CHAPTER V

THE PERSIAN GULF CRISIS

No other conflict between the two Third World countries in the recent history proved a catalyst for wide-ranging changes on international politics as did the Persian Gulf crisis, caused by Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990. So much so, that it eclipsed the political and economic implications of two other contemporary historical events—the end of the cold war and the breakup of the Soviet Union.

Interestingly, in its nature, the crisis mirrored one of the numerous cases of invasions which have occurred from time to time in the post-Second World War era. However, the region of its origin, the countries involved in it, the countries it affected, turned it into an international war, fought between Iraq and the US-led global coalition of some 32 countries of the world.

A detailed and analytical account of the events that unfolded between August 2, 1990 and February 25, 1991, will be in order here.

EVENTS PRECEDING THE IRAQI INVASION

The stage for the Iraqi invasion was set on July 17, 1990, when in a public speech on the anniversary of 1958 and 1968 Baathist revolutions, the Iraqi president Saddam Hussein accused some of the Persian Gulf regimes of being involved in an “imperialist-Zionist” conspiracy to cut off Iraq’s livelihood by not keeping the oil prices abysmally low through over production, without any economic justification and against the interest of the OPEC as well as the Arab nations. He also complained that the Arab nations were working against the interests of Iraq instead of rewarding it for having protected them from Iran by fighting an eight-year war with it. He warned the Arab nations of Iraq’s retaliation to remedy the situation. To quote from his speech:

“If words can not provide its people with protection then, actions will have to be taken to restore matters to their normal course and regain the rights which have been usurped”.

Saddam’s speech had three distinct components, which marked a deviation in Iraq’s policy towards the Arab neighbors. First, the US was involved in a conspiracy against Iraq. Second, the neighboring Arab rulers had launched an economic war against Iraq. Third, Iraq could resort to the use of force to discipline the Arab regimes guilty of over-production.

The next day, Iraq called the accused countries by the names. In a formal letter to the Arab League on July 18, 1990, the Iraqi Foreign Minister, Tariq Aziz, accused Kuwait and the UAE of causing a crash in oil prices. Kuwait was described as the main culprit. “As far as the Kuwaiti government is concerned, its attack on Iraq is double one. On the one hand, Kuwait is attacking Iraq and encroaching
upon our territory, oil fields and stealing our national wealth, such an action is tantamount to military aggression. On the other hand the government of Kuwait is determined to cause the collapse of Iraqi economy during this period when it is confronting the vicious imperialist-Zionist threat, which is an aggression no less serious than the military aggression”, the letter read.

The letter also complained that Kuwait had erected oil installations on the southern part of Iraq’s Rumailah oil field and had produced oil from it to the tune of $ 2.4 billion. The letter demanded that Iraq be paid by the Kuwaiti government an amount equal to the oil stolen by it and compensation for the damages the Iraqi economy had suffered due to the downfall in the oil prices.

The Kuwaiti government responded by mobilizing regional support against Iraq. It sent a troika of ministers to the Gulf Cooperation Council on the same day. The next day i.e. July 19, 1990, in a letter to the Arab League Secretary General, the Kuwaiti government denied as “falsification of facts” the Iraqi accusation of having encroached on the Iraqi lands. The letter also asserted that Kuwait had all the rights to pump oil from the southern Rumailah field as it constituted the part of Kuwaiti territory. “Hence Kuwait has produced oil from the wells within its territory, south of the Arab League liner and far away from the international borders to conform with international standards”, read the Kuwaiti letter.

In another letter sent to the UN Secretary General, Perez De Culler, on July 19, 1990, the Kuwaiti government accused Iraq of threatening it. The Kuwaiti move infuriated the Iraqi government which subsequently sharpened its diatribe against Kuwait, criticizing it for internationalizing a bilateral issue on the US dictates. Kuwait denied this charge, asking Iraq to settle this disputes through Arab League’s mediation.

On July 23, 1990, the US satellite Intelligence reported that Iraq had moved about 30,000 troops to Iraqi-Kuwaiti border. Around this time, the US clarified its stand on the controversy with the State Department spokeswoman stating that “the US was determined to defend the principle of freedom of navigation and to ensure the free flow of oil through the Strait of Hormuz”. The US also made it clear that it would defend its interests in the Persian Gulf region and use force if needed. The US also held a hastily arranged military exercises with the UAE’s armed forces.

The Arab League at this stage was inactive. However, the Egyptian President, Hosni Mubarak, visited Kuwait, Iraq and Saudi Arabia on July 24, 1990 to defuse the tension and succeeded in arranging a meeting between Iraq and Kuwait on July 28-29 in Jeddah. Then followed the two-day (July 26-27) OPEC ministerial meeting in Geneva. The decisions taken at the meeting redressed many of Iraqi grievances. It decided inter alai that:
- The minimum reference price for the OPEC crude basket is set at $ 21 per barrel.
- The ceiling for OPEC crude oil production for the second half of the 1990 is set at 22.49 million barrels daily. This compares with the previous 22.086 million barrel per day.
The production quotas for all the 12 members remain unchanged the only adjustment being the UAE whose quota is raised from 1.095 million barrel per day to 1.5 million barrel per day. It is also specified that production form the neutral zone is included in the ceiling and quotas of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

The monitoring committee consisted of the Heads of the Delegation of all member countries who will monitor production and supply of oil by all member countries(1).

Iraq which had advocated for fixing the price at $25 pb in the OPEC summit, however, accepted the decision of the price being at $21 pb. The Iraqi Oil Minister, Islam-Al-Chalabi, said in an interview with the Middle East Economic Survey, "We never said that the price of $25 pb can be achieved today—to make a jump from $14 pb. Of course, it can not be achieved. This ($21) represents a very good and positive start towards attaining a price of $25 pb and may be more (2)".

Meanwhile, the Iraq-Kuwait meeting which was scheduled to be held on July 28-29 was postponed to July 31. It is said that the period saved was utilized by the two sides to come to some broad understanding before the summit. Saudi Arabia, the PLO and Jordan mediated to settle the issue.

The meeting was held on the rescheduled date. But, it could not prove fruitful as Iraq refused to agree to Kuwait's partial acceptance of its demands made at the Summit. Iraq demanded the ceding of the southern part of the Rumailah oil field. This was rejected by Kuwait. In response to Iraqi demand for $2.4 billion as compensation for the oil extracted by it from the Rumailha oil field, Kuwait reportedly agreed to pay about half of that amount, 1 billion. Kuwait also agreed to write off Iraqi debts and pay additional financial compensation for oil market losses during Iraq’s war with Iran, provided Iraq agreed to sign a favorable border treaty.

Pre-war developments point to the fact that these did not lead to war(3). Rather, these precipitated the matter to creating a ground for Iraq to invade Kuwait. First, Iraqi relations with Kuwait and other Arab countries of the region were not strained to have warranted all of a sudden a hard-hitting speech from Saddam Hussein on July 17, 1990. Second, Iraq threatened to use force from as early as it raised the controversy. The issues like alleged extraction of oil by Kuwait from Iraqi sites and Arab countries’ designs to stall Iraq's economic progress could, in normal circumstances, have created strains in the relations at political and diplomatic levels than warranting an invasion. This is further substantiated by the fact that in the July 27-28 OPEC summit most of the Iraqi demands were met yet it invaded Kuwait within five days of the concluding of the summit. Last but not the least, the reported conversations between Saddam Hussein and the US ambassador to Iraq, during which the latter assured Iraq that the US did not want to intervene in a regional affair, must have emboldened Iraq to attack Kuwait(5).

CAUSES OF THE CRISIS
The alleged Kuwaiti encroachment, the petroleum quota question and the debt issue did not figure among Iraq's alibis of invading Kuwait. Instead, Iraq justified this act by describing it as a response to an appeal by Kuwaiti revolutionaries to assist them after they had ousted the Al-Sabah family and installed an interim government (6). But this excuse cannot be taken seriously by any stretch of imagination (7). This was only a ploy to attract the support of anti-monarchical elements in the Persian Gulf region and a bid to shroud its violations of Kuwaiti sovereignty by Iraq.

The objectives that actually prompted Iraq to invade Kuwait were, of course, the need of revitalizing its economy, establishing control over the strategic islands of Bubiyan and Warbah and turning itself into the strongest regional power.

IRAQ'S DETERIORATING ECONOMY:
The most plausible reason behind Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was the uncontrolled and deteriorating economy of Iraq. However, one must not tend to believe that the invasion of Kuwait was the last option to Iraq to overcome its economic problems. Iraq could have ward off the economic pressures by trimming its costly military program and by tightening its belt. In addition, the Kuwaiti government's offer to pay $1 billion in compensation to Iraq the raising of oil prices to $21 pb by the OPEC could have put the Iraqi economy back on track (8).

But, this way the revitalization of Iraqi economy was bound to be a long drawn out affair. Annexation of Kuwait, on the other hand, was seen as a quicker-fix for all economic ills. Sharp increase in oil prices, resulting from the chaos accompanying the annexation, and the huge wealth of Kuwait, including its 100 billion foreign assets, could have reversed the downside in Iraqi economy in one stroke (9). After annexing Kuwait, Iraq was destined to become the swing producer, replacing Saudi Arabia. With an additional quota of 4.6 million barrels per day, Iraq could have cleared its financial obligations as well as used the new oil wealth to maintain a huge standing army of one million and devoted a large amount from it to the chemical and nuclear weapons development program.

At the end of its war with Iran, Iraq was faced with serious economic crisis. Its external debt stood at $60 to 80 billion (10). The neighboring Arab powers, who had provided Iraq financial aid to the tune of the $500 million a month during the war, had no interests left in helping Iraq out during the peace time.

The eight-year war with Iran had created an acute resource-crunch. The reconstruction and the rehabilitation program had come to a standstill. Due to the neglect of non-oil sectors during the war, the Iraqi economy was heavily dependent on income from oil which constituted 90 percent of the governmental revenue. As a result, there began appearing a yawning gap between the government's earnings, which was estimated $17.12 billion annually with Iraq exporting 2.7 to 2.8 million barrel oil per day at the price of $18 pb, and its expenditure, which was estimated $56.1 billion in 1990. This is what prompted Iraq to lobby for the opting of oil price near the $25 pb mark. Iraqi official sources estimated that the decline of single dolor in oil price meant a loss of $1 billion annually to the country. During 1981-90, according to Iraqi
sources, the country had lost $89 billion on account of the decline in the oil prices.

The agriculture sector suffered badly during the war. In consequence, Iraq turned into a net importer of food at a time when its purchasing power had declined steeply. The policy of encouraging private sector did not make any significant breakthrough. Instead, it led to about 25 percent rise in prices of goods due to the declining imports. Political compulsions also added to Iraq’s economic woes, as says Pant Grijesh “Political imperatives of peace not only forced the Iraqiregime to mobilize finance but also undertake the task of rehabilitation and the reconstruction” (11). With political liberalization being a dangerous proposition to garner political legitimacy, the Iraqi government did not have any other alternative to acquire the same except keeping the people economically satisfied. The invasion of Kuwait was both the only political instrument to win popular solidarity and a short-cut to bring Iraq back to the economic prosperity.

THE LEADERSHIP URGE:

Since the exit of Egypt from the Arab camp, Iraq had put forward itself as the candidate for the leadership of the Arab world. Because of a number of political reasons, mainly the Syrian resistance and the Saudi Arabia’s reluctance, Iraqi move went largely unwelcome. The Iran-Iraq war hindered this process further. But, at the same time, the war turned Iraq into the region’s most militarily powerful country blessed with a huge arsenal and a large, battle hardened, well-trained and well-equipped armed forces. Learning from the past experience, both before and during the Iran-Iraq war, that the Arab countries would not invite it to take the mantle of the leadership, Iraq, decided to impose it on them. This explains the sudden and unexpected change in Iraq’s attitude towards the oil-rich countries, which had stood by it during the Iran-Iraq war(12). The strategy of Saddam Hussein was that if he could add to Iraqi military prowess the control over the greater part of the petroleum wealth of the Arab world he would be able to become the arbiter in one of the most important Geo-strategic regions of the world.

It can not be ruled out that Saddam would have dreamt of emerging as a sort of superpower. With the Soviet Union on the course of decline and the Eastern bloc having already collapsed, the Muslim bloc could on the basis of its numerical strength and its petroleum wealth qualify as the potential rival to the mighty US and the country leading it would have automatically become the USSR’s successor. Taking all these factors into account, it is easier to understand Saddam’s obliviousness from the possible reaction to his action, his arrogance, his self-confidence, his faith in his messianic role and his opposition to a peaceful end to the crisis (13).

A few more factors influenced Saddam’s decision to use force to realize his leadership urge. Saddam’s regime calculated that Arabpeople would, by and large, not regret the removal of Sabah family from the power. The Iraqi government thought that its move would be considered at home and elsewhere in the Arab world, as a right step towards rectifying a historical injustice done to Iraq by the British colonialists.

The international environment was undergoing a change. Moscow had almost neglected the Persian Gulf region as its attention was diverted to the pressing ethnic and economic
problems back home. Washington was involved in the restructuring of the East Europe and the
Soviet Union. With the end of the superpowers confrontation, the field was left for indigenous
nationalist leaders, like Saddam Hussein, to pursue their parochial interests(14). Thus Saddam
assumed that in the changing international scenario the US would accept his move as a fait
accompli.

Iran's humiliation in its war with Iraq and the gradual withdrawal of European and
American naval forces from the Persian Gulf in 1988-89 had created a vacuum in the Persian
Gulf region. Saddam Hussein's public warning to Israel and the neighboring Arab countries
were downplayed as rhetoric. The Arab leaders sided with Iraq when it threatened that if Israel
attacked Iraq it would "incinerate half of Israel"(15) The Arabs were of the view that the Iraqi
threat was provoked by fears that Israel might attack sites in Iraq where nuclear facilities were
presumed to be in the process of construction.

Iraq did not fear retaliation from Arab countries. Egypt, the only country which matched
Iraq's military strength, was considered a friendly power as it was the co-member of Arab
Cooperation Council. There were over one million Egyptians employed in Iraq who sent
remittances home. In addition, Egypt had not sent unit size military forces abroad since its
involvement in the disastrous Yemeni civil war during 1962-67.

Syria was bogged down in the Lebanon. Saudi Arabia looked docile as despite being
disturbed by the formation of the ACC, it signed the pact of non-aggression with Iraq and
Kuwait and had offered Iraq to sign a similar pact. No Persian Gulf country could single
handedly take on Iraq and the combined defense of the GCC was a 'non-entity' in comparision
to the Iraqi military prowess. Given the popular Arab mood against the US intervention in the
regional affairs the Arab Gulf countries would, Sadaam Hussien calculated, not ask for foreign
help in case he invaded Kuwait. Over and above, the Saddam regime could also count on total
support from its people who had backed Iraq on the question of its claim on Kuwait from the
days of the Hashmite monarchy.

TERRITORIAL EXPANSION:
To Iraq, Kuwait has been a strategic prize. The Islands of Warbah and Bubiyan are
crucial for Iraq to widen its 15-mile long narrow access to the Persian Gulf waters. And the
whole Kuwaiti territory provides connection to Iraq and the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf
through land, in the absence of which Iraq has been clubbed with either the Fertile Crescent
countries or with Iran that is on the other side of the Persian Gulf.

Iraq's historical claims over the Kuwait are unjustified. The Turkish empire of which Iraq
is said to be the successor state recognized Kuwaiti sovereignty in Anglo-Ottoman Draft
convention on the Persian Gulf Area in 1913. According to this convention, the islands, Bubiyan
Warbah and Falaka, were described as the part of Kuwaiti territory. On July 21, 1961, Kuwait
was admitted as a sovereign country to the Arab League of which Iraq was also the member.
On October 4, 1963, the Iraqi government formally announced its recognition of Kuwait (16).
Even Saddam Hussein's claim that the British power had forcibly carved Kuwait out of the
territory of Basra 'Vilayet' of Ottoman empire does not sound logical in view of the facts that as his government as well as the preceding ones recognized Kuwait as sovereign state and entered into diplomatic relations with that country (17).

Beside this, the historical claims in the Persian Gulf can not be regarded genuine due to overlapping territorial changes there. Saddam Hussein's claims are not different in nature to Jewish claims over Palestine. Moreover, going by Saddam Hussein's logic Iraq itself becomes the part of Turkey, which claims itself to be the successor state of Ottoman empire. Both Syria and Lebanon can legitimately claim Palestine as it was also the part of the vilayet of Damascus and Beirut under Ottoman empire. And Saddam could have extended Iraq's historical claim over entire Arabian peninsula as it constituted the part of 'Hasa' region, which was used to be administrated from Basra by the Ottomans (18).

RESPONSES TO THE GULF CRISIS/WAR

THE ARAB GULF COUNTRIES' RESPONSE:

The Arab Gulf countries were shocked and dismayed at the turn of the events. The invasion of Kuwait looked to them a prelude to similar exercises against the rest of them. Their response to the crisis was, therefore, that of total solidarity with Kuwait and unanimous condemnation of Iraq. In the beginning, these countries sought a peaceful solution to the crisis leading to the Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwaiti territory. But, faced with the specter of expansion of Iraqi invasion, which, they knew, they could not revert even jointly (19), the GCC countries, in a total volte face to their previous policy, invited the American troops to intervene.

Interestingly, the six-point statement which was adopted on Aug. 3 at the Ministerial Council meeting of the Arab League in Cairo after 36 hours of discussion, rejected any foreign intervention in Arab affairs. But the GCC's Ministerial Council meeting, which was held the same day and at the same venue, was an exception to the Arab League's resolution. The communique issued at the end of the GCC Ministerial Council summit emphasized that any collective UN action would not amount to foreign intervention. It was an indication that eventually foreign help would be sought.

At this time Saudi Arabia, along with the US, tried to impress that Iraq was planning to attack it (20). The US Secretary of Defense, Richard E. Cheney, visited Saudi Arabia on August 3. It is also reported that Saudi Arabia on August 6 invited "friendly countries" to help other regional countries in protecting their sovereignty. At the Arab Summit meeting, which was also held at Cairo, on August 10, the invitation to foreign forces was recommended.

Though initially an impression was given that the US forces were in Saudi Arabia to defend that country and not to take any military action against Iraq, on November 5, when King Fahad and James Baker met, Saudi Arabia conceded to the US pressure to give it the permission to launch an attack against Iraq when and if the need arose. Saudi Arabia, in return, secured the right to jointly command an attack inside Iraq. The veto power on allied attack against Iraq also rested with Saudi Arabia. It is reported that Saudi Arabia had invited the American forces within a few hours after the Iraqi invasion.
The Arab Gulf countries’ decision could spell dangers for the ruling regimes, more so for Saudi Arabia (which houses the holiest of Islamic shrines), as the presence of “unbelievers” on Saudi soil was always held as a mark of disrespect. The Islamic fundamentalists and the royal puritan family did not at first approve the move. The Saudi government tried to assuage people’s resentment and that of the religious elements by stating that the foreign forces were not gathered to carry out any military operation and would be leaving as soon as the Iraqi danger disappeared.

Even when war between an Arab power—Iraq—and the US became imminent the Arab governments proclaimed in order to pacify Arab peoples’ ire that their participation in the force was to liberate Kuwait and not to attack Iraq (21). As the war approached nearer, more than the Iraqi invasion Saddam’s resistance to the US became important for the general Arab public. As a result, they began supporting Saddam Hussein. Their was also a proportionate increase in Arabs’ disliking of the US as they perceived its resolve to destroy Iraq as the part of its post-cold war strategy to establish its hegemony in the entire Arab world (22).

On the foreign policy front, another perceptible change in the policy of the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf was the placating of Iran. Common perception of Iraqi threat brought the two sides to express similar concerns. Both viewed that after annexing Kuwait, Iraq will have a long coastline and would become a naval power. They also thought that Iraqi control of a large oil reserves would greatly disturb the regional balance of power. Thus both the sides condemned Iraqi invasion. Iran criticized the US presence in the region and was apprehensive of the shift of the balance of power in the region in favor of Saudi Arabia, yet instead of Saudi Arabia it criticized Iraq for being responsible for US presence in the region (23). In fact, the Iranian opposition to the foreign presence was toned down. The Iranian president, Hashemi Rafsanjani, said, at a Friday sermon in Tehran, “we have no objection to them obstructing aggression. However, it would have been better if the regional countries would have done not so” (24). The Kuwaiti foreign Minister paid a visit to Tehran where he expressed regrets over the “past mistakes” of his country towards Iran. A host of dignitaries from the GCC visited Iran. On September 29, the GCC foreign ministers met the Iranian Foreign Minister, Ali Akbar Velayti, at the Iranian office at the UN headquarters in New York.

At the December 24-25 GCC Summit at Doha, Iranian ambassador to Qatar was invited as observer. The Joint Communique, issued after the meet read “the Council welcomes the Islamic Republic of Iran’s desire to enhance and develop its relations with the GCC countries. It reaffirms the importance of working seriously and realistically to solve differences between Iran and the member-states so that the area is able to invest its resources in an over all economic development. The council confirms its desire to establish relations with Iran based on good neighborliness, non-interference in internal affairs and respect of sovereignty and peaceful co-existence.” At a press conference in Doha, the Qatari foreign minister indicated that Iran could be involved in a regional security system. Similar indications came from the Secretary General of the GCC, Abdulla Bishara, who said that there were some countries interested in cooperating with the GCC in regional security and stability and they by virtue of their geographical position
would have an important role to play in any such system.

The GCC countries' gestures overwhelmed Iran. Its foreign minister, Ali Akbar Vilayeti, proposed seven-member GCC sessions (25). However, the GCC states were not prepared to go to that extent as they did not want to annoy the US. Also Iranian induction into the GCC carried the fear that this body would be dominated by Iran given its geo-political and geo-strategic preponderance in the region (26).

Once it became clear that Iraq would not withdraw from Kuwait through persuasion, the GCC countries came all out in favor of the use of force against it. They had the genuine fear that if Iraq was not severely punished the rest of them would also fall prey to its ambitions (27). Saudi Arabia feared the undermining of its predominance in the region. A conspiracy theory was also in the air. According to this theory, which was given credence by the Saudi government itself, the annexation of Kuwait was the part of a larger plan of Iraq, Yemen and Jordan to occupy Saudi Arabia with Iraq retaining Kuwait, Jordan the Hejaz area and Yemen parting away with territory over which it had dispute with Saudi Arabia (28).

All indications suggest that the GCC countries were strictly for a war against Iraq. The US troops invited by them in an overwhelming number were more than enough if the purpose was merely to defend Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries. The GCC countries were adamant on Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait as the pre-condition for a negotiation-based solution to the crisis. Their unyielding stand, and also those of Iraq and the US, caused a stalemate (29) the war ultimately became inevitable.

The Arab states of the Persian Gulf were, however, also in a sort of dilemma. They felt that Iraq’s complete destruction would, on one hand, remove the Iraqi threat for ever, but, they on the other hand, feared that since Iraq was adequately prepared for such a war it would not be a cake walk for the multinational forces. Instead, it would turn out to be a prolonged war and spill over to Saudi Arabia, causing enormous loss of human lives and Arab wealth. There was a added fear that Iraq’s defeat would create a vacuum in the region tempting Israel and Iran to fill it (30).

They also had some doubts on US ability to fight a long drawn out war with Iraq at the cost of loss of hundreds of its soldiers. And what if Iraq dragged Israel into war, would, then, they continue to side with the US-Israeli-allied forces risking the chances of popular revolts all around. These were the questions which haunted the Arab governments.

This was one of the reasons behind the limited contribution, such as wherewithal and military personnel by the GCC countries to the Multinational Forces and their negligible participation in the war. An unofficial understanding had been reached between the US and the GCC countries that the latter would share the entire cost incurring to the allied forces in exchange for their token involvement in the military operation. For instance, Saudi Arabia bore
the entire expenditure of the maintaining of the US forces and construction of the infrastructure facilities. Beside this, Saudi Arabia and the UAE increased their oil output to compensate the absence of Iraqi oil (31). The increase in the oil production at the time when there was no oil glut in the market was supposed to increase the Saudi revenue by, it was estimated, $15 billion per annum. This could enable Saudi Arabia to meet the additional cost of maintaining foreign troops.

**IRANIAN RESPONSE:**

For Iran, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was its diplomatic victory over the US and the Arab countries who supported Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war. For, it vindicated the Iranian claim that Iraq was an expansionist and aggressive country and had attacked Iran in 1980 for territorial gains and toppling the Islamic government. The invasion upheld Iran's warning, during the late 80s, that Iraq would not spare the Persian Gulf countries either, using its added military prowess against the very countries whom it was indebted to for this.

Iran opposed the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait even though by that time the relations between the two countries had begun to improve. The Iraqi president had exchanged conciliatory letters with his Iranian counterpart and both the countries held common views on the question of oil prices and production during the emergency OPEC summit in July.

On August 2, the Iranian Foreign Minister issued a statement which read “Islamic Republic of Iran rejects any form of resort to force as a solution to regional problems. It considers Iraq's military action against Kuwait contrary to the stability and security in the sensitive Persian Gulf region, and condemns it... Iran considers respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of other countries and non-interference in their internal affairs as absolute principle of international relations. Since Iraq's military action contravenes the above principles and such actions would have serious effects on regional and national security and global peace and would pave the way for increased presence of a global military powers in the region, Iran calls for the immediate withdrawal of Iraqi troops to recognized international borders and a peaceful solution to the dispute”(32).

Thus, Iranian stand on the Kuwaiti crisis automatically brought it closer to the GCC countries. Iran declared that it would take unilateral military action if the two islands (Bubiyan and Warbah) were ceded by the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf to Iraq. However, the honeymoon between Iran and the GCC countries did not culminate into what Iran actually wanted, the membership of the GCC and a solution to the Kuwaiti crisis brokered by The GCC-Iran combine, denying, thereby, the US a chance to establish its foothold in the region. The GCC’s tilt towards the US, whom Iran could not side with, prevented Iran from playing a major role in the crisis. Even Saudi Arabia did not like the smaller Persian Gulf countries gestures to Iran. It prevailed upon the rest of the GCC members to defer the issue of Iranian admission until the Kuwaiti issue was resolved.

Iraq, like the GCC countries, was also trying to appease Iran. Iran's apathy towards the US, whom Iraq had challenged, came to help Iraq mend its ties with Iran. The Iran-GCC reapproachment was also the cause of concern for Iraq. For these reasons Iraq made an unexpected move (33). On August 14, it unilaterally accepted the Iranian terms for a peace
the UNSCRs and used the good offices of Syrian President, Hafez-al Asad, a close friend of Iran. Hafez-al-Asad visited Iran during September 22-24 to assure it that the foreign troops would pull out of the region as soon as the liberation of Kuwait was achieved and there would come up, instead, an Arab-Islamic security system including Iran as its constituent.

**YEMEN'S RESPONSE:**
Yemen sided with Iraq and had a distinction of being all alone beside Cuba in opposing the Security Council's moves against Iraq(37). Strong Bathist influence in North Yemen and South Yemen's avowed anti-imperialist postures along with popular mood in favor of Iraq prevented Yemen from wilting under Saudi and American pressures.

Angry over Yemen's close association with Iraq, the Saudi government called upon the Yemen's northern tribes to revolt against the Sana government. It also expelled 8,00,000 Yemeni workers. While the US cancelled aid arrangements with Yemen. Iraqi oil delivery to Aden refinery was cut off. Saudi Arabia also tried to undermine the three-month old unity between the North and South Yemens.

**MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES' RESPONSE:**
Unlike the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf, the Mediterranean countries were divided over the issue of Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the subsequent events. Egypt, Syria and Morocco arrayed against Iraq, while Jordan, PLO, Algeria, Libya and Tunisia stood with it.

**EGYPT'S RESPONSE:**
When the Iraq-Kuwait crisis was brewing, Egypt tried to mediate between the two countries to resolve the issue. Saddam Hussein spoke to Egyptian President, Hossseni Mubarak, and later sent his foreign minister, Tariq Aziz, to Cairo. Hossseni Mubarak himself paraded between Kuwaiti and Iraqi capitals to arrange a meeting between the two countries. On his part, Saddam is said to have assured Mubarak that he would not attack Kuwait. Thus, the Iraqi invasion made Mubarak bitter as it had meant the failure of his diplomacy. Egypt, therefore, adopted an anti-Iraqi stand. It supported all the UNSCRs, voted for the Arab Summit resolution on the sending of an Arab force in Saudi Arabia, despatched its forces to join the allied forces and allowed US warships to use the Suez Canal.

The Egyptian government's decision to join the multinational forces was taken against the public mood. However, In Egypt the popular support to Saddam Hussein was not as strong as in other countries. There was resentment among people also against Iraq over the plight Egyptian workers were facing in Kuwait and Iraq after the invasion. There were reports of beatings and even murders of Egyptian workers in Iraq. Mubarak's government also took stringent actions against protesters of Egyptian stand in the crisis.

The Ikhwanul Muslimeen, the Egyptian government's main political opponent, did not put up any strong challenge to Mubarak on his government's stand in the crisis. The Ikhwans were only mildly opposed to the US war against Iraq so as not to lose the financial assistance being provided to them by Saudi Arabia (38).
Despite being critical of the Iraqi invasion, Egypt in the initial stages was seeking an Arab solution to the crisis, a move which the US must have not appreciated. Egyptian government's position changed during August 7-8, when the Bush administration threatened to stop US military and economic aid to Egypt if it did not support the US policy towards the crisis.

Later, Egypt was obliged to support the US as the latter waived off its military sales to Egypt worth $7 billion by converting it into grants-in-aid (39). The Arab foreign ministers in a meeting in Cairo on September 10 also decided to shift the headquarters of Arab League back to Cairo. Egypt solicited these generosities from the US and the Arab countries by increasing the level of its forces stationed in Saudi Arabia from 3,000 to 30,000.

SYRIA’S RESPONSE:

The condemnation of the Iraqi invasion by Syria, did not come as surprise. What, however, deserves special mention is Syria’s active role in the drama that unfolded after August 2. This activism was dictated by benefits that Syria could garner in the form of economic reward and political recognition from the oil-rich Gulf states as well as the US (40). Thus Syria supported international action against Iraq, conveyed to the US that would not change side in an eventuality of Israeli involvement in the war and agreed, to quote the Syrian foreign minister, Farooq Al-Shara, “Israeli-Palestinian peace process should not be linked to the issue of Iraqi invasion of Kuwait” (41). Syria also sent troops to Saudi Arabia but decided that the mission of its forces in the wake of the war would be defensive only (42). Syria also lobbied for a vital place for itself in the post Gulf crisis regional security system.

Syrian people’s response was overwhelmingly pro-Iraq. Syrians, of course, did not approve the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait but they, at the same time, held that it was invited by the arrogant Kuwaiti government. Syrians were, by and large, stunned when their government decided to send its forces to help the multinational forces. There were widespread protests throughout Syria, particularly in the eastern part of the country around Deir-ez-Zor.

The Persian Gulf crisis provided an opportune monument for Syria to join ranks with the US. It saw no point in continuing its anti-US policy when the Soviet Union, Syrian guarantor against US-Israeli brinkmanship, was on the verge of forfeiting its superpower status and as a result the regional allies had become of little interests to it (43). The deterioration of relations with the USSR, with which Syria had signed the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation in 1980, also paved the way for the Syria-US reconciliation. The USSR had raised the issue of Syrian debts, which were about $25 billion. It had begun improving ties with Israel by allowing the Soviet Jews to migrate to that country and was showing hesitations to help Syria out in attaining strategic parity with Israel.

Syria was presented with a good chance to enter into a rapprochment with the US in a respectable manner as the latter was in need of an assurance from former that it would not enter the war from Iraq’s side if its arch rival somehow dragged Israel into the war. Syria was lured by the US to join the allied camp. It was promised to be given a free hand in Lebanese affairs. American patronage was withdrawn from Christian militias in Lebanon. The USA also established diplomatic relations with Syria. EEC de-released loans worth $193 million, earlier
held back on the ground that Syria was a terrorist state.

JORDAN'S RESPONSE:
Jordan, a staunch ally of the US in the region, mildly criticized Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Officially, Jordan opposed the occupation and annexation of Kuwait by Iraq, recognized Sabahs as the legitimate ruler of Kuwait and supported the sending of the Arab forces to secure Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait. It also decided to comply with the UNSCRs adding, however, that it alone would decide how to do it(44). On the other hand, Jordan also opposed the presence of foreign troops in Arab land and the US led military actions against Iraq. King Hussein also supported the linking of the Kuwaiti issue with Arab-Israeli issue by Saddam Hussein.

To avoid a breakdown in its relations with the US, the West and the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf, Jordan assumed for itself the role of a peace broker. King Hussein went (August 14) to Washington, reportedly, to hand over a letter from Saddam Hussein to Bush. All of Jordanian peace plans fizzled out as the US refused to agree on any thing less than Iraq’s unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait. Jordan kept its peace mission alive even then as King Hussein went to Morocco and Algeria and met (September 20) their respective heads of the state. After meetings these leaders, King Hussein proposed a compromise peace plan which envisaged Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait and that of the Foreign forces from the region, a referendum in Kuwait within six months of that, deployment of the UN peace keeping forces in Kuwait and an Arab force in Saudi Arabia and an international conference on the Palestine issue. This move was also rejected.

Gradually, Jordan began supporting Iraq overtly. This was, among other things, caused by growing Saudi hostility towards it. When Jordan had adopted more or less a balanced stand—supporting Iraqi withdrawal and opposing the foreign presence—Saudi Arabia cut off its oil supply of 30,000 barrel per day to it (45). Jordanian people, including Palestinians(46), who overwhelmingly supported Iraq, influenced King Hussein’s decision oppose an international coalition against Iraq.

There were huge public demonstrations in Amman against the US. Over 80,000 Jordanians had volunteered to fight along side the Iraqis(47). The rejection of popular mood in order to satisfy the US, could have been exploited by the Islamic fundamentalists who had already consolidated their position as the most significant bloc in Jordanian parliament(48).

Iraq’s importance to Jordan also dissuaded it from siding with the US. The economic crisis had increased Jordan’s dependence on Iraq which was providing Jordan oil at a considerable discount. Iraq was also a market for Jordan’s agricultural exports. Transit trade from Iraq to the Read Sea port of Aqaba had become crucial to the port’s rapid growth during the 1980s. Thousands of Jordanian workers were employed in Iraq. Jordan viewed Iraq as its strategic ally against Israel.

PLO’S AND PALESTINIANS’ RESPONSE:
Like Jordan, the PLO and the Palestinians supported Iraq and were more outspoken in doing this. Thus Palestinians everywhere in the region—occupied territories, Jordan and
Persian Gulf countries—, were unanimous in their support for Iraq.

The PLO, unlike the Palestinian masses, initially tried to obfuscate its position. It declared that it wanted Iraqi evacuation of Kuwait. The PLO had also disapproved Iraqi invasion at the Arab League Summit. But, at the same time, it advocated an Arab solution to the crisis and condemned the “reckless US Intervention” and regretted that “some of the Arab countries had accepted it”. The PLO also tried to play the role of mediator. However, following the rejection of its peace plans by the US and its allies in West Asia and as the crisis escalated, the PLO came to identify itself with Iraq.

The PLO Chairman, Yasser Arafat, visited Baghdad on August 19 and conferred with Saddam Hussein. In that meeting PLO’s support to Iraq might have been pledged. However, on official records Arafat proposed a peace plan to Iraq which envisaged withdrawal of the Iraqi forces from Kuwait, restoration of Sabah rule, subsequent establishment of firm border between Iraq and Kuwait and Kuwaiti compensation to Iraq for the revenues the latter had lost due to Kuwaiti oil policies.

PLO, frustrated by the failure of Intefadeh and continuing Jewish settlement in the occupied territories, and skeptical of US intention to resolve the Palestinian issue, saw in Iraq a savior which by annihilating Israel would pave the way for the establishment of a Palestinian state. It saw in Saddam a force to unite the Arab masses and take on Israel and America. PLO was sore with the Persian Gulf countries’ failure to fulfill their financial commitment towards the Palestinian cause.

The Palestinians whole-heartedly supported the linkage of the Kuwaiti and the Palestine issues and refused to regard it as Iraqi design to justify its occupation and annexation of Kuwait. They were rejoiced over Iraqi missile attacks on Israel which to them was the demonstration of a linkage between the Persian Gulf crisis and the Palestinian problem (49). Israeli discrimination to Palestinians in not providing them chemical war equipment during the war and an increase in Israeli forces atrocities those days further fanned Palestinians’ pro-Iraqi sentiments.

Saddam’s offer to Palestinians to settle down in Kuwait also strengthened Palestinians-Iraq bond. The Palestinians in Kuwait lent active support to Iraq in information gathering which facilitated Iraqi invasion and swift occupation of Kuwait.

LIBYAN RESPONSE:

The Qaddafi regime overlooked the Iraqi invasion and concentrated its tirade against the presence of US and British forces in Arab lands. At a news conference in mid-August, Qaddafi demanded that the USA be placed under international legal sanctions as Iraq had been, warning that failing this, Libya might leave the United Nations. Libya also called for the removal of naval blockade against Iraq and stated that it would not abide by the economic sanctions against Iraq as far as the supply of food and medicine to the latter was concerned. It together with PLO floated a peace plan which called for the mutual withdrawal of Iraqi and the Western forces and their replacement by an Arab-Islamic force in Saudi Arabia and by the UN forces in Kuwait,
ceding of Warbah and Bubiyan islands to Iraq and a referendum in Kuwait allowing its people to decide about the nature of the political system of their country. The Libyan plan also proposed that there be adopted a common Arab oil policy. Following the rejection of this plan, Libya came out with another plan this time in conjunction with PLO, Jordan and Sudan. The second plan was also rejected.

However, by mid-September, the Libyan policy changed from an extremely anti-US to cautiously pro-Western. This change was brought about by Iraqi rejection of Libyan offer of material assistance. During his visit to Libya, the Egyptian president advised Qaddafi that his overt support to Saddam Hussein would invite US hostility once the Kuwaiti crisis was over. Libya, as a result, modified its policy. It even offered to send its troops to join allied forces. However, the Libyan offer was rejected by the US. It is said that the US did it in order not to be bound by any moral obligation when raising later the issue of Libyan involvement in the bombing of a Pan Am flight over the Scottish town of Lockerbie.

TUNISIA’S RESPONSES:
Tunisia opposed both the Iraqi annexation and US intervention in the crisis. At the Arab League Summit it expressed pessimism at the majority decision to invite the US forces in Arab land. The Tunisian president, Zine-i- Abdine ben Ali, described this as “lending an imaginary legitimacy to the Western presence in Saudi Arabia. The Tunisians government reluctantly accepted the UN sanctions against Iraq. The Arab states of the Persian Gulf took punitive action against the Tunisian government by withdrawing all financial support to it. US aid to Tunisia was cut back as well.

MOROCCO’S RESPONSE:
Morocco supported the US position in the Persian Gulf crisis. Dependent on the western economic aid for its survival, it had no other option. However, Morocco could not make any significant contribution to the multinational forces because it was bogged down in western Sahara. No reinforcement or heavy equipments were sent. The small sized force Morocco sent to Saudi Arabia did not participate in the Operation Desert Storm. There was a little change of heart when the war against Iraq started. Moroccan king told ‘Le Monde’, a French magazine, that Iraq’s complaints against Kuwait had some substances. This change was caused by Pro-Iraq demonstrations in Morocco.

ALGERIA’S RESPONSE:
The Algerian government tried to stay away from the crisis by opting to play the role of a peace broker. It distanced itself from directly opposing Iraq by abstaining from voting at the August 10 Arab League Summit. The Foreign Minister of Algeria, Ahmad Ghizali criticized the West’s decision to freeze Iraqi and Kuwaiti assets abroad.

Public protests, led by the Islamic fundamentalists, against US aggression played a significant role in Algerian government adopting a neutral stand. FIS (Islamic Salvation Front) leaders, despite Iraqi regime’s hostility to Islamic fundamentalism, visited Iraq to express their solidarity with that country. The FIS also warned that “any aggression against Iraq will be confronted by Muslims everywhere”.

TURKEY'S RESPONSE:

Turkey was not an active participant in the anti-Iraq coalition in the beginning. Though Turkey supported all the US led actions against Iraq, it did not relish the prospect of suffering the loss of $300 million annually to be caused by closure of Iraqi pipelines carrying Iraqi oil to the Mediterranean sea.

Turkey was little embarrassed when Bush asked it to clarify its position and cut off Iraqi oil pipelines. Iraq helped Turkey to come out of its dilemma when it itself shut down one of the pipelines and reduced the flow of another by 30 percent (August 6) since because of the embargo none was lifting oil from Turkish terminal. Two days later, Turkey banned Exports of Iraqi oil from its territory and froze all Iraqi assets. Later, the US Secretary of State, James Baker, visited Turkey offering it financial compensation for the loss of revenue, and military protection. In return, the US got an assurance from Turkey that in case of a war with Iraq it would provide its northern base for military operations to the US forces.

Initial reluctance was given up soon and by the time the war broke out, Turkey was not only an active participant in Anti-Iraq coalition but it also permitted the US to make sorties from its Lcrlik base.

The decision of the Turkish government invited strong criticism from the leftists and the Islamic fundamentalists alike. Even part of the military establishment opposed the move, fearing that it would lead to Iraqi retaliation. Certain elements in the Turkish government also flayed the move, expressing their resentment through tendering resignation.

Turkish president Ozal's decision was prompted by the prospects of Turkish admission into the European Community as the Turkish participation in the war against Iraq would have demonstrated the country's importance as a strategic location in the West's war with an Asian power. The Turkish government's move was also likely to establish its sensitiveness to issues concerning Europe, resulting into an enhanced level of economic and military assistance from that region and the US. Turkey was also seeking an entry into the Persian Gulf politics, mainly interested in taking part in Persian Gulf security system and improving economic relations with the oil-rich states.

ISRAELI RESPONSE:

Iraqi invasion of Kuwait if, on the one hand, turned the Iraqi sabre-rattling against Israel into an imminent threat, it was also a welcome development being a pleasing diversion of the international attention from its suppression of the Intifadeh and the question of peaceful settlement of the Palestine issue. Saddam Hussein's invasion, accompanied by the threat to engage Israel into a war, was used as a pretext for avoiding a cut off in defense expenditure and securing military and economic aid from the West.

Yet, Iraq's move in Kuwait had all the elements to make Israel apprehensive. Iraq had already issued a warning to Israel that any other attack on Iraqi nuclear facilities would be answered by burning half of Israel. Israel did not dismiss this threat as a mere rhetoric. The
binary and chemical weapons Iraq possessed could accomplish this task. Instead, Iraqi clarification that such an option would be resorted to only in retaliation to an Israeli attack was, of course, dismissed by Israeli government as a ploy to divert Israeli attention from its security concerns.

At the same time, the Iraqi Invasion had in a way steered Iraqi attention from Israel. It relieved Israel that in case of such an attack the Arab countries, whom Iraq had alienated after occupying Kuwait, might not join Iraq. The US response to the Iraqi invasion also served the Israeli interests. That after its misadventure in Kuwait, collective security action against Iraq was inevitable came as a sigh of relief to Israel. Otherwise, Iraq’s credibility to launch a war against Israel in future would have enhanced if Iraq was allowed to retain control over Kuwait, its oil reserves and its financial assets. Israel also feared that if Iraq came unscathed from its invasion of Kuwait then it would have to confront Iraq alone.

The Israeli government did not rule out an Iraqi-Israeli showdown during the war. The full support Saddam Hussein had been receiving from Palestinians In Jordan and Occupied territories convinced Israel that Iraq had both means and Arab (masses) backing to launch a full-fledged war against her.

Israel, however, shared the US concern that it should not get involved into a war even if provoked. The Israeli government knew that once the war would break out Iraq would not spare any effort to drag Israel into the war, leading a few Arab countries to breakaway from the Coalition.

Israel also visualized that the magnitude of Iraqi attack on it during the war could, however, scale down if Iraq were engaged in a fierce battle with the coalition forces. Israel also found the peaceful solution to Kuwaiti issue, as a result of which Iraq could have retained its military strength intact, unfavorable to it. Moreover, a peaceful solution, leading to Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait, could have increased pressure on Israel to agree to a similar kind of solution on its occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza strip.

Israel prepared itself to deal with the inevitable. The armed forces beefed up their capability to counter an Iraqi attack. Among other security measures taken by the Israeli government was the distribution of gas masks among people for protection from chemical attacks. The US and Israel exchanged information on the Iraqi threat. Israel agreed to provide logistical and other support to the US led forces. Infrastructure was laid to secure communication between Israeli and the American defense authorities. Arrangement were made for provision to Israel of early warning on Iraqi missile attacks against Israel.

When the war started, the Israeli forces were stated to be well-prepared and alert to react to any Iraqi attack. As early as January 18, first Iraqi missile landed on Israeli cities. Two ‘Patriot’ surface-to-air missile batteries, ordered by Israel for delivery in Spring,1992, were immediately sent to Israel. Another package of the US Patriot batteries was airlifted to Israel with their American crews. Shortly before the end of the War, an additional Dutch Patriot Battery
was also transported to Israel.

The Patriot batteries were deployed in Tel Aviv and Haifa, and became operational within hours of their arrival on site to intercept incoming 'Al-Hussein missiles. Their unimpressive track record in intercepting the Iraqi missile notwithstanding, Patriots proved extremely valuable in alleviating the population anxiety and in demonstrating the US commitment to the Israeli defense.

THE US AND THE PERSIAN GULF

The US in many ways helped Iraq acquire the awesome military capability by the end of the Iran-Iraq war as a result of which it had become a bullying state prepared to challenge even the might of the US.

From intelligence sharing Agreement with Iraq in 1982 to the resumption of diplomatic relations with it in 1984 and the loans and credits to it to the tune of $ 4.2 billion, which were mainly used by Iraq for nuclear and missile development programs and acquisition of the weapons from the western countries, the US pampered Iraq all along. Some political analysts even feel that in view of Saudi Arabia's inherent weakness to outdo Iranian challenge, The US was developing Iraq as the policeman of the region to safeguard its interests.

This hypothesis is reinforced by some sort of undercover and clandestine US assistance to the Iraqi nuclear program. The US helped Iraq boost its missile capability. The Saad 16—Iraq's premier hi-tech complex for aircraft construction—missile design programs and also nuclear research received financial assistance from the US. Massive amount of sensitive equipment and technology were sold to Iraq by US firms. There were 6,000 licenses for $ 1.5 billion worth computers, machine tools, electronic equipment with military potential. There was no monitoring of their ultimate use.

Other American equipment which Saddam Hussein acquired from The US included $ 200 million worth of Bell helicopters, a machine tool plant capable of making weapons and a powder press suitable for the compaction of nuclear fuels. Beside this, two US computer firms built a giant petrochemicals plant near Bhagdad and a $ 4 billion ethylene facility(54).

The change in US attitude began appearing from the 1990 only when it realized that after battering a formidable enemy like Iran, Iraq was emboldened to assert itself in the Persian Gulf politics by hook or by crook. Then, the US became critical of Iraqi actions, expressed concern over Iraq's defense-build up and alleged it of stealing American technology. This allegation was a good excuse to shroud its own involvement in and contribution to Iraq's ambitious programs.

It is in this background of a little bit strained US-Iraqi relations that Iraq in July 1990 began threatening Kuwait and the UAE. Saddam Hussein had also taken up the cudgels against the US, accusing it of supporting Kuwait and the UAE in their "economic war against Iraq". Weigh against Iraq's anti-US tirade, the US reaction to Iraqi moves was mild by all accounts.
This persuades one to infer that the US wanted that Iraq invaded Kuwait so that it could intervene on behalf of the aggrieved country to take on Iraq (55).

In a meeting with the US ambassador to Iraq, April Glaspie, on July 25, Saddam Hussein had made his intention clear. He said to Glaspie “If we do not get what we want from Kuwait ..., we shall use force”(56). The Ambassador’s reply was “the US did not want to take sides in Intra-Arab disputes, like your border disagreement with Kuwait”. She even showed some sympathy for Iraq (57) while saying “I know you need funds. We understand that and our opinion is that you should have an opportunity to rebuild your country. She further stated that her country’s State Secretary had directed the US embassy officials in Baghdad to emphasize this instruction.

The content of Saddam-Glaspie discussion apart, the US did not forewarn its Arab and West European allies of Iraqi move. ‘Aviation Week and Space Technology’ reported that the US satellite intelligence had detected Iraqi tanks moving towards the Kuwaiti border on August 1. Though there was sufficient time to inform Kuwait about the move and to warn Iraq against attacking Kuwait, the US chose to remain silent. The CIA had also informed the administration about the possibility of Iraq invading Kuwait. Thus when the intelligence, the CIA, and media had reported about the developments that were likely to lead to Iraqi invasion(58), the US Administration’s contention that it failed to pre-empt Iraqi action because it relied on Arab allies—Egypt, Saudi Arabia—reports that no such thing was going to take place sounds illogical.

On the day of invasion, when Bush was asked that whether he was taken by surprise, he replied “not totally by surprise, because we have good intelligence and our intelligence had informed me about what action might be taken”(59). On August 1st, Iraqi Ambassador to the US, Sadiq Al Mashat, was summoned by the State Department and told that Iraq must solve its dispute with Kuwait peacefully. But this too points to the mild nature of the US reaction to the situation preceding the invasion. By August 1st, Iraq had already made its intention clear and had moved a large portion of troops to Kuwaiti border, which was also detected by the US intelligence satellite. The US reaction to this situation, particularly when one of its allies was the targeted state, could have come in form of a warning, threatening Saddam of a reprisal. The summoning of Iraqi ambassador on the other hand looked like the part of routine diplomatic ritual.

As soon as Iraqis invaded Kuwait, the US administration’s statements and reactions turned, in stark contrast to the past week or month, harsh and unflinching. The US did not then try to mediate to settle the issue peacefully. Bush said that if Iraq withdrew “unconditionally” from Kuwait and the “legitimate” government of Kuwait was restored, the issue of settling the crisis peacefully would be taken up. Saddam Hussein’s invasion was linked to the actions of Adolf Hitler. And the US Secretary of Defense, Dick Cheney, was immediately sent to Saudi Arabia, following whose meeting with King Fahad, Saudi Arabia formally invited the US troops. This indicates that not only would have the US been requested to send its troops, but Cheney might have gone to Saudi Arabia to persuade it to seek the US military intervention. The Secretary of State would have been a better choice if the US wanted to confine its dialogue with
Saudi Arabia to political issues related to the crisis.

The US, which despite all evidences suggesting to an Iraqi attack on Kuwait, had pretended not to take the threat seriously, raised a new issue, with a measure of authority, that Saudi Arabia might be attacked BY Iraq, though Saddam Hussein, unlike what he used to say before attacking Kuwait, categorically denied it. This was used as a pretext to send its troops in Saudi Arabia and take punitive actions against Iraq; “economic and otherwise”, as said Bush.

President Bush sent on 7 August troops, air power— utilizing an operational plan devised several years ago for possible use against the Soviet or Iranian military actions in the Persian Gulf region,— protect Saudi Arabian oil fields from possible Iraqi incursions on August 7, 1990. By November, the US forces numbered more than 2,30,000 army personnel and marines and more than 1,500 combat aircrafts of all types. US naval forces in the Persian Gulf were also augmented, additional air forces units were sent to Turkey and some were positioned in the UAE and Qatar.

A Central Command forward headquarter, under General Norman Schwarzkopf, was established in Saudi Arabia. On November 8th, Bush announced plan to deploy upto 200,000 additional troops to achieve what he termed as “an adequate offensive option”. At that time it was also agreed that the approval of Bush and King Fahad was required for any offensive action against Iraq. However, according to this agreement once the military action against Iraq was authorized by Saudi Arabia, the US forces would be free to operate exclusively under their own military commanders.

The logical conclusion of the US actions before and in the aftermath of Iraqi invasion can only be the fact that the US was pre-determined to wage a war against Iraq. The this took place only after about five and a half months of the arrival of the first batch of US forces in Arabian peninsula does not suggest that the US had opted war as the last resort, only if the economic embargo failed to achieve the stated goals. The economic embargo, in fact, was not used for this purpose(60). First, it at best could have secured Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait, which, it is stated, was not the primary objective of the US. Instead, the US wanted to smash Iraq militarily and remove Saddam Hussein from power. Second, it had become clear within a few months that the embargo had not worked out, but the US waited for another few months to attack Iraq so that the numerical strength of the US forces turned out half a million (61). Thus, the embargo was used for buying the time for military preparedness. A war and not the embargo could serve all of the US interests: destruction of the military might of Iraq, removal of Iraqi threat to Saudi Arabia’s and Israel’s security, liberation of Kuwait and the emergence of a new international order with the US at its apex (62).

Beside attaining the required military strength several other reasons can be attributed to the US delaying the war. The US policy to give its military action a collective security sheen for the purpose of legitimizing it, was bound to take a considerable period of time. There was also tremendous public pressure in the beginning not to go for war. A section of US military analysts were against the war as they maintained that the US would incur heavy manpower loss and it did not have the required superiority to defeat a regional power on its (Iraq) home ground.
Instead, carrying out its war in the name of a collective security action gave its actions a semblance of 'legality'. It also helped the US to prevent the war being Americanized since its unilateral military adventures in the past against Libya or in Panama had invited sharp international criticism. The US forging a coalition with scores of other countries could also help to offset growing anti-war sentiments back home.

The other countries' involvement did not, as would apparently seem, signified the US weakness in accomplishing the task of the peace-keeping single-handedly. Instead, it established the US control over the UN and also pointed to the fact that "America leads the world in attempts to solve the conflict and others follow it as unequal partners" (63). Unlike the case of true multilateralism, as was the World War Big Three coalition, the US drama was "pseudo multilateralism: "A dominant great power acts essentially alone, but, embarrassed at the idea and still worshipping at the shrine of collective security, recruits a ship there, a brigade there, and blessing all around to give its unilateral actions a multilateral sheen" (64).

Of course, this time the US wanted, at least for placating the Public opinion, that the burnt of a war must be borne out by all the concerned countries; Arab Gulf states, Japan, Germany and other West European countries.

American people were dead against the waging of the war as Americans soldiers began to arrive in Saudi Arabia. The question that whether, it was morally permissible to sacrifice a single human life for the pursuance of an interest, even if legitimate, one boggled the American public most.

They were haunted by the specter of thousands of dead bodies returning home after fighting "somebody else's " war. Americans, as stated above, were also perplexed as to why American soldiers be singularly made scapegoat when the interests of other countries around the world were also at stake. They were equally concerned at the effects of war on nation's treasury as it was estimated and made public that it would cost one billion everyday to the US. Opinion surveys indicated that the majority of Americans did not favor war. Anti-war demonstrations by thousands of people became a routine affair for months. The Vietnam phobia and the fear of an spurt in "Islamic terrorism" were other aspects which contributed to the anti-war attitude of the people(65).

When the Operation Desert Storm was launched, public protests increased. However, with the stunning successes against Iraq at the cost of unexpectedly low casualties the national pride and jubilation overshadowed the initial dismay. Electronic media played the most significant role in transforming people's attitude towards the war as it beamed the US victory live.

Thus, Bush finally managed to win popular support. However it did not last long. As soon as the euphoria of the victory died down, the negative effects of the war began to be felt by ordinary American. He held the war was by and large futile for common man. He reflected this disillusionment by defeating Bush, who, it was being unanimously said, would be elected unopposed for the second term.
As regards the US objectives behind unleashing a war against Iraq, the most important was to usher in the post cold war era as the undisputed monarch of the world. This emanated from both the opportunity the end of the cold war had provided and the danger the possibility of the emergence of multilateral world order posed. The US decline as the superpower was inherent in the vanishing of the Soviet Union. The West European countries did not need to rely on the awesome military might of the US to be protected against the Soviet power. They, mainly Germany, started asserting themselves as economic and technological superpower. China and Third World countries, with weapons of mass destruction, pretended to challenge the US military might in their respective regions if not worldwide.

The Gulf crisis came as an opportunity to the US to check its diminishing power status. It provided a chance to reinforce the centrality of military strength in the international politics. The US could demonstrate that the West had to fall in line with it to tackle a regional issue of immense importance to their security and economies. The US could emphasize that the economic well-being of West Europe would rest with the country which could assure an uninterrupted supply of oil from Persian Gulf to them. Most importantly, it could bring home the point to the Western European powers that they alone could not take up a Third World challenge to their economic interests.

For the Third World countries the tackling of the Persian Gulf crisis by the US was a reminder, that they were no match to the US military prowess. For a Third World country aspiring for a regional power status independent of the US it implied that the countries from their own regions preferred the US unilateralism over their regional supremacy.

The end of the cold war came as an opportunity to the US to impose unilateralism. The US could target the weaker Third World states without the fear of its move being deterred by the Soviet Union. It was far easier for the US to establish a master-client relations with West Europe as well as the allies in the Third World as their clout to play one superpower against other diminished.

All other important US objectives of war flowed from it. For instance, the oil was a central issue in this crisis not because its supply was endangered and the prices had begun shooting, for oil continued flowing from the region and the price hike that followed the Iraqi invasion was the result of panic. Some analysts have even gone to the extent of arguing that this panic was created by the US. The US had three months of reserves — nearly 600 million barrels — to avoid the panic. The inflated price justified increased exploration and exploitation in Alaska offshore and elsewhere. The additional revenue essentially was utilized in the conducting of the Operation Desert Storm.

What, therefore, was at the heart of the issue was the question as to who owned the oil, the users or the producers. In USA's view a Third World power could not sit over the largest reserves of oil in the world to deny the consumers the oil and influence the world oil price. In fact, Iraqi effort to increase oil prices to a reasonable level was not all that threatening to the US. What was unacceptable to US was the absence of the US influence in decision making.
process pertaining to the price and production of oil (70). Also, the US did not want that an oil
rich country with an investment over 100 billion abroad was occupied by Iraq, who would deny it a regular flow of Arab wealth in form of investment, assets and recycled petrodollars.

The oil was important in a few other aspects also. Once the war led to the liberation of Kuwait it along with other US friendly oil producing countries would step up the production to deluge the market. Thus the oil would remain cheaper in the 90s despite an increase in the global demand of oil. This proves that the war was fought against Iraq not to set the turbulence in oil market, resulting from Iraqi invasion, in order but in the interests of a long-term oil policy.

As stated above a strong Iraq had become a liability to the US after the end of Iran-Iraq war and the cold war. With Iran still smarting from its defeat, Iraq had turned from a friend (being enemy’s enemy) into a potential threat to the US and its allies in the region. It was too aggressive, too ruthless, too unpredictable, too untrustworthy and above all too independent and ambitious. Therefore, it needed to be destroyed if their came a golden opportunity to realize this goal.

This explains the US stubborn rejection of moves to find out a peaceful solution to the crisis. Though apparently the US was right in maintaining that no peace without the aggressor country’s withdrawal was morally justifiable, but its insistence on peace before withdrawal in the case of Israeli occupation of Palestine underlines that the US is principally against such a peace formula. This strengthens the doubt that the US wanted the settlement of the Iraq-Kuwait issue not before it settled its scores with Iraq. The centrality of Iraqi military destruction in the US war objectives got proved retrospectively. While Iraqi military destruction was only partly achieved during the 45-day war, the US did not relent as it activated the UN to complete the unfinished task. Thus a host of resolutions were adopted at the Security Council which envisaged total dismantling of Iraqi missile force and the weapons of mass destruction. The Security Council resolutions also called for an international arms embargo on transfer of arms and military related technology to Iraq.

Aware of Saddam’s ambitions, the US knew that mere destruction of Iraq would not do. Removal of Saddam was equally necessary. Bush, it is reported, directed the CIA to destabilize Iraq politically and get rid of Saddam by any possible means(71). The economic embargo, among other things, aimed at starving Iraq, leading to a popular upsurge against Saddam’s regime.

Bush did not rule out an anti-Saddam coup during the war. He had also urged the Iraqi military and the people to force Saddam to “step aside”. A large section of media persons, particularly those belonging to Israeli lobby, held the view that the Kuwaiti crisis could not be solved unless Saddam was removed. Les Aspin, the chairman of the powerful House Service Committee wished that destruction of Iraqi military capability and the removal of Saddam went hand-in-hand. This Congressman was willing to tolerate a million men army without Saddam Hussein than the vice versa”(72).

Security, both internal and external, of Arab allies as well as Israel also prompted the US to destroy Iraq. Once The US had already risked popular backlash in the Arab countries by deploying its forces there, it had become incumbent upon it to decimate Iraq so that Arab people’s morale could dim and the governments proved vindicated. It was also imperative upon the US to destroy Iraq to the extent that it ceased to be a threat to Saudi Arabia.
Another US consideration was to “clip the wings” of Saddam Hussein before he brandished both chemical weapons and missiles against Israel. The disadvantages of leaving Iraq scot-free were numerous. Had Saddam Hussein’s military machine been left intact, Saudi Arabia would have become a long term security preoccupation for the US, an obligation that would have been expensive and embarrassing. The added revenues provided by the utilization of production from Kuwait were destined to augment Saddam’s financial capability to develop of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. The US interests vis-a-vis the GCC allies could have become a hostage to Iraq’s growing influence in the region. The US wanted to resuscitate the NATO and retain it under its suzerainty. Both the desires could be met by activating the NATO against Iraq. The US was perturbed over the NATO being called as redundant after the end of the cold war to an extent that the USSR had agreed that the united Germany could belong to the NATO. The West European members also developed it into a new entity where in defence considerations would be secondary. The NATO’s participation in the war, on the other hand, promised to reinforce its importance as principally a military organisation.

THE SOVIET UNION AND THE PERSIAN GULF CRISIS

Soviet Union’s involvement in the Persian Gulf crisis was a self-recognition of its reducing clout as a power of international stature. Thus it did not differ from the US on basic issues involved in the crisis.

At the same time, the crisis was seen by the Soviet policy makers as an opportunity to salvage its image. Thus the Soviet Union tried in vain to carve out for itself the role of peace broker. By refusing to participate in collective security actions, the decision to which effect had emanated from its inability to bear its cost in the prevailing economic condition, the Soviet Union made a last ditch effort to give an impression that it could still act independently.

As soon as Iraq invaded Kuwait, the USSR condemned the Iraqi Aggression, demanding unconditional withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait. This followed the US Secretary of State’s visit to Moscow to confer with his Soviet counterpart, Eduarde Shverdandze. After that, the two countries issued a joint statement which condemned the Iraqi aggression and included an assurance from the Soviet Union to stop arms supplies to Iraq. The joint statement set the tone of Soviet policy towards the Persian Gulf crisis. It indicated that the Soviet Union was not looking at the crisis from the traditional master-allies relations angle. Rather, the USSR showed willingness to cooperate with the US in seeking an end to the crisis. Subsequent developments pertaining to the crisis brought some changes in Soviet attitude, but its policy remained more or less the same.

Soviet Union was expected to play the role of a moderator in the UN Security Council to soften the US-led international aggressiveness towards Iraq. However, the USSR did not only facilitate a smooth passage of the UNSCRs but also agreed to comply with them faithfully.

During the debate on UNSCR 660 (1990), envisaging economic embargo against Iraq the Soviet representative at the UN bserved“We do not advocate hasty decisions, but we must face the fact that the pace of the events taking place—the events which started with the sudden invasion of Iraqi forces of Kuwait—dictates that we take the necessary steps in accordance with
direct requirements of the United Nations Charter" (74).

In the case of the resolutions permitted military action against Iraq, the Soviet Union adopted a little different line of action. The Soviet government maintained that it preferred a political solution and insisted that the war must be carried out under the auspices of the UN (75).

The USSR did not have any other option than voting in favor of the resolution authorizing the war. The Soviet veto could not stop the US from taking an action outside the scope of the UN. While, the consequence of such a drastic step by the Soviet Union meant its international isolation politically as well as economically. In fact, the war was not in the interests of the Soviet Union as it meant a red signal to Soviet peace efforts, the only instrument in the hand of that country to make its presence felt in the Persian Gulf crisis. The war was also not in the economic interests of the USSR.

The USSR adopted a three-pronged strategy. It did stay away from multilateral military build up in the Persian Gulf, dissuaded the US from attacking Iraq unless all peace efforts exhausted and expressed its objection to the war not being conducted under UN umbrella (77). Gen. Mikhail Moideyev, the Soviet chief of staff, went on warning that any military action in the Persian Gulf would lead to the Third World War. Gorbachev desperately tried to see that a peaceful solution to the crisis was found before the deadline finally ended. He sent Academician Primakvo to Baghdad as special envoy to persuade Iraq to withdraw at the last moment.

Soviet Union categorically refused to participate, even symbolically, in the war on January 17, the day the war started. Its opposition to the war sharpened as it openly criticized the Allied Forces bombing on civilians. On January 29, the USSR issued a joint statement with the US which said bombing would end if Iraq promised an unconditional withdrawal. The USSR also joined Iran and a few other countries in opposing the US wanton destruction of Iraqi military and civilian targets during the air raids (78).

WEST EUROPE’S, JAPAN’S RESPONSE TO THE GULF CRISIS

West European countries and Japan sided with the US. France can be figured out as the country which maintained a little distance from the US. So did Germany, albeit to a limited extent, by restricting its support to the US to financially contributions.

Commonality of interests with the US brought the allied powers together. Free flow of oil was more essential to West European countries, even more so for Japan, than the US. The answer can only be found in the unique concentration around the oil of the Persian Gulf.
Petroleum explains why international consensus and action have been achieved in this case—but not, for example, in the case of Palestinians.

Saddam also contributed to the US-West Europe-Japan solidarity by remaining obdurate on the question of withdrawal from Kuwait. Otherwise, France's search for a honorable settlement of the issue and Japan's preference for the avoidance of war could have caused chinks and fissures between them and the US which also determined to resolve the issue by the use of force against Iraq. After all the allies were more concerned with the issue of the uninterrupted supply of oil than the total destruction of Iraq or the removal of Saddam, the latter was the US's principal goal.

Saddam was also responsible for enraging France, a US ally not blindly toeing the line of action like the UK. France was looking for a peaceful solution to the issue. On September 14, Iraqi soldiers forcibly entered the French embassy in Kuwait. France condemned this as aggression and demanded the prosecution of the persons responsible for attacking its embassy. The French demands were rejected by Iraq. By then France had not decided to send its troops in the region to join those of the US and other countries. However, soon after the aforementioned incident, France changed its mind (79).

France also acknowledged a linkage between Kuwaiti crisis and Palestinian issue and urged the US to take up the latter one as soon as the Kuwaiti crisis was resolved. France also tried to convince Iraq on this count.

West Europe and Japan condemned the Iraqi aggression and froze the assets of Iraq and Kuwait. They also hailed the US-Saudi Arabia decision regarding the deployment of friendly states' forces in Saudi Arabia. These countries soon began sending their troops in the region. France, however, made only verbal commitment in this regard with the Mittrand government announcing that it would positively respond to a Saudi and Kuwaiti request for military and technical aid. It also decided to strengthen its naval and air presence in the Persian Gulf.

Later, France also sent its troops and announced that it would join an attack against Iraq if that was carried within the framework of collective Security action as envisaged in the UN Charter. Otherwise, the French government decided, it would take part in a military operation against Iraq only if that country attacked a third country, say Saudi Arabia or Israel (80).

France and the UK deployed modest-sized ground and air forces in Saudi Arabia and the UAE. France sent a troop of 9,000 men. It also deployed six destroyers and frigates, three support ships, one command ship, Mirage Jaguar fighter bombers and transport planes in the region (81).

Other European states despatched token forces. Japan decided to provide $6 billion aid to war efforts and Germany $1 billion. British and French naval forces also enforced the UN economic sanctions on Iraq by interdicting Petroleum and other shipments coming from Iraq.
The European countries confirmed their participation in the war on January 14, by
deciding unanimously to abandon their peace initiatives.

Allies' participation was not as forthcoming as that of the US. The US also expressed
resentment on the lack of support from them, resenting that this was despite the fact that their
dependence upon the Gulf oil was far more acute than that of it. The total troops strength of
the allied powers in the Persian Gulf was merely 50,000 as against the USA's 4,30,000.

UNITED NATIONS AND THE PERSIAN GULF CRISIS

The United Nations, which till the eve of the Iraqi invasion was beset with the problem
of failing to respond to a crisis in time, lost no time to discuss the situation that followed the
August 2 developments. During the debate, the Iraqi invasion was unanimously described as
unacceptable and unbelievable. The Security Council passed a resolution which determined that
breach of peace was committed by Iraq and asked it to withdraw unconditionally to the position
as located before the invasion (82). This resolution was followed by many more which, taken
together, called for restoration of Kuwait, imposition of economic sanctions on Iraq and the use
of minimum force for the enforcement of such sanctions.

of the broadest set of sanction ever put in place”. The resolution called upon all the states to
prevent import, export and transshipment of all commodities and produce (including oil) to or
from Iraq and Kuwait and stop the transfer of funds, military equipment and weapons to Iraq.
The resolution, however, exempted foodstuff, medical goods under “humanitarian circum-
stances” from the items banned under the embargo. The international community was also
requested to provide all possible assistance to the legitimate government of Kuwait and protect
its assets. The said resolution also asked not to recognize any regime planted by Iraq in Kuwait.
The resolution also constituted a committee of all the members of council to supervise the
progress of the implementation of the sanctions.

The Security Council Resolution 665 (1990), which was voted in favor by all the
members present with Cuba and Yemen abstaining, virtually allowed the naval blockade of
Iraq(83). It called upon the maritime powers in the region “to use such measures that
commensurate to the specific circumstances as may be necessary under the authority of the
Security Council” to interdict all maritime shipping from and to Kuwait to inspect and verify
their cargoes and destinations and to ensure strict implementation relating to economic
sanctions against Iraq.

The UNSC adopted resolution 666 on September 14 (1990) which tried to resolve the
intricate question of supply of food and medical items to Iraq and Kuwait under “humanitarian
circumstances”. The strategy it evolved was to prevent uninterrupted flow of food items and
medical goods (84) and deny the Iraqi government control over the supplies made under the
humanitarian circumstances. The text, adopted by all the members with Cuba and Yemen voting
against it, directed the Security Council Committee to keep the situation regarding the supply of foodstuffs to Iraq under constant review. It requested the Secretary General to collect information from United Nations and other appropriate humanitarian agencies on the availability of food in Iraq and Kuwait. As and when the committee felt that the supply of foodstuffs be restored to it was required to report to the SC for appropriate action and authorization. After the authorization the foodstuffs were permitted to be distributed through UN agencies in cooperation with the humanitarian agencies in order to ensure that they reached the intended beneficiaries.

Passing 12 resolutions in a row the UN did not, as it has been advocated, get reinvigorated. Instead, it was a test-case of the US abduction of the same. For, its limited involvement in and clumsy reaction to other conflicts, which preceded and followed the Persian Gulf crisis, point to the fact that the UN's collective security action over Iraq did not emanate from its conscience. Instead, it fell victim to the wishes and whims of a single power.

The hijacking of the UN by the US exposed the very irrationality of an undemocratic provision in the Charter, the establishment of the Security Council authorized to take executive actions with each of its member vested with a 'veto power'. This, in effect, means that the UN can become captive to the wishes and whims of a single power. The Persian Gulf crisis exposed this to its hilt.

Also, the crisis questioned the efficacy of the "veto power". The exercising of the veto, as was demonstrated time and again, is related by the veto bearing country to its national interests than the interests of the world community as a whole. If previously the over use of the veto prevented the UN to resolve any crisis. The absence of veto bearing voice in the Persian Gulf crisis led to the adopting of one resolution after another, not allowing the diplomatic efforts the required time to succeed in ending the crisis non-violently.

In other words, when a major global power is ruling the roost in international arena no power can prevent it from utilizing UN's services in pursuit of its goals and objectives. This way the Persian Gulf crisis established that the US dominated this world body after the end of the cold war. The US behaved in such a dictatorial manner in the UN that it did not even consult the Secretary General and never took the matter to the General Assembly.

The US domination indicates the decline of this world body. This is because the UN might not be brought into scene in those crises whose solution does not serve the US interests (Bosnian crisis, for example), where the US does not need to invoke the UN to legitimize its involvement or where the US wants to take the credit all alone (Palestine accord).

In addition, in order to take punitive action the UN would always look to the US, for only it can make such a large contribution to the UN's peace-keeping operations and influence other member countries to do the same. The problems such as the composition of UN forces, command and control of the UN-sponsored operations and, most importantly, the financing of such operations will be a grave obstacle to a UN collective security action not supported by the US.
The UN’s authorization of war against Iraq raises a moot point. That is whether the UN’s military actions under its international obligation to establish and protect peace and security are morally justified. The sufferings Iraqis have undergone due to economic embargo, the number of civilian Iraqi casualties during the allied forces’ carpet bombings and damage done to the properties for civilian use suggest that they are not. The blame the UN must shoulder for the sufferings the Iraqi civilians are exposed to can not be transferred to Saddam Hussein accusing him of being responsible for all this. People of an undemocratic political system should not be made to suffer from a punitive action taken against their governments as they do not influence its decisions.

The cruelty inherent in the undertaking of UN’s moral obligation by another state on behalf of it can only be mitigated if the UN instead of authorizing a concerned states to carry out military operation under the collective security action itself takes the charge and in the course of the proceedings sees that laws of the war particularly those pertaining to the protection of civilian (and their properties) of the targeted country are strictly adhered to.

The UN can’t be said to have rejuvenated due to its role in a crisis in which its charter was blatantly violated (85). First, The collective security action was not undertaken under the UN command.

Second, the UNSCRs called for liberation of Kuwait and not the attack on Iraq. Actions inside the country targeted to be punished can be taken under extraordinary circumstances, For example the one in which without destroying the occupying power, the withdrawal can not be secured. But in case of the task of liberating Kuwait could be accomplished by the allied forces by landing their troops in Kuwait with adequate air cover to throw the Iraqi forces out from there (86).

**EFFORTS TO BRING PEACE**

The Persian Gulf crisis can be marked for the mooting of numerous peace plans in its short duration of four months, yet none yielding the desired results.

The first of these proposals came from Iraq itself only on August 2, 1990. The three-point Iraqi peace proposal demanded the resolution of all the West Asian problems simultaneously and on the same principle and basis as set by the UN Security Council, immediate withdrawal of the US forces and its replacement by an Arab force with its size and area of deployment as decided by the UN Secretary General and the constituents of the force by Iraq and Saudi Arabia in consultation with each other, and the exclusion of Egyptian force as they “are in the US plot against Iraq”.

On August 25, the PLO Chairman, Yasser Arafat, announced a three-stage peace plan which stipulated the freezing of military build up in the Persian Gulf, withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait and the international forces from Saudi Arabia and its replacement by both UN and
Arab Peace Keeping forces, and setting up of a committee chosen by the Arab League to discuss the territorial aspect of the conflict.

The PLO plan was presented in a modified version as the PLO-Jordan Plan on August 28. Beside envisaging the Iraqi and Foreign forces’ withdrawal, the plan proposed an agreement between the Kuwaiti government and that of Iraq on the latter having administrative control over some parts of Kuwait followed by plebiscite in Kuwait.

PLO came out with another Peace Plan on September 4. This plan was disclosed by Arafat’s deputy in the Al-Fatah organization of the PLO in an interview with French newspaper “Liberation”. A four-point plan, it called for a guarantee from the US that it would not attack Iraq’s chemical plants and nuclear facilities, Iraqi withdrawal from all of Kuwait except Bubiyan so that Iraq could have an access to sea, establishment of Iraqi-Kuwait border with Iraq possessing the Al-Rumeilah oil field, and plebiscite in Kuwait. This plan also maintained that Emir of Kuwait be bared from returning to Kuwait, unless the Plebiscite was held.

On August 31, the Arab League Proposed a five-point Peace Plan. This envisaged immediate release of hostages by Iraq, a guarantee from Iraq on the safety of Arab laborers in Kuwait, return of royal family to Kuwait and a guarantee from Iraqi government that it would not mishandle the Kuwaiti assets. The Proposal also condemned Iraqi invasion and refused to recognize its annexation of Kuwait.

In the month of September, Libya mooted a peace plan whose provisions included withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait and its replacement by a UN force, withdrawal of US troops and its replacement by an Arab or Muslim force, lifting of economic embargo on Iraq, Kuwaiti surrender of two islands and the Rumeilah field to Iraq, political self-determination for Kuwait people, a unified Arab oil Policy, and immediate negotiations on debt repayment by and compensation to Iraq.

ON January 14, 1991, the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) appealed to Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait and thus avoid war in the interests of Muslims of his country and those of the other Persian Gulf countries.

Outside the Arab world, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) also tried to seek a political solution to the crisis. In a meeting of NAM foreign ministers on October 4, 1990, the federal secretary of Foreign Affairs of Yugoslavia, the then chairman of the NAM, was authorized to evolve NAM’s position on the crisis and use his good offices to resolve it. The minister thereafter visited a host of countries including Iraq, Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. During his visit to Saudi Arabia the minister also met the dethroned ruler of Kuwait.

Beside the Arab countries, he visited France, Soviet Union, the US and the EEC headquarters. He also met the UN Secretary General during his world tour. NAM sought unconditional withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait as the pre-condition for any peace talks. However, it also maintained that after the Iraqi withdrawal the foreign troops must also pull out from the Persian Gulf region followed by an Iraqi-Kuwaiti negotiation on border
dispute issues. The NAM was also for a guarantee to Iraq that it would not be attacked. It was for the establishment of a regional security set up in the Persian Gulf sans any link with the outside military powers. It contended that immediately after the Iraqi withdrawal the whole complex of Middle Eastern Question be addressed, possibly by convening an international conference (87).

France was the only country from West Europe active in peace efforts. In an address to the UN General Assembly on September 24, 1990 the French president said that if Iraq agreed to withdraw, all the Middle East problems could be negotiated. It was a four-phase plan which envisaged in first place the withdrawal of Iraqi forces, restoration of the sovereignty of Kuwait and determining “the democratic will of the people of Kuwait” in the second stage, convening of an international conference on issues like presence of foreign troops in Lebanon, Palestinians’ rights for self-determination and the right of Israel to live in security in the third stage, and formulation of an Arab agenda on arms control and intra-regional cooperation in the last stage.

The Soviet Union was also engaged in finding out a diplomatic solution to the crisis. Soviet President sent his special advisor, Yevgene Primakov, to Baghdad and Washington. After his meeting with Saddam Hussein, Primakov declared that the latter had wished to withdraw provided he was allowed to retain the Bubiyan island and the Rumeilah oil field. Though the Soviet Union did not make any comment on Iraqi offer, Primakov’s statement that he was not pessimistic about the prospect of a political solution to the crisis, indicated Soviet Union’s implicit support to the afore-mentioned Iraqi position(88).

Primakov went to Baghdad again during the war (February 12, 1991) and declared in his subsequent visit to Iran that he saw “rays of light” in Iraqi position. Gorbachev presented a peace proposal on February 19, which called for Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait and negotiation of the Palestine problem. On February 21, the Soviet Union also announced that Iraq had agreed to withdraw unconditionally. On February 22, Moscow said that Iraq accepted the Gorbachev proposal.

The US, which maintained that no peace was possible unless Iraq withdrew immediately, unconditionally and completely from Kuwait(89), also resorted to diplomatic means in the end of November. On 30th of that month, the US President made a dramatic announcement that he was sending the Secretary of State, James Baker, to Geneva to confer with Iraqi Foreign Minister, Tariq Aziz, and invited Tariq Aziz to Washington for direct negotiations. Iraq agreed to send Tariq Aziz for Geneva negotiations scheduled to be held on January 9. On January 5, Bush said in a message to nation that in the meeting Baker would reiterate the US position that Iraq should withdraw immediately unconditionally and completely from Kuwait. On January 9, the two officials met for seven hours. The talks failed. Baker said that during the meeting he did not find Iraq willing to withdraw from Kuwait.

Before the war broke out, the UN Secretary General, Perez de Cuellar, visited Baghdad in his last ditch effort to see that the issue was settled without the war being made. During his
meeting with Saddam Hussies, Cuellar tried to convince him that in case Iraq withdrew, it would not be attacked. There will be subsequent lifting of the embargo followed by the withdrawal of foreign forces and the convening of an international conference on the Palestine issue.

All of the above-mentioned peace plans proved futile. Much of the explanation behind this lies in the biased character of the plans. These were clearly tilted in favor of either of the sides. The PLO Plan or the one it proposed in union with Jordan was totally biased in Iraq’s favor. In fact, one can gauge the growing liaison between PLO and Iraq in the latter’s peace plans. The one it proposed on August 25 was quite impartial as it asked for the simultaneous withdrawal of both the Iraqi and foreign forces. But within two days of it, the PLO along with Jordan came out with a new plan which called for holding of plebiscite in Kuwait also. The one PLO proposed on September 4, went a step ahead by proposing that Kuwaiti Emir be not allowed to return before the holding of the plebiscite.

Qaddafi’s insincerity in trying to find out a peaceful solution to the crisis reflected in his peace plans as these were more or less an endorsement of Iraqi occupation of Kuwait. For, these advocated that Iraq be permitted to retain two Kuwaiti islands and people be accorded the right of political self-determination, meaning thereby Iraq could retain Kuwait if its people wished so.

The Arab League plan did not even ask for a simultaneous or post-Iraqi evacuation withdrawal of the foreign forces. It was accordingly rejected by Iraq’s sympathizers in the League and, therefore, turned out to be a non-starter (90).

The OIC, where Saudi Arabia wielded much influence cashed in on Islam to call for a unilateral withdrawal of Iraq, evading all other related questions such as the Palestine issue and the withdrawal of foreign troops.

The NAM set the Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait as pre-condition for the settlement of any other West Asian problem. France’s proposal was more or less the same. But the reference to the restoration of “democratic will of the people” drew much interests. It could mean either of the two; to grant people the right to determine their future political system and Sabah’s family’s return to power.

The USSR claimed to have broken the ice twice i.e. persuading Iraq to accept the Security Council resolution which firstly and formostly demanded Iraq’s unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait; However, no sooner than the USSR made these claims Iraq denied it. The US also rejected Soviet peace proposals. Thus the shuttling between Baghdad and Washington by Primakov by and large proved a futile exercise.

Even the US proposal to hold negotiations with Iraq was a political move. A number of factors suggest that it aimed at buying time. The situations before January 15 i.e the pre-monsoon session in Arabia, were not ideal for war as heavy rains were expected which were poised to turn a good portion of land on Iraq-Kuwait border into marshland, restricting the movement of tanks and APC’s. Till then public opinion was not mobilized in favor of war. The West European allies, barring the UK, were skeptical of the utility of military action. So were
the Arab nations, with Syria, Egypt and even Saudi Arabia having yet not been able to decide that whether they would take part in any assault on Iraq.

However, once the pre-monsoon period came to an end, the US-Arab countries-Western allies evolved a consensus on the question of war, the US began harping on that it would not agree for anything less than an Iraqi withdrawal during Baker-Aziz meeting at Geneva. No such statement was made by Bush when he offered Saddam Hussein the olive branch.

The possibility of peaceful solution to the Persian Gulf crisis became a casualty to US and Iraq's uncompromising and confrontationist positions. The US stood for an immediate and unconditional withdrawal and Iraqi insisted on linking his withdrawal to that of Israel from the occupied territories.

In view of the fact the US was more interested in destroying Iraq and the linking of two West Asian issues by the latter was a political ploy, it was hardly likely that the US could agree to simultaneous resolution of both the issues on Iraq to the solution of the two crisis one by one, though both the options were well-meaning and attainable.

In the initial stages, Saddam's tough posture eluded peace. In response to French Proposal of September 4, Saddam put withdrawal of western forces and the lifting of economic embargo as pre-conditions. He also declared that he had no intention to withdraw from Kuwait (91). While at the eve of and during the war the same rigid attitude was exhibited by the US. Bush ensured himself that January 9 Baker-Aziz meeting did not succeed by stating that the talks would be used to ask Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait unconditionally.

Despite the Soviet contention on February 23 that Iraq was ready to withdraw, which was also not denied by Iraq, Bush said that it did not go far enough and went ahead launching land war on February 24. Since Iraq had partially accepted the US conditions, diplomacy should have been given one more chance by deferring the land war for a few days.

In fact, as the January 15 deadline approached nearer the US toughened its stand on peace. At the beginning of the crisis Bush was reported as saying that a mere statement of intent on the part of Saddam to withdraw would be enough, but when the war started with US nearly getting closer to its main objective of destroying Iraq, it rejected to announce cease-fire even though Iraqi President ordered a pull out from Kuwait (92).

US was also against an "Arab Solution" to the Kuwaiti issue which reflected in its cajoling Saudi Arabia into inviting American forces. US reportedly persuaded King Fahad not to attend Algerian president Shadli Ben Jedid who was to visit Saudi Arabia to arrange a meeting between Saddam Hussein and the King on their border.

THE COURSE OF WAR
It does not sound logical to say that the military action against Iraq was launched as a last resort before which the United States waited for economic sanctions to make desired effect on Iraq or diplomatic means to succeed. It had become clear much before January 17 that the economic sanctions had failed to dampen Iraqi resoluteness. Various diplomatic initiatives also failed in the face US as well Iraq’s uncompromising stands.

This may lead one to believe that the war was inevitable. To launch it on January 17 was a strategic decision. The deployment of around 400,000 troops by the US could be completed only towards the end or the beginning of December, 1990. The allied forces camping in Saudi Arabia also needed two to three months to get acclimatise with the geo-climatic conditions of the Arabian desert.

The US military strategists had warned their government that a Panama-like surgical strike was not possible against Iraq. It was, therefore, advised to enter the war after full preparation. Back home, during the first few weeks following the Iraqi invasion the public mood was also not in favor of the war. Americans and Europeans were of the view that oil—the main concern of the US—was coming from the Persian Gulf region without interruption. In view of this, the American public opinion held, it would be unreasonable to start a war which was going to cause about 50,000 deaths on the side of the allied forces alone.

Since the cost of the maintenance of the presence of the US-led Allied Forces was being borne by Saudi Arabia, there was no economic compulsion to return soon. Uncertainties regarding the participation of the Arab forces in an attack against Iraq, the Arab response if somehow Israel entered the war, the use of chemical weapons by Iraq and human casualties also persuaded US to defer the launching of an attack for an appropriate time.

During the debate before adopting the UNSC resolution which was meant to authorize collective security action against Iraq, January 15 was set as the deadline. This was also a strategic decision. For the period between January 1 and 15 happens to be the beginning of Monsoon session, therefore one or two heavy rains were not ruled out. In such a scenario, the US could not have been able launch at least the ground battle as the movement of heavy weapons like tanks, APCs would not have been possible in the marshy land on Iraq-Kuwait border.

When the war started the US led multinational forces (MNF) were about 550,000 in number. 250,000 of them were brought in the months of December and January alone. The MNF was armed with the laser guided smart bombs, heat-seeking missiles, electronic warfare measures to suffocate all communication of the enemy and an array of front-line aircrafts capable of dropping conventional as well as nuclear explosives. The attack was launched on a completely dark night of 17th January optimizing the effectiveness of precision bombs. The bombing began with the air force flying 2,000 to 3,000 sorties per day and cruise missile striking strategic targets including command and control centers and facilities producing chemical and biological weapons of Iraq.

The air strike tried to gain mastery over Iraqi skies by attacking air defense suite air strips and Iraqi aircrafts. The US also bombed refineries, power stations, political targets like
That how long the US would continue to bomb Iraq was kept close. Bush assured that it would be a six-day affair. This led many an analyst to believe that the US was for a quick victory. For, it wanted to avoid Israel being sucked into war and Iraq destroying oil wells in Saudi Arabia. However, a few other military analysts disagreed with this proposition. For, Iraq could be destroyed totally only in a long drawn out war. And if to kill Saddam was also one of the objectives of the MNF then the end of the war depended entirely upon the accomplishing of this task for which no time limit could be stipulated. Also, knowing the Iraqi strength at ground, the US did not want to start it before the morale of the Iraqi government and the army was destroyed.

Within a few days of the aerial attacks allies’ air strikes spread over civilian targets as well. This was partially the result of the allied forces’ failure to destroy Iraqi military infrastructure in full. Iraq managed to save its military strength from total destruction displaying the art of surprise and deception. Iraq strewed countryside with plywood Scud missile launchers with artificial fire emitting heat from energy decoys. In addition, Iraq deployed full-sized plastic inflatable tanks purchased from the West. Use of these dummies enabled Iraqis to achieve tactical surprise, especially during the air campaign. They also dug themselves deep inside the ground, with the Republican Guard in concrete underground shelter to prevent casualties in enemy’s air attack.

Iraq attacked Israel with Scud missiles as soon as the war started. The Iraqi action was to provoke Israel to jump into the war so that the Arab forces particularly the one from Syria could withdraw themselves from the war. It was politically motivated more than military-oriented.

Firstly, the missile attacks were not regular. When Israel with the help of Patriots started neutralizing Iraqi missiles in mid-air Iraq had an option to increase the frequency of attacks and hurl not one but 25 missiles or so in a single attack. Israel did not possess required number of Patriots to counter Iraqi missiles attacks on such a large scale.

Fear of a nuclear attack from Israel, which would have been a logical option for Israel had it been exposed to the threat of total destruction from Iraq, served as deterrence to Iraq. Although Iraqi move against Israel was welcomed by Arab people, it failed to drive a wedge between the Arab and the rest of the allied forces. The USA dealt with the situation quite reasonably as it literally bribed Israel, in form of giving it financial assistance, to keep it away from the war. Saddam Hussein also erred in attacking Saudi Arabia simultaneously. This act of him gave the Arab governments an excuse to say that they would not part with the coalition forces even if Israel entered the war. They pointed out that Iraqi attacks did not look to be an extension of Arab-Israeli conflict as they themselves were being meted out same treatment from Iraq as was Israel.

The US scored a major success by completely jamming Iraqi air surveillance capability enabling it moving huge quantities of weapons, equipment and other support materials over
sparse lines of communications. This in turn helped the US to outmaneuver Iraqi force deployment. 100,000 sorties dropping 88,500 tons of bombs in 40 days destroyed Iraqi command and control facilities and restricted the flow of maintenance commodities to Kuwait to 2,000 tones a day from the requirement of 20,000 tones per day.

On February 24, President Bush ordered the Gulf command to eject Iraqi out of Kuwait. Allied forces struck into Kuwait and Iraq beforedawn on that day. There was light resistance from Iraq as a large number of troops surrendered.

Iraq had deployed nearly 170,000 troops consisting of four armored and six infantry divisions inside Kuwait and 2,50,000 in southern part of the country which adjoins Kuwait on border with Saudi Arabia(95). 1,05,000 Republican Guards were held as reserves, some around Bhagdad but mostly (100, 000) in southern part of the country in general area of Basra in two groups; one immediately north of Kuwait city and other Around Basra (96). Iraqis had constructed well fortified defecnes all along the front, relying on a network of deep minefields and earth beams razor wires. Trenches had been dugged and filled with oil, to be ignited at the time of allied forces’ attack. Tanks and other support weapons were hidden inside strong points from where firing position could be taken on beams to engage attacking troops. A total number of, 50,000 mines had been laid all along the front line. The weapons Iraqi army was equipped with were not only of the most sophisticated quality, but were used in the eight-year long war with Iran, meaning that Iraqi army was quite efficient in employing them under desert conditions. Iraqi anti-aircraft defense was very formidable, it included hundreds of Soviet-built surface-to-air missiles and around 4,000 modern anti-aircraft guns. The Iraqi army was also aclamatized to the desert warfare.

According to some accounts, both the US and Iraq were not contemplating a land war. The US perception was that Iraq will not be able to survive its military machine after massive air offensive. Whereas, Saddam Hussein was under impression that aware of his country’s edge in land warfare with the specter of loosening thousands of lives and resultant domestic and international criticism in addition, Bush would like to avoid it.

But, when Saddam showed no sign to give up despite being bruised in about the month long aerial attack, the US planned a perfect air-land battle. It adopted an air-land battle strategy which implied air attacks on the rear areas to cut off supplying lines, destroy command and control centers and strike Republican Guard units toisolate it from the battle front. Air attacks was to be followed by rapid forays through enemy defecnes by ground troops with the help of artillery, close air support and armored attacks, throwing the enemy off balance spreading fear, confusion and dismay in opposite’s camp.

General Schwarzkopf planned to move the allied forces swiftly to surround the Iraqis and pound them. The air power was to be used to break the will of the enemy to fight. The date for the ground offensive was fixed on 21 February (97). However, due to USSR’s efforts to negotiate Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait, it was postponed for February 24.

A day before the commencement of the ground offensive, the focus of the allied forces
shifted to the front, attacking tanks, troops minefields and artillery emplacements. The allied forces’ used 15,00 pound bombs known as Daisey Cutters. These destroyed every thing in 300 foot diameter. The allied forces’ decided not to concentrate on bombing the Republican Guards inside concrete bunkers and other units dug inside the ground. Instead, the strategy was to damage about 30 percent of the artillery of the enemy.

On February 24, the US 18th Corps comprising 82nd Airborne Assault and 24th Mechanised Infantry divisions along with the Third Armored Cavalry Regiment launched the extreme western hook with heavy French armored brigade of the French Dagnet Division protecting its western flank. The 101st Airborne Western division leaping from 400 helicopters established a logistic base.

On the morning of February 25, about the same time as 101st was cutting highway 8 further west, the 24th Infantry Division established itself on the Euphrates river near Al-Nasirriyah, achieving complete tactical surprise and taking the Iraqis aback. As a result thousand of Iraqisoldiers surrendered. The US forces also destroyed bunkers full of munitions, weapons and other stocks between Talil and Jalibaah airfield.

When 18th Corps offensive neared Basra, The Hmammurabi Armored Division of Iraq was forced 30 km west of Basra to give the battle ground to the arriving troops. The US forces were able to destroy at least six Hammuravbi battalions with artillery and ground support helicopters. At 3.30 a.m. on February 27, the Iraqi division broke contact and fled from the battle field.

The 7th Corps launched the shorter hook aiming for reserves held north of Kuwait city. The corps moving on a front of 90 km and ably supported by scout helicopters, were able to cover a distance about 200 kms, first going north and then turning east to entrap the Iraqi reserves.

The Saddam line was nothing more than a 10 foot high sand wall and without any troop defending it. The much talked about Iraqi defecnes were pierced easily with earth beams being breached. The Iraqi army was expected to give spirited battle from its prepared defecnes and inflict heavy casualties on the attacking forces. But without any worthwhile surveillance capability, close air support and a will to resist, the Iraqis decided against sacrificing themselves needlessly or fighting a lost battle.

Saddam Hussein, who was oblivious of the actual ground conditions in the main defecnes, finally budged under massive onslaught by the allied forces and ordered the withdrawal of his forces from Kuwait. The withdrawing troops were caught defenseless on the Kuwaiti-Basra border. Their weapons and equipment was destroyed from the air. Even after the a cease-fire was declared, the allied forces’ aircrafts kept pounding the retreating Iraqi forces. It was only on February 28, a presidential decree ended the carnage.

Iraq’s 4000 out of 4280 tanks, 1856 out of 2750 APCs, 2140 out of 3110 artillery pieces were destroyed in 100 hours of ground offensive. Besides, 450 out of 650 aircrafts were lost in the war. over 100,000 Iraqi soldiers were captured as POWs and over 1,00,000 killed and wounded. The allies’ casualties were relatively light, being 311 dead, 66 missing, 13 captured as POWs and 45 planes and 15 helicopters lost in action (98).
The war was a one-sided affair. The only consolation Iraq derived from it was that it managed to sustain enormous loss of men and material for about 44 days. While the most disastrous aspect of Iraqi performance was that it did not put up any resistance where it was expected to be the strongest. Iraq's miserable performance in the war can be attributed to a number of factors. Saddam became the prisoner of his own defense strategy. The Iraqi army had turned Kuwait and south of it into a fortress by building powerful fortification along the Kuwait-Saudi border and as well as along the coast and laying extensive minefields. Because of this very reason, the Iraqi forces were easily cut off and encircled by troops advancing over undefended or poorly defended Iraqi territory in the direction of Nasiriyah and Basra. So says Dabic Manojlo, "history has shown that ever since war became mobile maneuvering wars, no fortification produced the desired results" (99).

Topography the region also played its role in the defeat of Iraq. The Iraqi forces had only one route --Aramaic to Basra-- open for their retreat. Between Nasiriyah Amarah and Basra there are vast marshes which exposed almost entire remaining Iraqi motorized unites to air attacks along that single road. Herein comes the importance of air support factor. Being attacked from air while returning and without adequate anti-aircraft defenses as well as air protection, the Iraqi army had no chance to disengage and deploy. Shortly after the arrival of coalition troops in Saudi Arabia, most of Iraqis aircrafts were pulled back from air bases in southern Iraq and deployed further north out of easy range of opposing strike aircraft in the region. Hardly any Iraqi aircraft took to air, leaving the allied forces enjoy unhampered air supremacy. The allied forces could attack Iraqi forcesat their will and prevent surveillance of their activities.

US space and electronic medium played an important role in Iraq's defeat. These jammed Iraqi air surveillance, making it easier for the allied forces to move unmonitored on the one hand and expose the Iraqi incapability to match and neutralize US superiority in the field of precision guidance. Absence of foreign advisors and shortage of spare parts also had a telling effect on Iraqi fortunes in the war.

Another tactical mistake the Iraqis committed was to spread themselves all along the 240 km Kuwait-Iraq border, thus the entire length of defenses was held very thinly. The result was, what Von Clauswits had warned much before, "one who tries to hold up every ground thinly ends up holding nothing".

Last but not the least, Saddam Hussein's underestimation of enemy's strength was largely responsible for the Iraqi defeat. Had he asked for counsel from his own intellectuals, those at the foreign office and military experts, there might have come advises to prepare a defense plan taking into consideration one's weaknesses vis-a-vis the strong points of enemy's defense preparedness and power to strike(100).

IMPLICATIONS OF THE WAR

THE VICTORIOUS : THE UNITED STATES:

From its victory over Iraq, the US emerged bestriding the narrow world like colossus with all others having been dawrfed before its might. Rusians lying low, Germans lost on their post unification reconstruction efforts, Third World, particularly the Arab countries, willingly
submitting themselves to the US suzerainty and Iraq being told to line up or face the ignominy of being whipped.

Though over a "second-rate power" the US victory led to the establishment of the American hegemony over the existing international system. For, coinciding with the end of the cold war, the US victory meant that in the absence of a global power of its standing, America had the capability to punish the ambitious powers who were trying to fill the vacuum left by the Soviet Union's retreat. No less was it a lesson to the countries of the North which could use their newly gained economic strength for dominating the international political system. The Persian Gulf war highlighted their inability to protect their economic interests from a Third World Power and their compulsion to align their foreign policy behind that of the United States for their economic survival.

The US victory established that neither was the multi-polarisation of the world nor the restructuring of the international order on economic plank was in offing as the logical consequence of the end of the Cold War. In other words, the scenario that emerged from the end of the Persian Gulf crisis was that the country with a combination of military, economic, diplomatic and political assets would remain to be the leader of the world. The other contenders lagged far behind the US in this respect. Hardly, as the Persian Gulf war plausibly demonstrated, any other country was capable of being a decisive player in any conflict anywhere in the world.

The US victory over a small-sized country, with few million population armed with aging Soviet weapons and battle-hardened only against a regional enemy (Iran), can not undo the great advantages the US had reaped from it. This was the first war the US won after Second World War. The US fought stalemate in Korea and returned defeated from Vietnam. But the war against Iraq brought to focus that now equipped with laser guided bombs, spy satellites, world's most sophisticated aircrafts and an army capable of successfully conducting its military operations in far flung areas and alienated environment, the US was an indefatigable military power.

However, the US led 'New World Order' does not look to be a 'fixed' phenomenon. The role of the leadership of the world the US assumed during and after the Persian Gulf war needs repeated demonstrations. US intervention in a regional conflict may be blocked in the future by the yawing gap between the declining domestic resources and global strategic commitments.

The US involvement in the Persian Gulf crisis was the result of a combination of circumstances. The crisis of the magnitude of Iraqi invasion may continue to erupt but changing circumstances may dissuade the US from intervening in each and every crisis.

This is not merely presumption. For instance, the economic recession that followed and was ensued by the Persian Gulf war and the defeat of Bush are pointer to the fact that after overcoming the Vietnam syndrome, thanks to the victory against Iraq, the people of the US are under the spell of Persian Gulf War syndrome. They do not want US to play the role of global policeman when one's own house is not in order. The US intellectuals are divided
between the internationalists, who are for an unbound America defending its interests and its lofty ideas, like export of democracy everywhere in the world, and the isolationists or non-interventionists who maintain that America must avoid needless external engagements misusing the country's power and strength to right very wrong in the world.

There are only a few flash points in the Persian Gulf where Western Europe might be tempted to line up with the US. In some other conflicts, they prefer from isolation to limited support to the US to pursue an independent policy. Thus the US leadership of the North in each and every sphere can not be taken for granted.

Of course, no other country of the world matches the combination of assets the US possesses. But its continuing decline as an economic power to reckon with will have its toll on the US foreign policy. The North dissociates its total submission to the US on security issues from its difference with the US on the latter's global economic interests. They shall lend their support to the US if a common threat haunts both of them. But they, at the same time, are unlikely to yield to the US on the issues of economic interests. Over and above, the US can not contain West Europe's economic hostility by threatening to use force (104).

The US victory over Iraq only accentuated its economic problems. The recession-hit economy, fairing not up to its reputation in global economic competition and vibrant technological innovation in civilian sector (105), is going to affect adversely the added pressure of retaining the mantle of the only supper power status it acquired after defeating Iraq(106).

The threat to the US from the Third World countries, particularly those with the weapons of mass destruction, ceased at least for a short after its overwhelming victory over one such power, Iraq. But these countries have not ceased to exist as the powers possessing the weapons of mass destruction. They are, in addition, resisting to their best the US diplomatic pressure to dismantle their weapons. This brings home the point that once the Persian Gulf war recedes into history, the assertion by regional bullies can not be discounted. And what about the defiant powers like Iran or Ukraine, which is reluctant to dismantle its nuclear weapons and is the third largest nuclear power (107) in the world?. Their defiance of the US, that too at a time when it is ruling the roosts, coupled with their strategic decision to confront the US politically only, unlike Iraq, is the source of a bigger embarrassment for the US.

Beside this, growing antagonism towards the US among the Third World people, a logical corollary of US indiscriminate use of force against Iraq, is a cause of concern to the US policy makers, no matter most of the Third World governments are its allies. Since radical and revolutionary political/popular changes are always in store in this region, its people's disillusionment with the US is a potential threat.

The Persian Gulf war might have become a license to the US military and political adventures abroad. But, at the same time, it has returned the course of the US foreign policy towards a domestic-economic agenda. There are greater pressures to reform its economy, end mitigate the budget and trade deficits, increase investment in education and infrastructure.
and regain export competitiveness. Though directed towards regaining its economic superiority on global level, this also demands a little dissociation from political activism.

As far as the implications of the US victory for its West Asian policy are concerned, the US has succeeded in arresting its waning influence in the Persian Gulf, and West Asia as a whole. The Iraqi invasion made up the loss of clout the US was about to undergo due to the end of the Soviet threat to the regional countries. Now, the regional powers know that the US support is equally, rather more crucial, to combat a hostile from among themselves.

In fact, the Persian Gulf countries were never directly exposed to the Soviet threat, even not when the USSR invaded Afghanistan. The Soviet Union also tried to befriend the US allies. This gave them a bargaining power vis-a-vis the US. But the Iraqi threat was real and imminent. For the first time these countries realized the importance of the US to them. The fact that Iraq has not been written off by the US allies in the region is also going in favor of the US.

The US can rely on a long-standing and total dependence of West Asian countries on it. On political front, the US has roped in Syria as one of its regional allies. On diplomatic front, it has for the first time succeeded in mitigating the US-Arab differences on the Palestine issue. The security of the supply of oil has been ensured. To quote Sreedhar "in fact some argue that the US has in effect become an OPEC member". (108) And a sort of informal security alliance with the oil-rich sates exists. The West Asian partners of this alliance are well disposed to provide it with all the strategic facilities as well as finance its military adventures.

**THE VICTORIOUS: ARAB STATES OF THE PERSIAN GULF:**

The Persian Gulf crisis exposed the fragility of the regional security structure of the GCC, to an extent that its member-states have shed their policy of not entering into an apparent security alliance with the US. Their rejection of a regional security structure including Syria and Egypt to fill the void where they lack in, has reinforced their confidence in US/Western defense umbrella. They have evolved a more organized pattern of the US presence in the region. Bahrain has consented to become the headquarters of the US Central Command in the Persian Gulf. Kuwait has been regularly holding joint military exercises with the US (109). So have been the other GCC member-states. The Persian Gulf states have not stopped seeing Iraq as a threat. Iran continues to remain an untested regional power, and Islamic fundamentalism is a new and fast-emerging threat (110). They find the existing regional security system a miss-match to contain these threats and knowing that these are the matter of concern for the US as well, they find in US an ally and a far better alternative to rely upon.

On the issue of beefing up the GCC security, the member-states have entered into bilateral agreements and have also decided to give hi-tech weaponry teeth to their organization and raising a 100,000 strong armed-force to avoid a Kuwait type invasion (111). Yet these efforts are no match to the kinds of threat they are faced with. Bilateral security alliance, it does not seem, would come into force when one of the partners would weigh its commitment to come to the defense of the other one in terms of the likely repercussions of it on its national security and integrity. It has been proved time and again that by the mere possession of hi-tech weapons in the absence of a well-trained armed force can not deter a regional or external threat. And the
raising of a strong army of 100,000 men can not materialize given the fact that such a plan would call for a huge cut down in the size of its armed forces by each country. Thus the regional security through this method tends to weaken the national security of the GCC member-states.

The Persian Gulf crisis has weakened the GCC, although to a limited extent. There is an urge among the smaller states to come out of the shadow of the Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia has emerged victorious from the war at the cost of undergoing a decline of its predominance in the region. Its image among the Arab masses and governments of the peninsular states is that of a meek power, unable to defend itself despite its large size and huge military infrastructure. After inviting mercenaries from Christian world, Saudi Arabia’s image as the custodian of the holiest of Islamic shrines has also suffered a blow. Thus, in these circumstances the smaller states can be expected to come out of the yoke of Saudi Paternalism.

The crisis has served a useful purpose in bringing home a point to them that their securities are also at stake in a crisis centering around Saudi Arabia. They have reacted to this revelation in different manners. While some states, like Oman and Qatar, advocate inclusion of Iran into a regional security and political system the others, like Qatar, do not approve a confrontationist attitude towards Iraq.

The GCC solidarity, in fact, came under a serious threat when Qatar threatened to pull out from it in retaliation to Saudi intrusions in its territory in 1992, preceded by a row between the two countries over the border issue. During his visit to Iran the Deputy Foreign Minister of Qatar Sheikh Thani was reported as saying “the Arabs should unite with Iran against certain Western Powers, which are seeking their own interests in the strategic Persian Gulf region”. This is a pointer to a scenario in which Iran can either be successful in pulling one or two member out of the GCC or using them as its advocates in seeking the membership of the GCC.

The Persian Gulf crisis gave a new dimension to intra-Arab rivalry. There were a few re-alignments. Syria joining the Conservative or the Pro-West Arab fold. However, the breaking of old alignments was more apparent. The long and solid links between Riyadh and Amman, two of the West Asian premier monarchies, almost raptured. Saudi-YAR relations also turned hostile due to YAR’s support to Iraq.

The relations between PLO/Palestinians and the conservative Arab regimes, —the latter were the main financer of their struggle against Israel beside being a host to thousands of Palestinian workkers — got strained. The Saudi government took repressive actions against the Palestinian residents for their support to Iraq. The Kuwaiti government deported 350,000 to 750,000 Palestinian residents when it was restored to power. Those who escaped the Sabahs’ ire are earning 40 percent less than what they used to get prior to Iraqi occupation of Kuwait. Other Gulf countries also took repressive actions against Palestinians. The UAE and Qatar ousted Palestinian workers, the PLO diplomats and expelled the Palestinians holding key positions in government and oil companies (112).

Like the Palestinians and the PLO the Palestinian issue, however, was not the casualty
of the Gulf crisis. Its internationalization by Iraq persuaded the US, desperate for salvaging its image as aggressor, to initiate along with the USSR Arab-Israeli Peace talks which although in the begging proceeded slow and in uncertain manner due to the intransigent attitude of Israel under the Likud Government of Yitzhak Rabin but later caught the momentum after the change of guard in Israel (113).

The Persian Gulf crisis paved the way for the PLO-Israel self-rule Accord last year in the sense that it altered the radical position of the PLO on the Arab-Israeli issue so demonstratively exhibited by it not long ago in supporting Iraq against Saudi Arabia-Kuwait-US alliance.

The defeat of Iraq convinced PLO that it was not left with any other taker of its cause in West Asia. The conservative Arab states of the Persian Gulf region, who supported PLO’s radical position on the issue, withdrew their support that used to come in form of financial assistance and political backing, from it. They after Palestinians’ betrayal were willingly gave in, for the first time, to the US perception of Middle East Peace.

Egypt was already among the so-called pragmatists, Syria seemed to shed its hostility to the US stand on Arab-Israeli issue. Jordan, which had come closer to Palestinians in the wake of its support to Iraq, began to return to its former pragmatist position (114).

Thus the PLO, like Jordan, embarked on the policy of repairing some of the damages caused in its relations with the US and the Oil rich states by signaling to the US that it was prepared for a settlement short of an independent state of Palestine.

As regards the implications of the Persian Gulf crisis for the GCC countries, there began the process of limited democratization, or political reforms, in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. This was in response to Arab people questioning the legitimacy and credibility of their countries’ governments: The resentment against the Kuwaiti government for fleeing the country in the hour of crisis, leaving the ordinary Kuwaitis behind, and against the Saudi government for inviting “infidels” in the land of Mecca and Madina, was the major factor behind introducing some reforms.

After about a year of the end of the war, Saudi Arabia announced the creation of a consultative council (Majlis As Shoorah) adopting of a constitution based on the Shariah (the Islamic code of conduct). Kuwaiti government promised the parliamentary election which were held on October 2, 1992, (115) after a gap of seven years. Kuwait was also pressurised by the US government for this where people were questioning the rationale behind destroying one undemocratic regime and saving the other.

However, after the elections were held severe limitations were imposed by the Sabah regime on the newly elected National Assembly’s prospects of participating in the governmental process. The Kuwaiti government invoked the constitution of 1962 which did not empower the National Assembly with appointing the Prime Minister and other ministers. The Crown Prince Sa’ad Bin Abdullah was appointed as the Prime Minister who then on his decoration appointed
10 to 12 ministers into cabinet from outside the National Assembly. The Kuwaiti government also clipped the wings of the National Assembly as 35 out of the 38 seats were won by the opposition.

Against all expectations Arabs’ resentment against their governments for funding a war launched by Allied armies from Islamic lands against a Arab and Muslim country did not burst into an Arab-Islamic resurgence. But that the gap between the ruling elites and the masses has widened is visible and poses to be a potential threat for the future. For it is feared that if any time the Islamists consolidate their position, the support of the Arab masses to them would automatically become overt. Growing public consciousness, people’s disillusionment with ruling elites, which were not used to be noticed on such a scale prior to the Persian Gulf crisis, will be additional factors in their support inclination towards rebels as and when their movement catches momentum. So says Singh K. R. “It should not be forgotten that while President Sadat was assassinated only by a handful of extremists, his funeral was boycotted by the masses, who, by their action, put a seal of approval on the action of the extremists” (116).

On the other hand, in Iraq the rebels have failed to cash in upon Saddam’s defeat. Saddam has demonstrated to them how public opinion can be moulded in favor of the government by arousing general anguish over foreign intervention and external hegemony.

In the Arabian Peninsular countries the resentment against the local governments is manifested not only in general masses alienation but also in the frustration expressed by intellectuals and technocrats. A large section of Arab Intellectuals publicly calls for the removal of Royal families and princely dynasties. Press is growing critical of these governments’ policies. And technocrats, have demanded greater participation in the public affairs (117).

Iran has benefited most from the Persian Gulf crisis. The destruction of Iraq has left a vacuum which has made room for Iran to step in. It has restarted its large scale military build up by augmenting its air force, navy, surface-to-surface missile program, and non conventional warfare capabilities. Since the US presence in the region would not facilitate Iran to fulfill its regional aspirations by intimidating other regional countries, it has presently embarked on a policy of non confrontation in the region eyeing on a role in the Persian Gulf security system.

From Iraq too, Iran has secured concessions of wide-ranging importance. All the Iranian territory and the POWs have been returned by Iraq and its claim to half of the river Shatt waterway has been recognized (118).

For the first time, since the dawn Iran of Islamic revolution Iran finds itself being sought after in the regional and international politics. The only untoward development being the raising of its border dispute with the UAE in April 1992. Iranian action would have been precipitated under extra regional-prompting. Iran wanted to probe the GCC states’ “capabilities and intentions after recent security arrangements with the US and its Western allies” (119). The relations with Saudi Arabia have constantly improved. All the Hajj seasons since the end of the Persian Gulf crisis have passed off peacefully. In 1992, Iranian spiritual leader Ayatollah
Kahminie issued a Fatwa that stated that performance of any ritual by Shias, which created discords among the Muslims or weakened Islam, was Haram. This was an indication to Iranian Haj pilgrims to stop holding political demonstrations in Riyadh during the Haj. The relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia and Iran and the UAE have strengthened on economic front too. The trade between Iran and Arab countries of the Persian Gulf has doubled.

For Egypt, the Persian Gulf crisis paved the way for its re-entry into the Arab fold. Since then it is being acknowledged as diplomatic heavyweight in the region. Western assistance, both economic and military, have reinforced its position in the Arab world.

However, on economic front, Egypt suffered from the crisis. Expulsion of workers from Iraq cut down Egyptian earnings from remittances (120). Added to it was the problem of the rehabilitation of the returnees. Economic embargo against Iraq has caused a decline of traffic to Suez and tourism. The reduction of tanker traffic is estimated to have reduced the revenue by 16 percent. Loss of revenue door to the decline in tourists arrival was estimated to be at $ 29 million as against the projected revenue of $ 600 million (121).

The Price-hike in the wake of the Persian Gulf crisis, however, increased the Egyptian earnings from oil from $ 3 million a day to $ 5 million. The US waived off its debt over Egypt amounting to $ 7 billion. In addition, the USA signed five grant agreements of $ 2789 million on August 21st 1990 with Egypt to “strengthen the infrastructure base of the country” (122). These helped Egypt not to crumble under economic pressures caused by loss of remittances, reduction of traffic to Suez, tourism and stopping of trade with Iraq and Kuwait.

The Persian Gulf crisis abetted the financial problem Jordan was facing prior to its reputation. According to official estimates, Jordan was to incur worth $ 12.4 billion loss due to the loss of exports, transit fees, subsidized oil, remittances, debt repayment and aid (123). Non-official sources put this loss at $ 3.5 billion only. Saudi Arabia and Kuwait were the main financial backers of Jordan's economy and the main source of remittances. Iraq was the largest customer of its foods and industrial goods. Hundreds of Jordanians were expelled from Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia also decided to cut off the oil supply to Jordan to some 33,000 barrels a day.

Beside economy, Jordan’s external relations also suffered in a big way. Relations with Syria and Saudi Arabia, who also happened to be its strategic partners against Israel, were eroded and its links with the West were almost snapped. The only consolation to Jordan was that it managed to preserve its internal unity. This also helped Jordan in moderating the radical atmosphere and reducing the political influence of Islamic groups.

However, after the war, relations of Jordan with the West got repaired as the latter preferred the survival and stability of the Hashmite in view of rising Islamic fundamentalism in that country. The West has come to understand that denial of economic assistance to Jordan can hamper its ability to cope with economic problems, the continuation of which might increase,
in turn, the popularity of the Islamic movement among the Jordanians. But the rehabilitation of relations with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait has yet not taken off, thus the chances of receiving aid from these countries so as to overcome its economic problems are still remote.

Syria was one of the few regional countries which benefited economically from the Persian Gulf crisis as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait pumped in $1.5 billion. The West European governments promised Syria economic aid, removed the sanctions imposed on it because of it being branded as a terrorist state. On politico-diplomatic front, Syrian success is equally impressive. It has enhanced its ability to influence regional developments. Its main rival has been defeated, its relations with Egypt and Saudi Arabia have become friendly. The Syrian administration indicated that it was willing to participate in the West Asian peace process which, the Syrian government assumes, would prompt the US to get it back the Golan Heights, an issue hitherto ignored by the US. Syria has also used its enhanced position to consolidate its position over Lebanon.

THE VANQUISHED: IRAQ

Iraq met the fate of those powers who launch a war of conquest and without being able to envisage the possibility of a defeat and its after-effects. Putting up a miserable show Iraq, lost the credibility it held in the eyes of the US as a threat to its supremacy. The US has after its victory treated Iraq in a most barbaric manner, by continuing economic sanctions against Iraq, abetting Shie and Kurdish revolts, publicly befriending anti-Saddam internal opposition, restricting Iraq’s sovereignty on its own lands, keeping on decimating Iraq’s military strength in the guise of the United Nations and carrying out military attacks against it whenever it pretends to be stubborn.

Saddam’s hope to emerge as the leader of Arabs through unleashing force and with the help of coercion have been dashed to the wall. Failing which it tried to bring Arab countries on its side by attacking Israel during the war, but it too failed to pay off. So did Saddam’s diplomacy as his linkage theory did not find any taker among Arab governments. Arab peoples remained sympathetic to Iraq but were not swayed by his call to rise and revolt against the puppet and pro-West governments.

Arab powers, who were tilted towards Iraq during the war cooled off their relations after the latter’s dismal performance. The PLO and Jordan turned away from it and got involved rapprochement with the US. After securing half of the Shatt, its territories and its soldiers held as POWs by Iraq, Iran condemned it for being responsible for doing irreparable damage to the world of Islam. It, in addition, also retained Iraqi front-line aircrafts and took an open part in the Shie revolt inside Iraq.

Thus after the war Iraq was left isolated, regionally and internationally. Relations with the other Arab powers of the Persian Gulf region embittered over the question of massive war reparations and US-UN imposed boundary demarcation between it and Kuwait.

The only edge over the neighboring Persian Gulf countries Iraq has managed to retain
is that it continues to be a regional threat for four factors: Saddam is still in power, Iraq possesses
a formidable arsenal, deadlier than those of the many Arab Gulf countries and an strong army,
more experienced, trained than rest of the Arab countries’ in the Persian Gulf, the regional
security system is relatively weaker and shall remain so unless Iran or Israel or both are included
into it, which is remotest of the possibilities.

THE VANQUISHED: THE THIRD WORLD

Apparently, one of the Third World countries—Kuwait— won the war and another —
Iraq— suffered humiliation. But, in fact, for the Third world as a whole, the Persian Gulf crisis
was not a good omen. It set a precedent for international intervention in the Third World. For
the first time since the inception of the UN all the five major powers acted in concert. Far more
significant for the future, however, is the endorsement by all five nations of resolution 687 on
April 4, 1990, which requires Iraq to accept UN controls in violation of its rights as sovereign
nation” (124).

The war comes as a reminder to the Third World countries that they can not dare to
oppose the US and its western allies due to their far weaker position in the area of arms
technology, as reflected in one of Bush statements “this war would be the last war as no nation
will be allowed to challenge the might of the US”. Moreover, the absence of a Soviet Union from
the international scene means that now the US would not face a formidable opposition to its
policy interfering in a Third World Conflict. Thus it would be free to exacerbate, or prevent
from occurring, a conflict between the two Third World countries.

OIL:

Due to the Gulf crisis, 4.2 million barrels (125) per day of oil, which accounted for 7.8
percent of the global supply, was withdrawn from the world oil market. This resulted into price-
hike, caused mainly by panic buying on the presumption that in the eventuality of seizure of
Saudi oil fields the world oil market would be deprived of about 20 percent of its total supply
(126). Thus the oil prices reached the $30 per barrel mark. Following the landing of the US
forces in Saudi Arabia, these began to come down as with this the chances of Iraqi seizure of
Saudi Oil fields had receded.

The oil consuming states from the West expected Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar and
other OPEC countries to step up the production to meet the supply gap. It was estimated that
Saudi Arabia could alone meet 2 million barrels per day, the UAE 600,000 to 700,000 barrel,
Venezuela 500,000, Nigeria 280,000 and possibly Libya 200,000 to 300,000 barrels

The Persian Gulf crisis did not aggravate oil crisis in the way as it was made out to be.
The crisis that ensued was manageable. With 100 million barrel of crude in commercial stock
and 900 million barrel (only US and Japan) in strategic stock, the OECD countries had enough
oil to ward off the oil shortages for a considerable period of time. Thus the main issue of concern
to the western economies was not the immediate shortage of the oil (127) but the specter of
Iraq sitting on the world’s largest reserves of a commodity which was poised for regaining its
significance in the global energy consumption from the mid-1990s. In long term, it would have
meant Iraq replacing Saudi Arabia as swing producer, unconcerned to the health of the Western economies and calling the shot in the matters of price and production when the OECD countries would be importing 65 percent of their consumption and the bulk of which would come from the Persian Gulf. Moreover, oil imports accounted for 50 percent of trade deficit of the US and other oil importers of the west. The hike in oil prices would have further accentuated the deficit.

However, the end of the Persian Gulf crisis restored the pre-crisis price (June 1990) despite the continuing absence of Iraqi and Kuwaiti oil from the market. Even due to the 'oil glut' caused by stepping up of production by Saudi Arabia and other OPEC countries coupled with the on-going recession supply overawed the demand. The prices have kept on slumping. The OPEC has of late tried to evolve a unanimous policy on each member state capping its production so that price can become reasonable. Yet, no tangible results have occurred so far. Kuwaiti re-entry has again flooded the market. Its plea that it be spared from the quota system has caused embarrassment to other OPEC countries. Once the sanctions are withdrawn from Iraq, the prices shall climb down further. Thus, there is no oil crisis at present as far as the oil consuming states are concerned.

After three years of the end of the war, the oil producing and oil consuming nations are interlocked in a conflict of interests. Saudi Arabia, the swing producer and a moderate among the OPEC countries, has, despite being obliged to the US, looks in favor of price-rise, and keeping the supply proportionate to the demand. Whereas, the more the West is envisaging an increase in its dependence on oil, particularly the Persian Gulf oil, after 1995, the more it is interested in a scenario of supply exceeding the demand.

The Inter-OPEC rivalry has not subsided. The member-states have not tried to manage their production in a way that their supplies commensurate with the demand. Instead, capitalising on the disappearance of Iraqi and Kuwaiti crude they increased production to maximize their oil revenues. This created tension between Saudi Arabia, which doubled its production since 1990, and Iran which after seeing that the former was not to amend its policies declared that it would no longer observe the OPEC quota.

The oil shall remain an contentious issue between the regional countries, sometimes conflagrating into war when some of the countries richest in oil happen to be militarily weaker than their neighbors relatively poorer in oil resource but a covetous, overbearing militant power.
REFERENCES AND FOOTNOTES


3. This is why the Sub-title goes as “events preceding the invasion”, than “events leading to the war”.

4. No major military or political actions threatening the Iraqi integrity were taken on the part of Kuwait. That Kuwait had made encroachments on Iraqi lands, as the Saddam government alleged, is not reported to have actually occurred.

5. The US ambassador’s message to Iraq that her country was against interfering in regional issues is considered as US green-signal to Iraq. However, having conducted military exercises with the UAE and through public statements soon after the US ambassador-Saddam Hussein met, the US had clarified that it would not brook an interruption in oil supplies from the region. Iraq did not relent even then. It indicates that Iraq was prepared to invade Kuwait even if it had to take on the US also.


7. The Kuwaiti opposition groups, including those which were outlawed, opposed the Iraqi Invasion.


10. To clear its debt Iraq wanted that the Arab Gulf countries should waive off their loans (estimated to be $ 50 billion) and provide it an additional amount of $ 30 billion ($10 billion each by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the UAE).


12. The Arab countries refused to induct Iraq into the GCC. The membership to the GCC eluded Iraq even after the end of the Iran-Iraq War which Iraq claimed to have fought to defend, and on behalf of, the GCC countries. See Dietl, Gulshan, “Strategic Implications for the Gulf Region” in Abidi A.H.H. and Singh K. R., The Gulf Crisis, Lancer Books, 1991, P. 218.


15. The reference is to Israeli attack of Iraq’s Osirak Nuclear reactor in 1981.

16. The agreement signed between Iraq and Kuwait on this occasion read “Iraq recognizes the independence and complete Sovereignty of Kuwait”.


19. The GCC defense network was totally inadequate to confront Iraq. At August 3 Arab League meeting, the member states rejected Kuwaiti proposal for the formation of a joint Arab force to face Iraqi army. The American strategists held Saudi Arab forces would not be able to withstand an Iraqi invasion. This is why the US lost no time in persuading Saudi Arabia to allow it to send its forces on the Saudi soil.

20. Iraqi ambassador to the US, Mohammed Sadiq Mashat, however clarified on August 5 that Iraq would not attack Saudi Arabia. He also denied the charge that Iraq had mobilized its forces near Saudi border. The next day Iraqi President, Saddam Hussein, reiterated the denial in an interview with the US Charge ‘d’ Affairs.


25. Vilayeti said this in an interview with the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) after returning from a tour to the GCC countries.

27. Kam Ephraim, "The Gulf Crisis and the Arab Arena" War in the Gulf: Implications for Israel

28. King Hussain is the direct descendant of Prophet Mohammed and his forefather have traditionally been the custodian of the Islamic sites in Mecca and Madina (in Hejaz province).

29. However, those moves could not take off as Saddam was adamant for a simultaneous solution to the Palestinian issue. Given the US strict opposition to the same. The Arab countries were finding themselves unable to support the linking of the two regional issues.


31. As against 5.2 billion per day at the eve of Iraqi invasion, the Saudi oil production increased to 7.5 billion per day in October. As a result, the oil prices also stabilized around $25-26 per barrel.

32. SWB, ME/0834, A/5, 4 August, 1990.

33. Another Iraqi objective in accepting the Iranian terms for peace was to divert its forces deployed on the eastern front to the war zone, the south-west.

34. Iraq also send its foreign minister Tariq Aziz to Tehran on September 9, 1990 on a confidence building mission. Iran reciprocated by sending its Deputy foreign minister to Baghdad.

35. Quandt, William B., N. 9, P. 63.


37. Yemen was the chairman of the Security Council during much of the Persian Gulf crisis.


39. The writing off the military sales came at the most telling time. The Egypt was dithering under inflationary pressure and was very near the point of defaulting of debt repayments to the United states, which could have cost it dearly in terms of future aid flows.

40. Saudi Arabia and Kuwait gave $1 billion and $50 million respectively to Syria.


42. To assuage the Public resentment which was anti-US, the Syrian President declared that sending of his country's troops to Saudi Arabia was "an Arab national duty" and would essentially be a peace-keeping mission. He emphasized that Syrian troops would not take part in assault against
Iraq and in case of Iraqi attack of Saudi Arabia they would only interpose themselves as buffer. Assad also reiterated that Syria was not in the US camp.


44. In reality, Jordan continued permitting the movement of commodities to and from Iraq through the port of Aqba.

45. It is said that the Saudi punishment of Jordan was a reaction to the adopting of the title of “Sharif Hussein” by King Hussein on August 14. Sharif Hussein was the great grandfather of King Hussein who ruled the holy cities of Mecca and Madina before his ouster by Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud, father of King Fahad. Thus adorning himself with that title, King Hussein, it was viewed by the Saudi House, was establishing Jordan’s territorial claim over Saudi Arabia in the veneer of history. Rumors also floated that Iraq, Yemen and Iraq had entered into clandestine agreement that the combined armies of these countries would attack Saudi Arabia and divide the country among themselves in the case of the latter’s defeat.

46. Palestinians, including refugees, comprised roughly 70 percent of Jordan’s 3.2 million population. The estinians in Jordan had regarded Saddam Hussein as the saviour of their national interests in future.


48. Some of members of Jordanian Parliament from the Islamic fundamentalist groups visited Iraq in a gesture of support for Saddam Hussein.


50. Morocco has long been a US ally. It is said to have influenced Anwar Sadat to take part in Camp David talks in 1978. It also facilitated strategic rights to the US navy and air force in the 80s.

51. Turkey hoped that a good amount of debt it owed to the US would be written off by the latter.

52. Emerging as a militarily stronger power from its war with the Iran, Iraq did not need to allay the Israeli security fears anymore. Instead, the urge for leadership of the Arab world pressed it to adopt a militant posture against Israel. Therefore, Iraq engaged Israel in a war of words with its president Saddam Hussein threatening to “make fire eat up half of Israel” if the latter tried to repeat its 1982 adventure. Before this Iraq had held joint military exercises with Jordan and conducted planes reconnaissance flights over Jordanian territory, apparently targeting the Dijon nuclear center in Israel.

53. Economic and Political Weekly, N. 6, P. 1676.

This theory is described as trap theory. Another interpretation, called ‘conspiracy theory’, is that Iraq and the US conspired to accomplish the CENTCOM. However, this theory is not substantiated by sound arguments. Therefore, it is largely believed that USA used Kuwait and Iraq for the pursuance of its interests in the Persian Gulf.


A day before the Iraqi invasion, Kremlin got a CIA alert that the attack was imminent, Newseweek, September 17, 1990.

Cited in Shrivastva, B.K., N. 8, P. 44

The US official position was that the embargo would be enough to force Iraq to withdraw. The US administration also ruled out first strike in the Persian Gulf.


Mohan, Raja C. correlates the US military actions against Iraq with the distant military interventions taken by the declining empires in the Past. See “Pax Americana” in Seminar, No. 381, May 1991, P. 37.

It was in this context a strong Iraq, which acted as a useful buffer during 80s, had become a liability for the US. Iraq threatened western interests in three main areas, its development of long range missiles and chemical weapons, its threat to the security of the Israel and its threat to the security of the oil rich states and the supply of oil. See Singh K. R. “Power without Greatness”, Seminar, No. 381, May 1991, P. 33.

The West does not need oil cheaper either. The prices of the oil must be reasonable so that their own oil industry is not hurt. For example, when in 1987 the oil prices began to fluctuate between $12 to 15 per barrel, Reagan send vice-president George Bush to ask them to contain their oil
production because it had badly hurt the state economies of Texas and Louisiana.


71. During the course of war even the making assassination-bid on Saddam was permissible, The US government publicly ordered its forces to target Saddam's would be hideouts.


73. The Soviet deputy prime minister in an interview with the Izvesta, referred to by International Herald Tribune, August 8, 1990.


77. The Soviet Union did not agree to contribute to the allied force’s military build-up in the Persian Gulf despite being persuaded to this effect by Bush at the September 9 Helsinki Summit 1990.


79. Iraq, however, later tendered apology but it was too late to to repair the damage already done.

80. In January 1991 French foreign minister, Pierre Chevenement, resigned in protest against his government’s deviation from it stand that it would participate so long the War was limited to Kuwait.

81. The Hindustan Times, “For the US, the Cheapest with the Largest Windfall” February 9, 1991.

82. The 8-power draft was adopted as Security Council Resolution 660 (1990). Out of the 15 Security Council members, 14 voted in favor while Yemen, the only Arab country representing the council, and the then Chairman of the Security Council also, abstained from voting.

83. The draft resolution also sought to permit the maritime powers in the Persian Gulf to apply maximum force to enforce the sanctions. However, due to Chinese and Soviet opposition the phrase was dropped.
84. It may be noted that in violation of the resolution 661 the United States and some of its allies decided to interdict all ships bound for Kuwait or Iraq and refused the permission to proceed to those ships were loaded with foodstuffs.


88. Shrivastav, B.K., N. 49. P. 57.

89. US Secretary of State James Baker’s reply to the Soviet president’s special Envoy Primakov statement that Iraq could withdraw on the condition that it was allowed to retain Bubiyan and Rumeliha Oil field in Kuwait.

90. Job Cvijeto, “There can be neither Peace nor Better International Relations with Aggression” Review of International Affairs, Vol. xlii No. 973, October 20, 1990, P. 10


95. Iraqi total military force strength consisted of 550,000 troops, 4280 tanks, 2750 armored cards, 33190 artillery pieces and 650 operational aircraft.

96. Basra bring an important rail-road communication center a and the main administrative base supporting all troops in Kuwait, was logistically the vital place to be attacked by the allied forces so as to strangulate the troops located inside Kuwait.

97. As Conveyed to President Bush by Dick Chenny, General Collin I Powell and General Schwarzkopf after their meeting in the second week of February.


105. Even in the military forced American dependence on imported critical elements from Japan is growing.

106. However, this brings the US West European allies at par with the US only. For, to quote Vanaik Achin. “After all if the Us can not translate its political military assets into commensurate economic gains, German and Japan can not do the opposite either”, See Vanaik Achin US Capacity to shape the World, Mainstream May 11, 1991.


108. Sreedhar, N. 1.

109. Kuwait-US held “Eager-Mace 92.93” and “Native Fury 1992” from 3rd to 19th August 1992, “Intrinsic Action 92-1”, which ended on September 22, 1992, and “Intrinsic Action 93-1” which took place from 26th October to 20th December 1992. These exercises were conducted to demonstrate the Unites d States commitment to the security and stability of the Gulf region”.


114. Ephraim Kam, N. 25, P. 86.
115. Only 7 percent of the country's population was eligible for voting. Seven Political groups, ranging from secularized, nationalist Pan arab to fundamentalist Muslims contested the elections for 38m open seats out of the 50 in the National assembly.


117. Eilts, Herman Fredrick, N. 13, P. 19.


120 Remittances due to the expulsion of about 100,000 Egyptians from Iraq and Kuwait Iraq was expected to be slashed by 50 percent. Remittances account for about 47 percent of Egypt's foreign exchange earning. For detail see Pant C Grijesh, N. 11. P. 192.

121. Ibid., p. 193

122. Ibid, p. 194

123. Ibid, 189


125. 2.8 million barrels per day from Iraq and 1.6 million barrels per day from Kuwait was lost.

126. In 1990 OPEC share in global supply was 38.8 percent. Pant, Grijesh C., N.11.

127. For instance Oil supply from Kuwait and Iraq accounted for the US6.3 percent of imports 3.2 percent in case of Europe.

128. Immediately before the starting of the war the oil process again sky rocketed, this time also due to the apprehension that supply would come to stop in the eventuality of the war which was expected to be a long drawn out affair. The Crisis then reached $40 per barrel. However the porches crashed in the wake of smooth transition of oil tankers from the Persian Gulf waters during the 40 day long war.