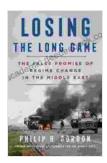
# The False Promise of Regime Change in the Middle East



Losing the Long Game: The False Promise of Regime Change in the Middle East by Philip H. Gordon

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The Middle East has been plagued by a seemingly endless cycle of conflict, instability, and authoritarian rule. In response, Western powers have repeatedly intervened with the aim of toppling oppressive regimes and installing democratic governments. However, these interventions have consistently failed to achieve their stated goals and have often led to even more violence and instability.

This article argues that the false promise of regime change has been a disastrous failure for Western foreign policy in the Middle East. It will examine the historical record of regime change interventions and show how they have consistently undermined stability, democracy, and human rights. It will also call for a new approach to the region that prioritizes diplomacy, economic development, and human rights.

#### The Historical Record of Regime Change

The United States has a long history of intervening in the Middle East to overthrow regimes it deems undesirable. In 1953, the CIA engineered a coup against the democratically elected government of Mohammad Mosaddegh in Iran. In 1973, the US backed a coup against Salvador Allende in Chile. And in 2003, the US invaded Iraq to topple Saddam Hussein.

These are just a few examples of the many regime change interventions that the United States has carried out in the Middle East. In each case, the stated goal was to promote democracy and stability. However, in each case, the intervention has failed to achieve its goals and has often led to even more violence and instability.

In Iran, the CIA-backed coup led to the establishment of a repressive dictatorship under the Shah. In Chile, the US-backed coup led to a military dictatorship that lasted for 17 years. And in Iraq, the US-led invasion led to a sectarian civil war that has killed hundreds of thousands of people and displaced millions more.

#### The False Promise of Democracy

One of the main reasons why regime change interventions have failed in the Middle East is that they have been based on the false promise of democracy. Western powers have assumed that toppling authoritarian regimes would lead to the establishment of stable, democratic governments. However, this assumption has been proven wrong time and again. In fact, regime change interventions have often led to the opposite of democracy. In many cases, they have led to the establishment of even more repressive regimes than the ones they replaced. In other cases, they have led to civil war and chaos.

The reason why regime change interventions have so often failed to produce democracy is that they have ignored the complex political, social, and economic realities of the Middle East. Western powers have often assumed that the region is ready for democracy when in fact it is not.

#### The Need for a New Approach

The false promise of regime change has been a disastrous failure for Western foreign policy in the Middle East. It has led to more violence, instability, and authoritarianism. It is time for a new approach to the region that prioritizes diplomacy, economic development, and human rights.

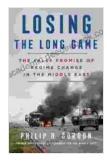
Diplomacy is the only way to resolve the region's conflicts peacefully. Western powers should work with regional actors to find common ground and build trust. They should also support efforts to strengthen civil society and promote democratic institutions.

Economic development is also essential for stability in the Middle East. Western powers should provide economic assistance to the region and help to create jobs and opportunities. They should also support efforts to promote trade and investment.

Human rights are also a key part of any new approach to the Middle East. Western powers should support efforts to promote human rights and hold accountable those who violate them. They should also work to end the use of torture and arbitrary detention.

A new approach to the Middle East will not be easy, but it is essential. The region is facing a number of challenges, but it also has a number of opportunities. With the right approach, we can help the Middle East build a more stable, democratic, and prosperous future.

The false promise of regime change has been a disaster for Western foreign policy in the Middle East. It is time for a new approach that prioritizes diplomacy, economic development, and human rights. Only by working with regional actors and addressing the root causes of instability can we help the Middle East build a more stable, democratic, and prosperous future.



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