

Iran and The United States Foreign Policy towards Kurdistan

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Abstract

This article seeks to identify and explain the impact of US foreign policy towards the Iraqi Kurdistan on the military security of the Islamic Republic of Iran, especially since 2003. The main question of this article is: What is the impact of US foreign policy towards the Iraqi Kurdistan on the military security dimension of the Islamic Republic of Iran? the research hypothesis is formulated as follows: the US foreign policy towards the Iraqi Kurdistan since 2003 has been influencing the military security of the Islamic Republic of Iran in structural and behavioral dimensions including: the formation of anti-Iranian armed groups and formation of regional coalitions. Stimulating the separatist tendencies of the Kurds in the northwest, especially the counter-revolutionary and dissident Kurds can be seen as behavioral part of the u.s presence effect in Iran`s securtty policy.

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Introduction

Following its continuous presence in western Asia after the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 and after a year and a half of diplomatic warfare in international forums against Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq, United States attacked the country in March 2003.

The US military presence in Iraq and its policies towards the Iraqi Kurdistan before and after the occupation of Iraq led to the formation of a federal system in Iraq, and the Iraqi constitution in 2005 recognized Kurdistan as a federal state. Four years after the occupation of Iraq in 2007, the United States reopened its diplomatic office in Erbil, Iraq, which then turned into a Consulate in 2011.

The construction of the world's largest consulate by the United States in Erbil reflects the specific goals and policies of the United States for Iraq and western Asia, which it has sought to implement through Kurdistan; in the same vein, the United States has even sought to forge a Sunni army in recent years, but that goal has not been achieved. (Moradi, 1397: 42)

Since the establishment of the US Consulate in Erbil, the US involvement in Iraqi Kurdistan has increased. In recent years, the United States has taken some stands on the developments in Iraqi Kurdistan in order to support the Kurds. The US foreign policy in the Iraqi Kurdistan has taken on different dimensions in recent years since the fall of Saddam Hussein in Iraq, and has affected its near environment, including the Islamic Republic of Iran.

On the other hand, one of aspect of national security is the military security, which is of high importance. Military security is

mainly related to the security of national borders and boundaries. Given the proximity of the Iraqi Kurdistan to Iran and the US effort to create military insecurity in the periphery of the Islamic Republic of Iran, monitoring and identifying the US foreign policy in Iraqi Kurdistan is a priority for Iranian policymakers and decision-makers. Therefore, as the US foreign policy towards Iraqi Kurdistan affects the security of the western Asia and consequently the military security of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the study of the US foreign policy towards Iraqi Kurdistan is the main object of the present article.

I. Theoretical Framework

The theory of realism defines world politics on the basis of the competition of states over their national interests. Realism is the most important and stable theory of the international relations. The appeal of this theory is usually due to its proximity to the performance of politicians as well as the conventional understanding of international politics. Also, despite the common principles and aspects among realist theorists, this school is not a completely unified whole.

Like human beings whose motivation is survival, governments will resort to violence, if possible alone or in alliance with each other, against any other government or factor that prevents them from achieving their goals. Violence and war are inherent issues in international politics. Therefore, fear is considered as a motivating factor for the behavior of players in international political scene. (Chegnizadeh, 1389: 14)

Despite the diversity of views and various classifications, realists agree on three common analytical bases in explaining the state and performance of government in the anarchic and competitive arenas of the international system:

1. Governmentalism: Identifying the government as the main actor with absolute internal sovereignty.
2. The principle of survival: the effort to maintain existence and provide security in every possible way
3. Self-help: trying to

ensure one's security without relying on others, even if it leads to the insecurity of other actors and leads to security bottlenecks and mysteries. (Chegnizadeh, 1389: 14)

The concept of military security is also an objective, real and tangible category, overseeing the capabilities, capabilities and efficiency of the armed forces in protecting territorial and border security, protection of the people and national interests, and the ability to counter and defeat threats and military operations of enemies and achieving military superiority. (Rashidzadeh, 2014: 36)

Military security is related to the interaction between the offensive and armed defense capabilities of governments and their perception of each other intentions. (Buzan, 2008: 34)

Studies show that US foreign policy in Iraqi Kurdistan is primarily due to US presence in the region to curb the power of countries such as Iran and Turkey, and the issue of Zionist security is of a paramount importance to the US in the region than anything else. Consistent with realism in other words, the US approach to Iraqi Kurdistan often has a security and political dimension, and the country seeks to establish a foothold in the region and increase its power to control developments in the West Asian region.

II. US Foreign Policy Elements in Iraqi Kurdistan:

In recent decades, the United States has designed and implemented a number of policies toward Iraqi Kurdistan. The geopolitical and oil resources of the Kurdistan region has many attractions for the United States, which is why the country has always sought to keep its presence and dominate the region. In addition, the United States has always tried to strengthen the position of the Zionist regime in the region. Controlling regional powers such as Iran and Turkey is another factor that has increased the US motivation to play a role in Iraqi Kurdistan and exercising influence on it is another goal of the US presence in Kurdistan. To achieve the above- mentioned goals, it is pursuing

the following policies in this region:

Dividing Iraq

Initially the United States sought to implement the policy of a "powerful secular state" in Iraq, but the weakness of the Iraqi government led to the failure of this policy and it pursued the second phase of its foreign policy in the form of more support for federalism and power sharing system (Dehghani Firoozabadi and Khediri, 2013: 26). One of the policies of the United States in recent years towards Iraqi Kurdistan has been the separation of this region from Iraq. If, according to US policy, Iraq is divided and Kurdistan is separated from the country, the western parts of Iraq will be allocated for the settlement of the Palestinians. If this policy is implemented, it will lead to major changes in the region, with dire consequences. It will cause frictions between governments and the nations of this region and ultimately they will be drag into the new war (Mullah Omar Issa, 2001: 404)

The Americans have been among those who have openly outlined plans for the future of western Asia and its demarcations for years, and some current or former officials still explicitly call for the secession of Iraqi Kurdistan and even downsizing other countries in the region. Former US ambassador to the United Nations John Bolton has said that the United States should recognize a referendum on the fate of the Iraqi Kurdistan. "The Kurds have long been ignored," he said. Therefore, if they have a decision to achieve independence in Iraqi Kurdistan, I think the United States should recognize it." (Khalili, 2017: 29)

Despite its declared policy of opposition to the referendum and the independence of the Iraqi Kurdistan, it has been one of the most important accelerators in the process of Kurdish secession for more than two decades. Among them is the role of the United States in establishing no-fly zones, as well as assisting Kurdish leaders in drafting a federal Iraqi constitution after the occupation, with the Kurds being the main winners. Similarly, over the past few years, the United States, along with some European countries, including Germany, have been the most important supplier of

weapons to Kurdish forces in Iraq and Syria, with the main result being the determination of the hardware dimensions required in the disintegration process. The Kurds have been seeking and increasing their power in a possible war with the Iraqi government forces. Accordingly, the declared policy of the United States in opposing the referendum in Iraqi Kurdistan is not in line with its practical actions in support of the Kurds. (Khalili, 2017: 29)

The plan for the disintegration of western Asia, which some neoconservative American theorists such as Bernard Lewis and American politicians such as O'Donnell had proposed and even mapped out several years ago, is now achieving its goals and now that the Arab world is embroiled in ethnic-religious tensions, a new space for the implementation of that plan has been found. The west Asian disintegration plans by Louis and Yannon to create new demarcations in western Asia is at the site of ethnic and religious fault lines. Recent plans have been designed on exactly the same basis and on ethnic and religious faults. The center of these plans are Syria and Iraq. Solution B or Plan B lays in Iraqi Kurdistan. In fact, with the independence of Iraqi Kurdistan, the process of Balkanization and disintegration of West Asia begins (Baxter & Akbarzadeh, 2008: 197).

Key tools by which the United States seeks to put pressure on the countries of the region is to support federalism (hidden autonomy) in the Iraqi Kurdistan region; Undoubtedly, the success of this project will strengthen the independence-seeking tendencies of the Kurdish people in the region. In addition, the structure of the Iraqi constitution has been formulated with the intervention of the United States in such a way that it is a privileged position for the 20% of the Kurdish population. The US effort to divide Iraq is based on the components that meets the US needs, namely security and the establishment of a government that supports the region for the US interests. In this way, on the one hand, the United States prepares the ground for the separation and independence of Iraqi Kurdistan, and on the other, it tries to bring a strong national government to power to ensure security in Iraq.

Hence, the United States carries out two contradictory activities at the same time, but the result of both is in the interests of this country. Given the actions and activities that the United States has done in Iraq since 1990, it has prepared the ground for the disintegration of Iraq, but for the independence of Iraqi Kurdistan, the role of regional and international powers must also be taken into account.. (Moradi, 1397: 19)

The strategic goal of the United States and the Zionist regime, which has been on the agenda for years, is to divide Iraq and other western Asian countries to ensure the security of the Zionist regime.

"Iraq's disintegration is the only way to stabilize the country." Even now, the Americans have an elite and sovereign consensus on the partition of Iraq and the independence of the Kurdistan Region, but they simply do not consider the current situation suitable for declaring the independence of the Kurdistan Region, which means that with the slightest turn in US foreign policy, Kurdish independence will be possible in time and this is an alarm for neighboring countries, especially the Islamic Republic of Iran. (Khabir Magazine, 2017: 18)

Fighting Terrorism

The west Asian region is experiencing one of its most volatile periods, a period of instability which is largely the product of the activities of terrorist groups in the region. Meanwhile, the US policies are one of the factors that have provided sufficient space for terrorist groups to operate in the region. In the aftermath of 9/11 terrorist attacks, the United States put counterterrorism at the top of its foreign policy priorities by creating a global counterterrorism dialogue and seeking to strengthen its military presence in the west Asian region By organizing a full-scale battle against terrorist groups and their allies. But a look at the security situation in west Asia today raises doubts about the effectiveness of the US foreign policy against terrorism. (Takhshid and Jalaian Mehri, 2017: 42)

In addition to ethnic divergence in the United States,

Americans are trying to emphasize the human rights pressures of forcing West Asian countries to relocate, so the short-term goal of the United States is to destabilize and identify its challenging forces.

Because of the threat it faced, the United States took action at home, abroad, in government, and in governance that showed fragmentation, poor crisis management, and confusion but over the time, the US National Security Agency turned this actual and potential threat into a tool for its long-term interests. Therefore, George W. Bush's national security doctrine was established in the field of international relations and the issue of combating terrorism became an agent of internal and external unity and cohesion and the grounds for the formation of a new world order was put on the US agenda. (Sadeghi, 1386: 117)

American policy can be considered a kind of " continuation with change." After 9/11, the two issues of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction became intertwined. The United States has plans for both. The Americans' goal in preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is to promote and consolidate international disarmament regimes, which they believe need to be standardized.

In the fight against terrorism, Americans consider the source of terrorism to be the two causes of poverty and ignorance. Poverty is due to the unequal distribution of facilities and wealth, and ignorance is due to the sociability of prejudice in the education system. The current situation is also unstable because the existing governments are not able to control the terrorist forces. They refer to these governments as "weak states" and see "good governance" as the solution. The two issues of strengthening international regimes and promoting good governance will be permanent elements of US foreign policy in the future. (Dehshiri, 2006: 18)

The allegations prompted the United States to expand its military presence in the West Asian region after the 9/11 under the pretext of fighting terrorism. One of the areas that has witnessed a

large scale US military presence is Iraq. After Afghanistan, Iraq was the second country to be invaded by the United States under the pretext of its links between the then-President Saddam Hussein and terrorist groups and his pursuit of nuclear weapons. The United States expanded its military presence in Iraq after the invasion and occupation of this country. This presence interfered in the political pillars of Iraq and influenced the future of this country. One of the areas of the US military presence and its influence in Iraq is the Kurdistan region. Under the pretext of fighting terrorism, the United States became militarily present in Iraq and tried to influence the issues of Kurdistan and subsequently the strategic issues of the region with this policy.

Prior to the military invasion of Iraq, the United States sought to strengthen the Kurds against Saddam Hussein's government by establishing a no-fly zone. After the occupation of Iraq, under the influence of the US military presence in this country, it made demands and moved towards independence.

The United States has sought to pursue its goals in the region by having a military presence in Iraq and supporting Kurdistan under the pretext of fighting terrorism. Undoubtedly, the policy of US military presence in Iraq affects the military security of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which will be discussed in the next section.

Strengthening Iran's Containment

The central goal of the Americans' engagement with Iraqi Kurdistan is to monitor Iran and Syria and strike at these two axes of resistance in the region through Iraqi Kurdistan. In this regard, the Zionist regime has established one of the most active Mossad centers in the Iraqi Kurdistan region so that it can easily manage the activities of Iran and Syria and its destructive plans in these countries from these centers. The United States has always had a very close relationship with Iraqi Kurdistan authorities and has sought to influence Iraq's neighboring countries in this way. The proximity of the Iraqi central government's views to Iran has led Washington to seek to establish relations with the Iraqi Kurdish

region. The construction of the largest consulate office in this region which is the world largest consulate can't be imagined as just an ordinary US consulate mission, but also a major center for political, military and even espionage activities and monitoring the actions and behavior of US opponents in the region. The usual activities of each consulate include special services such as issuing visas and business facilities, but the United States also wants to strengthen its long-term ties with the Kurds. In fact, after failing to influence the central government of Iraq, the US government seeks to establish bases with political cover but with military and intelligence functions in order to plan to counter the policies of Iraq's neighboring countries, especially Iran. (Moradi, 1397: 43)

US concerns about Iran's efforts to forge closer ties with Kurdish parties in Iraqi Kurdistan are growing, prompting the United States and Iran to confront each other quietly in Iraqi Kurdistan. The US policy toward northern Iraq is guided by its National Security Council and its strategy of containment of Iran in the region. The importance of the political situation in Iraq in the future for the United States and Iran has led both countries to work in Iraqi Kurdistan in order to influence the new political developments by influencing Kurdish parties. The US covert efforts to control Iran have drawn the leaders of two rival parties in Iraqi Kurdistan to the United States in recent years. Massoud Barzani and Jalal Talabani arrived in Washington at the invitation of the United States and met with the US Secretary of State and other officials and signed a peace agreement at the US State Department in the presence of the US Secretary of State. Under the agreement, the two Iraqi Kurdish groups put aside their differences and agreed to jointly run the Kurdish regions of northern Iraq. The Americans signed the Washington agreement between the two parties, Patriotic Union and Democratic Party, in addition to preventing the Kurds from reconciling with the Ba'athist regime in the past and influencing the Kurds (so that the Iraqi Kurds owe themselves to the United States) thus preventing

Iranian influence in Kurdistan. They consider Iraq as a strategic goal. (Mullah Omar Al-Issa, 2001: 205)

Concerns about the growing power and influence of Shiite parties, potentially Pro-Iranians, forced Washington to seek a counterweight to Iraq's future federalist structure. The existence of relative stability in the northern regions of Iraq was one of the few points of American mental reliance. "Only a small number of American troops were stationed in the Kurdish region of northern Iraq. Although the Kurds never threatened the Americans militarily, they were able to achieve the desired goals by supporting the United States in overthrowing Saddam Hussein. Since the Kurds have formed the second largest parliamentary bloc and the largest secular group, the United States' interest in the Kurds has grown to an unprecedented level. The Kurds became an important issue for Americans from then on. They gradually defended the establishment of secularism in Iraq and succeeded the failed moderates such as Iyad Allawi, and became a factor in striking a balance between Shiites and Sunnis, acting as an arbiter between them and resolving disputes. (Jafreh, Manti and Rahgovi, 1390: 72)

The US policy toward Iraq under Bush Sr. after the invasion of Kuwait was based on restriction, siege, and weakening its government.

the policy of "limiting" and weakening Iraq continued as before, and it became clear that the United States was locking the Iraqi regime in a cage. By implementing this policy, the United States tried to prevent the growth and supremacy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the regional and supra-regional arenas. Thus, the policy of limiting and weakening Iraq was deemed necessary to confront the Islamic Republic of Iran. (Rouhi, 2008: 12)

The United States and the Zionist regime are the two main foreign actors opposed to the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Iraqi Kurdistan region and supporters of Iraqi Kurdistan's independence behind-the-scenes, whose actions in this region are in conflict with the security of west Asian countries. The regional approach of the

United States to reduce Iran's influence in Iraq has also put on the US agenda the weakening of Iran's relations with the Iraqi Kurds.

Therefore, the United States has pursued weakening of relations between Iran and the Iraqi Kurds in an effort to strengthen its control over Iran. In this regard, in 2007, contrary to international custom, US forces occupied the consulate of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the city of Erbil during a military operation and arrested five Iranian diplomats. (Rouhi, 2008: 12)

Weakening the Axis of Resistance

Ahmad Dastmalchi, the former ambassador of Iran to Lebanon, in an interview with a reporter of the Young Journalists Club, which was published on the club's website in February 2017, said about increasing Israeli-UAE cooperation in the region: I believe an American-Zionist coalition has been formed in the region led by Saudi Arabia. It is also part of this coalition. He added: "This coalition is trying to be in full coordination with the Zionist regime in order to fight and confront the axis of resistance." Regarding the increase of US troops in Iraqi Kurdistan, he noted: "The United States is trying to establish itself in northern Iraq and eastern Syria, and with the cooperation of ISIS operatives and the PKK forces, these areas are being used for their own purposes and disintegration of Syria." and finally blocking the path of resistance. (Dastmalchi, Young Journalists Club, 11/19/96. Available at: WWW.yjc.ir)

Hussein Amir Abdullahian, a former diplomat and an expert on the Arab-Asian region, said in a special news conference in June 2017: "The Americans want to weaken the axis of resistance. Saudi Arabia is trying to legitimize Trump's power to counter and confront. Iran and the axis of resistance in the name of fighting terrorism. Abdullahian believes that the Americans, with the support of Saudi Arabia, intend to form a new coalition against the Islamic Republic of Iran in the region. (Amir Abdullahian, Nation House News Agency, available at: WWW.icana.ir)

Amir Mousavi, director of the Center for Strategic Research and International Relations in Iran, told a news conference in Iraq

on December 2009: "The goal of the Americans and their allies in the west Asian region is to weaken the Shiites, because the axis of resistance is Shiite- oriented. The Zionist regime is well aware that it is the Shiites who can destroy them. The Americans in Iraqi Kurdistan are also trying to exploit the protests to purge the politicians who have been active since 2003 so that some being replaced with the young, technocratic, self-centered, secular trends to increase their own influence and weaken the axis of resistance. (Mousavi, Islamic Azad University News Agency available at: <https://ana.ir>)

Expanding Influence in Iraq

"The main goal of the United States in Iraq after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein regime was to establish a federal government in the country in order to expand its influence in Iraq by weakening the central government and establishing a strong foothold in the region.

After the invasion of Iraq, the United States sought to establish a strong, secular central government with western inclinations. The failure to achieve this goal and the division of the Iraqi political scene into Shiite, Sunni and Kurdish groups, and the rise of Shiites to power after the 2004 elections, prompted the country to exploit interventions (divisions between the three Iraqi factions) to keep the country afloat. Being among the above- mentioned three groups, the Kurdistan region, due to its geopolitical position, natural resources and energy, its better economic and security situation than other parts of Iraq, is the largest political minority in Iraq with secular tendencies a tool to influence Iran, Turkey and Syria Kurds was more in line with the US goals and interests when necessary, as well as the Kurds' need for western support to achieve its political independence, and as a result, the Kurds became the best input from a marginal ally to a strategic one for the United States. The remarks of Gen. G. Garner, the first US military ruler in Iraq, clearly show the importance of the region to the United States: "If American efforts in Iraq fail, the independence of the Kurds must be defended. Just as the Philippines was the American platform for the

preservation of the pacific, Kurdistan in this century can be the American platform for western Asia” (Dehghani Firoozabadi and Khediri, 2013: 8)

The cornerstone of the largest US consulate in the world was laid on July 6, 2016 in the presence of US consul general in Erbil Ken Gross, the US Ambassador to Baghdad Douglas Suleiman and the then Prime Minister Nichirvan Barzani in Erbil. It was the largest US consulate in the world. The US government reopened its diplomatic office in Erbil four years after the occupation of Iraq in 2007 and in 2011 it officially became a consulate.

The construction of the largest US consulate in Erbil also indicates that the United States has prepared plans for Iraq and the west Asian region, which it will seek to implement in the future through the Kurdistan Region. In this way, the United States even in the past years sought to form a Sunni army, which, of course, did not materialize. (Moradi, 1397: 42)

Creating and Strengthening Anti-Iran Armed Groups

Although Iraqi Kurdistan Regional Government officials have repeatedly stated that they are indifferent to the fate of Kurds in other countries and do not support them, this has prevented Kurdish opposition groups (KDP and PJAK) and Turkey (PKK) from gathering in no parts of Iraqi Kurdistan. In addition to the Kurds who are living in four west Asian countries (Iraq, Turkey, Syria and Iran), the Kurdish diaspora of 600,000 in major cities of the world is a soft component of the power of Kurdish society, which energizes the life of Kurds as a middle class and productive populations. In short, it can be said that the collective will of the Kurds is to strengthen and consolidate the solidarity of the Kurdish community in Erbil in order to lead the life of the free Kurds; However, this solidarity between the Kurds has created misunderstandings against them and turned this opportunity into a threat. (Nasri, 2006: 194)

Support for insurgent and terrorist groups to achieve specific goals is rooted in US foreign policy. In addition, the United States has turned a blind eye to the financial assistance of its allies, such

as Qatar and Saudi Arabia, to terrorist groups, thereby indirectly reinforcing these groups. Former US President Barack Obama used his special power to prevent any disruption in the process of equipping and strengthening terrorist groups, and the federal law banning the transfer of weapons to terrorist groups and their supporters under the pretext of the importance of sending weapons. For these groups, the US national interest was ignored. As a result of such policy, terrorist groups were strengthened and moderate groups were encouraged to join them; an event that has led to the development of the field of activity and the increase in the power of terrorist groups in the region. (Takhshid and Jalaian Mehri, 2017: 45)

The most dangerous policy of the US-backed Kurdish regional government is to turn the northern region of Iraq into a base for PJAK and PKK forces to carry out terrorist attacks against the Islamic Republic of Iran. This policy could affect Iraqi-Iranian Kurdish relations; However, there are several reports that show PJAK terrorist attacks are carried out with the support and assistance of the US military, training and intelligence elements (Rouhi, 2008: 16).

With a military presence in Iraqi Kurdistan, the United States has formed a security shield for counter-revolutionary groups. Countless reports indicate that American generals and experts regularly visit the headquarters of counter-revolutionary groups and provide them with the necessary instructions. Seymour Hersh, the New Yorker's November 27, 2008, research correspondent, uncovered US and Zionist aid to counter-revolutionary groups. Hersh writes: The United States has promised Turkey to end the activities of the PKK-affiliated Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in Iran. The United States and the Zionists have illegally provided equipment and training to the group. The Zionists and the United States, who have lost the conflict with Iran in various fields, have identified and of course, promoted such a group. Some are trying to fill the gap of their direct presence, especially in Iran.

In the Iraqi Kurdistan region, the United States has supported

groups to put pressure on Iran. If the PJAK group has not been eliminated or expelled from northern Iraq, it is because the Americans are pressuring them to stay there whenever they want, in the form of the PKK to Turkey and in the form of PJAK to Iran by putting pressure, the Americans equip them and give them facilities.

III. The Impact of US Policies towards Iraqi Kurdistan

The US policy towards Iraqi Kurdistan is not only not in the interests of the citizens of Iraqi Kurdistan, but will create major problems for the countries of the region in various economic, political, security and social fields and pose a serious threat to neighboring countries. The region of Kurdistan will be like the Iran, Turkey, Syria and will affect the national security of these countries. Given that the Islamic Republic of Iran shares a border with the Kurdistan Region and cities bordering the region have a Kurdish population, the negative consequences of US policy toward Iraqi Kurdistan are critical to the military security of the Islamic Republic of Iran, especially in the long run.

Structural Impact

Any structural change on the border between Iran and Iraqi Kurdistan or deep inside Iraqi Kurdistan will have a structurally negative security impact on Iran. The structural impact of US policy toward Iraqi Kurdistan on the military security of the Islamic Republic varies; establishment of regional alliances, establishment of armed structures against the Islamic Republic of Iran in the western and northwestern border regions, establishment of multilateral military mechanisms with NATO, Arab countries in the region and the Zionist regime in the medium and long term, establishment of bilateral security defense mechanisms with Iraqi Kurds are one of the structural effects of US policy toward Iraqi Kurdistan on the military security of of Iran.

The Behavioral Impact

Given that one of the policies of the United States towards Iraqi Kurdistan is the independence of Iraqi Kurdistan, this policy has

mental-emotional effects on Iranian Kurds and is a basis for strengthening Kurdish nationalism in the Kurdish regions of Iran.

In addition, the US presence (given its hostile policies against the Islamic Republic of Iran over the past three decades) in northern Iraq, has affected Iran's national security on Iran's western borders. One of the strategies of the American neo-conservatives during the Bush Jr. term in office to change the regime in Iran was to provide financial-logistical support to the Iranian opposition in Iraq, a strategy that gradually caught the attention of US politicians in both the Republican and Democratic parties. Looking at US security documents, it can be seen that the US policies in this area are the same in different administrations. Due to the strengthening of Iranian Kurdish opposition parties by the United States, including the PJAK opposition group, tensions in Iranian Kurdistan have increased after the US invasion of Iraq. (Gadimi and Ghorbani Sheikhneshin, 2012: 76)

The US policy toward Iraqi Kurdistan will have adverse effects, especially militarily, on peripheral countries namely the Islamic Republic of Iran, Turkey, and Syria, and even more so given the current political situation in Iran, due to linguistic, cultural, and religious commonalities. Any action and interference in the military-political and cultural affairs in Iraqi Kurdistan region will also affect the Iranian Kurds and in a way affect the military security of the Islamic Republic of Iran

The US policies in Iraq will affect demographic, ethnic, and racial issues in Iran and new threats will be emerged with a new approach, eliminating military security threats, that is, the protection from danger and harm. Regarding the behavioral impact of US policies toward Iraqi Kurdistan on the military security of the Islamic Republic of Iran, it can be said that the behavioral impact of US Policies on Iraqi Kurdistan is very threatening to Iran. The US has invested more in Iraq and that has made things harder for Iran.

Stimulating the separatist tendencies of the northwestern Kurds, especially the counter-revolutionary and dissident Kurds,

and intensifying the enemy's intelligence activities in the west and northwest of the country, the US presence in Kurdistan can reduce Iran's presence and influence in Kurdistan and its mobilization. The possibilities of the Kurdish counter-revolutionary activities against Iran's military security, the increase of the Zionist regime activities in the region, the bridging of this region to attack the goals and interests of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the presence of US and Israeli forces in the Iraqi Kurdistan region have a negative impact on Iran's military security.

Conclusion

The US foreign policy towards Iraqi Kurdistan is theoretically framed in terms of realism. In this regard, the US approach to Iraqi Kurdistan is mostly of a security-political approach, and the country seeks to gain influence and power to control the developments in western Asia.

In brief, it can be said that: part of the US policy towards Iraqi Kurdistan makes a structural impact on the military security of the Islamic Republic of Iran including: the establishment of anti-Iranian armed groups, the establishment of multilateral military mechanisms, the establishment of bilateral security defense mechanisms and the formation of regional coalitions are among the structural effects of the US policies towards Iraqi Kurdistan in the military security of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

In addition, part of the US policy in Iraqi Kurdistan is to pave the way for stimulating the secessionist tendencies of the Kurds in Iran's northwest, especially the counter-revolutionary groups, and intensifying the enemy's intelligence activities in the west. The US presence in Kurdistan could lead to the mobilization of Kurdish counter-revolutionary forces against military security; increasing the presence of the Zionist regime in the region; putting the region at the forefront of threats against the goals and interests of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The presence of the US forces and the Zionist regime in Iraqi Kurdistan are among the behavioral effects of US policies.

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