

Biden's Middle East Policy: Inheritance and Changes to Trump's Middle East Policy

Zhiyu Jiang*

Department of Arabic, Sun Yat-Sen University, Zhuhai, Guangdong, 519000, China

*Corresponding author. Email: 1462608592@qq.com

ABSTRACT

President Biden proposed a Middle East policy different from that of the Trump administration in the 2020 American Presidential Election. Biden declared that he would correct Trump's mistakes in his campaign press release. Based on this, this article will use the method of comparative research to analyze the similarities and differences between the Biden administration's Middle East policy and the Trump administration's policy on the Iranian nuclear issue, the US military presence in the Middle East, and the relationship of allies. Although the Biden administration has inherited some of Trump's policies, and it has made changes based on the domestic situation in the United States and the values of democracy and human rights, Biden's Middle East policy is still difficult to make greater progress.

Keywords: *Biden's Middle East Policy, Trump's Middle East Policy, Iran nuclear issue, U.S. military presence, relation with allies, human right.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton published a signed article "America's Pacific Century" in "Foreign Policy" magazine in 2011, the Obama administration has pursued an Asia-Pacific rebalancing strategy. After 5 years, with Trump's coming to power and the intensification of strategic competition between China and the United States, the United States pursues a policy of strategic contraction in the Middle East. After the Biden administration came to power, the Middle East policy pursued by Trump has undergone some changes compared with Trump's Middle East policy, but there are also inherited parts. The Biden administration's policy in the Middle East is mainly based on Biden's manifesto. In Biden's election manifesto, the first focus is the issue of nuclear proliferation, which is Iran nuclear issue. Biden proposes to return to the Iran nuclear deal [1]. The second focus is the issue of the war and the U.S. military force in the Middle East. The U.S. will stop the Yemen civil war. The third is the relationship with allies. Biden try to rebuild the relationship between the U.S. and regional allies, which includes U.S. emphasis on human rights and the other democratic values [2]. This article will compare Trump's Middle East policy and Biden's Middle East policy in order in these three aspects, and finally conclude that Biden's inheritance and change of Trump's policy. Through an integrated analysis of the content of the

Middle East policy during the Trump and Biden period, combined with the views of various US Middle East policy think tanks, this article will show the main characteristics and changes of Trump and Biden's Middle East policy, and will help future research on the US Middle East policy.

2. IRAN NUCLEAR ISSUE

2.1. Trump's policy on Iran nuclear issue

On May 8, 2018, President Trump announced that the United States would withdraw from The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, JCPOA, referred to as the "Iran nuclear deal" [3]. Trump announced that his administration would work will allies to counter Iran, placing additional sanction on Iran, and address the regime's proliferation of missiles and weapons that threaten its neighbors, global trade, and freedom of navigation [4]. This marked the end of US-Iranian relations during the Obama administration. It is worth noting that Trump's adjustment to Obama's policy does not mean a change in the core interests of the United States on the Iran issue. According to Trump's announcement, it is obvious to figure out that the United States remains committed to prevent Iran from its pursuit of nuclear weapons, and effective missile for carrying nuclear weapons. It also has to assure the freedom of navigation in Hormoz Strait, and prevent Iran or its

proxies in some countries in the Middle East from directly threatening U.S. allies in the Middle East [5]. The core interests of the United States on the Iran issue have not been changed, but the Trump administration's diplomatic strategy has undergone significant changes. The traditional American foreign policy is generally that the United States tries to put the international order under the management of a multilateral cooperation framework. The Trump administration has clearly abandoned this strategy, choosing to abstain from many multilateral agreements, and the most obvious example is his withdrawal from Iran Nuclear Agreement. There are two factors that cause the change in Trump's foreign policy on Iran nuclear issue. The first is the ideological conflict within the Trump administration. The Trump administration can be divided into three factions: Nationalists, Libertarian non-interventionists, and internationalists, including neoconservatives and economic internationalists [6]. Nationalists gradually gained the upper hand in the second year of the Trump administration. This shift prompted a change in the Trump administration's Iran policy, which eventually led to the U.S. withdrawal from the Iran nuclear agreement. The other factor is that Trump administration had to conform to the political requirement from the American society. In Trump's election manifesto, Trump promised that his administration would avoid wasting U.S. resources on regime change, humanitarian intervention, and wars to promote democracy, which cater to the idealistic model of the white voters in the United States against globalization. As Trump himself said, withdrawing from the Iran nuclear deal is for campaign promises. Shaped by these factors, Trump's Middle East policy on Iran presents three characteristics. Firstly, Trump's policy is inconsistent and incoherence. The internal inconsistency of the Trump administration and its response to the domestic political needs of the United States are inconsistent with the actual interests of the U.S. Middle East policy. In the background of strategic contraction, the US's participation in multilateral agreements is actually a low-cost way to maintain US

regional hegemony. The existence of the Iran nuclear deal actually reduces the possibility of another U.S. military operation which will cost the U.S. much more in the region. After the withdrawal, Trump is failing to produce coherent alternative policy, and cannot translate his best campaign themes into coherent policy, grounded in new strategy [7]. Secondly, Trump tied radical Islam and Islamic terrorism with Iran in the propaganda, which further reduced the possibility of the cooperation of Washington and Tehran. Finally, In order to contain Iran's regional presence after the withdrawal from Iran nuclear deal, the Trump administration chose to fully support Saudi Arabia and Israel, including favoring the two countries in many foreign policies and arms sales, and build regional coalition. In September 2018, Pompeo met collectively with the foreign ministers of the 6 GCC countries and Egypt and Jordan, and officially announced the establishment of a "Middle East Strategic Alliance" with these 8 countries [8].

2.2. Biden's policy on Iran nuclear issue

Given that the Vienna held six rounds of talks on Iran's nuclear program between U.S. led western countries and Iran until July 30, 2021, Biden has tried to return to the Iran nuclear agreement. Like Trump, Biden's return to Iran also has its public opinion foundation in domestic politic environment. A recent survey analysis from the Chicago Council on Global Affairs and Iran Poll show that although support for the agreement has diminished over time, a large portion of American and Iranian publics still support the JCPOA. Nearly six in ten Americans (57%) favor US participation in the deal that lifts some international economic sanctions against Iran in exchange for strict limits on nuclear weapons. Backing, however, is heavily determined by party affiliation. A majority of Democrats (74%) express support for the agreement compared to a minority of Republicans (39%). Notably, four in ten Americans (39%) stated opposition to US participation, including a majority of Republican respondents (58%) [9].

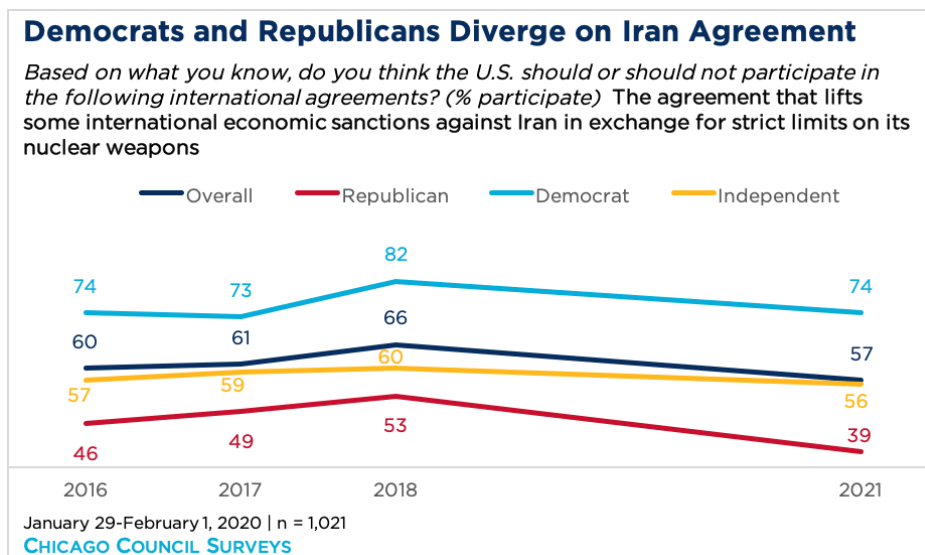


Figure 1. Democrats and Republican Diverge on Iran Agreement [10].

In addition to the support rate of domestic politics, another obvious feature of Biden's return to the Iran nuclear deal is the "delay strategy". The Biden administration does not seem to be in a hurry to reach effective progress on the Iran nuclear deal. The Vienna Conference reached a deadlock after six rounds, The Iranian representative cited seven contradictions during the conference, which includes that Biden administration hoped to tie some issues of the future regional situation into the Iran nuclear agreement, and Biden administration refused to sign written documents to ensure that they will not withdraw from the Iran nuclear agreement [11]. There three reasons for this deadlock in negotiation and delay strategy. First, the Biden administration still has disputes over whether it is necessary to bind provisions in the Iran nuclear deal to restrict Iran's future regional expansion and weapons development. Especially the sunset clauses in the Iran nuclear deal fail to make targeted arrangements to restrict Iran's research and development of nuclear weapons after 2025. Second, Biden's administration pays more attention to opinions of allies. Netanyahu stated on April 23 that the return to the nuclear agreement poses a threat to Israel and that Iran and international parties are not welcome to hold talks in Vienna [12]. After that, an Israeli Mossad official said that US President Joe Biden assured him that Washington will not return to the Iran nuclear deal [13]. Biden also promised that Iran will not threat Israel in nuclear issue, and the United States remains determined to counter Iran's malign activity and support for terrorist proxies [14]. Thirdly, The Iran government's attitude after the Iranian elections is unclear. Although the US urges Iran to return to the Iranian nuclear talks, the US's attitude is not eager. It is possible that the Biden administration deliberately used delaying strategy to gain the advantage and initiative in negotiations with Iran. Affected by the US sanctions and Covid-19 pandemic, the Iranian

national economy has been in a long-term downturn, although Iranians do not see the pandemic and foreign sanctions as the most important factor in determining Iran's poor economic performance [15].

2.3. Inheritance and changes

2.3.1. Inheritance

Although the content of Biden's middle east policy different from Trump's middle east policy, Biden's policy on Iran nuclear issue also focus on domestic politic requirement like Trump's. In addition to responding to domestic political demands, Biden also continues Trump's views on US interests in the Iranian nuclear issue, including preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons, preventing Iran's development of missile technology, and restricting the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' presence in the Middle East. To attain these interests, Biden's administration continues to maintain Middle East Strategic Alliance (Anti-Iran coalition) which is built by Trump administration.

2.3.2. Changes

Despite the deadlock in the negotiations, the Biden administration still has the will to return to the Iran nuclear agreement. Unlike the Trump administration, the Biden administration believes that the multilateral cooperation framework is still an effective policy tool for maintaining US influence in the Middle East at a low cost in the background of the strategic contraction in Middle East region. To keep the negotiation on track, although The United States has maintained sanctions on Iran until now, the Biden administration has abandoned the practice of tying the Iranian regime with radical Islam.

3. REGIONAL CONFLICTS AND U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE

3.1. *Trump's policy on regional conflicts and U.S. military presence*

There are three places in the Middle East that have large-scale conflicts and U.S. military presence: Syria, Yemen, and Iraq.

3.1.1. *Syria*

In the early days of the Obama administration, to overthrow Bashar regime was one of the most important reasons for the United States' involvement in the Syrian Civil War. However, as time went by to the Trump administration, under the influence of the intensified Sino-US strategic competition and the Middle East contraction strategy, the Trump administration shifted its focus to contracting Iran's power in Syria and destroying ISIS. Contracting Iran and its affiliated Shia militias is one of the important geopolitical layouts of the United States in the Middle East. Trump administration hoped to contain the "Shiite Crescent" created by Iran and break up the Iranian alliance, making it difficult to connect and become isolated points [16]. Compared with this main purpose, the fight against the Islamic State seems to be based on American value traditions and considerations of the security of its allies and the balance of the regional situation, but not a final act of the United States to safeguard its own interests in the Middle East. In addition to those two goals, Trump administration also wanted to contain Russia's strong influence in the Syrian region. However, with the victories of the Syrian government forces on the battlefield, the influence of Russia and Iran in Syria is increasing day by day. As a result, the influence of the United States on Syria's political situation is gradually shrinking, and the hope of containing Russia has gradually become a dream [17]. With the defeat of ISIS, Trump's policy about the U.S. military presence in Syria was faced with a dilemma. On the one hand, domestic demanded to end the high-investment military presence in the Middle East; on the other hand, it was the need to maintain US regional influence and geopolitical interests. After the wave of withdrawal [18], the U.S. still remained about 400 soldiers in Syria.

3.1.2. *Yemen*

Supporting Saudi Arabia to expel pro-Iranian Houthis in Yemen is one of the important policies of the Trump administration to contain Iran. For this purpose, Trump administration devoted itself to push forward the arms sale process. Despite great resistance from Congress, the Trump administration still seeks to pass the US\$8 billion arms sales to Saudi Arabia [19]. After Houthis attacking Saudi Arabia's oil fields, the Trump administration announced on Nov. 19, 2019 that approximately 3,000

U.S. troops will be deployed to Saudi Arabia to protect the region "against hostile action by Iran and its proxy forces," [20].

3.1.3. *Iraq*

The Trump administration's Iraq policy has obvious phase characteristics. Before 2019, the Trump administration had obviously inherited some parts of the Obama administration's Iraq policy which was predicated on a notion that Iran can be a partner, if not an ally in the war against ISIS. Although the Trump administration still monitored and contracted Iran's developments in Iraq, it deliberately turned a blind eye to some of Iran's actions, such as the rising force in Iraq—the Popular Mobilization Units (PMUs) [21]. After 2019, especially after Baghdadi was killed by the U.S. forces, the main task of the U.S. forces in Iraq changed to monitoring Iran. In an interview with CBS, Trump announced that the U.S. military force should stay in Iraq, not just continue to attack the ISIS, but to observe Iran. Trump said that the U.S. base in Iraq would serve as a monitoring center for activities related to nuclear weapons or other things in Iran [22]. Anyhow, Trump administration supported shrinking the military presence in Iraq. As of September 2020, the Trump administration has announced its plans to reduce troop levels in Iraq from 5200 to 3000 [23].

3.2. *Biden's policy on regional conflicts and U.S. military presence*

3.2.1. *Syria*

To date, the United States still has about 900 troops in Syria, including a number of Green Berets [24]. The United States has not made it clear whether it will increase its forces in Syria, but the Pentagon and the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS led by the United States announced that the U.S. will continue to maintain a smaller military presence in Syria to combat ISIS. For the Biden administration, the United States will not be too involved in the Syrian issue, but it still need to maintain its influence in Syria. In the manifesto of Biden in 2020 election. Biden announced that he would recommit to standing with civil society and pro-democracy partners on the ground, and help shape a political settlement to give more Syrians a voice. As a result, the US military presence in Syria is more to monitor Russia and Iran's expansion in Syria, and to protect US non-state actors in Syria—the Syrian Democratic Forces which fight against the Islamic State and Jaysh Maghawir al-Thawra (MaT), or the Revolutionary Commando Army, a Syrian democratic force in the eyes of Americans. There is still a lot of dissenting voice in the United States for maintaining the US military presence in Syria. The opposition, including Robert Ford, the Syrian ambassador of the Obama administration, believes that

Biden should withdraw from the US forces that help the Syrian Democratic Forces (the Kurdish-led militia) [25]. The Biden administration uses human right in Syria as a way to support non-state allies other than military intervention, and seeks chance to pass the UN resolution that reopens the cross-broader aid channel which is started in Iraq. In the eyes of China and Russia, the proposal was a disguised aid to the Syrian rebels, so the proposal was rejected by China and Russia. Despite the veto of China and Russia, in 2021 March 30, the U.S. unveiled “more than \$596 million in new humanitarian assistance to respond to the Syrian crisis” [26].

3.2.2. *Yemen*

In the speech on August 29, 2020, Biden announced that he would end the support for the Saudi-led war in Yemen. In the conversation with King Salman bin Abdulaziz al-Saud on February 25, 2021, Biden once again expressed the idea of ending the war in Yemen. To achieve this goal, Biden’s administration intends to suspend the sale of several offensive weapons approved by the Trump administration to Saudi Arabia. After review, the Biden government plans to suspend the sale of air-to-surface guided munitions used by fixed-wing aircraft to Saudi Arabia [27]. Regarding human rights issues, the Biden administration is willing to reverse the human rights situation in Yemen. However, lifting the blockade of Saudi Arabia against Yemen and the identification of the Houthi as a terrorist organization will lead to conflicts with geopolitical interests which include Saudi Arabia’s national security and the U.S. strategy to contract Iran. The Biden administration’s further attitude may be reflected in this year’s National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA)

3.2.3. *Iraq*

Compared with the withdrawal of troops in Afghanistan, it is difficult for the Biden administration to do the same thing in Iraq. Since the attack on the Green Zone in Baghdad in December last year, the United States has stepped up its efforts to crack down on Iran-backed Shiite armed militias. On February 25, 2021, United States forces conducted a targeted military strike against infrastructure in eastern Syria used by Iran-supported non-state militia groups [28]. Although after Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa Kadimi meeting with President Joe Biden at the White House, the U.S. decided to transform the U.S. military mission in Iraq into a purely advisory role before the end of the year, which marks the official end of the U.S. combat mission in Iraq [29], the United States still faces two major issues of maintaining the stability of the Iraqi regime and containing Iran’s actions in Iraq. Therefore, no matter what the change is, the number of U.S. troops deployed in Iraq will always maintain a considerable number, and the long-term military cooperation relationship with the Iraqi

government will be maintained to ensure U.S. interests in the Middle East.

3.3. *Inheritance and changes*

3.3.1. *Inheritance*

Firstly, Biden administration follows the strategic contraction that was implemented by Trump administration. The Biden administration, like the Trump administration, wants to cut spending on the U.S. military presence in the Middle East. Secondly, Biden administration inherits the anti-terrorism policy of Trump administration in the Middle East, which is reflected in maintaining the intensity of the fight against ISIS and primarily using air power. Thirdly, Biden administration inherits the notion of “strategy hedge” of Trump administration towards Iran. Although Biden administration withdraws from Afghanistan, it has shown no willingness to withdraw from Syria and Iraq.

3.3.2. *Changes*

Firstly, unlike the Trump administration, the Biden administration believes that the humanitarian crisis of the Yemen issue outweighs its geopolitical interests. In other words, the Biden administration does not put the Yemen issue in an important part of U.S. interests in the Middle East. Consequently, Biden administration seeks to end the military support on Saudi-Arabia in Yemen war. Secondly, the Biden administration is putting more emphasis on non-state Allies in Syria. Compared with the criticism caused by Trump when he announced his withdrawal from Syria, Biden pays more attention to the opinions of the United States’ non-state partners in Syria and regards them as important forces for combating terrorists and Shia militias, and even important forces involved in the division of political power in Syria after the civil war. Thirdly, The Biden administration regards human rights issues as the basic logic of US intervention in the Middle East [30]. It also regards human rights diplomacy as an effective policy tool, a low-cost policy tool for maintaining US influence in the Middle East and supporting non-state partners in the region.

4. **RELATIONSHIPS WITH ALLIES**

4.1. *Trump’s policy on relationships with allies*

The United States never has had any alliance commitments in the Middle East. Regarding U.S. interests in the Middle East and geopolitics in the Middle East, the United States has two most important “allies” in the Middle East, one is Israel and the other is Saudi Arabia [31].

During the Trump era, Israel had a clear priority. This priority is reflected in two aspects. One is the U.S.’s partiality towards Israel on issues left over from history.

Even though it was opposed by the media and people in many Arab countries, on December 06, 2017, the Trump administration announced that it would recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and moved the embassy to Jerusalem [32]. However, Trump's actions have not been opposed by Arab countries at the national level [33]. Therefore, this decision can be regarded as a pre-policy of the Trump administration to promote Arab-Israel reconciliation, testing whether Iran threat or Palestinian-Israeli issue is more important. The other is U.S.'s effort to support Israel's national security. This aspect is embodied in two measures: The first one is that the United States, on the grounds of guarding against threats posed by Syria, Iran, and Hezbollah, to Israel, announced that it recognized Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights [34], and acquiesced in Israel's use of air power to attack Shi'ite militias in Iran and Iraq. The second one is that The Trump administration had fully promoted the normalization of UAE-Israel relations, and had promoted the normalization of relations between Arab countries and Israel.

During Trump's time in the White House, the relationship between the United States and Saudi Arabia, especially Saudi Arabia, reached a peak. The Trump administration continued to implement arms sales with Saudi Arabia under pressure from Congress. In the killing of Khashoggi, although many members of the U.S. Congress have called for punishing Riyadh and reassessing the relationship, the Trump administration still maintains a close relationship with Saudi Arabia [35]. After the Houthi armed forces attacked Saudi oil fields, in October 2019, the United States continued to increase its military strength and sent two fighter squadrons, an air expeditionary wing, two air defense systems, and an anti-missile system to Saudi Arabia. Within two months, the total number of additional troops from the United States to Saudi Arabia has reached 3,000. The preference for Saudi Arabia is part of the Trump administration's Middle East strategy. For the Trump administration, the huge support for Israel and Saudi Arabia will cut US expenditures in response to the threat of Iran, especially Trump believes that arms sales will compensate for a large part of these expenditures. At the same time, these supports will also build a solid line of defense for the interests of the United States.

4.2. Biden's policy on relationships with allies

The Biden administration's policy towards its allies is extremely contradictory. On the one hand, Biden's strategy of contraction in the Middle East makes the United States have to rely on its traditional allies in the Middle East to maintain its utterance power in the Middle East. However, these traditional allies represent that the interests of allies in the region must be respected by the United States to some extent. On the other hand, Biden promised in his campaign platform that his foreign policy

would mark a major departure from former President Donald Trump, pledging to put human rights and democracy at the center of his approach to global affairs [36].

Biden's foreign policy towards Israel is clear, and the Biden administration will continue to support Israel. The Biden administration does not want to interfere too much in Israel's regional affairs, especially the Palestinian-Israeli issue. When the Palestine-Israel conflict began on May 10, the Biden administration lacked a response to the Palestine-Israel conflict. Although Biden claimed to support the two-state solution, he lacked action and was unwilling to take substantive actions [37]. While the Palestinian-Israeli conflict continues, the Biden administration still approved the sale of precision-guided weapons worth US\$735 million to Israel. Criticisms in Congress for Biden's partiality to Israel and inaction are increasing. The voices of American people supporting Palestine are gradually increasing. According to a Gallup poll, the percentage sympathizing more with Palestinians reach a 20-year high of 25 percent this year. This increase is being driven largely by gradual shifts in the views of Democrats (39% sympathize more with Palestinians) and young adults (43% of adults ages 18-35) [38]. Currently, after Netanyahu stepped down, Biden's attitude towards Israel is still on the established track, but the conflict between Palestine and Israel has not been properly resolved and the Palestinians and Israelis have insufficient confidence in the two-state plan [39]. In the context of this situation, the Biden administration may need to invest more political capital in Israel and the region.

Biden's foreign policy towards Saudi-Arabia is mixture. On the one hand, Saudi Arabia is still an important regional ally of the United States. Although the Biden administration hopes to resume the JCPOA negotiations, Saudi Arabia is still one of the important U.S. allies in the Gulf region. Especially when the current Iranian President Lacey comes to power, the prospects for the JCPOA negotiations are unclear. On the other hand, Biden intends to end the civil war in Yemen, and after the Khashoggi incident, in the United States, there is expectations for consistency with a broader foreign policy agenda that has placed a high priority on rebuilding ties with democratic allies and strengthening global commitments to human rights and the rule of law [40]. The willingness to end the Yemen war and domestic and pressure within the Democratic Party push Biden to hold Saudi Arabia accountable on human rights issues. Paradoxically, the pressure of the Biden administration cannot change Saudi Arabia's internal situation, but it may hinder the realization of the United States' utterance power in the Middle East.

4.3. Inheritance and changes

4.3.1. Inheritance

Obviously, Biden has inherited Trump's contraction strategy in the Middle East, which is also the Middle East strategy of the Obama administration. To implement this strategy, Saudi Arabia and Israel are still core allies for the United States in the region, and help the U.S. to reduce its cost for maintaining the utterance power in the region. For cooperation between allies, there is no doubt that Biden will continue to implement Trump's Abraham Agreement and continue to promote negotiations on the normalization of relations between Arab countries and Israel.

4.3.2. Changes

Biden's pursuit of democratic values and its emphasis on multilateral cooperation show that it is difficult for the Biden administration to return to the close bilateral relations of the Trump era with Israel and Saudi Arabia. Unlike the Trump administration, the Biden administration puts more emphasis on values such as democracy and human rights in allied relations, not only because of the change in Biden's diplomatic philosophy, but also because of the value of human rights as a tool in foreign policy. Through the Khashoggi case, the Biden government continued to pressure Saudi Arabia. In addition to the diplomatic concept and the consideration of making Saudi Arabia more democratic, the Biden administration's attack on Saudi human rights is more like reshaping its utterance power of leadership in the relationship of allies. This completely different model from the Trump administration will inevitably reshape the bilateral relations between the United States, Saudi Arabia and Israel, and it may have an impact on the interests of the United States in the Middle East, but its prospects are still unclear.

5. CONCLUSION

With Asia's increasingly important strategic position, there is not much room for the US's Middle East strategy to change. The Biden administration partly inherited the Trump administration's Middle East strategy and the issues that it hopes to accomplish. The Biden administration inherited the Trump administration's Middle East contraction strategy. Under the guidance of this strategy, the Biden administration, like the Trump administration, is committed to cutting military expenditures in the Middle East. The Biden administration's core issues in the Middle East have not changed. The issue remains the Iranian nuclear issue and Iran's expansion in Iraq and Syria. When the core issue is determined, the Biden administration also regards terrorism as a target of the United States, just like the previous administration. With spending cuts, Biden still

needs to rely on the traditional allies of the United States in the Middle East to deal with the crisis.

However, under the overall framework of the U.S. Middle East contraction strategy, the Biden administration has made some different attempts. The foreign policy tradition of the Democratic Party of the United States is democratic value and human right, such as the "Democratic Enlargement" (Democratic Enlargement) strategy adopted during the Clinton administration [41]. The Biden administration has inherited the tradition of the Democratic Party. Under the re-direction of this traditional value, the Biden administration emphasized two points: the framework of multilateral cooperation and human rights issues, which are completely different from the Trump administration's approach. These two points are reflected in the Middle East policy as returning to JCPOA, support for non-state allies under the name of protecting democracy and humanitarian, hoping to end the Yemen war and humanitarian crisis, and putting pressure on Saudi Arabia to reshape alliance relations and shape "idealistic democratically".

The future for the changes made by the Biden administration to Trump's Middle East policy are uncertain. The key issue of the U.S. Middle East policy is that the U.S. guided by the contraction strategy is seeking stability in the Middle East. However, the relatively stable situation in the Middle East means that the effectiveness of U.S. military power in acquiring the utterance power is reduced, and the U.S. need to invest the construction of the Middle East to gain the utterance power, especially in the development vision of the Gulf countries and the reconstruction of Syria and Iraq [42]. Although the Biden administration has re-advocated a multilateral cooperation framework to resolve the Iranian nuclear issue and focus on regional human rights issues, limited to the current national conditions of the United States, the Biden administration's investment is still insufficient. In addition, because the Biden administration has not given up sanctions on Iran, the Iranian nuclear issue still faces serious challenges. Biden's human rights policy in the Middle East is more like a pressure on Saudi Arabia and the reshaping of U.S.-Saudi relations since the Trump era, in addition to aid to Yemen and Syria. This policy has been criticized by American researchers in the Middle East and may lead to the deterioration of US-Saudi relations.

To sum up, Biden's Middle East policy has inherited the Trump administration's Middle East policy, but it is more of a change. Judging from the current information available, it is difficult for the United States to leave the Middle East, and it is also difficult for the United States to make greater achievements and breakthrough progress in the Middle East.

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