370 pending FMS cases to Iraq valued at over \$9 billion, and by January 2012, the U.S. Office of Security Cooperation (OSC-I), which administers Iraq's FMS, oversaw 600 cases totalling \$9.9 billion.³⁰ These figures dwarf the combined value of other U.S. military assistance programs to Iraq.

The State Department's Foreign Military Financing (FMF) program, which is U.S. funded defence procurement, has been decreasing rapidly since the full troop withdrawal at the end of 2011 compared to the billions in Security Forces Funding made available from 2004 to 2011 when U.S. combat troops were

²⁷ Williamson, 'Exploiting Opportunities', pp. 89-90.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

²⁹ J. Garamone, 'U.S. Continues to Help Iraq in Face of Extremist Threat', *DoD News*, 29 July 2014, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=122787> (last accessed 26 July 2015).

³⁰ Cordesman et al., *Iraq in Crisis*, p. 9; A.H. Cordesman, S. Khazai, and D. Dewit, 'Shaping Iraq's Security Forces', *US-Iranian Competition Series*, 16 December 2013, Centre for Strategic & International Studies, <http://csis.org/publication/shaping-iraqs-security-forces-0> (last accessed 26 March 2015).

deployed to Iraq.³¹ For 2014, FMF amounted to a mere \$300 million, and decreased further for 2015, the year after the capture of Mosul, to \$250 million.³² While FMS can be underwritten with FMF, Iraqi government funds pay for the majority of U.S. weapons purchases, as well as the salaries of non-governmental security contractors hired by U.S. and coalition forces.³³ Consequently, rather than being in a donor-recipient relationship in which the IFG benefits unequivocally from U.S. defence procurement, the U.S. is in a seller-buyer relationship because the IFG is more likely to shop around for the best bargain and choose the buyer most able to respond to its needs.

While the first order for 18 F-16 fighter jet aircraft in 2010/11 was been negotiated, the IFG held simultaneous negotiations with France for the purchase of 18 Mirage fighters, in addition to considering the lower cost option of the JF-17 Thunder combat aircraft jointly produced by China and Pakistan.³⁴ Iraqi leaders played the same supplier diversification card when the U.S. delayed delivery of the F-16s after Mosul.³⁵ Iraq's Prime Minister Nouri Maliki said "I'll be frank and say that we were deluded when we signed the contract [with the US]".³⁶ Iraq's Ambassador to the U.S. Lukman Faily referring to Iran and Russia, said: "Because of the precarious situation now facing us, it is difficult for us to decline offers from other countries that share our perceived

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

³² U.S. Department of State, 'Foreign Military Financing Account Summary', <http://www.state.gov/t/pm/ppa/sat/c14560.htm> (last accessed 25 February 2015).

³³ Cordesman et al., 'Shaping Iraq's Security Forces', p. 15.

³⁴ Defense Industry Daily Staff, 'The New Iraqi Air Force: F-16IQ Block 52 Fighters', *Defense Industry Daily*, 26 & 27 January 2011, <http://www.defenseindustrydaily.com/iraq-seeks-f-16-fighters-05057> (last accessed 23 February 2015).

³⁵ C. Harress, 'Iraq's Order of F-16 Fighter Jets Delayed as Russia Steps in With Better Alternative to Fight ISIS', *International Business Times*, 01 July 2014, <http://www.ibtimes.com/iraqs-order-f-16-fighter-jets-delayed-russia-steps-better-alternative-fight-isis-1616966> Last (last accessed 23 February 2014).

³⁶ BBC, 'Iraqi PM Nouri Maliki: Russian Jets will Turn Tide', *BBC News*, 26 June 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-28042302> (last accessed 23 February 2015).

danger".³⁷ The IFG subsequently ordered Russian SU-25 fighter jets with batches delivered by both Russia and Iran before the month's end.³⁸ Whether Russian, Iranian, or Iraqi pilots actually flew the aircraft is not clear, but with Russian and Iranian jets now bombing from Iraqi airspace and with the U.S. led air campaign not commencing until August, U.S. strategy in Iraq had stalled and had not shown itself willing to respond to Baghdad's urgent military assistance 'needs'.

Hence, in addition to cost, the IFG is emphasising urgency in its defence procurement decision-making. The multitude of suppliers available requires that the U.S. counter their influence, which makes the U.S. dependent on the IFG as it seeks to retain its influence. But the Obama administration's preference for Maliki to resign and the apparent hold-off on greater U.S. military involvement until a new Iraqi government had been formed led Iraqi leaders in search of weapons to maintain in chorus that they had no alternative but to request arms of Iran.³⁹ Once the Mosul crisis hit, Iran through its Defense Industries Organisation (DIO) is reported as making twice-daily flights to Baghdad complete with 70 tons of military equipment and supplies per flight.⁴⁰ Kurdish leaders maintained that Iran

³⁷ J. Hudson, 'Iraq Ambassador to the US: Help us or Else', *Foreign Policy*, 1 July 2014, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/07/01/iraqi-ambassador-to-u-s-help-us-fight-isis-or-else> (last accessed 25 February 2015).

³⁸ G. Jennings, 'Iraq receives additional Su-25 jets, purportedly from Iran', *IHS Jane's Defence Weekly*, 1 July 2014, <http://www.janes.com/article/40237/iraq-receives-additional-su-25-jets-purportedlyfrom-iran> (last accessed 25 February 2015).

³⁹ A. Gearan and K. DeYoung, 'Kerry meets with Iraqi leaders in Baghdad, says U.S. will defend its interests', *The Washington Post*, 23 June 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/kerry-arrives-in-baghdad-to-meet-with-iraqi-leader-as-militants-continue-rapid-offensive/2014/06/23/e73ac936-faa8-11e3-932c-0a55b81f48ce_story.html (last access 23 February 2015); The White House, *President Obama Makes a Statement on Iraq*, August 07, 2014, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/photos-and-video/video/2014/08/07/president-obama-makes-statement-iraq#transcript> (last accessed 23 February 2015).

⁴⁰ M. R. Gordon and E. Schmitt, 'Iran Secretly Sending Drones and Supplies into Iraq, U.S. Officials Say', *New York Times*, 25 June 2014,

was the first one to supply weapons.⁴¹ Russia signed an arms deal with Baghdad inclusive of artillery, mortars and ammunition contracts worth more than USD1 billion within one month of the crisis.

That said, the absence of weaponry provided by the U.S. in the early stages should not be taken at face value as Iraqi politicians may like. Until the U.S. had managed to bring on board its Gulf allies in the air campaign coalition as well as members of the Congress, the U.S. could not be seen to be fighting on the same side of a conflict with its arch enemy Iran. Using the same means of President Reagan to arm Saddam Hussein, the CIA purchased Russian made AK-47s on the black market and filtered those to the Kurds.⁴² The ISF also received leftovers of an outstanding order of Hellfire missiles, but lacked an adequate air force to launch these, ran out of stock by the middle of July, and had to await the necessary Congressional controls before more would arrive.⁴³ Hence, urgent recipient needs as identified by the IFG are not emerging as the utmost determinant of U.S. military assistance to Iraq.

Although the U.S. views the campaign against IS as part of its global war on terror and certainly does not want to see the group expand further in Iraq, it is likely to be concerned

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/26/world/middleeast/iran-iraq.html> (last accessed 25 February 2015).

⁴¹ I. Coles, 'Iran Supplied Weapons to Iraqi Kurds; Baghdad Bomb Kills 12', *Reuters*, 26 August 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/26/us-iraq-security-kurds-idUSKBN0GQ11P20140826> (last accessed 27 March 2015).

⁴² Razoux, p. 220-4; M. Hosenball and M. Ryan, 'U.S. Begins Direct Arms Shipments to Kurdish Forces', *Reuters*, 11 August 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/11/us-iraq-security-usa-kurds-idUSKBN0GB1XL20140811> (last accessed 27 March 2015).

⁴³ T.C. Marshall Jr., 'U.S. Continues Aid to the Iraqi Government', *DoD News*, 30 June 2014, (Last accessed 27 June 2015); Defence Industry Daily Staff, 'Out Of Hellfires', *Defence Industry Daily*, 21 July, 2014, <http://www.defenseindustrydaily.com/iraq-wants-hellfires-lots-and-lots-of-them-026078/> (last accessed 24 February 2015); Defence Security Agency, 'Iraq - AGM-114K/N/R Hellfire Missiles', 29 July 2014, <http://www.dsca.mil/major-arms-sales/iraq-agm-114knr-hellfire-missiles> (last accessed 24 February 2015).

about Baghdad exaggerating the terrorist threat to extract unnecessary weapons.⁴⁴ After all, Maliki's sectarian policies including brutalising and alienating Iraq's Sunnis led in part to the Mosul crisis. Even before U.S. troops left Iraq in 2011, U.S. officials were aware of a target list composed of names of Sunni men of military age, tribal leaders and other Sunnis that identified them as "the friend of a terrorist, father of a terrorist, grandfather of a terrorist," without any direct evidence of their involvement with terrorism.⁴⁵ Hence rather than been actually concerned with the U.S. led war on terror, the IFG's continuing emphasis on urgent supplies of weaponry without conditions is to respond to a threat from its Sunni rival and to serve as a weapons build up to hedge against future threats.⁴⁶ Such a strategy by Iraqi politicians is not new.

Iraq's baathists who came to power by means of a military coup in 1963 and who acquired arms primarily from the Soviets were not concerned about Moscow's global communist ambitions.⁴⁷ Akin to the IFG today, they were preoccupied with internal order including Kurdish calls for autonomy, internal insurrection, and border disputes with Iran; consequently, they sought arms.⁴⁸ Applying the same measure, U.S. and IFG strategic aims do not converge. The U.S. is supplying Baghdad to maintain the ally it sought in Iraq by means of the 2003 invasion and to counter a regional and international terrorist threat that may endanger its hegemonic interests.

Conclusion

U.S. military assistance after Mosul forms part of a long-standing strategy to maintain the traditional balance of power in the Gulf between Iran and Saudi Arabia. In this regard,

⁴⁴ A. Boutton, 'US Foreign Aid, Interstate Rivalry, and Incentives for Counterterrorism Cooperation', *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 51, No. 6 (2014), p. 751.

⁴⁵ Defence Industry Daily Staff, 'Intelligence', *Defence Industry Daily*, 4 July 2014, <http://www.defenseindustrydaily.com/iraq-wants-hellfires-lots-and-lots-of-them-026078/> (last accessed 24 February 2015).

⁴⁶ J. Hudson, 'Iraq Ambassador to the US'.

⁴⁷ Mott, *United States Military Assistance*, p. 95.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

the U.S. by employing military assistance seeks to maintain the territorial integrity of Iraq and consequently is left playing power broker between Iraqi rivals. Both further expansion of Iranian influence as well as IS in Iraq, could lead to the demise of a U.S. friendly government in Baghdad and more instability across the Middle East region. Thus, U.S. military assistance to Iraq presents itself in a new Cold War paradigm with the U.S. in competition with both Russia and Iran to influence the IFG and preserve its interests.

U.S. military assistance is not driven by military needs as defined by the IFG. Although actual weapons from Russia and Iran are of lower quality and value than U.S. weapons, the formers ability to deliver urgently and without democratic controls and human rights conditioning provides the IFG with a means to leverage the U.S. as it exploits the rivalry between these larger powers to attain a weapons build. This ability of Baghdad to reverse leverage makes the U.S. dependent on, and limits its ability to influence Baghdad. While U.S. and IFG short-term aims in combatting IS converge, strategic aims differ as Baghdad has little interest in Washington's global war on terror nor human rights concerns. U.S. weaponry may grant Iraq experience in modern warfare and military superiority, but as the former General Petraeus has shown, victory by military means cannot be attained in Iraq.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ D.H. Petraeus, 'How we Won Iraq', *Foreign Policy*, 29 October 2013, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2013/10/29/how-we-won-in-iraq/> (last accessed 29 March 2015).