



The Project on Advanced Systems and Concepts for Countering WMD (PASCC) is run at the Center on Contemporary Studies (CCC) and sponsored by the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA). PASCC awards and supports strategic studies and dialogues that anticipate and try to reduce the threat of WMD capabilities.



The CCC has a respected track record for providing research and timely analysis on a variety of topics to leading decision makers in the U.S. national security community. Located in the Naval Postgraduate School, the CCC is the research wing of the Department of National Security Affairs.

Research in Progress describes ongoing PASCC research. For more information, please contact pascc@nps.edu.

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Gassing One's Own People: Contrasting Leader Motivations and Behavior in Iraq and Syria

Performer: Texas A&M University

Project Lead: David Palkki

Project Cost: \$59,000

FY15-16

Objective:

Leaders of both Iraq (Saddam Hussein, 1988) and Syria (Bashar al-Assad, recently) have used chemical weapons against their own people. There is now extensive documentation of Iraq's chemical weapon decision-making in 1988, making it a uniquely rich case study. This project will produce a monograph contrasting Iraq's chemical decision-making with Syria's recent use of chemical weapons and draw insights from Iraq that are applicable to understanding Syria's actions. As policy makers weigh options for contending with Syria, this research will provide timely and informed analysis.

Approach:

The research team will study records captured from Iraq available at the Conflict Records Research Center, Hoover Institution, and University of Colorado (Boulder), as well as recently declassified interrogation reports of Iraqi principals, records and testimony released from Iraqi war crimes trials, documents in the Reagan Presidential Library, and other sources. Once this information is collected, the team will analyze it and draft a monograph. The monograph will be revised through feedback from experts and then shared with interested policy makers, intelligence and defense officials, and think tank analysts.