War on terror research paper

Society, Terrorism

War on Terror Do you ever have one of those moments in your life in which you will never forget where you were? I remember waking up early on September 11, 2001, getting ready for school and my dad telling me hurry up to watch the news with him. Being in 8th grade at the time, the news really wasn't something I would watch in the mornings so I knew it had to be something important. Then I saw it. An airplane crashing into a tower, people panicking, and mayhem ensuing in a city very well known to me. When any tragic event like 9/11 occurs, the effect it will have on a nation is tremendous.

It left America in shock, anger, and sadness just to name a few adjectives to describe the insurmountable amount of feelings that we felt on that day. With America being such a powerful nation, after recovering from the attack the next ideal step would be to seek retaliation, right? Well on October 7th 2001, the war in Afghanistan began marking the first step in the War on Terror. The 9/11 tragedy was very devastating to the American morale and our sense of security. America being so powerful and strong it may be logical to see how we had a false sense of security when it came to attacks on us.

I mean, who would really want to attack one of the strongest nations on Earth? No other nation in their right mind would, right? Wrong. When those two planes hit our towers and another hitting the pentagon we were slapped with a reality check. We weren't as safe as we thought we were. To add onto things, on September 18th and October 9th, 2001, we were hit by the anthrax attack that killed five and injured seventeen Americans. Something had to be done about this. We shouldn't be letting other nations attack us like this. So George W. Bush began the War on Terror.

The single person who tookresponsibilityfor these attacks on America is the notorious Osama Bin Laden. Bin Laden founded the jihadist terrorist organization known as al-Qaeda at around 1988 to late 1989. The al-Qaeda, which translates into " The Base," is well known for the September 11th attacks on the United States, but is also responsible for the 1998 US embassy bombings as well as the 2002 bombings in Bali. The war on terror started with America going on the offensive against al-Qaeda in Afghanistan. With Osama bin laden becoming the most wanted criminal in the United States, f not the entire world, other countries would join in our attempt to dismantle the al-Qaeda and their usage of Afghanistan as a home base. Australia, United Kingdom, and the united afghan front became our allies in the war in Afghanistan. These nations would launch Operation Enduring Freedom. While Operation Enduring Freedom was mainly targeting Afghanistan, it also had many subordinate operations. Along with Afghanistan, there were operations in the Philippines, Horn of Africa/Somalia, Pankisi Gorge, Trans Sahara, Caribbean and Central America, and Kyrgyzstan.

The terrorist regimes were placed all over the world and the nations fightingterrorismfound it necessary to assist these other countries in eliminating those hostile forces in their territory. Operation Enduring Freedom – Philippines is a currently active mission to fight the terrorist forces of Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiyah. Abu Sayyaf is an Islamist separatist group that was residing around the southern islands of the Republic of the Philippines while Jamaah Islamiyah is a militant Islamic terrorist group that

was spread out through Southeast Asia in Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei, parts of Thailand, and the Philippines.

This operation is still ongoing and has tallied 17 US soldier casualties with > 315 enemies killed, including Abu Sayyaf leader Janjalani. Another one of the Operation Enduring Freedom missions was the Horn of Africa (Northeast Africa/Somali Peninsula). This mission was dedicated to stopping terrorism and piracy in the Horn of Africa. The United States lost 29 due to non-combat fatalities, but so far have been able to kill 149-160 insurgents, 67-78 pirates, and captured around 1000 pirates. This mission is still ongoing since October 7th, 2002.

There was also another operation held in Africa referred to as Operation Enduring Freedom – Trans Sahara. A 500 million budget was approved for the Trans-Saharan Counterterrorism Initiative (TSCTI) that would be spent over a six-year p to support those countries that were facing threats from the al-Qaeda. These countries were primarily Chad, Algeria, Senegal, Nigeria, Morocco, Mali, and Mauritania. Along with the attempts to thwart terrorism, the TSCTI were also focusing on drug and weapon trafficking. One of the main points of this specific mission was to train these 10 nations with the ecessary skills and equipment to combat these problems on their own. The last two Operation Enduring Freedom missions are " Caribbean and Central America" and Kyrgyzstan. The Caribbean and Central American mission has forces deployed in El Salvador, Suriname, Guyana, Trinidad & Tobago, Belize, Honduras, and Costa Rica. The US Air Force at Manas International Airport primarily runs the operation in Kyrgyzstan near the capitol Bishkek. Now

onto the main mission in Operation Enduring Freedom, the War in Afghanistan.

The main reason behind this war was to dismantle the al-Qaeda organization and stopping them from using Afghanistan as their base. The United States would also go on to state that they were attempting to take the Taliban out of power and create a nation with a more democratic government. This war began on October 7th, 2001, and is still ongoing today making it the United States longest running war. " Article 51 permits a victimized state to engage in ' individual or collective self-defense' until recourse has been taken by the Security Council to establish peace" (Maogoto, 2003).

The reason that this war was criticized so much was because people felt that bombing and attacking Afghanistan was not self-defense because the 9/11 attacks were done by non-state actors, not Afghanistan's own army. Either way, President George W. Bush was given authorization by Congress to go ahead and begin the war against Afghanistan on September 18th 2001, when a legislation called " Authorization for Use of Military Forces Against Terrorists," was passed. With the War in Afghanistan being the longest war that the US has run, it is understandable that there are many losses.

In ourcoalitionthere were 3, 097 killed with 2, 031 of them being from the United States, over 23, 500 wounded, and 1 missing/captured. Of the contractors hired, there were 1, 143 killed and over 15, 000 wounded. The Afghan Security Forces lost 10, 086+ and the Afghan Northern Alliance lost over 200. As for the opposing forces, there was no real reliable estimate, but the Taliban forces were estimated to be around 25, 000 strong. One of the

more shocking numbers to be brought up in losses is how many civilians were killed during the attacks.

A rough estimate of civilian casualties is 12, 500 – 14, 700. While there were many causes for the civilian casualties, the majority of the losses came from the airstrikes and improvised explosives by the insurgents. The civilian deaths caused a lot of tension between the foreign countries and Afghanistan government causing President Karzai to summon his foreign military commanders to tell them " his people's patience was wearing thin" (BBC, 2007). Even though there were many losses suffered by all participants and those civilians, there was a huge victory for the United States on May 2nd, 2011.

This was the day that al-Qaeda leader, Osama Bin Laden, was finally shot and killed by the US forces in Pakistan (BBC, 2011). They would later confirm the death through DNA tests This could have also been another one of those " you'll never forget where you were" events for many seeing how he caused so much damage with the 9/11 attacks. The next war to start after Operation Enduring Freedom began was the Iraq war. The reasons behind this war have been extremely debated and discussed since it started. The official factors were listed in the " Iraq Resolution. " Here are some of the reasons to invade Iraq (President George W.

Bush, 2002): * Members of al-Qaeda, the ones responsible for attacks on the US, were residing in Iraq. * Iraq paid bounties tosuicidebomber's families. * Iraq was brutally repressing their civilian population. * Iraq was not complying with the 1991 ceasefire agreement while also interfering with U. N. weapons instructors. * Iraq was " continuing to aid and harbor other

international terrorist organizations," that also included anti-United States terrorist organizations. * Turkey, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia wanted Saddam out of power in Iraq and feared what he may do.

Those were listing only a few reasons, but another big factor in the Iraq War was that Saddam Hussein did not stop producing weapons of mass destruction in 2003 after the Duelfer Report revealed that information. In 1991, Hussein's WMD capability was essentially destroyed by sanctions to restore Iraq's economy to a more stable condition. On October 21, 2011, Obama announced, " After nearly 9 years, America's war in Iraq will be over. " The last troops to leave Iraq were leaving by January 1st, 2012, and that the troops in Afghanistan would start to come home as well.

A big problem that these wars caused for America, aside from the casualties, was how muchmoneywas spent. A lot of people look at the War on Terror and the Iraq War as the main reasons the American economy has taken a huge dive the last decade or so. From 2001 through 2011 the Afghanistan war cost the United States about $433 billion dollars (Bingham, 2012). The Iraq war has cost about $806 billion dollars so far, but Obama has said it may cost over $1 trillion dollars when it is all over (Krutzleben, 2011).

However, with all these wars not completely wrapped up, the final price of war could be as high as $4. 4 trillion dollars when all is told (costofwar. org, 2012). War affects every country involved, but specifically the veterans who participated and contributed to the war. It would only seem logical that those countries that have had veterans deployed and fight for their nation should be taking care of them as best they can. From the veterans who came back

from the Iraq war, 20. 3% of active soldiers and 42. 4% of reserve soldiers required mentalhealthtreatment (Milliken, 2007).

The total numbers of those diagnosed with Post-TraumaticStressDisorder from the Iraq and Afghanistan war is about 30% of the 834, 463 who were in those wars (Reno, 2012). These numbers were only the veterans that were treated by the V. A. (Veteran's Association) hospitals, so there could actually be more who have not looked for further treatment after returning. With some of these numbers rising as more soldiers are returning from the wars, this would mean the V. A. hospitals would need to hire more mental health professionals to deal with the influx in PTSD cases continuing to go up.

The V. A. has increased their mental health investments by more than 1/3rd in the last three years. They have " hired more than 4, 000 mental health professionals" and in April 2012 have announced they will add 1, 600 more professionals, totaling their mental health staff to 22, 000 (Reno, 2012). War has never been a good thing and there is never one side that is completely victorious when you consider how many people are killed on each side, civilians included. After the 9/11 attacks on the United States it would be hard to simply let that go unpunished, something HAD to be done.

As unpopular war is in the United States, there was a lot of support from the nation as a whole. I personally found it hard for there to be some type of peaceful way to come to an agreement with a terrorist organization so I also supported the war. The cost of these wars have been devastating to our economy though and a lot of people thought we were in these places for too long trying to do too much. Overall, it's really hard to judge whether these

wars have been a success. It's really a matter of opinion and how a person wants to analyze the results.

I can only hope that we defend our nation much better, that all the troops come back, and that they receive the care they all deserve. We are doing our veterans a great disservice if we cannot properly accommodate them for life after war. Bibliography Bilmes, L. (2006, February). The economic costs of the iraq war: An appraisal threeyears after the beginning of the conflict. Retrieved fromhttp://www. nber. org/papers/w12054. pdf? new_window= 1 Bingham, A. (2012, May). Afghanistan War by the Numbers: Lives Lost, Billions Spent. Retrieved from http://abcnews. go. om/Politics/OTUS/billions-dollars-thousandslives-lost-afghanistan-war/story?   id=   16256292#. UIRxJmk4WA0 Faiz, S. (2006, March 17). A timeline of the iraq war. Retrieved fromhttp://thinkprogress. org/report/iraq-timeline/? mobile= nc Hoven, R. (2012, September 6). An iraq war every year. Retrieved fromhttp://www. americanthinker. com/blog/2012/09/an_iraq_war_every_year. html Iraq War Veterans. (2004, July). Iraq veterans against the war. Retrieved fromhttp://www. ivaw. org/ Kellner, D. (2004, December). Bring 'em on: Media and politics in the iraq war. Retrieved fromhttp://books. google. com/books? l= en; amp; lr=; amp; id= 10BiGSdCyVQC; amp; oi= fnd; amp; pg= R7; amp; dq= iraq war; amp; ots= DpgUR6Ohbz; amp; sig= cb0_JxEuXqNrmyLL2WQEWCNLFY Kurtzleben, D. (2011, December). What Did the Iraq War Cost? More Than You Think. Retrieved from http://www. usnews. com/news/articles/2011/12/15/what-did-theiraq-war-cost-more-than-you-think Milliken, C. (2007, Novemeber 14). Longitudinal assessment of mental health problemamong active and reserve component soldiers

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