

The United States continues its War on Terror

Carilyn Pointer

03/03/2023



George H.W. Bush Visiting Somalia, January 1993

Carilyn Pointer - In Somalia, the United States continues to fight in the “[forever wars](#).” The wars are a direct result of the Islamic extremist attacks of September 11, 2001, and effects U.S foreign policy to this today. Recently, the State Department trained 346 Somali recruits to join an elite counterterrorism campaign to fight against Al Shabab, a deadly terrorist branch. Understanding nationalism provides insight into the of United States’ motivations and continued promotion of the counterterrorism campaign in Somalia.

An individual’s commitment to their country is called [nationalism](#). Nationalism takes the shared sense of attachment to a particular nation and uses it to justify political action. It can be a powerful force, that gives a shared identity and goal to a group of people. Following the attacks of 9/11, the U.S. experienced a surge of nationalism. In the shared sense of loss and fear, the citizens of the U.S. banded together as Americans strengthening their shared identity and attachment to their country. Additionally, nationalism promotes the belief that every nation has a right to control a piece of territory. Since the attacks violated the safety and territory of the U.S, political and military retaliation ensued. The devastation of the attacks made it easy to justify the political action taken and to gain the citizens support of the decision. While the War on Terror was initiated following those attacks, to this day the “forever wars” are still active, with Somalia being the center of the U.S. counterterrorism drone war. Within the past year, 20 airstrikes have been

carried out in Somalia and 450 troops were restored to the area to advise the Somali soldiers.

Since the fight against terrorism has been active for 22 years and counting, many wonder if it will ever end. Is there an end in sight, or will the U.S foreign policy continue to be defined by a sense of nationalism that is deemed to require the use of force across the globe? Is the drone war in Somalia an act of defense, in the best interest of the protection of our country?

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