

U.S. MILITARY INTERVENTIONS SINCE 1890: *FROM WOUNDED KNEE TO YEMEN*

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List and article at <https://sites.evergreen.edu/zoltan/interventions>

The following is a partial list of U.S. military interventions from 1890 to 2024.

This guide does *not* include:

- * mobilizations of the National Guard,
- * offshore shows of naval strength,
- * reinforcements of embassy personnel,
- * the use of non-Defense Department personnel (e.g., Drug Enforcement Administration),
- * military exercises,
- * non-combat mobilizations (such as replacing postal strikers),
- * the permanent stationing of armed forces on bases,
- * covert actions where the US did *not* play a “command operation” role,
- * the use of small hostage rescue units,
- * most uses of foreign proxy troops,
- * U.S. piloting of foreign warplanes,
- * foreign or domestic disaster assistance,
- * military training and advisory programs not involving direct combat,
- * civic action programs, and many other military activities.

Among sources used, beside news reports, are the *Congressional Record* (23 June 1969), *180 Landings* by the U.S. Marine Corps History Division, Ege & Makhijani in *Counterspy* (July-Aug, 1982), “Instances of Use of United States Forces Abroad, 1798-1993” by Ellen C. Collier of the Library of Congress Congressional Research Service, and Ellsberg in *Protest & Survive*. Death toll estimates from 20th-century wars can be found in the *Historical Atlas of the 20th Century*, by alphabetized places index, map series, and major casualties: <https://necrometrics.com/warstats.htm>

Forces: B: Bombing	N: Naval
CO: Command Operation	NT: Nuclear Threat
J: Jets	NW: Nuclear War
M: Missiles	T: Troops

COUNTRY OR STATE	Dates of intervention	Forces	Comments
SOUTH DAKOTA	1890 (-?)	T	300+ Lakota civilians massacred at Wounded Knee.
ARGENTINA	1890	T	U.S. “interests” protected in Buenos Aires.
CHILE	1891	T	Marines clash with nationalist rebels.
HAITI	1891	T	Black revolt on Navassa Island defeated.
IDAHO	1892	T	Army suppresses silver miners’ strike.
HAWAI’I	1893 (-?)	N, T	Independent kingdom overthrown, seized 1898.
CHICAGO	1894	T	Breaking of rail strike, 34 killed.
NICARAGUA	1894	T	Month-long occupation of Bluefields.
CHINA	1894-95	N, T	Marines land in Sino-Japanese War
KOREA	1894-96	T	Marines kept in Seoul during war.
PANAMA	1895	T, N	Marines land in Colombian province.

NICARAGUA	1896	<i>T</i>	Marines land in port of Corinto.
CHINA	1898-1900	<i>T</i>	Boxer Rebellion fought by foreign armies.
PHILIPPINES	1898-1910	<i>N, T</i>	Seized from Spain, killed 600,000 Filipinos.
CUBA	1898-1902 (-?)	<i>N, T</i>	Seized from Spain, still hold Guantánamo base.
PUERTO RICO	1898 (-?)	<i>N, T</i>	Seized from Spain, occupation continues.
GUAM	1898 (-?)	<i>N, T</i>	Seized from Spain, still use as base.
MINNESOTA	1898 (-?)	<i>T</i>	Army battles Ojibwe revolt at Leech Lake.
NICARAGUA	1898	<i>T</i>	Marines land at port of San Juan del Sur.
SAMOA	1899 (-?)	<i>T</i>	Battle over succession to throne; annexed east.
NICARAGUA	1899	<i>T</i>	Marines land at port of Bluefields.
IDAHO	1899-1901	<i>T</i>	Army occupies Coeur d'Alene mining region.
OKLAHOMA	1901(-?)	<i>T</i>	Army battles Creek Native revolt.
PANAMA	1901-14	<i>N, T</i>	Broke off from Colombia 1903, annexed Canal Zone; opened canal 1914.
HONDURAS	1903	<i>T</i>	Marines intervene in revolution.
DOMINICAN REP.	1903-04	<i>T</i>	U.S. interests protected in revolution.
KOREA	1904-05	<i>T</i>	Marines land in Russo-Japanese War.
CUBA	1906-09	<i>T</i>	Marines land in democratic election.
NICARAGUA	1907	<i>T</i>	"Dollar Diplomacy" protectorate set up.
HONDURAS	1907	<i>T</i>	Marines land during war with Nicaragua.
PANAMA	1908	<i>T</i>	Marines intervene in election contest.
NICARAGUA	1910	<i>T</i>	Marines land in Bluefields & Corinto.
HONDURAS	1911	<i>T</i>	U.S. interests protected in civil war.
CHINA	1911-41	<i>N, T</i>	Continuous occupation with flare-ups.
CUBA	1912	<i>T</i>	U.S. interests protected in civil war.
PANAMA	1912	<i>T</i>	Marines land during heated election.
HONDURAS	1912	<i>T</i>	Marines protect U.S. economic interests.
NICARAGUA	1912-33	<i>T, B</i>	10-year occupation, fought Sandinista rebels.
MEXICO	1913	<i>N</i>	Americans evacuated during revolution.
DOMINICAN REP.	1914	<i>N</i>	Fight with rebels over Santo Domingo.
COLORADO	1914	<i>T</i>	Army breaks miners' strike.
MEXICO	1914-18	<i>N, T</i>	Series of interventions against nationalists.
HAITI	1914-34	<i>T, B</i>	19-year occupation after revolts.
TEXAS	1915	<i>T</i>	Soldiers crush Mexican-American rebellion
DOMINICAN REP.	1916-24	<i>T</i>	Marine occupation for 8 years.
CUBA	1917-33	<i>T</i>	Military occupation, economic protectorate.
WORLD WAR I	1917-18	<i>N, T</i>	Ships sunk, fought Germany for 1.5 years.
RUSSIA	1918-22	<i>N, T</i>	Five landings to fight Bolshevik Revolution.
PANAMA	1918-20	<i>T</i>	"Police duty" during unrest after elections.
HONDURAS	1919	<i>T</i>	Marines land during election campaign.
YUGOSLAVIA	1919	<i>T</i>	Marines intervene for Italy against Serbs in Dalmatia.
GUATEMALA	1920	<i>T</i>	2-week intervention against unionists.
WEST VIRGINIA	1920-21	<i>T, B</i>	Army intervenes against mineworkers.
TURKEY	1922	<i>T</i>	Fought Turkish nationalists in Smyrna.
CHINA	1922-27	<i>N, T</i>	Deployment during nationalist revolt.
MEXICO	1923	<i>B</i>	Airpower defends Calles from rebellion.
HONDURAS	1924-25	<i>T</i>	Landed twice during election strife.
PANAMA	1925	<i>T</i>	Marines suppress general strike.

CHINA	1927-34	<i>T</i>	Marines stationed throughout the country.
EL SALVADOR	1932	<i>N</i>	Warships send during Farabundo Martí revolt.
WASHINGTON DC	1932	<i>T</i>	Army stops WWI vet bonus protest.
WORLD WAR II	1941-45	<i>N, T, B, NW</i>	Hawai'i bombed, fought Japan, Italy & Germany for 3 years; first nuclear war.
DETROIT	1943	<i>T</i>	Army put down African American rebellion.
IRAN	1946	<i>NT</i>	Soviet troops told to leave northwestern region.
YUGOSLAVIA	1946	<i>N, NT</i>	Response to shoot-down of U.S. plane.
URUGUAY	1947	<i>NT</i>	Bombers deployed as show of strength.
GREECE	1947-49	<i>CO</i>	U.S. directs far-right forces in civil war.
GERMANY	1948	<i>NT</i>	Atomic-capable bombers guard Berlin Airlift.
CHINA	1948-49	<i>T</i>	Marines evacuate citizens before Communist victory.
PHILIPPINES	1948-54	<i>CO</i>	CIA directs war against Huk Rebellion.
PUERTO RICO	1950	<i>CO</i>	Independence rebellion crushed in Ponce.
KOREA	1951-53 (-?)	<i>T, N, B, NT</i>	U.S./So. Korea fights China/No. Korea to stalemate nuclear threat 1950 vs. China '53. Still have bases.
IRAN	1953	<i>CO</i>	CIA overthrows democracy, installs Shah.
VIETNAM	1954	<i>NT</i>	French offered bombs to use vs. Dienbienphu siege.
GUATEMALA	1954	<i>CO, B, NT</i>	CIA directs exile invasion after gov't nationalized United Fruit lands; bombers based in Nicaragua.
EGYPT	1956	<i>NT, T</i>	Soviets told to keep out of Suez Crisis; Marines evacuate foreigners.
LEBANON	1958	<i>T, N</i>	Army & Marine occupation against rebels.
IRAQ	1958	<i>NT</i>	Iraq warned against invading Kuwait.
CHINA	1958	<i>NT</i>	China told not to move on Taiwan isles.
PANAMA	1958	<i>T</i>	Flag protests erupt into Canal Zone confrontation.
VIETNAM	1960-75	<i>T, N, B, NT</i>	Fought South Vietnam revolt & North Vietnam; 1 million killed; atomic bomb threats in 1968 & '69.
CUBA	1961	<i>CO</i>	CIA-directed Bay of Pigs exile invasion fails.
GERMANY	1961	<i>NT</i>	Alert during Berlin Wall crisis.
LAOS	1962	<i>CO</i>	Military buildup during Pathet Lao guerrilla war.
CUBA	1962	<i>NT, N</i>	Blockade during missile crisis; near-war with Soviets.
IRAQ	1963	<i>CO</i>	CIA organizes coup that killed president, brings Ba'ath Party to power, Saddam Hussein as secret service head
PANAMA	1964	<i>T</i>	Panamanians shot for urging canal's return.
INDONESIA	1965	<i>CO</i>	1 million+ killed in CIA-assisted army coup.
DOMINICAN REP.	1965-66	<i>T, B</i>	Army & Marines land during election campaign.
GUATEMALA	1966-67	<i>CO</i>	Green Berets intervene against rebels.
DETROIT	1967	<i>T</i>	Army battles African American uprising, 43 killed.
UNITED STATES	1968	<i>T</i>	After M.L. King is shot; 21,000+ soldiers in cities.
CAMBODIA	1969-75	<i>B, T, N</i>	Up to 2 million killed in decade of bombing, starvation, political chaos.
OMAN	1970	<i>CO</i>	U.S. directs Iranian marine invasion.
LAOS	1971-73	<i>CO, B</i>	U.S. directs South Vietnamese invasion; "carpet-bombs" countryside around Ho Chi Minh Trail.
SOUTH DAKOTA	1973	<i>CO</i>	Army directs Wounded Knee siege of Lakotas.
MIDEAST	1973	<i>NT</i>	Worldwide alert vs. Soviets during Mideast War.

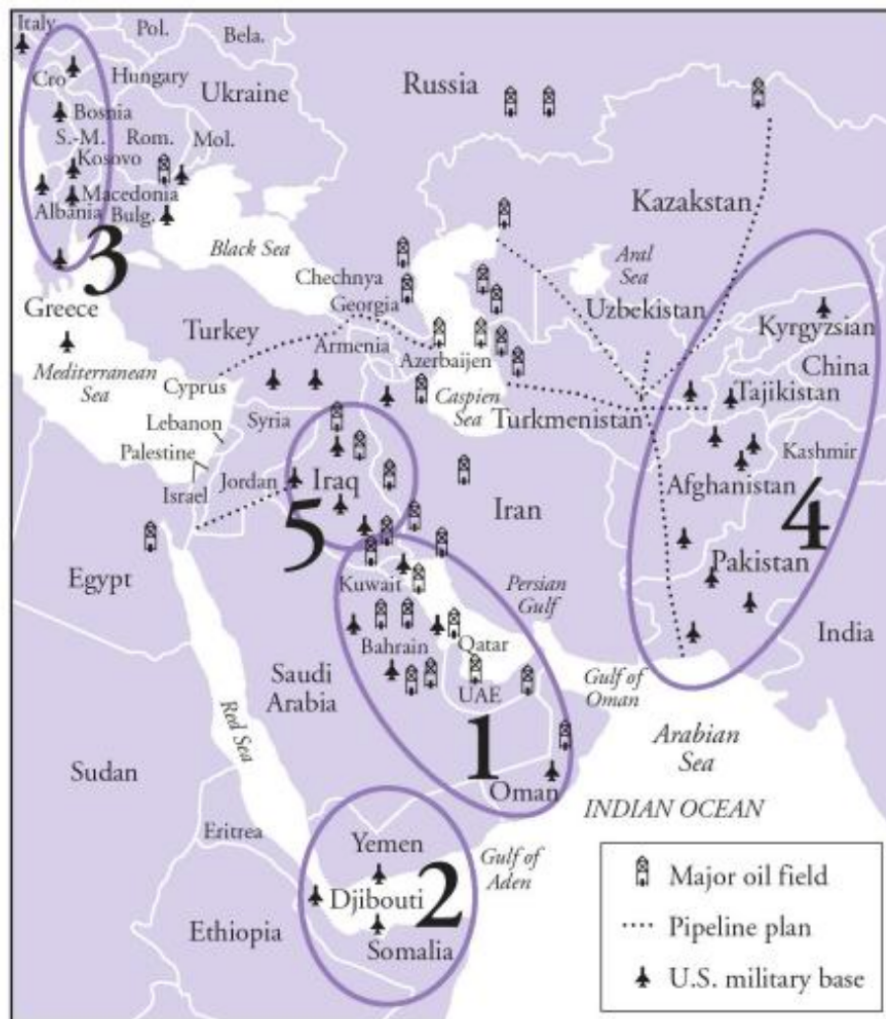
CHILE	1973	<i>CO</i>	CIA-backed coup ousts elected leftist president.
CAMBODIA	1975	<i>T, B</i>	Gassing of captured ship Mayagüez, 28 troops die when helicopter shot down.
ANGOLA	1976-92	<i>CO</i>	CIA assists South African-backed UNITA rebels.
IRAN	1980	<i>T, NT</i>	Raid to rescue embassy hostages; 8 troops die in helicopter-plane crash; bombing aborted. Soviets warned not to get involved in revolution.
LIBYA	1981	<i>N, J</i>	Two Libyan jets shot down in maneuvers.
EL SALVADOR	1981-92	<i>CO, T</i>	Advisors, overflights aid counterinsurgency war, soldiers briefly involved in hotel hostage clash.
NICARAGUA	1981-90	<i>CO, N</i>	CIA directs exile (Contra) invasions, plants harbor mines against Sandinista revolutionary gov't.
LEBANON	1982-84	<i>N, B, T</i>	Marines expel PLO and back far-right Phalangists, Navy bombs and shells Muslim rebels, Syrian forces. 241 Marines killed when Shi'a rebels bomb barracks.
GRENADA	1983-84	<i>T, B</i>	Invasion topples 4-year leftist revolutionary gov't
HONDURAS	1983-89	<i>T</i>	Maneuvers help build bases near Nicaragua borders.
IRAN	1984	<i>J</i>	Two Iranian jets shot down over Persian Gulf.
LIBYA	1986	<i>B, N, J</i>	Air strikes to topple Qaddafi gov't.
BOLIVIA	1986	<i>T</i>	Army assists raids on cocaine region.
IRAN	1987-88	<i>N, B</i>	U.S. intervenes on side of Iraq in war, defending reflagged tankers & downing civilian jet.
LIBYA	1989	<i>N, J</i>	Two Libyan jets shot down.
VIRGIN ISLANDS	1989	<i>T</i>	St. Croix Black unrest after hurricane.
PHILIPPINES	1989	<i>J</i>	Air cover provided for government against coup.
PANAMA	1989-99	<i>T, B</i>	Noriega gov't ousted by 27,000 soldiers, 2000+ killed, 1989. Canal Zone & bases returned, 1999.
LIBERIA	1990	<i>T</i>	Foreigners evacuated during civil war.
SAUDI ARABIA	1990-91	<i>T, J</i>	Iraq countered after invading Kuwait. 540,000 troops Stationed; also in Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, UAE, Israel.
IRAQ	1990-91	<i>B, T, N</i>	Blockade of Iraqi & Jordanian ports, air strikes; 200,000+ killed in invasion of Iraq & Kuwait; large-scale destruction of Iraqi military in Gulf War.
KUWAIT	1991	<i>N, B, T</i>	Kuwait royal family returned to throne.
IRAQ	1991-2003	<i>B, N</i>	No-fly zone over Kurdish north, Shi'a south; constant air strikes, naval-enforced economic sanctions.
LOS ANGELES	1992	<i>T</i>	Army, Marines deployed in anti-police uprising.
SOMALIA	1992-94	<i>T, N, B</i>	U.S.-led United Nations occupation during civil war; raids fail against one Mogadishu faction.
YUGOSLAVIA	1992-94	<i>N</i>	NATO blockade of Serbia & Montenegro.
BOSNIA	1993-95	<i>J, B</i>	No-fly zone in civil war; downed jets, bombed Serbs.
HAITI	1994	<i>T, N</i>	Blockade against military government; troops restore President Aristide to office three years after coup.
ZAIRE (CONGO)	1996-97	<i>T</i>	Troops at Rwandan Hutu refugee camps, in area where Congo revolution begins.
LIBERIA	1997	<i>T</i>	Soldiers under fire during evacuation of foreigners.
ALBANIA	1997	<i>T</i>	Soldiers under fire during evacuation of foreigners.
SUDAN	1998	<i>M</i>	Attack on alleged Al Qaeda nerve gas plant.

AFGHANISTAN	1998	<i>M</i>	Attack on former CIA training camps used by Al Qaeda after its attacks on US embassies.
IRAQ	1998	<i>B, M</i>	Four days of intensive air strikes after weapons inspectors allege Iraqi obstructions.
YUGOSLAVIA	1999	<i>B, M</i>	Heavy NATO air strikes after Serbia declines to withdraw from Kosovo. NATO occupation of Kosovo.
YEMEN	2000	<i>N</i>	USS Cole, docked in Aden, bombed by Al Qaeda.
MACEDONIA	2001	<i>T</i>	NATO forces disarm & move Kosovo Albanian rebels.
UNITED STATES	2001	<i>J, N</i>	Reaction to Al Qaeda hijacker attacks on New York, DC.
AFGHANISTAN	2001-21	<i>T, B, M</i>	Invasion to overthrow Taliban, hunt Al Qaeda fighters, install Karzai regime, and battle Taliban insurgency. 30,000+ U.S. troops, numerous private security contractors carry out occupation.
YEMEN	2002	<i>M</i>	Drone missile attack on Al Qaeda, including US citizen.
PHILIPPINES	2002(-?)	<i>T, N</i>	Training mission for Philippine military fighting Abu Sayyaf rebels evolves into Mindanao combat missions.
COLOMBIA	2003-22	<i>T</i>	Special Forces sent to rebel zone to back up Colombian military protecting oil pipeline.
IRAQ	2003-11	<i>T, N, B, M</i>	Saddam Hussein regime toppled in Baghdad. 250,000+ U.S. personnel participate in invasion. US & UK forces battle Sunni & Shi'a insurgencies. 160,000+ troops & many private contractors stationed on bases.
LIBERIA	2003	<i>T</i>	Troops in peacekeeping force as rebels expel leader.
HAITI	2004-05	<i>T, N</i>	Marines & Army land after right-wing rebels oust elected President Aristide, U.S. forces him into exile.
PAKISTAN	2005-21	<i>M, B, CO</i>	CIA drone, air strikes, Special Forces raids on alleged Al Qaeda & Taliban refuge villages kill multiple civilians. Drone attacks on Pakistani Mehsud network.
SOMALIA	2006(-?)	<i>M, N, T, CO</i>	Special Forces advise Ethiopian invasion that topples Islamist government; AC-130 strikes, Cruise missile attacks & helicopter raids vs. Al Shabab Islamist rebels; naval blockade vs. "pirates" & rebels.
SYRIA	2008	<i>T</i>	Special Forces helicopter raid near Iraq kill 8 civilians
YEMEN	2009-21	<i>M, CO</i>	Cruise missile attack on Al Qaeda kills 49 civilians; U.S. backing Saudi-Yemeni attacks on Houthi rebels
LIBYA	2011(-?)	<i>B, M, T, CO</i>	NATO coordinates air strikes and missile attacks vs. Qaddafi government during uprising by rebel army. Constant Special Forces, drone raids vs. Islamist rebels.
SYRIA	2014(-?)	<i>B, M, T, CO</i>	Air strikes & Special Forces intervene vs. Islamic State insurgents; training other Syrian rebels; bomb alleged Syrian gov't chemical arms sites.
IRAQ	2014(-?)	<i>B, M, T, CO</i>	Air strikes & Special Forces intervene vs. Islamic State insurgents; training Iraqi & Kurdish troops.
NIGER	2017	<i>T</i>	Air strikes on Iranians & pro-Iran militia, 2019-20. Special Forces combat Islamist insurgents, fly drones.

SAUDI ARABIA	2019-20	T	Mobilization against Iran in Saudi Arabia & UAE after drone attacks on Saudi oil infrastructure.
YEMEN	2023-?	N,B,M	Continued drone strikes on Al Qaeda in southern Yemen. US-UK attacks on Houthi vessels and sites in northern Yemen after Houthi attacks on Red Sea shipping during Israel-Gaza war.
ISRAEL	2024	J,M	Israeli, U.S., U.K., and Jordanian forces shoot down missiles and drones from Iranian attack carried out in retaliation for Israeli bombing of consulate in Syria.

EXPANSION OF U.S. MILITARY BASING RIGHTS PRECEDING AND FOLLOWING INTERVENTIONS, 1990-2003

Map by Zoltán Grossman,
Introducing Human Geographies, 2nd edition (2005), p. 560



1. PERSIAN GULF 1990
2. SOMALIA 1992–93 / YEMEN 1996–2000
3. BALKANS 1995, 1999
4. CENTRAL ASIA 2001
5. IRAQ 2003