CHAPTER -IV

Gulf Crisis and World’s Response

There had been a few surprises in the early stages of the war between the American-led multi-national forces and the Iraqi armed forces. As expected, the awesome airpower assembled by the allies dominated the skies over Iraq and Kuwait. Iraq responded by delivering missile attacks on Israel in an attempt to draw it into the conflict. The war was set to move sooner than later towards a great battle between the armies of the allies and Iraq on the Saudi-Kuwait border.

Naturally, the United States brought to bear all its superiority in air power at the very beginning of the conflict. It had sought to pulverize the political will in Baghdad with almost continuous bombardment of Iraq. The prime targets of the American and allied bombing had been the military assets of Iraq such as air fields, command and communication centres, the fixed missile launching sites, the mobile missile launchers, nuclear and chemical weapon facilities and supply routes to Kuwait. After the first three days the allied bombing had also begun to focus on the troop concentrations of the Iraqi Army, particularly the elite division of the Republican Guards. The US had also targeted some high value economic targets such as refineries and power stations, and high
visible political targets like the Presidential Palace and the Ministry of Defence.

Saddam Hussein’s devastating defeat in the Gulf war has left in its wake a sense of America’s obligation to help resolve some of the Middle East’s long-standing problems. One problem high on president George Bush’s list of priorities was the Arab-Israeli conflict. As he told a joint session of Congress on March 6, 1991, “the time has come to put an end to (the) Arab-Israeli conflict”. Nonetheless, the Gulf war was fought to liberate Kuwait, not to solve the Palestinian problem. Although Iraq repeatedly attacked Israel with Scud missiles, Israel was not a belligerent in this war at American insistence. Moreover, Hussein’s threats to destroy Israel and his attacks on the Jewish state were fully supported by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Palestinians in the occupied territories. This however, undermined what little trust had remained between Israelis and Palestinians. Nor has the war produced a new leadership on either side of the conflict capable of transforming the constituency-led politics of the past decade into the heroic politics of Anwar el-Sadat and Menachem Begin. It is therefore not clear that this war has made the Arab-Israeli conflict any more amenable to solution. The opportunities for peace must be defined before new ideas for advancing the process can be developed.²

2. Ibid.
The defeat of Saddam Hussein represents the defeat of his worldview. He had promoted the vision of a Hussein-led, Pan-Arab Superpower to counter American dominance of the post-Cold War world. He tried to give new credibility to the pre-Sadat method of settling the Arab-Israeli conflict by threatening to destroy Israel. The war had the important side-benefit of discrediting this approach. The war also shifted the balance of power in the Arab world decisively in favour of the Egyptian-Saudi coalition that fought along side the United States. Egypt and Saudi Arabia not only emerged from the crisis as winners, but also solidified their bilateral relations with a new bargain whereby Egyptian troops would help provide security for the Gulf Arabs in return for money to stabilize the Egyptian economy.3

The end of the Cold War had cost Damascus its super power patron. The Soviet Union had only been prepared to supply weapons for “defensive sufficiency”, and President Mikhail Gorbachev had also lectured Syrian leader Hafez-al-Asad on the need to make peace with Israel, warning that Moscow would not support any Syrian military efforts to resolve the conflict. At the same time, the Gulf Crisis had solidified U.S. - Israeli strategic ties, enhancing Israel’s deterrent posture toward Syria. On the other hand, joining the coalition had already paid Syria dividends in the form of a free hand in Lebanon and Saudi financial aid. By enabling the coalition to engage in the peace process,

Damascus can ensure that it becomes the focus of American diplomacy. Indeed al-Asad’s assessment of the United States as the dominant power in the Middle East requires him to approach the Bush administration with new flexibility. But the United States also needs Syrian cooperation on post war security arrangements and for a meaningful peace process. Syrian opposition to American efforts in either arena could complicate policy, providing al-Asad with some leverage in building the relationship he now seeks with Washington. These trends suggest that inter-Arab politics is likely to be dominated for the foreseeable future by the new axis of Egypt, Saudi Arabic and Syria, the largest, the richest, and the most nationalistic Arab states, respectively. This is an unassailable coalition should it decide to settle with Israel.

American circumspection was most evident in the Arab-Israeli conflict, whose conceptual parameters remained unchanged even as the protagonists stumbled on through what is wistfully termed “the peace process”. Curiously, developments in that process were stimulated and sustained by the protagonists’ expectation of genuine American interest and involvement in moving the process forward.

The grounds for such expectations were not at all clear. It is true that Bush began with an important diplomatic inheritance - Reagan’s decision in December 1988 to enter into a “substantive dialogue” with

4. Ibid., pp. 31-32.
the Palestine Liberation Organization. That decision undoubtedly constituted a significant milepost in U.S. Policy, but it also appears to have been an isolated measure in response to statements by PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat that met long standing American terms for such contacts. While Bush was obviously involved in the decision and resisted subsequent pressures to break off the US-PLO dialogue, there was little to suggest that it formed an integral element of any coherent U.S. Strategy or vision for the future. Nor was there anything in his election campaign or in his early presidential declarations to indicate that the new President felt a pressing need to move aggressively on Middle-Eastern issues. On the contrary, the slow pace of U.S. appointments to the Middle East and the identity of those appointed reflected a view of the area that could be fairly summarized as “cautious continuity”.

Secretary of State James Baker defended the merits of “a more reasoned and measured approach” and Bush, when asked about Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze’s February 1989 tour through the region, pronounced himself unconcerned with the prospect of the Soviet Union seizing the initiative. Finally, the comprehensive Foreign policy review undertaken by the new administration appears to have left the Middle East fairly low down on any list of priorities.6

Arab’s and Israeli’s, however, found it difficult to take seriously the possibility that the United States might not be consumed with interest

and intensely engaged in their problems. Captivated by the image of American power and ultimate willingness to use it, they felt compelled to undertake some actions themselves. Their actions were not necessarily intended to facilitate negotiations with adversaries; both sides believed that they could best promote their own objectives by persuading the American public and government of the rectitude of their respective causes. Even if Palestinians and Israelis were only responding preemptively to American activism that was not really planned, the effect was to create opportunities for progress that U.S. leaders could not easily resist. Thus, the United States was drawn into a magnetic field of diplomacy that often left local protagonists feeling distinctly uneasy about the implications of their own actions. In short, expectations about American policy became self-fulfilling prophecies that kept the engine of the peace process going the problem was getting out of first gear.  

/Role of The United States:

America had emerged from the Gulf war as the dominant power in the Middle East. All the powers in the region and all the interested parties outside the region were looking to Washington for leadership. The Arab Gulf states, in particular would likely to responsive to U.S. peace process requirements. Egypt wanted to play the role of strategic partner in the region. Syria was also keen to build relations with what it regarded as the only super power, and Israel sought coordination with

7. Ibid., p. 154
Washington to craft a process that meets its requirements. In these circumstances, the United States now had a stronger hand in influencing the peace process requirements than at any time since the disengagement agreements of the 1970s. And this influence was enhanced by Bush’s tremendous authority, following what was seen in the region as his personal victory over Saddam Hussein. But expectations of the United States were as high as its new reputation. In particular, the Arab states had come to believe that if the United States could liberate Kuwait in such short order, it was equally capable of liberating Arab lands occupied by Israel. And Israel’s restraint during the Gulf war was generally viewed by Arabs as the result of American pressure rather than as Israeli forbearance.

The Arab-Israel dispute is so deeply rooted in both the historical and psychological senses that one should not expect it to be solved in a single short diplomatic move. With this realization in mind the participants in the Camp David accords agreed on a gradual approach. This in turn was translated to “partial agreement”, in two different meanings. First Camp David accords signed on September 17, 1978, by the then President of the USA, Jimmy Carter, Anwar-al-Sadat of Egypt and Menachem Begin, the Prime Minister of Israel, revealed the “Framework for peace in the Middle East and framework for the conclusion of a Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel”. The latter was

8. Martin Indyk, n.1, p. 34.
9. Ibid., p. 35.
simple and straightforward and a treaty of peace and Friendship was concluded between the two countries and the terms of the treaty, however, were to be implemented in two to three years. "The Framework for Peace" seemed to be a more complex document because of the inclusion of the principles of U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338 and a detailed plan for a final autonomous status of West Bank and Gaza.¹⁰

It was an interim agreement, defining a transitional period of five years, which would enable the parties to examine carefully the developments in the Middle East, in particular, those west of the Jordan river. The agreement was partial also in terms of substance. The parties were asked to seek agreement on the "Softer" issues, on which they could hopefully agree, while addressing the harder issues would be deferred to a later phase. It is understood that the hardest-to-solve point of contention was the final status of Samaria, Judea and the Gaza district.¹¹

In short, the Arab states were tempted to sit back and wait while Washington orders Israel out of the territories. And there was a similar urge to return to business as usual in inter-Arab politics as each power sought to carve out new areas of influence in the Gulf an the PLO. Meanwhile, in the West Bank and Gaza, the cycle of Palestinian-Israeli violence could quickly sour the atmosphere between Israel and its Arab


neighbours. In the absence of clear leadership from Washington, the window of opportunity would probably close rapidly.

Conversely, if the United States takes the lead, it cannot hope to impose a solution unilaterally, but it may well be able to get the process of negotiations started. But they will need strong encouragement from Washington to take these steps.\textsuperscript{12}

The United States carries major political baggage in the Middle East that will compromise any regional security regime in which America is the primary actor. Any future security regime must allow the Middle Eastern states to hold the United States at a distance. The American role must be supportive, but largely over the horizon. If the regional organization requires special teeth, it can request them from the U.N., the United States, or any other external power. Unless the Soviet Union (former) regresses to its old ideological approach to world politics, it too should be able to play a useful role in the region, as would Europe. But a special Pax American would be very short-lived.\textsuperscript{13}

Yet, the war which began on January 16, 1991, did not lay the foundation for a new world order. It, on the other hand, killed probably 200,000 Iraqis-including civilians, victims of what has been described as “Collateral damage” and came close to wiping out Iraq as a viable state. The U.S-led Allied war had even caused a split in the European

\textsuperscript{12} Martin Indyk, n. 1, pp. 35-36.

\textsuperscript{13} Graham E. Fuller, “Respecting Regional Realities”, \textit{Foreign Policy}, N. 83, Summer 1991, p. 45.
Community and strained America’s relations with Germany and Japan. Also, relations with Russia, in spite of a U.S-Secured $3 billion (according to another estimate, $4 billion) loan from Saudi Arabia, have been strained, witnessed the resignation of Eduard Shevardnadze in December 1990 in the face of Soviet military opposition to his concessions to the United States on the Gulf crisis and on disarmament. The current closeness between the two countries in the context of Russia’s march to democracy is too uncertain to be of any long-term consideration.\textsuperscript{14}

Reportedly the U.S. government had began talking of a Pax-Americana instead of a new world order. However, as Davis Healey has observed, “the Pax-Americana... Is an illusion”, because the United States is unlikely to be able to “restore peace and security in the Gulf.”\textsuperscript{15}

The US role in the Gulf war suggests that despite the changing international environment, the present international system still remain unjust as it poses constant threat to the security of small nations. No doubt, it was due to the end of the Cold War that the UN acted in an unusually speedy way in this crisis. yet it was neither the prevention of the crisis, nor the resolution of the problem in a peaceful way, nor it was a collective security action. rather it was a selective security action. In the Gulf war the US acted under the cover of UN which cannot

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., p. 46.
be justified on strategic, political or on moral grounds. The US action in the Gulf war illustrates how a modern western states uses the concept of just war to make its foreign policy acceptable to its public; the US action in the Gulf war was a clear indicator of its policy towards the Third World.¹⁶

The key US objective in the Gulf war was not to restore order in the region by achieving Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait but "smash Saddam" or render him incapable for further aggression. Though the Allied action in the Gulf took place under the cover of UN, it appeared that President Bush was more involved in the entire UN decision making processes than the UN Secretary General, Perez de Cuellar.¹⁷

Bush used his ability to set U.S. policies in the United Nations to pressure Congress for authorizing to go to war; once the UN Security Council had set an ultimatum for Iraqi withdrawal. Congress could not refuse to authorize force without badly undercutting U.S. credibility. Congress played almost no role in Persian Gulf deployments until Senate hearings in December 1990 engendered a public debate between proponents of continued economic sanctions and those who favoured using force soon after the January 15, 1991, UN deadline for Iraq's withdrawal. Congress' major role came still later in its January 12, 1991 vote to

17. Ibid., p. 171.
authorize the use of force shortly before the UN deadline and months after the deployment of hundreds of thousands of U.S. troops.¹⁸

In the last days of war that hegemony emerged in its crudest form, when the US took control of 20,000 square miles of central Iraq, the ancient Mesopotamia, now transmodified into the latest western colony of Mesopotamia, a mere 90 minutes drive from the Shia shrine city of Najaf. Such a colonialist action makes clear that the real US war aim was the destruction of Iraq because Saddam Hussein's Iraq presented no threat. no danger to the US or to the UK or to Egypt or Saudi Arabia, if it had wanted to invade and capture part of Saudi Arabia it had the opportunity to do that on August 2 when that country lay wide open to the Iraqi forces in Kuwait. Even the Iraqi threat to its traditional enemy, Syria was more theoretical.¹⁹

The only country that was under real Iraqi threat was Israel, and it was because the Jewish state was (and still is) the local strategic ally of the US, its regional policeman, and also because the Israelis and the pro-Israel Zionist lobby in the US control that country’s West Asian policy. And it is because Israel remains the enemy of the Palestinians and of the Arabs in general that there was so much more anger than before against the Americans. In the other parts of the world, especially

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the Third World, the anger was directed at the American over kill, and also because the peace settlement that was envisaged almost demanded the removal of Saddam Hussein. A development that should have been left to the Iraqi people to decide on.20

Clearly the main gainer in this war has been Israel which by the clever tactic of first threatening to join the fighting and expanding the war and then claiming credit and material advantage for not joining in. Israel was the only country in the world that was happy because of the war and which wanted it to continue.21

Clearly round one in the Gulf war went to the United States. America was using its air power to the hilt, had kept Israel out of the war, and the Arabs in. Iraq had surprised the world with its continuing defiance, had brought Israel and Saudi Arabia under missile attacks, but was yet to crack up the alliance. But American air power alone was not going to decide the outcome of the war. The American commander, Norman Schwarzkoff's claim that the allies could perhaps win the war without the ground offensive may be a bit far-fetched. A ground war appeared inevitable, and its character and outcome were by no means predetermined. Bush pushed strong action from the start, consistently favouring the most ambitious military options under consideration in the National Security Council (NSC) in early August. He deployed two

20. Ibid.
21. Ibid.
hundred thousand U.S. troops without a strong or united recommendation from his NSC.

It is important to note that his approach and the subsequent decision to use force was not the only possible response. Judging by the speeches and writings of key figures in the Carter Administration, had the Democrats controlled the White House the response might have been quite different. There probably would not have been a massive military deployment in the Gulf or an international mobilization to defeat Saddam Hussein on the battlefield. Instead the approach would have been based on protecting Saudi Arabia and deterring further Iraqi expansion, not liberating Kuwait. Sanctions would have been given more time, with protests confined to the United Nations and overtures to seek concessions from Saddam Hussein linked to pressuring Israel to put the Palestinian issue on the bargaining table. In the final analysis force would have been avoided for domestic political reasons and for fear of triggering an anti-American backlash in the Muslim world. But Bush was determined to use force. With patience and tact he skillfully forged the international coalition, rallied support at home, cultivated the Soviet Union’s cooperation (a development that owed a great deal to the special relationship between Secretary Baker and then Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze) and obtained strong U.N. Security Council resolutions that ultimately included the right to use force to ensure Iraqi compliance.22

Response of Former Soviet Union:

For three months, though deploring the Iraqi aggression and agreeing to the imposition of sanctions, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev had refused to approve the use of force. His personal adviser, Yevgeny Primakov, an Arabist, had held lengthy discussions with Saddam Hussein on a number of occasions to find a face-saving, non military way out of the crisis, one that would have maintained the Soviet-Iraqi relationship and Moscow's substantial stake in the country. Surprising, therefore, was Gorbachev's decision at the end of November 1990 to support U.N. Security Council resolution 678 authorizing the use of force, if necessary, to "restore international peace and security in the area". Gorbachev's support meant that the date for the final showdown could be fixed.23

Some Soviet commentators felt that the "USSR negative attitude towards Iraq's military campaign against Kuwait did not mean that we (i.e. USSR) were not prepared to undertake all measures to find a suitable way out from the crisis and to provide all possible assistance to the sides in the Iraq-Kuwait conflict". The tone of the commentary which appeared in Pravda suggested that there might have been some thinking in the Soviet official circles to play a mediatory role in the conflict.24

23. Ibid., p. 56.
The Soviets, in keeping with their publicly declared stand, fully supported the UNSC resolutions No. 660 (August 2, 1990) which condemned the "Iraqi invasion of Kuwait" and demanded Iraqi withdrawal "immediately and unconditionally" to the positions as on August 1, 1990; No. 661 (August 6) imposing comprehensive trade and economic sanctions against Iraq and Kuwait (barring medical supplies, food stuffs; and No. 662 (August 9) declaring the "annexation" of Kuwait by Iraq as null and void. Thus, the Soviets, by going along with the US sponsored resolutions in the Security Council were acting in accordance with the principles of tackling the regional conflicts laid down in the joint US-USSR statement of August 3. Most Soviet observers have explained the Soviet response to the Gulf crisis in the light of the rapid normalisation of the Soviet-US relationship.

Alexander Bovin, the veteran Izvestiya commentator, viewed that the "Kuwait test" would ultimately judge the soundness and stability of the US-USSR relations. He wrote, "Moscow and Washington have condemned Iraq's aggression in identical terms, demanded the restoration of the status-quo ante and supported the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions. The Soviet Union has not objected to the transfer of US military units to Saudi Arabia or US naval ships to the Persian Gulf". While there was general satisfaction that the USSR was on the same side as the US on the Gulf crisis, several commentators also felt

25. Ibid., p. 775.
apprehensive about the ultimate objectives of the US in the Gulf. There was also a feeling in some quarters that the Soviet Union, with its reduced influence on the Warsaw Pact, the Arab world, and as a country deep in domestic crisis, had found itself on the margins as far as the current crisis was concerned. Some Soviet observers had noted that despite the US-USSR convergence, the policies of the two countries in the Gulf could not be identical.26

But Moscow's initial anti-Iraq position was not simply some sleight of hand by Shevardnadze, preempting broader consideration of Soviet interests in the crisis. A broad range of genuine Soviet interests were in fact at stake in adopting a common position with the United Nations and, indirectly, with the United States. Broad recognition by the Soviet Union of these factors would be of inestimable importance to the perpetuation of constructive Soviet (Russia) policies in international crisis in decades ahead. No serious Soviet policy specialist believes that the old days of Soviet isolation and economic autarchy are any longer in the country's best interests. If the Soviet Union was ever to prosper in a high-tech environment and globalized economy, it would have to deal as a full partner on the international scene. It was thus not in the Soviet interest to dissociate itself from a series of Security Council resolutions calling for the liberation of Kuwait that enjoyed broad international backing. The Security Council had both might and right on

26. Ibid., pp. 782-783.
its side. To oppose such general formulations would have isolated the USSR and cast doubt on its expression of interest in broad international cooperation.

Cooperation with the West involved more than mere principle, but economic interests as well. Continued credits from the West rest on the ongoing perception that the USSR was no longer fundamentally opposed to the Western political and economic order. Hence came President Bush's offer on September 6, before the U.S-Soviet Summit in Helsinki to provide international aid in return for Soviet cooperation in the Gulf.

The Soviets were not only in a position to derive economic benefit from the West; the riches of Arabia were also a prize that glitters at the end of new policies in the Middle East. Past Soviet policy presupposed fairly correctly - that Soviet ties would have to gravitate toward radical Arab states, eliminating the opportunity for truly lucrative ties with wealthy conservative states such as Saudi Arabia and the gulf Sheikhdoms. The dynamic of the Iraq invasion could change all that standing in condemnation of Saddam Hussein and voting with the Security Council, the Soviet Union was able to dramatize the character of its new international orientation. The pay-off was not for behind.27

The Soviet response to the crisis in the Gulf had been carefully worked out so as not to upset the gains of the US-USSR detente. This

explains the mild Soviet reaction to the US military build up in the Gulf. While the USSR favoured activisation of the UN, the problem of US dominance still remains. For the time being, the Russia would not like to be a seen in opposition to the US and the West on the key issues. The Russia’s capacity to influence the developments in the Arab world seems to had declined. The former Soviet Union was also unlikely to gain significantly from the oil price hike as the Soviet oil industry was not in the best of health at that moment. It had become evident that the Soviet Union might also comprehensively review its ties with its allies in the Third World.\textsuperscript{28}

\textbf{Role of Britain:}

Britain’s sole material contribution to the coalition was military; it made no purely economic contribution. In fact, Germany and Japan partially reimbursed Britain for the approximately $55 million a day British forces cost at the peak of the conflict. Those forces included forty-three thousand troops, seventy five warplanes, and fifteen ships, the largest European military contribution to the coalition and Britain’s largest foreign deployment since world war II. Britain’s diplomatic contribution was considerable. The then Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher decided even before Bush that a strong response to the Iraqi invasion was needed. A week after the invasion occurred, British officials said that they chose to be the first country to join the United States in

\textsuperscript{28} Arvind Gupta, n. 24, p. 785.
pledging troops to demonstrate support for Washington's stand. In early September Thatcher and Foreign Minister Douglas Hurd took a bolder public line than the United States, arguing that Article 51 of the UN Charter, on states' inherent right of self-defense, justified the use of force against Iraq without further Security Council authorization. Thatcher's position on this point endangered the broad support she had enjoyed on the issue up to the time from the opposition Labour and Liberal Democratic leaders. In late August she strongly condemned the tepid assistance other NATO members had given to Washington, saying that the United States could not police the world without help. Finally, John Major continued to offer such support after he succeeded Thatcher as Prime Minister.29

The collective action hypothesis's expectation that Britain would try to ride free could not have been incorrect; in proportion to its size, Britain contributed roughly as much as the United States and just as early. Part of the reason was London's perception that Iraq threatened the Middle East and if able to keep Kuwait, would have encouraged international lawlessness. In August Thatcher warned Iraq that any threat to Turkey would in her mind invoke NATO's collective defence commitments against Baghdad. After the air war began, defense officials warned against ejecting Iraq from Kuwait without first destroying much of Iraq's forces. Prime Minister Thatcher even suggested that Iraq had returned to "the law of Jungle" in invading Kuwait.29

29. Andrew Bennett, n. 18, p. 54.
30. Ibid., p. 54.
British dependence on the United States helps explain its contribution. On 24 August, Foreign Minister Douglas Hurd explained the British response in terms both of Britain’s “place in the world” and the expectations Americans had of British support. Thatcher more than once “angrily” criticized those she felt had not sufficiently supported the coalition, especially Europeans who believed that “what happens in the rest of the world is someone else’s business. In fact, some British pressure on other coalition members may have originated in the United States exert alliance leverage over France and other European countries.\(^3^1\)

**Role of West Asian Countries:**

The Second of August 1990 would be as important in Arab history as the November 2, 1917, the date of the proclamation of the Balfour Declaration providing for a Jewish homeland in Palestine. A large Arab country attacked, occupied and absorbed a smaller Arab country with which it had diplomatic relations. No Arab state endorsed the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. All Arab governments and the PLO demanded Iraqi withdrawal. Jordan, Yemen, Libya, Algeria, the Sudan and the PLO insisted that the problem could and must be settled by the Arab themselves.\(^3^2\)

Others, led by Saudi Arabia and Egypt, thought outside help was required, and Riyadh invited American troops to Saudi Arabia to defend

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the Kingdom, to liberate Kuwait and ultimately to destroy the army and the economic infrastructure of Iraq. This presented a problem; the United States had good relations with the GCC, but it was still the main supporter of Israel as well. American outrage at the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was widely contrasted with its tranquil acceptance of Israel’s defiance of a series of UN Security Council resolutions on Jerusalem, the West Bank, the Golan Heights and Lebanon. But all this was dismissed in the panic that followed Secretary of Defence Dick Cheney’s convincing report to the Saudi’s of an imminent Iraqi invasion of Saudi Arabia and the rest of the Arabian Peninsula. Nonetheless, the Saudi invitation to the United States was extraordinary. Countries that had long opposed “imperialism” and Zionism turned to the primary western military power for protection against another Arab country. Jordan, Yemen and the PLO found this “solution” offensive and dangerous, and they condemned the subsequent American destruction of Iraq. Their principles have cost them dearly. Jordan’s market in Iraq disappeared in the early days of the crisis. All subsidies from the Gulf Arabs to Jordan, Yemen and the PLO stopped; Saudi Arabia ceased delivery of oil to Jordan and stopped buying its agricultural produce. Altogether Jordan lost half of its gross domestic product.33

The damage to Yemen has been almost as severe. Some 800,000 Yemenis who had been long-term residents of Saudi Arabia were

dispossessed and expelled. They had peaceful, even docile, residents of the kingdom; they had taken no action against their Saudi Arabia hosts; there were no demonstrations, no sabotage. Yet, they were forced to leave their homes on short notice, sell their business for small fractions of their value and drive to the Yemeni border where their vehicles and remaining possessions were confiscated. Their expulsion was ordered presumably because the Saudis disapproved of the position held by the government in Yemen - that Iraq could be persuaded or forced to leave Kuwait without war - and possibly because the Saudis believed that the Yemeni government was part of the infamous "plot".\textsuperscript{34}

The Secretary General of the GCC had said that the Gulf Arabs would "never forgive and never forget the betrayal" by the poor Arabs. It would also be a long time before the wounds inflicted on Jordanians, Yemenis and Palestinians are healed. The Koranic injunctions to forgive and show compassion have been temporarily suspended by all. Those who opposed the invitation to the Americans accused the GCC and its allies of treason to Arabism and to Islam, but in the GCC itself there was little opposition. In short, the invasion of Kuwait and the Arab reaction to it marked the end of the period when Arabs maintained the pretense that they were part of one great nation.\textsuperscript{35}

The invasion of Kuwait by Iraq on August 2, 1990, further added to the need of cooperation among the countries in the region. Besides

\textsuperscript{34} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 39.

\textsuperscript{35} \textit{Ibid.}
instability in the area, it was considered by Iran and Saudi Arabia to be a threat to the strategic importance of their territories. If Iraq had managed the annexation of Kuwaiti territory, it would have a larger coastline in the Persian Gulf. This process would have made Iraq yet another naval power in the Gulf besides Iran and Saudi Arabia. Iraq would have also enjoyed an added production and export of oil. This would have disturbed the balance of power in the OPEC. The success of Saddam Hussein’s policies would have increased the possibility of Iraq becoming a leader of the Arab world which it had been trying for since long. No wonder both the states immediately condemned the Iraqi government for the occupation of Kuwait. In order to force Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait, the Kingdom shut off the vital Iraqi oil pipeline to the Red Sea outlet at Yanbu on August 7, 1990, and requested the US to despatch ground forces and warplanes to Saudi Arabia to deter any Iraqi aggression. In order to beef up its troops near the Saudi border and to ensure Iran’s neutrality, the Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, nine days later, announced that he would accept all the peace conditions with Iran. In addition, he requested Iran to side with Iraq against the US “imperialism”.

The deployment of foreign forces in the Gulf increased by the day, provoking a growing anti-Western sentiment in Iran. The Iranian hard-liners were opposed to the presence of the US forces in the region, and wanted the government to actually combat it. But the government

did not want to side with Iraq. Instead of blaming Saudi Arabia, which was responsible for the entry of the foreign forces to the Gulf, it blamed Iraq. The vast expansion of defence capabilities in Saudi Arabia and its back-up by the US military hardware and personnel were considered by the Iranian government as a clear change in balance of power in the region in favour of Saudi Arabia in the future. Iran not only tried to stop the entry of foreign powers into the Gulf but also to maintain the military balance in the region by checking the expansion of Saudi forces. Although the Iranian government had proclaimed a neutral stand in the Gulf crisis.\textsuperscript{37} It perceives a pre-eminent role for itself in the Persian Gulf and will not allow others to undermine it. The inter-state and intra-state politics of the Arab region of the Persian Gulf continue to make Iran still relevant to the region. And the Iranian's strategy and tactics to use Islam as a trump card to keep up their position have paid dividends so far. Already the Iranians were reported to have made a tactical move by agreeing to sell Iraqi crude (along with Turkey) to neutralise the effectiveness of extra regional powers' solutions to the region's problems.\textsuperscript{38}

It tried through diplomatic channels, suggesting a coalition of forces made up of the Gulf states, to force Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait. Iran appealed to the GCC states to set up a joint security system in the region to contain Iraq and curb the entry of foreign powers. It did not

\textsuperscript{37} Ibid., pp. 773-774.

get any positive response from them. However, the confrontation of GCC states with Iraq was accompanied by a radical change in the climate of GCC relations with Iran. This change was evident in the 11th annual summit of the GCC which was held in Doha during 22-24 December, 1990. The summit welcomed trends in Iran to improve and develop its relations with the GCC member states. It also appreciated Iran’s stand on the Gulf crisis. During a press conference in Doha, the Qatari Foreign Minister indicated that Iran should be included in security arrangements of the region by virtue of its geographical location. The Iranian Foreign Minister, two days after the GCC summit, stated that Iran “welcomes the positive points in the latest communiqué and is willing to discuss with the Gulf states the principle of cooperation to guarantee the security of the region from any influence of the foreign powers. Saudi Arabia was not enthusiastic about this proposal.39

Response of France:

France was the first to come out with proposals on long-term peace and security in the Middle East. Britain followed with its own. They all suffered from internal contradictions. Then there were differences among the allies on the proposal for an international conference on Middle East of which France was an ardent supporter but which was not favoured by America and Britain. In fact, Mitterrand of France had no hesitation in suggesting a linkage with the Arab-Israeli conflict, which

Saddam Hussein had sought to establish.\textsuperscript{40}

The fate of these or other proposals would depend on the political will of those who have taken the responsibility of organising Middle East with or without fundamental reforms and at a time when turbulence of peace threatens to last longer than the ferocity of war. \textsuperscript{41}

France made it clear that it would not be a party to a war in the Gulf and would veto any United Nations Security Council resolution approving the use of force to end the Gulf Crisis.\textsuperscript{42}

French defence minister said that the decision was a direct result of UN resolution 678, which had set January 15 as the deadline for Iraq’s withdrawal from Kuwait. French President Mitterrand announced on September 15 the dispatch of 4,000 ground troops to Saudi Arabia following an Iraqi raid on the French ambassador’s residence in Kuwait. Naval units including an aircraft carrier joined two warships already in the gulf. He had also given orders to its 3,000 man naval force to use force if necessary to enforce the embargo. French army ground reconnaissance forces would be part of a troop contingent the government plans send to the Arabian Peninsula.\textsuperscript{43}

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{40} L.K. Sharma, "Crossing the other Gulf", \textit{The Times of India}, March 3, 1991.
\bibitem{41} Ibid.
\bibitem{42} "France Against use of force to end Gulf Imbroglio", \textit{Indian Express}, New Delhi, October 9, 1990.
\bibitem{43} "World Acts Against Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait", \textit{Factsheet}, Economic and Political Action, pp. 3-4.
\end{thebibliography}
Rocard had been quoted as telling a group of French Parliamentarians that “the role of the French troops sent to join the international force is limited to enforcing the international sanctions against Iraq”, according to a source quoted in a report carried by the ‘Jourdan Times’. Earlier reports said that the speaker of the French National Assembly had demanded that the government clarify Paris’ position on the Gulf crisis. The 15 parliament members who met Rocard represent all parties in the Assembly according to the sources quoted by the “Times”. France, which had signalled an independent approach to the crisis in the initial days after Iraq invaded Kuwait on August 2, 1990, reacted dramatically to reports of a Iraqi intrusion into the French Embassy in Kuwait and sent 4,000 troops and armour to Saudi Arabia to join the multinational force.\textsuperscript{44}

Earlier the French involvement was limited to naval forces in the Gulf. Iraq subsequently expressed regret over the embassy intrusion. The French president, Francois Mitterand, again signalled a shift in position by becoming the first western leader to link the Gulf crisis to other conflicts in West Asia, including the Palestinian and Labnanee problems. In a speech to the United Nations General Assembly, he outlined a four-stages plan for comprehensive peace in the region. The plan was welcomed by Iraq, which said the proposal was positive and could be built upon.

\textsuperscript{44} “France Against Use of Force”, \textit{Indian Express}, New Delhi, October 9, 1990.
Role of China:

Since the Gulf war, there has been considerable scholarly interest in examining the decisions and actions of major players in world politics during the Gulf crisis and trying to determine their broader ramifications. In the case of China, the inquiry centers on why China voted in favour of the first 11 United Nations resolutions that condemned the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and abstained on the twelfth that is, resolution 678 of November 29, 1990, which from the U.S. point of view was “historic” as it set the deadline for Iraqi withdrawal and authorized U.N. member nations to adopt the measures necessary to restore peace in the region if Iraq failed to meet that deadline.45

Speaking at the general debate of the 45th UN General Assembly on September 29, 1990, Qian Qichen, China’s Foreign Minister, described the Iraqi invasion and annexation of Kuwait as ‘entirely impermissible” and called on Iraq to pull out its forces immediately. It should be noted that China was voted for most of the UN Security Council resolutions on the Gulf crisis while insisting that the dispute should be resolved through friendly consultations without resort to force. Although China voted for Security Council resolution 670 imposing an air embargo on Iraq, it abstained from voting on the subsequent resolution sanctioning the use of force if Iraq failed to withdraw from Kuwait by January 15. By doing so China underlined its preference for a peaceful negotiated

settlement reached mainly through talks between the Arabs themselves and for securing a quick withdrawal of Western armed forces from Saudi Arabia.\textsuperscript{46}

China was a partner of western allies in the early stages of the Gulf crisis. When it abstained on Resolution 678, Western observers suddenly realized that China's support for the anti-Iraq coalition was not unconditional and that its position included the principle of "peaceful settlement" of crisis. China, in other words, would not support a western war effort in the Gulf. Its position and consequently its decision to abstain on Resolution 678, according to some commentators, reflected the desire of the Chinese to maintain "relative neutrality". Their motives were multiple: if the war went badly for the U.N. coalition forces, Beijing would bear no responsibility; if all went well, Beijing would be in a good position to play a role in a post-war Middle East settlement; and Beijing wanted to provide just enough support to the allies to bring itself back into favour with the west. Thus, in order to get the most out of the Gulf crisis while not paying a price for taking an anti-U.S. position. China abstained on, rather vetoed Resolution 678.\textsuperscript{47}

During 1990, the Chinese apparently gave much thought to the general framework of the future world order. With regard to the current changes in international relations, they basically saw three existing or

\textsuperscript{46} Shri Prakash, "China and the Gulf Crisis". \textit{Indian Express}, New Delhi, Jan 10, 1991. \\
\textsuperscript{47} Hwei-ling Huo, n. 45. pp. 265-66.
developing conditions. First, the post-war bipolar system ceased to exist because of the profound changes in U.S.-Soviet relations. Second, world strategic patterns were following a path of multipolarization with new power centres emerging; however, the world was in a transitional period and a new order had not yet taken shape. Third, the post-Cold war world would be compressed by the hegemonic politics of the two super powers coming to the surface and even intensifying. On September 29, 1990, the Chinese foreign minister presented China’s vision of the new world order to the U.N. General Assembly. He said that normal international relations could be ensured only when all countries observed the five principle of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other’s internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. China proposed that, in the meantime, the United Nations should play a major role in working out solutions to various international issues and problems, fostering a trend toward multipolarity and eventually a more reasonable world order. Throughout the Gulf crisis and the war, China urged a major role for the U.N. and settlement within the framework of U.N. resolutions.48

China appeared more sober in its assessment of the international situation after the Gulf war. Its policy makers began to worry that U.S. determination to settle the crisis by force would set an example for future foreign policy conduct among the western powers, and that

48. Ibid., pp. 268-269.
American victory in the war would make the United States "the unchallenged super power" supported by its allies in the post-cold war era. They now believe that in the long run the U.S. does not have the resources for world domination and that the concept of balance of power will be operative, but in the short-run, the world will have to experience a "unipolar moment". Also, the transitional period from bipolarity to multipolarity could take fairly long time, during which the U.S. and its allies would have the ability and the temptation to practice power politics by various means. However, a more sober outlook has not changed the orientation of post-cold war Chinese foreign policy, as by various leadership statements. For example, Qian Qichen asserted in March 1991 that "the use of force can in no way solve all problems and the Gulf war cannot be made a precedent for settling international issues."^49

Role of Japan:

Japan's response to the Gulf war was seen as increasingly defining moment for Tokyo in the post-cold war world order. That response so far had been marked by anguished debates about what Japan's role should be, with its action until now limited to some financial aid and the promise of more. But perhaps the most striking aspect of Japan's behaviour was the growing perception that its citizens saw little at stake for themselves in the war's outcome, despite their dependence on West Asian Oil. On the surface, as usual, the arguments revolved around the

49. Ibid., p. 272.
constraints arising from Tokyo's postwar pacifist tradition and its constitutional renunciation of the use of force. Constantly fearful of generating hostility among its Asian neighbours, Japan clings more tightly than ever to these pillars of its identity. Despite repeated U.S. requests for a direct role in the Gulf, Tokyo had shied away Prime Minister Kaifu's initial proposal to send 1,000 military men in non-combat roles. He also ordered "preparations" for military planes to airlift refugees from the war zone, but some officials doubted the initiative would get anywhere. Many in the government were afraid that if it did, opposition parties whose votes are needed in parliament would withdraw their support of the money package. Others feared Japanese businessmen and diplomats abroad would be subjected to terrorism. It had become increasingly evident that Japan's temporizing was serving its sense of self-interest. This, in turn, had dismayed many, including the US Ambassador, Michael H. Armacost, who reminded Japan that "impressions forged in a major international crisis like this one do tend to have a durable, lasting effect". Before war erupted, for instance, Japanese officials said that one thing they wanted to avoid was the impression that Japan was capable of acting only under US pressure. Then they broke out, and Japan became paralyzed over what to do. Tokyo sent finance minister, Ryutaro Hashimoto, to ask the US what it wanted, and only then did Japan come up with a sum of aid to supply. No matter how hard they tried, the Japanese seemed to end up looking as if they were acting in response to pressure.
The idea that they did not see they had much at stake in the Gulf, other than preserving ties with the US, might seem to contradict the fact that Japan, more than any other country, depends on West Asian oil-for 70 per cent of its supplies. But since the Iraqi invasion in August, Japanese had been hearing cautious but bullish reports from their economic mandarins about prospects for weathering the storm.\(^50\)

The Gulf crisis presented as the first major test to Japan's foreign policy and diplomacy. While there were some in Japan who saw the Gulf Crisis as a clear case where the use of force was absolutely necessary in order to maintain peace and order. As regards Japanese response to the Gulf crisis three things seemed to be possible areas where Japanese response could be conceived: dispatch of Security Defence Force (SDF) personnel, sharing the cost of the multinational forces, and provide financial support for those countries which suffered by participating in the economic sanctions against Iraq. But what appeared to be most critical for Japan was the issue of dispatching SDF personnel to the Gulf and demonstrating the nation's willingness to share not only financial burdens but hardship and risk with other countries. It was in this perspective, the participation of the SDF. if not in a combat role, was seen essential.\(^51\)

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Japan imposed upon itself very strict constraints about the use of its military forces. It was definitely within the country’s discretion to give up its inherent right. However, to escape from its duty was not. It is the duty of a responsible modern state to contribute to the maintenance of peace and order of the world. When Prime Minister Kaifu announced the evening of August 29, 1990, his initial Persian Gulf package, which included no financial contribution to multinational forces there, he referred to it as the “maximum” effort his government could make. But less than 24 hours later, following a phone call from Kaifu to the US President George Bush which revealed that the US was unimpressed by Japan’s weeks of soul-searching. The aid package to the forces jumped from zero to $1 billion. Given Japan primarily US-oriented foreign policy, the government’s reaction to a lack of American enthusiasm, could be considered typical. But the government’s continuous failure to set its own international agenda, especially on the Gulf crisis seemed to have left both Japanese and foreign policy makers exceptionally discouraged about that possibility of Japan’s taking actions befitting its new found economic status.52

The Gulf crisis showed that unless Japan makes its own judgement on world issues and acts according to it, rather than to the American stance, the international community will not appreciate its efforts to

52. Ibid, pp. 7-8.
assume more responsibility. The fact that Japan was not consulted before the US sent troops to the Gulf was an example of how Japan’s failure to set an international agenda and this is what puts strain on Japan-US bilateral relations. Opinions were advanced in Tokyo that if the US thought Japan was a country with its own opinion and could take its own stand on certain aspects of international developments like Germany, it would have consulted Tokyo before because it would have wanted to hear a good advice. But it did not feel it was necessary because it expected Japan just to follow the US position. If Japan sincerely wanted to make an international contribution suitable for an economic superpower, it must have realized that a global political role has become increasingly inescapable. Japan continues to be the lynchpin to stability in the pacific. Now the US emphasizes on developing its bilateral relationship with Japan into a global partnership. Japan is already a global power, not a regional power.53

India’s Response:

Between the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the allied powers’ combined attack on Iraq to liberate Kuwait, there was a shift in power in India from the Janata Dal government headed by V.P. Singh to that of the Janata Dal (s) led by Chandra Sekhar. Chandra Sekhar’s government was short lived because of its minority support. It remained in power quite precariously only for a little more than six months from November 53. Ibid., p. 10.
10, 1990 to May 1991. When the Sekhar government assumed power, there were serious dangers to India’s unity and integrity, and its economy was in a shambles. The outbreak of the Gulf war further worsened India’s economy, posing a serious challenge to the government. Moreover, the government was confronted with a dilemma with regard to its foreign policy. Whether to throw in its lot with the allied powers who appeared to be sure winners, or to stand by a good friend like Iraq which was sure to suffer defeat.54

The Chandra Sekhar regime came to power on November 10, 1990 and the coalition forces launched their air war against Iraq on January 17, 1991—only two days after the expiry of the U.N. ultimatum on January 15. The face-to-face dialogue between James Baker, U.S. Secretary of State, and Tariq Aziz, Iraq’s Foreign Minister, and the talks between Perez de Cuellar, the U.N. Secretary-General and President Saddam Hussein at Baghdad failed. During these hectic days of diplomacy to resolve the Gulf crisis, New Delhi played a passive role. Although the Chandra Shekhar government claimed that it was in touch with other governments in this regard, the fact remained that it did not pursue active diplomacy to resolve the crisis. If anything, its pronouncements and other postures on the Gulf conflict generated an impression that it toed the U.S. line. While insisting on delinking the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait and the Palestine issue, Chandra Sekhar strongly hinted that it was President

Saddam Hussein who was primarily to blame for the Gulf crisis. He urged Iraq to vacate Kuwait in order to pave the way for peace. In response to the demand of the CPI (M) for the withdrawal of allied troops from the Gulf region, he asserted that the presence of these troops in the Gulf had U.N. sanctions.55

Quickly reacting to the outbreak of the war, the Janata Dal demanded an immediate cease-fire, followed by a negotiated settlement of the dispute between Iraq and Kuwait under the U.N. auspices, withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait, and freedom of Arab territories from Israeli control. Both the Congress party and Janta Dal complained that economic sanctions were not given sufficient time to work and that there were differences between U.N. objectives and the U.S. They argued that while the U.N. sought to liberate Kuwait, the main objective of the U.S. was to obliterate Iraq. There was, however, one important difference between the two political parties. The Congress party became increasingly critical of the U.N. while the Janta Dal hesitated to criticize it openly.56

Only a few days before the outbreak of the war, Foreign Minister Shukla had shown his reluctance to launch any peace initiative. He said, "such an initiative should be mooted only if it would be useful and possibly successful." However, within forty-eight hours of the outbreak of the war, India had embarked upon a peace move envisaging immediate

55. Ibid., p. 371.
56. Ibid., p. 372.
suspension of hostilities and withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait under a unit bound programme. The starting point of any peace plan has to be withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait— in principle and not unconditionally as was demanded by George Bush. The condition was that the Iraq-Kuwait border would be an open question but should be delineated by some international tribunal.

The next issue was to work out what sort of regime would replace that of the Al-Sahab family. Both the South Block and India’s U.N. mission became active for the purpose. Foreign Minister Shukla left for Belgrade while his deputy, Digvijay Singh visited Zimbabwe, Algeria and Jordan. But India’s diplomatic initiative to stop the war yielded no result; its peace was not taken seriously either by the U.S. or by Iraq.

**View from Pakistan:**

The apparent failure of the nearly seven hours of talks between the Foreign Minister of Iraq and the United States on January 9, 1991 had fuelled speculation regarding the inevitability of a military conflict between the two protagonists after the expiry of the January 15 deadline. Both sides seemed to be sticking to their respective positions. The Americans calling for an immediate and unconditional Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait and the Iraqis seeking a linkage of the Gulf crisis with the

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Palestinian issue. As the deadline approached, fears regarding a conflict being “Imminent” was widely circulated. Concurrent with the Iraqi-American talks in Geneva, there was the visit to Tehran of the highest ranking Iraqi official since the Islamic Revolution, namely the Vice-Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council, Izzat Ibrahim. In the meantime, there was interesting Gulf-related developments in Pakistan as well which clearly indicated that Pakistan was certainly not a disinterested party to the crisis in its vicinity. There had, for instance, been two public rallies in support of Saddam Hussein in Peshawar and Quetta reflective of a growing public opinion in the country that saw the defiance of Saddam to the American military might in a positive light. These rallies followed the publication of the latest public opinion survey indicating that popular support for Iraq in Pakistan had doubled since August and there had been a corresponding increase in Pakistani opinion to opposition to the American forces in the Gulf. At the same time Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif had announced the dispatch of another Brigade of Pakistani troops to Saudi Arabia “to defend the Holy Places”. This Brigade was to supplement the earlier 5000 Pakistani military presence in Saudi Arabia close to the Yemeni border since the Gulf crisis and it was now total more than 10,000 after the Brigade had been sent. This Armoured Brigade was likely to be stationed in Tabuk, the point in Saudi Arabia close to the Jordanian border. The United States embassy had also started preparing contingent plans for the voluntary evacuation of all
non-essential official Americans as well as dependents of diplomats stationed in Pakistan.

In another reflection of the strong public opinion in Pakistan against the US military presence in the Gulf, the Federal Minister of Local Government and Rural Development, Maulana Abul Sattar Khan Niazi, in a January 8, 1991 statement, publicly criticised the United States for its refusal to link the Gulf crisis with the Palestine issue, a statement at variance with the official stand of the Pakistan government. While efforts of European, Arab and UN leaders were continuing to prevent a war, it was clear that both sides were basing their respective strategy on certain assumption.

The eight day of the war made it clear that this was patent dissimulation—a mere alibi to further step up the barbarous assault on a Third World nation. A brutal number of air sorties perhaps 3,000-were conducted on that day. And even the minnows of the Western alliance like Canada, eagerly joined the fray, while France shed its early inhibitions about attacking targets inside Iraq.⁶⁰

The typical public reaction had been that western fury, though perhaps disproportionate to Iraq’s offence, had been justified; that in seeking to erase an autonomous nation-state off the maps of the world, Iraq transgressed grievously against all the norms of peaceful coexistence.

that make the preservation of world order possible. This however was an over simplification, perhaps even a half truth. Hostilities against Iraq did not commence with that country's invasion of Kuwait. G.H. Jansen, one of India's most perceptive observers of Arab affairs, had pointed out that the military offensive against Iraq had been preceded by a propaganda war, dating from at least March 1990.61

The US war in the Gulf was in its deepest sense a means of changing the rules of global power, of subordinating economic competitors to military power, of transforming economic competitors into docile bankers of US military conquests, of converting economic resources from markets towards war subsidies; of disaggregating European alliances in favour of US centred coalitions; of trading Third World debt payments for military contingents under US command.62

61. Ibid.