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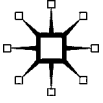
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Sold Out? US Foreign Policy, Iraq, the Kurds, and the Cold War
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SOLD OUT? US FOREIGN POLICY, IRAQ, THE KURDS, AND THE COLD WAR
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Softcover reprint of the hardcover 1st edition 2015 978-1-137-48711-7
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First published in 2015 by
PALGRAVE MACMILLAN®
in the United States—a division of St. Martin's Press LLC,
175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010.

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this is by Palgrave Macmillan, a division of Macmillan Publishers Limited,
registered in England, company number 785998, of Houndmills,
Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS.

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ISBN 978-1-349-69552-2 ISBN 978-1-137-51715-9 (eBook)

DOI 10.1057/9781137517159

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Gibson, Bryan R.

Sold out? : US foreign policy, Iraq, the Kurds, and the Cold War /
Bryan R. Gibson.

pages cm.—(Middle East today)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-137-51714-2 (ebook)—

1. United States—Foreign relations—Iraq. 2. Iraq—Foreign
relations—United States. 3. United States—Foreign relations—
1945–1989. 4. Kurds—Government policy—United States.
5. Cold War. I. Title.

E183.8.I57G55 2015

327.730567—dc23

2014045757

A catalogue record of the book is available from the British Library.

Design by Newgen Knowledge Works (P) Ltd., Chennai, India.

First edition: May 2015

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

*For my supportive parents, my wife and partner in crime,
and my little bear, Maximus*

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Acknowledgments

Over the past six years, I have received support and encouragement from a great number of individuals. Foremost, this book could not have been accomplished without the unwavering support of my doctoral supervisor, Nigel Ashton, whose considerable knowledge and guidance have made the writing of this book a thoughtful and rewarding journey. I am also indebted to my colleagues at the Middle East Centre of the London School of Economics; for the Emirates PhD award, which allowed me to conduct archival research in the United States; and to Maurice Pinto, who gave me an opportunity to revise my PhD thesis into this book.

There are a large number of colleagues and friends who have offered support over the last five years: Galen Perras, Michael Axworthy, Odd Arne Westad, Antony Best, Toby Dodge, Kristian Coates-Ulrichsen, Brian Villa, and Emilia Knight. I would also like to thank the friends I made along the way: Christopher Phillips, Aurelie Basha, Chris Emery, Daniel Strieff, Charles William Nicholas Sorrie, Nick McNally, Jonathan Hunt, Arend Kulenkampf, and Carsten Nickel; and a special thanks to Jeffery Brideau, Estrella Amador Bernal, and Mark and Andi Richards for opening their homes to me while I conducted my research. Finally, I want to thank Brent Scowcroft, Ronald Neumann, Jim Hoagland, Eliezer Tsafir, Zury Sagy, and an unnamed intelligence contact for offering valuable insight into this complicated period.

I want to express my deep appreciation to my family and friends who have fostered my intellectual growth and provided emotional support throughout this difficult process. I especially want to thank my parents, Marlene and Glenn Gibson, for their endless support, guidance, encouragement, and love. My mother has read every draft and redraft of every chapter in this book. Without her patience and support, this book could never have come to be. I also want to thank my brother and sister and their families for always bringing a smile to my face, even from afar. I also want to thank my lifelong friends from my hometown, Jonathan Kirshenblat and Peter Spadoni, for helping to foster my interest in international affairs and for helping me through the good times and bad. Finally, I want to thank my wife, Ashli Alberty, for guiding me through the last few years of this long and challenging process. She is my love, my life, and my new family. Without my friends and family, none of this would be worth it.

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Introduction

In a perceptive remark made during a meeting of the US National Security Council in January 1959, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles observed that America was “not sufficiently sophisticated” to meddle in the complex mix of internal Iraqi politics.¹ Nearly two decades later in 1976, another secretary of state, Henry Kissinger, who was also President Gerald Ford’s national security adviser, was in an uncomfortable meeting in Baghdad with Iraq’s foreign minister, Sa’dun Hammadi. Only a few weeks earlier, Daniel Schorr, a reporter for CBS News, had revealed top-secret details of a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) operation to aid Iraq’s Kurdish minority between 1972 and 1975.² When Hammadi asked about the leak, Kissinger, while denying direct US support for the Kurds, explained that he was “not opposed” to Iran providing support to the Iraqi Kurds, because at that time he “thought [Iraq was] a Soviet satellite.” After assuring Hammadi that the United States was no longer engaged in covert action against Iraq, Kissinger explained, “We have a more sophisticated understanding [of Iraq] now.”³ This book will show how the United States moved from being an unsophisticated observer of events in 1958–59 to becoming a direct protagonist in Iraq during 1972–75 through its own covert program to support Iraq’s Kurdish rebels. The motive for America’s shift seems clear: in the two decades since its revolution, Iraq had become an important player in America’s global and regional Cold War strategy to contain the Soviet Union.⁴

Despite the important role Iraq played in the Middle East theater of the Cold War, only on a few rare occasions did it dominate US foreign policymakers’ attention as it has for the last two decades. Because the American foreign policy establishment was focused on the Soviet Union for nearly 50 years, peripheral countries—like Korea, Vietnam, Cuba, Afghanistan, *and* Iraq, among many others—were important insofar as they were Cold War battlegrounds. Given this, US foreign policy throughout the Cold War period was, by its very nature, reactive, responding to threats—both real and imagined—as they arose. Consequently, America’s policy toward Iraq was driven by America’s perception of the Soviet threat. This book underscores the reactive nature of US foreign policy during the Cold War, while assessing America’s policies toward Iraq.

As a study of the Cold War, this book is situated within a wider debate about superpower interventions in the Third World. In his seminal book, *The Global Cold War*, Odd Arne Westad argued that American and Soviet interventions in the Third World during the Cold War have had a destabilizing effect on international

affairs today.⁵ The consequences of interfering in the affairs of postcolonial states was nowhere more evident than in the case of Iraq. This book uses the history of America's relations with—and interventions in—Iraq during the 1958–75 period of the international and national disorder sown by American meddlesomeness. In order to be consistent with Westad's analysis, this book abides by his definitions of Cold War, Third World, and intervention.

“Cold War” means the period in which the global conflict between the United States and Soviet Union dominated international affairs, roughly between 1945 and 1991. “Third World” means the former colonial or semicolonial countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America [and the Middle East] that were subject to European (or rather pan-European, including American and Russian) economic or political domination... “Intervention” means any concerted and state-led effort by one country to determine the political direction of another country.⁶

With these definitions in mind, this text shows that America's interventions in Iraq—a Third World nation—at the height of the Cold War contributed to the country's political and economic destabilization and its continual national upheavals and agonies.

This book weaves together a number of threads—American foreign policy, Cold War strategy, the Cold War in the Middle East, the Arab Cold War, Arab nationalism, Ba'athism, communism, and the Kurdish question—into a complex tapestry of interests, intrigue, betrayal, and deceit. It shows that whenever US officials in Washington believed that Baghdad was developing closer relations with Moscow, they took steps to counter Soviet influence, often relying on covert interventions. Three instances stand out: (1) in 1958–59, the Eisenhower administration engaged Egyptian president Gamal Abd al-Nasser to find ways to prevent the communists from coming to power, including the possibility of overthrowing Iraq's strong leader, Prime Minister Abd al-Karim Qasim; (2) in 1962, the Kennedy administration ordered the CIA to seek Qasim's overthrow after he nationalized the concessionary holding of an American-owned oil company; and (3) in 1972–75, the Nixon administration financed and armed Kurdish rebels to destabilize the Iraqi regime and prevent communists from joining the government after Iraq had signed a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the Soviet Union. However, when the United States believed that the Iraqi regime was anticommunist, it took steps to bolster and maintain its power, irrespective of the views of its allies. Two examples are prominent: (1) after Qasim was overthrown in February 1963, the Kennedy administration lent support to the Ba'ath Party, which was engaged in a brutal war against the Kurdish rebels, who at this point were being assisted by the Soviet Union; and (2) in the mid-1960s, the Johnson administration propped up the anticommunist, Arab nationalist regimes of Abd al-Salim Arif and then his brother Abd ar-Rahman Arif in the face of British, Iranian, and Israeli efforts to depose them. In all instances, America's interventions in Iraq were based on the perceived need to check Soviet influence, reinforce potential pro-Western allies, and undermine perceived enemies. This was a logical extension of America's broader Cold War strategy.

Traditionally, the United States had viewed the Gulf as a “British lake” and preferred to rely on Britain for its defense.⁷ However, as tensions between Washington and Moscow escalated following the Second World War, both the Americans and Soviets began to recognize the vital role that access to Gulf oil would play in the event of a third World War. As early as 1945, American policymakers believed that Moscow’s designs on the Gulf were evident when it demanded that the Iranian government provide it with naval bases in the Strait of Hormuz and began supporting the fledgling Azerbaijani and Kurdish break-away republics, who sought independence from Iran.⁸ Similarly, a US military study from 1946 concluded that losing Iraqi and Saudi Arabian sources of oil would force the United States and its allies to fight an “oil-starved war” against the Soviet Union, and vice versa.⁹ This meant that America’s regional strategy was aimed at defending the Gulf, preventing Soviet domination of the region’s oil resources, and ensuring the survival of the region’s Western-backed autocrats.¹⁰ To achieve this, the United States sponsored the development of a regional defense system aimed at reinforcing what Secretary Dulles called the “Northern Tier” states, consisting of Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, and Turkey. By the mid-1950s, this group had organized itself into a regional security alliance known as the Baghdad Pact.¹¹ This study will show how the overthrow of the pro-Western Hashemite monarchy in 1958 upended America’s Cold War strategy for the Gulf region, displaced Britain’s influence, and led to direct competition with the Soviet Union over what direction the new regime in Baghdad would take.

This contest would last for 17 years—through four coup d’états, five different regimes, innumerable failed plots, and a 14-year-long Kurdish War—before the Ba’th Party, led by Ahmad Hassan al-Bakr and Saddam Hussein, achieved absolute control of Iraq in 1975.¹² In assessing US-Iraqi relations during this period, it will be clear that the driving force behind US policy toward Iraq was the application of the broader principles of America’s Cold War strategy on local political developments. In practical terms, this meant ensuring the flow of oil from the region, while undermining Soviet influence through lavishing military, economic, and development assistance on regional allies.

The Soviet strategy toward Iraq and the Gulf virtually mirrored that of America. As Galia Golan points out, “Soviet interests in Iraq have been tied up with the fact that Iraq borders on a number of traditionally pro-western states: Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Turkey and Iran, the last two on the Soviets’ own border.”¹³ In the 1950s, Iraq’s central role in the anti-Soviet Baghdad Pact alliance system only increased Moscow’s perception of Iraq’s importance in the Cold War. In short, Iraq was viewed as a threat. However, Iraq’s revolution in 1958 and its abrupt departure from the pact in 1959 transformed the Soviet Union’s strategic calculus for the Gulf region. As a result, Moscow’s primary objective in Iraq during the 1960s and 1970s was to keep Baghdad out of the Western—or rather American—orbit. In the military sphere, the Soviets sought to cultivate a military-supply relationship in order to make Iraq dependent on Soviet arms. Between 1958 and 1975, the Soviets and Iraqis signed a series of major arms deals, worth millions. As Golan observed, “The Soviets saw a special role for Iraq in the Gulf, to help Moscow obtain a political foothold for bases.”¹⁴ This was a

by-product of a shift in Soviet policy in the 1960s following the US Navy's deployment of nuclear-armed Polaris submarines in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean.¹⁵ With Soviet military needing to project itself southward, Iraq and the Gulf took on greater salience, leading to Moscow securing basing rights at Iraq's only viable Gulf port, Umm Qasr, following the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation in April 1972. The Soviets were also interested in Iraqi oil and encouraged successive Iraqi regimes to nationalize Western oil companies. For instance, when Baghdad faced a boycott after nationalizing the Western-owned Iraqi Petroleum Company (IPC) in June 1972, Moscow provided an alternative market for Iraqi oil and assisted in the development and production of Iraq's southern oil fields.¹⁶ Taken together, all of these steps suggest that Moscow's approach to Iraq in the years following its revolution was a success; however, this would be misleading. Soviet-style communism was never an attractive ideology in Iraq, and the ruling regimes in Baghdad often used the superpowers' Cold War rivalry to their advantage.

The historiography—or the history of the evolution of a historical debate—of US-Iraqi relations during the Cold War is still in its infancy. To date, only a single book focused on US-Iraqi relations: Peter Hahn's *Missions Accomplished? The United States and Iraq since World War I*.¹⁷ Relying mostly on primary documents made available through the Department of State's *Foreign Relations of the US (FRUS)* series and other secondary works, Hahn's analysis of US-Iraqi relations is aimed at “undergraduate students” and tends to overlook many key events covered here. Nevertheless, this study supports his central argument, which asserts that the United States “monitored Iraq from a distance, aiming to deny any inroads by Soviet-backed communism and to prevent any flair-ups in violence between Iraq and its neighbors.”¹⁸

In particular, Hahn and other notable scholars have recognized Iraq's revolution in 1958 as a pivotal event for both Middle Eastern politics and the Cold War. Malcolm Kerr, for example, viewed the coup as a key turning point in what he called the “Arab Cold War,” because the Qasim regime turned against Nasser's radical brand of Arab nationalism—a nationalist ideology celebrating the glories of Arab civilization, Arabic language and literature, and calling for the political union of the Arab world—which undermined Nasser's efforts to bring the Arab world under his command.¹⁹ The revolution has also been termed an important turning point by numerous Cold War scholars.²⁰ From the outset of the Cold War, Iraq had been a key player in America's “Northern Tier” containment plan and was the namesake for the Baghdad Pact. Therefore, the overthrow of Iraq's pro-Western monarch by a group of radical, Arab nationalist military officers jeopardized America's Cold War strategy. Despite this, there is some debate among scholars over America's response to the revolution. For instance, Stephen Blackwell has suggested that the United States and Britain had a “common perception” of the communist threat to Iraq after the coup, but others, like Nigel Ashton, have argued that Anglo-American perceptions toward Iraq were not so closely aligned.²¹ This study disputes Blackwell's notion and argues that the Eisenhower administration viewed Iraq as part of its geostrategic contest with the Soviet Union, whereas Britain saw Qasim as an alternative to Nasser in the

Arab world and sought to maintain him. Of course, this assertion contrasts with the widely held notion of an Anglo-American “Special Relationship” during this period.²²

A core theme covered in this book is America’s use of covert action to intervene in Iraq in order to deny the Soviet Union influence in the Middle East.²³ It is accepted among scholars that the CIA tried to assassinate Qasim in the fall of 1959;²⁴ sought to “incapacitate” him again in 1960;²⁵ and finally, assisted the Ba’th Party in its overthrow of his regime in February 1963.²⁶ It is also believed that the CIA provided the Ba’th Party’s death squads with lists of known communists, who were rounded up and in many cases killed.²⁷ In recent years, a group of young scholars have waded into these debates, using declassified documents available at the Kennedy Presidential Library. While these analyses advance the study of US-Iraqi relations, none was able to provide conclusive evidence proving the CIA’s involvement in these plots.²⁸ However, a careful examination of a wide range of documents and interviews raises important questions about the veracity of these claims as to whether the CIA was behind the 1963 Ba’thist coup.

Despite this, there is considerable evidence that the CIA developed an interest in the Ba’th Party starting in the early 1960s. Michel Aflaq, a Lebanese Christian, and Salah al-Din al-Bitar, a Syrian Sunni, founded the Ba’th Party in 1943. Its motto, “unity, freedom, and socialism,” pointed to its Arab nationalist, anti-imperialist, and socialist ideology and its dedication to bringing about a complete transformation of Arab society through revolutionary activism. After first coming to power in Iraq in 1963 and being overthrown later that year, the Ba’th returned to power in a coup in 1968 and ruled the country until the US invasion in 2003.²⁹ Joseph Sassoon argues that although “the party’s ideology was at odds with Western democracy” because of its belief that democracy masked the tyranny and exploitation of the masses, the Ba’th Party was not inherently anti-Western.³⁰ This book will show that this was evident during the first Ba’th regime in Iraq in 1963, in 1973–75, when the Ba’th Party improved Iraq’s relations with France and the West, and finally during the Iran-Iraq war, when Iraq established a covert military, economic, and diplomatic relationship with the United States.³¹

For much of the 1958–75 period, the dominant issue affecting US-Iraqi relations was an ongoing civil war between Iraq’s Kurdish population and the central government in Baghdad that broke out in 1961. The Kurdish conflict had its origins in the aftermath of the First World War, when the Allied powers reneged on their promise to give the Kurds a state composed of the southeastern corner of Turkey in the Treaty of Sevres. Instead of establishing a Kurdish state, the Allies carved up the Kurdish territories into modern-day Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria with the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923.³² For the rest of the 1920s, the Kurds in Iraq rebelled against their new British colonial masters, only to be put down by force.³³ The leader of the Iraqi Kurds during the period covered in this analysis was Mulla Mustafa Barzani, a born revolutionary. Having first engaged in combat during a rebellion against the British authorities in 1919 and again in the early 1930s,³⁴ he later went on to play an integral role in the formation of the short-lived Kurdish Republic of Mahabad during 1945–46, in Soviet-occupied

Iran. As Archie Roosevelt explained in his analysis of the Kurdish republic, after Mahabad collapsed in late 1946, Barzani led his followers on a 50-day-long running battle with the Iranian military until reaching safety in Soviet Azerbaijan.³⁵ The Soviet Union's overt attempt to annex the Kurdish and Azerbaijani regions of Iran in 1946 would have a long-standing impact on America's perceptions of the Kurds.³⁶

Following Iraq's revolution in 1958, the Soviets exploited Baghdad's Kurdish problem, using large arms sales to establish a degree of military dependence.³⁷ Following the outbreak of the Kurdish War in 1961, Moscow exploited the Kurdish problem to its full advantage by alternating support for Baghdad with that for the Kurds, depending on the Cold War orientation of the regime in power. During the Qasim regime, for instance, the Soviets advocated greater autonomy for the Kurds, simply because they believed the Kurds had the potential to destabilize his pro-Soviet regime. However, when the Ba'th Party first came to power in 1963, Moscow shifted its support toward the Kurds, providing them with overt political and diplomatic support. Similarly, during the Arab nationalist Arif regimes in the 1960s, Moscow kept Baghdad at a distance, focusing instead on cultivating close ties with Nasser in Cairo. Unexpectedly, the second coming to power of the Ba'th Party in 1968 led to a rapid improvement in Soviet-Iraqi relations. The Soviets urged the Ba'th to resolve its differences with the Kurds and helped facilitate a four-year ceasefire in March 1970. However, when the agreement collapsed in 1974, the Soviets provided considerable military assistance during the 1974–75 Kurdish War to help Iraq crush the Kurds once and for all.

This study will show how Moscow's support for the short-lived Kurdish project in the 1940s convinced US officials that the Soviets intended to use the Kurds to bypass America's Middle Eastern containment strategy in the 1950s and 1960s. Likewise, the massive shift in the Gulf's geostrategic balance following Britain's 1968 decision to withdraw its military from the region led the Nixon administration to reevaluate its position on the Kurds, leading to a massive covert assistance program from 1972 to 1975.³⁸

In terms of historiography, only recently has the US policy toward the Kurdish War gained new importance, as a number of scholars have published articles revealing new details. In his 2010 article, Douglas Little claims that the Kennedy administration had played a role in encouraging the outbreak of the Kurdish War.³⁹ In a review of his article, Roham Alvandi argues by contrast that there is "no substantial evidence to support Little's claim" that the United States urged the Kurds to rebel against Baghdad.⁴⁰ Evidence unearthed at the Soviet archives in 1994 by Vladislav Zubok, a researcher from the Woodrow Wilson Centre, suggests the outbreak of the Kurdish War was part of a Soviet plan.⁴¹ This fits with Golan's analysis, which suggested, "the Soviets wanted some degree of continued Kurdish unrest in the North of Iraq... so as to create an Iraqi need for Soviet arms, political assistance and Communist support for the regime in order to stay in power."⁴² Using declassified primary materials and interviews, this study will support Alvandi, Zubok, and Golan's conclusions and argue the United States played no role in the outbreak of the war. Conversely, Hahn suggests that the Kennedy administration had suspected that the Soviets had "encouraged and abetted" the

Kurds to “gain influence in the country.”⁴³ This argument stands in contrast to Little’s additional assertion that the CIA had also encouraged Iran and Israel to support the Kurds.⁴⁴ Again, this is disputed. As Alvandi observed, “the CIA may well have been pursuing its own policy of covert intervention in Iraq, without the knowledge of the State Department.”⁴⁵ Finally, Edmund Ghareeb has claimed that the Nixon administration established a secret relationship with the Kurds in August 1969.⁴⁶ Again, this is a questionable assertion. While this analysis will reveal considerable evidence on Iranian and Israeli support for the Kurds from the early 1960s onward,⁴⁷ there is no evidence available today that suggests that the United States supported or encouraged the Kurds in any way prior to 1972.

Scholarship on the Lyndon B. Johnson administration’s policy toward Iraq is limited, with Little and Hahn offering the first accounts. In *Missions Accomplished*, Hahn argues the Johnson administration “adopted a policy of detached friendliness,” while awaiting opportunities to improve US-Iraqi relations. This approach was successful and eventually resulted in the Johnson administration providing Iraq with foreign aid, political consultation, and other forms of normal diplomatic activity. Hahn’s work is also significant because it provides the first account of the American response to two key events in US-Iraqi relations: the breaking of diplomatic relations during the June 1967 Arab-Israeli War and the second Ba’thist coup in July 1968.⁴⁸ He suggests that the United States regretted Iraq severing relations and was forced to monitor events from afar—such as the Ba’thist coup in 1968—using information provided by Belgium, which had agreed to run a US interests section. Hahn argues that the Johnson administration’s initial favorable assessment of the Ba’th Party waned as Ahmad Hassan al-Bakr and his nephew, Saddam Hussein, brutally consolidated power and pulled Iraq toward the Soviet orbit.⁴⁹ Although Hahn’s study neglects the impact of the British withdrawal on US policy toward Iraq and the region, there are a number of excellent studies detailing the Johnson administration’s adoption of the “twin pillar” policy that sought to build up Iran and Saudi Arabia to take Britain’s place and prevent the Soviet Union from filling the power vacuum left behind.⁵⁰ However, this study will provide greater detail than that previously available on the challenges faced by the Johnson administration over US policy toward Iraq during the 1960s.

Until recently, scholarship on US-Iraqi relations during the 1969–71 period has been limited, even though the Nixon administration’s policies toward Iraq have been the subject of considerable debate. Even Kissinger’s account of the Kurdish intervention in his memoir, *Years of Renewal*, avoids a discussion of US policy before 1972.⁵¹ This is because Nixon was uninterested in Iraqi and Gulf affairs during his first term, focusing instead on more urgent matters like the escalating war in Vietnam, the opening to China, and achieving détente with the Soviet Union.⁵² Like previous administrations, the Nixon administration maintained a strict noninterference policy toward Iraq and the Kurds. However, in mid-1972, the US policy toward Iraq underwent a major shift, leading to Nixon’s approval of a covert operation to support the Kurds.

There has been substantial debate over why Nixon approved the Kurdish intervention. The overwhelming majority of scholars explain it as a retaliatory response to the Soviet-Iraqi Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation signed in April 1972,⁵³

with Little arguing that the operation was based on “Cold War logic.”⁵⁴ In his review of Little’s article, Alvandi dismisses the Cold War argument and suggests that Little downplayed the Shah’s role in drawing the United States into the Kurdish War.⁵⁵ Alvandi reasserts this argument in an article on US-Iranian relations, stating, “Nixon and Kissinger were seeing Iraq and the Gulf through the Shah’s eyes.”⁵⁶ This theory is supported by Jonathan Randal, who argued that the Shah overemphasized the Soviet-Iraqi threat and played the “superpower rivalry card” to convince Nixon to build up Iran as the regional hegemon and tie down Iraq, his only regional rival.⁵⁷ However, both Alvandi and Randal seem to ascribe the Shah too much agency, as evidence suggests that the American decision to aid the Kurds was driven by Cold War strategic considerations in response to Iraq’s growing importance to the Soviet Union.

The title of the book points to a key controversy surrounding the way in which the Kurdish intervention came to an abrupt halt in March 1975, with one scholar stating that the Nixon–Ford administration never “cared one whit” about the Kurds and “dropped [them] cold” when the Shah traded his support for them in exchange for a border concession from Iraq at an Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) conference in March 1975.⁵⁸ The source of this outrage stems from articles published by William Safire in 1976 that accused the Ford administration of selling out the Kurds, abruptly halting its Kurdish intervention, ignoring Barzani’s heartfelt pleas for help, and failing to provide the Kurds with humanitarian assistance.⁵⁹ Safire’s claims are based on a leaked copy of a top-secret congressional report on the CIA’s activities, known as the *Pike Report*.⁶⁰ While the report provides valuable information on aspects of the Kurdish intervention, this study shows that it was not an objective analysis. Furthermore, since the leaking of the document in February 1976, numerous scholars have uncritically repeated the arguments presented by Representative Otis Pike, who was the chair of the House Select Intelligence Committee that drafted the *Pike Report*, and William Safire, without investigating the sources on which their claims were based.

In recent years, Kissinger has tried to challenge the *Pike Report*’s assertions. After leaving the White House in 1977, he published a memoir, *The White House Years*, but appeared reluctant to reveal his side of the story, allocating three sentences and a brief footnote in which he promised to “explain these [events] in a second volume.”⁶¹ Two decades later, Kissinger published *Years of Renewal*, which provided a detailed account of Nixon’s decision to aid the Kurds in May 1972; US interests in the operation; his efforts to stave off a Kurdish offensive against Iraq during the 1973 Arab-Israeli war; and details about a US-Israeli operation to transfer captured Soviet weapons to the Kurds during 1974–75.⁶² In effect, Kissinger set out to challenge the existing historiography and explain his reasons for supporting the Kurdish intervention. Prior to this publication none of these details was publicly available. While self-serving at times, Kissinger’s account reflects records now available at the Nixon and Ford presidential libraries and the State Department’s recent publication of documents detailing US policy toward Iran and Iraq between 1969 and 1976. What has become clear is that the *Pike Report* has distorted the study of US-Iraqi relations and the Kurdish

intervention. Recently declassified documents support Kissinger's argument that the Shah's decision to abandon the Kurds was presented to the United States as a *fait accompli*. Thus, this analysis will, to some extent, exonerate Kissinger and will disprove many of the *Pike Report's* most controversial assertions.

This study revises our understanding of US-Iraqi relations during the 1958–75 period on the basis of newly available documentation. As a whole, this study relies on recently available primary documents, interviews, and the available secondary resources to construct a detailed narrative of US-Iraqi relations and the Kurdish War between 1958 and 1975.⁶³ It advances existing historiographical debates by bringing to bear a significant body of newly available primary source material. In doing so, it underlines that the established historiography has relied excessively on the *Pike Report*, which has distorted our understanding of events. As a complement to this research, interviews were conducted with General Brent Scowcroft, Ambassador Ronald Neumann, Pulitzer Prize-winning *Washington Post* journalist Jim Hoagland, and a former high-level CIA official. This former CIA official was a bonafide participant in the events detailed in this book. He was stationed in Iran between 1958 and June 1963, assigned to Tabriz to monitor the Kurds in 1959, in charge of the CIA's "denied area" operations in the Middle East from late 1968 through June 1970, and deputy station chief in Tehran from August 1973 to 1976. He has asked to remain anonymous because he still consults for the CIA.⁶⁴ Two Israeli intelligence officials, Zuri Sagy and Eliezer Tsafir, were also interviewed on the subject of Israel's involvement in the Kurdish War. Sagy played a crucial role in directing Kurdish military operations against Iraq during the 1960s and later in 1974–75, and Tsafir is a former senior Mossad official. Both explained in detail Israeli operations inside Iraq during the 1960s and 1970s. While interviews have their methodological limitations, details provided here have either been confirmed or supported by documents or secondary sources.

This book seeks to redress these historiographical deficiencies and further develop the argument that the US policy toward Iraq between 1958 and 1975 was based on denying Soviet influence over Iraq, inline with its Cold War strategy. Chapter 1 will assess the Eisenhower administration's response to Iraq's revolution and its leader, Abd al-Karim Qasim. Chapter 2 recounts the Kennedy administration's policy toward Qasim, in the period between Kennedy's coming to office and Qasim's overthrow in February 1963. Chapter 3 examines Kennedy's policy toward Iraq during the brief, nine-month rule of the Ba'th Party and argues that Iraq was a Cold War battleground. Chapter 4 analyzes the Johnson administration's evolving relationship with the two nationalist regimes of Abd al-Salim Arif and his brother, Abd ar-Rahman Arif, and the clear divergence of the perception toward Iraq between the United States and its closest allies, particularly Britain, Iran, and Israel. Chapter 5 examines the Johnson administration's response to the Six Day War, Britain's decision to withdraw from the Gulf, and the coming to power of the second Ba'thist regime. Chapter 6 assesses the Nixon administration's policy toward Iraq and the decision-making process that led to the Kurdish intervention in 1972. Chapter 7 details how the Nixon administration set up the Kurdish intervention in the period leading up to the Arab-Israeli war

in October 1973. Finally, Chapter 8 focuses on the central role of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger in both running of the Kurdish intervention and the tragic way in which it ended in March 1975. In doing so, it will be evident that from Eisenhower to Ford, US decisions and actions were based on a single, unifying perception: the Soviet Union posed a threat to Iraq's sovereignty. Because of this, the US policy toward Iraq between 1958 and 1975 was based on Iraq's perceived role in the Cold War, leading to a series of major and minor interventions, which have contributed to the country's ongoing instability.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AAD	Access to Archive Database
AU	Arab Union
BNA	British National Archives
BPC	Basra Petroleum Company
CENTO	Central Treaty Organization
CFPF	Central Foreign Policy Files
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
COMECON	Council for Mutual Economic Assistance
CPL	Carter Presidential Library
DCI	Director of Central Intelligence
DNSA	Digital National Security Archive
DOD	Department of Defense
DoS	US Department of State
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
EPL	Eisenhower Presidential Library
ET	Electronic Telegrams
FCO	Foreign Commonwealth Office
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act
FPL	Ford Presidential Library
FRUS	Foreign Relations of the United States
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOI	Government of Iraq
HSF	Harold Saunders Files
IAF	Iraqi Air Force
ICP	Iraq Communist Party
IDF	Israeli Defense Force
INOC	Iraqi National Oil Company
INR	Bureau of Intelligence and Research
IPC	Iraq Petroleum Company
JCS	Joint Chiefs of State
KDP	Kurdish Democratic Party
KPL	Kennedy Presidential Library
KSF	Kissinger-Scowcroft West Wing Office Files
KT	Kissinger Transcripts
LBJL	Johnson Presidential Library

MR	Mandatory Review
NARA	National Archive and Record Administration
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCRC	National Council of the Revolutionary Command
NDP	National Democratic Party
NEA	Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs
NIE	National Intelligence Estimate
NPL	Nixon Presidential Library
NSAM	National Security Action Memorandum
NSC	National Security Council
NSF	National Security File
OCB	Operations Coordinating Board
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
OPEC	Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
PFLP	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PHF	Phillip Halla Files
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organization
PRF	People's Resistance Force
RCC	Revolutionary Command Council
RG	Record Group
RKF	Robert Komer Files
SAVAK	National Intelligence and Security Organization (Iran)
SCI	Special Committee on Iraq
SN	Subject Numeric Files
SNIE	Special National Intelligence Estimate
SOV-MAT	Soviet Military Materials
UAR	United Arab Republic
UN	United Nations
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
USINT	United States Interests Section
USIS	United States Information Service
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
USUN	United States Mission to the United Nations