

The Tilt that Backfired

Historical Perspectives on the Persian Gulf Crisis

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Preface: The Nature of Case Studies

The case study is a completely different form of writing than the research paper. In a case study, there is no thesis, no formal introduction and no conclusion. The document is intended to read like a story, a narrative. Rather than declaring concepts to the reader, sentence by sentence, the piece attempts to get the reader to infer these pedagogical objectives on his or her own. The voices in the case are those of the people who were actually involved in the events.

I have included my pedagogical objectives for this case at the end of this document. After you are finished reading, take a moment to look those over. Let me know if I did a good job of “teaching” the concepts in the case. Perhaps you may wish to look at these before reading the case. Doing this, however, will give you less to think about as you read. Part of the purpose of a case study is to extract the author’s objectives from the text alone. My purpose here, however, is to inform, not to baffle. Therefore, if you are new to the study of politics and security issues, a look at the objectives before hand may be useful.

Part ONE: Endgame

This will not stand.

-George Bush on the White House lawn, 5 August 1990

I will send foreigners to Babylon to winnow her and devastate her land; they will oppose her on every side in the day of her disaster. Let not the archer string his bow, nor let him put on his armor. Do not spare her young men. Completely destroy her Army. They will fall down slain in Babylon, fatally wounded in her streets.

-Jeremiah 51:2-4

In the early morning hours of 2 August 1990, a circle began to close in the Middle East. Iraq crossed the line that British colonialists had drawn in the sand nearly seventy years earlier.¹ One hundred twenty thousand of Saddam Hussein's battle-hardened soldiers, supported by a full complement of helicopter gunships, Soviet made T-72 tanks and as many as nine hundred armored fighting vehicles, moved in waves across the border into Kuwait.² This invasion, and the following annexation of Kuwait by Iraq, took most of the world by surprise. Saddam Hussein's actions were clearly incongruous with the norms expected from leaders in the contemporary international system. The situation immediately became an international crisis.

In the months that followed, a dizzying diplomatic effort ensued. The United States, with President George Bush and Secretary of State James Baker as the ringleaders, hammered, chiseled and molded together a united coalition against Iraq that would eventually include thirty seven members.³ Diplomacy, however, soon gave way to forceful persuasion. Rhetoric flew between the Western allies as they tried to forge a consensus.⁴ While there was disagreement among some Western states with regard to the management of the crisis, the message to Saddam Hussein was unambiguous: Leave Kuwait immediately. The stakes in the game, however, kept

¹ Sciolino, Elaine, *The Outlaw State*, New York, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1991, p. 205.

² Ibid. p. 205.

³ Ibid. p. 25.

⁴ Gibbons, Earl F., *Forging a Consensus: The Western Alliance and the Invasion of Kuwait*, Case 354, Dist. by Georgetown University, School of Foreign Service, Washington D.C., © 1992 by The Pew Charitable Trusts, p. 6-7.

rising: Iraq would not change its position on the annexation of Kuwait, and the U.S. kept building up its forces in the region (Desert Shield). Alexander George likened the situation to a game of chicken:

The United States deliberately set itself on a collision course with Hussein and tried to convince him that it had thrown away its steering wheel; therefore, a "crash" (that is, war) could be avoided only if he got off the road.⁵

Yet, before the open conflict between the Western Alliance and Iraq (Operation Desert Storm) finally began, virtually the entire gamut of coercive diplomacy had been, at least, attempted.⁶

On Wednesday 16 January 1991 at 1900 Washington time, Saddam Hussein's time had finally expired.⁷ An international coalition force, led by the United States, descended upon Iraq and occupied Kuwait to begin the most extensive military campaign witnessed since World War II.⁸ Almost immediately, White House Press Secretary Marlin Fitzwater announced, "The liberation of Kuwait has begun."⁹ As he spoke, US F-117s and other coalition combat aircraft streaked over targets theater wide. The sky above Baghdad was awash with tracer fire from Iraq's Soviet made air defense systems. CNN correspondent John Holliman narrated the barrage as the world watched: "The sky is just brightly lighted with all these tracer rounds. Some are red. Some are white. We can see explosions from these weapons. . . .Whoa! That was a large air burst that we saw. It was filling the sky."¹⁰ US Air Force commanders checked their watches when the raid was in the ninth minute: at the exact moment that the telephone exchange was do to be hit, CNN went off the air.¹¹ By the time the eerie, green night vision images from Baghdad were restored to the global satellite networks, there could

⁵ George, Alexander L., *Forceful Persuasion*, Washington D.C., United States Institute of Peace, 1993, p. 61.

⁶ Some, such as Noam Chomsky, do not believe sanctions were given a chance to work. See Bresheeth, Haim and Yuval-Davis, Nira (eds.), *The Gulf War and the New World Order*, London, Zed Books Ltd., 1991, p. 15.

⁷ Freedman, Lawrence & Karsh, Efraim, *The Gulf Conflict 1990-1991*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1993, p. 299.

⁸ Lambeth, Benjamin S., *Learning from the Persian Gulf War*, Santa Monica, RAND, 1991, p. 1.

⁹ Sciolino, 1991, op.cit., p. 27.

¹⁰ Ibid. p.27.

¹¹ Freedman and Karsh, 1993, op.cit., p. 300.

have been little doubt that Iraq was to receive a swift and brutal lashing for the collective mistakes of Saddam Hussein.

What follows is an attempt to provide an historical context to the crisis situation that evolved out of Saddam Hussein's military expansion into Kuwait. Three areas will be addressed: 1) The U.S. role in Iraq in the years prior to the Persian Gulf Crisis of 1990-91; 2) The arming of Iraq; and 3) Iraq's perspective.

Part TWO: The United States and *Active Neutrality*

Unbeknownst to most Americans, their government was hard at work supplying Iraq with billions of dollars in U.S. government financing and hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of advanced machinery and electronic equipment in the years leading up to the 1991 Gulf War.¹²

-William D. Hartung, *And Weapons for All*

I attended meetings where Bush made clear he wanted to help Iraq. His door was always open to the Iraqis. If they wanted a meeting with Bush, they would get it.¹³

-Howard Teicher, Assistant to Deputy National Security Advisor Robert C. McFarlane

By early 1982, the United States had begun a close relationship with Iraq. The link was born out of U.S. national security interests surrounding the raging war between Iran and Iraq. The Reagan administration decided that in order to protect the free flow of oil from the Persian Gulf, neither Iran nor Iraq could be allowed to gain the upper hand in the conflict. CIA Director William Casey was convinced that only Saddam Hussein could effectively prevent Tehran from dominating Persian Gulf oil resources.¹⁴ "I wouldn't have helped either Iraq or Iran," recalled Alexander Haig, "but Casey had a position that I called *active neutrality*."¹⁵ Since Iraq was losing the war, support needed to be applied to, in effect, create a strategic parity between the belligerents. Casey, however, was not the only one who held this viewpoint. Vice President George Bush summarized the situation during a phone conversation with William Draper, a former Yale classmate and Chairman of the U.S. based Export Import Bank: "We believe that victory by either side would have a serious destabilizing effect on the region."¹⁶ Bush had embraced the idea of covertly aiding Iraq.

¹² Hartung, William D., *And Weapons for All*, New York, Harper Collins Publishers, 1994, p. 222.

¹³ Friedman, Alan, *Spider's Web: The Secret History of How the White House Illegally Armed Iraq*, New York, Bantam Books, 1993, p. 25

¹⁴ Ibid. p. 25.

¹⁵ Ibid. p. 25.

¹⁶ Ibid. p. 30.

What *active neutrality* meant operationally, was, however, a delicate matter. Since the beginning of the war, the U.S. and other Western states had agreed to ban the shipment of war matériel to either Iran or Iraq. Additionally, the Arms Control Act of 1976 required Congress to be informed of American exports with military potential.¹⁷ These legal barriers necessitated the creation of a covert relationship with Iraq. According to James Eagleton, the most senior diplomat in Iraq, "You have to do what you have to do."¹⁸ On 26 February 1982, the Reagan Administration told Congress that it had dropped Iraq from the list of nations that supported terrorism.¹⁹ The State Department had made it clear that taking Iraq off the list of terrorist nations did not mean the U.S. was lifting its ban on arms shipments to Iraq.²⁰ Indeed, there would be no official weapons transfers.

The U.S., however, went further. On 17 December 1983, President Reagan's special Middle East envoy, Donald Rumsfeld, flew into Baghdad bearing a hand written note to Saddam. In it Reagan offered to renew diplomatic relations and to expand military and business ties with Baghdad. Teicher, who traveled to Baghdad with Rumsfeld, said that it was this letter that paved the way for the U.S. tilt to Iraq: "Here was the U.S. government coming hat-in-hand to Saddam Hussein and saying, 'We respect you, we respect you. How can we help you? Let us help you.'"²¹ After listening politely, Saddam told Rumsfeld that America should try to stop the flow of arms to Iran. The White House had a different idea: The U.S. began offering government-backed loan guarantees to Iraq.²² Hussein had secured the political and financial backing of the United States to pursue his arms acquisition efforts.

Alexander Haig, however, was not the only voice against the U.S. tilt toward Iraq. Howard Teicher was responsible for monitoring arms deals in the Middle East during the Reagan administration years. He had a special interest in Saddam Hussein

¹⁷ Hartung, 1994, op.cit., p. 58.

¹⁸ Friedman, 1993, op.cit., p. 38.

¹⁹ Ibid. p. 19.

²⁰ Ibid. p. 19.

²¹ Ibid. p. 28.

²² Ibid. p. 29.

from the start of his career. Back in 1979, while he was working as an analyst in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, he had written a fifty-page paper predicting that Saddam would invade Iran, seek to annex oil-rich provinces from Tehran, and eventually even try to renew Iraq's historical claims to Kuwait.

Harold Brown, secretary of defense under Jimmy Carter, brushed aside Teicher's warnings, commenting in the margin of the report, "I disagree. Iraq has changed. It has moderated its behavior." Teicher did not change his views when he joined the Reagan administration; in fact, he grew more convinced as his predictions started to materialize. He then found out that U.S. arms shipments had found their way through third countries to Iraq. When he inquired about how the White House could be assisting in the clandestine transfer of U.S. matériel to Iraq, he was told not to bother himself about it.²³

²³ Entire Teicher account, *Ibid.* p. 30.

Part THREE: Spinning the Web

Our interest is in maintaining a strategic balance between the belligerents in the interest of regional stability.²⁴

-George Shultz, Secretary of State

The real plans were for a secret war, with the U.S. on the side of Iraq, against Iran, on a daily basis.²⁵

-Lieutenant Colonel (ret.) Roger Charles, Staff Officer in the Office of the Secretary of Defense

...we have a renegade operation on our hands for whom the rule of law means nothing....over which the elected representatives apparently have no control, have no ability to direct policy, have no ability to say what they can and cannot do."²⁶

-Howard Berman, House Foreign Affairs Committee member

I go home at night, I take a drink, and I think of all the death those materials can make....²⁷

-Ben Hilbers, Dutch detective

No state actor is singularly responsible for the creation of Saddam Hussein's military machine. Iraq's weapon procurement network formed a vast global web; an interwoven mosaic of contacts and financial tributaries which allowed---and continue to allow---Hussein to acquire a startling portfolio of military equipment. Virtually every major industrial state contributed, not only to Iraq's ready arsenal, but also to its ability to produce weapons independently. All of Western Europe was represented, as well as the Soviet Union, China and even Brazil. The U.S., while by no means acting alone, may be thought of as the ringleader; the facilitator of Iraq's military power spiral. The U.S. role is unique in that it coordinated multilateral efforts to arm Iraq. What follows is only a partial sampling of the *types* of actions which contributed to the creation of the world's

²⁴ Ibid. p. 28.

²⁵ Ibid. p. 40.

²⁶ Hartung, 1994, op.cit., p. 193.

²⁷ Krosney, Herbert, *Deadly Business*, New York, Four Walls Eight Windows, 1993, p. 59.

fourth largest military power. It is not, by any means, a complete catalog of events. Hundreds of similar operations, some barely legal and others overtly illegal, actually took place.

A *cut-out* is an intelligence community term that simply refers to an innocuous corporate entity whose actual function the government prefers to keep secret. Most of the time, the company operates a legitimate business. On occasion, however, the firm would be available to perform other activities. Mainly, it would serve as a contractor for covert operations for the United States Central Intelligence Agency. Of course, there are no official links to the U.S. government.

Remember, there were no *official* U.S. arms transfers to Iraq. Indeed, many authors acknowledge that very little U.S. *made* military equipment was actually fielded by the Iraqis during the Persian Gulf War of 1991. Most of it was of Soviet, Western European (notably French) and Chinese origin.²⁸ Although the U.S. didn't manufacture much of the equipment in Saddam's arsenal, in many cases it did act as a courier and financier on behalf of Iraq.

Johnson Consultants, is a small firm in northern Virginia. From the outside, the offices are no different than a thousand others in the five mile wall of glass facing Washington across the Potomac. In 1986, Robert Johnson, the president of Johnson Consultants, was not behind his desk.²⁹ Actually, he was spending an inordinate amount of time facilitating covert arms shipments to Iraq. In November, he was to transport Soviet-made ground-to-ground 122-mm. missiles to Baghdad, which was an odd thing for an American operative to be doing. Johnson's experience is worth describing at length:

The reason [for transporting Soviet missiles] was that the Iraqis had Soviet-made equipment, and it was cheaper to get them what they needed from the Eastern bloc than to provide entirely new systems from America. They were having financial problems anyway, *and we were trying to supplant their dependence on the Soviets.* So we ended up

²⁸ Henderson, Simon, *Instant Empire*, San Francisco, Mercury House, Inc., 1991, p. 169.

²⁹ Robert Johnson and Johnson Consultants are pseudonyms.

getting them some of the equipment through gray channels that they used to get directly from Moscow. [emphasis added]

On his trip he headed to Bern, Switzerland, where he met a CIA contractor who operated his own specially fitted Boeing 707 cargo jet, in which the two men flew on to Bucharest. There, a Romanian arms broker who had worked for years with American Intelligence had the missiles ready for loading. They had been purchased on Eastern Europe's thriving black market for Soviet-made arms. After loading, the operatives took off for Iraq. Johnson did not like the flight or having to deal with the Iraqis:

We landed in Baghdad at night, and the air force guys came up to the plane. We gave them bottles of Scotch whisky, copies of *Penthouse* magazine, and cartons of cigarettes so they would unload the stuff quickly. We carried \$18,000 in cash, the amount needed to pay for refueling, in a bowling bag. Then we were put up at a government hotel. [*It was tricky because our own U.S. intelligence officers in the embassy didn't know the details of what we were doing.*] We were supposed to keep the entire operation to ourselves. [emphasis added]³⁰

Robert Johnson was a very busy man, indeed. In addition to his dealings in the Middle East, his travels took him to South America as well. In Chile, he struck up a relationship with arms producing magnate Carlos Cardoen. His company, Industrias Cardoen, was a capitalist's dream; cheap labor was used to produce an highly sought after product. The firm was able to price cluster bombs, sometimes referred to as area denial ordinance, at little as \$7,000 each, or \$19,000 less than competitors in Europe.³¹ What is interesting, though, is how Cardoen obtained the implements and the technical know-how to construct cluster bombs (a single bomb has the capacity to kill or maim anyone in an area the size of ten football fields).³²

The actual machinery came directly from the United States. As one would expect, there are severe restrictions on the sale of equipment that may be used directly for weapons production. Loopholes, however, were found. Eventually, two closed down munitions factories were reclassified by U.S. officials as "scrap metal."³³ They were then

³⁰ Entire Johnson account from Friedman, 1993, op.cit., p. 35-36.

³¹ Ibid. p. 46.

³² Ibid. p. 46.

³³ Ibid. p. 49.

sold, lock, stock and barrel to Cardoen. The scrap metal, mainly, the presses and drills essential for munitions production, were in perfect working order.

The transfer of cluster bomb intellectual property to Cardoen, on the other hand, constituted an imbroglio of much larger proportions. Few U.S. military technologies were as sensitive as cluster bombs. On the other side of the world, Iraq needed a boost on the battlefield. The Reagan administration's determination to help Hussein had become so great that Cardoen was now receiving the technology itself, unofficially, and in direct violation of the arms embargo enforced on Chile at the time.³⁴ Cardoen's good fortune continued when he met up with the enigmatic James Guerin, president of the U.S. based company International Signal and Control (ISC). Through this relationship, Cardoen received the design specifications for ISC's Rockeye (the state of the art cluster bomb in the U.S. arsenal) that markedly improved the performance of the cluster bombs he was selling to Iraq.³⁵

The cluster bomb technology had come from the U.S., according to Johnson: "It was easy to get technical specifications down to Santiago. They could be carried as blueprints or drawings in a suitcase." An American Air Force Colonel said the Chilean cluster bomb was, "almost a duplicate," of the U.S. version.³⁶ Cardoen would eventually sell Iraq \$400 million worth of cluster bombs and the technology to build its own cluster bomb factory without interference by any U.S. government agency.³⁷ (Saddam Hussein proceeded to build U.S. style cluster bombs domestically until January 1991. The Saad 38 factory south of Baghdad, which produced the weapons, was designated as one of the first targets to be hit by the U.S. led coalition in the opening minutes of Desert Storm.)³⁸

James Guerin enjoyed his work. He liked to think in global terms. His dealings with Industrias Cardoen, whatever they entailed, were not enough. South Africa's

³⁴ Ibid. p. 51.

³⁵ To this day, law enforcement officials have been unable to determine who actually transferred the technology and how. Ibid. p. 61-62.

³⁶ Ibid. p. 50.

³⁷ Hartung, 1994, op.cit., p. 235.

³⁸ Ibid. p. 235.

burgeoning defense giant Armscor was in the market for advanced electronic equipment intended for use in the development of an array of weaponry, including ballistic missiles. Again, U.S. export laws were in force. Yet, despite the official U.S. policy of wanting to isolate South Africa, both countries shared a fervent anti-Soviet sentiment. Guerin and ISC were ready and willing to supply Pretoria with whatever it needed. In return the U.S. would be allowed to place listening posts at the Simontown naval station, off the Cape of Good hope.³⁹

Admiral Bobby Ray Inman, a legend in the intelligence business, confirmed, "ISC had the South African connection." The National Security Agency established a cut-out company for Guerin to facilitate the technology shipments to South Africa. From 1977 to at least 1987 ISC used Gamma Systems, a small building at Kennedy Airport in New York, as a staging area to ship equipment from the U.S. to South Africa. The planes leaving the U.S. were packed with some of the most sophisticated testing equipment for missile systems. Not a single item had the proper export license.⁴⁰

James Ivy was one of ISC's operators in South Africa. In a sworn affidavit Ivy wrote:

I discussed some such exports on occasion with some CIA agents. During the six years of my meetings and discussions with the CIA, none of the agents suggested that any of our exports or shipments were illegal, and the CIA encouraged the continuation of our relationship with South Africa.⁴¹

As one U.S. customs agent put it, the CIA "let all that shit go and did nothing to stop it." More disturbing still, Armscor was selling much of the equipment that had been sent from ISC to Baghdad. "It went into the Condor II missile that Iraq was developing to carry a nuclear warhead. It went into their antiaircraft defenses. And who knows where else it went?" said the customs man.⁴²

³⁹ Friedman, 1993, op.cit., p. 59.

⁴⁰ Ibid. p. 63.

⁴¹ Ibid. p. 63.

⁴² Ibid. p. 63.

Part FOUR: Totality Through the Eyes of Saddam Hussein

The fact remains that the great divine reinforcement is our source of power and effectiveness.⁴³

-Saddam Hussein, broadcast on Baghdad Radio, 20 January 1991

It is me they want. I am the defiant spirit. But I tell them, "before you feed on me, I will feed on you."⁴⁴

-Saddam Hussein, talking with radical Palestinian leader, George Habash

We do not accept threats from anyone because we do not threaten anyone...Yours is a society which cannot accept 10,000 dead in one battle.⁴⁵

-Saddam Hussein, talking to U.S. Ambassador April Glaspie 25 July 1990

Many adjectives have been used to characterize Saddam Hussein. They range from enigmatic at best and devolve all the way to delusional and psychotic at worst. "Why did we take our action against Kuwait?" Saddam Hussein asked rhetorically as he leaned forward in his chair, his eyes fixed on a British interviewer. "We took our action because the ruling family in Kuwait is good at blackmail, exploitation, and destruction of their opponents. They had perpetrated a grave U.S. conspiracy against us. . . stabbing Iraq in the back with a poisoned dagger."⁴⁶ This statement encapsulates Hussein's world view. He has believed the entire world was against him since the day he assumed power. The ultimate goal is staying alive. Politics is a ceaseless struggle for survival; a Hobbesian state of nature. "I know that there are scores of people plotting to kill me," Hussein commented to a personal guest of his shortly after assuming the presidency in the summer of 1979, "and this is not difficult to understand. After all, did we not seize power by plotting against our predecessors? However, I am far cleverer than they are. I know they are conspiring to kill me long before they actually start planning to do it.

⁴³ Sifry, Micah, L., and Cerf, Christopher (eds.), *The Gulf War Reader*, New York, Times Books, 1991, p. 315.

⁴⁴ Bulloch, John and Morris, Harvey, *Saddam's War*, London, Faber and Faber, 1991, p. 26.

⁴⁵ Sifry, Micah, L., and Cerf, Christopher (eds.), 1991, op.cit., 124.

⁴⁶ Karsh, Efraim and Rautsi, Inaria, *Saddam Hussein: A Political Biography*, New York, The Free Press, 1991, p. 1.

This enables me to get them before they have the faintest chance of striking at me."⁴⁷

Usually, autocratic rulers focus their paranoia toward domestic threats to their power. Saddam Hussein has, indeed, done this. On two occasions, though, in 1980 with Iran and in 1990 with Kuwait, his actions violently spilled over the Iraqi frontier into the territory of his neighbors. Since the focus of this case is the Persian Gulf Crisis of 1990-91, we shall examine factors pertaining to Kuwait.

Walid Khalidi, of Harvard University, conducted a study of Saddam Hussein's statements, made in speeches and diplomatic correspondence, between the end of the war with Iran in 1988 and the invasion of Kuwait in 1990. The following are Hussein's viewpoints:⁴⁸

- At horrendous cost to Iraqi lives (Saddam's favorite phrase in Arabic is *anhar al-damm*, "rivers of blood") and material assets, he, Saddam, blocked *al-bawwabah al-sharqiyyah*, "the Eastern Gateway" to the Arab world in the face of Khomeini's hordes. It is this that saved the other Arab Gulf states, notably Kuwait, from certain ruin.
- This superhuman achievement, against overwhelming odds, has vindicated Baghdad's historic role (heir as it is to the ancient glories of the Abbasids) as *the* regional metropolis, confirming Iraq's *paramount* ranking in the hierarchy of the Gulf states.
- The salvation of the other Gulf states, thanks to Iraq's sacrifices, imposes on these states a *moral and material indebtedness* to Iraq commensurate with the scale of Iraq's sacrifices under Saddam's leadership.
- The outcome of the Iran-Iraq war (in stemming the Khomeini tide) propelled Iraq- *not* Syria, *not* Egypt- to the leadership of the Arab world in the post-Cold War era.
- This outcome imposes upon Iraq the duty of the deterrence of Israel (which other Arab states have shirked), which Iraq alone is capable and willing to undertake because of the expansion during the war of its *industrial-technological* infrastructure.
- Because of Iraq's assumption of new deterrent responsibilities vis-à-vis Israel, the leading Western countries, principally the U.S. and Britain have, *since* the cease-fire

⁴⁷ Ibid. p.2.

⁴⁸ Sify, Micah, L., and Cerf, Christopher (eds.), 1991, op.cit., p. 60.

with Iran, had a secret agenda to negate and counterbalance Iraq's post-cease-fire preeminence.

- To counter these Western machinations and to maintain its deterrent capacity against both Iranian revanchism and Israeli adventurism, Iraq urgently needs to reconstruct its economy and expand its industrial-technological infrastructure.
- This can only be achieved if Iraq increases its oil revenues through higher oil prices, if its war debts to the Gulf states are canceled, and if it is the beneficiary of an Arab "Marshall Plan" put together by these states, the very survival of which is owed to Iraq and Saddam.

Saddam Hussein's attention increasingly began to focus on Kuwait and economic matters:⁴⁹

- Overproduction of OPEC quotas. 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, although the agreed-upon price was \$18 per barrel. He claimed that every one-dollar drop in the price per barrel meant a loss of \$1 billion per annum for Iraq. He explicitly stated that in Iraq's present economic state this overproduction was an "act of war."
- The Iraqi debt to Kuwait. Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi Foreign Minister, did not give a figure to this debt, but stated that the "assistance" from Kuwait to Iraq during its war with Iran should not be considered a "debt" and should be canceled.
- The oil allegedly taken from the Rumaila field. Aziz claimed that from 1980 to 1990 Kuwait pumped \$2.4 billion worth of oil belonging to Iraq from this field; he said Kuwait owed Iraq this amount.
- 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 "no less than an act of war."

⁴⁹ Ibid. p. 63-64.

- Kuwait's alleged complicity with foreign powers. Aziz claims that the overproduction of Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates 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.
- Kuwait's alleged reluctance to negotiate with Iraq. Aziz claimed that in June of 1988, even before the cease-fire with Iran and soon after the Iraqi victory at Fao, Iraq informed Kuwait of its readiness to settle all outstanding issues amicably but that Kuwait had temporized.

Hussein's talk with U.S. Ambassador April Glaspie on 25 July 1990 revealed warning signs for a final solution to the Kuwaiti issues.⁵⁰ In it Saddam reiterated many of the points from above, and went much further, "I say to you clearly that Iraq's rights, we will take one by one. That might not happen now or after a month or after one year, but *we will take it all...*If you use pressure, we will deploy pressure and force. We know that you can harm us although we do not threaten you. But we too can harm you. Everyone can harm according to their ability and their size. We cannot come all the way to you in the United States, but individual Arabs may reach you."

To these comments, and others, Glaspie retorted, "I know you need funds. We understand that and our opinion is that you should have the opportunity to rebuild your country. *But we have no opinion on the Arab-Arab conflicts, like your border disagreement with Kuwait.*"

This meeting would be the final high-level contact between the United States and Iraq before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on 2 August 1990.

⁵⁰ Ibid. p. 122-133.

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Pedagogical Objectives

(Large Issues)

- 1) The U.S. often winds up using its military against previous allies who were used as pawns by the U.S. to accomplish some goal. The military functions as the broom that sweeps away the mess caused by poor strategic planning and judgement in the first place. Consider: Manuel Noriega in Panama. Saddam Hussein in Iraq. Mohammed Farah Aideed in Somalia. And most recently, Osama bin Ladin. ALL OF THEM, former U.S. clients.
- 2) Policy makers rarely concern themselves with the future implications of their actions. Expedient courses of action are chosen to deal with situations that are complex and dangerous.
- 3) The U.S. is very interested in the calculus of geostrategy, and meddles in events to shape the world for its purposes.
- 4) Autocratic leaders are usually delusional. Do they make good allies? Probably not.

(Narrow Issues)

- 1) The White House can do just about anything it wants, totally outside of the law and without scrutiny from Congress. "Separation of Powers" is a myth when one considers the covert action capabilities of the National Security Council.
- 2) The CIA is the primary tool used by the White House to subvert U.S. Law, and accomplish its covert goals abroad.
- 3) Covert operations are complex and employ actors from different states and backgrounds. Cut outs are extremely useful for facilitating covert operations