

## Lecture 7 - Decapitating Terrorist Leaders

**UPDATE THIS USING INFORMATION FROM THE DRONE CHAPTER OF THE UNDERSTANDING WAR AND PEACE TEXTBOOK IN YOUR OFFICE**

Hi class, and welcome to our lecture on a controversial approach to dealing with an equally controversial global political issue – conducting “decapitation” operations to kill or capture the leaders of terrorist organizations. In this lecture, we are specifically going to focus on the question of whether these operations work by examining the tangible effects they have on terrorist organizations.

### **GO TO FIRST SLIDE**

#### **Introduction**

Today’s lecture is going to be based on an article by Patrick Johnston called “Does Decapitation Work?,” which used a variety of statistical analyses to determine the effects of killing or capturing the senior leader or leaders of a terrorist organization.

Although governments have been conducting these kinds of operations for well over a century, they have recently become quite popular, especially with the Governments of the United States, Israel, and Russia. The killing of al-Qaida’s leader, Osama bin Laden, in May 2011, is definitely the most famous of these operations. However, it was just one of several hundred conducted by the Government of the United States since 2001, most of which have involved the use of remotely piloted aerial vehicles, or drones.

Indeed, according to the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, which maintains one of the major, publically available databases of drone strikes, the Bush, Obama, and Trump administrations carried out at least 15,026 drone strikes against suspected members of terrorist organizations in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia between 2002 and 2020, which killed between 8,717 and 16,728 people.

From these stats, it's hopefully clear to you that attempting to kill suspected terrorists has been a very popular strategy within the US Government during the early twenty-first century.

And, with this in mind, trying to figure out whether these operations are successful is an important endeavour because, if they aren't successful, then they would constitute a waste of resources. Moreover, if they aren't successful, then this means that, in the cases where they result in the death of a terrorist, let alone civilians, they have inflicted needless losses of life. On the other hand, if they are successful, then it's important for us to know why.

### **NEXT SLIDE**

#### **The Notion that Leadership Decapitation Does Not Work**

Alright, now, before we get into Johnston's arguments regarding why he thinks that leadership decapitation operations work quite well, it's important to highlight the fact that numerous scholars feel that these operations do NOT work very well. So, why might this be?

#### ***Organizational Durability***

Well, first off, scholars who don't think that decapitation operations work very well often assume that the leaders of terrorist organizations are simply NOT particularly important to an organization's willingness and ability to carry out terrorist attacks because the organization, as a whole, will survive the loss of a leader. If this assumption is correct, then killing or capturing terrorist leaders probably won't have much effect on an organization's ability to carry out its work.

On the other hand, Johnston argues that, in fact, most terrorist organizations lack the robust organizational structures that are necessary to insulate themselves from the shocks associated with losing their leaders.

For example, an organization called the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (or JVP), which conducted campaigns against the Sri Lankan government in 1971 and 1987, suffered a great deal during both of

these conflicts when the Sri Lankan government captured its leader, Rohana Wijeweera. This leader served as the mastermind for the group and planned their overall strategy and also their individual terrorist operations. He was also very charismatic and likely attracted several members of his group with his personality. With this in mind, it is perhaps unsurprising that, after he was captured, his subordinates failed to undertake the operations he had planned and the organization was quickly defeated.

In general, Johnston thinks that killing or capturing the leaders of a terrorist group should reduce the group's pool of skilled commanders, strategists, and operatives, and, through this, undermine their ability to plan future operations, conduct training, and, of course, actually carry out terrorist attacks.

### NEXT SLIDE

#### *Martyrdom Effects*

Now, scholars who think that leadership decapitation doesn't work also tend to assume that killing or capturing the leader of a terrorist organization automatically turns that leader into a martyr and that this, in turn, has a number of counterproductive effects.

They, for instance, assume that killing or capturing a group's leader will increase the group's morale and esprit de corps, bolster their resolve to continue fighting, enhance their ability to recruit new members, and intensify their desire to violently retaliate in response to the loss of their leader.

Scholars who believe this tend to point to statements provided to the news media by terrorist organizations in the aftermath of the death of one of their leaders, where the organization will at least claim that they view their dead leader as a martyr and pledge to avenge his death with the blood of their enemies.

On the other hand, Johnston thinks that there are at least two problems with this assumption. First off, he points out that the senior leader of a terrorist organization is not necessarily popular among his

subordinates. They may actually view their leader as reckless, or as an idiot, especially if the organization has accomplished very little under his command or lost several of its members to reprisal attacks by the governments they have targeted. He also points out that many of the terrorist leaders who have been killed or captured were, in effect, “sold out” by one or more of their subordinates who told a government how to locate and target their leader.

In addition to this, Johnston argues that the martyrdom assumption seems to rest on the false premise that terrorist groups are driven primarily by emotion. Indeed, quite a bit of recent scholarship on terrorism has found that terrorist groups are usually driven by cold, calculated logic and directed at accomplishing specific, tangible – though often highly ambitious – goals.

For example, Al-Qaida’s stated policy objectives back in 2001 included: to “expel the United States from the Persian Gulf;” to “sever US-Israeli relations,” to “sever US-apostate relations” which means ending the US government’s support for Muslim governments that Al-Qaida considers heretical, like the Saudi monarchy and Pervez Musharaff’s regime in Pakistan; and to “spare Muslims from ‘Crusader wars,’” which means fighting back against Western military campaigns in Muslim countries or Muslim regions of multi-religion countries, like Bosnia, Chechnya, and East Timor.

The stated policy objective of the Tamil Tigers, on the other hand, is to “establish a Tamil state” on the Island of Sri Lanka, and the stated policy objectives of the Kurdistan Workers’ Party are “to establish a Kurdish state in the Middle East” and to “establish communism in Turkey.”

With this in mind, if a terrorist group’s leader is killed or captured by a government, then this sends a powerful signal to the group’s current members and its supporters and potential recruits that the group has serious problems and that it might not be a good idea to get or stay involved with it.

## **NEXT SLIDE**

### ***Inadvertent Decentralization***

And finally, scholars who think that leadership decapitation doesn't work ***also*** tend to assume that leadership decapitation operations make it harder to defeat insurgent groups by ***motivating these groups to decentralize***. This claim, in turn, rests on the assumption that, as a terrorist organization becomes less hierarchical and more decentralized into localized cells that are capable of conducting operations on their own, the organization should find it easier to continue operating after losing its senior leader.

In response to this, Johnston argues that there simply isn't much evidence that leadership decapitation operations motivate terrorist groups to decentralize themselves.

Likewise, he argues that there is very little evidence that decentralized terrorist organizations are more capable of conducting attacks than centralized ones. On the contrary, he feels that it's likely that a decentralized terrorist organization made up of small cells that don't have much contact with each other is probably going to be pretty weak and unable to conduct sophisticated, highly-destructive attacks.

It's important to remember that, although al-Qaeda certainly had a number of small cells, its biggest and most destructive operations, including the attacks on two American embassies in Africa in 1998 and the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks had a great deal of involvement and direction from the senior leaders of the organization.

## **NEXT SLIDE**

### **Which Kinds of Leadership Decapitation Operations are Most Likely to Succeed?**

Alright now, before discussing the particular effects of leadership decapitation operations, Johnston takes the time to point out that these operations can take a variety of forms. In other words, governments can use a variety of different ***techniques*** to try to kill or capture the leader of a terrorist organization, and some of these techniques tend to be more successful than others.

Johnston broke decapitation operations down into five fairly specific categories. The first of these, “shootings,” involved sending an assassin on a specific mission to find and kill a particular leader with a firearm.

“Bombings” involved killing a leader by dropping bombs or missiles on them from the air.

“Raids/Sweeps” involved sending a team of soldiers or operatives to storm the suspected location of a terrorist leader and kill or capture them in the process. So, for instance, the famous attack on Osama bin Laden’s compound by a team of Navy SEALs in 2011, which was featured in the movie *Zero Dark Thirty*, is a good example of this kind of operation.

“Combat” operations involve attempts to kill or capture a terrorist leader during the course of a military operation that was actually launched for some other purpose, like capturing or defending a particular piece of territory. So, for example, one could argue that the primary goal of the Sri Lankan military’s invasion of the Tamil regions of that country in 2009 was to conquer these territories and subjugate the civilian population, but, in the process of accomplishing these goals, the Sri Lankan military killed LOTS of members of the Tamil Tigers.

And finally, Johnston also included an “unknown” category to capture cases where it’s clear that some sort of attempt was made to at least try to kill or capture a terrorist leader but it’s NOT clear which method was used.

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Now, as you can hopefully see in the graph up on the slide, Johnston found that combat operations were the most common type of decapitation operation, followed by shootings, raids, and bombings.

However, even though combat operations were a relatively common way to try to kill or capture terrorist leaders, they were not **the most successful** kind of decapitation operation. Indeed, raids are by far the most successful kind of decapitation operation, since they succeed 64 percent of the time. These are followed by shootings, which succeed 44 percent of the time, combat operations, which succeed 32 percent of the time, and bombings, which succeed 29 percent of the time.

And, finally, whichever operations are covered by the “unknown” category always failed.

I think these numbers make a great deal of sense, since, unlike bombings and combat operations, shootings and raids are **precision** operations that are **specifically designed** to kill or capture a particular terrorist leader.

And, before moving on, it’s important for me to highlight the fact that Johnston found that the **overall** success rate of decapitation operations was 40 percent.

This result suggests that, although leadership decapitation operations do not constitute a “silver bullet” that will **always** work against terrorist groups, they work often enough for governments to view them as a worthwhile way to try to harm terrorist groups.

### **NEXT SLIDE**

#### **The Effects of Leadership Decapitation Operations**

Alright, now, so what are the tangible effects of leadership decapitation operations? Well, according to Johnston’s statistical analysis, these kinds of operations tend to have several notable effects.

#### ***Termination***

The first effect he discovered was that terrorist campaigns are **more likely to come to an end within a year after a leadership decapitation operation** has taken place. Specifically, he found that leadership

decapitation operations increase the chances that a terrorist campaign will end by 27 percent.

### ***Victory***

Now, just because a terrorist group decides to stop its campaign, this does not mean that it has been defeated by a government. A terrorist group can, for instance, simply decide to go dormant for a while. With this in mind, Johnston tried to figure out whether leadership decapitation operations had a tangible effect of the probability that a government would decisively defeat a terrorist group within a year after the strike occurred.

He found that these kinds of operations did, indeed, increase the chances that a government would defeat a terrorist group within a year of killing or capturing one of its leaders. Specifically, he found that this chance increased by 32 percent, which suggests that killing or capturing the leaders of a terrorist group DOES make it easier for governments to defeat the rest of the group fairly quickly.

### **NEXT SLIDE**

#### ***Lethality***

Now, if terrorist groups simply sat around doing nothing or confined themselves to pursuing non-violent activities, governments probably wouldn't try very hard to kill or capture their leaders. But of course, the use of deadly violence is one of the key characteristics that distinguish terrorist groups from other kinds of non-state actors and it's the primary reason why governments try so hard to eliminate and defeat them.

Taking this into account, Johnston also tried to determine the effects of leadership decapitation operations on the lethality of the attacks carried out by the groups that lost a leader to one of these operations.

He found that, on average, terrorist groups that have lost a leader to one of these operations tended to kill fewer people during the year following the loss of the leader than during the year prior to the loss of the leader.

## *Attacks*

Likewise, Johnston found that leadership decapitation operations also help reduce the frequency of terrorist attacks.

This means that terrorist groups that have lost a leader to one of these operations tend to conduct fewer attacks during the year following the loss of their leader than they did in the year before they lost their leader.

## **NEXT SLIDE**

### **What Kinds of Terrorist Groups are Most Vulnerable to Leadership Decapitation Operations?**

Alright, now, besides determining the general effects of leadership decapitation operations, Johnston also wanted to figure out which kinds of terrorist groups were more and less vulnerable to these operations.

This is a particularly important part of his overall study because it draws attention to the fact that not every terrorist organization is fighting for the same kinds of objectives or goals.

For instance, some terrorist groups are “ideological” in nature, which means they carry out attacks to help further their particular secular belief system, like communism or white supremacy. During the Cold War, ideological terrorist groups were fairly common and they often viewed themselves as fighting for one or the other side in that global struggle between communism and democratic-capitalism.

Examples of this kind of group include the **Red Army Faction**, which was also known as the Baader-Meinhof Gang and operated in West Germany from 1970 all the way up to 1998, and the **Red Brigades**, which has operated in Italy since 1970, but hasn’t really been active since the 1980s.

Other terrorist groups are classified as “identity-based” organizations since they claim to carry out their attacks “on behalf of” or “in

defence of' a particular ethnic or religious group and are almost always fighting to achieve some form of **self-determination** for the people they claim to represent by convincing a government to hand over a particular piece of territory and allow it to become a completely separate, **independent** country or, at the very least, allow it to become highly **autonomous** by allowing it to govern itself, pass its own laws, and operate its own police forces without interference from the rest of the country.

The IRA and the various Basque terrorist groups that used violence to try to convince the Government of Spain to let the Basque region become an independent country are examples of this kind of terrorist group.

The Tamil Tigers, who fought for years to convince the Government of Sri Lanka to allow the Tamil dominated areas of that country to separate are another example.

Still other terrorist groups are called “centre-seeking” groups because their main objective is to use violence to convince the government of a country to hand over political power and authority to the group, **regardless of what the group’s particular ideology is.** So, these groups are all about taking power in a country. They may have ideological goals too, but taking power is their main objective.

The Taliban are a pretty good example of this kind of group since they always made it clear that their ultimate goal was to retake power in Afghanistan.

And, finally, Islamist terrorist groups are groups that use violence to support radical interpretations of Islam. Al-Qaida can rightly be called an Islamist terrorist group.

Now, after examining the effect of leadership decapitation operations on these four kinds of terrorist groups, Johnston found that their level of vulnerability to leadership decapitation operations is **remarkably and unexpectedly similar**, which means that every major kind of

terrorist organization is at least somewhat vulnerable to suffering considerable harm after losing its leader.

This finding is quite interesting because most scholars of terrorism assumed that Islamic groups were much less vulnerable to collapsing than most other kinds of terrorist groups since Islamic groups tend to have a particularly strong belief in the notion that any leader who dies at the hands of their enemies has been martyred and that they shouldn't be demoralized by his ascension to paradise.

Islamic groups are also held together by an extremely well-established belief system and tend to operate in Islamic societies, which means they have a very large social support base on which to fall back on in the event that they lose one of their leaders. Most other kinds of terrorist organizations simply don't have these advantages, which, again, led most scholars of terrorism to assume that they were significantly more vulnerable to collapse following the loss of a key leader.

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#### **Are Older Terrorist Organizations More or Less Vulnerable to Leadership Decapitation Operations?**

Next up, Johnston decided to try to figure out whether the age of a terrorist organization had any effect on its vulnerability to leadership decapitation operations. To do this, he compared groups that were targeted within the first ten years of starting their first terror campaign with groups that were targeted after they had been using terrorism for ten or more years.

He found that groups that have been using terrorism for ten or more years are more vulnerable to leadership decapitation operations than groups that have been using terrorism for less than ten years. Johnston thinks that the main reason for this is that losing their senior leader probably serves as a particularly crushing blow to the morale of a terrorist group that has been fighting for a long period of time because it will make them feel a great sense of hopelessness about their chances to ultimately prevail in their struggle.

## **Is Killing Terrorist Leaders More or Less Effective than Capturing Them?**

And finally, Johnston tries to figure out whether killing terrorist leaders is more or less effective than capturing them. Well, he found that *killing* terrorist leaders tends to be more effective than *capturing* them in the sense that terrorist groups are more likely to be defeated by a government after their leader is killed than if their leader is captured.

Johnston reasons that terrorist groups will probably suffer a greater loss of morale if their leader is killed than if their leader is captured.

If this result is accurate, than it serves as good news for the Governments of the United States, Israel, and Russia because all of these governments have demonstrated a distinct *preference* for killing terrorist leaders rather than capturing them.

## **Conclusion**

**TAKE A BREAK**

## Lecture 8

Hi class, and welcome to our lecture on counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency during military occupations. In this part of today's class, we're going to talk about a number of key factors that a scholar by the name of David Edelstein has argued can influence the likelihood that a military occupation will succeed or fail.

### GO TO FIRST SLIDE

#### Introduction

Alright, now, military occupations, which involve the “temporary control of a country by another state that claims no right to permanent sovereign control over that country,” are a critical aspect of counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency because many terror campaigns and insurgencies develop in order to try to force out an occupying army by creating a great deal of violence and instability in the occupied country.

And, with this in mind, Edelstein considers a “successful” military occupation to be one in which the occupying power manages to largely defeat any terror groups or insurgencies that spring up in the country it is occupying, and, basically, maintain a fairly high degree of order and security inside the occupied country.

### NEXT SLIDE

#### Factor 1: Is the Occupation Necessary for the Occupied Country?

First off, Edelstein argues that military occupations are more likely to succeed in situations in which the population being occupied absolutely needs the help of the occupiers. A potential occupier can try to ensure this by destroying the major political, economic, and social institutions of the country they want to occupy during their invasion of that country.

In other words, achieving a decisive and highly destructive military victory will increase your chances of being able to successfully occupy a country.

The main reason for this is that, if the occupied country has been devastated by war, then the population is likely going to accept the occupation as a “necessary evil,” because, without the occupying power’s help, the occupied population may not be able to rebuild their country or even meet their own basic human needs for a very long time.

So, for example, during the Second World War, both Germany and Japan were annihilated by years of Allied bombings, which left these countries with shattered cities, very little infrastructure, and almost no food at all.

In this context, the occupying powers, including the United States, Great Britain, France, and the Soviet Union, literally held the lives of the German and Japanese people in their hands by controlling access to food and other vital supplies that were necessary for rebuilding these countries and taking care of their citizens. And this, in turn, helped motivate the German and Japanese citizens to stay peaceful and cooperative.

### NEXT SLIDE

Now, from the perspective of the occupied population, a positive aspect of this factor is that an occupying power will probably want to offer a great deal of support to a country that it has devastated during a recent war. Indeed, from a moral perspective, an occupying power may feel a strong sense of responsibility to help rebuild a country that it has just destroyed. And, from a strategic perspective, the occupying power will probably want to rebuild a devastated society so that it won’t collapse into total chaos and anarchy.

These fears and concerns can trickle right down to the level of the individual soldiers who are taking part in a military occupation, and are sometimes reflected in popular folklore that develops while military occupations are taking place.

For example, during the late 1940s, as the Allies were occupying Germany in the aftermath of its crushing defeat in World War II, American soldiers began telling a story that was not necessarily strictly true, but which reflected their genuine fears and concerns about what might happen if they failed to support and rebuild that devastated society.

The story goes like this: “In Berlin, after World War II, money was short, supplies were tight, and it seemed like everyone was hungry. One day a young woman noticed a blind man slowly making his way through a crowd. The blind man struck up a conversation with the woman and asked her for a favor: could she deliver a letter he was carrying to the address written on the envelope? Well, the address wasn’t very far away, so she agreed.

She started out to deliver the letter, but quickly turned around to see if there was anything else the blind man needed. And when she did this, she spotted him hurrying back through the crowd without his dark glasses or white cane. Upon seeing this she, naturally, became suspicious and went to the police, who raided the address on the envelope and found heaps of human flesh for sale.

And what was in the envelope? A letter saying: “This is the last one I am sending you today.”

Again, this particular story didn’t actually happen, but it reflects the genuine fears and concerns that the occupation forces had regarding the need to rebuild and stabilize post-war Germany.

### **NEXT SLIDE**

#### **Factor 2: Is an External Threat Present?**

Alright, now, a second critical factor that can improve a government’s chances of successfully occupying a foreign country is if the security of the occupied country is being threatened by another country.

Indeed, when an occupied country faces an external threat, the occupied population is likely to welcome the protection offered by the occupying power and, as a result, they will behave more passively and peacefully than they otherwise would.

In other words, an external threat can make the occupation of a country more acceptable to the population that is being occupied because the occupation forces will be working to protect them and ensure their security.

At the same time, if an occupied country is considered to be geopolitically important, then the occupying power might be motivated to send a great quantity of soldiers, equipment, and other military resources to that country to ensure that it is not conquered by someone else.

So, for instance, it is commonly believed that the occupations of West Germany, Japan, Italy, Austria, and South Korea by America and its Western European Allies after the end of the Second World War all succeeded in part because of the threat posed to these countries by the Soviet Union, which had either conquered or forged alliances with countries, like North Korea, East Germany, and Czechoslovakia, that were right next to these occupied countries.

With respect to West Germany, the American military governor of West Germany from 1949 to 1952, John McCloy, recalled that the successful occupation of that country was greatly assisted by, in his words, “the threat of the Soviet Union, (and) the fear of the Russians.... [In] a way, we [Americans] could do no wrong because the importance of showing ourselves in Berlin was so apparent to the Berlin population... while down in the [main US occupation] zone we were apt to be criticized.”

What this example demonstrates quite well is that, even in the same occupied country, the degree of external threat that is felt in different parts of the country will have an influence on the occupied population’s

attitudes toward the occupiers. Since West Berlin was completely surrounded by the Soviet Union's occupation zone, the West Germans who lived there felt that the Soviet threat to their safety was very high and so they were quite willing to accept the presence of American troops on their streets because these troops would help keep the Soviets out.

## **MENTION THE PICTURE ON THE SLIDES WITH THE LOOTED WRIST WATCHES ON THE SOVIET SOLDIER.**

On the other hand, most of the West Germans who lived in the main American occupation zone didn't have the Soviet Army literally on their doorsteps and so they didn't recognize the value of having American troops patrolling their streets to the same extent that the residents of West Berlin did.

Now, with this in mind, one of many factors that made the US-led occupation of Iraq more problematic is that Iraq lacked an external threat that could have motivated the US government to send more troops to Iraq and help bring the Iraqi people closer to their American occupiers by allowing them to see that there is at least some value in having the US military in their country.

Afghanistan, likewise, lacked a clear external threat during the period when the United States and NATO were occupying it, and this greatly reduced the chances that the occupation of Afghanistan would succeed.

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#### **Factor 3: Can the Occupying Power Provide Credible Guarantees that It Intends to Leave Relatively Soon?**

Finally, an occupying power can increase the chances that it will successfully occupy a country by offering credible guarantees of its intention to leave the occupied country in a timely manner.

Even occupied populations who view the occupiers as a "necessary evil" that are rebuilding their society, ensuring that their basic human needs

are met, and protecting them from an external threat want to know that they will regain their independence relatively soon.

With this in mind, providing credible guarantees that the occupying power is going to leave relatively soon will reduce the chances that anyone in the occupied country will feel the need to organize a terror campaign or insurgency to try to force out the occupiers.

Edelstein thinks that there are at least four strategies that an occupying power can use to make its intention to eventually leave the occupied country seem more credible, but he notes that all of these strategies have significant flaws that might prevent them from working.

### **NEXT SLIDE**

#### **Set a Deadline for Withdrawal**

First off, Edelstein argues that an occupying power could choose to set a deadline for withdrawing its military personnel from the occupied country. The main advantage of doing this is that it can give an occupied population hope that they will receive their freedom and independence by a certain date, which, in turn, might motivate them to forgo creating or maintaining a terror campaign or insurgency to try to force the occupying power to leave.

On the other hand, setting a deadline also has some possible downsides. For instance, deadlines will quite often not seem credible in the eyes of an occupied population because, with the possible exception of having to deal with angry voters back home, nothing bad is going to happen to the occupying power if it fails to meet a self-imposed deadline.

In addition to this, even if a withdrawal deadline does seem credible in the eyes of an occupied population, it could still be counterproductive. This is because setting a withdrawal deadline provides the terrorists and insurgents inside an occupied country with a very strong incentive to simply bide their time and wait until the occupying power leaves, at

which point they can start using violence against the government and civilian population of their *newly independent* country.

If this were to happen, then the occupation will have ultimately failed because it did not actually *defeat* the terrorists and insurgents.

### *NEXT SLIDE*

#### *Adopt Indirect Rule*

Now, *another* strategy that an occupying power can use to try to convince an occupied population that it plans to leave their country relatively soon is to *empower* the citizens of the occupied country by allowing them to play a role in governing their own country.

*Indirect rule*, as this is called, was used in Japan and Austria after the end of the Second World War, and in a number of African countries that were under British occupation in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

In Japan, indirect rule was pretty well a *necessity* because very few members of the American military spoke Japanese well-enough to be able to govern that country, and so the Japanese were allowed to continue to help govern their country even under US occupation.

Now, as you might expect, one of the major *advantages* of indirect rule is that it can help win the hearts and minds of the occupied population because, by incorporating members of the occupied population into the occupation government, it gives them a great sense of *confidence* that the occupying power will eventually return *full control* of their country back to them.

On the other hand, the main *disadvantage* of indirect rule is that it can *easily fail* to improve the legitimacy of the occupation government in the eyes of the occupied population because the members of the occupied population who decide to take part in the government may be viewed as

mere puppets or collaborators who are working to support the interests of the occupying power rather than their own citizens.

If this happens, then terror groups or an insurgency could develop to try to overthrow or at least try to significantly disrupt the work of this “illegitimate” government.

### NEXT SLIDE

#### Adopt Direct Rule

Now, although indirect rule has been tried many times in occupied countries, many other military occupations opted to rely on direct rule instead. Probably the most famous use of this strategy was during the occupation of West Germany after the end of World War II.

The Allies were able to pursue this strategy in West Germany because there were plenty of people in the American and other Allied armed forces who could speak passable German, which meant that native Germans were not absolutely needed to help govern their country.

And, the main reason why the Allies pursued this strategy in West Germany is because they felt that members of the Nazi party had played such a central role in the German government during the 1930s and early 1940s that the only way to ensure that Nazis did not play a role in post-war West Germany was to keep virtually ALL Germans out of important government positions for several years as the Allies tried to “de-Nazify” the country and slowly train a new generation of Germans to eventually take over responsibility for governing their country in the 1950s.

Now, like indirect rule, direct rule has its advantages and disadvantages. Among its advantages is that it allows the occupying power to avoid having to rely on local civilians, who may have questionable loyalty, to implement the work of the government.

In other words, this strategy helps avoid possible security risks, like people who might try to use their position in the government to help their fellow occupied citizens to start or continue an insurgency.

The major disadvantage of direct rule, on the other hand, is that it makes it harder for an occupying power to demonstrate that it intends to leave the occupied country in the relatively near future.

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#### *Make Withdrawal Contingent on Good Behaviour*

Alright, now, a third strategy that an occupying power can use to try to convince an occupied population that it will soon regain its sovereignty is a bit more promising than the previous two. This strategy involves gradually turning over more and more responsibility for governing the occupied country to its own citizens IF, and only IF, they cooperate with the occupying power and stay well-behaved.

So, in this way, increasing the freedom and independence of an occupied country is being used as a “carrot” to motivate good behavior on the part of the occupied population, while decreasing its freedom and independence is being used as a “stick” to discourage bad behaviour.

Now, during the Allied occupation of Italy, which started after Italy surrendered to the Allies in 1943, the Allies adopted this strategy. As the Allies began expanding their zone of occupation into northern Italy, they granted greater control of southern Italy to its own citizens. And the reason why the Allies did this is because the residents of southern Italy were actively cooperating with them to identify fascists and were not organizing significant resistance movements.

Now, not only did this strategy help relieve the Allies of some of the burden of occupying Italy, but it also provided a clear signal to both the Italians and the citizens of other countries that the Allies intended to occupy, like Germany and Austria, that the Allies were sincere in their

intention to eventually allow the countries they have occupied to govern themselves.

The United States also employed this strategy in Iraq, and it seems to have worked fairly well. Indeed, one of the likely effects of the Bush administration's "surge" strategy of 2007, which involved sending over 20,000 additional soldiers to Iraq, was to send a signal that, as long as the terrorism and insurgency continued, America was going to stay in Iraq indefinitely.

In other words, the surge demonstrated that "bad behaviour" on the part of the Iraqi people would slow down America's transfer of power to them and its withdrawal from their country.

And, as the rates of terrorist and insurgent violence in Iraq slowly died down after 2007, tens of thousands of American troops left the country and turned over responsibility for Iraqi security to Iraq's own government security forces as a "reward" for the improved behaviour of its citizens.

Now, although this strategy is more promising than the previous two that I mentioned, it can still be quite hard to implement because it will only work if the occupying power and the occupied population can learn to trust each other and believe each other's promises. Trust may, however, be in short supply in the aftermath of a violent military conflict.

### **NEXT SLIDE**

#### ***Multilateralize the Occupation***

And finally, an occupying power might be able to make their promise to eventually withdraw from and free the occupied country seem more credible by "multilateralizing" the occupation by bringing in multiple occupying powers rather than bearing the responsibility for occupying a country entirely by itself.

The main reason why bringing in other countries can be helpful in this respect is that it's inherently implausible that the international community would try to collectively annex the territory of a member state of the United Nations.

As a result, the occupied population can be confident that a multilateral occupation will come to an end in a reasonable period of time.

History has born this out. For example, West Germany was occupied by three countries after the end of World War II, including the United States, Great Britain, and France, and it was allowed to become “fully sovereign” in 1955 – which was just ten years after this multilateral occupation started. In contrast, East Germany was occupied by only one country, the Soviet Union, and it, like all of the other countries in Eastern Europe that the Soviet Union occupied at the end of World War II, only became fully sovereign at the end of the 1980s, or about forty-five years after these unilateral occupations began.

However, one of the disadvantages of this approach is that the various member countries of the international community that choose to participate in a multilateral occupation will probably have very different degrees of commitment to the success of the occupation, which means that some countries will TRY much harder than others to actually help rebuild and stabilize the occupied country.

Moreover, this means that some countries will give up and quit the occupation much more easily than others will, which could create a situation where an occupation that started out as a multilateral operation could eventually end up as a unilateral operation.

This happened in Iraq. Indeed, during the first few years of the occupation, several countries were involved in it from various parts of the world, including, the US, UK, Australia, Poland, Denmark, Italy, Georgia, the Ukraine, the Netherlands, Spain, Honduras, Nicaragua, South Korea, and Japan, among several others.

However, with the exception of the American, Australian, and British troops, very few of these countries made any concerted attempt to **fight back** against the rising terrorism and insurgency in Iraq. Instead, one-by-one each of these countries gave up and exited Iraq until America was the only one left. And this, if anything, **emboldened** the insurgents because it showed them that, through their use of violence, they could convince most of the occupation forces to leave.

The same thing happened in Afghanistan.

### **Conclusion**

Alright, that's it for today, class.