

Different media perspectives of the withdrawal of u.s. troops from iraq essay

[Media](#), [Television](#)



This paper compares and investigates the media biases regarding the effects of the withdrawal of the United States army from Iraq. Two media outlets namely Fox News and Russia Today are put into side-by-side comparison. Videos and news reports of the same event from the two media outlets are used to study the differences in media coverage. A brief background study of the two media outlets is included. A critical analysis of the differences in media coverage and the underlying motives for bias will also be discussed.

Media Perspectives in the Withdrawal of the U. S. Troops from Iraq (2011)

Introduction After the more than 9 years of invading Iraq, the United States President Barack Obama had ordered the complete withdrawal of the U. S. Troops from Iraq on October 21, 2011. This order took full power on the 18th of December 2011, pulling out more than 40, 000 U.

S. combatants from the battle field in Iraq. This act was in accordance with the agreement made between former U. S.

President George Bush with Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri Al-Maliki to withdraw the U. S. troops before December 31 2011. Days after the withdrawal of the U. S. army from Iraq, an increase in violence inside Iraq had been reported by various media outlets. Fox News and Russia Today both featured the news with different perspectives. “ Many (Iranian Dissidents) feel that without U.

S. protection, they will be killed” says a Fox News’ National Security Correspondent, Jennifer Griffin (2011). “ US leaders insist that they left a stable nation after nine years of launching that invasion” says a news anchor

from Russia Today (2011). This paper will use television and written news reports from an American national media outlet “ Fox News” and from an international news media outlet “ Russia Today” to critically analyze and study the media biases within the news outlets. The Fox News Media Bias On the 27th of December, 2011, Fox News released their television report on the after-effects of the American army leaving Iraq. The news featured various clips and describes an Iraq that is largely still dependent on the U. S. to maintain peace inside its territory. The news first featured a rampage of U. S. manufactured tanks after the U. S. force handed over control of a refugee camp to Iraqis which killed dozens as reported in the news. The news then featured the Iranian dissidents who fears for their lives if left unprotected by the U.

S. military in Iraq. In this news broadcast, Fox News had shown how the United States protected the minorities in Iraq and how they kept control over violence inside Iraq. The news also gives credit to the American military being “ Heralds of Peace” in Iraq. On the same day, a blogged report on Fox News’ website Foxnews. om was published and was entitled “ Al Qaeda Front Group Claims Baghdad Blasts” which talks about an Al Qaeda group in Iraq claiming responsibility for the attacks that surged through Baghdad on a single day during the week before the news. The group reportedly seeks to create a civil war inside Iraq. It was also reported that the attacks were not influenced by the withdrawal of the U.

S. troops but “ Instead, it focused its rage on the country’s Shiite-dominated leadership, which Sunni insurgents have battled since it came to power as a result of the U. S. led invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein in 2003. ” (Fox News’ Associated Press, 2011). Alongside with these, the news article continued on with: U. S.

and some Iraqi officials have warned of a resurgence of Sunni and Shiite militants and an increase in violence after the U. S. troop withdrawal. Along with the security challenge, Iraq is facing an increase in political tension as Iraq’s Shiite prime minister, Nouri al-Maliki, is engaged in a showdown (cont.) (cont.

) with the top Sunni political leader in the country. (Fox News’ Associated Press, 2011, paras. 10 & 11)The two reports from Fox News offer a great biased view that the United States is a country that came to Iraq to bring stability and peace. This also gives the image of Iraq being weak on its own and needing the United States in order to maintain peace inside Iraq.

Russia Today Media Bias Russia Today reported news on December 23, 2011 which covered the violence that was happening in Iraq. The news first featured video clips of smoking buildings, blown up vehicles and describes the calamity of the disaster as 72 are dead and over 200 are injured from over 20 separate explosive blasts. After these facts the news anchor sarcastically quoted that “ US leaders insist that they left a stable nation after nine years of launching that invasion”. The broadcast then continue on to reporting on the suicide rate of U. S. soldiers in Iraq.

The news covers that the suicide rate is actually higher than the in-combat casualty rate for the year 2010 and continuing on to 2011 as the second year of having this kind of irregularity. Matthis Chiroux, a war veteran and an anti-war activist was interviewed and said that: We come home feeling terrible, despicable about what we did and what we saw.... The laws of decency doesn't apply in combat, you go back to having to apply those laws to yourself all the time... that for many leads either to the grave or to jail. (Chiroux, 2011) Then the news carries on to reporting that a quarter of the homeless in United States are soldiers and war veterans and makes up about 12% of the unemployment rate. With this report Russia Today had presented news that covers the negative effect of the American Army entry and exit from Iraq.

Another news report that was released on December 24, 2011 by Russia Today featured the sectarian violence that was happening in Iraq. One interview from Major General Hassan Salman of the Iraq's army in an acknowledged interview with Russia Today said: The US troop invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the grave mistakes they committed made the situation here worse. There are so many mistakes committed by the US military leadership, especially in managing the civilian aspects here. This had a negative effect (Salman, 2011) The news continued on to report that it was the U. S. invasion that raised the sectarian violence in the country and how the Iraqis hope to have a better future without the U. S.

Military on their territory. The two news reports of Russia Today offer the public big and bold criticisms about the United States' policies and decisions.

Also, it generally reports the negative effects of what the United States had done in Iraq which gives a negative view on the United States. Analysis of the Differences Fox News had presented news that is highly sympathetic to the United States. They covered news in such a way that the US government will get credit by creating a positive image both in and outside the United States of America. While Russia Today had presented news that shows the negative effects of what the United States' entry and exit in Iraq which reveals the terrible things that happened because of the war in Iraq. The news entry of December 27, 2011 on foxnews. com and Russia Today's December 24, 2011 news report offers totally contradicting ideas.

While Fox News claims that the US leaving Iraq has nothing to do with the Al Qaeda bombings, the Iraq military Major General was reported in Russia Today says that the violence in Iraq was totally the United States' fault. Although reported in the context of the act of " leaving" and not the actual influence of the U. S. troops in Iraq, the news reported by Fox News is presented in a way that it completely separates the U. S. army's influence from any violence after its withdrawal.

For Fox News, some underlying motives for bias are according to its history that Fox News had a big reputation of being biased in favor of the republicans/conservatives in both political and social manners. " Fox has become a central hub of the conservative movement's well-oiled media machine. (Ackerman, 2001) The order to enter the Iraq war was given by the former U. S. President George Bush who came from the Republican Party. Also the withdrawal treaty that only allows the U. S.

military to stay in Iraq until the end of December 2011 was also signed by the former U. S. President.

This protective action of Fox News to the Republican Party together with its American patriotism might have pushed it to create a media bias towards the United States. On the other hand, Russia Today is a news outlet that was established to enhance its image in the West. But in recent times the news outlet has created a trend that makes the United States look bad. “ Recently, however, the Kremlin-financed television channel has devoted considerable airtime not only to coverage that makes Russia look good, but to coverage that makes the United States look bad. ” (Scherr, 2010) and as quoted by the Kathryn Stoner-Weiss, deputy director of the Center on Democracy, Development and the Rule of Law at Stanford University’s Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies said “ It’s clearly a pro-Russian perspective; that’s the purpose of Russia Today. Sometimes, a pro-Russia perspective involves an anti-somebody-else perspective — and we’re the most useful target at certain times. ” (“ Russian TV Channel Pushes ‘ Patriot’ Conspiracy Theories”, para.

6) It is speculated that the media bias of the Russia Today most likely comes from being pro-Russian and “ anti-somebody else. ” Conclusion This paper had compared and analyzed the news perspectives of Fox News and Russia Today and investigated their probable underlying motives for biased reports on the withdrawal of the U. S. troops from Iraq. Fox News a national news outlet in America had presented news which gives a good image to the

United States. The side of the stories they reported could be labeled as “ pro-American”. Their news showed how dependent Iraq is on the U. S.

for peace and order. The news also excluded the U. S. influence on the violent moments after the withdrawal from Iraq. Russia Today, an international news outlet gave news reports which highly criticize the occupation of American soldiers in Iraq and it’s after effects.

It showed how violent Iraq had become after the U. S. occupation and blamed them for the Al Qaeda bombings after the withdrawal. Also, Russia Today covered the horrific terror that U. S.

soldiers have to face as they showed that more U. S. soldiers die from suicide than on the battle field. Bias will never disappear in the media. In whatever media we’ll turn to, it will always stick to the values it cherishes. Underlying motives for this bias could count as immeasurable, in the case of Fox News in the U. S.

withdrawal from Iraq. The most probable bias is its close relationship with the Republican Party and its home turf patriotism. While on the other hand, in the case of Russia Today, the pro-Russian media showed a tendency to go “ anti-American” in its past and might be the result of the economic competition between Russia and the United States. As a citizen, rather than complaining against these biases, we should be critical of the news we hear every day. We should look at two sides of the spectrum and not just rely on one media outlet for clear unbiased news.

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