CHAPTER – IV

THE IRAQ – KUWAIT WAR

It was around the turn of the 18th Century that word reached the heart of Arabia of the lucrative pearl-fishing in the coastal areas of the Gulf, together with information that the rule of the Safavid Empire of Persia was on the decline. Three families of the Utoobi clan of the Unaiza tribe of southern Nejd, attracted by the prospect of a better life near the sea, began to migrate from their ancient desert home, headed northwest, and landed in Qarain (now known as Kuwait) in 1710 AD. The depiction of the settlement of Kazima in maps produced in the century (1652-1737) preceding the Utub settlement of Kuwait Bay is given a thorough treatment in Dutch archivist’s B.J.Slot’s excellent work on the history of the state of Kuwait in maps. \(^{155}\) They were the Beni Sabah, led by Sheikh Suleiman bin Ahmad; Beni Jalajimah, led by Sheikh Jaber bin Utoobi; and Beni Khalifah, led by Sheikh Khalifah bin Mohammad. Qarain, at the time, though nominally a part of the territories of Eastern Arabia ruled by Sadun bin Mohammad, Sheikh of Beni Khalid, was in reality a no-man’s land. The Sheikh of Beni Khalid paid no attention to the immigration of Utoobi clans to Qarain.

The Settlement (Qarain) was a humble village, consisting of some tents belonging to the members of Awazim tribes, some fisherman’s huts, and the Sheikh’s small fort (Kut in Arabic). The name “Kuwait” which means “Little Kut” or “Little fort” derived from this small fort which was situated on the southern side of the Kuwait bay. \(^{156}\)

The three families formed a union for the purpose of resisting attacks from the more powerful clans in the neighbourhood of the settlement. The leadership of the Union was initially shared by the principal sheikh of the three families; Sheikh Suleiman, Sheikh Jaber and Sheikh Khalifah. They determined to become, at once, merchants and pearl-fishers, and the profits arising from these occupations to be shred equally amongst


the whole union. The Al-Jalahimah handled shipping, Al-Khalifah became merchants, and Al-Sabah controlled political affairs and diplomatic relations. The first fifty years of this union witnessed a rapid growth in wealth and significance of the settlement and by matrimonial alliance with other tribes in the neighbourhood. The federation grew rapidly in its population and strengthened its position vis-à-vis the Beni Khalid who until then dominated the entire north-eastern parts of Arabia.

Forty two years since their arrival in Qarain, the tribes of Qarain agreed (in 1752) to appoint Sheikh Sabah ben Jabir Al-Sabah as the ruler of Qarain. He remained in power till his death in 1762 A.D. This development gave birth to the independent Emirate of Al-Sabah in a place which was virtually no man’s land. No one opposed the move and nobody challenged it. Fourteen years later, the federates, became anxious to enjoy singly their lucrative branch of the original league.

Sheikh Khalifah, chief of Al-Khalifah branch of the union, an artful ruler succeeded in 1766 to persuade members of the other two tribes to take his skill in pearl-fishing and trade elsewhere. They moved south-east-wardly, heading towards the pearl shores near Bahrain. The Al-Jalahimah guaranteed their safe passage to Zubarah in north-western corner of the Qatar Peninsula. Zubarah was the principal settlement of the Al-Khalifah area from where both Qatar Peninsula and Bahrain archipelago were governed. The Al-Khalifah completely succeeded in its objectives in Zubarah in a short period of time and at length refused a share of profits resulting from its attainments to both the other parties in the original union. Al-Jalahimah themselves found the idea of a second migration quite attractive. They too, moved from Qarain to Qatar, and settled there. Thus, Al-Sabah found themselves as they are today, the sole rulers of the settlement in Qarain. Interestingly, one historical source mentions that Sabah, who was the brother of Rahim, was based at his fort at Umm Qasr, lying on the west bank of the Khor Zubair, right until his assumption of power in Kuwait.

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157 The Iraqi Aggression on Kuwait: The Truth and The Tragedy, Center for Research and Studies on Kuwait, Information Office, Embassy of Kuwait, New Delhi, 1994, p.23.
By the end of the 18th century, pearling and trade created a thriving port of the north-western end of the Gulf. When in 1775 the port of Basrah, to the north of Qarain, was overrun and occupied by the forces of Karim Khan Zand, king of Persian, the British residents and a number of the inhabitants of Basrah migrated to Qarain. Diverted to the new port was also the bulk of the Indian trade with the Ottoman cities. This development proved to be highly profitable to the growing town of Qarain and increased its importance in the region. Even after the British East India Company's offices returned to Basrah in 1779 when the Iranians lost Basrah to the Ottomans once and for all, Qarain's harbours continued its significance as a place to transfer goods from boats to caravans bound for Baghdad, Aleppo, and Constantinople.

During the rule of Sheikh Abdullha al-Sabah (1762-1815) the powerful Beni Kaab tribe of Khuzestan of Iran began forcing Al-Sabah of Qarain to pay tribute and its chief married Sheikh Abdullah's daughter (Mariam) apparently by force. The Al-Sabah forces, commanded by Sheikh Salem al-Sabah rebuked the Bani Kaab challenge. Though, the autonomous Bani Kaab, based on the marshlands east of the Shatt al-Arab in modern-day Khuzista, had, until this point, exercised maritime supremacy in the northern Persian Gulf, occasionally exacting tribute from Kuwaiti vessels. They had also sufficiently powerful to defeat the Ottoman fleet at Basra during 1765. The Al-Khalifah of Zubarah supported their cousins in the event, and together they defeated Beni Kaab navy at Riqqah off Bubbian island. This was the first major political achievement for Al-Sabah, boosting their moral so much that led them to begin active political functioning in the Gulf. Very soon the opportunity arrived for the Al-Sabah to return Al-Khalifah's favour and to mark their existence in the Gulf as political force.

Briefly, Al-Khalifah began their slow migration from Zubarah to Bahrain archipelago as from the time of their arrival in Zubarah. Sheikh Nast Khan, the Iranian governor of Bahrain found this move disturbing to the status quo. He attacked Zubarah in 1779 but sustained defeat. Quickly he dispatched the intelligence Bahrain, and warned

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him to be resolute and vigilant against foreign attacks, until he went back with reinforcement. The boat conveying the dispatch was intercepted in passage and the papers were discovered by Al-Sabah who had sent vessels there to intervene in favour of Al-Khalifah. Aware of the defenceless state of the islands, they immediately proceeded to the attack and gained possession of its principal posts previous to the arrival of Sheikh Nasr Khan’s fleet. Finding the islands in possessions of the enemy Sheikh Nasr Khan Zand’s death that year made Iran leaderless for sometimes and Sheikh Nasr Khan was not able to go back to Bahrain. Thus, by 1783 the Al-Khalifah of Zubarah, with the help of Al-Sabah, made themselves masters of the islands of Bahrain, albeit they accepted Iranian sovereignty under the Qatar Shahs.

Establishment of the Al-Khalifah authority in Bahrain opened up new trading opportunities for both tribes. Goods began to be imported in Qarain from Muscat, Zubarah, Bahrain and Qatif. The thriving port of Qarain gradually became an entity independent all powers in the neighbourhood. The domain of the gradually became known as “Kuwait”. However, when Basrah was recovered by the Ottomans from the Persian, the British East Indian Company’s factory at Basrah was moved to Kuwait, in anticipation of Ottoman interference in its affairs. This development increased the European presence in Kuwait which, in turn, prompted several attacks by the Wahhabis of Arabia (who founded the Saudi Kingdom at a later date) attempting to incorporate the town of Kuwait in the Arabian dominions. By 1795, Wahhabi attacks become so frequent that the British decided to return to Basrah. The Al-Sabah, therefore, found no alternative but to cooperate with the Wahhabis.161

In 1800, the Wahhabis reduced the forces of Beni Khalid whose dominions included the entire region from Hasa, Qatif, Abiqiq, and as far as Qarain. Al-Sabah’s cooperation with the Wahhabis continued until 1818 when their authority was temporarily overthrown in 1818 by Mohammad Ali Pasha, Khadi or viceroy of Egypt who had invaded Arabia on behalf of the Ottoman Sulat.

161 Ibid., p. 544.
From this time until 1898, Kuwait maintained some form of de facto Ottoman sovereignty as a self-determining emirate, the tax from which being levied by the Pashalik of Basrah. Under Abdullah II Al-Sabhah (1866-92) Turkish influence grew steadily in Kuwait. In 1871, the Ottomans asked Al-Saah’s assistance in their efforts in Al-Hasa. Sheikh Abdullah provides 300 ships to carry horses, artillery and troops. He also encouraged the Sheikh of Al-Thani of Dohah in Qatar to accept the Turkish flag. Sheikh Abdullah was awarded the Ottoman title of Qaem Maqam (Locum Governor) of Kuwait, given to him by Medhat Pasha, Wali of Pashalik of Baghdad. Still, Medhat himself later admitted in his autobiography that the Kuwaitis had successfully resisted all Constantinople’s effort to bring them into the Ottoman’s orbit.\(^\text{162}\) This is the closest politically that Kuwait came to the Ottoman Empire, after more than 150 years of independent existence under the emirate of Al-Sabah.

In 1896, Sheikh Mubarak succeeded his brother Sheikh Mohammad who, in turn had succeeded the older brother Sheikh Abdullah II in 1892. Sheikh Mubarak’s rule met a series of challenges notably from Sheikh Jassem of Qatar and the Al-Rashid rulers of Hail in northern Arabia. The latter inflicted a serious defeat on Mubarak’s forces at Sarif in 1901, but themselves were crushed and annihilated by the Wahhabis soon afterwards. These threats, together with the increasing danger of Ottoman, Russian and German interference in Kuwait’s affairs, forces Mubarak to seek outside protection. He approached the British in 1897 with proposals for an alliance. The British rejected the offer initially as: “... In 1896, Kuwait occupied little or no place in British political affairs, the principality being regarded at home as under the exclusive influence of the Porte.... In 1898, however, Russian activity induced Britain to reconsider her attitude to adopt measures for countering forewning influence at Kuwait. There was reason to suspect that the Russians wished to establish a port of coaling station there, and attempts were being made to obtain a concession from the Porte in favour of Count Kapnist, a Russian subject, for the construction of railway from the Mediterranean to the Gulf – a

scheme which, if it had materialized, might have ended in the creation of Russian territorial rights at Kuwait”.\(^{163}\)

Kuwait, thus, became a place of strategic significance in the eyes of the superpowers of the time. The French and Germans were also suspected by the British of wanting to extend the proposed Berlin-Baghdad railway to Kuwait. Hence, in January 1899, Britain signed a treaty with Kuwait, whereby the former officially undertook to protect Kuwait against outside interference, and the latter undertook to conclude no treaty with other powers. Therefore, the principality of Kuwait became an official British protectorate.

The British protection did not, however, deter tribal conflicts in the vicinity of Kuwait, especially in regard to Wahhabi movement which gave prominence to the Saudi family in Arabia. Abdul Aziz ben Saud who had spent his childhood in Kuwait returned to Riyadh in 1902 and regained the Saudi patrimony by mobilising a new generation of Wahhabis, known as Ikwan. In 1920, the British protectorate of Kuwait attacked the Ikwan and was heavily defeated. Later that year, the Ikwan, commanded by Faisal al-Dawish, attacked Jahrah village and besieged its fort. The Kuwaitis began to erect high walls around the town of Kuwait and managed to free the fort in Ajaharah. A series of attacks against the tribes and Sheikhs on the northern margins of Arabia continued throughout 1920s by Ikwan.

By the end of November, 1914, British forces moved up the Shatt al Arab persuaded Kuwait that it was too dangerous to continue with its flying green Ottoman flag. British forces fired warning shots across the bow of a Kuwaiti dhow flying the green Ottoman flag. The result was that Sheikh Mubarak began to fly his own distinctive flag, with the word ‘Kuwait’ inscribed on a red background, over his own and his merchant and military vessels.\(^{164}\)


Amir Abdul Aziz ben Saud, crowned himself in 1926 as the King of Hijaz. The continued military efforts against the tribes of northern Arabia inspired a concerted attempt to crush the Ikhwan. These men, formerly Ibn Saud’s shock troops, had by then, turned against him. Ibn Saud, therefore, openly backed the British air force and the Arab Legion, under the command of John Bagot Glub (Glub Pasha) – which in 1928 resulted in the Ikhwan’s retreat to Kuwait, where Al-Dawish and the leaders of Ikhwan surrendered in 1930. Two years later the State of Saudi Arabia came into being on the southern and eastern flanks of Kuwaiti. To the north of Kuwait, the modern State of Iraq was created in 1924 in wake of the war-torn Ottoman Empire. The two former Ottoman Pashaliks of Baghdad and Basrah formed the territories of the state of Iraq which was given to a branch of the House of Hashemite of Arabia.\(^{165}\)

Iraq and Kuwait defined their approximated boundaries in the Batinah (Kuwait) and Rumailah (Iraqi) regions, in 1932. The treaty recognized also the eight offshore islands, including Bubiyan and Warbah, belong to Kuwait. Warbah became a bone of contention later when in 1990, attention was given to the Iraqi demands that Bubiyan Island be leased and that Iraq already regarded Warbah Island as its own national territory.\(^{166}\) Only four days after Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait, Thomas Pickering, the US Ambassador to the UN, urged his Jordanian counterpart, under instructions from his government, to pass on the following message to Baghdad: ‘We acknowledge your need for an opening to the Gulf, and the issue of access to the islands is one that we could look on favourably.’\(^{167}\)

**Discovery Of Oil And Iraq’s Claim**

With the discovery of oil resources in the areas around the town of Kuwait in 1938, the territories belonging to the Emirate of Kuwait were defined to include a semi-circle of rather featureless country. Having heard of Kuwait’s great wealth in oil

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\(^{165}\) Ibid., pp.445-446.


deposits, King Ghazi of Iraq claimed sovereignty over this emirate on the basis of Kuwait’s position as tributary of the Ottoman Pashalik of Basrah between 1871 and 1899. The Iraqi kind had neglected the fact that Kuwait existed as an independent emirate about 120 years prior to becoming a tributary of the Pashalik of Basrah and the fact that it became an official protectorate of Britain in 1899, some twenty-five years before the State of Iraq was created by the British and her allies in the post-world war-I. The Hashemite king did not heed that if Kuwait was to be given to Iraq on the basis of having been a tributary of the Ottoman Pashalik of Basrah for 28 years, the entire Mesopotamia should be given to Iran as it formed Persia’s eastern province in the greatest part of history since 500 B.C.\(^\text{168}\)

The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was culmination of series of Iraqi attempts at annexing Kuwait – first during 1938 – 41 and again from early 1950s – proclaiming the entire territory of Kuwait as part of Basra province. This Iraqi claim over Kuwaiti territory was largely due to the land locked position Iraq finds itself except for a tiny access to the Gulf.

**Iraqi Frontier**

The Iraqi frontier with Najd was defined in the Treaty of Mohammara in May 1922 and a neutral zone of 7000 sq kms was established adjacent to the western tip of Kuwait frontier. An agreement in May 1938 concerning the administration of this zone was signed between the two states which more or less settled their boundaries, without however, demarcating them.

The Kuwaiti ruler Sheikh Ahmad Sabah and the British High Commissioner for Iraq Sir Percy Cox on April 19, 1983 defined the Iraqi-Kuwait border. The Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri as Saeed Pasha on July 21, 1932 confirmed the “existing frontiers” between Iraq and Kuwait to the British Resident in Kuwait as defined in the Anglo-Ottoman Agreement of 1913 which included Warba and Bubiyan as part of Kuwait. The

\[^\text{168}\] Ibid., p. 547.
frontier was described as: From the intersection of the Wadi of Audja with the Batin and thence northwards along the Batin to a point just south of the latitude of Safwan, thence eastwards passing South of Safwan wells, Jebel sanam and Umm Qasar leaving them to Iraq and so on to the junction of the Khor Zobeir Abdulla. The islands of Warbah, Bubiyan, Failakh, Auhah, Kubbas, Qaru and Umm al Maradim appertain to Kuwait.169

Infact, last minute considerations of the negotiating teams included the possible existence of bituminous oil wells at Burgan, lying to the south between the outer and inner zones of influence proposed for Kuwait, and reports of submarine oil seepages between the islands of Qaru and Kubbas, both of which were recognized by Britain as belonging to Kuwait.170 In much the same way as the July 1913 Anglo-Ottoman settlement had preserved the factions of the Porte’s control of Kuwait, a treaty of 15 May 1914 concluded between the Ottoman Empire and Ibn Saud,171 recognizing the latter as Pasha and Wali of the wilayat of Najd, did the same for the nominally Ottoman territories south of Kuwait.

In an earlier exchange of letters on April 4 and April 19, 1923 between the Sheikh of Kuwait and Sir Percy Cox the existing frontiers between Iraq and Kuwait had been clearly emphasized. Cox’s prime territorial concern in north-east Arabia at this time was to stabilize tribal unrest in the undefined southern territories of Iraq which matched with the expanding Saudi emirate. Before any precise limits to territory could be fixed, Cox tried to address the question of loyalties and allegiances in the border zone.172

Uqair Protocol of 2 December 1922 saw the appearance, for the first time in Arabia, of the notions of a ‘neutral zone’. Such features are usually agreed on when


territorial disputes between the neighbouring states reach deadlock and generally involve a partial surrender by both sides of sovereignty over the area in question.¹⁷³

The Kuwait ruler in a letter dated August 10, 1932 confirmed the boundaries as mentioned in Nuri Pasha’s letter. In line with their deep interest in the establishment of Kuwait, the confirmation of the boundaries between Iraq and Kuwait was the zenith of the success of their diplomacy. Thus, Britain had finally established as a legal entity and recognised by Iraq. But there was a gap. The Iraqi – Kuwaiti boundaries had not been demarcated.

Meanwhile Kuwait prospered under the rule of Sheikh Jaber and due to massive oil revenues in a matter of few years the shape of Kuwait Town was dramatically changed from an old fashioned and dhow port to a modern busy city attracting the best talent from all over the world.¹⁷⁴ In the records of history, King Ghazi (second king of Iraq) was the first Iraqi ruler to lay claims on Kuwait. In fact, he had raised the possibility of Iraq intervening in Kuwait and incorporating it just before his death on April 5, 1938 in mysterious car accident. Kuwait which raised the issue of border demarcation for the first time in 1951 found Iraq unenthusiastic of this issue and when the Kuwaiti ruler pursued the issue Baghdad expressed its desire to have Warba in return for demarcation of their borders. Until then all had appeared smooth and satisfactory but beneath this tranquility a storm was building up which the British were fully aware and conscious. The Kuwaiti ruler found the Iraqi demand as unacceptable and opposed it. The Iraqi kept up their pressure on Kuwait when in 1954 in the context of negotiations related to the supply of water from Shartt al Arab, Iraq increased her claim on Kuwaiti territory. This time it claimed about four kms of Khaur al Sabiya coastline which is north of the Island of Warba and Bubiyan.

The British realized the Iraqi predicament and urged the Kuwaiti ruler to consider leasing Warba Island to Iraq in return for water from Shatt-al-Arab. The ruler of Kuwait rejected Britain's proposal in 1956. Nuri as Saeed in early 1958 called on Kuwait to join in a confederation between the two Hashmire monarchies of Jordan and Iraq and in return Iraq offered to demarcate the border and supply Kuwait Shatt-al-Arab water and to guarantee continuation of the existing degree of autonomy enjoyed by the Kuwaiti ruler.

Despite Iraq's territorial claim over parts of Kuwait, under the monarchy relations were more or less normal and at times cordial. The British due to their massive presence tried to keep things under control. When Iraq demanded Warba in return for Kuwaiti demands for demarcation they prevented things from getting out of hand and in fact, outwardly tried to mediate to resolve the problem amicably. But in the end they had laid the basis for a feature conflictual relationship. The attitude of the post July 1858 revolutionary Iraq was quite different towards Kuwait which was became independent on June 19, 1961. The Kuwaiti ruler Sheikh Abdullah al-Salim al-Sabah applied for membership of the Arab League on June 22, 1961. But Iraqi Prime Minister Kassem on June 25, 1961 claimed Kuwait to be a part of Basra province. He proceeded to designate the Kuwaiti ruler as Qaimmaqam of the Governor of Basra, like it was done during Sultan's rule. This move came only six days Kuwait signed a Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Consultation which terminated the British protectorate of Kuwait and the 1899 agreement which had given Britain the responsibility of the conduct of Kuwait's Foreign Policy. Kassem denounced the Anglo-Kuwaiti agreement as a "specially dangerous blow against the integration and independent" of Iraq and Kuwait and declared Kuwait as inseparable part of Iraq. On June 26, 1961 the Iraqi Foreign Minister issued a formal statement enumerating the legal grounds for its claim over Kuwait. Threatened with an Iraqi appeal for British Military help under the June 19, 1961 agreement with UK. He also rejected all the Iraqi claims over Kuwait. The British only July 1, 1961 promptly responded by landing 6000 troops. The Sheikh of Kuwait also requested King Saud of Saudi Arabia to send troops whose contingents also immediately arrived. The

175 Ibid., pp. 20-21.
Kuwaiti ruler also mobilized his own small force to safeguard the nascent independence of his oil rich Emirate.

The Arab League Secretary General Khaleq Hassouna visited Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Iraq to defuse the situation and on July 20, 1961 the League reached the following decisions: it called for the withdrawal of British troops from Kuwait as quickly as possible; it urged to pledge that it would not resort to the use of force to annex Kuwait; it supported any Kuwaiti desire for union or merger with any Arab state. More significantly it welcomed Kuwait as a new member of the Arab League on July 21, 1961 and urged its members to support the request of Kuwait for UN membership. It also asked the Arab states to provide active help for guaranteeing the independence of Kuwait. Thus a temporary resolution of the Iraq-Kuwait crises was reached.176

After Kassem over throw in a coup de late in February 1963 the new Iraqi President Abdul Salam Arif recognized Kuwait’s independence on October 4, 1963 and said it wanted to clear “the sullied atmosphere created by the Kassem regime”. The occasion was during a visit by a high powered Kuwaiti delegation led by the crown Prince and Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah al-Salim al-Sabah the interior Minister and acting Foreign Minister and other officials. The delegations visited Iraq on an invitation from the Iraqi Prime Minister Major General Ahmad Hassan al Baker. At the meeting and recognized the independence and complete sovereignty of Kuwait and its boundaries as specified in the letter of the Iraqi Prime Minister dated 21.07.1932 and which was accepted by the Kuwait Ruler in his letter dated 10.08.1932. However, this did not lead to the resolution of their border demarcation problem.

The emergence of a full fledged Baathist party government in July 1968 in Iraq opened a new chapter in Iraq-Kuwait relation. Kuwait was first to accord state recognition to the new Baathist regime. Saddam Hussein who became Vice-President under General Ahmad Hassan al Bakr made clear his desire to establish close ties with Kuwait.

176 Ibid., pp. 22-23.
But beneath this façade of normal relations remained the old issue of demarcation of common border, and meanwhile Iraq on April 28, 1973 suggested to Kuwait that the border demarcation talks should be resumed and that the “solution of the problem” should take into consideration not only the interests of the two countries but also the larger interests of the Arab world. Moreover, in a note on May 27, 1973 Iraq rejected previous border agreements saying they had not been ratified as required by Iraqi Constitution. Around the same time the Iraqi foreign Minister emphasized the importance of the two Kuwait islands of Warba and Bubiyan to Iraq and asserted that without them it could not be a “Gulf Power” and that it was prepared to give up “all of Kuwait” in return for the islands.\(^\text{177}\) This clearly revealed that Iraq had not renounced its claim over Kuwait despite having recognized its sovereignty and territorial integrity in 1963.

One crucial reason for Kuwait determination in rejecting Iraqi demands over the two islands was their desire not to antagonize the Shah who desired to be the policeman of the Gulf. These two islands would have surely strengthened Iraqi position and desire to dominate the Gulf. The expected Iraqi challenge was sought to be nipped in the bud by the Kuwait rulers whose tilt towards the Shah and West was well known. Kuwait ultimately realized that leaving the two islands unused only attracts Iraqi demands. So they decided to have their presence.\(^\text{178}\) Soon after the Iran-Iraq ceasefire in August 1988 Kuwait confident of Iraqi friendship asked for the demarcation of its border. Again Iraq raised the issue of Bubiyan island and was firm that unless this is transferred to Iraq there won’t be demarcation. Again Kuwait turned down Iraqi demand and the situation reverted to the Stalemate. It must be stressed that the Al Sabah rulers were convinced that if they were to yield Iraq on this issue, it would be seen as a grave provocation by Iran. Later in October 1990 Iran told Kuwaiti exiled rulers not to grant the island of Bubiyan to Iraq and that it would take appropriate measures (meaning they themselves will occupy it) if they actually did so as part of any settlement.\(^\text{179}\) United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission (UNIKOM)’s account of the Bubiyan episode therefore went some though not all the way towards supporting the Baghdad government’s protestations

\(^{177}\) Ibid., pp. 24-26.

\(^{178}\) Ibid., p. 26.

\(^{179}\) Ibid., p. 31.
of innocence, that if there had been an incident on or off the island, then ‘smugglers and pirates’ might have been responsible.\textsuperscript{180}

In the realm of historiography, the fifty years during which the present state of Iraq gradually evolved was a history of numerous negotiations, memoranda, mapmaking, lost records, procrastination, contradictory evidence, and little accord. Iraq inherited 1,472 kilometers from the Gulf to Mount Ararat. Approximately 700 of the 1,472 kilometers pass through the region known as Kurdistan.\textsuperscript{181} The complicated negotiations that defined this Ottoman-Persian frontier were clouded by intrigue, the extent of which may only be surmised. The earliest surviving document relative to the boundary settlement is dated at Zuhab in 1639, but was itself preceded by negotiation known to have occurred about one hundred years previously. The Zuhab treaty was followed by numerous attempts at further adjustments, most important in 1746 (Kurdan) 1823 and 1847 (Erzurum), 1911 (Tehran) and 1913 (Constantinople). All of these agreements were accompanied by the efforts of numerous commissions and cartographers and interspersed with border strikes and general unrest. On one occasion there was a massacre of as many as 30, 3000 Persian Shi’is in Karbala when the Ottoman established their suzerainty over the city in 1843.\textsuperscript{182}

After World War I the fate of this territory was taken up in a new series of treaties and conferences; the Treaty of Sevres in 1920, the Cairo conference in 1921, the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty in 1822, the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, and the Anglo-Turkish Treaty in 1926. Subsequent protocols with Iran – sought to define Iraq’s frontiers with the neighbouring states.

Iraq itself was assigned as a British mandate in 1920 despite widespread public resentment. The mandate encompassed roughly the three former Ottoman Wilayas, or

\textsuperscript{182} Karbala was in effect an independent enclave whose social and political life was dominated by Persia Shi’is. See J.G. Lorimer, Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, ‘Oman and Central Arabia, Historical part IB, Gregg International Publishers, Faraborough, Baghdad, 1970, pp. 1348-59.
administrative district of Mosul, Baghdad and Basra which had been established during the mid-to late nineteenth century. (Kuwait was once part of the Wilaya of Basra even though the Ottoman never established real control there). After the Mesopotamian Revolt against British occupation during the summer and autumn of 1920, Britain decided at the Cairo Conference during March 1921 that its mandate over Iraq should be executed in an indirect rather than a direct manner, as had originally been intended at San Remo in April 1920. Such an arrangement was also expected financially. There was some doubt about the fate of the Wilayas of Mosul, disputed by both France and Great Britain. It remained a “dark incubus of uncertainty” until it was allocated to Iraq in 1925 after much international bartering. The territorial content of the mandate was not finally defined until 1932. The British simultaneously brought about the enthronement of Faisal bin Hussain Al-Hashim as King, a position his successors inherited until the revolution of 1958.

Britain’s foremost concern in the post World War I period in the Middle East was to secure economic and strategic interests that revolved primarily around India and Egypt. The founding of Jewish home in Palestine under the terms of the Balfour Declaration constituted political and strategic concerns. British officials felt that if they could control Iraq and Egypt, they could secure all these interests. A primary factor in the delineation of Iraq was to allow for potential railway, pipeline and air routes between Palestine and Mesopotamia. A glance at a map of the Middle East shows that Iraq and trans-Jordan together formed a strategic corridor linking the Gulf to the British mandate of Palestine on the Mediterranean Sea. Britain also had secondary obligations to the Hashmite family, which had supported Britain’s war efforts and was considered a potentially useful political tool in the aftermath of the war. Members of this family were installed as leaders in the two adjoining states. Britain hoped that they would provide a

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186 Ibid., pp. 186-89.
chain of Hashimite control across northern Arabia that would remain under the protection and influence of the British.

Iraq's northern region, including Mosul, had originally included territory the French hoped to control. It became a major issue between the two mandatory powers. When the British realized that Russia would not have a common border with Iraq after the war, they sought to include Mosul within Iraqi territory, promising France 10 percent of any oil revenues derived from the region or part ownership in any of concession. Although recent studies have stressed that the British government recognized the potential of Mosul's oil resources, London was at least as concerned about the economic and political viability of Iraq as a state. British authorities worried in particular lest the waters of the Tigris be drawn off before reaching lower Iraq and lest the civil administration lose its revenue from tobacco, wood and grain – commodities that were produced in the north but were scarce or lacking altogether in the south.

The justification for the delimitation of Iraq's southern border involved radically different concern. A straight line through the desert was delineated by the British on the initial assumption that thus region was largely uninhabited, but large and powerful tribes and tribal confederation moved throughout the territories now included within Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Ever since the mid twentieth century, negotiations have continued over the formal legal status of many of these boundaries Iraq, for example, laid claim to all of Kuwait as recently as 1961 and to its islands of Warba and Bubiyan in 1973 on the historical grounds that they were all formerly part of the Basra Wilaya; it settled the issue of the Neutral zone with Saudi Arabia only in 1975, and signed an additional boundary agreement with Saudi Arabia in 1981 to which two protocols were appended in February 1982. The celebrated Algiers Declaration of 1975 between Iraq and Iran was one of a long series of efforts to establish secure borders and to adapt to the ever-changing economic and political needs of the states concerned. Perhaps motivated

by a desire to consolidate support from other Arab governments during the Iran-Iraq war. Iraq since 1980 has settled some of its outstanding boundary issues with, for example, Jordan, with which it had discussions in 1980-81 and signed an agreement over their international border in 1984.

One of Iraq’s immediate responses to the unleashing of hostilities against it on 16 January 1991 had been to cancel all charters and agreements concluded since 1968 with Saudi Arabia, from whose soil the allied attack had been launched. Iraq argued that Saudi Arabia had thereby violated several existing agreements, most prominently the 27 March 1989 ‘Agreement on non-interference in internal affairs and the non-use of force between the Republic of Iraq and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia’. It must be presumed that among the list of instruments ‘cancelled’ were the border agreements of July 1975 and December 1981, by which the two sides had agreed to partition their rhomboid-shaped neutral zone (originally established with the conclusion of the December 1922 Uqair protocol) and to smoothen and straighten out the whole of the land boundary further west.

Thus it is evident that the Prime factor affecting Iraqi foreign policy is the relationship between Iraq’s turbulent political past and Western attempts to impose boundaries as political solutions for Western problems. At least twelve states have appeared as newly created political entities in the Arabian Peninsula since World War I: almost without exception, subsequent acceptance of their borders by native inhabitants was accompanied by turmoil. Some areas to contested that boundaries remained totally undefined, while neutral zones between Iraq and Saudi Arabia and Kuwait and Saudi

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191 For translated texts of the 1975 and 1981 agreements see Schofield, Richard (ed.), ‘Arabian Boundary Disputes’, Vol. 6, Saudi Arabia-Iraq, Archive Edition, Farnham Common, 1992, p:785-809. Although the exchange of ratification of the 26 December 1981 Saudi-Iraqi border treaty took place in February 1982, it took until June 1991 for the text of the treaty (with border coordinates) to be registered with the United Nations and even then, this was done unilaterally by Saudi Arabia. The feeling persists that Saudi Arabia would not have bothered to take this action, were it not for the Iraqi statement of 21 January 1991, canceling all bilateral agreements concluded with the kingdom since 1968. For Saudi Arabia had shown no inclination previously to register its border treaties with their coordinates at the United Nations. For further details see Schofield, Richard (ed.) Territorial Foundations of the Gulf States, UGL Press, London, 1993, Chapter 1.
Arabia evolved as the only workable solution to intractable political problems. One study has estimated that there have been at least twenty-two active boundary disputes in the region since 1900\textsuperscript{192} and no fewer than twenty-one instances in which redress was sought by military means. As such, International boundaries have negotiating table, and the outcome of the long fought Iran-Iraq hot war is equally a temporary and arbitrary political solution which is bound to re-erupt any moment.

As a matter of fact, the two main sources of contention between the Government of Iraq and Kuwait were a dispute about the frontiers between the two states, and another on the rights to the production of oil from Rumaillah oilfield. In addition to that there was the old Iraqi interest in securing an outlet to the waters of the Gulf which had been denied them because of the way in which the boundaries between the two countries were drawn by the representative of the British Government in 1922.

The nub of the problem with Kuwait in Baghdad’s eyes was the open flouting of the OPEC output quota by Kuwait (as well as United Arab Emirates). Overproduction by these states in the spring of 1990 depressed the oil price well below OPEC’s reference price of $18 a barrel, fixed in November 1989. During a closed session of the extraordinary Arab summit in Baghdad in 30 May the Iraqi President addressed the gathering on the subject. He alluded to the failure by some of Arab brothers to abide by the OPEC decisions when they flooded the world market with more oil than it needed, thereby enabling clients to buy below the fixed (OPEC) price. He added that ‘for every US dollar drop in the price of a barrel of oil the Iraqi loss amounted to $1 billion annually’. The total loss to the oil-producing Arab countries was manifold. After urging that the matter be viewed from ‘a pan-Arab angle’, he said, ‘War is fought with soldiers and harm is done by explosion, killing and coup attempts, but it is also done by economic means sometimes’.

I say that we have reached a point where we can no longer withstand pressure. The Iraqi leader knew well the efficacy of the economic tool. During the First Gulf War, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia had succeeded in damaging Iran’s economy by causing an oil price collapse from over $30 a barrel in late November 1985 to under $10 in early April 1986 by flooding the market. Tehran never recovered sufficiently from this near-fatal blow to its economy to wage its war with Baghdad vigorously. Iraq’s economy suffered, too, but unlike Iran, it received substantial financial and other aid from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait – not to mention the US and other Western nations to withstand the oil price crash.

Now Saddam Hussein’s plea seemed to have fallen on deaf ears. Overproduction continued, and depressed the price to $11 a barrel in June, a level of which Iraq’s oil income was barely enough to meet current expenses, leaving nothing to meet the repayments of foreign loans or pay for minimum reconstruction that was needed in late June. A desperate Saddam Hussein sent a personal message to the Kuwaiti Emir, warning him to Kuwait’s excess output (of 600,000 b/d over OPEC’s quota of 1.5 mb/d) as it was having a negative impact on Iraq and OPEC’s vital interests. He addressed a similar missive to the ruler of UAE. Iraq’s deputy Prime Minister, Sadoun Hamadi, told Kuwaiti officials that the oil price needed to be raised to $25 a barrel.

To resolve the worsening problem, Saddam Hussein proposed a summit meeting of the Arab Gulf members of OPEC: Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Having agreed to the idea of such a gathering in principle, King Fahd tried to rally fellow-monarchs against Iraq’s move to raise the petroleum price to $25 a barrel, aware that a high oil price was detrimental to the economy of the West, particularly America, whose interests were dear to the Saudi royal family for political and personal reasons.

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Two days before the meeting of the oil ministers of the Arab Gulf members of OPEC on 11 July 1990, Iraqi intelligence secured the intercepts of a telephone conversation between the Saudi king and the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Khalifa ibn Hamad al Thani. To Saddam Hussein, these tapes established conclusively that the two rulers were plotting against Iraq’s interests (See Appendix – I).

The meeting of the petroleum ministers of Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE held in Jeddah on 11 July went some way towards the Iraqi objective of $25 a barrel. It unanimously urged OPEC to freeze the ceiling on the overall output of 22.1 mb/d to help raise the price per barrel from $14 to the $18 target which had been set in November 1989. However, on 13 July, this stand was repudiated by the Kuwaiti oil minister, thus rekindling Saddam Hussein’s apprehension, built up over many months, that the Gulf monarchs were lining up against Iraq’s economic interests. On 9 July, the day the Saudi and Qatari rulers agreed to undermine Saddam Hussein’s proposal for summit, the Kuwaiti government welcomed the foreign minister to resume the ferry service with Iran while continuing to stall Baghdad’s suggested resumption of air travel between Iraq and Kuwait also upset Iraqi government. Equally disturbing to Baghdad was the visit to Cairo on 14 July by President Hafiz Assad of Syria – an arch – rival of Saddam Hussein who had aided with Iran during the First Gulf War – after an interval of thirteen years. It went down badly with the Iraqi President and cooled his relationship with President Mubarak.

While the threat of Israel appeared to be rising support for Iraq from fellow Arab countries seemed to be declining – a process in which, according to Saddam Hussein, America and Britain played important roles. In an interview he said: ‘British and US diplomats are combing the Gulf warning rulers to fear Iraq.’

On 15 July Iraq’s foreign minister, Tariq Aziz, sent a letter to Chadli Klibi, the Arab League Secretary-general in which he complained about the oil policies of Kuwait

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197 Al Thawra, 21 July 1990.
and the UAE and laid specific territorial and financial claims against Kuwait. “Precisely since Iraq began to raise its voice calling for regaining the Arab’s rights in Palestine and drawing attention to the dangers of the American presence in the Gulf, the Kuwaiti government began to adopt an unjust policy aimed at harming... Iraq, wrote Tariq Aziz. ‘The government of the United Arab Emirates participated with the Kuwaiti government in this regard’. The oil glut created by these stats, he continued, had caused the price to fall below OPEC’s minimum price of $18 a barrel – to between $11 and $13 a barrel. Since a drop of $1 in the price of barrel of oil lead to a drop of $1 billion in Iraqi revenues annually’. He argued Baghdad had lost many billion of dollars due to the policies of Kuwait and the UAE. Despite the Iraqi President’s appeal to these states at the Baghdad summit (in late May) they had continued the policy of overproduction of oil. “We have no choice but to deduce that he who deliberately, directly and openly adopts this policy or he who supports or instigate it, is implementing part of the imperialist-zone plan against Iraq and the Arab nation”, he stated.

Secondly, Tariq Aziz added, since 1980 Kuwait had been extracting oil from the Iraq Rumeila oilfield’ (which extended three miles into Kuwait) and based on the prices between 1980 and 1990, the oil stolen by the Kuwaiti government from the Rumeila oilfields.... Amounts to $2.4 billion (at the rate of 25,000 b/d). Finally, he summarized Iraq’s assessment of the Iran-Iraq war and the financial aid it had received from the Gulf states to conduct it. “The war which Iraq was obliged to wage was not only intended to defend Iraq’s sovereignty, but also to defend the eastern flank of the homeland, especially the Arabian Gulf region”, Tariq Aziz wrote. “This was confirmed by the Gulf leaders themselves in the strongest words. ‘In a war that hasted eight years, the value of the military hardware for which Iraq paid currency... amounted to $102 billion. Because the conflict severely disrupted Iraq’s petroleum production (of 3.6 mb/d before the war) and exports Baghdad lost $106 billion in oil revenue. Among the countries that benefited from the decrease in Iraqi oil exports were Kuwait and the UAE. How can these amounts (i.e.; the interest-free loans from Kuwait and the UAE to Iraq up to 1982) be regarded as Iraqi debts to its Arab brothers when Iraq made sacrifices that are many times more than these debts in terms of Iraqi resources during the grinding war and offered rivers of blood
of its youth in defence of the (Arab) nations’ soil, dignity, honour and wealth? While no figures were mentioned it was widely believed that Kuwait’s interest free loans (in cash and oil counter sales) to Iraq amounted to $10 to $14 billion.

Two days later, in a television speech on the 22nd anniversary of the Baathist coup, Saddam Hussein issued a public warning to the Arab countries conspiring with the US to hurt Iraq. He distinguished between the ‘old method’ of military means and the ‘new method’ of economic warfare. ‘This new method, which has appeared within the ranks of the Arabs seeks to cut off livelihood while the old method, which has already been contained (by Iraq), sought to cut off neck, the Iraqi leader said. At the behest of the US, certain Arab states had deliberately overproduced oil in defiance of the will of the OPEC majority. As a result of the fall in oil prices from $27 - $28 a barrel which prevailed ‘not very long ago’ Iraq had been loosing a $14 bn a year. ‘Raising our voices against the evil (of overproduction) is not the final report if the evil continues, he warned. ‘There should be some effective act to restore things to their correct position. Iraqis will not forget the saying “Cutting necks is better than cutting the means of living”. He then went on to explain why the US was increasing ‘at high rates corresponding to its increased demand’, and ‘now that it has the opportunity, the United States is determined to become the only superpower without competition’, it is working to guarantee the flow of oil to it at the cheapest price’. Moreover, the US wanted an increasing strategic reserve of oil’ in order to withstand any disruptions caused by strife and was in the Middle East likely to result from America’s superpower ambitions and Israel’s expansionist reserve (of America) will not be as heavy a burden to the US Treasury as it would have been if bought at its true value.’ Given this, Saddam Hussein argued, ‘the policies of certain Arab rulers are American inspired and detrimental to the interests of the Arab nation.’

While the Iraqi national Assembly backed Saddam Hussein’s attack on the oil policies of Kuwait and the UAE, the Kuwaiti national Council, meeting in a closed

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199 Baghdad Radio, 18 July 1990.
session on 18 July, denounced Iraq’s memorandum to the Arab League for ‘its violation of the rights of neighbourliness and its shunning of the Arab AND Islamic fraternity.’

In his reply to Iraq’s letter on 19 July, Kuwait’s foreign minister, Sheikh Sabah al Sabah, described Iraq’s charges of Kuwaiti installations on Iraqi territory as ‘a falsification of reality’. He referred to ‘repeated Iraqi attempts to dig oil wells within Kuwaiti territories, which inflict severe damage on the reserves of the part of the (Rumeila) field within Kuwaiti territories’. He proposed an Arab League committee to settle the border dispute. Regarding the deterioration of the (oil) price he described it as ‘an international problem in which numerous sides – producers, consumers and OPEC members and non-members – were involved.’

On 19 July 1989 the US states of department expressed ‘strong commitment’ to ‘supporting the individual and collective self-defence of our friends in the Gulf, with whom we have deep and long standing ties’. The friends in this case were apparently Kuwait and the UAE. Baghdad took unkindly to this, with an editorial in the Baathist Party newspaper, Al Thawra (The Revolution), on 21 July expressing astonishment at the American position. To lower tension, King Fahd dispatched his foreign minister to mediate between Baghdad and Kuwait. And, responding to an invitation by President Mubarak, Tariq Aziz arrived in Cairo on 22 July.

The next day, as Mubarak flew to Baghdad to cool tempers against the background of the dispatch of 30,000 Iraqi troops to the Kuwait border, Washington confirmed that its six warships in the Gulf, including four frigates, had been put on alert, and that they had joined an exercise with the UAE navy as a signal of support for the UAE and Kuwait.

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203 Ibid, 19 July 1990. In its response to the Iraqi memorandum the UAE described Iraq’s attack on its oil policy as ‘void of responsibility of the oil-producing countries inside and outside OPEC’s regarding the fall in oil prices. BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, 23 July 1990.
204 Guardian, 24 July 1990.
It was against this charged atmosphere that Saddam Hussein had a two-hour meeting with the US ambassador to Iraq, April Glaspie, in his office on 25 July. After receiving Glaspie’s account of the meeting President Bush sent Saddam Hussein a ‘Presidential message’ on 28 July via US embassy in Baghdad. In it, he reportedly told Saddam Hussein that the US wanted to improve relations with Iraq, but advised him against pursuing ‘threats involving, military force or conflict’ to resolve Iraq’s grievances against Kuwait, and added that the US would ‘support other friends in the region, meaning the moderate Gulf States.’ In the meantime despite rivalries Iraq and Iran joined hands at the OPEC meeting in Geneva on 25 July 1989 to push for a reference price of $21 a barrel. Assisted by Saudi Arabia, they achieved their objective. At the same time the overall OPEC output was raised slightly to Rs.22. mb/d, with the Iraqi quota fixed at 2.7 mb/d.

With that matter settled, regional attention once again turned to the Iraq-Kuwait crisis. Aware of Baghdad’s animus towards his foreign minister, Sheikh Sabah al Sabah, the Kuwaiti Emir named Shaikh Saad al Sabah as the head of the Kuwaiti delegation to meet its Iraqi counterpart led by Izzat Ibrahim. The two delegations arrived in Jeddah on 31 July with different expectations. The Iraqis came simply to secure their ‘rights’, territorial as well as financial, which included not only obtaining $2.4 billion for the Iraqi oil that Kuwait had allegedly stolen but also a loan of $10 billion to surmount the current financial crisis. The Kuwaitis arrived to haggle, intent on exploiting Iraq’s weakened economic situation to settle once and for all what mattered most to them: frontier delineation. According to one version, the Kuwaiti crown prince insisted that they discuss the border demarcation before anything else. This angered the Iraqi leader. Tempers flared. ‘Don’t threaten us’, Shaikh Saad reportedly said to Izzat Ibrahim. ‘Kuwait has very powerful friends. You’ll be forced to pay back all the money you owe us. This seemed in tune with the guidelines reportedly specified by the Kuwaiti Emir to Shaikh Saad: not to make any concessions to Iraq in the negotiations, and to remember that this position was based on the advice given to him by the US, Britain and Egypt.

207 Ibid.
'Whatever, you hear from the Saudis and the Iraqis about Arab brotherhood and solidarity, don't listen to it, 'Stated the Kuwait Emir’s memorandum of 29 July 1990 to Shaikh Saad.' ‘Both have their own interests. The Saudis want to awaken us and exploit our yielding to the Iraqis so that in the future we shall yield to them the (jointly owned) Neutral Zone, and the Iraqis want to compensate for their war from our accounts.'\textsuperscript{208}

The second Iraqi letter to the Arab League had not responded to the Kuwaiti suggestion that the question the border’s demarcation be submitted to an Arab arbitration tribunal. Kuwait had to wait four days longer until 25 July 1990 for Iraq’s rejection of this initiative.\textsuperscript{209} At the same time the US administration leaked information to the Washington Post that satellite pictures showed that six Iraqi divisions, consisting or 95,000 soldiers, were deployed near the Iraq – Kuwait frontier. These actions of the pentagon and the behaviour of Shaikh Saad al Sabah in Jeddah seem to have convinced Saddam Hussein that further negotiations with the Kuwaitis were futile: an assessment which paved the ground for the decision by the Iraqi high command on the night of 31 July – 1 August to invade Kuwait.\textsuperscript{210}

The Iraqi army's invasion of Kuwait in the early hours of the morning of August 2 took the world by surprise. King Hussein was informed that the invasion had taken place at exactly 5.50 a.m. through a telephone call from King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, who requested that President Saddam Hussein should be urged to limit his invasion to the extent of the disrupted boundaries between Iraq and Kuwait until the whole dispute could be resolved peacefully. When asked by King Hussein about where the Iraqi forces were, he was shocked to learn that they were approximately six kms from Kuwait city and still moving in. Iraq's borders and airspace were closed and all attempts to telephone the Iraqi President failed until he returned His Majesty's calls just after midday on August 2. His Majesty was informed that in response to a measured approach from Arab governments

\textsuperscript{210} According to PLO sources, Saddam Hussein's decision to invade Kuwait was taken around midnight on 31 July – 1 August 1990, Independent, 2 October 1990.
and out to threats provocation, or condemnation. Iraqi forces (by now essentially in occupation of all of Kuwait) would begin to withdraw from Kuwait within days and complete their withdrawal within weeks.211

**US Security Council's Resolutions**

The 15 members UN Security Council adopted 12 resolutions on the Gulf crisis between Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990 and the expiry of its deadline for Iraqi withdrawal at 0500 GMT on January 16. The first came only after the invasion with a demand that Baghdad withdraw from the Emirates immediately. Four days later the Council imposed stringent economic sanctions. To enforce these, the Council on August 25 imposed air embargo. It took two more months – until November 29 – for members to adopt a US proposal demanding Iraq withdraw from Kuwait by January 15, 1991 or face the threat of war.

Following the summaries of the resolutions:

1. August 2, 1990 – the Council, in resolution 660, condemned Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait and demanded Baghdad withdraw its forces. The vote was 14 to 0 with Yemen not participating.

2. August 6, 1990 – The Council, in resolution 661, imposed stringent sanctions on all trade so and from Iraq except for medicine and in humanitarian circumstances, foodstuff. The veto was 13 to 0 with Cuba and Yemen abstaining.

3. August 9, 1990 – the Council, in resolution 662, unanimously declared Iraq’s annexation of Kuwait null and void.

4. August 18, 1990 – the Council, in resolution 664, unanimously demanded Iraq allow foreign nationals to leave Iraq and Kuwait and rescind its order to close diplomatic missions in Kuwait.

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5. August 25, 1990 – the Council, in resolution 665, permitted states to use limited naval force to ensure compliance with the economic sanctions, including the right to inspect cargoes.

6. September 13, 1990 – the Council, in resolution 666, approved food shipments to Iraq and Kuwait for humanitarian purposes, but only if distributed by approved international groups. The vote was 13 to 2 with Cuba and Yemen opposing.

7. September 16, 1990 – the Council, in resolution 667, unanimously condemned raids by Iraqi troops on French and other diplomatic missions in occupied Kuwait.

8. September 24, 1990 – the Council, in resolution 669, unanimously adopted a procedural measure entrusting its sanctions committee to evaluate requests for assistance from countries suffering because of the trade embargo.

9. September 25, 1990 – the Council, in resolution 670 prohibited air traffic with Iraq and occupied Kuwait except in humanitarian circumstances. The Vote was 14 to 1 with Cuba opposing.

10. October 29, 1990 – the Council, in resolution 674, asked states to document financial losses and human rights violations from the invasion. The vote was 13 to 0 with Cuba and Yemen abstaining.

11. November 28, 1990 – the Council, in resolution 677, unanimously asked the UN Secretary-General to safeguard copy of Kuwait’s pre-invasion population register.

12. November 29, 1990 – the Council, in resolution 678, authorised States ‘to use all necessary means’ against Iraq unless it withdraw from Kuwait on or before January 15, the vote was 12 to 2. China abstained. Cuba and Yemen voted against.

On January 3, 1991 the Foreign Ministers of Pakistan, Iran and Turkey during a one-day trilateral meeting in Islamabad, called for a total withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait and for the full restoration of Kuwait’s independence and sovereignty in accordance with US Security Council resolutions and the organization of Islamic
Conference (OIC) declaration. The Ministers called upon the Secretary-General of the OIC to undertake every conceivable effort, including an emergency meeting, to promote a peaceful solution to the crisis.\textsuperscript{212}

On January 4, 1991, Iraq agreed to send Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz to meet Secretary of State Baker in Geneva,\textsuperscript{213} and on January 8 as Mr. Baker and Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz arrived in Geneva, Mr. Bush, in a television address, called Mr. Baker’s mission “perhaps the final chance” to resolve the conflict peacefully. On the way to Geneva, Mr. Baker met with allies in France, Germany and Italy. Mr. Bush called on the US Congress to adopt a resolution stating that it “supports the use of all necessary means to implement UN Security Council Resolution 678”. In a letter to Congressional leadership, Mr. Bush said that such a resolution “would send the clearest possible message to Mr. Hussein that he must withdraw without condition or delay from Kuwait”.\textsuperscript{214}

On January 9, 1991 Mr. Baker and Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz held talks in Geneva which lasted for six and one-half hours and at a news conference following the talks, Mr. Baker stated that “regrettably... I heard nothing that suggested to me Iraqi flexibility whatsoever on complying with the UN Security Council Resolution”. He also said the Mr. Aziz refused to accept a letter from Mr. Bush to Mr. Hussein. In Baghdad, Mr. Hussein told a Baath party meeting the “we will make them (Americans) swim in their own blood” if war starts. Mr. Bush, in a press conference,, pointed out that while he is “discouraged” about the outcome of the talks he will “continue to try to reach out” to Mr. Hussein, “want to go the extra mile for peace”, he said. “But Mr. Hussein doesn’t move, UN Resolution 678 will be fully complied with”.\textsuperscript{215}

On January 12, 1990 the US Congress by a 250 to 183 vote in the House and 52 to 47 in the Senate – passed a joint resolution that give Mr. Bush full authority to use US

\textsuperscript{212} The Times of India, New Delhi, 4 January 1991.
\textsuperscript{213} The Times of India, New Delhi, 5 January 1991.
\textsuperscript{214} The Times of India, New Delhi, 9 January 1991.
\textsuperscript{215} The Times of India, New Delhi, 10 January 1991.
The following day on January 13, UN Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar met Mr. Hussein for talks widely seen as the last chance to avert war. Emerging from three – and – a half hours of talk, Mr. De Cuellar said he report no progress in persuading Iraq to pull out of Kuwait by the January 15 deadline.217

On January 15-16, United Nations Secretary-General made a final appeal to the Iraqi President “to turn the course of events away from catastrophe”. In an appeal on the eve of the United Nations deadline for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait, Mr. Perez de Cuellar urged Iraq “to commence, without delay, the total withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait”. But Iraq rejected the UN appeal.218

On January 17, The United States launched air attacks against Iraq and on January 22 – Iraq set some Kuwait oil facilities ablaze. Treaty to a jump in oil prices. The Coalition officials said that Iraq sabotaged Kuwait’s main supertanker loading pier, dumping millions of gallons of crude oil into the Gulf. On February 15, 1991 – Iraq offered conditional pullout, but Bush dismissed it as ‘cruel hoax’. On February 18 – Iraq foreign Minister Tariq Aziz held three-and-a-half hours of talks in Moscow with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and in February 22, a Soviet peace olan was revealed according to it Iraq was to withdraw its forces from Kuwait within 21 days of a ceasefire.

On February 25 – Mr. Hussein ordered his forces to withdraw from Kuwait. The White House reacted icily to the radio dispatch. The Iraqis score, a direct hit with scud missile attack on the US barracks in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, killing 28 troops and injuring 100. a majority of the US Security Council members insisted that Baghdad accept all 12 Council resolutions before a ceasefire could considered. As a last blow to Iraq’s mauled army and tank battles raged on the outskirts of Basra. Mr. Bush declared that “Kuwait was liberated” and that at midnight “all United States and coalition forces

217 *The Times of India*, New Delhi, 14 January 1991.
will suspend offensive combat operations" and ultimately on February 28 ceasefire being as Iraq agreed to honour all UN resolutions on the war.

The Iraqi strike against Kuwait was followed by three critical misperceptions on the part of Saddam Hussein. The first was Iraq’s belief that the sheer magnitude of her military power would smother any military response from the Gulf and Arab states. The second was the belief that she could divert the ire of the Gulf States from Iraq to Zionist Israel. And third, Saddam appeared reasonably certain that a recession hit USA could not and would not interfere militarily on behalf of an insignificant Kuwait. A number of political commentators and analysis have alleged that the US had deliberately misled Saddam Hussein into this misperception. They have alluded to a possible conspiracy and have put together fairly formidable evidence in support of a theory that the USA had planned to go to war to establish her credibility in the eyes of the world, in collusion with other major powers like the UK and USSR. The Executive Intelligence Review of July 20, 1990, vol. 17, No. 20 made startling disclosures that The USA was conducting high level secret talks with Israel on launching a war against Iraq. This ‘Conspiracy Theory’ was supported by Helga Graham in the ‘Observer’ (London) of 21 October 1990, Patrick Cockburn in ‘Independent’ (London) October 1, 1990 Henry Schaler, in Arab Oil and Gas Journal of 1 March 1990, Efrain Karsh and Inari Rautsi in ‘Survival’ of January/February of 1991. The origin of this ‘Conspiracy Theory’ lies in transcripts of taped conversations between the American Ambassador Ms. April Glaspie and President Saddam Hussein of 25 July 1990, released by Iraq in September 1990 (the United States has not released its own transcript). During a meeting between the two, on 25 July 1990, she is alleged to have hinted that the USA would not interfere in an Arab versus Arab conflict and that the US had no military commitment to Kuwait. Other sources allege that the USA was not averse to raising oil prices to $ 25 a barrel. “Apparently reassured of American neutrality, Hussein preceded to the last stage of his plan”.

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219 The Times of India, New Delhi, 29 February 1991.
220 For a Chronology of war events and UN Resolutions see Annexure III and IV.
222 Ibid., p. 28.
It was also on the 25 July 1990 that the US Ambassador in Baghdad, April C. Glaspie uttered her famous assurance to Iraqi President Saddam Husain, ‘We (the US) have no opinion on the Arab-Arab conflicts, like your border disagreement with Kuwait.’

George Bush froze assets in the United States soon after the invasion occurred, and Secretary Baker and Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze issued a statement condemning the invasion from Moscow. Bush then met Thatcher in Aspen, Colorado. At the time, he did not believe that Iraq would invade Saudi Arabia and was leaning against a military response. However, Thatcher argued that Iraq would invade and that the only option was to send troops to the region. This established an Anglo-American cooperation that would be the core of the Coalition. Given their reticence concerning the presence of foreign troops in Saudi Arabia, the Saudis were approached cautiously. Cheney and Powel discussed a coalition force with the Saudi Ambassador, and when Bush learned that the Saudis were not going to permit the deployments, he let them see satellite photographs of Iraqi forces amassing for an invasion along their border. The king reversed his stand and accepted the troop deployments. Support was solicited from other Arab nations, and the Soviets agreed to honour the sanctions against Baghdad and to halt further arms sales. Japan and China agreed to boycott Iraqi and Kuwaiti oil. Turkey given its proximity to Iraq faced a difficult situation, but with firm assurances, it joined the Coalition and closed the oil pipeline to Iraq on August 7th.

For over 43 days the coalition air force prosecuted an air war, the likes of which these never been witnessed before. “The Iraqi Air force, the sixth largest and most expensive Air Force in the world, collapsed on January 26 after producing nothing for its nation, either defensively or offensively”. “The US may have emerged from the Gulf War as the only military super power as well as the only country capable of forging and

leading a coalition of diverse nations, but it was clear it could not execute the war without financial help from Japan, Germany and the oil-producing allies.228

The calculations of Saddam Hussein did not achieve any of his major goals; he did not retain Kuwait, he did not obtain financial resources to offset against his $80 billions debt (a major cause of his invasion), he did not get any revision of the boundary between Kuwait and Iraq, he did not mobilize a sustained or credible popular following in the Arab and Islamic worlds. He remains in power, but as far as the regional and international situation is concerned, he is much weakened; he has discredited himself in the eyes of many Arabs, for failure and for bomb blast, and remains in almost complete diplomatic isolation. No other state in the world sides with Iraq or provides significant help. In most respects, the war, in the destruction it brought, and the consequences, was a major defeat, for more so than the eight-year war with Iran. The sense of Iraqi patriotism which he mobilized against (Imam) Khomeini was exhausted by the time the second conflict with Kuwait, begun: the reply of his people was the mass insurrection of March 1991, in which it is likely that more people were killed than in the war with the USA.

The war widely divided the Arab world and, less expectedly the Islamic world. Certainly, the division into anti-Saddam and neutral states was severe during the war, but those states that refused to back fully the Desert Strom Operation (it would be emphasized non backed Iraq and all condemned the occupation of Kuwait itself) did so because of popular and/or Ba’thist pressure from within their own countries or following, Jordan, Yemen, Tunisia, the PLO. These states, to repeat, did not support Iraq’s annexation of Kuwait but tried to get Saddam to withdraw by diplomatic means; they were as disappointed as anyone when he refused to listen to them. Lieutenant General Ali Abdulla Saleh, President of the Republic of Yemen has asserted that Yemen did not support the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. This was also proved upon the passing of time. Such a stand was distorted may be in a premeditated way to affront the close brotherly relations between the two countries and peoples in Yemen and Kuwait, he said.

The President, in an interview with the Kuwait “Al-Watun” Newspaper, went on to say: “Yemen was against the war because it perceived its consequences and jeopardizes against the Arab Nation. It constantly affirmed the importance of Iraq's commitment to implement the Security Council’s resolutions pertaining to the Gulf Crisis and War and to positively deal with, so as to enable the Iraqi people bring into an end the economic embargo imposed upon”. He affirmed that the relations between our country and its brothers in Gulf are good and boosted continuously. “We do not have differences or a problem with our fraternals in Kuwait and traces and vestiges of the Gulf crisis and war should be eliminated”. He added.

Regarding the Yemeni-Saudi relations Mr. President said, they are close and developed relations, adding that works of committees formed in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding on resolving the borders problems between the two countries are progressing in a good way, which the two sides feel satisfied with.

He considered the restoration of Kuwait-Jordanian relations as excellent restoration of Arab solidarity. The presence of Yemen in Gulf cooperation Council is a natural thing, because Yemen is the Strategic historic, geographical depth and human stockpile for its brothers in the Arab Gulf and Peninsula, he said.

He denied threats of any sort against oil companies either in the northern or southern Govern orates of the Republic. Mr. President further affirmed that Yemen is with the peace process and champions all efforts exerted for the achievement of peace in the Region. “Yemen is with the equitable and comprehensive peace with which wants the restoration of Arab rights and eliminates Israeli occupation of Arab lands in Palestine, the Gowlan Heights and South Lebanon, guaranteeing the erection of an independent Palestinian state with its capital Jerusalem”, he said.\(^{229}\)

In an article in *Newsweek* magazine of November 26, 1990, US President George Bush presented three reasons for US involvement in the war: one, to administer

\(^{229}\) For details see Annexure – II.
exemplary punishment to Saddam Hussein for Iraq’s invasion and occupation of Kuwait, two, to ensure oil supply from the region for the United States and other consumer and three, to create a world in which American and others can live free from fear. The US was obviously capitalizing on the changing world perception of its long-time adversary, the Soviet Union. By flexing its military muscles in the Gulf and concentrating the largest ever military force since the Vietnam War, Washington announced to the world, clearly and loudly, that the days of a US-centric unipolar power system had arrived. In a broadcast to the nation soon after the war was over, George Bush stated: “The Vietnam syndrome – the legacy of self-doubt and disunity has been kicked out forever” By restricting Israel from taking any pre-emptive or retaliatory measures against Iraq, the US had also highlighted Israel’s vulnerability to pressures from Washington.

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232 Ibid.
Conversation between Saudi King and Amir of Qatar

Fahd: We have had enough: Israel threatens Iraq and now Iraq threatens Israel. New we’re back to the same old story of (President) Nasser before 1967 (Arab-Israel war). We want to think the matter over.

Khalifa: I shall always be with you.

Fahd: I wanted to tell you that I told Hisham (Nazer, Saudi Oil Minister) to tell his brothers not pay attention to what the Iraqi minister said. Iraq is in trouble. There’s a sensitive situation between Iraq and Israel.... The important thing is that we put everything in order during these two months (until September) especially when things become quiet and we follow a defensive stand. Two months are left to us. As Gulf states, we shall meet and organize matters. The same applies to Iraq. The Iraqis have lost their temper.... And you know when someone loses his temper his speech is unreasonable.

Khalifa: True, their speech is unreasonable.

Fahd: We don’t want that.

Khalifa: I am sure it is unreasonable.

Fahd: We don’t want problems with Israel. We don’t want problems with Iran.

Khalifa: True

Fahd: But we are envied as Gulf States. Yet where were those who now envy us when we were poor. They did not say our brothers have nothing.

Khalifa: No, they did not....

Fahd: All I want to do is stop the bad temper. When things become quite it will be easy to Iraq. Saddam thinks highly of you. All we must do is to stop this bad temper. I told my minister to meet their minister in Iraq tomorrow. Before you meet with Iraq, all of us must agree (on policy) as Gulf ministers. Keep quiet even if the Iraqi minister says something bad.
These people the Iraqis, have got themselves into a problem with Israel, but they have nothing to do with Israel. 700 kilometers separate them from Israel. The matters must be settled wisely....

Fahd : They (Iraqis) have given themselves the same problems as Nasser, and he could not solve them. How we fight the whole world? Between (the two of) us, I think the Palestinians have pushed matters too far. They are losing nothing.

Khalifa : True

Fahd : I hope Abu Ammar (i.e. Yasser Arafat) will be reasonable I told our brothers, the Palestinians, that we will do our best so that they might not lose the West bank and Gaza. I don’t want to see the West Bank and Gaza lost by sheer words.

Khalifa : That’d be disastrous.

King Fahd then pointed out that the Iraqis proposing the summit conference for a time when Shaikh Khalifa would be away.

Fahd : (Continuing) As a principle, when they mentioned that idea I said it can’t be. Let oil ministers meet first, and discuss with one another. It will be better if ministers of oil, foreign affairs and finance meet in every country to discuss the matters from all political financial, social and oil aspects.

Khalifa : True

Fahd : At that time you might think of a summit meeting. But don’t think of holding a summit if there’s a chance of failure.

Khalifa : And Kuwait?

Fahd : Probably our brothers, the Iraqis will agree to discuss the idea of a summit meeting.

Khalifa : God be praised.

Fahd : It’s easy to start a conflict but it is very difficult to stop it. Israel is our number one nightmare. It has 200 nuclear warheads and 47 atom bombs. Its people are crazy. All out Palestinian brothers have to do is to do their
best, and we will help them. They have got to put their hand on the West Bank and Gaza. They don’t have to go to the extreme. In that case Israel would make them real colonies.

Khalifa : We have to gain one position after another.