
FOREIGN ASSISTANCE AND POLITICAL STABILITY IN RESTIVE STATES: U.S. INTERVENTIONS IN YEMEN REVISITED

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Abstract

Yemen has often been described as a country with historical struggles for sustained political stability amidst her poor economy. The negative situation accounted for the option of seeking foreign aid from the United States and other multilateral agencies for the country to sustain its economy and achieve political stability. However, the worry is on the implications of the foreign assistance for the troubled state. This necessitated this study whose objectives are to determine how the U.S. economic and military assistance to Yemen engendered the 2011 widespread revolutionary protest and to ascertain the implication of U.S. government's military assistance on demand for regime change in Yemen. Anchored on the Marxian theory of dialectical materialism, the qualitative mechanism of data collection and analysis was applied in the study. Data were collated from secondary sources which include institutional materials while qualitative descriptive method was used for data analysis. Among other things, the study found out that the military aid provided to Yemen by the U.S. was rather utilized to strategically strengthen and embolden the security forces in order to maintain massive crackdown on peaceful protesters against regime change. The study equally established that political stability in the country has nosedived on the account of the foreign assistance. In view of the findings, the study recommends that the administration of President Abed Rabbo Mansour Al Hadi needs to cooperate with the people of Yemen as partners in rebuilding the troubled country. It also recommends that the administration needs to review the partnership existing between Yemen and foreign partners, particularly the U.S. in order to identify areas that may require some adjustments.

Keywords: Yemen, political stability, foreign assistance, contemporary world, aid

Introduction

The Republic of Yemen was formed by the merger of the former separate states of North Yemen and South Yemen in 1990 with Ali Abdullah Saleh becoming president of the unified state in 1990. However, Yemen's support for Iraq during Operation Desert Storm crippled the country economically, as Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States expelled an estimated 850,000 expatriate Yemeni workers and the United States cut off ties to the then newly-unified state. The 1994 civil war critically drained Yemen's economy. As a consequence and for decades, Yemen relied heavily on aid from the U.S. and other multilateral agencies to sustain its economy. Primarily since Yemen's unification, the United States government has prioritized combating Al Qaeda-affiliated terrorist groups inside Yemen. Al Qaeda's attack in 2000 against the USS Cole, coupled with the attacks of September 11, 2001, a year later, officially made Yemen a front in the war on terror (Sharp, 2012). More so, President Saleh's opposition in the Northern Yemen increased compelling him also to seek more support and cooperation from the U.S. government to maintain his grip on power.

In 2009, the Barack Obama's administration initiated a major review of U.S. policy toward Yemen which, coupled with the attempted airline bombing over Detroit on Christmas Day 2009, led to a new U.S. strategy toward Yemen referred to as the National Security Council's Yemen Strategic Plan. This strategy is essentially three-fold, focusing on combating AQAP in the short term, increasing development assistance to meet long-term challenges, and marshalling support for global efforts to stabilize Yemen. Thus, the U.S. government therefore provided series of financial aid to Yemen aimed at helping the economy stabilize. However, it was strongly believed that the U.S. foreign aid is strategically directed at instituting and strengthening western principles in Yemen and exterminating Islamic principles from the country.

Mainly, Yemen received U.S. economic aid from multiple accounts, the largest of which are typically the Economic Support Fund (ESF), the Development Assistance (DA) account, and the Global Health Child Survival account (GHCS). USAID's country stabilization strategy for Yemen features, among other activities, two main programs, the Community Livelihoods Project (CLP) and the Responsive Governance Project (RGP). The CLP seeks to work with NGOs in local communities in Yemen's rural governorates in order to expand access to freshwater, healthcare, and education (Sharp, 2012). The RGP seeks to work with key Yemeni ministries, including Health, Education, Agriculture, Planning, Industry and Trade, among others, to address related but broader government policy, institutional, and capacity issues that will help the Government of Yemen be more responsive to the needs of its citizens (USAID, 2010). The governance program was awarded to Counterpart International. In addition to USAID programming, Yemen also receives U.S. humanitarian assistance. Current U.S. funding supports shelter, food aid, emergency relief supplies, safe water supplies, sanitation assistance, camp coordination and management, protection, health and nutrition, and medical supplies for refugees and internally displaced persons (USAID, 2010).

Also, in a bid to provide more financial assistance to Yemen for the implementation of its sponsored neoliberal policies the U.S. launched a group of foreign donors for Yemen known as the "Friends of Yemen" to raise more financial aids for Yemen. The group pledged a total of \$5.7 billion to Yemen at the 2006 London conference. Between 2007 and 2010 Yemen also received pledges totaling \$4.7 billion. Donors also pledged \$1.5 billion and \$6.4 billion in for 2011/2012 at New York Conference (U.S. Department of State, 2012). U.S. military aid to Yemen has increased considerably over the years. In fact, it was estimated that U.S. military aid to Yemen averaged \$20 million a year during the Bush administration. President

Obama sought \$50 million in total aid for 2010, including \$35 million in development assistance (U.S. Department of State, 2012).

However, the U.S. economic assistance to the Saleh administration (especially the implementation of the aid-tied neoliberal policies) has continued to attract scholarly attention with regards to the real effects which it creates in the country, particularly with regards to her national sovereignty (Schmitz, 2012). This forms the major concern of this study which sought to interrogate the implications of U.S. interventions in Yemen on political stability of the country.

Statement of the Problem

Basically, the involvement of the United States in the affairs of Yemen was driven by certain interests. Yemen is key for the expansion of U.S. influence in the Middle East, the Horn of Africa, and North Africa. First, it was estimated that the Bab al-Mandab gateway off Yemen's coast (one of the world's busiest sea lanes), through which more than 3 million barrels of oil are shipped daily to Europe, the United States and Asia could be at risk if the U.S. does not have the support of the Yemeni government, (US Department of State, 2012). Also, U.S. has interest to assist its oil partner, Saudi Arabia's ongoing border war with Northern Yemenis. More importantly too, there have been recent oil discoveries in Yemen.

Remarkably, Yemen's oil reserves are estimated at 11.9 billion barrels of oil. As a consequence, to guarantee its oil interests in Yemen which is critically contingent upon Saleh's consolidation of power and root-out the Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) terrorist interference which posed serious threats to Saleh's regime and by implication U.S. oil interests, the U.S. deemed it strategically worthwhile to establish a military presence, including bases in Yemen. And with the fall of U.S. supported dictators in Tunisia and Egypt this has become even more important (St Pete for Peace, 2013).

To engage itself more with Yemen and achieve its national interests, the US. demonstrated favorable intentions concerning Yemen. That became evident when the U.S. fully supported the Yemeni unity against the failed Separatist attempt in the summer of 1994 (Yemen Embassy, 2008).

However, this intervention seems to have produced negative consequences which include plunging Yemen into more economic crisis and making the living conditions of the people appear bleaker. In fact, Saleh's economic policies, as spurred and propelled by the U.S. neoliberal dictates, left Yemen as one of the poorest countries in the Arab world. Despite possessing significant oil and gas resources and a considerable amount of agriculturally productive land, Yemen remained one of the poorest of the world's low-income countries; more than 45 percent of the population lives in poverty. With as much as seventy percent of government revenues derived from the energy sector, Yemen's government is losing its capacity to implement fundamental economic reforms at a time when unemployment, poverty, and youth populations are all on the rise (Rudolf, 2010). The rate of unemployment rose dramatically from 20 percent in 2008 to 40 percent in 2010. Forty-five percent live below the United Nations' poverty line, while fifty percent remained illiterate. And seventy-three percent still live in rural tribal areas (Assamiee, 2010). With per capita gross domestic product (GDP) at only \$2,500, Yemeni living standards have more in common with sub-Saharan Africa than with the rest of the Middle East where there is appreciable oil windfalls (Swift, 2012). Yet, Yemen remained under significant pressure to fully implement economic reforms or face the loss of badly needed international financial support (World Bank, 2011). Yemen has recently endured annual inflation rates as high as nineteen percent. High inflation came on

the heels of a fifty percent drop in known oil and gas reserves during the last three years preceding the revolution (International Monetary Fund, 2011).

Generally, state corruption was rampant, and the country remained the poorest in the Arab world and one of the most destitute nations on earth. In 2011, it ranked 154 out of 187 on the United Nations Human Development Index. Saleh managed to stay in power for over four decades, but the country's long-term structural resource and economic challenges worsened during his rule (Sharp, 2012). Even where the policies were meant to benefit the people, the gains were not evenly distributed to the entire populace but rather benefited on a few in the military and in government as well as those loyal to the government. These developments therefore sparked widespread strikes and protest actions across various public institutions in Yemen. Importantly, Gordon (2012) establishes that parallel revolution against the unpopular policies and corrupt tendencies of the U.S. spurred by President Saleh and his close relative cronies has emerged in institutions of the state on the deteriorating level of the governance resulting to economic crisis of various kinds such as high poverty rate, hunger, unemployment, low wages, high rate of illiteracy, inflation and excruciating debts among others. The dissatisfied public had established a connection between Saleh's Western alliance and the present economic crisis devastating the country. It is in the light of these problems that the study seeks to establish the implications of US interventions on the political stability of Yemen.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How did the U.S. economic and military assistance to Yemen engender the 2011 widespread revolutionary protest?
2. What is the implication of U.S. government's military assistance on demand for regime change in Yemen?

Research Objectives

This study has both broad and specific objectives. The broad objective of the study is to interrogate the implications of the United States assistance on political stability in Yemen. The following specific objectives are:

1. To determine how the U.S. economic and military assistance to Yemen engendered the 2011 widespread revolutionary protest.
2. To ascertain the implication of U.S. government's military assistance on demand for regime change in Yemen.

Significance of the Research

This study has both theoretical and practical significance. At the theoretical level, this study seeks to contribute to the existing literature on the implications of foreign assistance on national sovereignty in contemporary world. As the implication of US assistance to Yemen on the country's internal sovereignty has triggered unending debate, the study makes an in-depth incursion into the subject matter by thoroughly examining the variables of the study. At the practical level, the study seeks to provide a practical guide for Western Asian leaders, policy makers and economic analysts, especially in determining the level of relations to maintain with foreign states. In essence, this research will be an eye-opener to many countries

especially the developing countries on the need to streamline their relations with western states.

Methods

The qualitative mechanism of data collection and analysis was applied in the study. Ex-post facto research design was utilized. Data were collated from secondary sources which include institutional materials while qualitative descriptive method was used for data analysis.

Theoretical Framework

This study adopts the Marxian theory of dialectical materialism. This theory is a sub-theory under the broader framework of Marxian political economy. Fundamentally, the method of Marxian social production and reproduction system is that of dialectical materialism. It holds specific explanations of revolution and the basic accounts on why societies go through the process of change. Fundamentally therefore, Marxian dialectical materialism is also a theory of revolution and the basic explanation for how societies go through the process of change. The foundation of Marxian dialectical materialism, as well as his broad philosophical orientations, is well rooted in his classical works and that of his friend and financier, Fredrick Engels. They include: Marx (1967); Marx (1970); Marx (1985) Marx and Engels (1977); Engels (1978); Engels (1975). Other important works that highlight the reality of Marxian dialectical materialism include Lenin (1970); Lenin (1975); Lenin (1977); Boguslavky (1978); Ake (1981); Vodolazor, (1984); Berbershkina (1995); Akpuru-Ajah (1997) among numerous others.

The Marxian analysis on dialectical materialism is, amongst other things, built on the following bedrock:

- It is in the struggle for survival and security that human beings find and/or define allies and opponents, be it within or outside their family, clan, tribe, nation, class or profession, etc. This struggle proceeds and informs and is likely to outlive class, religion and other group formations and exists outside classes and other social identities.
- This struggle to change/improve or retain/preserve ones position in the scheme of things is the direct and indirect basis of virtually all social behaviour such as cooperation, conflicts, violence, allies and alliances, friendships, enmities, within between and across classes, occupational groups, in fact, in all social groups.
- As long as the interests of all have not been satisfied there is bound to be conflicts.
- The more the harmony of interests in social relationships the less the level of violence and conflicts and vice versa.
- Those whose survival and security interests are satisfied in their social production and reproduction relationships tend to defend such a relationship and want it to continue to be so, while those who perceive their survival and security needs unsatisfactory in a social production and reproduction relationship tend to oppose it and want to change in their own favour, their religious and ethnic identities notwithstanding.
- Those who are foisted into political office by others must do the bidding of those who foisted them or get thrown out, neutralized or liquidated by those who foisted them. However, if they hope to act independently or do their own bidding they must quickly and/or skilfully neutralize, dominate and/or liquidate their sponsors if they can. This is what military regimes do. Such a task is not often easy particularly if there is great

disparity in the means possessed by the sponsored and the sponsor (Ogban-Iyam, 2005; Albalkin, Dzarasov, and Kulikov, 1983).

For this study, the regime change that occurred in Yemen can be explained and understood as an outcome of the untiring struggle by the excluded and deprived class to upturn the turn of events and reclaim a better place in the distribution of material wealth in the country. Remarkably, following the worsening economic condition of the Yemeni people, President Ali Saleh, who feared the overwhelming masses' disillusionment over his dictatorship, as well as the rising popularity of the opposition parties, threw his doors open and made a wholesale subscription to the capitalist ideologies and Western financial aid, especially that of U.S. economic aid which is usually unavoidably tied to the subscription of neoliberal policies.

Literature Review

Yemen and Political Stability

As Sharp (2012) notes, the 20th century political upheavals in the Arab world driven by anti-colonialism and Arab nationalism tore Yemen apart in the 1960s. In the north, a civil war pitting royalist forces backed by Saudi Arabia against a republican movement backed by Egypt ultimately led to the dissolution of the Yemeni Imamate and the creation of the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR). In the south, a Yemeni Marxist movement became the primary vehicle for resisting the British occupation of Aden. Communist insurgents eventually succeeded in establishing their own socialist state (People's Democratic Republic of Yemen or PDRY) that over time developed close ties to the Soviet Union and supported what were then radical Palestinian terrorist organizations. Throughout the Cold War, the two Yemeni states frequently clashed, and the United States assisted the YAR, with Saudi Arabian financial support, by periodically providing it with weaponry.

Notably, Yemen struggles with the lowest percapita GDP in the Arab world (\$2,300) for its population of 24.7 million people and has the region's second highest birth rate after the Gaza Strip (Sharp, 2012). The country's rugged terrain and geographic isolation, strong tribal social structure, and sparsely settled population have historically made it difficult to centrally govern (and conquer). This has promoted a more pluralistic political environment, but also has hampered socioeconomic development. Outside of the capital of Sana'a, tribal leaders often exert more control than central and local government authorities. A series of Zaydi Islamic dynasties ruled parts of Yemen both directly and nominally from 897 until 1962. The Ottoman Empire occupied a small portion of the western Yemeni coastline between 1849 and 1918. In 1839, the British Empire captured the southern Arabian Sea port of Aden, which it held, including some of its surrounding territories, until 1967.

Yemen and United States' Relations: Historical Overview

Political and diplomatic relations between Yemen and the United States date back to 1946. These relations were reinforced in 1959 with the establishment of the first U.S. resident mission in the city of Taiz. The report from the Yemen Embassy shows that the United States was one of the first countries in the West, to recognize the proclamation of the Arab Republic of Yemen of (1962). The John F. Kennedy Administration announced its support for the new republic on December 19, 1962 (U.S. Department of State, 2007). The crisis of 1967's Arab-Israeli War resulted in a cooling of diplomatic relations between the United States and all the Arab countries, including Yemen. Relations were re-established on July 1972 on the occasion of an official visit to Sana'a of the then secretary of State William Rogers. In December 1967, Washington recognized the independence of South Yemen from Britain and announced its

intention to open a resident mission. Washington's plan to establish a resident mission in Aden was discarded given the political tendencies that prevailed in Southern Yemen at that time.

American relations with Yemen continued on a positive and progressive course. In less than 20 years, Americans had begun to take more notice of Yemen. From 1979 to 1991 Officials from both sides exchanged visits. One of these significant visits was taken by the then Vice President George Bush in April 1987. His visit coincided with the official announcement of the oil discoveries in the fields of Mareb by Hunt-Texas Oil Company. Under Bush's Administration, relations between the two nations were at an all time high (Yemen Embassy, 2008). By the mid-1980s, relations between North and South Yemen improved, aided in part by the discovery of modest oil reserves. The Republic of Yemen was formed by the merger of the formerly separate states of North Yemen and South Yemen in 1990. Ali Abdullah Saleh, a former YAR military officer and ruler of North Yemen (from 1978 to 1990) became president of the newly unified state in 1990. However, Yemen's support for Iraq during Operation Desert Storm crippled the country economically, as Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states expelled an estimated 850,000 expatriate Yemeni workers and the United States cut off ties to the newly unified state.

In January 1990, President Ali Abdullah Saleh made his first official visit to the USA just a few months before the proclamation of the Yemeni Unity. The visit contributed to the progressive character of our bilateral cooperation. But once again, regional events would cause a temporary set-back in the budding relation. The emergence of crisis and confrontations during the second Gulf War overshadowed the development of Yemeni-American relations. The position taken by the Republic of Yemen regarding the occupation of Kuwait by Iraq was misinterpreted. Consequently, in the years that followed, Yemen Intensified its diplomatic efforts to clarify its position and reverse the distorted image that hindered its relations with the U.S. during the Gulf Crisis. In mid-nineties the Yemeni-American relations overcame the Gulf Crisis. Washington demonstrated favorable intentions concerning Yemen. That became evident when the U.S. fully supported the Yemeni unity against the failed Separatist attempt in the summer of 1994 (Yemen Embassy, 2008). During this time, the government forces loyal to then President Ali Abdullah Saleh put down an attempt by southern-based dissidents to secede. Many southerners still resent what they perceive as continued northern political, economic, and cultural domination of the country. Under former President Ali Abdullah Saleh's rule, political power gradually coalesced around his immediate family, whose members filled key posts in various security services. Corruption was rampant, and the country remained the poorest in the Arab world and one of the most destitute nations on earth. In 2011, it ranked 154 out of 187 on the United Nations Human Development Index. Saleh managed to stay in power for over four decades, but the country's long-term structural resource and economic challenges worsened during his rule (Prados& Sharp, 2007).

The U.S. also acknowledged Yemen for its efforts regarding democratic orientation, freedom of the press, parliamentary elections of 1993-1997 as well as its manifest backing of Economic and Financial Reforms with the cooperation of the IMF and the World Bank. The late nineties witnessed significant intensification of the bilateral interest of both countries. Senior officials from the State Departments, Defense Departments, and parliamentarians from both countries exchanged visits. American governmental and non-governmental institutions such as the National Democratic Institute for International relations (NDI), the International Foundation for Elections Systems (IFES), have developed a relation of partnership with the Yemeni Government in order to support its democratic experience. As a culmination to these

efforts Yemen was selected in 1999 to host the first international conference of Emerging Democracies under the patronage and support of NDI, USA, Britain, Japan, Holland and the UN. The conferences demonstrated the seriousness of Yemeni Emerging Democracy. Generally, during Saleh's presidency, U.S.-Yemeni relations were constantly strained by a lack of strong military-to-military ties and commercial relations, general Yemeni disapproval of U.S. policy in the Middle East, and U.S. distrust of Yemen's commitment to fighting terrorism. Since Yemen's unification, the United States government has been primarily concerned with combating Al Qaeda-affiliated terrorist groups inside Yemen. Al Qaeda's attack in 2000 against the USS Cole, coupled with the attacks of September 11, 2001, a year later officially made Yemen a front in the war on terror.

Sharp (2012) remarks that during the early years of the George W. Bush Administration, bilateral relations improved under the rubric of the war against Al Qaeda, although Yemen's lax policy toward suspected terrorists and U.S. concerns about corruption and governance stalled additional U.S. support. Saudi Arabia's forceful campaign against Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) drove militants to seek refuge in Yemen in the middle of the decade, compounding Yemen's struggle with terrorism. In 2009, the Obama Administration initiated a major review of U.S. policy toward Yemen. That review, coupled with the attempted airline bombing over Detroit on Christmas Day 2009, led to a new U.S. strategy toward Yemen referred to as the National Security Council's Yemen Strategic Plan. This strategy is essentially three-fold, focusing on combating AQAP in the short term, increasing development assistance to meet long-term challenges, and marshalling support for global efforts to stabilize Yemen.

United States' Strategic Interests in Yemen

Basically, it must be stated that certain primordial economic and political interests, especially its oil interest, underscore the heavy and overbearing involvement of the United States in the affairs of Yemen. The following specific interests essentially explain why the United States pursues wider role in Yemen:

1. To establish a military presence, including bases in Yemen. With the fall of U.S. supported dictators in Tunisia and Egypt this has become even more important.
2. Because of where it is located, Yemen is key for expansion of U.S. influence in the Middle East, the Horn of Africa, and North Africa.
3. The Bab al-Mandab gateway off Yemen's coast (one of the world's busiest sea lanes), through which more than 3 million barrels of oil are shipped daily to Europe, the United States and Asia, could be at risk if the U.S. doesn't have the support of the Yemeni government (Note: 96% of Yemenis disapprove of their government's cooperation with the U.S.)
4. Somalia, where the U.S. is militarily engaged, and Djibouti, where the U.S. has a military base, are just across the Gulf of Aden from Yemen.
5. To assist Saudi Arabia's ongoing border war with North Yemenis.
6. More importantly, there have been recent oil discoveries in Yemen (St Pete for Peace, 2013).

Mainly, oil underscores the U.S. overriding interest in Yemen. Remarkably, the United Press International (2010) reports that Yemen's oil reserves are estimated at 11.9 billion barrels of oil, a dramatic jump from earlier estimates. This follows the information by the Petroleum Exploration and Production Authority indicating that the country's oil industry requires more investment. Nasr al-Humaidi, the head of the agency, said using updated technology would

likely increase the estimate further. According to the Oil Minister Amer Al-Aidaros, ongoing exploration is promising, and the country has explored just 20 percent of its potential, with full capacity block producing 25,000 barrels a day and production is up. Hence, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency had listed Yemen's oil as one of its strategic interests in the Arabian Peninsula in the 21st century.

However, the pipelines in oil-rich districts of Marib and Shabwa have become a target for Al-Qaida and tribal groups, to the point that the sabotage has had a drastic impact on oil production. This foremost reason, for instance, justifies the heavy U.S. military presence in Yemen. As the Minister notes, "Without a safe and stable environment, oil production will not develop," In fact, An August report from the Central Bank of Yemen shows that current oil production is 300,000 to 350,000 barrels a day from 12 oil fields, down from a peak of more than 420,000 barrels a day in 2002. It is therefore under this complex strategic logic that one can fully understand and appreciate the untiring role of U.S. in Yemen and why it continuously pursues wider militaristic role in the country.

The need to strategically secure this underlying oil interest therefore connects to the purpose and militaristic thrust of United States' involvement in the internal security affairs of Yemen which is fundamentally hinged upon the expanded campaign against al Qaeda in Yemen. This seemingly rationalizes U.S. undivided efforts in mobilizing military and intelligence resources to enable Yemeni and American strikes and drawing up a longer-term proposal to establish Yemeni bases in remote areas where militants operate. Entous, Barnes, and Coker (2010) divulge the seeming concern of a senior Obama administration official who emphasized that the continued limited U.S. intelligence experience in Yemen has created "a window of vulnerability" that the U.S. government is "working fast to address." For now, the U.S. gets much of its on-the-ground intelligence from a growing partnership with Saudi Arabia, which shares a border with Yemen and has a fruitful informant network in Yemen's tribal areas.

In the rush to build up capabilities, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and other agencies have moved in equipment and personnel from other areas, and over the past year have expanded the size of teams in the U.S. analyzing intelligence on AQAP. The emphasis has always been to expand the number of intelligence operatives and analysts in the field.

In other words, the contention has remained on how best the Obama administration and Pentagon would ramp up the fight against AQAP, the Yemen-based terrorist group. Hence, supporters of establishing forward operating bases for Yemeni forces say they would help the weak Yemeni government expand its control and create an opportunity to get a small number of American Special Operations trainers and advisers out of the capital region and into the field. The U.S. has therefore maintained some military bases which varied in size, with each accommodating scores of troops, including specialized Yemeni commando units, which are trained by the U.S. and would work most closely with the Americans to hunt al Qaeda leaders.

Also some U.S. officials have confirmed that urgent efforts are under way to accelerate delivery of equipment to Yemen, possibly by drawing on U.S. supplies leaving Iraq. Particularly, a senior administration official said the U.S. wants to help boost Yemen's ability to move its troops around the country, but didn't comment on any specifics about this effort. As he states, "We're looking at a wide range of options and we're working aggressively to expand Yemeni capabilities to fight the terrorists." More interestingly, Yemen's government in San'a has urged Washington to provide more helicopters and other supplies such as night-vision goggles to aid missions against militants in remote areas.

Analysis of Latest Research Where the Solution of the Problem is Located

Socio-Economic Effects of U.S. Interventions on the Living Conditions of the Yemeni Masses

Obviously, the effects of the implementation of the U.S. neoliberal economic policies in Yemen were so enormous on the Yemenis. In substance, selective economic liberalization rather served to stabilize the Saleh's regime in various ways. First, by keeping untouched politically sensitive economic sectors, selective economic reforms did not harm the interests of the established ruling elite, thus preserving the privileged position of many regime supporters such as the military (Schmitz, 2012).

To begin with, the poverty level in Yemen has spread in the last few years. Government spending significantly reduced poverty in the main cities in the middle of the decade, but with the recent decline in state revenue poverty has increased. With limited natural resources, a crippling illiteracy rate, and high population growth, Yemen faces an array of daunting development challenges that some observers believe make it at risk for becoming a failed state in the next few decades. Currently, it ranks 151 out of 177 countries on the United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Index, a score comparable to most poor sub-Saharan African nations. Over 43% of the population lives below the poverty line. Overall, proportion of people in Yemen living on less than \$1.25 per day is 42%, up from 37% a few years ago. No doubt the dislocations of the war in the north and the repression of the civil disobedience movement in the south have further increased poverty as well. Per capita GDP in Yemen is estimated to be between \$650 - \$800. The education sector has been in disarray. Literacy rates in Yemen are 49% for males and an even lower 33% for females. The overall literacy rate for the population age 15 and older was 54 percent. According to Yemen's Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, a third of Yemeni children do not attend primary school, and over ten thousand new schools will need to be built in the upcoming years just to keep up with population growth (3.1% in 2005) (Prados and Sharp, 2007).

Some efforts to resuscitate education in Yemen seemed to have been a spoonful of salt in a heavy ocean. For instance, in September 2004, the World Bank approved a US\$121 million, six-year project to improve the quality of basic education (grades one through nine). Under this programme, classroom facilities would be expanded and upgraded, curricula and educational materials improved, and the Ministry of Education's capacity to implement new programmes and resources strengthened. However, it was not certain if this programme was successfully accomplished.

In March 2008, the World Bank also approved a US\$103 million, seven-year project to improve gender equity, and the quality and efficiency of secondary education, focusing on girls in rural areas. This programme, a major goal of which was to improve teaching and learning practices in the classroom, would upgrade school facilities and provide learning equipment as well as school community grants. However, Yemen's government on its own has in recent years merely increased spending on education—from 4.5 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 1995 to 9.6 percent of GDP in 2005. This is but an insignificant approach in view of its deplorable education system. A report released by the U.S. Library of Congress in 2008 shows that there is a direct correlation between the very high rate of illiteracy and the lack of basic education. Although Yemen's laws provide for universal, compulsory, free education for children ages six through 15, the U.S. Department of State reports that compulsory attendance is not enforced, and the cost of attendance (approximately

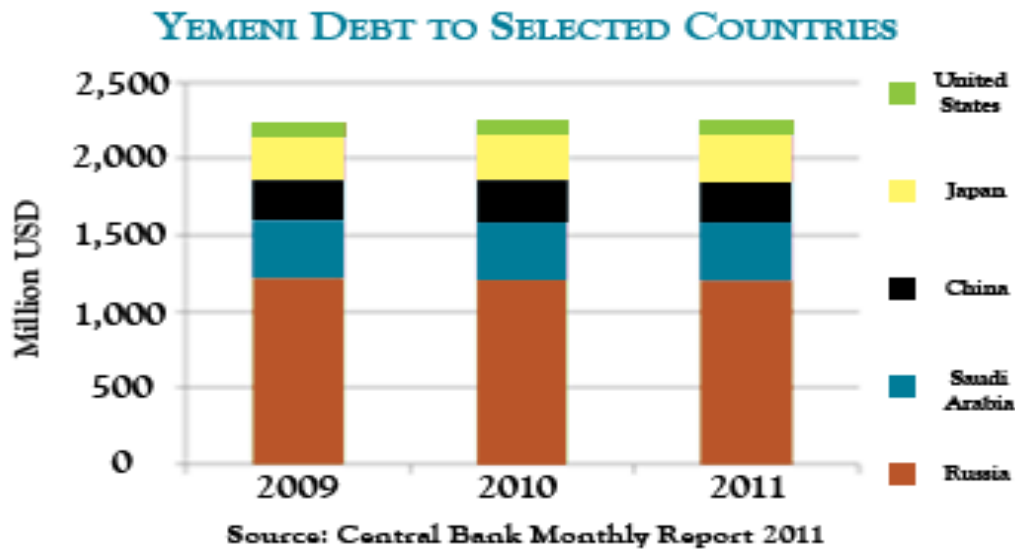
US\$10 per student per year) is an additional deterrent. This deficiency is confirmed by World Bank statistics. In 2006 only 75 percent of Yemen's school-age population was enrolled in primary school; enrollment was even lower for the female population—only 65 percent. In that same year, only 37 percent of the school-age population was enrolled in secondary school, including only 26 percent of eligible females. These low enrollment numbers are in turn a reflection of the countrywide shortage of the requisite infrastructure. School facilities and educational materials are of poor quality, classrooms are too few in number, and the teaching faculty is inadequate. This situation greatly upset the people of Yemen leaving them prone to protest against the government.

Moreover, Yemen has remained an indebted country owing to the interest rates not a highly indebted country. Even though it does not qualify for the World Bank and IMF's Highly Indebted Poor Country programme for debt relief (Schmitz, 2012), Yemeni debt crisis has considerably increased. Yemen's debt is about 6 billion USD which amounts to about 20% of GDP, low by international standards. All of that debt is public and about half is supplied by multilateral lending agencies and half to individual countries. Russia is the largest creditor of Yemen followed officially by Saudi Arabia, China, and Japan. The United States offers little direct credit to Yemen, though the US is a large contributor to the multilateral programmes. Per capita aid to Yemen is also quite low by international standards. Tables 2 and 3 below show the realities of Yemeni debt crisis.

Chart1: Yemeni Foreign Debt between 2009 and 2011



Chart 2: Yemeni Debt to Selected Countries



United States' Military Aid to Yemen

Generally, the U.S. security assistance to Yemen is aimed at restoring stability and security to Yemen while building the capacity of the Yemeni government to combat the common threat of al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). Fundamentally, the thrust of the U.S. military assistance to the Yemeni government can be classified in the following statement released by the U.S. Department of State:

- Based on conditions in Yemen, we are gradually resuming previously suspended military assistance to components of the Yemeni military that are combating AQAP. The resumption of assistance to Yemeni forces includes equipment and limited training.
- We will support efforts to reform and strengthen Yemen's law enforcement and judicial institutions in order to enhance the rule of law.
- In accordance with the political transition initiative, Yemen must restructure its armed forces under civilian control, and create a unified and professional leadership structure that serves the Yemeni people's national interests. The United States is committed to supporting the Yemeni military as it undertakes this task (U.S. Department of State, 2012).

The U.S. has always put in tremendous effort in reforming the waning Yemeni army to the best standards. The Yemen's military is divided into an army, navy, and air force. The army is organized into eight armored brigades, 16 infantry brigades, six mechanized brigades, two airborne commando brigades, one surface-to-surface missile brigade, three artillery brigades, one central guard force, one Special Forces brigade, and six air defense brigades, which consist of four anti-aircraft artillery battalions and one surface-to-air missile battalion. The navy's major bases are located in Aden and Al Hudaydah; there are also bases in Al Mukalla, Perim Island, and Socotra that maintain naval support equipment. The air force includes an air defense force.

Basically, Yemen's army is reported to be equipped with 790 main battle tanks, 130 reconnaissance vehicles, 200 armored infantry fighting vehicles, 710 armored personnel carriers, 310 towed artillery, 25 self-propelled artillery, 294 multiple rocket launchers, 502 mortars, six Scud B (up to an estimated 33 missiles) and 28 other surface-to-surface missiles,

71 antitank guided weapons, some rocket launchers, some recoilless launchers, 530 air defense guns, and an estimated 800 surface-to-air missiles. The navy's inventory includes eight missile craft, six miscellaneous boats/craft, five inshore patrol craft, six mine countermeasures vessels, one landing ship (tank), two landing craft (mechanical), four landing craft (utility), and two support and miscellaneous tankers. The air force, including air defense, has 75 combat aircraft and eight attack helicopters, as well as assorted transport aircraft, training aircraft and helicopters, and both air-to-air and air-to-surface missiles.

Generally speaking, Yemen has the second largest military force on the Arabian Peninsula after Saudi Arabia. Yemen's military consists of an army, navy, air force, and reserves. In 2007 total active troops were estimated as follows: army, 60,000; navy, 1,700; and air force, 5,000. In September 2007, the government announced the reinstatement of compulsory military service. Yemen's defense budget, which in 2006 represented approximately 40 percent of the total government budget, is expected to remain high for the near term, as the military draft takes effect and internal security threats continue to escalate. Despite these troop levels, Yemen's military equipment is considered to be light, outdated, and poorly maintained, particularly when compared with neighboring Gulf states (Library of Congress, 2008).

The United States provides Yemen's conventional armed forces modest amounts of FMF grants mainly to service aging and outdated equipment under the Foreign Military Financing programme (FMF). The FMF programme is managed by the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA). According to documentation provided to CRS by DSCA, FMF grants help Yemen's Air Force to sustain their two C-130H aircraft originally purchased in 1979, as well as a handful of their serviceable F-5 fighter aircraft. The United States also has provided Yemen's Coast Guard, which was partially developed and trained by the United States, with fast response boats (Archangel and Defender Class) using FMF grants. FMF also funds Yemen's regular purchase of small arms ammunition, spare parts, and power generators. It also covers overseas transportation of equipment to Yemen, the costs of which can be high due to piracy attacks in nearby waters (see Sharp, 2012). FMF funds also are used to supplement training for Yemen's Ministry of Interior Forces, specifically from the U.S.-funded Counterterrorism Unit (CTU) inside the Central Security Force, an internal unit controlled directly by General Yahya Mohammed Abdullah Saleh, the former president's nephew. Generally, U.S. military aid to Yemen has averaged \$20 million a year during the Bush administration. President Obama sought \$50 million in total aid for 2010, including \$35 million in development assistance. However, Sharp (2012) classifies other U.S. military aid programmes as follows:

Nonproliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining, and Related Programs Funds (NADR)

This programme is basically managed by the State Department, the NADR account, funds police training programs, export control and border security programs, conventional weapons destruction and demining, and antiterrorism training.

International Counter Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INCLE)

This programme is basically managed by the State Department, INCLE funding provides technical assistance, training, and equipment to Yemen's civilian law enforcement and judicial institutions.

International Military Education and Training (IMET)

Like most recipients, Yemen uses IMET funds to send its officers to the United States to study at select military colleges and institutions. IMET funds also have paid for English language instruction from the Defense Language Institute for Yemeni officers, including the construction of a language lab in Yemen. IMET funds typically support the training of between 10 to 20 students per year. According to the U.S. Department of State, the resumption of International Military Education and Training (IMET) assistance and the transfer of military equipment and spare parts to Yemen have improved defense relations between the United States and Yemen. In FY 2006, Foreign Military Financing for Yemen was US\$8.4 million, IMET was US\$924,000, and Non-Proliferation, Anti-Terrorism, Demining and Related Programs received US\$1.4 million (U.S. Department of State, 2012).

Defense Department Assistance

In recent years, the Defense Department's 1206 train and equip fund has become the major source of overt U.S. military aid to Yemen. Section 1206 Authority is a Department of Defense account designed to provide equipment, supplies, or training to foreign national military forces engaged in counterterrorist operations. In general, 1206 aid aims to boost the capacities of Yemen's air force, its special operations units, its border control monitoring, and coast guard forces. Importantly, it should be noted that since FY2006, Yemen has received a total of \$290.026 million in 1206 aid.

Aid to Yemen's Ministry of Interior Forces

More so, the U.S. government provides a significant military financing directly to the Yemeni government's Ministry of Interior Forces. Remarkably, section 1207 (n) (C) of the FY2012 National Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 112-81) established a new transitional authority that would permit the Secretary of Defense, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, to assist counterterrorism and peacekeeping efforts in Yemen. Assistance may include the provision of equipment, supplies, and training, as well as assistance for minor military construction, for the following purpose: "To enhance the ability of the Yemen Ministry of Interior Counter Terrorism Forces to conduct counter-terrorism operations against al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and its affiliates" (Sharp, 2012).

On June 7, 2012, for instance, the secretaries of Defense and State jointly certified that up to \$75 million in U.S. aid to Yemen's Ministry of Interior Counterterrorism Forces is important to U.S. national security interests. The GSCF FY2012 aid includes, among other things, funds for night vision goggles, armored wheeled vehicles, and operational training. Tables 10 and 11 provide a detailed analysis of U.S. military aid to the Yemeni government under President Saleh's administration.

Table 1: U.S. Aid to Yemen (current year \$ in millions)

Programmes	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007
Economic Support Fund (ESF)	14.800	7.90	12.00
Foreign Military Financing (FMF)	9.900	8.40	8.50
International Military Education and Training (IMET)	1.080	1.08	1.08
Non-Proliferation, Anti-Terrorism, De-mining and Related	3.175	2.25	3.74

Total	28.955	19.63	25.32
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Source: U.S. Department of State (2012)

Table 2: Department of Defense Funding for Yemen FY2006-FY2012 (in US \$ million)

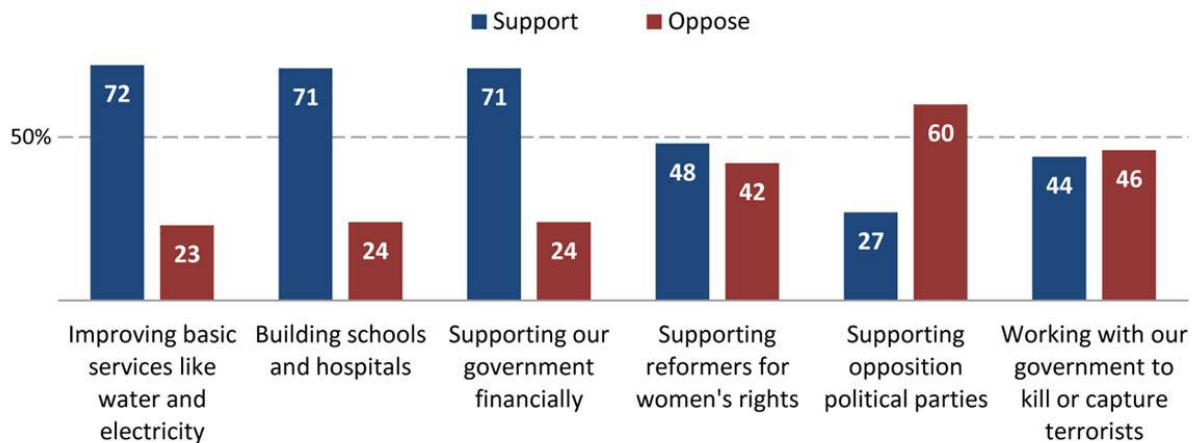
1206 Programme	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012
Cross Border Security and CT Aid	4.3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Yemeni Special Operations Capacity Development to Enhance Border Security	-	26.0	-	-	-	-	-
Air Force Aerial Surveillance Initiative	-	-	-	5.9	-	-	-
Coast Guard Maritime Security Initiative	-	-	-	29.9	-	-	-
Increased Border Security CT Initiative	-	-	-	25.4	-	-	-
Explosive Ordnance Disposal Initiative	-	-	-	5.8	-	-	-
Special Operations Forces CT Enhancement Package	-	-	-	-	34.5	-	14.0
Fixed-Wing Aircraft and Support for Yemeni Air Force to Support CT Units	-	-	-	-	38.0	-	23.426
Rotary-Wing Aircraft (4 Huey II) and Support for Yemeni Air Force to Support CT Units	-	-	-	-	52.8	-	-
Upgrades and Parts for approx. 10 existing Yemeni Air Force Helicopters	-	-	-	-	30.0	-	-
Total	4.3	26.0	0	67.0	155.3	0	37.426

Source: Serafino, N.M. (2012) "Security Assistance Reform: "Section 1206" Background and Issues for Congress," CRS Report RS22855.

Approximately, therefore, U.S. military aid to Yemen has averaged \$20 million a year during the Bush administration. President Obama sought \$50 million in total aid for 2010, including \$35 million in development assistance. It is on record therefore that the United States also has helped Yemen build and equip a modern coast guard, which is used to patrol the strategic Bab al Mandab strait where the tip of the Red Sea meets the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean. Finally, the United States has provided technical assistance, equipment, and training to the Anti-Terrorism Unit [ATU] of the Yemeni Central Security forces and other Yemeni Interior Ministry departments (Prados and Sharp, 2007).

Chart 3: Public Opinion In response to the Increasing Economic and Military Role of the U.S. in Yemen

Q: Please tell me whether you would strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose the United States doing each of the following. (%)



Impact of U.S. Military Assistance on the Security of Yemeni Populace

While the U.S. military assistance to Yemen has remained progressive, strong concerns have equally emerged regarding the increased U.S. military aid to Yemen. This goes against the ideal of the donor (U.S. government) which had vowed to continue to monitor carefully all U.S. assistance to ensure it served its intended purpose and to guard against human rights abuses by preventing persons or groups who have committed human rights violations from receiving U.S. funding (U.S. Department of State, 2012). Basically, there is serious agitation that, despite required U.S. human rights training and vetting of Yemeni units, abuses committed by security forces have not only continued to occur but have considerably increase over the same period in which the aids were being provided. In fact, there were strong indications that some U.S. equipment may have been diverted by the Yemeni government away from combating terrorism and toward fighting domestic insurgencies (Sharp, 2012).

In response to this development, on January 2010, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee report concluded that it was likely that U.S. counterterrorism assistance had been diverted for use in the government's war against the Houthis in the north and that this temptation will persist. This therefore shows that the military aids being released by the U.S. government to the Saleh have not actually been appropriately utilized. In fact, there is clear evidence that these military aids have more or less been tarnished as a result of corruptive tendencies of heads of various security institutions most of which incidentally happened to be Saleh's relatives. It was therefore Saleh's secret plot to strengthen his rein in power with the military largesse from the U.S., especially by ensuring that his instituted cronies heading various security apparatuses in the country utilize the military benefits against opposition groups. However, as unexpected, the corruptive tendencies and poor administration of the security sector by Saleh's cronies led to massive protests in various security organizations. However, as these protest against untold corruption raged, the heads of these security units still maintained internal crackdown of protesting officers.

It is on record for instance, that Saleh's most prominent security force named the Republican Guard, which remained one of the best-armed branches of the Yemeni military, had been frequently deployed to protect regime interests. Whitaker (2012) notes that this elite group of soldiers, who have been the backbone of the regime's crackdown on dissidents was

commanded by Saleh's oldest son, Brigadier General Ahmed Ali Abdullah Saleh. Ahmed Saleh preemptively purged the Republican Guard of any potentially mutinous elements, arresting dozens of suspected dissidents in December 2011 to prevent the mass defections and mutinies seen in other branches of the military and police force. Ahmed also warned his men that defecting from the Guard in imitation of their peers in other wings of the Yemeni military would not be tolerated. These announcements were secret, and members of the Republican Guard disclosed them to the press only under the condition of anonymity (Al-Shamahi, 2012). As noted, despite Ahmed's preemptive measures, the Republican Guard has not escaped the Parallel Revolution. The Fourth Brigade of the Republican Guard mutinied on January 28, 2012, blocking Taiz Road, a major route near their position at al Sawad camp in south Sana'a, and locked the brigade's leadership out of its headquarters. The protesting guardsmen demanded the dismissal of the brigade commander, Brigadier General Mohammed al Arar, and other staff members who allegedly have been molesting the public (Bin-Sallam, 2012). Hence, as Bin Sallam hints, Ahmed's name appears on a popular list circulated on the internet by the Yemeni revolutionaries. This list enumerates those who must be thrown out of office for the revolution to be considered complete. Sources within the Yemeni military have called the dismissal of Ahmed Saleh impossible, at least for the first few months of Hadi's government. The Republican Guard, they say, is essential to Saleh's protection during the coming period of instability.

Again, Raghavan (2012) discovered that the Central Security Forces (CSF) which is an elite paramilitary force run through the Interior Ministry, and just like the Republican Guard, have been a weapon in countering revolutionary activity. Central Security forces were used to suppress the uprising of airmen in late January, and also to control protesters in the flashpoint city of Taiz. The forces were headed by a nephew of the former president, YahyaSaleh, who is Chief of Staff for the CSF. YahyaSaleh ran the CSF through a purge similar to the one his brother conducted in the Republican Guard, with a series of arrests of possible rabble-rousers and private speeches warning against defections (Raghavan, 2012). In response of the increasing resentment over the abusive activities of the security forces, Brigadier General Abdullah Qairan, head of security in Taiz governorate, was replaced in the backlash caused by months of his orchestrated attacks on protesters and local tribesmen (Gordon, 2012).

In 2011, at the height of political unrest in Yemen, it was learnt that the military equipment sent by the U.S. were used to fight and suppress opposition groups in Yemen. Hence, the U.S. Administration was forced to suspend deliveries of previously appropriated aid for Yemen, although the delivery of some aid resumed in September 2011. U.S. officials had been concerned that U.S. trained and equipped units in the Yemeni security services may have been involved in fighting between former President Saleh's forces and his opponents (see *Wall Street Journal*, April 8, 2011). As a result, Yemen did not receive any U.S. Section 1206 Department of Defense (DOD) assistance in FY2011.

In fact, the situation had first turned violent in 2008, with government forces killing and wounding scores of activists in a bid to quash the protests. In 2009, armed factions associated with the Southern Movement began to respond in kind, with sporadic gun battles erupting in Aden and other southern cities. As YSP cadres called for independence, southern tribal leaders like Tariq al-Fadhli broke their longstanding alliances with Saleh's regime and backed the secessionist movement. By January 2010, local polling indicated that some seventy percent of Yemenis living in the former PDRY favored independence (Swift, 2012). The protest drew more than 20,000 participants, as well as a show of force from Saleh's supporters across several institutions. Security forces responded to protests in Aden with live ammunition and tear gas. The table below brings reported details of the inhumane activities of U.S. assisted Yemeni security forces against the peaceful protesters which further fuelled widespread protest against the Saleh regime.

Table 3: Abusive Activities of the U.S. Assisted Security Forces Against Peaceful Protesters in Yemen

Date of Event	Incident, Location and Casualties
Oct. 20, 2012	An international rights group has accused Yemeni security forces of endangering health care in the southern city of Aden by forcibly removing wounded activists from hospitals and exchanging fire with gunmen seeking to block the arrests
June 18	Yemenis gather to protest detention, torture by Saleh forces in Gitmo.
June 13	Security forces opened fired with bullets and tear gas on protesters in the southern city of Aden, killing at least four people.
Dec. 23, 2011	Troops commanded by relatives of Yemen's outgoing president attacked a crowd of more than 100,000 protesters peacefully marching into the capital Saturday, killing at least nine
Nov. 19	More than 400 troops defected from the Yemeni military Saturday evening, saying they would no longer attack unarmed protesters
Nov. 11	Govt. forces kill at least 15 protesters in Taiz
Nov. 7	Over one thousand protesters put in prison, many more tortured by security forces
Oct. 18	Reports of more deaths in Yemeni protest - Witnesses say forces loyal to President Saleh fired on protesters, killing at least seven in the capital, Sanaa
Oct. 16	Yemen police kill 12 protesters, wound dozens
Oct. 10	Days after female activist Tawakkul Karman won the Nobel Peace Prize, thousands of women demonstrate throughout Yemen, dozens injured by government mobs and security forces
Oct. 5	Civilians killed as Yemeni troops shell Taiz - Anti-government protests continue as the president's opponents declare that "dialogue with the regime has stopped"
Sept. 24	At least 18 civilians and 11 defected soldiers were killed on Saturday, raising the death toll to 49 since President Saleh returned from his medical treatment trip to the U.S.
Sept. 23	Protesters killed in violence following surprise arrival of the president in Sanaa after three-month absence
Sept. 22	Deadly fighting rages through Yemeni capital - At least fifteen people, including two women, reportedly killed in Sanaa as death toll increases.
Sept. 21	Yemeni forces shatter ceasefire, shelling mourners at protesters' funerals
Sept. 18	Yemeni rooftop snipers fire at random at anti-regime protesters. <i>NOTE: In response, the U.S. had the audacity to say "we call on the parties to refrain from actions that provoke further violence" as it adds to the chaos with its escalating drone strikes.</i>
Sept. 17	Thousands of anti-government protesters stormed the capital's main university, preventing the first day of classes from beginning and tearing down pictures of the longtime leader whose ouster they seek. Sit-in attacked as loud explosions surround protesters.
Sept. 13	U.N. calls on the US-supported government of Yemen to halt attacks on civilians
Sept. 4	Hundreds of thousands protesters march in Yemen's capital amid escalated tension, 4 injured by security forces
Aug. 16	Eyewitnesses: 26 people killed by security forces in Yemen clashes, including 17 women and children
Aug. 15	Houthi Rebels Blame U.S. for Car Bombing Attack in North Yemen
July 29	A Yemeni air strike killed four civilians and wounded 12 near the militant-held southern city of Zinjiba
July 27	Saleh remains defiant as Yemen is set to receive \$120M from the U.S., mostly in military and security funds which are contingent on Yemen support for the U.S. 'war on terror'
July 22	Shelling by Yemen security forces kills girl, mother
July 11	1 dead, 150 hurt after Yemeni president's security forces attack protesters
July 10	Scores Injured as Pro-Regime Forces, Thugs Attack Yemen Protest. The demonstrators took to the streets to reject international and regional interventions

	in Yemen chanting slogans refusing the U.S. and Saudi mandate
July 1	Three protesters killed in argument at gas station as shortages deepen
July 29	47 killed in Zinjibar clashes
July 28	Yemeni Forces Bomb Several Anti-Government Tribal Villages
July 23	Five killed as Yemen's security forces clash with protesters at funeral procession in Aden
July 21	100 Yemenis killed in battle for Zinjibar
July 18	Youth protesters attacked by Islah members in Change Square
June 10	100,000 protesters hit the streets in Yemen with many killed and several others injured by security forces
June 8	Dozens Injured as Yemen Protests Call for Transitional Council
June 6	Saudi TV: Saleh to return to Yemen; tribe says Yemeni regime kills 3
June 4	Tribal target struck by Yemen forces; 10 dead
June 1	At least 41 people were killed as street battles continue to rage in the Yemeni capital
May 31	8 killed in Yemen violence, at least 50 dead in Taiz since Sunday
May 31	New video shows gunmen shooting protesters in Taiz
May 29	Police bulldoze and set fire to protesters tents, fire live ammunition and teargas as 20 are killed and 200 wounded in Taiz
May 29	There were seven explosions north of the capital, Sana'a
May 29	The government carried out rocket attacks against tribesman in southern Yemen. And, up to 300 fighters entered the southern coastal town of Zinjibar and took over "everything". The fighters were alleged to be al-Qaeda members (though this is denied by tribesman)
May 28	Sporadic gunfire fills Yemeni capital after mediation efforts fail
May 26	Blasts rock the capital Sana'a and 28 people were killed in an explosion and 23 in other incidents
May 25	Fighters from Yemen's powerful tribes fired on government buildings Tuesday, prompting soldiers to respond with intense shelling in street battles that left at least 38 dead as the uprising against President Ali Abdullah Saleh threatened to become a militia-led revolt.
May 23	Yemen gun battles erupt after Saleh refuses exit - government buildings set on fire; 6 killed in reports of grenades and machine gun fire
May 14	Gunmen fire on protesters in Yemen, wounding 35
May 11	Yemen forces fire on protests in 3 cities; 13 dead
May 7	Troops kill two students south of Yemenicapital
April 27	Gunmen kill 10 protesters in Yemen; This prompted residents in at least 18 cities to launch a civil disobedience campaign protesting a plan which would give Ali Abdullah Saleh a month-long window to resign
April 12	Yemen violence claims the lives of 7 more protesters
April 10	UNICEF: 24 children have been killed and another 638 wounded in Yemen
April 9	Security forces open fire on protesters in Yemen - at least 1 killed
April 4	Violence intensifies in Yemen protests - at least 14 killed
March 28	WikiLeaks: Yemen's president tried to get Saudis to kill rival
March 18	Bloodbath in Yemen: 52 protesters killed
March 18	Arrest of female activist, Tunisian uprising spark protests calling for regime change in Yemen.
March 18	At least 13 southern activists arrested in Yemen. The gathering was called in protest at the death of a woman who was run over by a police vehicle in the city during a demonstration to demand the release of militants

Source: Compiled from St. Pete for Peace (2013) "News from the U.S. Covert War in Yemen," St. Pete for Peace, <http://stpeteforpeace.org/factsheets/yemen.html> (also see *New York Times*, *Al-Jazeera* News of respective dates).

It is therefore evident, as clearly shown in the above table, that the Yemeni security forces were rather strengthened and emboldened by the U.S. military assistance to wage full-blown war against peaceful demonstrators in Yemen. Hence, the initial crackdown of the peaceful demonstrators resulted into widespread protests against the Ali Saleh's unpopular regime. This development further plunged the country into intense revolution which gave rooms for more civilian abuses by the military.

The following thematic presentation of the various calls from the Yemeni civil rights groups to the international community (especially the United States) to cut military assistance to Saleh's regime go on to buttress the fact that the U.S. military assistance to Ali Saleh's regime rather empowered his administration to abuse the masses who peacefully demonstrated over his high-handed rule, thus, provoking more angry confrontations from the public which led to the 2011 widespread revolutionary protests in the country.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study investigated the role of the United States in the democratic revolution in Western Asia, with particular focus on the 2011 Yemeni revolution. The study adopted the qualitative method of data collection and analysis to gather relevant secondary data for the study and analysis of same. The review of extant literature created an intellectual lacuna, which provided sufficient grounds for the adopted research questions upon which the thrust of the work was based on. The following research questions were posed: (i) How does the U.S. economic and military assistance to Yemen engender the 2011 widespread revolutionary protest? (ii) What is the implication of U.S. government's military assistance on demand for regime change in Yemen?

Relying heavily on the Marxian theory of dialectical materialism which provided a philosophical justification for the study, the correlations between U.S. assistance and political stability in Yemen were examined. It was consequently established that the U.S. economic and military assistance (with the aid-tied neoliberal policies) to the Saleh regime contributed to the 2011 democratic revolution in Yemen. Mainly, unsatisfactory outcomes of the U.S. neoliberal policies in Yemen, in which implementation disappointedly worsened the standard of living and general wellbeing of the lower and middle class, generated public disaffection, labour strikes and demonstrations that led to the 2011 revolution. Similarly, it was found out that the military aid provided to the Saleh administration by the U.S. was rather utilized to strategically strengthen and embolden the security forces in order to maintain massive crackdown on peaceful protesters. On the other hand, the study also established that the U.S. Government's military operations in Yemen undermined the peoples' demand for regime change in the country, thereby adversely affecting her political stability.

In view of the findings, the study makes the following recommendations:

1. The current Yemeni President Abed Rabbo Mansour Al Hadi has to cooperate with the people of Yemen as partners in rebuilding Yemen. The people have the responsibility of trusting the government and giving it maximum support while the president should respect the rights of the people and make laws and policies that will transform the society and bring about political and economic transformation of that country.
2. The new administration in Yemen must also review the partnership existing between Yemen and other countries, especially the U.S. in order to locate areas that may still be helpful to the country and areas that require total scrapping or amendment. This is important in order to avoid the mistakes of the past administrations, especially Saleh administration.

3. Specifically, the U.S. sponsored neoliberal policies in Yemen should be critically re-examined in order not to neck-deep the Yemeni low and middle class in abject poverty. Repeat of such hardship may lead to another revolution in the country if care is not timely taken.
4. Even as some riots and demonstrations go on in Northern Yemen presently, perhaps as a result of delays in opposition calls for drastic constitutional amendments, the military and security forces should never in any way be contrarily used by the President Abed Rabbo Mansour Al Hadi to violate the fundamental human rights of the Yemeni demonstrators via intimidation, oppression or brutalization of any kind whatsoever.
5. The cronies and relatives of the ousted Saleh's administration especially those that headed various security apparatuses and some other in public institutions who have arbitrarily used government funds and the powers of their elevated offices to do the bidding of Saleh by maintaining excessive crackdown on peaceful protesters should be properly investigated, (be removed from such positions if they still occupy them), and lawfully tried accordingly for their gross abuse of office.

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