

International Military Education and Training Program as a Tool of Smart Power

by

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ABSTRACT

The International Military Education and Training (IMET) have been functional since 1976 as a part of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (FAA). The proposed dissertation seeks to investigate the effects that the IMET program has on foreign officers that come to the United States of America, their understanding of American values, democratic principles and national security and foreign policy objectives. Further, aim of this study is to contribute to further development of the IMET program.

Data for this study will come from interviews of foreign officers that graduated from the Air University at Maxwell Air Force Base, Montgomery, Alabama during the periods of 2006 until 2012.

The idea behind this study is to contribute to better understanding of the benefits and weaknesses of this program.

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I.

INTRODUCTION

Events that occurred in the spring of 2011 were anything but ordinary. “Arab Spring” showed to the world that there is a huge potential for political changes in that part of the world, whether we like it or not. When a young man in Tunisia burned himself to death because of the lack of the opportunities and abuse of the police, it unleashed storm of changes that swept Tunisia very fast moved to Egypt and then had bloody showdown in Libya and Syria.

Most of the Arab regimes are violent, ruled with an iron fist. The institution that have monopoly on a violence in any country, whether democratic or not, a military, in Tunisia and Egypt in the end decided to abstain. It was actually recognized as the only force that could provide at least interim stabilization. In the news, however, we were able to hear several hints of why that was happening. When protestors gathered in Tahrir Square in Cairo, military did not open fire on them. Military was a key link that prevented more casualties, and once it showed that it would not shoot on its own people, it was clear that President Hosni Mubarak had very little time (clear to everyone but Hosni Mubarak). Simultaneously, behind the scenes, the United States diplomacy and military were working. Many Egyptian high-ranking officers finished Staff or War colleges, or some other military schools in the U.S. These personal connections and friendships between the U.S. military personnel and Egyptian personnel played one of the crucial roles.

1.1 Statement of the Issue

Since Joseph Nye coined the term “Soft Power” in the beginning of 1990’s, this phrase entered vocabulary of policy makers in Washington D.C on a regular basis. Soft power was always present in the international relations, it is just that Joseph Nye coined that term and made the definition that says:

A country may obtain the outcomes it wants in the world politics because other countries-admiring its values, emulating its example, aspiring to its level of prosperity and openness-want to follow it. In this sense, it is also important to set the agenda and attract others in world politics, and not only to force them to change by threatening military force or economic sanctions. This soft power-getting others to want the outcomes that you want-co-opts people rather than coerces them¹.

Soft power among the American population is not widely recognized. Many scholars are researching this topic, but term soft power does not come to the mind of an ordinary American citizen that often. Applying soft power in international relations can be ambiguous and does not require special strategy but patience.

After attack on Iraq, the true meaning of the term “Soft Power” surfaced out. The likability of the U.S was falling dramatically around the world, especially in the regions where our military was heavily involved². Also, the U.S popularity among our closest allies was also dramatically falling down³. The decision by the administration of the President George W. Bush

¹ (Joseph S. Nye, 2004)

² (Gallup, Inc. 2009)

³ (Gallup, Inc. 2009)

to go to war in Iraq almost unilaterally and fallout regarding International Criminal Court (ICC) did huge damage to the U.S when it comes to the perception of our country around the world⁴. Issues like Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib prison, initiated discussions whether there were other ways to achieve our foreign policy goals.

When Joseph Nye coined term soft power, the U.S. was reaching height of its popularity in the world. The Cold War was coming to an end, and it seemed that the U.S. and what the U.S. has always stood for, prevailed over Communist ideology. Eastern European states became respectable members of the European Union (EU) and in the last twenty years, countries like Czech Republic and Slovenia became stronger economic powers than Portugal or Greece; when it comes to the standard of living, many advanced democracies around the world could look upon those two countries⁵. One of the reasons why Eastern European countries progressed that much so fast is that the U.S was willing to help them overcome many hurdles of post-Cold War transition. The U.S also actively helped Russia to properly store its biological and nuclear material and warheads with the Nunn-Lugar program⁶.

However, after events of 9/11, the U.S took a different approach to the foreign policy. Soft power and cooperative engagement doctrine that was at the forefront of President Bill Clinton agenda was replaced by Bush doctrine of preemptive engagement⁷. The world overwhelmingly showed sympathies toward the U.S after events of 9/11, however, after debacle in Iraq in 2003 and later on, and other policies, especially policy toward Israel and Palestine,

⁴ (Hoyt 2008)

⁵ (United Nations 2011)

⁶ (Carter 2002)

⁷ (Posen and Ross 1996/97)

Guantanamo Bay and ICC, the U.S appealing in the world dropped significantly and foreign policy goals were harder to achieve in that environment⁸.

How much these issues deteriorated the U.S image around the world proves the fact that, although our country was a leader in rescue attempts and later in humanitarian efforts in Tsunami affected region of Southeast Asia in 2004 and 2005, in Haiti in 2009 and then in earthquake disaster in Japan in 2011, it did not help the U.S to improve its image around the world substantially⁹.

One of the main objectives of the U.S. policymakers is to improve an image of the U.S. around the world but at the same time to stand behind our principles. We witnessed in month of September 2012 that in many countries that the U.S. is not popular, and that domestic forces in those countries will use that fact for their own political agenda¹⁰.

1.2 Research Question and Purpose of the Study

U.S. policymakers today are aware of the problems of soft power. However, today during unprecedented anti-tax mentality not only in Washington D.C, but across country, it is very popular to cut the budget for many programs across the board. The DoS, already an underfunded department that has an ever-increasing role especially when it comes to nation building, will be additionally deprived of money in next fiscal year¹¹. That means that programs like IMET will also face cuts. The IMET program is one of the most cost effective programs that are currently

⁸ (Ball 2007)

⁹ (Gallup, Inc. 2009)

¹⁰ The movie "Innocence of Muslims" sparked great outrage in many Arab countries in September 2012. Violence resulted with the death of the U.S. Ambassador Christopher Stevens in Libya. However, we saw by the reactions of the politicians in Egypt, Pakistan and other countries that they used the situation for their own political gain, blaming the U.S. for problems that are strictly of domestic nature.

¹¹ (Pincus 2001)

being implemented in the U.S. Thousands of foreign officers went through the U.S. military schools as grantees of this program.

Foreign officers that come to the U.S. usually go to the intermediate and senior military schools, such as Air Command and Staff College (hereafter: ACSC) and Air War College (hereafter: AWC), while some attend Squadron Officers School (hereafter: SOS)¹². They usually spend approximately a year in the U.S. (students attending ACSC and AWC) or several months (students attending SOS). This is a substantial time for them and their families to spend in the U.S. They have an opportunity to not only attend military schools, but also to travel around the country as a part of the IMET curriculum or with their families during holidays or free days. So far, the academic community did not give an answer as to how this program affects foreign officers; this researcher is trying to find an answer to the exact research question: *what effect does the IMET program have on foreign officers and their families understanding of American values, democracy, national security and foreign policy objectives?*

Furthermore, the plan for this study is not only to contribute to the academic pool of knowledge, but also to the better understanding of the effects that the IMET program has among policymakers and ordinary citizens. The ultimate goal of this study is to contribute better awareness among those who appropriate money for programs like IMET in order to broaden the IMET program so it can reach to more people around the world who are crucial when it comes to not only the U.S. projection of its national security and foreign policy objectives, but also to contribute to a better understanding of democratic values and civic virtue.

¹² (Larson, 1993)

II.

SMART POWER

As already mentioned, Joseph Nye in the beginning of the 1990's started a discussion about the term "Soft Power." Nye's paper "Soft Power" from 1990 reflects that period of time; the collapse of the Soviet Union and rising Japan. As Nye states, the United States was at a crossroad:

The Cold War is over and Americans are trying to understand their place in a world without a defining Soviet threat. Polls report that nearly half of the public believe in decline tend to favor protectionism and to counsel withdrawal from what they consider "overextended international commitments"¹³.

Twenty-two years after, we are witnessing a completely different world. Soviet Union does not exist anymore and Japan is the country with the highest ratio of debt compared to the GDP¹⁴. China replaced Japan as the second largest economy, and our "paranoia" that we will lose our status as a superpower shifted from the Soviet Union to China.

However, although our domestic political theater could strongly convince ignorant observers that the United States is losing its place as the only superpower and its appeal to the rest of the world, that is not the case.

As Joseph Nye argued in his groundbreaking work, power is changing in its nature, and that the United States will face new challenges and shifting powers after the Cold War¹⁵. That

¹³ (Nye 2004)

¹⁴ (Shilling 2012)

¹⁵ (Nye 2004)

definitely happened as we entered 1990's where local and regional conflicts dominated international theater¹⁶. In the beginning of the 21st century we witnessed horrible terrorist attacks in the United States, and on September 11th 2001, we collectively understood that the world has changed¹⁷.

After military intervention in Afghanistan and an "adventure" in Iraq that costed the United States more then 4,500 lives and more then \$1 trillion, and economic crisis of 2008, the argument about Soft Power became very popular again.

Joseph Nye claims that:

Soft Power is the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments. When you can get others to want what you want, you do not have to spend as much on sticks and carrots to move them in your direction. Hard power, the ability to coerce, grows out of a country's military and economic might. Soft power arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies. When our policies are seen as legitimate in the eyes of others, our soft power is enhanced¹⁸.

Since Nye published his revised work in 2004, Soft Power became more attractive to the politicians and military. Nye claims that we cannot rely on hard power to the extent that we once did. We have to take another approaches when it comes to the projection of the American power.

¹⁶ In the beginning of 1990's we saw several bloody conflicts around the world, most notably in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Somalia and Rwanda.

¹⁷ Although one could argue that the collapse of the Soviet Union was the point when world changed, for average American, world truly changed on September 11th.

¹⁸ Nye 2004

Nye clearly states that Hollywood, universities, arts etc. make a huge impact on the projection of the American soft power¹⁹.

Nye did not forget the great foreign policy mastermind, George Kennan, who advised that Soviet Union needs to be changed from within, and the only way to achieve such a goal is to develop exchanges and face-to-face contacts. Nye here too also warns about trends amongst our policy makers to cut the budget that are keeping alive small, but essential programs:

It was a great mistake for the Clinton administration and Congress to cut the budget and staff for cultural diplomacy and exchanges by nearly 30 percent after 1993. And it is a mistake now to let visa policies curtail such contacts. The most effective communication often occurs not by distant broadcasts but in face-to-face contacts- what Edward R. Murrow called “the last three feet.” Such programs were critical to winning the Cold War. The best communicators are often not governments but civilian surrogates, both from the United States and from other countries²⁰.

Other countries also followed Nye’s recommendation that governments cannot anymore rely only on hard power. The academia started to research this question rigorously, trying to apply the definition of soft power to many countries, including: China, Russia and most of the European countries.

However, there are limitations to soft power. Hard power (military and economic powers) is often reasonable response to certain issues. The U.S. uses hard power very often, like employing sanctions against certain countries (Iran, Syria, North Korea). Hard power was a way

¹⁹ Nye 2004

²⁰ Nye 2004

to end the Bosnian war in 1996, and to remove Slobodan Milosevic from power in Serbia in October 2000²¹. In the latter case, the combination of hard power and soft power actually led to the end of brutal regime in Serbia. In the 21st century the answer to the problems that we are facing with will not be pure hard power or just soft power, it needs to be combination of both.

With the invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the years that followed we can make the conclusion that employing only hard power is definitely not an answer in certain circumstances. The leverage that we lost in Iraq during that period of time where the administration of George W. Bush thought that hard power is the way to go is staggering. Today politicians in Baghdad actually look more to Teheran than to Washington D.C. for advice or consultations²². Clearly, by employing only hard power we failed to attract Iraqis.

In the 21st century military is going to have different roles than in the past. The U.S. will keep the military force second to none for a long period of time. Current DoD budget confirms that, and with its technical superiority it will be very hard even for China with a much larger population to “catch up” any time soon²³. Military will have to do much more than just employing raw power, and that is actually nothing new for the military. If we just look at the examples recently, we will see that the U.S. government used military as a tool of smart power very effectively. In 2004, the U.S. effectively used military in assisting areas that were hit by the earthquake and the tsunami in Southeast Asia primarily Indonesia²⁴. Assistance to Indonesia was

²¹ (Holbrooke 1998) War in Bosnia was finished very fast after the U.S. and NATO conducted air strikes against Bosnian Serbs. In 1999 the U.S. and NATO conducted air strikes against Serbia, which resulted in international protectorate in Kosovo and ultimately led to peoples uprising against Slobodan Milosevic. It needs to be noted that Serbia was under economic sanctions since 1992.

²² (Huffington 2012)

²³ (Hellman and Kramer 2012)

²⁴ (McCawley 2006)

so successful that perception of the U.S. among ordinary Indonesians skyrocketed in the polls that were conducted after²⁵.

In 2009, the U.S. employed great force in helping Haiti that was devastated by the earthquake. The U.S. was the first respondent to the scene and established operations immediately at the airport in Port Au Prince, a capitol of Haiti. Across the world, it was recognized as not only that the U.S. reacted without hesitation but also that the U.S. military having the capabilities for such a swift and effective assistance. This was proof in 2011 when Japan got hit by the earthquake. Although Japan alone has tremendous capabilities when it comes to coping with especially consequences of the earthquake, the combination of the earthquake, tsunami and nuclear disaster in nuclear plant Fukushima, prompted the U.S. to offer assistance applying its both civilian and military resources²⁶.

Power is getting more dispersed. After World War II (WWII) the U.S. was an unquestionable economic power that produced almost one third of world GDP²⁷. However, several decades after WWII, countries like Japan and Western Europe started to increase their share of the world GDP. That is nothing bad; actually the U.S. was the main culprit behind their recovery with programs such as the Marshall plan²⁸. Despite witnessing a bipolar world during the Cold War , in actuality the U.S. was truly the only superpower that was able to project smart power, a combination of hard and soft power. Eastern European countries were in decline during the Cold War, not because those countries did not know how to cope with post WWII environment, but because the Soviet Union was able to only employ hard power that was driving populations of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, and other countries who

²⁵ (McCawley 2006)

²⁶ (Alford 2011)

²⁷ (Ravenhill 2008)

²⁸ (Nirmal 1996)

were under Soviet “boot” away from Moscow and the idea of global proletariat and communism²⁹. Everything started to culminate in 1981 in Poland and then had a grand finale in Berlin on November 9th 1989 when the Berlin Wall was brought down³⁰. This was an example of projecting only hard power as a tool of foreign and national security policy; unfortunately, our policy makers during the Bush administration forgot this lesson very fast, which had dire consequences in Iraq.

This is not to say that hard power is the past. On the contrary, in 21st century we can expect new challenges and we are already fighting asymmetrical warfare, and the role of the military and economy as is important, as before. It will be projected in a different way, and in 21st century the combination of hard and soft power will be a way to win.

There are many examples where small countries demonstrate great foreign policy achievements because of maximizing their soft power potentials. Norway is one of the best examples today, as well as former Yugoslavia during the rule of Tito until his death in 1980³¹. Countries like Japan, Germany, Italy, Spain, New Zealand or Australia do not have large militaries. However, for example many in the world are envious of the Australian culture or the New Zealand culture and their respect for freedom. Many in the world believe Italy and Spain to be great tourist destinations; many envy Japan and Germany for their economy and work ethic. Japan and Germany, although economic powerhouses, are attractive because of many factors such as, culture, work ethic, education, healthcare etc.

²⁹ (Woodward 1995)

³⁰ (Woodward 1995)

³¹ During the rule of Josip Broz Tito, Yugoslavia enjoyed tremendous international recognition. It was probably most important member of Non-Aligned movement and it had huge voice in the UN and other organizations. Today Norway is also very involved in trying to solve various problems around the world.

The U.S. during the 1990's had a much better image in the world than it has today, and one of the reasons for that is the popularity of the Clinton administration. The world did not take Clinton administration as aggressive, especially during the Balkan wars. It appeared that President Clinton was heavily involved in negotiations, engaging late Richard Holbrooke as the U.S negotiator. Once the U.S. used military force against Bosnian Serbs, and later Serbia and Montenegro, it appeared justified because the U.S. used all the possible diplomatic ways to solve the issue. When George W. Bush wanted to attack Iraq, the world clearly had impression that hawks in Washington D.C. did not care that much about the world opinion³².

Ernest Wilson defines smart power in following way:

[A] genuinely sophisticated smart power approach comes with the awareness that hard power and soft power constitute not simply neutral “instruments” to be wielded neutrally by an enlightened, all-knowing, and independent philosopher king: they themselves constitute separate and distinct institutions and institutional cultures that exert their own normative influences over their members, each with its own attitudes, incentives, and anticipated career paths³³.

The behavior of the U.S. prior to the war in Iraq is: we know everything, and quite honestly we do not care about rest of the world. The best examples are rhetoric by policy makers such as Vice-President at that time, Dick Cheney, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld or journalists such as Charles Krauthammer³⁴.

³² (B. Woodward 2004)

³³ (Wilson 2008)

³⁴ (B. Woodward 2004)

However, the world is watching the U.S with binoculars. The reason for that is because the U.S. is the only superpower in the world, and many in the world expect the U.S to lead and use its tremendous power for a greater good. That puts the U.S. in a difficult situation, since the U.S. is behaving as any other good student of realist thought, it looks first its own interests. However, the U.S has to be more proactive when it comes to the applying right choices in order to achieve its goals. Because of the fiasco in Iraq, the world almost did not notice what kind of assistance the countries in Africa, that are ravaged by AIDS, received from the U.S because President Bush was personally active when it came to that issue³⁵.

That is the past, and the past cannot be changed, but we can apply lessons to the future. We can see some positive changes with President Obama coming to office and through tremendous sacrifice of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton³⁶.

Applying smart power requires knowing when to apply what, as Wilson says:

Smart power means knowing the strengths and limitations of each instrument. What can armies be expected to achieve? What can targeted broadcast do? What can exchange programs achieve? Furthermore, one needs the capacity to recognize when to use one kind of power rather than another to achieve national purposes, depending on the context³⁷.

Applying smart power is much more difficult then it seems. If we take into consideration the argument by Suzanne Nossel, that the U.S. should move more to the cooperative engagement, we will find that very hard sometimes because not everyone shares our ideas and

³⁵ (Bloomfield 2008)

³⁶ (Delargy 2012)

³⁷ (Wilson 2008)

values or they are just not capable to deal with certain issues. Nossel points to the Bosnian war in the 1990's when leading European countries were not able to address the issue successfully although it was in their backyard³⁸. Only when the U.S. actively got involved in solving the issue the solution was in sight. It is even more alarming that once the U.S. showed leadership during Bosnian war, the European countries like France and Great Britain showed panic in their foreign policy, trying not to be portrayed as weak³⁹.

Arne Tostensen and Beate Bull are arguing that employment of “smart sanctions” is sometimes the solution to the problem that the international community is facing with⁴⁰. Still, the example of the Balkan wars shows that when there is no consensus among leading powers, the world obviously needs a leader. Arms embargo on former Yugoslavia proves that sometimes sanctions are used by the influential countries to achieve some goals that are against basic principles of freedom and right for self-defense⁴¹.

Clearly, as Nossel claims, the U.S. needs to reconsider its foreign policy strategy, because the U.S. did it before, after the WWII:

When the United States, the only industrialized power left intact by the war, faced challenges ranging from containing Soviet ambitions to rebuilding war-ravaged Europe, it did not try to shoulder the burden alone. Instead, it crafted an interdependent

³⁸ (Nossel 2004)

³⁹ (Holbrooke 1998) Holbrooke argues that during his “shuttle diplomacy” together with General Wesley Clarke in 1995, European countries started to “panic” because they were afraid that if the U.S. succeeds to break the peace, they will look incompetent. By Holbrooke recollection, sometimes they would have to fly to Italy or other European countries just to satisfy “egos” of these countries who wanted to look like they are also involved in efforts.

⁴⁰ (Tostensen and Bull 2002)

⁴¹ (Vulliamy 1998) Vulliamy, journalist for The Guardian, openly argued that British government wanted to collapse legal Bosnian government during Bosnian conflict. Author argues that any attempt to abolish arms embargo against Bosnia and Herzegovina, the country that was at that time full member of the UN, was undermined by British government and Foreign Minister Douglas Hurd.

network of allies and institutions that included the UN and NATO. The United States stood at the center of this order, but it shared the task of maintaining it. The sources of U.S. strength-economic, political, and moral-thus reinforced one another. International institutions helped spread American values, which in turn fueled an appetite for American products. Trade enhanced political influence, and political influence helped further extend American values⁴².

Today America is facing a similar challenge. While new technologies made globalization faster than ever, a lot of small and poor countries are still not members of an industrialized and democratic club. If we take a look at the Human Development Index, we can see that majority of countries in the world are still fighting the battle on how to have drinking water available to majority of population, or how to cope with the hunger⁴³. There is so much that the U.S. can do around the world, but it needs to follow its own example after WWII. It is not surprising that many people in the world today look at the U.S. suspicious after the debacle in Iraq and non-questionable support to Israel, including some of the worst regimes in the Middle East⁴⁴.

Many people in countries across the world never had the opportunity to know anything about the U.S. and its values because the only thing they heard about the U.S. came from news, TV stations, or various newspapers around the world, with objectivity being questionable⁴⁵. Even

⁴² (Nossel 2004)

⁴³ (United Nations Development Programme 2010)

⁴⁴ We saw in 2011 that the U.S. was reluctant to support revolution in Egypt until it was obvious that President Hosni Mubarak does not stand a chance against his own population. Maybe even better example is Bahrain whose Royal family the U.S. openly supported together with Saudi Arabia.

⁴⁵ (J. Nye 2009)

if people in poor and developing countries have a different look at the U.S. it is through Hollywood movies, and some cultures around the world will find those movies as offensive⁴⁶.

The only way populations of poor and developing countries will have true picture of the U.S. is if they personally come to the U.S and witness what is this country all about. Best ways to achieve those goals are student programs or student and other exchanges.

These types of programs and exchanges are particularly important when it comes to military. Foreign military officers are in a position of influencing or have a prospect of influencing the policy of their countries as well influencing other officers and soldiers. Foreign officers, who are coming from countries struggling with democratic concept or are prone to instability, can sometimes be a key factor in a sense that the military can learn to understand its role in their respective society⁴⁷.

Although military officers in great majority of countries in the world are probably highly educated, they could very easily have distorted opinions about the U.S, the values, and generally people who live in this great country.

Another very important issue, besides understanding and the perception of the U.S., is that many officers from those countries are going to work shoulder to shoulder with American officers. Misunderstanding between them could actually have potential catastrophic consequences for each of them and lead to more complications in relations between countries. That is why, IMET, is one of the most important tools of smart power, because it has immediate application of smart power through the fact that foreign officers not only go to school with U.S. officers, but they also bring their families to live with them in the U.S. for a certain period of

⁴⁶ We had a chance to see in September 2012 that one obscure movie that was made by one person in California, could be used to rally masses against the U.S. in various countries, most notably Egypt, Yemen and Libya where the U.S. Ambassador Christopher Stevens lost his life.

⁴⁷ Example of IMET alumni that holds important positions

time. This combination of education and living experience in the U.S. is actually a projection of smart power and achieving our foreign and national security goals.

III

IMET: A Review

One of the crucial programs, when it comes to good relationships with militaries of other countries, is International Military Education and Training (IMET). As a part of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, Section 541, IMET program has been educating thousands of foreign military officers since it was established in 1976⁴⁸. The authorization clearly states that the President of the United States has the authority to grant assistance to friendly nations:

Sec. 541. General Authority.- The President is authorized to furnish, on such terms and conditions consistent with this Act as the President may determine (but whenever feasible on a reimbursable basis), military education and training to military and related civilian personnel of foreign countries. Such civilian personnel shall include foreign governmental personnel of ministries other than ministries of defense, and army also include legislators and individuals who are not members of the government, if the military education and training would contribute to responsible defense resource management, foster greater respect for and understanding of the principle of civilian control of the military, contribute to cooperation between military and law enforcement personnel with respect to counter narcotics law enforcement efforts, or improve military justice systems and

⁴⁸ (U.S General Accounting Office, 1990)

- procedures in accordance with internationally recognized human rights. Such training and education may be provided through-
- (1) attendance at military educational and training facilities in the United States (other than Service academies) and abroad;
 - (2) attendance in special courses of instruction at schools and institutions of learning or research in the United States and abroad; and
 - (3) Observation and orientation visits to military facilities and related activities in the United States and abroad⁴⁹.

This broad authorization gives the President of the United States tremendous power over the IMET program. Clearly, the President can offer benefits of the IMET program to various countries that the U.S. has relationships or wants to expand the level of cooperation with. This authorization gives various possibilities to Presidents.⁵⁰ However, the purpose of this program is clearly stated in the FAA:

- Sec. 543. Purposes.-Education and training activities conducted under this chapter shall be designed-
- (1) to encourage effective and mutually beneficial relations and increased understanding between the United States and foreign countries in furtherance of the goals of international peace and security;
 - (2) to improve the ability of participating foreign countries to utilize their resources, including defense articles and defense

⁴⁹ (U.S Congress 1961)

⁵⁰ (Gill 2004)

services obtained by them from the United States, with maximum effectiveness, thereby contributing to greater self-reliance by such countries; and

- (3) to increase awareness of nationals of foreign countries participating in such activities of basic issues involving internationally recognized human rights⁵¹.

From this section we can see that the primary goal of the IMET program is helping other nations to further defense capabilities. It also states that this program is designed for mutual beneficial relationships to take place⁵². The FAA was created as a response to chaos present in the government of the U.S. whenever it came to the assistance to foreign countries. This act was created to create order in a chaotic field that was present during that time in our government⁵³. President John F. Kennedy was not only farsighted when it came to domestic policies, but also foreign policies. This act has been one of the most important long-term achievements of his administration when it comes to utilization of our resources in helping other countries and, at the same time, furthering our foreign policy goals.

The U.S. Congress, at the initiative of President Kennedy, passed the FAA at the height of the Cold War. In the opening section it states that:

It is sense of the Congress that peace depends on wider recognition of the dignity and interdependence of men, and survival of free

⁵¹ (U.S Congress 1961)

⁵² (U.S Congress 1961)

⁵³ (Cope 1995)

institutions in the United States can best be assured in a worldwide atmosphere of freedom⁵⁴.

IMET program goes along the narrative of the Cold War. The U.S. was a force of the freedom and progress; most importantly it was for the U.S. to show willingness to share its capabilities and knowledge with allies. Also, President Kennedy recognized that the only way to make sure that the U.S. still represented beacon at the top of the hill, was for others to come to their own realization of what it is that the U.S. is trying to promote around the world⁵⁵.

Of course, foreign assistance did not start with the FAA. Since the end of the WWII and the Long Telegram, the U.S. has been assisting other countries when it came to the equipment and training. About 10% of foreign aid in 1946-1950 was in security assistance, and after Korean War started, about 50% of foreign aid went to military assistance⁵⁶.

As mentioned, the IMET program is sanctioned under Section 541 of the FAA⁵⁷. The Act was created as an attempt to aid the countries that could not financially support the education of their officers in the United States⁵⁸. While many military schools in the U.S welcomed the officers from the United Kingdom (UK), Germany, Sweden, Australia and other advanced democracies and close allies, the IMET program was designed to help countries that cannot financially support their officers, democratic or not, or those currently undergoing a political transition towards democracy, such as the case in the 1990's with Eastern European countries, to

⁵⁴ (U.S Congress, 1961)

⁵⁵ (Kennedy 1963) President John F. Kennedy in his message to the House of Representatives on April 2nd 1963, gave wide explanation of why the U.S. has to assist other countries. In his message he address issue of wealth and moral obligation to help as he said “sister countries” that are not so fortunate to be wealthy as the wealthiest nation of the world. President Kennedy in his message responded to the critics that questioned “wisdom” of such a project like FAA considering fiscal problems. President Kennedy pointed that many claimed that the Marshall Plan would bankrupt the Republic, but it did not. It is not necessary to explain what kind of benefits the Marshall Plan had when it comes to the stability of the Western Europe, expansion of democracy, economic progress and the U.S image.

⁵⁶ (Clarke, O'Connor and Ellis 1997)

⁵⁷ (U.S Congress, 2010)

⁵⁸ (U.S Congress, 1961)

send their officers to various military schools in the U.S.⁵⁹. Immediately after the Cold War, the IMET program was offered to countries like Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Albania, Bulgaria and even Russia⁶⁰.

The primary goal of the IMET program, as mentioned, is to strengthen the U.S national security and cooperation between the U.S and other friendly nations. According to the State Department, in 2010, the U.S provided approximately \$96.7 million in training and other expenditures to students from 136 nations⁶¹. DoS is in charge of general guidance of the program while DoD is in charge of practical implementation of the program⁶². On an annual basis 7,000 foreign military and civilian officers attend approximately 150 military schools offering some 4,000 classes⁶³. In some way, the IMET program basically offers “scholarships” to foreign military officers. The military, in this sense, is following civilian methods of a student exchange. After WWII student exchanges in the world rapidly increased; according to UNESCO by 1950 107,589 students were studying overseas, while in 1989 that number increased to over one million⁶⁴.

Clark, O’Connor and Ellis in their brief observation about the IMET program caught one very interesting observation:

It has also drawn bipartisan support from many members of Congress, with Senator Alen Cranston (D-Calif.) even recommending in 1991 changing the name of the program from

⁵⁹ (Cope 1995)

⁶⁰ (U.S General Accounting Office, 1992)

⁶¹ (The U.S State Department, 2010)

⁶² (U.S General Accounting Office, 1990)

⁶³ (The U.S State Department, 2010)

⁶⁴ (Barnett and Yingli Wu 1995)

IMET to the Democratic Military Education and Training program,
since this “best puts the program’s title in sync with its purpose.””

This observation by Senator Cranston came at time when Eastern European countries were opening up and the Soviet Union was collapsing while virtually all Eastern European countries including Albania became part of the IMET program. Despite authors’ criticism of the IMET program, mostly because critics thought that this program develops dependence on the providing country (USA), authors summed up a positive observation of the IMET program in this way:

However, IMET has broad support, not only within U.S. national security bureaucracy and Congress, but from many foreign governments. For example, former President of Argentina Raul Alfonsin remarked: ‘Joint training of military officers and civilians from the political community and from parliament is essential for the strengthening of our democratic governments⁶⁵.’”

The former Argentinian president had a similar comment for military education and training, which does not come as a surprise. Most of the countries that are part of the IMET are having smaller militaries compared to the militaries of the U.S., France, Great Britain, Japan or Germany. The officers that those militaries suggest to the U.S. for education are usually the best ones, and it is possible that later they will be able to affect policymaking. So it’s no wonder that the former Argentinian president was familiar with the military education and training. We can

⁶⁵ (Clarke, O’Connor and Ellis 1997) Authors go into great detail when it comes to overall Security Assistance programs that are provided by the U.S as well as into great detail about assistance that the U.S is providing to the Israel and Egypt.

see here that it is possible that some of his top advisors were at one point part of the IMET program.

The importance of the IMET was by and large understood by the politicians in Washington D.C. Dr. William Perry, Secretary of Defense during the Clinton administration, considered IMET as part of a so called “preventive defense,” and he had these words about that concept of defense:

In addition, if we can build trust and understanding between the militaries of two neighboring nations, we build trust and understanding between the two nations themselves. Some have said that war is too important to be left to the generals. Preventive defense says peace is too important to be left solely to the politicians.⁶⁶

Later Secretary Perry made a very useful point here. Politicians have a very important role in constraining generals when it comes to wars. Some military officers could be trigger-happy and civilian control over military is from utmost importance. However, many politicians, especially younger generation of politicians in the U.S, have never served in the military, not to mention being on the battlefield. Their understanding of the battlefield and consequences of war is very limited. That is why it is necessary to include military during peace in the diplomacy and resolving important issues between countries, because they could be a “hand-break” for the situation to deteriorate to unthinkable.

Secretary Perry also had a very fond opinion about the IMET program:

⁶⁶ (Keeling 1999) Cited in the text.

In an address presented by Secretary of Defense William J. Perry, at the Business Week Forum, on January 18th 1996, in Washington D.C., the secretary stated, “I never imagined that I would be running a school to teach Russian Military Officers about democracy, budgeting, and testifying to a parliament, and yet that’s exactly what we do at the Marshall Center in Garmish Germany, and have been doing it the last two years.” The course Secretary Perry spoke of, is founded under the auspices of IMET.⁶⁷

Secretary Perry obviously was referring to the fact that only several years back it would be unimaginable to see Russian military officers in the U.S. military installation attending classes that are intended to educate someone about western or more precisely, American values.

John Cope in his broad analysis of the IMET program argued that the Congress recognized a moment to expand the IMET to the E-IMET program. Congress did not strip the IMET of funding just because the Cold War was over, but actually recognized the IMET program as a pivotal program to help other countries, at that time mostly Eastern European countries, to overcome the heavy burden of transitioning to democracy and a free market system. Cope also analyzed technicalities of the program, arguing that at that time (mid 1990’s) one of the biggest obstacles for the IMET program was the knowledge of the English language by the foreign officers, where the Defense Language Institute (DLI) in San Antonio plays a pivotal role⁶⁸. The English language is an obstacle when it comes to educating foreign officers. Cufar explains that very well in his example of Slovenian military, a country that usually sends more proficient English speaking students. Cufar gave the example of a very small military force that

⁶⁷ (Kratsas n.d.)

⁶⁸ (Cope 1995)

is operating now in a completely different environment after the break-up of Yugoslavia. After being part of relatively large country (24 million people) and the 4th largest military force in Europe (Yugoslav Peoples Army), the Slovenian military started to face difficulties common for small militaries. One of the more obvious problems, considering the path that Slovenia took to join the European Union and NATO, is the English language among their officers. Many officers in Slovenian military are taught in former Yugoslav military schools, and those schools did not put any emphasis on teaching the English language. However, in former Yugoslavia, and after that in all successor states, the English language was taught in elementary schools starting from the 5th grade. The issue was that most of those officers did not have the opportunity or need to use the English language, so they relatively forgot it. Whenever they took the English proficiency test, they scored below average⁶⁹.

The problem of the English language that Cope and Cufar are pointing out is that we do not take into consideration the fact that many officers who are serving together with the U.S troops in Iraq and Afghanistan from various countries are not proficient in English or maybe not even speaking English at all. That could bring our troops and foreign troops in great danger if there are problems with communication, and definitely there are. However, foreign officers who have been part of the IMET program had to meet certain standards when it came to English proficiency, but also, they spent a certain amount of time living in the U.S and using the English language with people whose native language is English. That definitely helps once the U.S officer and, for example, a Slovenian officer meet in Afghanistan to discuss issues that could mean life and death.

⁶⁹ (Cufar 2001)

Off course, the U.S. military help to other nations did not always serve as an example. The School of the Americas is the best example how a novel idea can be used in the wrong way. The fact that one of the worst dictators and military leaders were trained under the U.S. tutelage is definitely not something that we can be proud of⁷⁰. However, the IMET program cannot be viewed through that example. Academia spent a lot of time trying to explain why the U.S. sponsored countries with horrible human rights record or why it trained some of the worst dictators that ever walked this planet. The reason for this was that the U.S. tried to use those dictators for its own foreign policy goals that have little or nothing to do with democracy and freedom, but never with the intention to train future dictators who will oppress their own people⁷¹. Also, the IMET program fit very well with the overall arms race during the Cold War. Many poor and developing countries could not afford their own state of the art education in order to have their militaries use modern weapons or collaborate with the industrialized countries⁷². The IMET program served very well to close that gap.

The IMET program today has a different role. The Cold War is behind us, and proliferation of technology and access to information basically constrained those who would still help certain regimes in order to achieve short-term foreign policy goals. The events in the Middle East, especially Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Syria proved that it is always better to support people

⁷⁰ (Blakeley 2006) School of Americas (SOA) was founded in 1940's, with task to train Latin-American soldiers and officers. Some 61,000 military personnel went through this school and less than 1.5% of them was implicated in human rights abuses. What is controversial is that the U.S. military was providing field manuals that were advocating human rights abuses. These manuals were distributed by the U.S. Mobile Training Teams (MTT). SOA went through dramatic change in last two decades and Blakeley argues that now SOA has more oversight than other military schools in the U.S.

⁷¹ (Blakeley 2006) Text explains that it was never the goal of the U.S. to purposely train various dictators or those who have been accused of crimes against humanity.

⁷² (Zwi and Ugalde 1992), Poor and developed countries during the Cold War spent five times more as a percentage of GDP on military than industrialized and developed countries.

then dictators (case of Egypt)⁷³. This does not mean that part of the IMET should be only for countries with good human rights and democracy record. The only way for struggling democracies to succeed is to experience freedom. The IMET should serve as a tool for military officers, from countries that are transitioning to democracy, to experience democracy because at some point they will be policy makers that could shape their countries in some way⁷⁴.

Nydegger, immediately, after WWII was discussing benefits of exchange programs in understanding different cultures:

We need to learn not how the other countries differ but how they are like us. Too many people have only a vague and nebulous idea of the people of Latin America and their customs. We think of the typical Mexican as a cigarette-smoking, huge sombreroed, mustached, swarthy individual wearing sandals and a sarape, asleep in the sun with his hat shading his eyes, too lazy to move; and of the typical South Americans as a sleek-haired, guitar-playing, gay caballero serenading his lady love under the *balconcita*. This is the Hollywood version. We must dispel such pictures and create the picture of the true individual Latin American who can be and will be a friend and neighbor. Student-teacher exchanges will help us learn the true Latin American and will do much to dispel the false impressions so current⁷⁵.

⁷³ The initial hesitation by President Obama's administration during "Arab Spring" shed the light on the U.S. as supporter of dictators. The U.S. did not support revolution until it was clear that President Hosni Mubarak does not stand a chance against its own people and when Egyptian military showed no intent to crack down on protestors.

⁷⁴ (Atkinson 2010)

⁷⁵ (Nydegger 1948)

Nydegger here discusses the most important issue when it comes to foreign policy, and that is: culture. Today we are exposed to 24/7 news cycles, and primarily the goal of those big media outlets are ratings. Negative news always attracts the audience. If we truly want to understand someone's culture, why not just go there? Foreigners also have their stereotypes about the U.S. and the Americans. It is possible those foreigners are having even more difficulties trying to understand our country. The U.S is isolated with two vast oceans from the rest of the world. It is expensive to visit the U.S, and most people who come here as tourists are from wealthy countries. Many people around the world know the U.S from Hollywood movies or from news; news offers a different picture than what reality truly is. In many of those countries the government controls media, and more often than not, the U.S is portrayed in a negative light. It is very important that the U.S makes it possible to bring certain groups of people to the U.S. in order for those groups to understand the U.S and Americans better, because it is in their interests as well as ours. Exposure to our culture and our customs can substantially explain who we are and what we want. We have to understand, that because of the U.S. status as the only superpower in the world, many people do not look at us favorably. They think we are in the business of solely trying to impose our will on other people for our own benefit, whether that is oil or something else. People in a number of countries think that we are in war with Islam and Muslims and that we blindly protect Israel, simultaneously neglecting other countries. Off course it is true that we, like any other nation, will pursue our own interests first, however for foreigners, especially those that are not part of the western civilization, it is very important to know who we truly are. The best way to "sell" our beliefs, values, and intentions, is to bring them here and just let them live a normal life amongst the Americans for one year.

Cope contributes here with his research when it comes to the understanding of America by foreign officers. Cope points that the IMET or even the E-IMET programs offer very little when it comes to training about democracy and liberty. Although this issue was addressed especially after creation of the E-IMET program in 1991, still it was just theoretical training about democracy and liberty. Even though we can study about someone's way of life and their culture we will not have full understanding of that culture and that way of life unless we live in that country. So Cope brings up an example of a graduate of the IMET who had a pivotal role in bringing down a dictatorship and a recollection by one U.S. Foreign Officers who was on duty in Mali from 1990 until 1994:

Those officers who benefited from IMET training tended to support the transition to democracy and civilian control of the military. In addition, many of them had a heightened sense of the professionalism... and how it related to human rights issues and support for democracy, even though there had not been in courses specifically designed to address these issues. (This was just before E-IMET was created.) Some of them spoke often about importance of their IMET experience both for professional development and for what they learned about how a professional military acts in democracy. Some of them emphasized that this came not only from the course, but also from contact with U.S. military and civilians, and from just living in the U.S. for a year.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ (Cope 1995)

It is obvious from this testimony of the American Foreign Service Officer that official “liberty and democracy” training is not necessarily needed. We could say that training about International law and Democracy could have an impact on the better understanding about freedom and liberty or conduct of war, however, it would be very hard for foreign officers that are coming from countries that never experienced democracy before to comprehend true meaning of that just from the courses. However, if we expose them to ordinary life in the U.S, if we connect them with ordinary American citizens, which military does by introducing them to goodwill ambassadors that are helping foreign officers to have an easier way around.

The student exchange programs were seen as good way to “break the ice” during the Cold War. Sheila Fitzpatrick wrote about her student days in Moscow in 1966 as a completely different experience. She described it in a way where one can learn and understand the Soviet Union and Moscow better, since learning about Moscow life was limited to a certain extent to foreign students as opposed to diplomats and politicians who were coming from the west at that time⁷⁷. Stephen Rosenfeld also discussed student and other exchanges with the Soviet Union during the Cold War. He argued that by the 1960’s just several thousands of students, scientists, artists and others were part of exchange programs, which seemed little considering the size of other exchange programs, especially between the U.S and Western Europe, but the impact of this exchange program with the Soviet Union was extremely important. Rosenfeld argued that both parties learned a lot from each other, especially Americans, since Americans went to the USSR in much larger numbers⁷⁸.

The exchange programs were always looked at as a tool of foreign policy. In a letter exchange between Mr. William D. Carey, Executive Officer and Publisher of Science, and Mr.

⁷⁷ (Fitzpatrick 1982)

⁷⁸ (Rosenfeld 1964)

Frank Carlucci, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Defense, Mr. Carey addressed several issues when it came to understanding the scientific exchanges by the DoD. Mr. Carey wrote a letter to Mr. Carlucci accusing the DoD that it did not understand what scientific exchanges were and how they benefitted the U.S and the scientific community. In publication “*Soviet Military Power*” DoD accused Soviets of using scientific exchanges between two countries for improving its military. Mr. Carey said that was not accurate, defending exchange practices saying that both sides are benefiting greatly. Mr. Carlucci in response said that the USSR had advantage of scientific exchanges disproportionally and that they even claimed that they are using it for its military purposes⁷⁹.

Katz, Mac Lane, Adams and Wilson were also arguing that scientific exchanges proved beneficial for the Americans when it came to not only expanding scientific knowledge, but also when it came to the better understanding of the Soviet Union as a country and its people. Wilson pointed out that these exchanges allowed him to better understand the Soviet scientific community and in what kinds of conditions they were operating⁸⁰. We know how the Cold War ended. Mr. Carlucci was worried, and we have to understand that. However, because of the exchange programs, American or Western way of life and our values were more attractive to the Soviet population than values at that time in USSR, because they were exposed to them. We witnessed in the end of 1980’s and beginning of 1990’s that the Iron Curtain did not fall because of the mighty American and European armies but because of the repression behind the Iron Curtain and the strife for freedom and democracy.

Hayden argues that the U.S was always very active in promoting student exchange programs and study abroad programs. By Hayden research, in 1977 under federal sponsored

⁷⁹ (Carey and Carlucci 1982)

⁸⁰ (Katz, et al. 1980)

programs, some 39,000 foreign visitors came to the U.S with associated cost of some \$662 million. That number consists only 5% of the foreign visitors to the country in 1977, but it says that the U.S was always extremely active when it comes to the civilian exchange programs⁸¹.

Barghoorn analyzed the exchanges between Communist countries and the U.S during the height of the Cold War in the 1950's and 1960's. Of all communist countries, former Yugoslavia had by far the best cooperation with the U.S institutions, sometimes in range of several hundred students being involved just per one institution. This is an important observation because Yugoslavia was an open communist country that embraced learning from others, which had an impact on economical as well as political developments in that country. In the analysis we can see the communist countries that were more active in student exchanges were also doing much better today when it comes to democratic development and economic development than Russia, which is a successor of the former Soviet Union⁸².

The questions of academic exchanges or study abroad programs are well known as well as answers. We could say that there is a unanimous agreement on how useful these programs are. Military exchange programs on other hand are more ambiguous and the primary purpose of those programs is interoperability of militaries and assistance to the countries that cannot afford a top-notch military education.

⁸¹ (Hayden 1980)

⁸² (Barghoorn 1967) Findings of Barghoorn are not surprising. Yugoslavia until its disintegration was by far most developed communist country in the world. Tito's Self-Management system allowed Yugoslavia better economical development, and because of the fact that citizens of that country were able to freely move between Yugoslavia and rest of the world contributed to the overall development of the country. The democratization of the country actually started much before then in rest of the communist countries, with student protests in 1968 and new constitution in 1974 that was result of demands of citizenry. Although Yugoslavia disintegrated, former Republics such as Slovenia and Croatia today are having higher standard of living then some of the former communist countries that went through peaceful transition to democracy and free market system. Great part of that success should be contributed to better understanding of Western culture by policy makers in those countries unlike in some other Eastern European countries.

The IMET program is generally a small program if we take into consideration other programs that are part of the DoS or DoD budget. However, the IMET program has a complexity of its own which requires screening the needs of countries that are potential candidates and then addressing how those needs are going to be addressed, both by the country that are potential candidates or already is a part of the IMET on one side and the U.S on the other side.

Although DoS generally sets up guidelines for the IMET program, within the DoD, Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) is in charge of implementing the IMET program. DSCA assigns officers from each military branch to the Security Assistance Organization (SAO) within the U.S Embassies. SAO officers then assess the needs of militaries from countries that are stationed and how to best apply the allocated IMET funds in order to address their needs. SAO officers need to develop two-year plans for those militaries and recommend programs most suitable for their needs⁸³. Usually, SAO officers are in the rank of captain.

Unfortunately, implementation of the IMET program does not going the way it always should. According to the General Accounting Office (hereafter: GAO) 1990 report to the Sen. Patrick J. Leahy, a Chairman of Subcommittee on Foreign Operations in the U.S Senate, the IMET program was assessed as successful and that it meets its objectives. However, GAO pointed out that SAO officers sometimes change the two-year plans determined for the countries based on their own assessment, which usually comes from the communication with the military officers in the country where they are located. GAO also pointed out that IMET generally lacks methodology in order how to assess whether the program is successful or not⁸⁴.

Although all three GAO reports that are observed here are pointing out the problems with the IMET program and general oversight, GAO administrators who have worked on these reports

⁸³ (U.S General Accounting Office, 1990), (U.S General Accounting Office, 1992)

⁸⁴ (U.S General Accounting Office, 1990)

agreed that the IMET program is generally a very successful and affordable program that serves the U.S foreign policy objectives⁸⁵.

Even though the program always had very good support among legislators, which could be attributed to the financial size of this program and its attractiveness, members of the U.S Congress requested reports from the GAO only several times on the IMET program because they generally were not interested in this program.⁸⁶ Academia also stayed out of this program. There are several research papers and books that tried to cut this program, however none of these publications gave us an answer on what effect the IMET has on the foreign officers and their perception of the U.S, its values, and its foreign policy goals.

The GAO report from 1990 gave an analysis on the views of the U.S officers involved in the IMET program and on several reports submitted by the Defense Security Administration Agency (DSAA), which is predecessor of the DSCA. In the report GAO argues that based on the views of officers and DSAA reports, the IMET has tremendous positive consequences for the U.S foreign policy goals. This part of the report best describes what kind of advantages the IMET has for the U.S foreign policy objectives:

U.S officials in Austria mentioned two specific benefits received from the IMET program. First, IMET graduates are instrumental in resolving (Cope 1995)operational issues pertaining to U.S forces. For example, the United States receives permission for about 1,500 military overflights a year. Permission for each overflight is obtained on a case-by-case basis from an Austrian officer who is

⁸⁵ (U.S General Accounting Office, 1990), (U.S General Accounting Office, 1992), (U.S Government Accountability Office, 2011)

⁸⁶ (Cope 1995), After 1991 and expansion of IMET program, due to the end of the Cold War was in some way “forgotten” and little attention was paid on it.

an IMET graduate. Second, Austria has provided the United States with free annual mountaineering and alpine helicopter training for about 50 U.S. military personnel⁸⁷.

From the case above, it is clear that the IMET program has benefits that are hard to measure. Hypothetically, the Austrian officer who was giving permissions for the U.S military over flights may have had cut time for acquiring those permissions just because of his understanding of the U.S foreign policy objectives and understanding how the U.S military functions.

Carol Atkinson, on the other hand, argues that foreign military exchange programs, in this case IMET, played an important role in the democratization of the countries from which those officers are coming from. Atkinson pointed out that military student programs are unique in nature because military helps repressive regimes to stay in power. Also when you expose military officers from such countries to democratic values that theoretically could have an impact on their behavior and the way they conduct business⁸⁸.

Atkinson brings another important point to discuss about. The question of which countries are a part of the IMET program is very important for the legislators. Legislators do not like to see anything in the press about the fact that under the IMET program the U.S is schooling military officers from countries not considered democratic or free. Atkinson argues that military officers from such countries should be part of IMET because they are not democratic and free, and that the IMET program is a very good way to project its soft power across the world.

Atkinson states:

⁸⁷ (U.S General Accounting Office, 1990)

⁸⁸ (Atkinson, 2010)

“Over the long term, engaging potential political elites from authoritarian states, rather than excluding them from programs, provides an opportunity to channel liberal ideas into some of the most democratically austere regions of the world⁸⁹.”

Atkinson tried to explain that the IMET program has an impact on the democratic development of the undemocratic countries. In 2011 during the Arab Spring, militaries in Tunisia and Egypt abstained from using force, and both countries are a part of the IMET program⁹⁰. We know that the U.S military had direct contact with the officers in the Egyptian military and the former Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff; Admiral Mike Mullen even emphasized that the U.S military was able to achieve that since many Egyptian officers were in schools in the U.S and that many personal connections were made between the U.S and Egyptian military officers as a consequence of their schooling in the U.S⁹¹.

Admiral Charles R. Larson argues that the IMET is a cornerstone of the Cooperative engagement in the Pacific. As a Commander in Chief of the U.S Pacific Command (USPACOM), Admiral Larson had many opportunities to face with former graduates of the IMET program and saw in practice how they applied their knowledge on a daily basis. Admiral also argues that the IMET program produces much more dividends than what is invested in it. The main reason is that the majority of officers that are graduates of the program reach key governmental or private sector positions later. Since the IMET is designed for officers to attend senior or intermediate military schools in the U.S, they sometimes move on to very important

⁸⁹ (Atkinson 2010)

⁹⁰ Egypt is one of the largest recipients of the U.S. foreign assistance, second to Israel. In 2010 Egypt received \$1.9 million for IMET funding and in 2011 \$1.4 million. Tunisia overall is smaller recipient of the U.S foreign assistance than Egypt or Israel, but larger recipient of IMET funds. In 2010 Tunisia received \$1.95 million and in 2011 \$2.3 million. (Sharp, 2010)

⁹¹ (Mullen 2011)

positions immediately after returning to their native countries. Admiral Larson gives several examples about former graduates and states that at that time (1993) President Ramos in the Philippines was a graduate of the IMET program, and in South Korea about 110 flank officers at that time were graduates of the IMET program. Same as Atkinson, Larson also argues that countries that are having issues with applying democratic principles should not be cut off that easily from the IMET and argues that at that time the U.S Congress should allow Fiji, Malaysia and Indonesia to become part of the IMET again (which eventually happened)⁹². Admiral Larson's argument goes hand in hand with Atkinson's argument that undemocratic countries need to be exposed to democracy in order to progress towards democracy⁹³.

Keeling's argument is in line with Atkinson and Larson. Keeling argues that it is wrong to "punish" the undemocratic or countries that we have problems with by cutting their IMET funding. Keeling cites research that was done by RAND Corporation about effectiveness of IMET:

The irony of such sanctions on IMET, is that they often cut off communication with precisely those countries and those categories of individuals we wish most to influence... It seems arguable that instead of cutting IMET in such instances, Congress might usefully increase it, since most U.S. Ambassadors and CINCs agree that they would prefer to deal on such issues with officials who have been advantaged by education in the United States. The sanctions against IMET isolate the officer corps of countries who clearly

⁹² (Larson, 1993)

⁹³ (Atkinson, 2010)

need enlightened leadership, and thus achieve the opposite of what Congress intends.⁹⁴

Keeling is on point here. During the Cold War we talked to Soviet's extensively, especially after the Cuban Missile Crisis. The Cuban Missile Crisis proved that better communication could lower the risk of the war. Unfortunately, today we see that we do not have any communication with Iranians or Syrians. With Iran, we have not had diplomatic relationships since 1979, and it would be naïve to expect anyone in congress to support reaching out to Iran at this point unless they give up their nuclear program let alone offer Iran to be part of the IMET program, which is borderline science fiction. However, the question is why we never offered Syrians to be part of it? It would be much easier for us now to understand Assad's regime and his intentions when it comes to Syrian civil war if we had some unofficial contacts with Syrian military officers that hypothetically graduated from the U.S. military schools of the IMET program.

GAO report from 2011 found several problems when it came to the IMET sponsored programs. In 2010, 29 nations that were ranked as "Not Free" by the freedom house were part of the IMET program. While DoD claims that they were addressing country specific needs. A report argues that that is not the actual case. GAO uses Turkmenistan as an example and claims that officers from this country actually did not have any assigned programs that would expose them to the human rights theory. However, this is ambiguous and brings to question the methodology that was used to produce this report. One of the programs that were assigned to the officers from Turkmenistan is "exposing military leaders to the U.S. society." GAO researchers did not interview Turkmenistan officers so it is not clear whether those officers benefitted from

⁹⁴ (Keeling 1999)

the program “exposing military officers to the U.S. society”; this program could have had an impact on their understanding of democracy and freedom. We can only assume that this had an impact on their understanding of democracy and freedom and that they will try to implement that in their country, including the values that they have been exposed to in the U.S. when it came to those issues. In the end, the main recommendation by the GAO is that the DoD has to expose the IMET countries ranked by Freedom House as “Not Free” or “Partly Free” to more training when it comes to democratic standards. However, the question is whether emphasis on that training would have more of an impact on their understanding of democracy and freedom as opposed to just to the everyday exposure to the democracy and freedom that ordinary American citizens enjoy every day. It is impossible to know the answer without actually asking foreign officers that question and analyzing their opinion regarding that issue.⁹⁵

Former Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Policy, J.D. Crouch, described how the U.S. sponsored programs, particularly the IMET program, helped former Soviet states in that region to overcome hurdles of transitioning from ruggedly central controlled government in Moscow to a more disperse system of governing in his testimonial hearing before the Subcommittee on Central Asia and South Caucasus of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the U.S. Senate. Emphasis on understanding civil-military relations and the way that the U.S. military functions along with the understanding of the U.S. foreign policy and national security paid off after the September 11 attacks, when the U.S needed help from those countries in order to successfully conduct operations in Afghanistan.⁹⁶

In the same hearing, former U.S. Ambassador to Kazakhstan and Georgia, William H. Courtney, gave the following statement about the U.S. sponsored program in this region:

⁹⁵ (U.S Government Accountability Office 2011)

⁹⁶ (The U.S. Senate 2002)

When the Soviet Union collapsed, militaries in Southern Eurasia had little experience with how a ministry of defense was supposed to function, or deal with presidents, parliaments, and publics. The Soviet military had assigned many soldiers from central Asia to construction units, partly because of limited Russian language skills. Military officers from the region were often pigeonholed in assignments that prevented them from gaining a broad understanding of defense policymaking and management. The first defense minister in Kazakhstan had been specialist in military motor pool operations. U.S. programs help new ministries of defense and security to develop the leadership skills necessary to run their respective ministries. The International Military Education and Training program and the Marshall Center in Germany have provided valuable leadership, management, and democratic law training to mid- and senior-level officers and civilians.

Courtney went on to say that during the 1990's these kinds of programs paved the way for the possibility of cooperation between the U.S. and these countries when the U.S. intervened in Afghanistan in the fall of 2001.⁹⁷

From this hearing we can conclude that the U.S. sponsored programs, especially the IMET, had a pivotal role not only when it comes to building relationships between the U.S. and

⁹⁷ (The U.S. Senate 2002)

the countries that are recipients of the IMET funds but also improving their functionality and on a better transition to the more democratic oriented societies.

Col. Bruce D. Grant on other hand argues that the IMET and Foreign Military Sale (FMS) programs directly contribute to the operational capabilities of not only militaries that are part of the IMET or the FMS program but also of the U.S military. This is an example that the successful cooperation between the U.S and Saudi Arabia's military forces during the Desert Storm was a consequence of the FMS and the IMET program⁹⁸.

Advantages of the IMET program are probably best described in Fort Sam Houston News Leader, a base newspaper. In 2005 News Leader brought several testimonies from both foreign and the U.S. military personnel about their experiences. Many students at Fort San Houston are trained at the Army Medical Department Center and School (AMEDDC&S). The attendees are in rank of private to general officers. The publication generally explains how foreign officers are funded, either through Foreign Military Sale (FMS) where the country pays their education or through the IMET program⁹⁹. The Captain Kate Elpchik from Australia best describes how the U.S. military can benefit from those programs:

My course (health services materiel officers' course) will give me skills to work in a coalition force. The purpose of my course is to experience the U.S. Army's medical logistic system and to give me objectivity as a student and when making decisions back home or out in the field. Right now, it is good time to be here because we have coalition forces in Iraq¹⁰⁰.

⁹⁸ (Grant, 1998)

⁹⁹ (May 2005)

¹⁰⁰ (May 2005)

Sgt. 1st Class Sve Jagers from Royal Netherlands Air Force had a similar observation:

People over here have a lot of experience. One of my instructors is the instructor of the year. When we will deploy and will work with Americans, we will know what you do, so all preventive medicine experts will be able to work together¹⁰¹.

This shows those international officers are fond of these programs, allowing them to come to the U.S. and get training. From these two observations we can see that officers understand that there is high probability to get deployed together with American forces abroad and the more interaction before deployment the more it will be easier to work together once they are at the battle field or some other dangerous environment.

The U.S. military personnel share a similar opinion. Private Casey Cummings from Kansas National Guard said, “It is good to interact with military personnel of other countries. I am in class with a St. Lucian soldier. I am learning from him and becoming familiar with how things are done in St. Lucia should there be a tropical storm, for example, and we need to help.” Pfc. Dawn Rossi of 28th Infantry, Johnstown, PA said “What I like is you get to interact with the international students while you are training instead of being in the real-world action and not understand each others’ way of doing things. We are learning their ways in their military.”¹⁰²

This kind of cooperation is also emphasized by Col. Rainer Waelde of Deutsche Bundeswehr and Lt. Col (ret) Robert D. Schwartzman of the U.S. Army. Waelde and Schwartzman described a hypothesized operation “Pluto” where Hungarian, Norwegian, Afghan and the U.S security forces are involved. The complexity of operation alone involving several

¹⁰¹ (May 2005)

¹⁰² (May 2005)

nations is creating an extremely difficult environment to operate. Waelde and Schwartzman claim that today's soldier needs to be a soldier, policeman, diplomat and administrator; that only a multi-cultural education can produce soldiers with such a broad knowledge and understanding of different cultures¹⁰³.

It is more obvious that in today's world joint education and training between several militaries is a key to success. As Waelde and Schwartz point out, nowadays it is almost impossible that one military fights a war on its own without some kind of partnership with another military¹⁰⁴. The world became more complex; therefore, conflicts and understanding between militaries on the ground should be one of the top priorities for a country.

Taylor and Ibarra provided real examples of how the IMET program is beneficial to the U.S. As mentioned before in previous chapters, the U.S. invasion in Iraq was not supported by great powers, except Great Britain. However, several dozens of countries that rely on U.S. assistance did support the U.S. led invasion in some ways; some of those countries like El Salvador sent their military to assist the U.S military forces. Taylor and Ibarra argue that because of the IMET program Salvadoran Armed Forces (ESAF) were able to cooperate successfully with the U.S. military in some very complicated tasks while being in Iraq. It is very important to recognize how much El Salvador actually sacrificed to help the U.S. in Iraq. The ESAF consists of around 12,500 soldiers, however, since August 2003 until 2005, El Salvador sent 1,800 soldiers to Iraq, which is approximately 15% of El Salvadorian military. The staggering number is due to the IMET program. Since 1995 until 2005, 1,726 El Salvadorian military personnel went through the U.S schools¹⁰⁵.

¹⁰³ (Waelde and Schwartzman 2011)

¹⁰⁴ (Waelde and Schwartzman 2011)

¹⁰⁵ (Taylor and Ibarra 2005)

From this example we can see that regardless of miscalculations in the U.S policy making during planning of Iraqi invasion, especially when it comes to diplomatic planning, a lot of countries were willing to help the U.S. and even send large portions of their militaries to the war zones. Joint interoperability between the U.S forces and El Salvadorian forces would definitely be more difficult if El Salvador had not been part of the IMET program and if its officers did not have understanding of how the U.S military functions.

However, the IMET program has much more potential. Although it is designed to help our allies that are unable to pay for the education of its officers here in the States, the IMET program has an even more important unforeseen long-term role when it was conceived in 1976; that is the understanding of American culture and goals by foreign officers.

The IMET program is very small, and it is only a fraction of our budget. Reynolds, however, claims that the IMET is actually a very large program, regardless of money that is available per year. Reynolds claims that the IMET program was not even two-tenths of the national budget over the past years, and between 1950 and 1989 it was only .0169%. Still, through this program went through 600,000 foreign officers¹⁰⁶.

In 1990, the Expanded IMET was created as a response to the developments in the world. The initiative came from Foreign Operations Subcommittee of Senate Appropriations Committee (SAC), as Elisa Moskowitz said: “to pursue higher calling.” The E-IMET had the immediate support of Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT). Similarly to the IMET, the E-IMET was not a controversial program, and policy makers and Congressmen saw this as an opportunity to address issues that came with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of bipolarity. The E-IMET is designed as an outreach to the civilian sector in countries that are participating in the IMET

¹⁰⁶ (Reynolds 2003) Education of foreign officers existed in one or another form since 1949.

program. Those countries can send civilians that are employed in the departments other than the Defense Department¹⁰⁷. This is a very interesting concept since civilians from other countries are actually getting U.S. military education. Civilians in those countries, like in any other, do not have a full understanding of military culture (regardless of compulsory military service in many countries). Hence civilians, sometimes, are the most vocal critique of military culture. Considering the outreach that the U.S. military has in the world, it is safe to say that offering civilian's insight to the U.S. military culture and customs is beneficial to the U.S. and to the civilians from the other countries.

Reynolds research on the E-IMET is very valuable for understanding the expanded program and the overall concept of the IMET program. Reynolds in his dissertation work titled: "*E-IMET: Is It Accomplishing Its Human Rights Focus in Latin America?*" was focused on only three countries: El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua. Although Reynolds's dissertation and survey he conducted were not focused on the understanding of American foreign policy or culture, we can draw some conclusions from it. His survey proved, in this case, foreign civil servants have favorable opinions about the program, with 80% of them believing that the program enhanced their leadership skills and 77% saying that program was helpful in understanding the U.S. system. More importantly, for my work, is the 75% of respondents in

¹⁰⁷ (Moskowitz 2008) Furthermore, Moskowitz explains main actors in E-IMET program and who was initially responsible for idea to start such program. Moskowitz argues that Congress was main catalyst for this program and that it is nothing unusual for Appropriations Committee to start new program (Chairman of SAC at that time was Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT)). As is the case with IMET, DoS had oversight of the program, which was very important in creation of E-IMET since staffer that initiated E-IMET was actually former DoS Foreign Service Officer. DoD was not excited about E-IMET in the beginning, however, after realizing that although E-IMET put some constraints on IMET (it was coming from same budget), DoD also realized that this was an opportunity to engage with other countries and build different set of relationships. Most interesting is that Military Departments were excited about E-IMET, especially Navy department, because IMET and now E-IMET offered justification to keep some bases open that otherwise would be closed due to the end of the Cold War and cuts in the budget that followed. Non-Governmental Sector was in the beginning sceptical of the E-IMET, after experience with School of Americas, however later fully embraced program.

Reynolds' survey who said that they are currently having an impact on policy with 61% of them in areas of human rights, general military and military justice, and 63% of them think that they will impact policy in the future. Reynolds came up with conclusion that although he did not have large number of respondents, it is impossible to ignore positive trends that are present in the E-IMET program¹⁰⁸.

Cope in his research about the IMET program brings several very interesting observations. Cope cites Congressional testimony of Lt. General William E. Odom and his recount of what he calls “subjective ties:”

Another kind of desirable influence through IMET is demonstrated by US-Pakistani relations immediately after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. General Zia, the President of Pakistan, was urged by his foreign minister to scorn US offers of assistance in favor of coming to term with Moscow. Because Zia had attended two US Army schools, and because he had extremely close friends with ordinary American citizens during those two years, he was subjectively inclined toward the U.S. offer. As a party to the meeting with him in Pakistan when he made the decision to accept the U.S. offer, tying his policy to US strategy for Afghanistan, I gained the impression that his IMET experience was a critical factor in his decision¹⁰⁹.

¹⁰⁸ (Reynolds 2003)

¹⁰⁹ (Cope 1995)

It is hard to say from Lt. General Odom's testimony that the IMET program was solely responsible for Zia's favorability of the U.S. and its policies compared to those that have been offered by Moscow¹¹⁰.

Kratsas also gives an insight, from his own personal experience, as to how effective the IMET program is when it comes to changing foreign officers opinion about the U.S.:

On more than one occasion, the officer selected by the Hellenic Defense Ministry to travel to the U.S. had serious misperceptions about the United States, its people, and our political and military system. It was particularly rewarding to all of us at the Military Assistance Group when those same officers returned with not only a superb military educational experience, but with a new found respect and admiration for what America stands for. These officers, once they returned to Greece, were eager to share both the educational lessons learned, as well as their social and cultural experience. The IMET program produces professionally informed, and operationally skilled officers, but in addition, creates foreign officers who serve, unwittingly as they may, as American Ambassadors.¹¹¹

Recollection by Lt. Col Kratsas illustrates very well how important the IMET program is for the U.S. as a country. Although the IMET program is created to help our allies to improve

¹¹⁰ (Crille n.d.) George Crille in his book "Charlie's Willson War" offers maybe best explanation about the U.S. involvement in the Soviet led invasion of Afghanistan. From Crill's writings we can see that pivotal role in making President of Pakistan, General Zia, the U.S. ally was played by the wealthy woman from Texas, Joanne Harring and the URepresentative from Texas in Congress, Charlie Willson (D-TX). However, we can assume that the fact that General Zia spent several years in the U.S played positive role in forming opinion about the U.S.

¹¹¹ (Kratsas 1997)

their capabilities, the IMET program had a much broader effect, and it is impossible to quantify that effect.

Cope's and Kratsas research is very important because it sheds the light on such recollections like that of Lt. General Odom's personal recollection of Lt. Col Kratsas. Also, Cope argues that based on surveys they conducted among foreign officers, it is clear that they have a much better understanding of an American culture than before. Research found that in many instances, foreign officers helped behind the scenes when certain issues came up between the U.S. and their respective countries. One good example that Cope mentions in his research is Zaire in September 1991 when an officer, a graduate of the IMET program, made a difference in evacuating 450 Americans from a closed national airport under his control. In another instance, the U.S. military officers kept at least two unauthorized channels of communications in 1982 with Argentinian officers during Malvinas/Falkland war. One Chilean officer said that the relationship between the Chilean Air Force and the Peruvian Air Force had never been better because that Chilean officer went to an undergraduate pilot training school in the U.S with the Peruvian officer, and both officers were raised in ranks to very important position in his air force. The Chilean officer said, "There is nothing that we cannot work out between us¹¹²."

These "subjective ties" as Lt. General Odom said, are one of the crucial benefits of this program for the U.S. As many researchers pointed out, including Cope, the IMET program is cost-effective, and we cannot really measure true benefits of the program. If we take into consideration the situation in Zaire in 1991, where 450 American citizens were evacuated under a Zaire military officer control of the airport, who is also an IMET graduate, how we can measure that? An officer saved 450 American lives, and there is no price tag on human life. At

¹¹² (Cope 1995)

the same time, we tend to spend extremely high amounts of money on military programs that we do not have a full understanding of when it comes to benefits and advantages. For example, if we take a F-22 program and the cost of one plane, estimated at \$400 million, which is still not capable to conduct a fighting mission, then we have to ask ourselves: are we being cheap when it comes to the IMET program?¹¹³

The impact that the IMET program has on foreign militaries is maybe even more profound. In the Portuguese military, former IMET students held top positions in the Naval Academy, Air Force Academy, the Institute of Advanced Military Studies, and the NATO Defense College. In Lebanon their situation was similar for their former IMET students.¹¹⁴

That does not come as a surprise, because countries usually send their top students. The best description is how seriously countries take the IMET program, which best illustrates this example, a recollection by Lt. Col James J. Kratsas:

While working at the Joint US Military Assistance Group, Greece, I was heavily involved in assisting Hellenic Military Officers prepare for their IMET funded trip to the U.S. Generally speaking, only the most capable personnel with recognized potential are selected to participate in the IMET program. It is the students' own government which makes the selection. However, the U.S. Mission or Military Assistance Group to that country will often make suggestions and recommendations based on gathered information and general knowledge of certain officers and civilians.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ (Hennigan 2012)

¹¹⁴ (Cope 1995)

¹¹⁵ (Kratsas 1997)

The IMET program went through “reinvention” after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. The GAO report in 2011 illustrates that. According to the report since 2000, the budget for the IMET program increased from \$62 million to \$108 million or by 70%, and the biggest beneficiaries of that increase are European and Eurasia countries, by 30%. On the contrary, the same report argues that although there was an increase in funding, the number of foreign students that attended the U.S military schools dropped from 8,200 to 7,100 or by 14%. What the GAO report found out was extremely worrisome which is that administrative costs for the IMET program skyrocketed from \$765,000 to \$ 5 million per year or approximately \$15,000 per student in year 2010. DoD defended this increase in costs due to different calculations of costs. According to the DoD, the official difference is that after 2004 the cost of education for foreign students was adjusted to the cost of education for U.S students. Also, lack of cheap on-base housing contributed to the increase of costs along with cost of instructions went up. By the same DoD official, many U.S. military instructors were on assignments in Iraq and Afghanistan, which prompted the DoD to hire civilian and contract instructors, raising the costs substantially.¹¹⁶

One of the reasons why the IMET program had a huge increase in funding was due to the Secretary of State, which at that time was Collin Powel. The retired General had tremendous insight in this program during his tenure in the U.S. military, and he was particularly fond of this program. As Secretary of State he made sure this program received proper attention.¹¹⁷

What is worrisome in this report is the actual breakdown of the costs of the IMET program. The most amount of money was going to the Professional Military Education (PME), usually in areas such as finance, intelligence, and logistics. The purpose of this training was to

¹¹⁶ (United States Government Accountability Office 2011)

¹¹⁷ (Mehlhorn 2007)

prepare future officers for leadership roles. According to DoD, PME was usually longer and costlier, despite that fact that it covers only one quarter of the students. In 2010 only \$4,161,477 was spent on postgraduate/degree programs.¹¹⁸ The reason why PME is emphasized is because future leaders are usually coming from this pool of students. The students who are attending postgraduate/degree training; usually have a higher rank and are chosen from very small pool of officers. When it comes to educating foreign officers on the U.S foreign policy and national security, and/or to expose future leaders to the advantages of democratic values and freedom, the amount of money that is currently spent on the postgraduate/degree programs should definitely be increased.

As this researcher said before, it is very hard to quantify the impact that the IMET program has on relationships between the U.S. and other countries. However, Reveron provides a very good observation when it comes to the impact of the IMET program, claiming that it is difficult to assess how the IMET program exactly benefits the U.S. but provides this observation:

One major impact of IMET programs is building personal and professional relationships with those who rise to senior levels within their countries. As a testament to the selection quality for the Naval Staff College in Newport, for example, 236 participants have attended flag rank, 102 served as chiefs of service, five became cabinet ministers, and one became nation's president.¹¹⁹

The whole idea of the IMET program is to improve capabilities of friendly countries and exchange ideas between them and us. The IMET program, throughout its history, went further than that, establishing itself as one of the most important programs that DoS and DoD are

¹¹⁸ (United States Government Accountability Office 2011)

¹¹⁹ (Reveron 2007)

running today. The fact that program costs just above one hundred million dollars (it is cheaper than one F22 fighter jet) makes this program even more valuable and attractive.

3.1 Contribution of Dissertation to the Scholarly Literature

As we saw in this chapter, the IMET program was the subject of academic research to a certain extent. However, as we saw, foreign officers were the subject of just a small number of researches, done by the newspapers or governmental agencies, such as GAO. We saw that several authors researched this topic, however, we could not see in-depth analysis of foreign officers experiences in the U.S. and their understanding of American way of life, the U.S. foreign policy and national security, their experience and opinion of the IMET program, and their suggestions how to improve it.

This study will try to answer these questions. This researcher believe that it is important to understand what kinds of experiences foreign officers had in the U.S., and how their stay in the states affected their beliefs, perceptions and opinions.

This researcher believe that this study will be a major contributor to the scholarly literature, and that general audience will have a better understanding of the IMET program and effects it has on the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives.

IV.

Research Design & Methodology

4.1. Introduction

This chapter outlines the research methodology beginning with an overview of the research question and hypothesis (3.2). In section 3.3, the researcher discusses the research design; section 3.3.1 discusses the unit of analysis of this study. Section 3.3.2 discusses the preferred method of collection of data and procedures; section 3.3.3 discusses the sampling frame. Section 3.3.4 discusses the interview design used in this study and section 3.3.5 discusses the data analysis procedure that was used in this study.

4.2 Research Design

This study is trying to identify what kinds of effects the IMET program has on the foreign military officers and their families when it comes to the understanding of American values, democracy, and the U.S. national security and foreign policy objectives. The study will also attempt to determine whether the IMET program may have had any influence on those officers regarding their personal and professional lives. In the end, based on the responses from the officers, this study is explaining the overall effectiveness of the IMET program and how the program could be improved.

As we read in Chapter II, the definition of Smart Power is still in the making and it is relatively new to the American people. The population is just starting to get to know the term Soft Power, which is understandable, considering the general knowledge of the American

population concerning foreign or national security policy issues¹²⁰. However, in the last decade, the average American has been awakened by the September 11 attacks; then by two long wars, one of which was in Afghanistan; the other in Iraq. The question that has been asked since then is: Can we do better?

This study suggests that the IMET program plays a crucial role when it comes to the projection of the U.S. foreign policy and national security goals through the exposure of foreign military officers to the U.S. military institutions, culture, and the general American way of life.

Simultaneously, foreign officers as well as the U.S. officers, have a chance to interact with each other and build both professional and personal future relationships, which could be beneficial when it comes to the projection of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives.

We saw from Chapter III how time spent in the U.S. affects foreign officers, their opinion about the U.S., and that many of them establish life time relationships with the American military personnel¹²¹.

4.2.1 Hypothesis

Based on the literature review and the objectives of the study, two hypotheses were developed in order to test the effects of the IMET program on the understanding of American values, democracy, and the U.S. national security and foreign policy.

H₀: *The IMET program does not have significant influence on foreign military officers in respect to their understanding of American values, democracy, and the U.S. national security and foreign policy objectives.*

¹²⁰ (Iyengar and Morin 2006)

¹²¹ (Cope 1995), (U.S General Accounting Office 1990), (May 2005)

H1: *The IMET program positively affects foreign military officers and their families in respect to understanding American values, democracy, and the U.S. national security and foreign policy objectives.*

4.3 Methodology

The proposed study is conducted by applying a qualitative research design constituted from interviews. The researcher's goal is to determine what kinds of experiences officers had while attending their schools by applying an interview technique¹²². Also, the researcher is planning to get as much data as possible regarding the living experiences of former IMET grantees in the U.S. In particular, the data regarding IMET participants' opinions about the U.S. domestic politics, foreign and national security policies, and the IMET program as a whole will be investigated.

The researcher intends to conduct a *sample survey and scheduled interviews* in order to gain more knowledge from foreign officers, that otherwise would be missed by applying *elite interviews*. In social research we often need to talk on a "one-on-one" basis with the subject in order to clearly understand how those individuals think and act, or how they understand and interpret certain phenomenon¹²³.

The reason why the researcher applied *sample survey interviews* and *scheduled interviews* is because although each officer that was interviewed came from a different

¹²² (Babbie 2007), (Seidman 1988) Seidman explains why we are conducting interviews in studies like this. By conducting interviews we can better understand experiences of other people and how they understand those experiences. It is also important to acknowledge that we can never understand other people perfectly and that there are always be certain ambiguities.

¹²³ (Manheim, Willnat, Brians, & Rich, 2006)

background, they all were part of the same program and went to either the same school or similar schools that form parts of the Air University in Maxwell AFB in Montgomery, AL.

As mentioned, the majority of the countries participating in the IMET program come from financially deprived and undemocratic countries, even though many IMET participating countries are democratic, free and financially stable (for example Czech Republic)¹²⁴.

Each of the IMET participating officers returns to military related duties when they return to their countries. Some continued to do the same work similar to their position or rank, however, many others are reassigned to other duties and are responsible for more complicated tasks.

By applying *Sample Survey Interviews and Scheduled Interviews*, this researcher managed to collect enough data about the IMET experience. Nearly all the officers faced similar issues when they arrived to the U.S. and when they returned back home¹²⁵.

4.3.1 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis in this study is foreign military officers who have attended Air University at Maxwell AFB, Al. Usually; the unit of analysis is individuals in social research. In this case this researcher is trying to determine the effectiveness of a program and its influence on policymaking through experiences of foreign officers who have been grantees of this program¹²⁶. The data was collected from foreign officers who were part of this program. King, Keohane and

¹²⁴ (The U.S State Department, 2010) that being said, Czech Republic, Slovenia and Croatia are going through transitional phase from Communist (one party system) to open society and multi-party system. However, militaries in those countries, although part of NATO, still resemble patriarchal culture.

¹²⁵ (Manheim, Willnat, Brians, & Rich, 2006)

¹²⁶ (Babbie 2007), (Schutt 2006)

Verba, the units of analysis, are arguing that when we are researching certain organizations or programs the unit of analysis is the individual.

However, at the data collection stage, it is up to the researcher to choose the type and amount of variables that are going to be used since there are no clear rules¹²⁷. For this research the foreign officers who are interviewed for the purpose of this study are the “best” experts when it comes to the IMET program. Their experiences can be used to determine effectiveness of the program.

4.3.2 Data Collection Procedure

The preferred data collection technique was to conduct interviews primarily via video link, such as Skype, Facebook (supported by Skype program), and/or a Gmail G-Chat video link. Today’s technology allowed this researcher to conduct interviews with foreign officers who now reside outside North America. Interviews were conducted using the laptop computer Apple MacBook Pro, and all interviews were recorded on audio recorder SONY ICD-PX 312.

Previous studies of the IMET program were rarely based on interviews with former students who have been part of this program. This researcher had a chance to examine a study that was conducted by the U.S. General Accounting Office in 1990. Even that study produced only a few recollections of former students¹²⁸. There were several other articles about the IMET program with some testimonies of foreign and U.S. officers that went to schools together¹²⁹. Unlike prior studies, this research specifically targets foreign military officers who were part of the IMET program.

¹²⁷ (King, Keohane and Verba 1994)

¹²⁸ (U.S General Accounting Office 1990) GAO also used interview technique in order to have better understanding of foreign officers opinions about the IMET program.

¹²⁹ (May 2005)

The proximity of the Air University and Maxwell AFB in relation to the Auburn University Montgomery enabled this researcher to remain in contact and socialize regularly with foreign officers dating back to 2006. In 2010 this researcher regularly attended “Strategic Leadership” class at Air War College in Maxwell AFB; in 2011 regularly attended “National Security and Decision Making” class. In all instances, this researcher met foreign officers participating in classes at the Air War College; some of those officers are part of this study. At the same time, the researcher got a sense for the military educational programs and of the daily lives for the mid-career and senior officers.

When the officers finished school and left the U.S., this researcher stayed in touch with them via e-mail but primarily via Facebook¹³⁰. On Facebook, there are several groups that were started and organized by foreign officers in hopes that they might be able to stay in touch with each other. The U.S. military and civilian personnel who went to school with those foreign officers are also a part of these groups, which sometimes contain more than 200 officers.

However, this researcher was not able to obtain agreement from some foreign officers who were not personal friends with the researcher. Therefore, interviews were done only with those officers where the researcher built trust and a rapport, which allowed for deeper questioning.

Considering the fact that it would be impossible to conduct interviews without the Internet or programs capable to carry a video link, poses several drawbacks using this method.

The first drawback is that several times the researcher had to stop the interview and reset the connection due to problems with the video link. Several interviews started as video

¹³⁰ (Manheim, et al. 2006), (Babbie 2007) authors discuss in detail advantages of internet as well as research that is conducted using internet. However, there is no practical discussion about interviews that are conducted via video link or drawbacks of doing interviews in such a way.

interviews, however, during the interview the researcher had to interrupt the interview and establish only an audio link with the interviewee. On several occasions even the audio link would be of poor quality, and the researcher had to go back and repeat the question while the interviewee had to repeat answer.

The second drawback of this method is the time difference between the U.S. and Europe. All interviewees now reside in continental Europe. The time difference between Alabama and continental Europe is seven hours. Several interviews were conducted in the afternoon hours on Alabama time; late night hours on continental Europe time. It was visible that the interviewees were tired and exhausted. However, this researcher was convinced that these drawbacks did not influence or compromise quality of the data collected.

4.3.3 Sampling Frame

The interviews were conducted with officers that attended Squadron officers School (SOS), Air Command and Staff College (ACSC), and Air War College (AWC). All these schools are part of the Air University that is located in Maxwell Air Force base in Montgomery, Alabama. Officers that attended SOS spent approximately three months in school, living in Maxwell AFB. Officers that attended ACSC and AWC spent approximately a year attending school, living usually off the base premises.

Each year there are hundreds or more foreign officers attending the Air University and schools that constitute the Air University. This researcher managed to conduct 14 interviews for this study out of 43 invitations to participate. The primary reason for not being able to reach more foreign officers is that many of them did not respond to the request since the researcher did not know them personally. All officers who replied to be part of this study also knew this

researcher personally. Another possible reason why some officers did not reply is due to their active status in the military personnel in their countries, which posed a threat to their current job if they had consented to be part of the study.

All officers are males. The researcher is aware that for the purpose of the study it would be beneficial if there were a certain percentage of female participants, since all of these subjects are coming from countries where democracy is still young, and military culture is much more patriarchal than in the U.S. or Western European countries, this does not come as a surprise. Hopefully in the future, the researcher will be able to recruit female subjects to be a part of a continuous study on the IMET program.

4.3.4 Interview Design

Interview design was split in three following topics:

1. Experience in the United States
2. The U.S. Foreign Policy and National Security
3. International Military Education and Training Program

Each topic had several questions, and during the interview process many interviewees would provide several answers while they were presented with one question. This researcher did not want to be repetitive; therefore some questions during several interviews were skipped in order not to alienate the interviewee.

Every respondent was interviewed via video link (Skype program). Only one subject requested to answer the questions on paper and submitted those answers via e-mail. The interviews were not recorded on video, but only on an audio device.

During the interview process, the interviewees gave consent to the researcher, allowing the researcher to take notes in a notebook. Notes were taken because it would be much easier to access the most important parts of the recorded interview at a later date (audio and notes were linked). This technique proved very useful later in data analysis process.

Interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes; some as short as 20 minutes; some as long as 45 minutes. The interviewees sometimes had a difficult time expressing their thoughts due to the English language being a second language for them. Despite this language barrier, the researcher concluded that this was not a significant hindrance to the data collection.

In the end of an interview, the respondents were then asked to address important issues or topics not covered during the interview. After conducting the interviews, the researcher started to journal the interviews as soon as possible.

4.3.5 Data Analysis

Researcher used *Content Analysis* as a preferred way of analyzing collected data. Babbie argues that content analysis is a preferred way of understanding the majority of social interactions, especially when it comes to the recorded communication, such as interviews¹³¹.

Seidman argues interpreting massive data collection gathered during interviews is a preferred approach along with journaling (which the researcher did). Next, a researcher should identify the most common words and phrases that respondents use.¹³² Seidman's argument agrees with Babbie's argument as to why one might use content analysis, however, Babbie argues further by identifying the most common phrases and words that are used by respondents during the data collection period. This way a researcher is able to easily identify the most

¹³¹ (Babbie 2007)

¹³² (Seidman 1988)

common traits and interpret data. Babbie also gave a very good argument as to why a qualitative approach is more preferred than a quantitative approach when researching human behaviors:

For qualitative research, data collection usually involves extended observation of (or even participation in) the phenomenon being studied. Rather than standing apart from the people or events to be studied, the researcher often is intimately engaged with them. Only in this way can researchers probe for the information they need to understand, for example, why people act the way they do, how complex processes unfold, or what impact some specific event had on those who experienced it¹³³.

Schutt also argues that when it comes to qualitative research, content analysis is a preferred way of analyzing large amount of data. Schutt argues that based on the amount of data, a researcher cannot just use only common words among respondents, but also use common themes¹³⁴.

Both Babbie and Schutt argue that there are several drawbacks when it comes to analyzing qualitative data. Qualitative data is much more complex to interpret than quantitative data. The computer programs can easily analyze quantitative data as opposed to the qualitative data. Despite some improved programs for analyzing qualitative data have recently been developed, it is still very hard to analyze qualitative data using computer programs and modules. This is why both authorities argue that interpreting qualitative data is still a preferred method to analyze qualitative data regardless of the collected data being imperfect, such as themes being

¹³³ (Babbie 2007)

¹³⁴ (Schutt 2006)

missed or going unnoticed by others reading the particular studies¹³⁵. All data is transcribed as it is, meaning that it is grammatically incorrect. This researcher did not want to alter transcribed data due to its originality.

4.3.6 Institutional Research Board

The Institutional Research Board (IRB) approval was obtained from Auburn University Montgomery. All data was collected after approval was issued. The researcher, prior to submitting request for the approval conducted, successfully finished the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) certification in regards to human subject research.

4.4 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the researcher discussed the research design and method. The researcher outlined the preferred way of collecting data and some issues the researcher faced during the process of collecting the data. Also, the researcher outlined the way that data will be analyzed and the kind of technique that will be used in order to interpret large amount of data. The researcher did not mention a way to improve the study in this chapter but that it will be mentioned in the closing chapter or conclusion.

¹³⁵ (Babbie 2007), (Schutt 2006)

V.

Data Analysis

5.1 Themes

Based on the data collected using interview technique, there are 11 themes that the researcher determined. Themes came from three topics that were discussed in the interviews¹³⁶:

1. Experience in the United States of America
2. The U.S. Foreign Policy and National Security Policy
3. The International Military Education and Training Program

The themes that surfaced out as a result of conducted interviews are:

1. Time spent in the United States was positive.
2. Time spent in the United States was positive for family members.
3. State of democracy in the United States.
4. The United States is the world policeman and that is good.
5. The IMET has a great impact on educational development of officers.
6. Educational level was challenging due to the fact that the English language is second language.
7. Officers were able to apply knowledge that they gained in the U.S. in their respective countries.
8. The IMET program is a great way to establish or improve relations between the U.S. military and foreign militaries.
9. Good Will Ambassadors are of great help.

¹³⁶ List of all questions that are part of those three parts can be found in Appendix #

10. Retained personal and professional relationships between the U.S. and other foreign officers.
11. How to improve the IMET program.
- 12.

5.1.1 Time Spent in the United States was positive

As expected all respondents had a very positive opinion about the time they spent in the U.S. Based on the results regarding the observations of the respondents, the researcher concluded that not only were they positive about their experiences, but they also showed very positive emotions while they were talking about time spent in the States. One of the interviewees said that “time spent in the U.S. was essential.” Another respondent said that for him, time spent in the States was positive but unexpected. He did not expect to go to the U.S. at all. He got notice about month and a half prior to departure from his country to the U.S. One of the interviewees said that his experience was also positive in the States and said, “This was great opportunity to meet people from different countries and the U.S. with different personal and professional view.”

One of the interviewees, after reflecting on his positive experience in the U.S., explained how he broadened his views on the U.S., and that he was especially touched by the care of his Good Will Ambassador (GWA). He stated that, “I received help anytime I wanted” and that he plans to invite his GWA to his country to visit him and his family who were not in the U.S. with the interviewee due to the short stay of 8 weeks that the interviewee had in the U.S.

Another interviewee immediately responded positive regarding his experience in the U.S. Interviewee then went on to praise the organizations of IOS and SOS. The interviewee said, “All personnel were good, and they even organized trips for us to Washington D.C, we toured institutions of State of Alabama in Montgomery.” He also said that he was expecting a positive

experience because he finished one year of high school in Tennessee and familiarized himself with the customs and culture of the U.S. from that previous visit. However, he mentioned, “SOS definitely changed my perspective about some issues to the positive.”

Another interviewee came to ASCS and he was with a family in Montgomery, AL for a year. He said that his experience was “pretty positive” and that he cannot find any issues to “complain about.”

One of the interviewees, who is currently attending ACSC, immediately answered that his experience in the U.S. was positive. The interviewee stated in his opening remarks that what he found most positive was the “American people” and their “hospitality.”

Another interviewee said that his experience was very positive and that the reason for such an opinion is that his experience in the U.S. was what he was expecting. Also, the fact that he was able to spend a year in the U.S. had a major impact on his opinion. This interviewee went on to say:

My experience about American people is positive. I had a little bit different opinion about Americans, maybe influenced by movies, I do not know. However, now I understand that American people actually are not quite different from our people. They are actually very similar in way of doing things. They have their American way of doing things, but they are not very different from us.¹³⁷

A different interviewee said this about his experience in the U.S., “My experience is pretty positive about my stay in the United States. I changed my opinion about the United States and Americans as people. Me and my family were accepted by the Americans like we are part of

¹³⁷ As mentioned in Chapter IV, 4.3.5, Data Analysis section, all data is transcribed as it is, meaning that direct quotes are grammatically incorrect.

them, like we are Americans.” He also said, “For me it was strange. I thought that I will meet some people who are pretty strange, like people who want to be alone, that they are not so friendly, and that they do not want to spend some time with other guys. I did not expect from Americans that they would spend so much time with us. For me it was really nice time to be with them.”

5.1.2 Time spent in the United States was positive for family members

All interviewees went into more detail regarding the experience that their families had. Several respondents were not with the family members in the states; they truly regretted that. One interviewee had an opportunity to spend Christmas and New Year with their family in Montgomery. Another interviewee had a chance to spend three months with his daughter here; she attended Church classes and several English courses. That interviewee also pointed out, “I had personal issues to the fact that my family was not with me, but that does not have anything to do with the IMET program or the U.S. government.”

On other hand, interviewees that had their families with them in the states had particularly positive remarks to share. One of the interviewees said, “That this was one time life opportunity to come to the U.S. and get education.” He stated that this was definitely a good experience since he and his family had a chance to “meet another culture.” The same interviewee went on to say, “I can definitely say that once I came back to my country, I became different person and overall experience is excellent and thanks to the U.S government for providing us an opportunity to spend one wonderful year in America.” Interviewee then said, “As a consequence of being in the U.S. for a year, both of my sons are playing American football in my country. They are one of the organizers of first club of American football in my country.” This

interviewee was especially proud of the fact that his twin sons finished high school in the U.S. He emphasized that one of his sons even had an opportunity to work for a certain program that was sponsored by the U.S. Marines Corps. This interviewee was not able to identify what kind of the program that was. His son received an offer to stay in the U.S. and finish college under the ROTC program; however, he decided he would go back. He claimed “Experience in the U.S. had tremendous impact on the life of my two sons.”

Another interviewee said that his family had “definitely happy and positive experience in America.” One of the interviewees said that his family got a chance to live abroad for a full year, and his two children were able to finish one year of school in another country.

One of the interviewees did not say much on describing his experience, but he went into much more details about his family’s experience. He was in Montgomery for a year attending ACSC and his wife and two children came along with him; daughter and a son. He said that “After all they had pretty good experience, and my daughter is still writing to some boy from Asia, or I think Latina America, one of those.” The interviewee was happy when he was explaining his family’s experience in the U.S.

Another interviewee stated that the experience for his family was very positive (interviewee is still attending ACSC) and that his wife immediately got involved in “social activities.”

5.1.3 State of democracy in the United States

This theme was particularly interesting and more elaborative than the previous two. Interviewees responded in a positive way and also had some critique. One interviewee immediately said that the U.S. political system is transparent and that his country has a lot to

learn from the States. He said that he knew a lot about the American political system and the U.S. democratic values prior to arrival. However, he also emphasized that time spent in the States opened up his eyes. He then went to say; “freedom of speech; but transparency is what it is important and care for small people.” He again emphasized transparency, and the researcher noticed that he was responding in a way as if he was arguing with someone and trying to prove a point. Another interviewee said the he is, “impressed with decentralization, big number of local governments, open legal system and transparency.” This interviewee also mentioned transparency, which this researcher finds interesting. However, this interviewee also had critique. He said that, what he found negative is the healthcare system. He argued that the U.S., “maybe needs better medical care, medicals services and maybe more care for poor people.” Another interviewee pointed out the same problem. He said that he found more or less what he expected from the U.S. “a developed and progressive country.” However, he was particularly emotional when he was talking about the state of the healthcare system in the U.S. He said that when he came to the U.S., “I was expecting everything to be developed, and medical care is very disappointing to me.” One other interviewee had a similar critique of the American healthcare system saying, “generally, it is bad.” For this researcher, negative opinions about the U.S. healthcare system did not come as a surprise considering that all interviewees are coming from the countries that have a universal healthcare system. However, it is interesting that those negative remarks are from officers that are coming from rather undeveloped countries compared to the U.S.; countries fighting with tremendous corruption problems especially in the medical field. Despite these officers being covered with medical insurance provided by the U.S. government, they still had rather negative views about state of the healthcare system in the U.S.

Regarding the question about American people, all interviewees had very positive remarks. One of the interviewees said, “I had very warm welcome both by civilians and military personnel.” He also stated that he found particularly enjoyable to interact with regular people, families and military personnel. One of the interviewees had very interesting observation of the U.S. political system. He said that he did not come to the U.S. with formed opinion, and his opinion was not negative or positive. The same interviewee believes that one year spent in the U.S. is enough to assess the political system by watching TV, interacting with the regular people, or talking with classmates. However, he found the U.S. political system, “little bit strange system,” and that, “you would expect higher standards.”

Another interviewee said that: “I did not know so much about American people. It was definitely wrong picture I had in my head at that time. It is also same for my family, and as a father, I am very proud that I provided my family one year in the U.S. Now, they definitely have more advanced and more positive attitude than boys their age in my country.” Interviewee then went on to say: “Definitely a lot of people became our friends there, and also, we have to thank to the U.S. government for that.” This interviewee then went on to say:

American people are just normal people, same like in my country.

However, what I have noticed is that they are not that much interested in politics, like people in my country. They are more interested in business, not so much into politics. I have now many friends in the U.S., however, because I did not know many Americans before I came to the U.S., and I must say I have now very clear and positive picture about Americans. I must say, that was another time, time before I arrived to Montgomery, in Texas.

People in Texas are much more friendlier than in Alabama. People in Alabama, as I mentioned, are divided, and it is very difficult to make real contact with people in that state than with people in Texas. In Texas it is absolutely a different situation, you can make communication with the people on the street and pretty much everyone.

This interviewee had very interesting remarks. It is obvious this interviewee carefully analyzed the behavior of the population and connected that with past and current racial problems that Alabama is facing with. At the end of the section, which was designed to address the political system, interviewee stated:

I still remember very well, it is still in my brain, what one lady said. It was time when Bush Junior was the President, and Obama was just starting to organize his campaign. Lady told me: If African-American becomes President, I will leave country and tore up American passport. It is something I could not believe that someone who has everything, I mean, for me; coming from poor country it was unbelievable. That human being, who has everything in life, thinking to leave that country. It is definitely difficult for me to understand that.

Another one of the interviewees said that, "all individuals can surface out and that anyone can become professional no matter what religion or race they are." This interviewee acknowledged that he did not know too much about the U.S. prior to arrival, but that changed after spending a little more than three months in the States. He said that presentations and

lectures about the U.S. political system in SOS at Maxwell AFB were very good. He stated: “very good organizations of presentations how economy works, judicial system, checks and balances and executive power.”

One of the interviewees was actually nostalgic about the core idea of democracy. He said that:

American democracy works good. You can feel this democracy and its continuous evolution. My country was also democratic before WWII, however war stopped democratic development and later Soviets destroyed it completely.

The researcher found this a particularly powerful statement. It was possible to see that this interviewee reflected on this issue in very nostalgic and almost tragic way.

All interviewees had very positive opinions about their contacts and interactions with the American people. One of the interviewees said that Americans are “honest people always willing to help and they did when I needed help.” Another interviewee said that he did not have a particular opinion about Americans, however, did not have too many interactions with them prior to his arrival to the States. He finds American people very open and willing to help, but at the same time a bit too individualistic for his taste. He added that he did not find that as negative. Another interviewee had a very interesting observation about the American people. He said that, “We have negative views in EU in last six years, but that changed after my visit to the U.S.” The researcher finds this statement particularly useful for the purposes of this study that shows effects of the IMET program.

Another interviewee had a very interesting observation about the U.S. state of the affairs and security, something that other interviewees did not mention. The interviewee said that he had

some kind of knowledge about the U.S. due to his last visit to the U.S., which lasted for five to six days. Interviewee stated that most of his knowledge was coming from the movies. “My impressions about the U.S. were mostly based on the movies, and I considered America as dangerous place full of crime.” The interviewee went on and said:

“ I spent 10 days in Harlem when I was in New York City for a New Year celebration. I was surprised with security. Situation was really good. Policemen were everywhere with good manners, good communication with people on the streets. They were not there just to give you ticket.”

This interviewee, however, had more to say about the city of Montgomery than about the general political system in the U.S. or state of democracy. The interviewee stated that he was disappointed with the public transportation in Montgomery, and that he “expected much better public transportation, bus system” than what he experienced.

One of the interviewees had a positive introduction to the American political system and also offered a critique. The interviewee said that he was surprised to see that money plays a role in every aspect of life. He stated, “System is based on money and that is the case from top level to bottom level. Even Air Force Base location is about the money.” He found this information useful in preparation for learning about the political system and the historical development of the country at the International Officers School (IOS). In addition, he found his trip to Washington D.C. very informative. He also mentioned that contacts with ordinary people helped in order to understand the political system in the U.S.

Another interviewee was very elaborate and offered positive and negative remarks about the political system in the U.S. He stated that what he found very interesting were the primary

elections. During his time at SOS, the Republican primaries were going on. He stated, “It is good that many candidates are in the spot light doing a lot of debates. That introduces them to the public and public can have a better understanding who truly are people who are seeking Republican nomination.” Also he stated, “What is really good by my opinion is that people are actually going to these rallies and it seems that they are truly involved in the process.” the interviewee continued on further to say, “What I really did not like is that politicians are bringing out all this dirty laundry about other candidates, which was for me a little too much.” Then interviewee went on to say that he was particularly impressed with Alabama Supreme Court, the Legislative Branch and the Governor.

One of the interviewees had an interesting observation about the state of the democracy in the U.S. and political system. He stated, “I was really impressed with emphasis on freedom of speech. I was thinking that freedom of speech works in the U.S., but never imagined that it is working this good.” He also critiqued the U.S. political system, laws, and culture. He said, “However, that being said, I found it very hard to understand what is going on with all these restrictions in the U.S. It seems to me like it is becoming a police country. You cannot drink until you are 21, you cannot smoke almost anywhere, and it is just too much.” Then the interviewee started to talk about the sexual harassment course they received at IOS:

What is even worse is issue of sexual harassment. I understand that that can be an issue, especially in the military that is male dominated, however, I think it went too much. We received instructions that actually we could get in trouble if we send wrong signals to women or even if women misunderstands look or our behavior towards her. I just could not understand this.

He added a very interesting observation about the American people and said, “I was expecting to meet some people who are strange, closed, too individualistic. That is perception in my country not only about Americans, but generally Westerners. However, I was very surprised that me and my family spent so much time with Americans talking, going out and just generally socializing.”

Another interviewee stated, “I am very impressed about government and how it was created. I am very impressed with the U.S. history and how independence was achieved and constitution created. Furthermore, he mentioned, “One negative thing that I found about political system in the U.S. is that popular vote does not mean anything. I mean, look what happened to Al Gore in 2000? I would change that so that simple majority in the country decides elections.” The interviewee concluded that the classes he attended at ASCS provided him with a better understanding of the American political system. He said, “I am attending cultural studies as my elective, and it really helped me to understand this system.”

A different interviewee provided this observation:

I find a similarity between Alabama and my country. There is still huge racial divide in Alabama, and it is my opinion, I find it true, that Alabama and my country are having similar problems, because my country also has huge problems when it comes to divisions, except, those are religious divisions. We learned how the U.S. addressed this issue, and I am positive that my two sons received too lectures in Jefferson-Davis High school about this issue, and will be able to apply those lessons in my country when their time comes.

Another interviewee touched on the freedom of speech and said, “The most positive thing for me is that they can speak freely. I was impressed in my school that even officers can speak without any consequences. I can freely express your opinion.” On other hand, this interviewee continued to say, “For me most negative is that ordinary people are really uninformed. They do not have a clue why the U.S. is doing some stuff around the world and worse; they are not questioning that. They cannot understand why Americans are sometimes hated by some people, let’s say by Muslims today.” This researcher finds this to be quite an interesting observation.

5.1.4 The United States is the world policeman and that is good

This topic is of great interest to the researcher. the researcher expected more critique from the interviewees when it came to the U.S. foreign policy and national security policy; that did not happen.

The first interviewee in this research immediately invoked two familiar words: “world policeman.” The researcher was expecting that the interview would be about the critique of the U.S. foreign and national security policies, however, the opposite happened. The interviewee believed that the world “needs policemen” and that it is good that the U.S. take on this role. He also added that it is in the good interest for the rest of the world that the U.S. takes on the responsibilities of being a “policeman” and that they should pursue to “patrol” other countries. He also added that for the sake of the rest of the world that the “policeman” responsibilities be divided among other countries. Another interviewee had a similar opinion and added that, “When you take into consideration which countries today are the strongest ones, it is better that

order is kept by the U.S. However I will never agree what happened in Iraq, and I think that that was huge mistake.” Then he went on to say:

If we look at China, they do not care who they trade with and what are those countries. The U.S. is always setting various conditions to the countries in order to trade, do business. I can understand that to some point, but I cannot completely understand the U.S. foreign policy because sometimes it seems like it is going toward global war and not peace. It is just perspective of the guy from a small country that has very good ties and connections with the U.S. We are real friend of the United States, and I am sure that world would be much worse if the U.S. is not taking that position, but in some aspects I definitely cannot agree with the U.S. foreign policy.

One of the interviewees had a strong opinion about the role of the U.S. in the world. He said that prior to coming to the U.S. he had a relatively negative opinion about the American role in the world that was shaped mostly by newspapers, TV and magazines. After his visit to the U.S. he completely changed his views and said, “If you consider what country you want to do it, you want the U.S. to do it,” referring to the role of “world policeman.” Then he added, “If all people had an opportunity to stay in the U.S. they would change their opinion about the U.S. foreign policy.” The researcher found this to be a very powerful statement and very useful for the purpose of this study.

Another interviewee was shorter in his remarks about the U.S. foreign policy. He said that he did not change his mind and said, “I am sure someone needs to be world policeman 100%, and you want the U.S. to be that.” One of the interviewees was not so opinionated about

the U.S. foreign policy and tried to stay relatively neutral according to the researcher's opinion. He said that he had an "average and partial" knowledge about the American foreign and national security policies along with its role in the world. He thinks that now he has a better understanding of the foreign and national security policies and the "different government roles in creating those policies."

One interviewee had a metaphorical and elaborative opinion about the U.S. foreign and national security policy. He immediately said that his knowledge about the U.S. foreign and national security policies were minimal before arrival to the U.S. After spending a year in the States and receiving an education at the AWC in Maxwell AFB, he concluded that now the U.S. foreign and national security is "logical process, a long-term process." However, after this remark, this interviewee went on to talk about the most important part of his argument. He described the U.S as a "bully in the schoolyard that dictates the rules. Just vision of the guy from small country." He argued:

"There could be a different approach. The U.S. is using big M as military instead of combination of resources in order to achieve better results using Smart Power. The U.S. should not only be dependent on military power.

This researcher found this statement useful because it is directly referring to the purposes of this study.

One of the interviewees said that before coming to the U.S. he did not know too much about the U.S. foreign policy and was thinking, "America is trying to be boss in the world." He then continued and said, "My visit confirmed my thoughts about this subject. We should not forget the U.S. role in the WWII and how America helped Europe in that time. I think that the

U.S. played very important role when it comes to development of the EU.” Then the interviewee went on to say that, “The world should be balanced, and that other countries should balance the U.S. or join together to balance America.” This researcher finds these statements interesting. The interviewee never appeared negative in any way towards the U.S., and his responses about the U.S. foreign policy seemed more analytical.

Another interviewee said that he came to the U.S. with little knowledge about the U.S. foreign policy and that IOS did a very good job in explaining how foreign and national security policy is created. However, he said that he gained most of his knowledge via communication with other fellow officers from the U.S. and from other countries. He said that he came from the country where “people have very positive attitude about Americans, but negative about American foreign policy and time spent in the U.S. was important for me to better understand American foreign policy.”

One of the interviewees stated:

“before I came to the U.S. I had perception that the U.S. foreign policy and national security is all about the money, oil and other interests. I think my thoughts were confirmed, however, I can see that there is more to that. Actually it is not like we think “those Americans want to steel world resources” but that there is much more to that, like you know, world stability, economic stability. There is just more to that than we have perception in countries like mine. The problem is just that the U.S. interests are not in sync with interests of many other countries and that can create resentment.”

Another interviewee said that he did not really change his opinion about the U.S. foreign policy after spending one year in the U.S. He stated, “I was always thinking of the U.S. as the most powerful country. Today, I think it still is, and it can always influence events and solve problems. I just got more insight how it is done, but really did not change opinion.”

One of the interviewees had this to say, “I saw the U.S. and their foreign policy too much selfish, paranoid. I had an opinion that they protect too much their own interest.” Then on the question whether his stay in the U.S. changed his opinion, interviewee answered, “I am right now attending national security course. I better understand outcomes of foreign policy etc. I do not think that I have changed my opinion, but I do definitely understand better why the U.S. is doing stuff that it is doing.”

Another interviewee had a “realistic” approach to the U.S. foreign policy:

Before you come to America you base your opinion on news you find on Internet, that the U.S. politics, especially foreign policy, is governed by money, oil, something like that. Then when you come to the states and talk to the people and you are amongst them, you live there, it kind of changes, perspective changes. You see that people are good people; that people in the military are normal people; they are doing their jobs. They are trying their best for their economy to hold the ground, to keep the country safe actually. My opinion was that they safeguard and protect their national interests. Problem is that the U.S. national interests are not sometimes in line with interests of other countries. But then again, when you come to the states, live there and see, how people are

living and what they doing, and how policies are made, you can then understand what they doing, because they fear for their way of life and they trying all they can to secure it.

This interviewee never condemned the U.S. foreign and national security policy. By his expression, it seemed that he had a full understanding of the way the U.S. is conducting its business. For him he understands that the U.S. is going to do whatever necessary to protect its own interests.

5.1.5 The IMET has a great impact on educational development of officers.

Interviewees generally had positive opinions about the impact that the IMET program had on their educational development. One of the interviewees stated that it was a big challenge for him to attend school but that it was worth it. Another officer said that the IMET program helped him to contribute more to his own air force, a big challenge for him.

One of the interviewees stated that IMET contributed to his education, however, “ASCS is organized for the U.S. military personnel and we cannot apply a lot of stuff in my military.” Another interviewee said that challenge was average. He stated that “lower level courses were easy; however, higher level courses were hard.” He also stated that he gained a lot of knowledge from the international students he encountered classes. The he added, “IMET had biggest impact on my career and I look issues with different eyes now.”

One of the interviewees said:

It was great experience, and I truly enjoyed. Education is definitely different then in my country, and I had all conditions to commit myself to the maximum to the studying, something that I never had

in my country in all these years. What impressed me is that we could talk and talk and talk. We could present our opinions, even if we are wrong. At that time, it was not popular to criticize the U.S. role and behavior in Iraq, but I openly did it and no one said anything to me, actually, they took it as advice or outside opinion of someone who is watching this from a side. I would say, besides technical superiority of the U.S. schools, freedom of the expression is for me, the most valuable experience. That is something that had and will have the biggest impact on me.

Another interviewee said that meeting a lot of different people had a big impact on his educational development. He also stated that, "It is important that I got education in the country that is superpower." Then he reflected on the issue of a Master's program at AWC that he attended. He stated that a Master's program is mandatory for American military personnel but not for foreign officers, and in the future, the U.S. military should reconsider this and mandate all attendees to complete a Master's program. Later, in the end of interview he emphasized this again and added, "Maybe even Master should be mandatory in ASCS."

One of the interviewees emphasized that he expanded his general knowledge by encountering and learning with 32 colleagues originating from 26 different countries.

Another interviewee went into more detail about the education that he received at ASCS. He stated that school was a big challenge for him. He stated that he did not know about the U.S. military system at all, rankings, nor how Navy is organized. Then interviewee stated: "Now I know how and when I need to deploy Predators or F-35."

All interviewees stated that the education that they received in the U.S. is just a part of the requirements for the promotion. Some of the interviewees were promoted, however, not immediately but usually after a certain amount of time. One interviewee attested to this when he said, “In my country for the rank of Colonel Air War College is just one of the requirements that is necessary to accomplish and I did not receive higher rank immediately but once I met other requirements too. This is just due to the fact that my military is differently organized then American.”

One of the interviewees was particularly elaborative. He spent one year in high school in Tennessee and probably because of that fact; his English language proficiency was very good. Probably that is the reason why he was more comfortable in answering questions.

Interviewee stated:

“It was beneficial for me, but also for the U.S. colleagues. I found out that we actually think same, just have different perspectives, and it was beneficial for both. I learned a lot in SOS, I was in leadership role prior to arrival to the SOS, however, this school changed how I lead my men. I can see that I am better organized now, and truly better leader. I got understanding of the concept of leadership in the school. I am now in charge of field exercises, and I now understand how I truly need to treat and lead my men.”

He went on to say that he was promoted two months after he got back to his native country to the rank of Major. He had all the requirements for that rank before; he just needed SOS in order to get higher rank.

One of the interviewees talked about how the IMET program influenced him and his career and stated, “I have very positive opinion how the IMET program and ACSC influenced me and my career. I mean, I attended school where there were 64 nations present. This is the first time for me to work together with people that are not from Europe, but also from Asia, Latin America, Africa and the U.S. I think this school really had major impact on my development.”

Another interviewee said that what he found most important was seeing the American military officers’ reactions on world affairs. He said, “It was very important for me to hear what American soldiers think about WWI, WWII Korean War, Vietnam War, Iraq, the Balkans, Afghanistan and again Iraq. For me it was really important to hear how they see those events. Now it is much easier for me to understand some stuff. Now I can see for example why Atomic bomb was dropped in Japan.”

One of the officers described his experience in the school and what he gained from it:

As much as it was beneficial for me, I think it was beneficial for my fellow American colleagues, because I learned a lot of stuff, I heard a lot of different things, had various programs that thought me new stuff and broadened my horizons. Yeah I learned a lot both in a professional sense and personal sense. I think I got back a lot, because I was encouraged to speak my opinion and a tell the difference, let me say an example: most U.S. officers they kind of think in a similar way when it comes to national security, and other policies, how to do things. Then, I was encouraged to voice different opinion so they always had other perspective on issues,

and a lot of times they would say they never think in such a way if I did not come up with some ideas or opinion. It made them think twice about some things and how they do some things, and they all said, I mean, all of them, all thirteen and instructor, that they value this experience very much and that they learned a lot during these eight weeks by being in contact with foreign officers.

This interviewee gave very important insight of how the IMET program is useful for foreign officers and for the U.S. military personnel.

5.1.6 Educational level was challenging because of English language.

All interviewees agreed that the English language was an obstacle while attending Air University. One of the interviewees emphasized that, “I was not part of DLI.”¹³⁸ He then stated that it would have helped more if he had some type of course prior to attending Maxwell AFB. Another interviewee said that English was a problem for him and stated that “I did not have any knowledge of English language prior to arriving to the U.S., what really helped me was the fact that I was in DLI in San Antonio. That was really useful.” However, he said he was still struggling with the English language. Both of these interviewees said that they left the U.S. with better English proficiency. The interviewee who was in DLI said that he would not be able to fly helicopters if he did not improve his language skills due to the fact that his country is going through transition toward membership in NATO. However, this interviewee also had a critique about educational level: “This is hard question, and one would guess that educational

¹³⁸ Defense Language Institute (DLI) is located in San Antonio, TX. Many foreign officers prior to arriving to their schools across the U.S. first go to DLI to receive courses in English language.

requirements for foreign students are very low. All international officers successfully finished school, something that is not usual in my country.”

One of the interviewees said that English was not that much of a problem, but that his English language skills dramatically improved after three months. Another interviewee stated, “Although my country is a NATO member for some time and I use English very often, I still had issues with language in classroom since ACSC is designed for American officers.”

One interviewee also mentioned that the English language was a bit of a challenge. However, the interviewee immediately went on to say: “I would like to see more effort by foreign students. They are spending too much time traveling around and acting as an tourists.” A separate interviewee mentioned that before coming to the U.S. he assumed that he would have little problems with English. However, he stated: “English was not so much of an challenge, however, due to the different educational approach it was a little bit challenging to use English in such an environment.”

Another interviewee said that he was very shy using English before. He said, “However, ACSC had very positive impact on my career since now I am assigned in office that communicates with foreign militaries every day, and I literally do not have any problems using English, it is still rough, but difference is like night and day.”

One of the interviewees offered an interesting observation about the educational challenge in school. He stated, “It is up to you. It is like every other school, and you have to pick it up. It is up to you whether you will use it or not. I really improved my English, although I spent year in the U.S. before. I became more relaxed when doing presentations.” Then he added, “However, school on other hand, is difficult because I was not with my family there. It is much

easier with family, your personal thoughts are synchronized, and you are more relaxed. Definitely it is much more difficult to study without family.”

Another interviewee stated that first month and a half was very difficult. However, he stated that things got better as time went on, and that he experienced problems when the instructor assigned them a lot of readings, which was confusing for this interviewee.

One of the interviewees said this; “It had great impact on my education. You sit with officers from various countries together in the classroom so you learn a lot. I had a conversation with the officer from the Middle East several days ago, and I learned about that region in 30 minutes more than in 20 years on my own.” This interviewee also added, “This school is very helpful for someone like me who is in the military for 25 years. It helps us older soldiers to move from tactical to strategic level.”

Another interviewee stated, “it was little bit surprising. It was not very difficult to learn. The biggest problem was that we had a lot of readings, which was impossible even for American guys to catch up with, but nothing else. It was not big problem for me to learn.”

5.1.7 Officers were able to apply knowledge that they gained in the U.S. in their respective countries.

All interviewees answered positively on this question. They stated that more or less they are able to apply knowledge in one way or another.

One of the interviewees stated that he did not have a chance to apply direct knowledge that he acquired while attending ACSC. However, he stated:

“I am applying knowledge indirectly. I am in charge of cadets at pilot school, I am conducting exercises and yes I do apply that

knowledge in certain way. Soon we have joint exercise with other NATO countries and Americans are going to be there, so probably I will be able to use some stuff I learned in ACSC during that exercise that I will lead. Also, I am waiting promotion to position of Commander of pilot school, so probably I will be able to apply that knowledge more then.”

Another interviewee said: “I got very important position at Ministry of Defense after coming back from the U.S. I was not able to apply directly knowledge that I gained, but my English improved a lot, and I had better understanding how other militaries are working, which was very important to understand at this place where I worked.”

One of the interviewees stated that he still has not used his knowledge to the full extent; he probably will once he moves up to a higher rank. In addition, he mentioned that his strong involvement in his classes helped him to relax when it came to public speaking, especially in English.

One interviewee provided a short explanation regarding the knowledge he gained while being student at ACSC. He stated: “Yes, I am applying knowledge every day, and it turns out, school was very useful.”

Another interviewee was also very short and to the point and stated, “ Yes I am able to apply knowledge every day. I work in Air Force HQ, and have an opportunity to apply knowledge I have received at ACSC.”

One of the interviewees was more elaborative and he stated:

“Yes, I am able to apply knowledge every day, where it is applicable. Problem is that our Air Force is structured differently

so it is not possible to apply always knowledge acquired at AWC in our military. We are small country, small air force, so some stuff is just different, and you can't compare it."

One other interviewee actually while talking about application of knowledge, also had a critique. He stated:

I did not have an opportunity to apply knowledge yet. I think I will be able soon, once I receive higher rank. However, some people in my country who were in schools in the U.S. came back and retired very fast after coming back. Some retired after three to six months, some after two years. They did not use knowledge they have received in the U.S. at all. Countries which are sending officers to the U.S. through the IMET program should be more responsible."

Another officer was again brief in his explanation of application of knowledge. He stated: "Yes, I am applying knowledge every day. The school is really necessary and in my case, SOS really made a difference."

One other interviewee also touched subject of leadership: "I am applying knowledge everyday. However, when it comes to application of knowledge, most important is issue of leadership. I think ACSC in my case really made a difference."

Another interviewee described his experience:

I cannot say that it had impact on my career. I would say I had better position before I left to ACSC then after I got back. I was not promoted, and toward the end of my military career there was no indication that I will be promoted. So, I was not able to apply

any knowledge, except for the fact that my English improved a lot, because I was working with foreign military attaches in my country.

One of the interviewees provided his observation on the application of knowledge that he gained while attending ACSC: “I actually have been able to apply knowledge. I had opportunity after coming back to my country. I had an opportunity to work with American Special Forces and actually my experiences from school helped me to understand what they want from us. It was actually very nice.”

5.1.8 The IMET program is a great way to establish or improve relations between the U.S. military and foreign militaries.

On this issue, foreign officers provided short responses and gave few examples. One interviewee said that it is one of the ways to improve cooperation and understand how Americans conduct business. The he stated: “It is important, because we have team in Afghanistan, and when you learn how the U.S. military works it is much easier to understand each other.”

Another officer also said that due to financial constraints his country couldn't send officers to schools, such as the one he attended (ACSC). The IMET program made that possible, and any cooperation between militaries is good. The he stated: “We get a chance to learn how Americans work, and there is understanding between us. If we do some stuff together, we know how each side thinks.”

One of the officers who attended SOS stated:

“Americans are helping us to build our air force. If no IMET program there is no way my country could send me to SOS. It is essential to have this program and actually, you know, we could use more people in those schools. Also, Americans learn how things operate in our militaries, so it is useful for both countries.”

Another officer was very short: “My country cooperates with the U.S. through the IMET for years, so it is one of the best ways to improve cooperation.” One other officer basically confirmed this by saying: “Yes, it is a great way to improve relationships between militaries.”

A different interviewee was a bit more elaborate: “During education you are incorporated in air force process. You develop private and professional relationships, you can always after that call somebody and ask why something is happening somewhere. Definitely good way to improve relations.”

One of the interviewees was actually very critical of his country in this case: “Yes, the IMET is very important in improving corporation. However, my country is not doing good job using people who are educated in the U.S. Yes, one of the guys who was at ACSC is now military attaché in Washington D.C. and generally you can expect to progress. However, I am disappointed in my country because it is not using a lot of people who finished schools in the U.S. in proper way. This needs to be addressed. My country needs to transform air force, and the IMET program is one of the best ways to help us do that.”

This interviewee finished his reflection on how the IMET program affects cooperation, and he did not elaborate any further.

Another interviewee stated:

“Any conversation is important especially if you spent a lot of time in the U.S. Once you are there we do not measure people from where they are, what color of skin they are or what religion they are. We all cooperate at SOS, no matter from what country you are coming from.”

One of the interviewees said that the IMET program is one of the best ways to improve relationships between his country and the U.S.

Another interviewee had to say this about the IMET contribution when it comes to cooperation between his country and the U.S.:

Off course. I think it contributes a lot. It is much easier to understand American soldier who is coming from Navy, Marines, I can understand what they need from locals, from us and I can understand why they need what they need. Before going to school I was little bit, it is not only me, we were little bit skeptical when they want something from us which would not be good to give them. Now it is much easier for me to understand why they need something.

On of the officers had a particularly interesting observation when it came to the question of whether he was able to apply knowledge he gained in the situations that involved cooperation between his military forces and the U.S. forces. The interviewee did not answer this question

directly, but, rather, he tried to say that a visit to the U.S. helps promote mutual understanding, which actually works good for the U.S.:

Well, not specifically with the U.S. military, I did not have that much contact after coming back, but I did with my countryman. When I got back everyone was asking how it was, how it was in the states, how is military, how are the people, and I could say that I was pretty good ambassador of the U.S., because I was only talking, well, about my positive experiences that I had, and, people were listening to me, because I was arguing that, showing them things I have learned. I think that was good thing, because, in that kind of way, I past my experience on my people. With that I maybe opened eyes to some people, that the IMET program is a good thing, the education in the U.S., that it is good thing.

5.1.9 Good Will Ambassadors are of great help.

This is a topic that everyone had a unanimous agreement on. However, some of the interviewees shared criticism with the researcher.

First interviewee was very short with his answer and just responded: “They play very good role.” However, second interviewee was much more elaborate. The interviewee stated that when he arrived to the U.S. with his family they did not know anyone. Then he stated:

“I really did not expect that anyone will wait for me at the airport. However, I saw that other guys, who came to Montgomery that night, had their GWA’s waiting for them. They talked few

minutes, GWA's gave them their numbers and left. My GWA did not wait for me at the airport, but what is more disappointing; she did not call for like month and a half. After month and a half, I really could not use GWA for any help since I already figured out how to enroll kids to the school and other stuff. Point is, that GWA's are most necessary in the beginning, in first few weeks to help us figure out how things work. Yes, she did invite us few times to her house, we chatted a little, but most of the other guys had their GWA's helping them tremendously. In the end, GWA's of other guys helped me too. I think that IOS really needs to screen people who want to become GWA's better."

Another interviewee also had very positive remarks about his GWA and some recommendations: "GWA's are very good idea. I got information about GWA too late I think. Maybe IOS should get info to the officers earlier then it is case now. It is good to hear that information before coming to the U.S."

One other interviewee also had positive opinion about GWA's and said: "It is very good to have them in the beginning." Other interviewee said that overall GWA's play very important roles, and that he is still in touch with his GWA. Another interviewee said:

"they are very good thing. However, what is most important is that they are coming from general population. Even American military has problems identifying with general population, not to mention foreign officers. In this way, actually it is not only GWA's who are helping us, but we are helping them and general population to

understand who we are, what we are doing here. It is very good thing. I would add that it would be good if the U.S> military through embassies inform officers little bit before who GWA is going to be, and maybe we can establish contact earlier, before coming to the U.S.”

One of the interviewees said:

“My GWA was very good. Some guys did not get any help from their GWA’s. My GWA helped them too.” Another officer also stated:

“It is good idea, however my GWA was not helpful at all. They need to figure out how to make contact with officers before they come to the U.S. That is most important, first few weeks in the U.S. If we have someone to help us those first few weeks, you know, to figure out how to put kids in school, where to buy certain food and other stuff, it would make big difference.”

Another interviewee had to say: “Good thing. You actually have people that care about you; they invite you for a dinner to their house. It is important, especially for me because I was not with family here.” Another interviewee also said very positive remarks about GWA’s:

“Yes, really, really important. I was lost when I came to Montgomery. I had someone who I can call and ask simple questions, like, where to buy this or that stuff. My GWA was also very encouraging, gives you strength to go through first few months. Kids came to completely new environment, they did not

know English, so it is important to have someone to tell you do not give up or something like that.”

One of the officers said this: “Yes, very, very helpful. For me this was great shock. My good will ambassador helped me a lot to adjust on the culture here and just every day life.

Another interviewee stated that his experience was good, but like some previous interviewees mentioned already, he also mentioned that some of his friends did not receive any help.

5.1.10 Kept personal and professional relationships with both, the U.S. and other foreign officers.

Based on responses gathered from interviewees, this theme was very important to them. One of the interviewees said: “I am having daily contacts with many classmates and other officers I met there. We are having both personal and professional contacts.”

Another interviewee said that although he is retired now, he is still in contact with many officers he met during his studies at ACSC. A different interviewee said that he established very good professional contacts that are helping him regularly in his work. He said that he could always call friends he met during his studies at SOS and ask them for help.

One of the interviewees stated: “Off course I am in contact with the U.S. officers and officers from around the world. I talk to them all the time through Facebook, Skype, e-mail. My class even has Facebook page where all classmate can stay in touch with each other.” Another interviewee said that he is in contact with most of his classmates and officers he met in Maxwell AFB. He stated that when it comes to professional contacts he relies on foreign officers that

attended school with him due to the fact that they are close to his country. When it comes to connections with American officers, he stated that they are “strictly personal.”

Other interviewee was more detailed on this subject: “Most of the contacts that I have are personal. However, I did have professional contacts with people I met during my stay in Montgomery. If we are cooperating on something, like exercise then things go very smoothly because we know each other already.”

One of the interviewees had an interesting observation: “I am in contact mostly on personal level. We had some contacts with some people that I know from Montgomery, and it worked well. However, I am not that much in contact with the U.S. officers. They seem to me too self oriented and what they worry about is their career, that’s bottom line when it comes to American officers.” A different interviewee said that so far his contacts were strictly personal, mostly with other foreign officers, but also with some Americans.

One interviewee offered especially useful observation:

I have contacts with officers I was with at SOS. I met people from a lot of countries, so mostly my contacts are personal. Actually, one of the colleagues that went to SOS with me had to land on airport where my squadron is, so I helped him with procedures he did not know and some other stuff. So, yes, it this is very good thing, both for the U.S. military and for international officers, because, since I was in this IOS program, there were 31 officers from 26 countries around the world and I could say that there are now 30 Ambassadors from my country in their country, because now they can say what kind of people are coming from my

country. Probably this was the first contact they had with someone from my country, so they go back to their countries and say: people from that country, they are all right. It is a good thing and if I go to those countries, all of them without any exception say that I need to contact them if I come to their country and come to their house. It is a really good thing, and, works multiple ways.

Another interviewee said that he has been in contact with an officer he met while attending ACSC. He said most of the contacts are of personal nature; both American officers and other foreign officers, which they all have kept in contact via Facebook and e-mail.

5.1.11 How to improve the IMET program.

This subject is of particular importance for the study. Some officers offered very detailed opinions and lengthy suggestions.

One interviewee was short on this subject and offered a suggestion. He said that policy makers should consider assigning mentors to foreign officers to help the officers overcome some difficult challenges. For example, a mentor would be useful in the beginning when officers are learning to adapt to the environment and culture. Another officer said that one way to improve the IMET program is to add more officers to the program. He stated before during the interview that his country would use more slots in IMET. This interviewee was particularly positive about the IMET program and he was speaking highly about the subject.

One of the officers said that family members unable to come to the States with him are an issue due to the long separation. He believes that the U.S. and countries are recipients of the

funds, and that this issue should be addressed. He said that life would be much easier if family was with him.

Another interviewee had strong opinions on this subject. This specific interviewee mentioned before that all students who are attending AWC should do be required to earn a Master's since it is already a requirement for the American officers. He also mentioned that this requirement be applied to officers that are attending ACSC as well. In the end of an interview again he suggested:

“Study trips should be always part of the program. They are very useful tool to get familiar with rest of the country. Number of foreign officers should be maintained or even expanded. Everyone is profiting from this program, the U.S. and other countries. There is no better way to improve cooperation and mutual understanding. However, it should be mandatory for foreign officers to do Master. It would increase competition among officers in classroom. Also, countries that are sending officers to the U.S. would pay more attention who they sending since not all officers who attended AWC with me from other countries, were material for Master program.”

Other interviewee had a criticism about the way topics in classes are being taught and he stated: “Some instructors really did not want to discuss certain subjects. I asked question: who is terrorist, and they tried to ditch the question. I think they should work on that.”

Another interviewee who attended ACSC critiqued the different kinds of trips that were arranged. This interviewee went to Washington, D.C. with other foreign officers attending ACSC

and found that experience very useful. However, he stated that ACSC should reconsider how they organize trips to the Capitol. They visited Congress and Library of Congress but not Pentagon or Arlington cemetery. Interviewee stated that, “Considering that I am military officer, I am very interested in seeing the Pentagon and Arlington Cemetery.” He also stated that for the future it would be useful for officers to visit some companies that are producing weapon systems. This visit may help officers gain a better understanding about the relationships between the government and the military industrial complex.

A different interviewee offered this suggestion: “I think foreign officers should get some kind of education about IMET program before they come to the U.S. They should know why America is doing this, what are goals of the program. I think that would help.”

One of the interviewees suggested this: “Maybe schools should be more patient with international guys. I mean, on second and third day in America we are staying in school until 5 p.m. It is exhaustive, we just had flight over Atlantic, and that is really not necessary.”

Another interviewee that still attends ASCS said: “I think that school is great, but visiting lecturers are sometimes not up to the task. I think ASCS needs to pay attention on that. Also, sometimes readings are too narrow-minded. I would like some outside sources from other authors regarding same subject.”

One of the interviewees said:

I would not say that this is a failure of the IMET program, but there are several issues with it. You see, I have never been able to apply any knowledge that I gained in the U.S. in Ministry of Defense of my country. I think that the U.S. has to request from the countries that are sending officers under the IMET program to the

U.S. to be promoted when they come back to their countries or something where officer will be able to apply that knowledge.

When I got back, I tried to make just one simple change in my country military, and that is concerning military funerals. I tried to apply something like in the U.S. They made me ashamed that I even suggested solving that problem. So I think that the only problem that needs to be addressed is that officers, who received education through the IMET, sometimes do not have a chance to apply that knowledge.

This interviewee also said:

I mentioned before, the standards for international officers are very low. I think they should be in the same basket with American officers, regardless of issues with English. I just think that international officers should be put on a same level as Americans. I think it is definitely easier to be international officer at ACSC then American officer. I think that people who are running the school underestimated the knowledge of international officers.”

When he was asked if there was anything else he would like to add, this officer responded:

When I was attending ACSC, American officers just started to attend cultural studies. For me it is unthinkable that the USAF did not have such program long time ago. I mean, in my country, which is very small, we learn from young age foreign languages, and USAF is just starting to address that issues. That is just

unthinkable to me. For people in my country it is normal to speak one or two foreign languages, and for Americans it is normal only to speak English. It is something that really surprised me.

Another interviewee had a more critical opinion regarding the IMET program and suggested some potential changes before future foreign officers arrive to the U.S:

Well, recommendations. Well, all I can say that one improvement could be if the students that go through the IMET program, before they go through it, they get broader knowledge of what to expect, what is the IMET program, what program brings, because, I went through ODC office and then the U.S. Embassy, and I had some information's, but all I know I did not have the whole picture. I had make private investigations and inquiries to get to know some more. So maybe in this information part, people could get prepared more and get more information's of what to expect there and what is expected of them.

5.1.12 Observations

In addition to interviews, this researcher spent time with the interviewed officers socially on many occasions. Since 2006, the researcher was constantly socializing with foreign military officers, going with them to bars, organizing social events, traveling to visit various attractions, such as Six Flags Over Georgia or Blue Angels Air Show in Pensacola, FL. This part of the dissertation represents the researcher's recollections of time spent with these officers and the

researcher's views on how the IMET program influenced their perception of the U.S., people in this country, and its political system.

In 2010, the researcher had an opportunity to meet several officers from Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia. It turned out that one officer from Serbia went to Yugoslav Air Force high school with an officer from Croatia; other officer from Serbia went to same high school with officers from Montenegro and Slovenia. They saw each other after 22 years (Serbian and Croatian officers) and 21 years (Serbian, Montenegro and Slovenian officer) in Maxwell AFB, AL. Suffice to say, Croatian and Serbian officers were on opposing sides during the Balkan wars in 1990's. The researcher recollects spending time with them, such as socializing, visiting Blue Angels Air Show, etc. Today, those officers are in contact with and visit each other on a regular basis. The officer from Croatia, two officers from Serbia, officer from Montenegro, officer from Macedonia, and an officer from Slovenia regularly visited each other. In this case, these officers were bound together because of the common language (former Serbo-Croatian).

In another case, this researcher went to a Blue Angels Air Show with a Croatian, Bosnian, and a Czech officer in July 2011, and met a Pakistani and an Israeli officer who came with their families to also see the Blue Angels perform. The Pakistani and Israeli officers, including their families, became best friends and traveled everywhere together while the officers were attending school in the U.S.

These are situations that no one could envision when creating this program. What is more striking is that at one point in time those are military officers had to fight against each other. The fact that Israeli and Pakistani officers can socialize on a daily basis, or for that matter, a Serbian and a Croatian officer, is something that usually requires diplomacy and various meetings.

Because of the IMET program, these officers are actually creating future relationships that some day could be a focus when it comes to solving problems that those countries could have between each other.

5.2 Chapter Summary

This chapter analyzed responses given by foreign officers who attended the Squadron officers School, Air Command and Staff College, and Air War College at Maxwell, AFB in Montgomery, AL. Analyzing data, following themes were identified: (1) Time spent in the United States was positive, (2) Time spent in the United States was positive for family members, (3) State of democracy in the United States, (4) The United States is a world policeman; that is good, (5) The IMET has a great impact on educational development of officers, (6) Educational level was challenging due to the fact that the English language is a second language, (7) Officers were able to apply knowledge that they gained in the U.S. in their respective countries, (8) The IMET program is a great way to establish or improve relations between the U.S. military and foreign militaries, (9) Good Will Ambassadors are of great help, (10) Kept personal and professional relationships with both, the U.S. and other foreign officers, (11) How to improve the IMET program. The conclusions about these findings are presented in next chapter of this study.

VI.

Conclusion

The final chapter of this study presents the conclusions of this project. The chapter is divided in three parts. The first part provides an overview of this study and presents summary of findings; second part offers discussions of findings and theoretical implications; third part offers future research plans on this subject.

6.1 Overview

This study offers insight into a program that is relatively unknown to the American general public. The purpose of this study was to prove that the IMET program is one of the ways to promote American and democratic values around the world. The IMET program is especially important because it is dealing with foreign military officers. Some of the foreign officers who attended military schools in the U.S. will eventually become leaders in their militaries, and the IMET program could have an important impact on how they make future decisions. The researcher in this study posed this research question: *What effect does the IMET program have on foreign officers' and their families understanding of American values, democracy, national security and foreign policy objectives?* This study offers answer on this question.

6.1.2 Soft Power & Smart Power

First chapter of this study offered theoretical background about definitions of *Soft Power* and *Smart Power*. As we could see, Joseph Nye introduced the definition of Soft Power in the

beginning of the last decade of the last century.¹³⁹ We examined the arguments for and against Soft Power along with the events after the collapse of USSR; Soft Power was very popular theory among many diplomats and academics. However, in the last decade, Joseph Nye found problems with this theory because he concluded that it did not work all the time. A new theory surfaced out, Smart Power. Smart Power as we will see offers an explanation on how to combine military power with various powers that constitute Soft Power.

6.1.3 Literature Review

Literature review offered insight into International Military Education and Training program. In the first part of literature review the researcher offered a historical perspective of the IMET program. We could see how the U.S. addressed issues of military help to foreign countries and some of the problems that the U.S. was facing with when it came to U.S. military aid to allied nations . The second part of the literature review offered a historical perspective on student exchanges in the U.S. within the last century and the implications that such a practice had both on the U.S. and countries whose students were coming to the states. In the third part of the literature review we saw previous research on an IMET program and how effective it is.

6.1.4 Research Design & Methodology

In chapter IV the researcher offered explanations of research strategy and methodology. The researcher argued why this topic is important for the general audience and policy makers that make decisions about an IMET program on a daily basis. The researcher also offered two hypotheses in Chapter IV:

¹³⁹ (J. S. Nye 2004)

H0: *The IMET program does not have significant influence on foreign military officers in respect to their understanding of American values, democracy, and the U.S. national security and foreign policy objectives.*

H1: *The IMET program positively affects foreign military officers and their families in respect to understanding American values, democracy, and the U.S. national security and foreign policy objectives.*

This researcher also offered insight into the design of the study and approach to the research. This chapter explains how data was collected for the purpose of this study and what kinds of techniques were used. The researcher provided the reasons from several authors to explain why *Survey Interviews and Scheduled Interviews* were used. The researcher also explained why foreign officers were chosen as unit of analysis. The researcher also talked about the data collection procedure; what kind of equipment was used, what kind of programs, where data collection was conducted, and with what kind of problems during this phase he was facing with. Then the researcher proceeded to explain the sample frame. Following that explanation, the researcher explained how data was analyzed and what technique was used for data analysis (content analysis), as well as literature review on the content analysis technique.

6.1.5 Summary of Findings

The summary findings were derived from the data analysis using content analysis technique. The data was collected by conducting interviews with foreign officers who attended schools at Air University at Maxwell AFB, AL. Eleven themes surfaced out as a result of the data analysis of data collected using the scheduled interview technique.

6.2 Themes

Eleven themes were identified as a result of the data collected from the conducted interviews: (1) Time spent in the United States was positive, (2) Time spent in the United States was positive for family members, (3) State of democracy in the United States, (4) The United States is a world policeman; that is good, (5) The IMET has a great impact on educational development of officers, (6) Educational level was challenging due to the fact that the English language is a second language, (7) Officers were able to apply knowledge that they gained in the U.S. within their respective countries, (8) The IMET program is a great way to establish or improve relations between the U.S. military and foreign militaries, (9) Good Will Ambassadors are of great help, (10) U.S. and foreign officers kept personal and professional relationships, (11) How to improve the IMET program.

The major findings of this study are positive. Interviewees were very positive about their overall experience in the U.S., their understanding of democracy and political system in the U.S., and about the IMET program.

Based on the answers that interviewees offered, the IMET program is a very useful tool in projecting the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives. Interviewees offered a lot of insight from their experiences in the U.S. and also suggested improvements that our policy makers should consider when it comes to the IMET program.

As we saw in the Chapter V, foreign officers who agreed to be interviewed had generally very positive impressions about the U.S. We have to understand that, in this case, the researcher conducted interviews with individuals who are very well educated and usually have very good access to references. Still, as we saw in the data analysis part of this study, spending a certain amount of time in the U.S. had a profound impact on their opinion about this country.

Despite having a preconceived notion about the U.S., we could see that time spent in the states still influenced many interviewees' understanding of the U.S. and its people. As we saw, many officers described the experiences that their family had in the U.S. and Montgomery, AL. It is obvious from the data collected that interviewees are most proud of the fact that their children attended and/or finished schools in the U.S. We can conclude that spending time in the U.S has a profound effect on the opinions of foreign officers regarding this country and its people. It was especially interesting to find that many of the officers were intrigued about the state of democracy in the U.S. What was particularly interesting was an observation made by one of the interviewees about state of the security in the U.S. He recalled his experience in New York City where he celebrated New Years. Researcher made a conclusion that interviewee based his opinions more on the questionable news sources or on Hollywood movies. As one interviewee pointed out, many news sources in his country are of questionable integrity.

What is also very important for the purposes of this study is the affectionate reaction the interviewees had towards the American people. As we have seen in the past, there is a general agreement that Americans are open and always willing to help. It was interesting to see that one of the interviewees thought that Americans were selfish and closed; however, his experience made him believe otherwise. From the testimonies we can see that general opinion among officers interviewed were very positive when it came to the perception of the American people.

This researcher was surprised by the fact that one of the officers interviewed reflected on the issue of racial problems in the state of Alabama. This interviewee also compared the hospitality and approach of the people in Alabama as opposed to the hospitality and approach of the people in Texas. The interviewee obviously tried to point out that Alabama is still struggling with its past. This response is also an indication that foreign officers are learning from American

history, and that they can apply those lessons in their own countries once they go back and start to make decisions.

We could say that interviewees also had positive opinions about the U.S. foreign policy and national security. Some of the interviewees said that they knew a lot before, and they still had same opinions about the U.S. foreign policy and national security after what?. Some of the interviewees, as we saw, actually had a wrong picture about the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives. We can conclude that time spent in school and living in the U.S. and exposure to the culture in the states, as well as the political process, had a major influence on foreign officers' understanding of the U.S. foreign policy and national security.

A similar conclusion could be derived on the topic regarding the understanding of the U.S. role in the world. Officers were almost unanimous in their belief that the U.S. is a superpower and is exercising that power. However, we saw in Chapter V, that there is almost a mutual agreement that the U.S. should be a "world policeman." Only one interviewee said that other countries should balance the U.S., but he never indicated that the U.S. foreign policy is somehow "dangerous" for the world.

This researcher was surprised that all the officers had positive impressions about the IMET program. The only problem with the program was that some officers struggled in the U.S. because they were without their families. What was even more significant is that we saw the education the foreign officers received in the U.S. impacted them personally and their careers. We saw that some officers were critical of some practices and some suggested certain changes to the program, such as mandating foreign officers to finish a Master's program both in Air War College and Air Command and Staff College. Also, it was interesting to see that some interviewees think that some foreign officers attend schools here in the States just to have fun.

From the analyzed data we saw that all officers had certain difficulties with the English language, and that the difficulties differed between them. Some interviewees thought that there was too much to read and some thought that level of difficulty was not that challenging.

It was interesting to find out that all officers think that Good Will Ambassadors are good practice. However, we saw that not all officers had positive experiences with their GWA's assigned to them. The officers mutually agree that GWA's are necessary to help officers adjust to a different culture and habits.

Also, the data showed that all the officers stayed in contact socially with their classmates and other officers they met while attending school in the U.S.; some stayed in contact for professional reasons when applicable. One interesting example, in particular, was when one interviewee helped another classmate navigate better through the airport.

6.3 What did we learn and how to apply it

As we saw in Chapter III, exchange programs are old but prominent in education such as that of a university. However, we have to take a different approach here when we want to analyze what kind of an effect an IMET program has on the U.S. and on foreign nations whose officers are coming to the U.S. for an education.

Presently this researcher has been socializing with many foreign officers since 2006. In 2010 and 2011 the researcher has attended regular classes at AWC in Strategic Leadership (2010) and National Security and Decision Making (2011). This researcher was in class with 13 American military officers, one officer from Egypt, one from Norway, and one from Indonesia. The officers from these three foreign countries were not part of this study, however, the

researcher had an opportunity to see those three officers as well as countless others from South Korea, Israel, France, Sweden, Taiwan, Thailand, Australia, UK, Afghanistan, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Poland, Kuwait, Pakistan, Turkey, Bulgaria etc. Even till now this researcher has been in contact with many of these officers over the years for similar reasons as the interviewees in this study.

As we saw in Chapter III, various authors stated that one of the most important advantages of the IMET program is the fact that many foreign officers are coming from undemocratic countries. This researcher witnessed many officers who received an education from not only undemocratic countries, but from countries that were in military conflict with the U.S. in last two decades (Serbia and Iraq). In this researcher's study the officers did not have any negative reaction towards either the U.S. policies or American people. Based on the time this researcher spent with these officers, the researcher concluded that the IMET program improves or helps to establish cooperation's between the U.S. and other countries, and it plays an essential role in exposing American values and ideas to those countries. In this study the interviewed and observed officers changed their opinion about the U.S. and its policies, and in many instances, concluded that American people can be true friends. On the contrary, many officers disagree on the U.S. foreign policy and/or national security goals; however, they all understand the reasoning's behind why the U.S. conducts their business the way that they do.

In the beginning of the 1990's, Nye argued that Soft Power meant attraction by other means, such as culture, entertainment industry etc. In the last decade, the term Smart Power surfaced out as a more applicable approach to the international relations. Smart Power means combining Hard Power and Soft Power, and in the case of the IMET program, it is obvious that this program can be a very useful tool of Smart Power.

The IMET program very successfully combines the military aspect of hard power with the cultural aspect of soft power. As we saw in the previous chapter, foreign officers are attending schools in the U.S. like any regular foreign exchange student, except that in this case, these are military schools.

This researcher believes that based on the results of the interviews that the IMET program is a very successful tool in the hands of the U.S. policy makers. Is the IMET program a program that will make a key change in certain countries? Probably not, however, it could be the key when it comes to cooperation between the U.S. and other countries because most of the foreign students in the U.S. military schools of higher education are going to end up with high positions in their respective militaries or even pursue political careers. It is impossible to definitely determine what kind of an impact the IMET program is going to have, but based on the evidence in the literature review and on data resulting from interviews that are conducted for the purposes of this study, the IMET program is not only a tool in the hands of the U.S. policy makers, but a very strong weapon!

With that being said, one of the worst possible scenarios that the U.S. government and DoD could do is to cut the budget for an IMET program. We are witnessing possible budget cuts in the Federal government, and DoD is going to be one of the departments that is going to take a big hit. This researcher agrees that some programs definitely need to be cut. Do we really need 2,400 F35 planes? Did we really need 170+ F22 planes that are still having problems with the oxygen system and are incapable to conduct military missions? We have spent hundreds of billions of dollars on these two programs, and in the end, we have a plane (F22) not functioning to its full capabilities and a plane with a constant delayed service (F35).

On other hand we have a relatively small program in a range of around \$110 million and contribution of that program to our security and security of other countries is not possible to emphasize enough.

Engineers of this program, immediately after the WWII, never envisioned what kinds of effects an IMET program will have on security of this country and on security of other countries.

The question is then what does our policy makers need to do to keep this program running and to improve it?

We saw in a Chapter V that some interviewees offered some suggestions; this researcher argues that the Department of State and Department of Defense have to take them into consideration and try to execute them. Also, it would be worrisome if DoS cuts the budget for the IMET program because there will be long-term unimaginable consequences. At one point the very same creators of this program could not imagine that a Croatian and a Serbian officer were going to socialize at a barbeque, or that a Pakistani and an Israeli officer were going to plan a road trip together with their families. What the Federal government needs to do is to increase the budget and offer assistance to countries that are currently struggling to overcome consequences of previous dictatorships, such as Libya, or depending on the situation on the ground even Syria.

In the end we need to understand that many of the countries that are participating in the IMET program are not financially capable to send their officers to military school in the U.S. If the U.S. cuts financial help to those countries those countries will probably give up of on sending their officers to the U.S., which impacts tremendously on the relationships between the U.S. military and militaries of those countries. Usually countries that are financially deprived are those that are prone to more volatility and is of outmost importance for the U.S., being the

superpower, to keep these countries stable. One solution is to involve their militaries in the U.S military education system through the IMET program.

Several interviewees pointed out that some foreign officers consider education in the U.S. a tourist trip. This researcher believes that the U.S military institutions have to address this issue and raise the educational bar for the foreign military officers. One of the interviewees recommended that foreign officers be required to complete a Master's degree, which would raise the requirements for foreign militaries when it comes to selecting which officers they will send to the U.S. This would also address the issue of English language proficiency among the foreign students, resulting in better communication between foreign students and the American military officers and faculty.

One could also argue that an IMET program does not have that much of an impact. We helped Egypt so much in last 30 years, but still, Egyptians are protesting and trying to burn our embassy. Another could argue that Bahrain is our ally, but that situation with human rights in Bahrain is detrimental. Those are valid observations, however, this research showed that the IMET program truly affects officers who are or will be take on important positions in their militaries. The many foreign officers attending U.S. military schools improves our relationship with those countries as well as our understanding of their militaries.

One of the interviewees offered a particularly interesting observation when he said that the IMET program is useful for everyone, the U.S. military and foreign militaries, because it develops connections and friendships between each other. That officer stated that he could call any officer that he was in school with and could be invited as a guest in their countries if he should decide to visit. This researcher thinks that this last statement sums up why the program is important?

In the end, this program is not designed to change countries or systems, but to serve our national security interests. We learned from the literature review and from the interviews that the IMET program had a major impact on officers' opinions and played a role in their decision-making. This researcher concluded that the IMET program could have a major impact on important situations that could be a deciding factor of whether or not foreign officers will be of aid to our military or to cooperate with the U.S. in the future. Also, it could have a major impact on the countries that the foreign officers are coming from. However, it is difficult to quantify what an effect the IMET program has, but interviews that were conducted in this study proved that the IMET program has a positive effect on foreign military officers when it comes to their understanding of the U.S., American people and political system.

6.4 Limitations to This Study

This study has several limitations that this researcher is aware of. The first shortcoming of this study is that all the officers interviewed are coming only from Europe. Officers from these countries are actually working in open societies and countries that are part of NATO or will be very soon.

Second shortcoming of this research is the small number of interviewed officers. Only 17 officers were interviewed, although researcher had opportunity to observe more than one hundred throughout the years.

In the future, this researcher plans to expand this study and conduct interviews with officers from Latin America, Asia, Middle East and Africa. Also, this researcher plans to mix two methodologies, a qualitative design and quantitative design, applying surveys in order to try "catching" more data.

This researcher will attempt to increase the number of officers willing to be part of this study tremendously contributing to validity of the study.

Appendix A

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Appendix B



INFORMED CONSENT Concerning Participation in a Research Study Auburn University at Montgomery

For International Military Education and Training Program as a Tool of Smart Power

You are invited to participate in a study of effectiveness of International Military Education and Training program (IMET) because you are a foreign officer attending one of the schools at Air University at Maxwell AFB, Alabama. We hope to learn how your experience in the United States can help policy makers to improve the IMET program and make this program more effective and efficient.

If you agree to participate, this interview will be done in complete anonymity. The principal investigator, Edin Mujkic, doctoral candidate, Department of political science and Public Administration, Auburn University at Montgomery, will conduct the interview.

Any information obtained in connection with this study that can be identified with you will remain strictly anonymous and will be disclosed only with your permission. If you give us your permission by agreeing to this document, we plan to disclose the findings for academic purposes in form of a dissertation, professional presentation, journal article or a book and without disclosing your name or any other identifying information.

Your decision whether to participate will not prejudice your future relations with Auburn University at Montgomery. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and to discontinue participation at any time without penalty. If you decide later to withdraw from the study, you may also withdraw any information that has been collected about you.

Before you decide whether to accept this invitation to take part in the study, please ask questions that might come to mind now. Later, if you have questions about study, you can contact the investigator, Mr. Edin Mujkic at emujkic@aum.edu or at phone number (334) 868-1282. If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact Debra Tomblin, AUM Research Compliance Manager at dtomblin@aum.edu or (334) 244-3250.

YOU ARE MAKING DECISION WHETHER TO PARTICIPATE. YOUR AGREEMENT INDICATES THAT YOU HAVE DECIDED TO PARTICIPATE, HAVING UNDERSTOOD THE INFORMATION PROVIDED ABOVE.

Investigator's signature

Appendix C

Interview Discussion Guide

Topic #1: Experience in the United States

1. What are your general impressions about the United States?
 - How would you rate your time spent in the U.S. Was the experience positive or negative?
 - Did you arrive to the U.S. with your family?
 - (If yes): How was their experience?
 - How this visit affected your opinion about American people as a whole?
2. What are your impressions about the U.S. political system?
 - What was for you most positive about the U.S. political system?
 - And what was the most negative about the U.S. political system?
 - Do you now have a better understanding of American domestic politics?
 - Did you change your opinion about the American political system? If so, how did your opinion changed?

Topic #2: The U.S. Foreign Policy and National Security

1. How would you describe your understanding of the American foreign policy and national security prior to your visit?
2. In your own words, how would you describe your understanding of American foreign policy and national security after your visit?
3. How would you describe your understanding of the U.S. role in the world prior to your visit?
4. In your own words, how would you describe your understanding of the U.S. role in the world after your visit?

Topic #3: International Military Education and Training program

1. How would you rate your overall experience?
 - In your own opinion, what are positive things about the IMET program?
 - In your own opinion, what are negative things about the IMET program?

2. For you personally, what is most important that you gained from this program?
 - Were there any negative consequences for you being a part of the IMET program?
3. Excluding possible issues with the fact that English is your second language, how would you rate educational challenge of the IMET program?
 - Did you improve substantially your English language proficiency?
 - Were there any disappointments with the program?
4. Did the IMET program have any impact on your career?
 - Were you promoted after coming back to your country?
 - (If yes) After what time?
 - Are you able to apply any new knowledge and experiences that you received during the time when you were part of the program in your military?
5. In your opinion, does the IMET program contribute to cooperation between your military and the U.S. military forces?
 - Have you already been able to apply knowledge and experiences that you gained while you have been part of the program in certain situations that involved your military and the U.S. military?
 - In what way do you think that the IMET program is important when it comes to improvement of cooperation between your military and the U.S. military?
6. Do you have any recommendations how to improve the IMET program?
 - Do you think that Good will Ambassadors play important role in the IMET overall experience?
 - Are you in contact with officers from other countries that attended classes with you? If so, what are these contacts?
 - Are you in contact with officers from the U.S. that attended classes with you? If so, what are these contacts?
7. Finally, do you have any advices, concerns or thought that we did not address in this interview?

