CHAPTER-5
After World War II, when almost all Arab countries achieved independence, Iraq appeared to lag behind them in exercising full freedom because of her pre-war commitments to Great Britain. When General Nuri moved to rid his country of the objectionable treaty obligations to Britain in 1955 he entered into a new regional defence arrangement -- the Baghdad Pact -- in which Britain rejoined as a partner, keeping Iraq not only committed to her former ally, but also to the Western block as a whole against alleged Soviet threats to the West Asia. This was done at a time when Arab public opinion had reached a high pitch of nationalist excitement and was calling for Arab solidarity against Western support for Israel's claims to Arab lands. Consequently Arab leaders urged their countrymen to remain uncommitted in the cold war and the ideological cry for neutralism was spreading fast in the Arab world -- indeed the whole Arab-Asian block -- in which Iraq remained the committed oasis in a vast neutralist desert. Thus Nuri's principal miscalculation was in overstressing Iraq's common interests with her non-Arab neighbours at the expense of Arab solidarity on the one hand, and in entering into an alliance with the West which, by its support for Israel presented in Arab eyes a greater danger in Arab interests than the Soviet threat on the other.

Iraq’s foreign policy after the Revolution of 1958, though seemingly oriented by ideological influences, was governed essentially by the same forces that shaped the foreign policy of the Old Regime. The revolutionary leaders tried to change certain foreign policy objectives but could not effect a radical departure from Iraq’s traditional foreign policy. Under the Old Regime, the opposition leaders demanded Arab solidarity and neutralism in the cold war, but after the fall of the monarchy the cause of Arab solidarity was not much better off—indeed, there were occasions, when the relations between Iraq and Egypt were almost reached to the breaking point. Even today, despite the fact that Iraq and Syria are governed by branches of the same party, the relations between the two countries are highly strained. As to neutralism which was the reason given for opposition to General Nuri’s policy, it was but momentarily upheld, as the revolutionary leaders learned very soon that an alliance with a Great Power has always been indispensable if Iraq’s independence were to be adequately protected. They also realized that cooperation—indeed even friendly relationship— with Iraq’s non-Arab neighbours was necessary if the stability of the country and its internal unity be maintained. Some form of unity with one or more Arab countries, though a cherished aspiration of the revolutionary leaders, remained a mirage and often invited interference in Iraq’s internal affairs whenever
attempts were made to bring the country into close relationship with one Arab country or another.²

Although Iraq's tentative attempts to disassociate itself from its leftist stance in the middle 1970's were welcomed by most of its neighbours. Their continuing distrust and the regime's own unpredictable and erratic behaviour meant that the process of Iraq's reintegration into the 'higher counsels' of West Asian politics was somewhat uneven. However, the changing political circumstances in the region after 1973 Arab-Israeli war produced an atmosphere that put growing pressure upon Iraq to put an end to its 'radicalism' and to its strident extremism. In this situation the gradual weakening of ties with the Soviet Union, the new oil wealth, and the agreement concluded with Iran meant that Iraq was now in a better position to improve its relations with its neighbours and also to play a more vigorous part in the politics of the region.³

Iraq's relation with other Arab Gulf States have not always been smooth and friendly, owing partly to dynastic rivalries but mainly to Iraq's territorial ambitions, particularly in Kuwait, which has alarmed other

². Ibid, pp. 142-43.

*Gulf countries. Following the fall of the monarchy in 1958, the establishment of the republican regime in Iraq and the recurring military coups did not in themselves pose a threat, but the subsequent adoption of socialism and other radical doctrines by the Ba'ath Party let alone its alliance with the Soviet Union, have aroused concern in high Gulf circles. The alarm deepened in recent years as the Ba'ath regime, stressing Pan-Arab goals have shown greater interest in Gulf affairs than ever before⁴.

In an attempt to mollify their Arab Gulf neighbours, the Ba'ath leaders assured Gulf rulers that they have no intention of interfering in their domestic affairs, least of all of undermining the ruling dynasties. They tried in vain to impress on them the need to follow an Arab Gulf policy aimed at fostering harmony and cooperation, to oppose foreign intervention and to limit immigration non-Arabs to the Arabian coast of the Gulf, which had the effect of de-Arabizing the character of the Gulf. While the Arab States shared Iraq's concern in principle, they were suspicious of Iraq's ambition to play the role of leader in Gulf security affairs. For this reason, it was suggested that an understanding between Iraq and Saudi Arabia was deemed necessary before embarking on an Arab Gulf policy.

The Iraqi leaders seem to have been confident that their policy would eventually meet with approval as it would promote general Arab interests and not only Iraq's own special interests. They must have also realized that such a policy could evolve only slowly and cautiously by means of direct negotiations, and it should not be imposed as a "grand design" embodying ideological goals. At the same time, Prince Fahd’s visit to Baghdad in June 1975 marked the beginning of improved relations between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, and the two countries came to an agreement on the delimitation of the neutral zone on the borders between them later in the year. In the course of his speech on the seventh anniversary of the Ba'ath seizure of power, on 17 July, 1975 al Bakr declared that 'in accordance with our clear Pan-Arab outlook we have sought to deepen understanding with the Arab countries of the Gulf, particularly Saudi Arabia, and to solve the issue pending with them.'

Although it was easy for the Iraqi regime to make the case that the claims of Arab brotherhood and solidarity made it imperative for it to pursue good relations with its Arab neighbours, it was both less inclined and less able to extend such cordiality to its

5. Ibid.
6. Sluglett, Marion Farouk, op., cit., p. 201.
Ba’th brothers in Syria. In order to maintain some degree of credibility it had to continue to phrase its policies in nationalist and unionist terms and appear to be more militant and more Arab than the Syrians, notably, of course, on Palestine. In this and other ways it tried to uphold its claim to the leadership of Arab radicalism throughout the latter part of the 1970’s, while simultaneously maintaining that the achievement of Arab unity was constantly being frustrated by ill-will or intransigence on the Syrian side, a charge that the Syrians were equally ready to level at Iraq. Apart from a brief explosion of ecstatic good neighbourliness, which lasted from the autumn of 1978 to July 1979, Iraq-Syrian relations between 1968 to 1980 were never particularly cordial and were in fact more often downright hostile.

However, the situation in the West Asia as a whole was greatly altered by Sadat’s decision to go to Jerusalem in November 1977, since this marked such a major departure from the previous norms of inter-Arab politics as to require a fundamental change in the ground rules; even those states that had never enjoyed particularly cordial relations with each other were obliged at least to make public profession of some form of solidarity against Sadat. These circumstances also combined to bring about a situation in which Saddam Hussain was increasingly tempted to assert

his own and Iraq's pretensions to fill the leadership vacuum, for which, given Saudi Arabia's more circumscribed political style, Syria was the only other serious contender. Thus readers of al-Thawra were informed in the run-up to the Baghdad Summit that 'The eyes of the Arabs everywhere have been turned towards your great revolution in this country and to your brave party which has shouldered the trust and responsibility of the Pan-Arab struggle for over thirty [Sic] years'. Iraq's role at the Baghdad Summit meeting and its announcement of the Arab National Declaration, aiming at achieving greater solidarity and cooperation among other countries, enhanced its position in inter-Arab affairs.

The boundary dispute between Iraq and Iran, a legacy which Iraq had inherited from the Ottoman Empire, has become more complicated by political conflicts ever since Iraq achieved independence. The Iraqi-Persian Treaty of 1937 fixed the frontier between the two countries at the low-water mark on the eastern side of Shatt al-Arab. It gave Iraq control of the waterway except the area near the Abadan and Khurram shahr where the frontier was fixed at the median line in mid-channel or the thalweg. Iran's participation in the Baghdad Pact (1955), in which Iraq

8. Ibid., p. 203.
9. Khadduri, Majid, 1988, op. cit., p. 120.
played a leading role, induced both countries to subordinate the frontier dispute to large defence plans because these were then considered necessary to oppose an impending Soviet threats to the two Royal Houses of Iraq and Iran.\textsuperscript{10}

After the fall of the Monarchy in 1958, Iraq withdrew from the Baghdad Pact and relations between Iran and Iraq began to deteriorate. These disputes were intensified after the Ba'th party came to power in 1968 as Iraq’s new rulers have shown deeper difference with Iran both in regional and international affairs. The Ba’th leaders, stressing Arab ideological goals, were determined to assert Iraqi rights and referred to the Shatt as the eastern border of the Arab homeland. Iran’s hostility to Iraq’s new regime was reflected in her support to opposition leaders involved in a power struggle with Ba’thist leaders. Complaints from one side to the other were not heeded, Iran demanded that the frontier issues should be considered as a whole and Iraq insisted that these should be settled in accordance with the judicial process specified in the treaty of 1937. Since a settlement in accordance with that treaty was considered unsatisfactory to Iran, the treaty was denounced on April 19, 1969, on the ground that its provision had been violated by Iraq for many years\textsuperscript{11}.

\textsuperscript{10} Khadduri, Majid, 1978, op., cit., p. 148.

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid, p. 149.
A series of border clashes between Iraqi and Iranian troops took place in 1972 and 1973, especially near the Mandali area (about 60 miles north east of Baghdad), causing casualties on both sides. While direct negotiations were taking place between Iraqi and Iranian representatives, who met in Istanbul from August 13 to September 1, 1974, a new series of frontier incidents recurred which delayed the negotiations but did not interrupt them. It was, however, at a meeting of the organization of petroleum Exporting countries (OPEC) in Algiers (March 1975) that Iraq and Iran finally reached to an agreement 12.

In June 1975, the foreign Ministers of Iraq and Iran met in Baghdad to sign a 'reconciliation' treaty designed to settle all outstanding differences between the two countries. The Baghdad Treaty did not merely settle border disputes, it is a landmark which ended longstanding issues between two neighbours whose cooperation was necessary for internal unity as well as for regional peace and security 13.

Hardly four years had passed since Iran and Iraq had reached a peace settlement in Algiers (1975) when

12. Ibid, p. 150.
significant changes occurred in the political structure of both countries, which had an adverse effect on their newly established friendly relations. In January 1979, the Shah’s regime was overthrown by Islamic Revolution; six months later, the presidency of Iraq passed from Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr to Saddam Hussain. The two regimes — the Ba’th of Iraq and the Islamic Republic of Iran — were by their very nature prepared to engage in ideological warfare even before the hostilities commenced. Both aspired to establish new social orders, one embodying the fundamental principles and values of Islam and the other espousing modern doctrines such as nationalism, socialism and democracy. On a more profound level, the causes of the war stemmed from the attitudes of the two states towards the use of the force. The Iranian leadership, at that time manifestly plural or decentralized, saw the world through the eyes of their success — full revolutionary experience. They rejected the need for standing and professional military forces armed with modern, or culturally contaminating, weapons in favour of reliance on the people — their faith, their dedication and their unity. For revolutionary Iran, it was axiomatic that power came from the people against which brute military forces was useless. It was therefore, on the people of Iraq and Iran that they 14. Khadduri, Majid, 1988, op.,cit., p. 64.
relied to remove Saddam Hussain and to spread the Islamic revolution further afield.\(^\text{15}\)

The leaders of the Islamic Republic in Iran, although often speaking in the name of Islam in general, have consciously sought to promote their own particular brand of Islam into a favoured position. Iran’s stress of Shi’ism provided ample ammunition for the press and other media to engage in ideological warfare by inciting Shi’i followers in Iraq to denounce the Ba’th regime as biased against Shi’i of non-Arab descent. The extremist have gone so far as to deny the legitimacy of the Ba’th government on religious and historical grounds. The goal of Iran’s ideological warfare was and still is to enable the Shi’i community in Iraq to play a meaningful role in the country’s political system and, ultimately, to assume its leadership. To achieve this aim, the revival of Shi’i teachings and the preparation of a new generation that would undertake leadership were deemed necessary. Before the Iranian Revolution, the stress was on non political organizations, but after the Islamic republic was established, more active organization began to work, sometimes resorting violence\(^\text{16}\).

Hizb al-Da’wa al-Islamiya (the Islamic call

party) came into existence in 1965. At the outset, its goals were not political, as its activities were confined to the revival of Shi‘i teachings and restricted to areas where Shi‘i followers outnumbered Sunnis, such as Najaf, Karbala, Samarra, and Kazimayn. But its ultimate goal was unmistakably political, since the stress on Shi‘i teachings tended to raise tensions, specially among the rank and file.  

Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr was the main spiritual leader of the Da‘wa Party in 1970s. He published several books and articles on Islam covering a wide range of subjects. Outwardly, the object of his works was to reform society, irrespective of confessional differences, but the ultimate goal was obviously political and critical of the regime, by making clear that the alternative programs of reform offered by modern secular doctrines Pan-Arabism, Socialism and others — which the Ba‘th have advocated, would eventually lead to the revival of confessional tensions and other forms of discrimination and injustice. At the same time, the Shi‘i cleric Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, had long been seen by the regime as a focus for ideas of an alternative political order. These implicitly challenged the principles exploited by the regime to justify its hold on power, and explicitly challenged that hold when civil disorder erupted.

17. Ibid.
in the Shi'i towns of the south during the 1970s. Al-Sadr had consequently been arrested numerous times by the regime. It encouraged the belief that the disturbances in Shi'i cities were the work of the new Iranian regime, acting through their local agents.\(^{18}\)

At the same time, Tehran escalated its anti-Ba'ath campaign by resuming its support for the Iraqi Kurds (which had ended in 1975), providing aid to underground Shi'i movement (in particular the Da'wa Party) in Iraq, and initiating attacks against prominent Iraqi officials, the most significant being the failed attempt on the life of Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi deputy premier, on April 1, 1980.

To check these pressures, Baghdad resorted to suppressing Shi'i underground organizations, expelling Iranian citizens (as well as Iraqi citizens of Persian origin) in mass, attempting to organize a united Arab Front, and supporting Iranian separatist elements such as the Iranian Kurds and the Arabs in Khuzistan. These countermeasures failed to impress the revolutionary regime, and, responding Hussain's pledge to take revenge for the attempt on the life of Aziz, Ayatollah Khomeini called on the Iraqi Shia on June 9, 1980 to overthrow Saddam's government. Iran's foreign minister, Sadegh Ghotbzadeh,

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18. Ibid.
revealed on the same day that his government had made the decision to topple the Ba’th regime. The same theme was reiterated two days later by the Iranian President, Abol Hassan Bani-Sadr, who also warned that Iran would go to war in the event of further deterioration in the situation on the border. In April 1980, the Iranian-Iraqi confrontation entered a new phase with clashes among the common frontier, in August these escalated into heavy fighting involving tank and artillery duels and air strikes 19.

The war has in fact evolved in a way quite other than the hoped for and desired by Saddam Hussain. Nevertheless it is remarkable that the political system upholding his leadership has been able to cope so readily, both conceptually and organizationally, with the effects of a prolonged and defensive war. However, this can largely be explained by the dual nature of that political system. On the one hand, there is a small core of ‘insiders’, relatively homogeneous even if that homogeneity has been somewhat ruthlessly created -- and clustered around the figure of Saddam Hussain. These men, and the particular constituencies they in turn cultivate, are the repositories of a traditional and exclusively dispensation of power, from

which they derive considerable benefit. On the other hand, there is the mass of ‘outsider’, who are expected to play a strictly subordinate role to the self-designated rulers. However, they are addressed by them and regimented by them in the name of a national ideal and a national struggle. The purpose of this is to create out of the mass of Iraqi’s a malleable resource for the rulers in their competition with each other or with other rulers. Though the techniques of physical elimination and role-playing on a public stage, Saddam Hussain has sought to turn the political loyalties of this very heterogeneous mass towards himself, or atleast away from any more authentic local leadership.

This was achieved against the background of the 9th, Ba’th Party Regional Congress which witnessed Saddam Hussain’s formal appropriation of the Ba’th and its ideology to serve his own ends. The process whereby his influence had become paramount within the party had, of course, been in train since 1969. There were, however, a number of longstanding members of the party who either objected to Saddam Hussain growing autocracy or who held fast to dogmatic interpretation of the proper mission of the Ba’th and its members. In neither case Saddam Hussain could tolerate these obstacles to his own absolute exercise of power. He had succeeded in disposing a number of personal

opponents in the 1970s, at the 1982 Congress he succeeded in establishing that henceforward 'on every matter big or small [he would be] cited as the authority'. As Ofra Bengis points out:

[The more precarious Hussain’s standing in the party became the more he was inclined to enforce his line of thinking and to assert this authority. This --- was reflected in the ‘formula which the report devised as his epithet, Viz. the ‘imperative leaders’ --- or the leader who represents historical and national ‘necessity’. Forming a dialectical relation between Hussain and the party, the report warned members that ‘disregarding this necessity or deviating from its strategic line’ amounted to causing intentional and direct harm to the aspirations of the party and the people and their basic interests] 21.

In this respect, the myth of Iraqi nationhood and values, as well as identification of the person of Saddam Hussain himself with that ‘nation, has undergone an intensification rather than a radical change under the pressure of War. At the same time, it had been noticeable that the Ba’th, especially while it came increasingly under the influence and direction of Saddam Hussain, had been encouraging Iraqis to think of themselves as the inheritors

21. Ibid., p. 90.
of a distinctive national and cultural tradition, antedating the Arab-Islamic conquests. Many of the Pan-Arabists in the Ba’th looked askance at this apparent erosion of the idea of Arab nationalism. However, for those who sought to wield power within the given territorial limits of the Iraqi State, it would be of considerable utility if the ethnically diverse inhabitants of that state could be persuaded by that they shared a common identity. Even more useful would be the belief that this common identity imposed upon them an obligation to obey the individual who claimed to embody all the qualities of the national community.\textsuperscript{22}

By transforming the institutions of the State, and incidentally the Ba’th as well, into the servants of an absolute ruler, it is hoped that the dangers and contradictions of institutional autonomy in such a setting will be avoided. Having established his primacy in this sphere, the autocrat can then, on his own terms, project his own person as the embodiment of the collective ideals that define the state. These two features, of private control and public myth have been evident in Saddam Hussain’s seemingly inexorable rise to a position of primacy in Iraq.\textsuperscript{23}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textbf{22.} Ibid., p. 94.
\item \textbf{23.} Ibid., p. 242.
\end{itemize}
Although it was claimed as an historic victory, Saddam’s war against Iran proved a futile and wasteful endeavour. After eight years of armed conflict, the economy was in a shambles as the cost of the war mounted, estimated at around $300 billion. The people were disillusioned and disoriented and casualties have been estimated between 250,000 and 500,000. The reconstruction bill is put at $230 billion. Moreover, Iraq’s annual oil revenue had declined to $13 billion, hardly sufficient to meet the nation’s budgetary requirements. Iraq had also accumulated an $80 billion-worth of foreign debts. In short, the hollowness of proud claim made at the beginning of the conflict that development and war would proceed hand in hand, began to haunt Saddam as he embarked on the construction of victory monuments in Baghdad and elsewhere in the country.

Another dimension of the ruinous was featured prominently in Saddam’s perception of his triumphant struggle against Iran. He expected the Arab World to hail him not simply as its hero but also its saviour since the war ended in the containment of Iran and the threat of its Islamic revolution. The War, so far as he was concerned, was fought on their behalf and in their defence. the moral

and material support and assistance he received from Europe and the United States during the war also convinced him that the West too owed him a debt. Arab financial aid, Soviet arms and Western technology liberally supplied to Saddam during the war allowed him to build a formidable war machine with chemical, biological and potentially nuclear weapons. However, scorned by the Arabs, rebutted by the West, and feeling economically vulnerable to the pressures of the politics of the oil industry, its production quotas and pricing mechanism, Saddam embarked on a belligerent course to make the weight of Iraq in regional and international politics felt. Having cajoled the Arab oil producers, antagonized the West over the execution of the hopeless journalist, Farzad Bazoft, the super-gun episode and the nuclear triggers affair, and with his threat to scorch half of Israil with binary chemical weapons, all in the course of few months, he ordered the Iraqi army into Kuwait on 2 August 1990.  

Ever since 'Abd al-Karim Qasim put forth Iraq’s claim to the sovereignty of Kuwait after the declaration of Kuwait’s independence in June 1961, relations between Iraq and Kuwait have often been strained over a variety of issue. In 1963, after Qasim’s fall from power, friendly relations between Iraq and Kuwait were restored

25. Ibid.
following a formal visit to Iraq by Shaykh Sabah Salim al-Sabah, then crown prince and Premier of Kuwait. The Crown Prince and the Prime Minister of Iraq, Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr, met to affirm the existing borders between the two countries that were established in 1932.26

Upon the coming of the Ba’th Party to power in 1968, which had repudiated Qasim’s territorial claims and recognized Kuwait’s independence in 1963, there were high hopes in both countries that the border dispute might at last settled. Because of Iraq’s conflict with Iran over the shatt al-Arab and Kuwait readiness to support Iraq, the circumstances were considered favourable to resume negotiations over the frontiers for a final settlement27.

However, a year later a new factor entered into the situation which rendered the dispute more difficult to resolve. In 1969, it will be recalled, Iraq-Iranian relations had so deteriorated that war between the two countries was imminent. In April 1969, Iraq requested Kuwait to permit Iraqi troops to be stationed on Kuwaiti territory as part of a military force on both sides of the border to protect Umm Qasr from an impending Iranian attack. Though Kuwait was hesitant to allow the entry of Iraqi

27. Ibid., p. 155.
troops across the border, Iraq pressed her demand and both Hardan al-Takriti and Saleh Mahdi Ammash, the Iraqi Ministers of Defence and Interior, proceed to Kuwayt to request permission for the Iraqi force to be stationed on her territory\(^{28}\).

Iraq rejected the validity of the agreements (in a note dated 17 May, 1973) on the ground that they have never been ratified in accordance with Iraqi constitutional procedure. Moreover, the Iraqi note stated, Kuwayt should bear in mind the radical changes of circumstances — Iraq’s rise to full international status and the elimination of foreign influence — and the Arab national goals to which the Ba’th and the Iraqi people have committed themselves\(^{29}\).

Already before the Algiers Agreement and as early as 1973, the Ba’thist regime in Iraq had pressed Kuwayt to lease to it the uninhabited islands of warba and Bubiyan. The acceptance of the Thalweg in 1975, and the building of a naval port in the mean time at Umm al-Qasr at the entrance of the Western estuary opposite Warba, increased Iraqis intrest in this Island and in its neighbor Bubiyan. Iraqi planning envisaged the widening and extension of this western estuary to link up north wards

\(^{28}\) Ibid.
\(^{29}\) Ibid., p. 157.
with Basra and thus provide Iraq with an alternative access to the Gulf other than Shatt-al Arab\textsuperscript{30}.

The other grievances that grew during the Iran Iraq War.

Although the grievances just mentioned remained in practical obevance because of Iraq's preoccupation with Iran, they were, nevertheless, simultaneously being exacerbated below the surface. The issue of access to the Gulf became more acute because of the then still uncertain outcome of hostilities and the blocking of Shatt-al-Arab with the debris of war and accumulated silt. By the same token, Iraqi interest grew in a post-war alternative to Shatt-al-Arab and therefore in warba and Bubiyan. At the same time, all Kuwaiti activity along the border (for example, building of new frontier posts and oil installation) during Iraq's war with Iran was perceived by Iraq as a unilateral attempt by Kuwait to strengthen its case on the issue of the delineation of the frontier. In addition, a new burgeoning grievances began to emerge based on the Iraqi perception or claim that during the hostilities with Iran, Kuwait was drawing more than its share from the common north-south Rumaila oil field, the Southern tip of

which straddled the border inland from the Gulf.\footnote{31}

The grievances that were articulated in the period between the ceasefire with Iran in August 1988 and the Jeddah Conference just prior to the invasion on 2 August.

1. **Overproduction of OPEC Quotas:** In the closed session of the head of state already referred to on the last day of the Baghdad Summit on 30 May 1990, Saddam claimed that some Gulf countries had begun early in 1990 to produce beyond their OPEC quotas to such an extent that the price in certain instances had plummeted to $7 per barrel. He claimed that every one dollar drop in the price per barrel meant a loss of one billion dollars per annum for Iraq. He explicitly stated that in Iraq’s present economic state this overproduction was an "act of War". War he said, could be waged by military means by "sending armies across frontiers, by acts of sabotage, by killing people and by supporting coup detat but war can also be waged by economic means.... and what is happening is war against Iraq". He said he hoped the situation could be rectified, and hinted that the price of oil could be raised to $25 per barrel. This was the only grievance that Saddam aired at this session before his peers.

\footnote{31. Ibid.}
including the Emir of Kuwait. He did not mention any Arab country by name. But he made it clear that he had reached the end of his tether. "I must frankly tell you that we have reached a stage where we can no longer take any more pressure".

2. **The Iraqi Debt to Kuwait:** Aziz did not give a figure for this debt, but stated that this "assistance" from Kuwait to Iraq during its War with Iran should not be considered a "debt" and should be cancelled.

3. **The Oil Allegedly Taken from the Rumaila Field:** Aziz claimed that during 1980-1990 Kuwait pumped oil belonging to Iraq from this field, the worth of which was $2.4 billion and which Kuwait owed Iraq.

4. **Kuwait's "War" on Iraq:** Aziz claimed that Kuwait's pumping of "Iraqi" oil from Rumaila was "tantamount to an act of War". While its attempt "to effect the economic collapse" of Iraq (through overproduction) was "not less than an act of War". This was a variation on the theme propounded by Saddam on 30 May 1990.

5. **Kuwait Alleged Complicity with Foreign Powers:** Aziz claimed that the overproduction of Kuwait and UAE was synchronized with efforts of foreign powers to denigrate Iraq because of its increasing championship of the Palestinian cause and its role as a deterrent to Israel.
6. **An Arab Marshall Plan for Iraq:** Iraq claimed it was entitled to expect the Gulf countries to launch a Marshall Plan to support its recovery from the war, just as the United States had done in Europe after World War II.  

There was deep shock in the Arab world when a number of Arab armies joined the U.S.-led coalition against their "Iraqi Brothers" in the Gulf War. The bitter realisation that Arabs could not solve their own problems without outside help kindled the discussion over a better Arab future.

A year later disillusionment has set in. Inter-Arab rivalry seems as strong as ever.

It seems that the Arabs have learned nothing from the Gulf War, said one expert.

Iraq and those countries that sympathised with President Saddam Hussein during the Kuwait conflict remain isolated. Yemen, Sudan, Tunisia, Algeria and the Palestinians are still being given the cold shoulder by the ambittered Gulf States.

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32. Ibid., p. 11.
"Egypt and Syria are trying to perform a bridging function but have not been successful so far", said Walid el Kassiha, political science professor at the American University here.

Even the new Arab petrodollars for security system agreed by Egypt and Syria with the six Gulf States last March has flopped.

Damascus and Cairo decided to withdraw from the Gulf their 50,000 soldiers who were intended to form the core of a peace keeping.

Kuwait drew up a new security pact with United States.

"The Gulf States have increasingly withdrawn from the Arab World". There are some signs that they now wish to resuscitate the "Damascus Decleration".

The Six heads of the rich oil producing states agreed last year to create an Arab Development Fund amounting to $10 billion.

Yet a new regional security system is not now in sight. There is disagreement among the "Damascus States" over which non-Arab regional powers such as Iran, should be
brought into the process.

There are many in the Gulf who feel the feared Islamic state could be appeased by financial support. But Egypt, fearing the loss of its required leadership role, has rejected this.\footnote{33. The Economic Times, New Delhi, 15 Jan. 1992.}

Given the record of the violent and unexpected ends of most Iraqi regimes since the overthrow of the monarchy, it would be unwise to make any predictions about the length of time Saddam Hussein yet to rule. Such was the resilience of Hussein's inner circle of Kinsmen and associates that even in the aftermath of the defeat in Kuwait, he was able to keep hold of the main sinews of power in Iraq: the intelligence services, the internal security forces and key divisions of the armed forces. Consequently, by early April 1992, the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) could boast of having crushed 'the acts of sedition, sabotage and rioting in all towns of Iraq of having defeated the plotting of the 'US-Atlantic Zionist aggression' or '30-state agression' that had 'sought to turn this unified, secure and lofty country into another Lebanon, to be enmeshed and crushed by Sectarian religious and racial conflicts.'\footnote{34. Tripp Charles; The Gulf States and Iraq, Survival, Vol. No.3, Autumn 1992, pp. 55-61.}
It is quite conceivable that many Iraqis, despite their misgivings about the competence, let alone the legitimacy of Saddam Hussain's regime, are ready to believe their government's thesis that Iraq had been singled out for severe treatment. It was certainly a theme that the Iraqi authorities and media have returned to again and again in the year following the defeat in Kuwait, harking back not only to the 'Mother of all Battles' but also pointing to the continued disabilities under which Iraq suffered: the UN-imposed economic blockade; the UN-supervised destruction of Iraq's nuclear, chemicals and biological weapons facilities, as well as its missiles; and the effective autonomy of much of Kurdistan under allied supervision. Regardless of Whether Iraq's cared much about the last two aspects of Iraq's predicament, all were affected by its economic plight and were as likely to blame the international community as the force that had provoked these measures in the first place.

However, even in the cases in which the Iraqis identified the regime as the main culprit, there did not seem to be a great deal they could do about it. Saddam Hussain had reestablished the security and intelligence network that has always constituted the final underpinning of his regime, ensuring that his kinsmen play a prominent

35. Ibid.
and vital part therein. By the end of 1991, one half brother, wathban Ibrahim al-Hassan, had been appointed minister of the exterior, whilst another, Sabawj Ibrahim, was given over all responsibility for the domestic intelligence services. Reportedly one of the Saddam Hussain's sons, Qusay, was placed in charge of a newly created-tribally based special force, trained to counter the growing number of attacks on police and army posts in the towns of the southern provinces.\(^{36}\)

It appears therefore, that Saddam Hussain's strategies of consolidating the centre, reestablishing the networks of patronage and kinship control and challenging the international community but not risking open defiance, have largely succeeded. It is in the nature of such strategies, of course, that they do not guarantee long term-survival, but Hussain has always acted upon the principle that if he can make the necessary dispositions to survive in the short term, the long term will look after itself. The issue that must concern Iraq's neighbours, however is whether this preoccupation with the political survival of his regime will lead him, as in the past, to turn his attention to those in the region who appear to threaten that survival and, furthermore, if that should happen, whether he will have the where withal to do anything about it.\(^{37}\)

\(^{36}\) Ibid.

\(^{37}\) Ibid.
The fears for the immediate future must revolve around the intentions of Saddam Hussain and the regime he has constructed in Iraq. However, in the medium to long term, Iraq’s neighbours have reason to be fearful of the developments that might occur in Iraqi politics after the demise of Hussain himself. When contemplating the shape of Iraqi politics after the fall of the present regime, two possibilities seem to emerge in the debate.

The first might be called the sceptical or pessimistic views. It suggests that, whatever the circumstances of Saddam Hussain’s fall, there will eventually emerge a regime not dissimilar to that of Hussain. That is, it will be a neo-patrimonial system, relying on kinship ties and patronage networks, led either by a military strongman or by a group of powerful figures who can command loyalty within the armed forces and within those sections of Iraqi society that have hitherto supported the Saddam Husain regime. It may not be as brutal as the regime of Saddam Hussain, it may even initially adopt a facade of openness but the principle of authoritarian, personalised and unrepresentative government will lie at its heart. This view is founded on the belief that the regime of Saddam Hussain and his Kinsmen is no more than the product of the forces that characterize Iraqi society, and Hussain himself has ensured that the same forces will
continue to be the sole foundation for the successful exercise of power in Iraq. Whatever principles may be adhered to in public, to neglect the powerful clannishners and the patron-client networks of Iraqi society is to commit political suicide.

This leads to the second, more hopeful and optimistic vision of Iraq's political future. Basing itself largely on the public declarations of the many Iraqi opposition parties, this view assert that all opposition members, of whatever ideological have now committed themselves to the establishment of a liberal democratic government in Iraq. The argument is founded on two central beliefs. First, that the Iraqis, as a whole, are sick of dictatorship and long for a more open and representative government; second, that the opposition parties themselves have realized that a representative system is not only the most desirable, but also the most practical means of governing Iraq. Encouraged by recent experiences in Kurdistan, the suggestion is that there exists a capacity among Iraqi to set aside ethnic, sectarian and tribal division of society and to escape from the effects of divisive strategies pursued by all previous Iraqi regime.

There are many ways of trying to assess the global impact of Iraq's defeat at the hands of the U.S. in

38. Ibid.
the recent Gulf conflict. One can attempt the most comprehensive of surveys focussing in turn, on the implication of the war for each of the major actors, whether regional or extra-regional, whether state or non state and then seeking to leave together these intersecting relationship into an overall tapestry of the world political scene.

In respect of the U.S. objective, the outcome of the war carries much more mixed consequences challenges to pro-U.S. intermediaries come from Arab nationalism in both its secular and non-secular forms and from the rise of any potential regional rival to Israil. It is necessary to clarify the issue and to dispose of some of the arguments against attaching due weight to Arab nationalism. It is indubitably the case that Arab nationalism is itself vitiated by the specific nationalisms of different nations. Thus, despite widespread popular sympathy for Mr. Saddam Hussain in his confrontation with the U.S. even those Arab countries most opposed to the behaviour of the U.S. led coalition did little beyond verbal protest. Time and again efforts at forging a large Arab nation have fallen through it also can not be denied that Anwar Sadat's peace initiative with Israel, although it represented an enormous setback to Palestinian aspirations, was widely welcomed by the Egyptian public for the territories it restored to the nation. There has not been one Arab Government including
Mr. Saddam Hussein's which has not been cynical in its manipulation of the Palestine issue 39.

Nevertheless, Arab nationalism exists and Palestine continues to represent its cutting edge. The importance of Arab nationalism and its discomfort for the U.S. and Israel lies not so much in its potential for generating wider Arab unity as in its capacity to disturb the existing patterns of Western, especially U.S. Control in the region, it is changing manifestation and its periodic exuberances threaten to alter the existing, established on therefore, stable arrangements or regional patterns through which the West/U.S. must operate in order to secure its control on influence 40.

It is not an argument to say that ultimately these periodic expressions -- Iraqi posture as champion of Arab nationalism or Iran as the vanguard of an Islamic nationalism are ultimately amenable to cooperation with the U.S. or incorporation in an eventual Western dominated arrangement. The point is precisely the instability created in the period (often prolonged) from initial challenge to the U.S. and ultimate institutionalisation of accommodation to it. This institutionalization is adversely effected by

40. Ibid.
periodic outbursts of anti-Israeli and 'temporary' anti-Western fervour of the kind associated for example, with the rise of Islamic fundamentalism.

American success in the war has achieved little. The internal arrangements of its client Arab nations have been badly shaken and they will not re-establish themselves easily. The Palestine question continues to fester and an increasingly enubittered Palestinian diaspora and West Bank populace will continue to make its presence felt in uncomfortable way for the West, Israel and the U.S.41.