

Observation no: 185

Country-year: United States 1990

1. Did the current regime come to power in a military coup?

No.

2. Has the country ever experienced a military coup?

No.

3. Is the country's top leader a former military officer?

Yes. George H.W. Bush served in World War II from 1942-1945 as a naval aviator.¹ At the time of his separation from the military, he held the rank of Lieutenant Junior Grade.

4. Is the military officer corps largely closed to those who do not share the leader's ethnic or sectarian background?

No. In 1948, President Harry Truman issued Executive Order 9981, calling for the desegregation of the Armed Forces and equality of treatment and opportunity for all service members.² That said, due to legacies of discrimination and the presence of segregated units prior to World War II, minorities are still underrepresented at the officer corps level.

5. Are there strict ideological requirements for entry into the senior officer corps?

No.

6. Is party membership required for entry into the senior officer corps?

No.

¹ "Biography: Lieutenant Junior Grade George Bush, USNR," Naval History & Heritage Command, accessed May 1, 2014, <http://www.history.navy.mil/faqs/faq10-1.htm>.

² Military Leadership Diversity Commission. *From Representation to Inclusion: Diversity Leadership for the 21st Century Military*, Military Leadership Diversity Commission Report, Arlington, VA, 2011.

7. Does military training involve extensive political education or ideological indoctrination?

No. The U.S. military is a professional force.

8. Has the military been used to repress internal dissent in the last five years?

No.

9. Has the military been used to govern the country in the last five years?

No.

10. Is there a paramilitary organization separate from the regular military, used to provide regime or leader security?

No.

11. Is there an internal intelligence apparatus dedicated to watching the regular military?

No.

12. Has a purge of the officer corps occurred in the last five years?

No.

13. Is there an institutionalized forum through which civilian leaders and military officers regularly exchange information?

Yes. The National Security Acts of 1947 and 1949 overhauled the American defense establishment, enhancing and institutionalizing congressional oversight of the military.³ The National Security Council, established in 1947, functions as an arena for information sharing between the military and civilians.⁴ Additionally, Congress oversees the military at the level of Armed Services Committees (established in 1947)⁵ and has budgetary oversight via the Subcommittees on Defense

³ Avant, Deborah D, *Political Institutions and Military Change*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 32.

⁴ Feaver, Peter. *An Agency Theory Explanation of American Civil-Military Relations during the Cold War*. Working Paper for the Program for the Study in Democracy, Institutions and Political Economy. 2007, p. 12.

⁵ Established in 1947 See, "1947-1954," National Archives Website, accessed May 5, 2014, <http://www.archives.gov/legislative/finding-aids/reference/senate/armed-services/1947-1954.html>.

Appropriations. The National Security Act of 1947 also officially established the Joint Chiefs of Staff, comprised of service chiefs from the Marine Corps, the Army, Air Force, and Navy who would elect a Chairman as their direct line of communication to civilian government via the Secretary of Defense.⁶ Notably, the Goldwater-Nichols act of 1986 increased the Secretary of Defense's control of the Department of Defense by making the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff the head of an augmented, stronger Joint Staff and principal military advisor of the President, the National Security Council and the Secretary of Defense.⁷ The Chairman was also assigned to develop joint doctrine.

⁶ Its predecessor was the 1942 Combined Chiefs of Staff (CCS), a joint effort of Churchill and FDR. See, "Joint Chiefs of Staff," Navy Administration Website, accessed May 5, 2014, http://navyadministration.tpub.com/12966/css/12966_224.htm.

⁷ Robert Egnell, *Complex Peace Operations and Civil-Military Relations: Winning the Peace*, (NY, NY: Routledge, 2009), p. 51.