

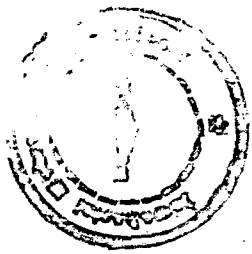
THE ROLE OF SUPER POWERS IN IRAN-IRAQ CONFLICT

Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University
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DEDICATED TO MY MOTHER

Musrath Jahan

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"Man's dearest possession is life and since it is given to him to live but once, he must so live as not to be seared with the shame of a cowardly and trivial past, so live as not to be tortured for years without purpose, so live, that dying he can say: 'All my life and my strength were given to the first cause of the world -- the liberation of mankind'"

NICOLI OSTROVSKY

INTRODUCTION

Attempting on contemporary issues means ushering trouble for professional academicians and researchers. This study being a current issue, which has continued for many months and may continue for many more years to come, may highlight new facts and come with new analysis in due course which may substantially disprove this research work. This is more likely in an area like the Gulf where chronic changes are taking place since early 1978. However, the study period for this topic has been confined till 1985.

Like two bone-weary prize-fighters Iran and Iraq flail at one another in a ring of territory, straddling their frontier.

The Iran-Iraq war which broke out in September 1980 and which continues unabated till now, has taken a toll of over 100,000 lives and even now, in the present state of military indeterminateness casts each combatant roughly a billion dollars per month. It has also increased international tension by precipitating new alliances and a rearrangement of forces in the already turbulent Middle East.

The focus of this dissertation is on the historical, economic and political dimensions of the war between Iran and Iraq. The initial chapter examines many historical aspects which led to the creation of the modern state of Iraq and Iran.

(iii)

It traces developments as early as the fourth millenium BC to the early 1979 -- after the Shi'a Islamic revolution seized power in Iran and its brand of revolution to Iraq through a propaganda campaign aimed mainly at the Shi'a community, which comprises of more than half of the Iraq population, inciting it to revolt against the Sunni-dominated Baathist regime.

The dynamic role of the Super Powers in these regions prior to the conflict, is analysed in chapter two. The inter-changing roles of the Super Powers and their diplomatic policies and issues are framed for their own personal gains, thus making the two victim regions -- Iran and Iraq -- puppets in their political game.

The third chapter illustrates the origination, issues, proposals and lessons of the conflict. However, the terms demanded by those who rule Iran today do appear extortionate, from financial as well as political and economic standpoint. In fact, it is difficult to understand what are the specific objectives for which this fight is carrying on so furiously, and with such a conspicuous disregard for nonaligned and other international opinion. By the same token, it is difficult to appreciate the stubbornness of the ruling group in Iraq in refusing to jettison a leader like Saddam Hussein. The objective of this chapter is also to reveal the destructions of war --

in economic resources, how foreign trade hampered, the killings of innocent people and the failure of human wisdom to rebuff the war -- as no war is inevitable.

The attitudes of the Super Powers in the conflict are examined in the fourth chapter. Militarily speaking, a trench war has shown a seesaw game without tilting the strategic balance one way or the other. An open 'armsbaryar' is there where hardly any ideology interacts. Here, light is shed on the failure of all the attempts to mediation made so far and proposals to adopt peace and parry this horrendous conflict. This is evident from the quantity of ammunitions and armaments the warring countries possess. Will the war end? Will either of the Super Powers succeed in their mission? Or, is negotiation and peace the only answer to save mankind? An attempt is made to assess the bilateral issues, perceptions and prospects of peace.

Limited war requires a limitation of the aims pursued by the opponents. The limitation of war aims must be declared immediately -- sudden and total disaster or peace and negotiation, or is the Question Absurd? The worst of all possible cold-war worlds is a self-generating arms race feeding upon a rapidly advancing technology, each country progressing at a different rate kept secret from the other.

War can always be prevented by the trivially simple device of surrender. But most men know that death is preferable to slavery: the path of peace cannot ignore justice: and thus the war continues. Loose thinking is seldom permissible. It should be avoided like the plague in the discussion of our strategic -- military problems since the answers we need affect our survival, individually and as a nation. Yet it is here where hard thinking and peace negotiations and a keen sense of brotherhood would pay off most handsomely.

The theoretical literature pertaining to this research work is based on primary sources including the government documents of Iran and Iraq. Such secondary sources as books, research articles, press clippings are also made use of.

Chapter I

HISTORY OF IRAQ AND IRAN

GENERAL MAP OF IRAQ



SOURCE: THE MIDDLE EAST REVIEW CO., LTD.

Chapter-I

HISTORY OF IRAQ AND IRAN

Iraq

Iraq is a nation in search of cultural identity, a modern state that is attempting to accommodate the traditions of a very old society while coping with the rapid political and economic changes of the twentieth century. The historical records show Iraq to have been a difficult country to govern. Over 150 years, there have been few prolonged periods when conditions of internal order and external relations have provided reassurance for those in authority.

Iraq centres the sumerian civilization in the world and its ancient history dates back to the fourth millenium B.C. There was a progression of societies based primarily on irrigation and agriculture. These included the sumerians, who were conquered by the Akkadians and who in turn gave way to the Elamites. Under one of the greatest kings of antiquity Hammurabi, Iraq attained a high degree of splendor.¹ This in turn gave way before new invaders from the north and the east - chief among these were the Kassites. Subsequent conquerors included the Mitannians, the Hittites of Asia Minor, the warlike Assyrians.

1. The Middle East and North Africa 12th ed., (London : European Publications Ltd. - 1965)

This relentless cruel chain of events eventually gave way to Persian domination which made Iraq one of the imperial provinces and a buffer zone between Persian and Roman empires. The land finally became an arena for prolonged warfare between Byzantium and Persia, who were to exhaust themselves to the point of being unable to meet the formidable danger which was to come from the south.²

The state of Iraq has existed only since 1920, when it was created under British aegis as a mandate. With its 170,000 square miles (440,300 sq. km.) land area and a population of over 14 million in 1984, Iraq is the largest of the fertile crescent countries rimming the northern edge of Arabian Peninsula.³

Arabic Conquest

The religious and political organizations that Muhammad developed at Mecca and Medina aroused and released in Arabia powerful talent forces which sought outlets in neighbouring territories. The death of Muhammad on June 8, 632 ushered in a period of internal conflict when Abu Bakr was compelled to "reconvert" or to militarily subjugate Arabian dissidents. With this the sword of ^{ISLAM} ~~Islam~~ extended from Arabia eastwards to

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2. The Middle East and North Africa 12th edition (London : Europa publications Ltd. 1965)
 3. Iraq : Ministry of Planning, Statistical Pocketbook (Baghdad : Central Statistical Organization, 1982) p. -11

impenetrable India, Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Iran. The conquest of Iraq, then a part of the Persian Empire, began under one of the greatest Arab general, Khalid - ib - al - Walid in 634. Kufa in Iraq was the then capital. With the entry of the Umayyad rule in Iraq, it became the centre of shi'ism and the problem of poll-tax resulted in a strengthening of the shi'ite position in Iraq. The Abbasid Caliphate marked the greatest period in Iraqi history, with prosperity in economic fields. In the 15th century, the Portuguese discovered the route around the Cape of good Hope, and their monopoly of Eastern trade effectively sealed off most of Iraq's prosperity.

The Ottoman Empire

Iraq turned out to be a most difficult and expensive proposition for the Ottomans. After the conquest in 1453, the Ottoman political system was headed by a Sultan and his government was called the "Sublime Porte". However, it was early in 1634 that the entire territory of contemporary Iraq came under permanent Ottoman rule. The communal riots between the sunnis and the shias classes of Iraq and the deterioration in the central administration system, pronounced the downfall of the Ottoman Empire in the early 17th Century. Iraq stood on the periphery of the great contest taking place in Europe and Asia during the eighteenth century. The "sublime parte" in the meantime was undergoing considerable reform and in 1831 one Ali Ridha Pasha was sent to Iraq " to end the Mamluk system and

regain direct possession of Iraq".⁴ The Mamluk era, which began in 1704 was finally overpowered by the Ottomans in 1831 and once again Iraq was under the ottoman rule. A leading ottoman statesman Midhat Pasha, took the initiative to reform Iraq's administrative reorganization, the establishment of secular education and the betterment of tribes. His reforms were known as "Midhat's reforms. He welcomed the European participation as a decisive factor in the future of Iraq. Steamboats were soon seen on the rivers of Iraq, telegraph lines appeared after 1861, rail road proposals were being developed and reform along western lines became more evident. Newspapers, schools, law colleges, hospitals, tramways, army concription, postal services and administrative councils, mere concrete evidence of European influence. A process of fundamental change, albeit negligible at the time, had begun and no regime could possibly reverse the trend. Henceforth the form of nation building was started by Sir Percy Cox, who was appointed British Commissioner in Baghdad in 1920, when he set up the Arab Executive Council as the nucleus of a national administration.⁵

The British Mandate - 1920-1932

The impact of British rule has been second only to that of

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4. 'The Impact of Modernization on Iraqi Society During the Ottoman Era - by 'Abd - al - Rahman. Ph.D diss. University of Michigan, 1958
 5. Middle East Journal, Volume I No.3, Oxford University Press, July 1967

Ottoman rule in shaping modern Iraq. As state builders, the British created or developed an impressive array of institutions a monarchy, a parliament, a Western style Constitution, a bureacracy, and an army. Britain's stay in Iraq was one of the shortest in its imperial career. Moreover, for much of Britain's tenure in Iraq, its policy was vacillating and indecisive.

World War I proved to be a fatal blow to the Ottoman Empire. As early as 1914, Britain occupied the provinces of al-Jow and Basra. The British, subsequently regrouped and with the aid of Indian divisions were finally able to re-establish their hold on southern Iraq and they captured Baghdad in March, 1917. The British policy during the 19th century followed a rather insincere and ambiguous course dedicated to the preservation of the Ottoman Empire, yet hedged with the qualifications and reservations - as they controlled the road and river routes thro' Mesopotamia and India. British diplomatic performance during the course of World War I - most significant secret partition agreements in the bargain formalized with Iraq on May 16, 1916 known officially as the Sykes-Picot agreement.⁶

6. Sykes-Picot agreement - one provision of this agreement is Russia has to obtain the provinces of Erzerum, Trebizand Van and Bitlis (known as Turkish Armenia) as well as territory, in the northern part of Kurdistan.

George Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs
New York : Cornell University Press, 1966

In the Clemenceau - Lolyo George agreement of December 1918, France consented to the inclusion of the Mosul area in Britain's sphere of influence in compensation for British military action in Mesopotamia. This essentially consolidated the British position in Iraq.

On April 24, 1920, the peace delegates met again at San Remo on the Italian River and British was given mandatory powers over Iraq and Palestine. This resulted in a violent reaction on the part of Iraqi nationalists against the British administrators - which lasted from May to October 1920 and cost the British nearly £ 40,000,000. Military rule under the British was terminated and Sir Percy. Z. Cox. organized a provincial council of state with Sayyad Abd - al - Rahman al - Gailani as the Prime Minister and the British were assigned only an adviser's role.

Mandate of Independence

Iraq was the first Arab State to rise to the dignity of independence. However, the most immediate problem concerned the question of who was to rule Iraq. The British were convinced that "it could only maintain its influence in Iraq if it were to put a monarch at the head of this government."⁷ In London,

7. Brockelmaw, Socialist Iraq (Middle East Institute, Washington, 1978)

a new colonial secretary, Winston Churchill, had been selected, and one of his first actions was to convene a conference at Cairo to "decide, once and for all, the many outstanding Middle Eastern question and to decide the ruler of Iraq." It was determined that Prince Faisal, one of King Hussain's four sons, was acceptable to the King Seekers at Cairo. The British encouraged Faisal to visit Iraq and offer himself as King - on the condition that his government should be a "constitutional representative and a democratic one".⁸ This selection was ratified by "a sort of people's assembly" and Faisal was proclaimed king on August 23, 1921 by Sir Percy Cox. Eversince then, the cordial relationship between the British and Iraqui nationalists was renewed by subsequent treaties on October 10, 1922; January 13, 1926; December 14, 1927 and June 30, 1930. The last treaty provided for a 25-year alliance between the two countries and confirmed British support of Iraq's admission to the League of Nations; it promised that Iraq's full independence and the termination of the British mandate would be effective on the date of Iraq's entry into the League of Nations on October 23, 1932. Iraq was so admitted after having given "guarantees for the protection of minorities; the rights of foreigners, respect for human rights; and the recognition of debts and treaties concluded by the mandatory power". It was against these unpalatable control that the forces of Iraqui nationalism rebelled.

8 Iraq - Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Report on the Administration of Iraq 1922-32 (London, 1932)

The inculcation of national feeling and its martial tenor began with the educational system and this later led to the need for an army. According to the Treaty of 1923, Iraq would ultimately be responsible for defence and no less than 25% of her revenues for this purpose would be allotted from her national budget. The strength of Iraq's army was 20,000 in April 1925, which gradually grew from 3,500 in 1922 to 7,000 in 1927, reaching some 11,500 at independence.

The unexpected death of King Faisal in 1933, interrupted Iraq's strife for self-government and progress. Faisal was succeeded by his son, Ghazi I, (1933-39) and in this period emerged the problems of age-old animosities between the sunni muslims and the shi'ite tribes on the Euphrates; the persistent problem of relations with the kurds in the north-east; the massacre of Assyrians in 1933 to suppress the Assyrian 'peril' and political intrigues which led to the first military coup d'etat of 1936. A group called the Ikha-al-Watani (National Brotherhood - formed in 1930) dominated Iraqi politics and opposed the Anglo-Iraqi treaties. Army officers led by Gen. Bekrsidki looked upon the western imposed division of the Arab World as artificial and advocated instead some sort of Pan-Arab federations. They formed a coalition with the Ahali group (People's group) to overthrow the existing Ikha Cabinet.

A successful camp de'etat was executed on October 29, 1936.⁹ The only positive contribution of Bekr's rule was to conclude the saIdabad Pact on July 9, 1937. This treaty joined Iraq with Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan. On August 11, 1937, Bekr was assassinated in Mesul by rival army leaders. Britain new aids Gen : Nuries - Said to head the state.

Second World War

Relations with Great Britain deteriorated inspite of a strong pro-British faction in the Iraqi army. German and Italian propoganda was quick to take advantage of all adverse situations. The most dominant figure during the period was Rashid Ali-al-Gailam, who in conspiracy with a group of four colonels known as the "golden square" tended to favour a pro-axis position. Actually, Iraq's position changed as the fortune of war changed. To the French and English the Anglo-Iraqi alliance had become a liability. To complicate matters, Ghazi was succeeded by his infant son, Faisal II and a regency was established under Prince Abdul Ilah, a maternal uncle who was acceptable by the British. Iraq became a centre of Nazi and Italian intrigue. Subsequent camps by army leaders and the landing of British troops in Iraq from Palestine finally forced Rashid Ali out of power. The so-called thirty day war between Great Britain and Iraq was concluded with a negotiated armistice.

9 George Lenczouski, The Middle East in World Affairs (New York : Cornell University Press: 1966) pp. 273-74

The war years were punctuated by broad strikes, especially in the year 1943 with inflation and economically, the war created an even more visible oligarchy.

The Hashemite Era (1946-1958)

The Government of Iraq in 1954 was confronted with the basic problems as a result of these arrangements:

- (1) Whether or not to join the Northern ^(NER) Tier defense pacts.
- (2) How to change her relationship with Great Britain to whom she was still linked by 1930 treaty.¹⁰

The formation of the United Arab Republic in 1958 and its dissolution in 1961 was one such attempt to translate Arab nationalism into Arab unity. Another such effort was the creation of the League of Arab States - as proposed under the Protocol of Alexandria on October 7, 1944. The Turkish-Iraqi Pact was signed in Baghdad on February 24, 1955 by the President of Turkey and King of Iraq. On April 4, 1955, Great Britain and Iraq concluded a special agreement in Baghdad whereby Great Britain agreed to give Iraq military aid. In this era Britain had more control as United States hesitated to participate in the pact. The Suez Crisis of October-November 1956, created the fear in Iraq that Egyptian-Israeli hostilities might expand beyond Sinai. This first reaction to the Spread of Nasserism

10 Waldemar Gallman, - " Iraq under General Nuri - Baltimore : John Hopkins University Press, 1964

was followed by a Confederation of Iraq and Jordan on February 14, 1958. The King of Iraq became the head of the Federation, known as "The Arab Federation" and its capital alternated every six months between Baghdad and Amman.

Brigadier General Abdul Karim Kassim engineered a coup d'etat on July 14, 1958 and took control of the city. All the royal members in Baghdad, including King Faisal were put to death. General ^{KASSEM} ~~Kasim~~ announced to create a republic of Iraq and liberate the country from the domination of imperialism.

The Qasim Era (1958-1963)

Due to deep seated discontent among officers and civilian politicians with the regimes foreign policy and its slowness to reform, the military camp overthrew the monarchy and inaugurated a new era in Iraqi history. Chief of Staff Rafiq Arif was responsible to initiate the first revolutionary movement, revived in the autumn of 1956 under the impetus of the Suez Crisis.¹¹ Several new groups were formed, some apparently influenced by the Liberal Democratic Program of the NDP (~~NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY~~) and others influenced by the Communists. Most were Pan-Arab in orientation.

Gen. Qasim's government had been recognized by Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and the People's Republic of China. Later, he was involved in a conspiracy planned by his Deputy Premier

11 Uriel Dann - Iraq Under Qassem (New York : Praeger, 1969)

Colonel Abdul Saleem Arif, who had connections with the Baath or renaissance party. On 14th July, a coup initiated by Gen. Qabnu and Colonel Aref arrested Nuri and the crown prince and killed them both. The lion's share of power went to Gen. Qasim while Colonel Aref became the Prime Minister.

Within five days, a struggle for power between the two main protagonists of the camp began. The differences between Qasim and Aref crystallised around a key policy question - union with Egypt. Aref soon began to put himself in the limelight in Iraq's foreign policy. A month later, he was tried and killed.

Among the major political groupings like the Istqlal (Independence Party), the National Democratic Party (Socialists), the Baath (Renaissance Party), the Communist Party of Iraq (pro-Soviet) mention should be made of the Kurdish rebels - a separate group although they represented a pro-Soviet element in Iraq. The Mosul revolt on March 8, 1959 and the Kiskuk Massacre from July 14 to 19, 1959 were products of communist tactics, which emerged in this era and were curbed prudently by Gen. Kassem.

The Kurdish Rebellion - 1961

Unsuccessful attempts, to attain an autonomous Kurdistan were made in 1919, 1937-38 and again in 1946 to no avail. The premier leader of the 1946 rebellion in Iraq, Mustafa Barzani was allowed to return from exile in 1958 by the Kassem government.

The new government included a Kurd' Shayk Baba' Ali, as a Cabinet Minister and thus the kurds were co-partners within the framework of Iraqi unity. Mustafa Benzani and his supporters organized the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP).¹² During the summer of 1960, Berzani demanded full autonomy for the Kurds/inkurdistan. Premier Kasben replied by supplying to the anti-Barzani Kurdish tribes, arms and money. In retaliation, Barzani went to Moscow to obtain Soviet support for his position. During the summer of 1962, nearly 20,000 Kurdish insurgents continued guerilla warfare in northern Iraq. On February 8, 1963, a military camp carried out in Baghdad overthrew the Kassem regime and a new military junta assumed power. Kassem's failure in providing a constitution to Iraq and continuous agitation with his neighbours pronounced the downfall of the Kassem rule.

The promising settlement concluded by al-Bazzaz in 1966 had fallen into abeyance, partly because it was unpopular with a number of army officers and partly because the Kurds had hardened their stance. When the Baath came to power in 1968, they inherited the unsolved Kurdish problem from the Arif era - which led to chronic clashes between the Iraqi army and the Kurds. These attacks intentionally delivered the message

12 Stephen C. Pelletiere The Kurds : An Unstable Element in the Gulf (Boulder : Westview Press 1984)

that unless Kurds' demands were heeded the source of most of the government's revenue could be cut off. Iran was soon heavily embroiled in the conflict. By 1969, the kurds were receiving massive aid from Iran and Iranian units were even fighting in Iraqi territory. Recognizing stalemate, the government reluctantly concluded an agreement with al-Barzani in March 1970.¹³ A fifteen point agreement was the result of discussions between Saddam Husayn and al-Barzani in January 1970. It provided for Kurdish autonomy (the first official use of the word)¹⁴ and stabilized the Ba'ath regime and postponed an unfavourable settlement on the Shatt.

The Kurdish Problem

The 1970 Kurdish agreement had put a temporary end to hostilities, but the peace was short-lived. In July 1970, the KDP nominated Muhammad Aabib Karim, as the Kurdish Vice-President but he was rejected by the Ba'ath because of his Persian background. Moreover, many assassination attempts were made on opposition leaders. It was not long before desultory fighting began once again. The aim of the Ba'ath was to isolate the KDP and al-Barzani, which led al-Barzani to reestablish ties with the Shah who was now thoroughly alarmed by Soviet influence in Iraq. So too, was the United States. On 31st May 1972, President Nixon directed the CIA to surreptitiously advance al-Barzani \$ 16 million

¹³ Edmond Ghareeb, The Kurdish Question in Iraq Syracuse (New York: NY: Syracuse University Press, 1981) pp 142-145

¹⁴ Some have argued that the word used in the agreement was 'self-

in aid. The Shah followed with far more massive help.¹⁵ By the April the war had resumed. The 1974-75 war had reached its peak, when the government troops captured the "Hamilton Trail", - the life-line of the Kurds to Iran. To protect the line, Iran augmented its military aid, furnishing the Kurds with anti-tank missiles and artillery, and intervening directly in Iraqi territory. Syria, also at odds with Iraq, likewise aided the Kurds. It was during this stalemate, that there was first talk of an agreement between Iraq and Iran, at the expense of the Kurds.

15 Kutschera, Movement Kurde , pp. 282-283
On the CIA and portions of the Pike Report (made to Congress) appeared in the Village Voice (New York), 16 February 1976, p. 88

IRAN



— RAILWAY

SOURCE: THE MIDDLE EAST REVIEW CO., LTD.

Iran

The name 'Iran' bears etymological affinity with the words 'Aryan'. In Avesta (Vends 1, 3, 5), the great plateau of Central Asia and the region south of it was called 'Aryan Vajjo' or the land of the Aryans.¹⁶ Antiquarians are of the opinion that Iran is the proper name of the country about which lithic records from the cuneiform inscriptions of the Achaemenian Emperor, bear testimony.

The official language of Iran, according to its constitutional law of 1907 is Arabic and the language spoken is Farsi. Modern Iran, with an area of 628,000 square miles, is more than five times the size of Great Britain. The origins of the Iranian nation are wrapped in some mystery. The earliest inhabitants of which we have any knowledge are the Elamites. From 4000 to 1000 B.C they were constantly in contact with the Semitic people of Akkad, Babylon and Assyria, and with that great mother of civilization - 'the sumerian civilization.'¹⁷

The 'SHAHNAMEH' mentions four dynasties in pre-Islamic Iran, namely the Pishdadian, the Kiyanian, the Ashkanian and the Sasanian. For many centuries, the words Iran and Persia have

¹⁶ M. Moghadam, Persia and English : Iran Review No.5 (August-September 1960)

¹⁷ Richard N Trye, The Heritage of Persia (New York, N.Y: World Publishing Company, 1963), pp. 4-5

¹⁸ Ferdosi, Book of Kings

been used interchangeably to identify the same century. It is in Iran that the Aryans first appeared in history as a people of definiable racial, linguistic and cultural identity. Greek influence were submerged under a renaissance of Achaemidian and purely Iranian culture. In the 7th century rose the Arab influence which rebuffed the Sasanian Empire of Iran under the Arab onslaught. Among the people whom the ^{MEDES} Medes and Persians brought into subjection were races that flourished the Sumerians and Elanites civilizations in the Tigris - Euphrates Valley, a thousand years before the arrival of the Aryans. Then there were Hittites, Hyksos, the Assyrians, the Chaldeans, the Akkadians and the Phoenicians.¹⁹ The Arabs did not colonize Iran, there is little Arab blood in the modern Iranian.

Repeatedly from the 9 to 14 centuries, Iran suffered from incursion of various Turanian people from the East, of whom the principle ones were the Seljuk Turks, the Mongols and the Tartars. Their presence did not influence the Iranian culture or tradition. The Kurds lived in the mountain ranges that fringed the land. Being a minority class they did not participate in any issues of the land. Besides these, there were other tribes like the Bakhtiari and the Lurs.

¹⁹ E.G. Browne, A Literary History of Persia. - II
(Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1964) p.95

The Persian renaissance, which began roughly about the end of the ninth century had reached its peak in the twelfth, only to be arrested, temporarily by the Mongol invasion. The 'Persianization of culture - religion, literary and intellectual - was strongly opposed by the then ruling Abbasid dynasty. This created enmity between the Persian Principalities and the Abbasid rulers. The former group was aided by the Arabs while the latter sought aid from the Turks. The Turks were swallowed up by the tremendous cultural activity of the Persians and because its enthusiastic patrons. Thus this sounded the death knell of the Abbasid rulers.

Iran, now came under the control of the Ghaznavids - who were Turks. Sebuk-Vegin was the founder of the Ghaznavid Kingdom but his son Moham^umd-also titled as "Right Hand of the Realm", gained independence for the entire territory of Iran and promoted persian culture. Even though the dynasty lasted in ever-shrinking territory until 1186, it did not amount to much and had to make way for the larger Turkish dynasty of Saljuq.

By far the most important Turkish rulers to establish a Kingdom in Iran were the saljuqs. They were the first Moslem soldiers who were able to defeat the Byzantines in the famous battle of Manzikert (now Malazkirt) north of Lake Van in

1071²⁰ and established the Saljiq Kingdom of Rum in Asia Minor. Toghrul, was an able leader of this Kingdom who advanced the Persian touch, politically, economically and culturally.

Mongols:

Why the Mongols came so far from their base of operation in China is still vague. It can only be ascertained that a number of Chinese merchants who were sent by Chengiz Khan were killed by the then ruler of the dynasty Mohammad. This started the avalanche. The Mongols entered Iran as warriors and after their mission a few of them stayed in Iran and absorbed the Persian people's culture. After the death of Chengiz, his vast empire was divided into three parts. First was China, second was Russia and the third was Iran called the "Ilkhan" - with its capital at Maragheh in Azarbaijan. Holagha, the founder of the Ilkhan dynasty, was a builder and a patron of arts and science. Marco Polo, who travelled through Iran to Peking around 1271, described the thriving industries of Tabriz, Kashan and Kerman.

The arrest of Persian renaissance was short-lived. The Persians not only restored their own culture but they also civilized the Mongols. Later, Iran was separated from its neighbours to the west and Persian language replaced Arabic.

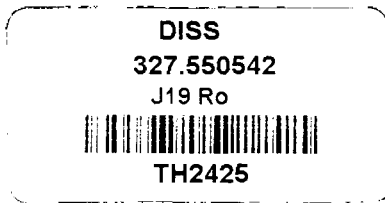
²⁰ The Turks celebrated the 900 anniversary in 1971. For further treatment see J.A. Boyle, ed., "The Seljuq and Mongol Periods" in Vol.5 of The Cambridge History of Iran Cambridge University Press, 1968

The Persians loyalty was not to a land but to a language and culture. Two centuries later political unity followed in the establishment of the safavid dynasty.

The Safavids

The safavi dynasty founded by Esmail excepted Islam with great zeal and fanaticism. The dynasty was established on two foundations. One of these was shi'ia and the other Persian and Esmail concentrated more on the first than the second. He insisted on forceful conversion to shi'ism or death. Half a century later Iran was a shi'i country. The inevitable contest between Esmail and the Ottomans, whose new ruler was Selim I - (1512-1520) took place at the battle of Chaldiran in 1514, in which the Ottomans won a resounding victory and selim was awarded with Syria and Egypt.²¹ Chaldiran was also the beginning of a senseless and inconclusive struggle between Iran and Turkey which lasted for nearly three hundred years. During the early safavid period we witness a standard struggle between the obligarchy and antocracy. Under Shah Abbas (Esmail's son) Iran reached the zenith of its power and at the same time, the beginning of its cultural and political decline. While his predecessors concentrated on forcing all the people to conform to shi'ism, Shah Abbas emphasized the Persian aspect

²¹ Narrollah Fallisafi, Chand Moqate-ve Tarikhi (A few Historical Essays) (Tehran : University of Tehran Press, 1962), p.6



of his rule. He later exploited the weakness of Russia and the ottoman empire and gained possession of their territories.

After Shah Abbās died, the Ottomans moved against Iran from the west and encouraged their fellow Sunnis, the Uzbeks and the Afghans, to attack from the east. In 1722, the Afghan leader Mohammad invaded Iran and defeated the Persian forces on May 8, 1722, in the village of Goluabad, some twelve miles from Esfahan.

Nader Qoli, a soldier who was destined to be called the "Napoleon of Iran" succeeded in pushing the Afghans back. The Turks defeated the Persians while Nader was in the east and Tahmāsp signed a treaty in 1732 by giving up five cities in the caucasus. Nader, who was against such a treaty had a revolt against Tohmasp and in the following three years, he defeated the Turks, pushed the Russians back and secured eastern Iran against the Afghans. In 1736, he assumed the throne as Nader Shah Afshār. During the next eleven years, his main work was to retake the territories lost by the later safavids and further to expand the empire. His spectacular campaign was against India. He captured Kābol, Peshawar and Lahore in 1738 and the following year he defeated the Moghul emperor Mohammad Shah and entered Delhi. The price of the plunder brought with him

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from India has been estimated at from thirty to eighty seven million pounds. Among these were the peacock throne and the famous diamond Kuh-e-Nur.

Nader Shah was neither a Shia nor a Sunni. He was a free thinker. He wanted to end the strife between the sunnis and shi'is by inviting them and made a fine-point proposition for unity.

1. That the shi'i doctrine be recognized officially as the fifth school of thought in Islam.
2. That the shi'is should have special accommodations in Mecca.
3. That every year there should be a special leader of pilgrimage, Amir al-Haj, from Iran.
4. That the Ottomans and Persians should exchange prisoners of war.
5. That the Ottomans and Persians should exchange ambassadors.

The period between the death of Nader Shah and the coronation of Agha Mohammad Khan, the founder of the Qajar dynasty in 1795 lasted fifty years. The first twelve years were spent in warfare among the many claimants to the vacant throne. The victor was Karim Khan, the head of the Zand tribe. At Karim Khan's death, Agha Mohammad Qajar crowned himself Shah

of Iran in 1795 at Tehran. During the Qājār period, Iran was ushered into the nineteenth century and the era of European imperialism, which contact with the west destroyed the isolation of Iran.

Imperialism, Awakening and Revolution

Iran was still a power to be reckoned with in West Asia and important enough to be wooed by European rivals. Russia and British interests in Iran were constant while that of Napoleon's in Iran as well in India, was used as a tool to defeat Great Britain or force Russia to come to terms.

During the 19th century Great Britain sent a mission to Iran and persuaded the Shah to sign a diplomatic and commercial agreement in which Iran promised to follow an anti-French policy. Napoleon sent a mission to Iran in 1805 proposing an alliance against Russia provided Iran would repudiate its treaty with England. The Shah agreed to this and the result was the Treaty of ^Finkenstein in May 1807. All this came to naught, however, because Russia and France became friends and signed the Treaty of Tilsit in 1807. This gave British an opportunity to send a mission to Iran in 1808 and signed a treaty against France and Russia. Again on October 13, 1813, Iran signed the Treaty of Golestan with

Russia. Iran lost fine cities in the ^(caucasus) Caucasus, gave up the right to maintain a navy on the Caspian, and gave up its claim to Georgia and Daghestan.²²

The need for money on the part of Iran and the need of Great Britain to reciprocate the actions of Russia resulted in a new treaty between Great Britain and Iran in 1814. It is referred to as the "Definitive Treaty"²³, in which Iran promised full support to Great Britain, while the latter paid an annual subsidy of £ 150,000; and to help Iran settle its boundaries with Russia. The Russians marched to the caucasus region and set the boundary following the Aras River and then south to include Lamkaran and east to Astara on the caspian. Under the Treaty of Turkmanchay in 1828, Iran officially accepted the principle of extraterritoriality and the payment of an indemnity amounting to three million pounds. This treaty ushered in a new era because for nearly a century Iran became a buffer state between Russia and Great Britain.

By the beginning of the twentieth century the annexation phase of Anglo-Russian imperialism had come to an end. Economic imperialism had started in Iran from 1870 to 1921.

²² Ali Akbar Bina, Tarikh-e- Siyasi Va Diplomasi - ye Iran (Political and Diplomatic History of Iran) (Tehran: University of Tehran Pers, 1959)p. 171

²³ It is also called the Tehran treaty

After the Mutiny of 1857, the Indo-European Telegraph Company operated communication between London and Delhi through Iran. Further under the consent of Naser-al-Din, the Iranian forces were trained and organized by the Russian Officers until 1921. The British sought permission for establishing the Imperial Bank of Persia with the right to issue bank notes. The British claimed a monopoly for the production, sale and export of tobacco in Iran. The Shah was to receive an annual payment of £15,000 while the Company received a profit of £ 500,000 per annum. This drained the economy's resources and ushered in the initial steps of "Europeanization". This aroused patriotic feeling and the Iranians protested against the foreign hand in the economy's decision. This drain in the economy made Iran borrow a loan of £2,400,000 at 5% interest per annum besides the already owned credit of £ 500,000 to the British.

Background of the Revolution

Three points strike as the main forces for revolution:

1. The first is the Persian's consciousness of their identity. Ever since the Achayemenid period, they were identified as "Black Shirts", "White Shirts", "Red Shirts" the Brethern of Purity" and so on. This kindled both political and cultural patriotism.
2. The second point is that creativity and intellectual and spiritual advance created patriotic awareness.

3. Lastly, the isolation of Iran from the rest of the Moslem World made the Iranians conscious of their unity with their brethren.

After the death of the Shah on January 8, 1907, his son Mohammad Ali gained accession to the throne. He was against the revolution and was a well known Russian puppet. He failed to bring peace in his country while he signed an agreement with Russia and Britain - to help him curb the revolution.

The World War I, however, had changed the situation drastically. Iran, as a result had become the battlefield of hot war between the Ottomans and the Russians, and the scene of a "clark and dragger" were between the British and the Germans. Great Britain formed a Persian militia in the south called the South Persia Rifles (SPR) and it was kept fairly busy quelling tribal uprisings caused by the German agents Niedermayer and Wasmuss.²⁴

The October revolution of the Bolsheviks in Russia changed the situation in Iran. Iran was occupied by British troops on their way towards Baku and the caucasus to help the "whites" in the civil war against the Bolsheviks. A Soviet Republic of Gilan was established in 1920 with Rasht as the Capital. Soon after this the Baku Congress of 1920 forced Iran

²⁴ Christopher Sykes, Wasmuss, the German Lawrence
(London : Lengmans, 1936)

with marxism, especially by a communist Russia. The Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 vowed to control the land and the sea approaches to India as well as the oil wells of Iran. With the desire to have a more stronger hold on Iran, Great Britain, offered it many loans so that "Iran would prosper under the tutelage of Great Britain."²⁵ Russia signed the Iran-Soviet Treaty of 1921 & Russia cancelled all debts and credits between the Tsarist government and the other countries. By this treaty, which had twenty-six articles, the Soviet Union relinquished all Russian claims to assets, concessions and properties to Iran and also gained concession to establish in 1927 a new Indo-Soviet Fisheries Company to operate for twenty five years.

The fear of communism, signalled the Shah to have a friendly tie with Britain for fear of Russia. The British with enough aid made possible Reza Shah's rise to power. On April 25, 1921, Raza Khan became the Minister of War and he forced Ziyar (Prime Minister) to leave the country. In October, 1923, Reza Khan became Prime Minister. During his reign he was more interested in the glitter of Western Civilization, industrialization, building public services and economic reforms. By 1933, Reza Shah had virtually

²⁵ Quoted in - Yahya Armajani, 'Iran' (NEW JERSEY, Prentice-Hall Inc, Eaglewood, Cliffs, New Jersey - 1972), p.134

wiped out almost all the rampants of the old economic imperialism and change it for both nationalistic and economic reasons.

The crowning achievement of Reza Shah in Iran's policy with its neighbours was the Sa' dabad Pact on July 8, 1937. It was a non-aggression agreement among Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq and Turkey. During the second World War, Iran remained neutral and the then Prime Minister Ahmed Qavam invited America as a third power to intervene in Iran's internal affairs. Soon, America joined hands with Great Britain against Russia.

Amongst all these feverish political activities, the new Tudeh (Masses) party was formed under Dr. Erani. This, by far was the best organized political party in the century. The Tudeh was admittedly Marxist but not communists. This party thoroughly worked for the masses and spread patriotism among the common people. Seyyed, Ziya Takatabai, the calender of the coup di etat of 1921 returned from exile and he organized a right wing pro-British and anti-communist party called the Eradesh-ye Melli, 'National Will' - similar to Tudeh party.

After the second World War the Soviet Union refused to evacuate Iran and in 1945 a group of communists launched a separatist movement in Azarbayjan and the Kurds demanded

autonomy. The refusal of the Iranian government to grant concession in oil deal to Soviet Russia, brought a direct attack by the Soviet representatives on Iran. Finally, the Majles released a bill banning all concessions for oil to foreign nations.

Britain gradually began to lose hold on Iran. It lost its oil concessions after oil nationalization in 1948 and in the same year the 'Imperial Bank of Iran' was renamed as the "British Bank of Iran and the Middle East" and was brought under the jurisdiction of the Persian Government.

From 1953 to 1975 the international attitude of Iran had gone full circle from a form of neutralism to partisanship and back to neutralism. In the Anglo-Russian rivalry, Iran was mostly passive. In 1955, Iran became a member of the Baghdad Pact and for the first time, joined the "Western Block" in the polarization that had developed in the cold war. This part included Turkey, Pakistan, Iran, Iraq and Britain. The Shah visited the Soviet Union in 1956 to renew correct and cordial relations with Russia. With demise of the Iraqi Kingdom in 1958, the pact was named CENTO and, reacting to the international situation, its activities have become less military defense and more economic and social co-operation. The Persian Government concluded a bilateral military agreement

with America. This alarmed Russia, who threatened to invoke Articles Five and Six of the 1921 treaty. By 1965 they extended commercial relations with Iran without insisting that it gave up its pro-Western alignment.

On 4 November 1979, Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargem and his Foreign Minister Dr. Ibrahim Yazdi visited Algiers where they indulged in confidential talks with President Carter's National Security Adviser. The Iranian revolutionary council severely criticized this meeting and plagued fundamental differences among the citizens. USA was helping Iran with its back door policy. The Shah sought refuge in America and on 4 November, 1979 a small political party assaulted the U.S. embassy, in protest against the U.S. aid to the Shah. By the end of spring 1979, Khomeini's forces ousted the Shah and Iran was made into a Islamic Republic, with a new constitution to institutionalize Khomeini's concept of a Shia theocracy.

The death of the Shah in Cairo on 27 July 1980 and the appointment of Mohammedali Rajoi as Prime Minister reinforced, restored peace to the militant students group who were against the Shah's U.S. links. However, the hostages problem and their release became a chief responsibility of the Rajai government. With the death of the Shah the demands laid by Khomeini on the release of hostages had become moot. Instead, Khomeini wanted (1) the return of the people's wealth plundered

by the Shah (2) the lifting of the sanctions imposed by the USA (3) a pledge of non-intervention in Iran's internal affairs; (4) the approval of the Majlis of the above conditions.

When Iraq invaded Iran on 22 September 1980 the urgency of the resolution of the crisis was enhanced. In a way, the landslide victory of Reagan showed that the hostage problem was eased. They were released later after Carter was out of power.

At any rate, the Iranians were insistent on their requests of 24 billion to cover their frozen assets and the property taken by the late Shah and his family. In early January this was cut to \$ 9.5 billion, enabling Warren Christopher to fly into Algiers to formalise the agreement, worked out by the Algiers government to be signed by the USA and Iran.

On 16 January Iran paid off the entire \$ 3.67 billion in outstanding loans with Western Banks and European banks. Soon after this the country's political scene was resumed to normalcy and the presidential and parliamentary elections and the formation of the first cabinet were soon followed.

In a sense one could surmise that with the war against Iraq, the clergy dominated government and the Majlis became the hostage of their own anti-American rhetoric.

Chapter II

IRAN, IRAQ AND SUPER POWERS
(BEFORE THE WAR)

Chapter-II

IRAN, IRAQ AND SUPERPOWERS (BEFORE THE WAR)

Introduction

From ~~our~~^{an} ethnic, religious, political and economic standpoint, the Middle East is perhaps the most complex region on earth. Sunni and Shi'ia Moslems, catholics and Protestants, Jews, Kurds, Copts, Maronites and Americans coexist uneasily in a region characterized by unstable and frequently changing governments, and periodically convulsed by fighting between Arabs and Israelies, Iraqis and Kurds, Lebanese Christians and Maslems, Sudanese Arabs and Blacks, Jordinians and Palestinians, North and South Yemens and lastly Iranians and Iraqis.

Here, the study is confined only to the Iranians and Iraqis and their relations with the super powers - United States and Soviet Union - before the outbreak of the war in September 1980.

USSR and IRAN

Russia's history has been characterized by constant expansion - from the principality of Moscow to an empire. By tradition, she was of course a partner in crime with Great Britain, but the revolutions gave promise of a change of heart.

Iran, like Ottoman Turkey, was affected by dynastic debilitation, economic backwardness^d and military weakness, and was favoured to relinquish land to Russia. The conquest of Transcaucasia of Russian forces began in the late 18th century. Tbilisi, the capital of Gruzia, was captured by the Russians in 1801, Baku in 1806, Yerevan, the capital of Armenia, in 1828. After an ill-conceived war against Russia, Iran was forced by the treaty of Turkamanchay (1828) to yield additional territory and economic concessions, which made it a virtual vassal state of Russia. The occupation of the caucasus was accomplished only in 1864.

Russia, now began its construction programmes. The first railways was opened in 1888 and railroad in 1890. Northern Persia was almost completely under Russian control and the Caspian sea became a 'Russian Lake'. However, to this rapid expansion of Russia, Britain was an obstacle. Finally, in 1895, Britain proposed to maintain the situation by declaring Persia as a buffer state - like Afghanistan - between the Russian and British spheres of influence. Tsar Nicholai II, however, rejected this proposal in 1897 as Persia¹ was weak and dependent.

1 Until 1925, Iran was referred to as Persia.

For Moscow, the year 1900 seemed an opportune moment to establish a military presence in the Persian Gulf, and the Shah was totally pro-Russian. The British naval supremacy, made the Gulf a British preserve and blocked Russian attempts to establish a presence there. On 15 May 1903, the British Foreign Minister pronounced a Warning to Russia and Germany, a sort of 'Monroe Doctrine' for the Gulf. But, Russian officers, trained the Persians of the cossack units and this military force was perhaps the best model for the Persian cavalry.

Russia's defeat by Japan in the war of 1905 made it reconsider relations with Britain. Domestic instability, the 1905 revolution, limited resources, increasing German influence in the Near East - all these were contributing factors. The Russian-British reapproachment reached its peak with the signing of the convention of 31 August 1907, which divided Persia into British and Russian spheres of influence. The richer northern part with Bandar Abbas to the east, was in the Russian sphere, while Afghanistan was in the British sphere. The Gulf area to the west was in the neutral zone. Thus, on the eve of the world war I, Iran had again become a virtual Russian protectorate.

The first world war brought Britain and Russia into the same camp. On 15 March 1915, it was agreed to transfer the

neutral zone in Persia to Britain in exchange for Russian annexation of Constantinople and the Turkish straits. This agreement was later repudiated by the Soviet regime.²

Iran, like Turkey and Afghanistan - young countries with no particular love for the Western Capitalist nations - was obviously suitable as an ally, even if she were not ready for absorption. In 1919 the Soviet Union granted void (1) to all Persian debts to ^{TSARIST} ~~tsarist~~ government, (2) Russian interference in Persia's income (from various sources) (3) Russian bank in Persia was declared a property of the Persians (4) and transfer of roads, railways and other stations to the Persian nation. Persia, however, was in no position to reply to this gesture. The Iranian Party Congress changed its name in July 1920 to the Iranian Communist Party.

The Treaties of 1921 and 1927

The corner-stone of Russo-Iranian relations was the Treaty of 1921 (renewed in 1926). This treaty includes certain territorial restorations to Iran (to which the port of Enzeli (now Pahlavi) was added in 1928); all debts owed to or concessions held by the Imperial Russian Government were revoked; and reparations for damage done by Soviet troops were arranged. Russian rights under the Capitulations were abolished Soviet citizens in Iran becoming subject to Iranian law

2 George Buchanan, My Mission to Russia Vol. I
Little Brown & Co. Boston, 1923 pp.114-118

(though naturally exempted from military service); Russian religious organizations in Iran were disbanded and their property handed over to the Iranian Government.³ A further trade agreement was ratified in 1931 and in 1935 when it was placed on a barter basis amounting to some £ 5,000,000 annually;

On October 1, 1927, a non-aggression and neutrality Soviet Persian Treaty was signed. Article V of that Treaty stipulated that Russia would extend full support to the Iranian Government in every sphere of activity and specially if threatened by another nation. However, the Soviets later invoked this cause, saying that the ties established in the 1950s-70s with the USA were in violation of this and the 1921 treaty.

The Soviet Union tried its best to be the best friend of Iran. During the 1930s, the USSR occupied first place in Iran's foreign trade with Soviet-Iranian trade comprising a third of the total. In the late 1930s Reza Shah tried to offset the dominance of the USSR and Britain by introducing Germany as a third and balancing power. However, Russia was given a sugar monopoly by the Iranian Government in 1933 and

3 Leonard Shapiro (e.d.) Soviet Treaty Series : A Collection of Bi-lateral Treaties, Agreements and Conventions Vol.I (Georgetown University Press, Washington - D.C. 1950-1955) pp.92

in 1936 she was taking 28% of Iran's exports and providing her with 30% of her imports. Russian engineers and technicians began to pour into the country. Iran never guessed that Russia's strong hold in her geographical and strategic links will affect her internal political links. The 1940 treaty of economic cooperation, made a duty-free exchange of goods and the participation of delegates of both nations, in each other's projects, exhibitions and other programmes. Russian orientalists attended the Ferdosi celebration of 1935, and the 800th anniversary of the poet Nezami's death has celebrated in Moscow, in return Iran sent congratulations on the 23rd anniversary of the October revolution. In 1937 Iranians living round the Caspian were offered the choice of Soviet nationality or expulsion - a step which aroused considerable indignation in Iran.

A secret protocol of a draft agreement between Germany, Italy, Japan and the Soviet Union on 26th November 1940, stated that all nations should respect Iran's sovereignty and political independence. But Russia was prepared to accept the draft of the 'Four Power Pact' under conditions that the areas south of Batum and Baku in the general direction of the Persian Gulf is recognized as the centre of the aspirations of the Soviet Union. No agreement was reached and a month later, Hitler issued his 'Operation Barbarossa' order to attack the

Soviet Union.⁴ The German attack began on 22 June 1941. Reza Shah declared his country's neutrality. Germany was seen as an enemy to USSR and Britain, which became allies in a common war against a common enemy. On 25 August 1941, after the Iranian government had rejected an ultimatum to expel all Germans from its territory, Britain and USSR troops entered Iran.⁵ The pro-German Reza Shah was forced to abdicate and was succeeded by his son, Muhammad Reza Pahlavi.

Iran became important as a corridor of US military supplies to the USSR. The British-Soviet occupation was formalized by a treaty of alliance between the U.K., the Soviet Union and Iran. It was signed in Tehran on 29 January 1942. The Allied Powers undertook 'to respect the territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Iran' and co-operation between the three governments in a common aim to defeat the Nazis.

At the Tehran Conference between Roosevelt Churchill and Stalin from 28 November to December 1st, 1948, the Soviets signed a declaration promising Iran economic assistance and to respect the independence, sovereignty and territorial

4 Raymond J. Soutag and James S. Beddie (ed.), Nazi Soviet Relations, 1939-1941 (Department of State, Washington, D.C. 1948) pp. 242-3.

5 Llland M. Goodrich (ed.) Documents on American Foreign Relations Vol : IV (World Peace Foundation, Boston, 1942) pp. 674

integrity of Iran.⁶

However, in 1946, Iran gave four significant concessions to Russia:

- 1 To have a joint establishment of Russian - Iranian Oil Company - USSR had 51% of the share.
- 2 To grant 3 cabinet posts to the Tudeh party members
- 3 To recognize the rebel Azerbaijan Government
- 4 To withdraw Iran's complaint against Russia before the United Nations.⁷

After Stalin's death in 1953, the Tudeh Party adhered to rigid, dogmatic stalinist positions and held anti-Western co-operation with other nations.

In March 1951, the British owned Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC) was nationalized. This led to a total Western boycott for Iranian oil, while Russia strongly supported the Iranian stance. With Mohammad Mossadeq's appointment as the Prime Minister in 1951, it appears that Britain was being replaced by the Americans. Mossadeq was anti-British and the American pressure in Iran was too much of a price to be paid by USSR. USSR moved

6 Quoted in - Aryeh Y. Yodfat, The Soviet Union and Revolutionary Iran (New York: St. Martin's Press, New York 1984) pp. 17

7 IVO. J. Lederer and Wayne S. Vacinich, Soviet Union and the Middle East - Post II World War Era (Stanford University, Hoover Institution Press California, 1974), p. 61

closer to Turkey while America moved closer to Britain.

In mid August 1953, the Shah was forced to leave his country. The country was in the grip of the Tudeh party for first two days but Moscow failed to give long term assistance to the Tudeh party. A camp staged by General Fazallah Zahadi with American assistance on 19 August 1953 defeated Mossadeq who was subsequently arrested. The Shah returned on 21 August 1953. Once again cordial Soviet-Iranian relations continued and an agreement of 2 December 1954 provided for an exchange of certain border areas and the turning over of World War debts to Iran.

In the mid-1950s Soviet policy towards Iran underwent a complete change. On 24 February 1955, a Kleseru sponsored mutual defence treaty, known as the Baghdad Pact was signed between Turkey, Iraq, Pakistan and Iran. Iran's entry into the pact ended its officially proclaimed policy of neutrality and even-handedness between East and West, and it now became integrates into the Western camp. The Shah's decision to do so was based on a conviction that only massive American aid would enable his regime to survive. The Baghdad Pact evoked considerable anxiety in the USSR. They tried to circumvent the pact by establishing a presence to the south. It entered into arms deal with Egypt in 1955, Syria in 1958 and with Iraq in 1958. The Soviets, on learning of Iran's intention to sign

the security pact with USA, promised Iran a long-term non-aggression pact and considerable economic aid. So Iran entered into negotiations with the USSR on a non-aggression treaty.⁸ The Soviet mission failed in its aims as the mission arrived two weeks late in Tehran. Meanwhile, the USA, Britain West Germany, Turkey and Pakistan appealed to Iran to resist the Soviet proposals. The Shah signed the American-Iranian treaty on 5th March 1959. The Soviets sharply protested at the move, considering it inconsistent with the 1921 and 1927 Soviet-Iranian treaties. Iran turned a deaf ear to the Soviet's campaign against Iran. USSR wanted Iran to withdraw from any alliance with the West while itself not giving it the same economic and defence assistance as the West could offer.

Modern American arms poured into Iran to counter the massive Soviet arms supplies to Iraq, Syria, Egypt and Afghanistan.

After J.F. Kennedy assumes power in USA, USA initiated a process of withdrawal from the region. The Shah decided to terminate Iran's sole dependence on USA and renewed its relations with USSR. On 15 September 1962, Iran pledged not to allow any foreign missile bases on its territory.⁹ Three

⁸ Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi 'Mission for My Country' (NEW YORK, Mc Graw Hill, New York, 1961) p.122.

⁹ The Times, 21 December 1962

months later Soviet gave Iran, economic, cultural and technical co-operation with emphasis on hydro-electric power stations and on fisheries. The Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet, Leonid Brezhnev, visited Iran in November 1963 - and this itself exemplified the vast improvement in relations. The Shah visited the USSR from 21 June to 3 July 1965 whereby the construction of a metallurgical plant, a machine - building plant and a trans-Iranian pipeline for delivering gas from Iran to USSR, was agreed.

In February 1967, it became known that Iran and the USSR had signed a secret \$ 110 million arms agreement. USA was very stern at this and wanted payment in hard cash. The Shah later disclosed that Iran had already received shipments of trucks and armoured personnel carriers from the Soviet Union. Later, a eight-year repayment plan at 2 1/2% interest was given to Iran.

After the Arab-Israeli war in June 1967, the Shah saw a danger to his regime from radical Arab forces. It was finally agreed by all Gulf countries to create a Western oriented defense organization with each other's assistance. Iran, backed by Russia, rejected its participation in this endeavour. The Shah at the most intended to have a equilibrium with the west and east. The soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968 and the presence of Soviet naval vessels in the Indian

Ocean made Iran once again suspicious of Soviets' intentions.

On the 2,500th anniversary of the founding of the Persian Empire, the Soviet Union proposed to extend the old friendship agreements, to which the Shah disagreed. Shah's intention was to diversify Iran's foreign policy and avoid complete dependence on the USA. Iran was getting military assistance from Soviet Union, USA and Britain.

After signing the Soviet-Iranian treaty of friendship and co-operation on 9th August 1971, Iran made a secret ambassadorial level relations with the People's Republic of China. The Soviets signed a friendship treaty with Iraq on 9th April 1972, in order to use it as a tool of soviet policy - a 'proxy' to create instability in the Gulf region.

Iranis' feeling of insecurity increased as a result of a series of developments that evoked proximity to it; Britain's evacuation of the Gulf; Iraqi claims to Kuwait; the independence of Bahrain, Qatar and the UAE; the revolt in the Dhofar province of Oman which was supported by the radical People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) regime, whose relations with the USSR were growing stronger. It looked as if the Soviets were replacing Britain in the Gulf area. This led the Shah to move even closer to the USA.

On 21 March 1973, Iran nationalised its oil industry, as directed by the Soviet Union.

During the years 1971-76, the Shah's internal policy had been a hard-line one. Early 1976 saw a thorough abolition of communism in Iran. There were 3,000 communists prisoners in Iran.

Early 1977 saw the start of a policy of liberalization, coinciding with the beginning of Jimmy Carter's presidency in the USA. In 1978, the Iranians were discontented with the Shah's rule and Iran was internally a disturbed nation. The Shah moved closer to USSR and further renewed its economic ties with it in 1979. By the end of January 1979, Soviets decided to gain better terms by backing the then Key Leader Khomeini.

On 16th January 1979, the Shah left Iran. A week after the Shah's departure, the Soviets broke with him, denouncing him as a corrupt dictator. Although the Shah died of cancer in a Cairo hospital on 27 July 1980, Soviet accusations of the Shah continued even after his death. The Soviet support for Iran's revolutionary regime was still more lukewarm by June 1979. The relations worsened and this resulted in cancellation of a number of joint economic projects. Iran ceased to be an appendage of the US military machine, withdrew from the CENTO military-political alliance and ceased to be a gendarme of the Persian Gulf. On 3 November 1979, the Iranian government decided to abrogate Articles V and VI of the friendship treaty of

26 February 1921, to which the Soviet government did not pay any attention until 1980.

Iran of 1979 was in no way similar to post World War II period, or the Mossadegh era, when a pro-Soviet party seemed to monopolize the allegiance of much of the politically articulate Iranians. The Soviet Union's hostility towards Khomeini, especially after the hostage crisis, was so intense that even Iran's revitalization was not considered too high a price for Khomeini's downfall.

Just as the Soviets would not tolerate the US occupation of Iran, the Islamic Republic was convinced that the US would not permit any Soviet invasion. Iran was a keen partner in Soviet's policy. When Soviet marched into Afghanistan during Christmas of 1979, there were severe demonstrations outside the Soviet Embassy in Tehran and the ambassador was requested to meet Khomeini in Qom immediately. Reliable reports indicate the stern reply of Soviet as that the ambassador gave the Iranian government eight hours to secure the safety of the embassy and its personnel.

"or else, an independent country called Iran will simply be erased off the face of the earth"¹⁰

To the hardliners possible sovietization of Iran may appear as

¹⁰ Quoted in Sepehr Zabih, 'Iran since the revolution' (Great Britain, 1982), pp. 173

the kind of just punishment which its present regime richly deserves.

USA and Iran

The United States relations with Iran can be viewed only as a part of the total American posture in the Gulf. American long-range policy was framed with a step that a strong-hold on Iran will save the US from getting involved in a nightmare of inter-regime and intra-regime conflicts which would be suppressed under the pretense of repelling aggression.

Iran's attitude towards the United States was evidently influenced by American policy towards Iran in the post-Shah era. The United States exercised control over the Shah's actions and dictated policy from Washington.

The evolution of U.S. policy in the Gulf, particularly to Iran, can be categorized in four main doctrines, with varying degree of clarity and effectiveness:

- 1 The Truman Doctrine - (March 12, 1947)
- 2 The Eisenhower Doctrine- (January 5, 1957)
- 3 The Nixen Doctrine - (February 18, 1970)
- 4 The Carter Doctrine - (January 23, 1980)¹¹

¹¹ Emile. A. Nakhleh The Persian Gulf and American Policy (NEW YORK) Praeger Publishers New York, U.S.A. 1982) pp. 16

As early as 1947, Washington controlled the foreign policy of Iran. Even in 1949, the US Department of State had considered that, for military assistance purposes, Iran could not be considered amongst those states that were vital to US security or under direct and immediate danger. However, the 1949, Mutual Defense Assistance Programme lumped Iran together with the Philippines and Korea under Title 3 status, to share a total of \$ 27 million.

Eisenhower Administration

The period of the Mossadegh government had two important effects upon US attitude towards Iran. It forced U.S. to recognize the Shah as the only capable leader of maintaining a pro-Western orientation of the country, and also forced the British to withdraw its military presence in the area in 1968. The Shah's return to power (1953), thus thoroughly transferred Iran from the U.K. sphere of influence to that of the United States. The Shah needed tangible support from the U.S. in terms of both economic and military assistance, if he intended to build a powerful base within the bureaucracy and the armed forces. As a result US military assistance increased nearly fivefold in 1952 to 1953. Much of the aid was in the guise of various provisions of the Mutual Defense Assistance Programme (MDAP) and the Mutual Security Act of 1954. The defence support

grant was injected into the military appropriation sector of the budget. In two years (1956-57), Iran received more than \$ 60 million as defence funds. Even with this support, the Iranian government had a deficit of \$ 80 million in June 1957.¹²

During the Eisenhower years the philosophy of collective regional security agreements as a bulmark against communism was zealously promoted. In the Baghdad Pact, U.S. maintained an associate membership of Iran. Iran joined the pact in 1955 as USA failed to maintain its promises on military and economic assistance. The US government attempted to convince the Shah that it was economic madness to mount up Iran's defence expenditure. Iran could not hope to conduct a *tons azimuts* defence policy and therefore, the best guarantee of Iranian's sovereignty lay in 'the deterrent strength of the United States'. President Eisenhower planned to equip the armed forces of Iran in terms of quality and not in numbers of personnel. However, this generosity was overtaken when in July 1958, the government of Iraq was overthrown by a group of radical army officers. This brought serious confrontations with the Shah and U.S. In 1959, the Shah was made to enter into negotiations with

12 Quoted in Hossein Amirsadeghi, The Security of the Persian Gulf, (Billing and Sans hinted U.K., 1981) pp. 64

the Russians over a non-aggression treaty. Khrushchev planned to give the Shah anything he wanted. Meanwhile, a compromise was reached with the U.S. and the Shah renewed his cordial relationship. This made Russia indulge in an anti-Shah propaganda campaign.

The Shah did succeed in his immediate aim of lowering more budgetary support from the United States. President Eisenhower diverted \$ 13 million from the Presidential Contingency Fund and thus met half the cost of the Iranian budget deficit. NIKE $\frac{1}{2}$ missiles began to arrive in Iran before the end of Eisenhower's term of office. The armed forces were, however, expanded during the period 1959/60 and US military assistance to Iran also peaked during these years to an average of \$90 million per year. A bilateral security pact with all the CENTO members and with Iran was also signed on 5 March 1959.

The Kennedy Administration

In March 1961, President Kennedy outlined a philosophy that centred upon long range planning for the economic development of the recipient states and upon the implicit right of the US fully to involve itself in all matters pertaining to the utilisation of American aid. This was the most active period of US interventionism.

The US President personally appointed a presidential task force to review the internal political problems of Iran, the progress of MAP aid to Iran and on the agencies connected with the military aid to Iran. Iran was asked to deal with its internal political problems rather than foreign and military affairs. The Shah showed signs of deviation from the U.S. support and hence pinned its hopes on Russia. President Kennedy sent Chester Bowles to Iran in 1962 to assess the extent of Iran's social, economic, political and military problem and how to preserve its pro-Western policy without encouraging excessive demands for aid.

Stressing the inter-relationship between military, economic and political factors, the final proposal took the form of classic 'carrot and stick' approach to the problem. The US armed forces in Iran were reduced to 150,000 men and the proposed MAP programmes was also reduced. The Shah was unimpressed and after six months of negotiations, the Shah accepted the inevitable and signed the agreement on reduction.

Aware that Iran was considered by the Soviet Union to be 'analogous to United States relations with China', the Shah reacted favourably to a Soviet proposal to reach an understanding which would ban all 'foreign rocket bases' from Iranian soil.

President Kennedy, thus concentrated on a long term economic development of Iran, reduced its military aid in future, as he felt that Iran could well afford to take care of itself. Before the Shah could chart out the chances to gain more U.S aid, there was a premature ending of the Kennedy Administration.

The Johnson Administration

Kennedy's period was presidential involvement, whereas Johnson's period was of least presidential interest. All developments of US-Iranian relations were dealt with the administrative suction of the US bureaucracy, rather than the upper echelons of the executive.

President Johnson was too preoccupied with affairs in South East Asia and with his own domestic social programmes, thus neglecting the Middle East until 1966, when his interest was checked due to the sudden increase in oil revenues. Against apparent Iranian opposition, the US forced Iran to sign a memorandum of understanding on 4 July 1964, which committed Iran to purchase military equipments for cash only with the United States.¹³ As a result of this agreement, Iran was to

¹³ Dulight Eisenhower, Message to Congress, January 6, 1957
Quoted in Documents on the Middle East, pp. 90-91

receive \$ 504 million in credits to purchase US military services and equipment during the years 1965-69, of which more than \$200 million came from the Export-Import Bank through the 'Country X' loan scheme.¹⁴ Special army and navy teams were sent to Iran to train the Iranians arm force. Some of the aircrafts sold to Iran include the F-4 D and F-5 and F-4s.

Iran also indulged in trade agreements with Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Romania and USSR simultaneously. The Iranians also received a natural gas plant as a gift from the Soviet Union. This alarmed the U.S. and Iran threatened that they would purchase of Soviet missiles and aircrafts if credits for the F-4s were not forthcoming from the United States. The Shah's political and strategic implications went into a week long consultations and finally it was decided that the US would supply a squadron of F-4s worth \$ 160 million to Iran.

The Shah offered a consolation prize to Soviet Union in February 1967, by announcing the low-technology defence material to the value of \$ 110 million, to be purchased on credit from the Soviet Union. This signalled to the US that his threat of July 1966 was not completely hollow.

14 Foreign Military Sales Facts : 1975, p.19

But, the Congress had been kept in a deliberately unenlightened state on the arms sales and on knowing this called for a hearing into arms transfer policy, which resulted in the ending of the country X loan scheme, the curbing of the power of the ILW and, through the Foreign Military Sales Act of 1968, arms sale to Iran was minimised. This had little effect upon Iranian arms procurement ambitions, for by 1969 the Shah paid most of his credits to US.

Although stymied in the early stages of the Johnson Administration by the hostility that was made evident by the termination of grant and in 1964, the Shah was able to establish his autonomy very successfully during this period

The Nixon Administration

After the termination of the British military presence in the Gulf in 1968, the Shah promoted Iran as the new gendarme to fill the vacuum and to present the Iraqis and USSR. But, the United States, interventionist policy imposed severe constraints upon the Shah's plans for a military and politically strong and autonomous Iran.

A study by the National Security Council in 1969, on the Iranian situation concluded that Iran should be fully supported in its desire to fill the vacuum left by the British. With Iran and Saudi Arabia acting as the 'twin pillars' of

Western interests in the area, the threat of Soviet interventionism could be minimised without the need for direct US involvement. Since Iran served as a proxy of the US, the US considered it right to give it the proper tools to do the job.

By 1971, US planned to withdraw its forces from Iran. The Shah's increasing fears of Soviet advancement, urged the US to parry this advancement by the surrogate local power which was ready to perform the function of a 'regional policeman' (Iran).

Through the increased oil revenues, the Shah began to order military equipments of a qualitative and quantitative nature that hitherto had been unimaginable.

In May 1972, President Nixon visited Tehran, and the Shah was told that henceforth all Iranian arms requirements would be allowed to be formulated by the Iranians themselves and that the U.S. would act simply as an implementational agency. The Shah was supplied with all weapons for which he could pay and demanded.

During the years 1972-78, Iran ordered about \$ 20 billion worth of US arms. American reconnaissance stations were also established near to Soviet borders. Now the Shah was dependent not only on continuing American supplies, but also

on the availability of American specialists. Rising oil prices and the negative American balance of payments meant that the USA had an economic interest in the sale of arms to Iran. This served as a competition among American companies. The US armed forces - the army, navy and air force, all had vested interests in the selling weapons system to Iran. However, the US public and other leaders were against Nixon's decision of arms supply to Iran.

In October 1973, the Shah had a \$ 12,000 million 'shopping spree'. Thus, the American economy seemed to be mounting up the petrodollars and encouraging Iran to get 'armed till its teeth'. What had been the 'Iranian problem' during the Truman, Eisenhower and Kennedy administration had, by 1969, been transformed into an alliance and partnership which precluded even constructive criticism.

The Nixon doctrine called for action by local states using U.S weapons but not U.S soldiers. The operative principal of the Nixon doctrine were partnership, strength and willingness to negotiate. "Peace through partnership"

The years of appeasement that the U.S ambassador had complained of in 1959 had robbed the U.S of the ability to deal honestly with Iran and its problem.

It is important to note that the hostage crisis was an exceptionally tumultuous event in the relations between the

two countries and as such did not permit a balanced examination of US-Iran relations. The assumption of power by President Reagan put those relations in a new context. The victory of the revolution confronted the U.S with several positions concerning Iran. Each of these related to a specific interpretation and comprehension of the revolution. One position interpreted the overthrow of the Shah as an agonizing setback in terms of U.S strategic economic and a whole range of other goals in the region.

One school of thought view that Iranian revolution was basically an optimistic one. It held that the overthrow of the Shah must be accepted by the United States as at least a blessing in disguise. It was the logical conclusion of the US human rights policy. However, the general agreement remains that the Shah had lost the determination to rule and the opposition to him had acquired, by the end of 1978, a gigantic popular dimension. The U.S would be hard put to oppose a popular revolution so soon after its own clamour for the respect of human rights. Moreover, pragmatism dictated that the U.S should seek to accommodate the new regime. Its anti-American rhetoric should be viewed as basically for domestic consumption.

The U.S. could never reinstate another Shah like regime in the country, so it preferred leaving Iran to its own devices and

instead concentrated on countries like Saudi Arabia, the Gulf States, Turkey and Egypt - where active American support was sincerely welcomed. This concept was of course at the root of the so-called Carter Doctrine announced in the wake of Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979.

The Carter Doctrine

From 1947 to 1980, U.S. presidents felt an increasing need to clearly define the area that they perceived as vital to U.S national security and strategic interest. This 'interest' was dramatically sharpened by President Carter.

In his "The State of the Union" address on 23 January, 1980 President Carter's message on the Soviet threat to the Persian Gulf was clear:

"Let our positions be absolutely clear: An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the USA, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force".¹⁵

Once the shock of the Iranian revolution had begun to dissipate, the Carter administration embarked on a policy of accommodation with Khomeini.

This administration interfered in Iran's domestic affairs, particularly in view of the fact that the US had given political

15 Jimmy Carter, "The State of the Union", address to Congress on January 23, 1980. Quoted in Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents

refuge to a large number of military and civilian associates of the Shah. The Iranian response was a well-orchestrated barrage of anti-American propaganda. The U.S should decide whom it wanted to accommodate, the officials of the fallen regime or the new Islamic government. If it was the latter, then it should tolerate the practices of Khomeini's justice. The U.S., also failed to consider an academic for the position of the U.S ambassador. This was strongly opposed by the Iranians in June 1980.

In short, one learns from these varying degrees of relations with the various U.S. leaders that Iran had demanded three things from the USA, as concrete evidence that they had genuinely accepted the revolution. One was that the USA should absolutely cease and desist from expressing concern about the trials and punishments of officials of the foreign regime. Secondly, that the U.S should agree to extradite at least some of the most notorious military and civilian officials of the Shah who had been granted refuge. Thirdly, the USA should abandon any idea of sheltering the Shah and indeed should cooperate with the Iranian authorities to recover some of the Shah's assets in the US. Every account indicates that the USA was most conciliatory on all these scores, literally accepting Khomeini's terms for accommodation. This poster was

severely tested by the admission of the Shah to the U.S. in October. The chain of events that it unleashed had two serious results. As far as the Khōmeini government was concerned, that act simply proved that the US protestation about accepting the revolution and accommodating the new regime was a blatant deception. In fact, the U.S was binding its time and preparing itself to achieve Khomeini's downfall. If the failure to predict the Shah's downfall had been the first dramatic US failure, the inability to comprehend the difficulties of accommodating Khomeini' might surely be considered as a second disastrous US error.

The main areas of focus, during the Carter administration, in the Mideast policy was the Pallestinian conflict, the gulf security and its energy crisis. Unfortunately, during the final months of the Carter administration, the U.S foreign policy was perceived as vacillating and lacking in leadership. The Carter administration's reactions to the upheavel in Iran, to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and to Soviet threats in the gulf area left U.S friends in the region bewildered and unsure of Washington's resolve to resist Soviet aggression and of its determination to defend U.S. interests. Like all countries, U.S had no permanent friends or permanent enemies, only permanent interests.

In fact the Gulf leaders heard many promises and exaggerated rhetoric from Carter, but they saw very little action. The Carter doctrine remained more words than substance.

As to the concept of strategic consensus, it is obvious that the Regan Administration is moving towards a preclusive posture towards Iran.

Although the Reagan Administration has attempted to create a new image of U.S. concern and resolve in the Gulf, by early 1982, it failed to develop a comprehensive political program for the region and it responded to urgent developments in the region (such as the assassination of President Anwar Sadat of Egypt) only through military aid.

Caught in a web of contradictory concerns and pressures, the US appears incapable of initiating active new policies towards Iran as long as Khomeini's regime holds a radically different perception about Iran's security.

USA and Iraq

It is hard to understand how a government with a basically Soviet styled military and socialist oriented economy, could have upon the victory of the Islamic Revolution veered around overnight, to make giant strides towards West.

But while much attention has been focussed on the graving economic, political and strategic importance of the Gulf

countries, little attention has been paid to Iraq's role in this sensitive region. Iraq has received scant courage on its role with superpowers.

There is very little information on US-Iraqi relations before 1958. Iraq, gained prominent international recognition only after a surprise coup, sounded the death knell for the Hashimite monarch in July 1958.

In a real sense, the two countries have never been particularly close in the past. If Britain was Iraq's principal great power ally until 1958, the Soviet Union took that role in the later years. Although American companies had a 23.75% of share in the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC) the venture was dominated by British interests. Iraq was considered comparatively better under the British, by the United States. The US also criticised the British backed Iraqi government for its repression and narrow base. The British made it clear that Iraq should discourage any US political or economic foothold. Until US remained as a western ally of Saudi Arabia and Turkey in the late 1940s and assumed a senior Western role in Egypt, Iran, Lebanon and even Jordan in the early and middle 1950s, Iraq remained a British stronghold.

Before the July 1958 coup, which ended the Hashimite monarch, two issues had a great effect on US-Iraq relations :

on Palestine and on its regional security. Iraq, like other Arab countries opposed the creation of Israel and was bitterly angry at American policy and it is this disagreement that lay the basis for great strains in the future. On 21 April 1954, instead of joining the Pakistan-Turkey accord, Iraq signed a military aid agreement with the US.

In 1959, US programme in Iraq was initially small, involving only US advisers and \$ 9million in assistance for the four years.¹⁶ Events, however, moved quickly. Iraq withdrew from the Baghdad Pact in March 1959 and briefly severed relations when the US recognised Kuwait in 1961.

During the 1960s, Iraq's increasing hostility and radicalism played a central role in the growing US-Iran alliance. The sale of F-4 fighter planes to the Shah, was justified within the American grant as matching Soviet sales to the Iraqis.

But, in 1961, Iraq and US were moving very closely, when a cultural co-operation agreement was signed in January 1961, a 'Food for Peace' arrangement commenced in August 1963, a US Export-Import loan was made in 1965 and an Agricultural Commodities agreement was negotiated in December 1966. After the end of Qasim's regime in 1963, the ruling Arif brothers renewed economic and commercial ties with the West. After June 1967 war, Iraq severed diplomatic relations with the US, suspended oil shipments, refused US aircrafts overflight rights and announced a boycott of American goods.

In 1967, Iraq broke diplomatic relations with the US and rejected the repeated American attempts at resuming it again.

In 1968, when the Ba'th came to power, reconciliation with the US hardly constituted a priority for Baghdad. However, in 1970s, the Carter administration (until January 1977) reopened formed relations with Iraq.

In 1972, and during the office of Hassan - al - Bakr, a friendship pact was signed between Iraq and the Soviet Union for expanding economic, military and cultural relations between the two countries. The pact was enforced at least until 1978-79. However, despite maintaining its constant ties with Moscow, Baghdad furtively turns to the west to purchase arms, coinciding with the time - i.e. the ex-Shah's regime was fast deteriorating. US failed to react immediately and hence Iraq sought France's help which sold as much as two billion dollars in arms to Iraq. US strategy in the region aimed at attracting Iraq to the West.

The US hold equally unfavourable perceptions of Iraq, as a radical state, an ally of the Soviet Union and a destabilising, revolutionary force in the region. Iraqi knowledge of the US's collaboration with Iran on the Kurdish issue inevitably increased antagonism towards the United States and Baghdad's 1972 friendship treaty with the USSR - thus moving

Iraq to the Soviet Union. The earlier hostilities became integrated into cold war alignments.

After Iraq nationalised the Iraqi/Petroleum Company in 1972, it led to heavy loss in oil export and this hurt the United States most as the U.S was its highest bidder. After October 1973, (i.e. when Arab-Israeli war began), Iraq joint U.S. petroleum income due to this collaboration increased by nearly 20%.

The U.S. imported \$ 123 million, in 1971 worth of oil and \$ 671 million in 1976.

From 1977 onwards, the US motives for attempting to improve relations with Iraq were of two kinds:

- 1 The Carter Administration denounced the East-West aspect of Third World Conflict and did not adopt its predecessor's view of Iraq solely as a Soviet ally. Iraq was seen as a potential ally in maintaining regional stability and in opposing Soviet expansionism.
- 2 The growing rift between Baghdad and Moscow

With Khomeini assuming power in Iran the US moved to Iran - so Iraq wanted Soviet support in combating western influence but had no intention of helping the USSR gain hegemony over the region and Iraq wanted to project its own influence throughout the region.

On 27 March 1979, Saddam Hussain told an Arab Conference in Baghdad that the US had been making.....

"monthly or at least yearly attempts during the past five years to restore relations with Iraq, but this country will continue to view the US as an enemy of the Arabs as long as Israel, with US backing continues to occupy Arab lands"¹⁷

The US dependence on Iraqi oil was not hampered despite the weak relations. In 1979, the US took only 3.2% of Iraq's oil exports. US exports to Iraq, meanwhile, grew from \$ 382 million in 1976 to around \$ 700 million in 1980.¹⁸

The US share of Iraq's import market which totalled an estimated \$ 5.5 billion in 1979, remained relatively steady over those years.¹⁹ By 1976, 22 US Companies had branches in Iraq.

By the first half of 1980, US import of oil amounted to 37,000 barrels a day from Iraq.²⁰ In spite of this Iraq was only 9th among American suppliers. Iraq, in one way (oil revenue) depended on the US not US on Iraq.

17 New York Times, 20 March 1981.

18 Iraq : US Food Credits Granted - Middle East Review Vol.10, Jan.-1983

19 B. Rubin, "The Great Powers in the Middle East - 1941 - 47 The road to Cold War" (London, Fuenk Cars, London, 1980) p.137

20 Ibid - p.138

At the inception of the war, Washington did not intend to make Saddam Hussein dependent and subservient to the U.S. This was, because even before the war, Saddam Hussein was considered a US inspired agent at the head of the Ba'ath Party, Washington's principal goal was to obstruct the channels through which the Islamic Revolution might infiltrate into Iraq and at the same time minimize Soviet influence in that country.

When the non-aligned conference at Baghdad failed to drag Iran for negotiation, Saddam Hussein made efforts to get foreign support for ending the war. The U.S. rushed to help Saddam by instigating Israel to invade Lebanon, thus creating a political atmosphere conducive to help Saddam declare a ceasefire.

Before embarking on war against Iran, Saddam Hussein held serious talks to establish financial relations with the U.S. The West started out its political support for Iraq on the advent of the war and increased such support by declaring its agreement with an imposed ceasefire as proposed by the United Nations.

The U.S. position in the Persian Gulf is very essential to its very existence - Washington's role in controlling Iran-Iraq conflict.

The U.S. interest in the Persian Gulf is due to three elements:

- 1 The countries of the Persian Gulf which try to deny the West its rights of unhindered access to their resources and which endeavours to frustrate any effort and any exertion to force in assuring such rights,
- 2 The Invasion of the Soviet Union
- 3 A devouring power declaring a revolutionary movement in the international system.²¹

In order to safeguard its interest, the West would need to implement a forceful dual strategy. The first policy would pave the way for an independent policy, that is a return to the economic interference of the Classic US dollar policy. The second policy which would also impel the Soviet Union to accept it, is a political strategy based upon co-operation for arms control and a novel effort towards detente. In countries like Iran, where Washington's influence fails to achieve any result and exploit its non-nuclear forces, an 'offensive' strategy would be seen as appropriate, as the rise of Iran as a dominating power in the Persian Gulf portends disaster for Washington.

After Israel's raid on Iraq's nuclear reactor, in June 1981, the U.S and Iraq negotiated through United Nations channels to produce a compromise resolution on the issue.

21 M. Khadduri, 'Socialist Iraq' (Middle East Institute, Washington, 1978), p.172

Concluding Perspective:

Extensive mistrust between the US and Iraq in recent years has manifested itself over two principal issues : Gulf security and the Arab-Israeli conflict. Iraq faced a heavy jolt when the U.S sent aid to Iran and AWACs(radar) planes to Saudi Arabia.

In its relations with the U.S, Iraq has consistently been influenced by the Palestinian question. The convergence of Iranian, Israeli and United States interests is encouraging and backing the Kurdish rebellion. Such attempts are sure to destabilise and isolate Iraq thereby adversely affecting US-Iraqi relations.

This hardline understanding will not bring the unlikelihood of a speedy comprehensive settlement or a direct clash between the U.S and Iraq. Similarly, as a leader of the non-aligned movement, Iraq would hardly be likely to ally itself openly or closely with the U.S. Iraq's own political culture - the Portsmouth Treaty and the Baghdad Pact experiences are obvious examples, illustrates the price that Iraq may pay for alliance with the West.

On the American side, Washington's policy towards Iraq depends heavily on the attitude taken by Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf Arab states. Washington sees Iraq as an actor there, but not as the region's new leader.

The best way for Iraq to gain coverage over U.S policy would be to demonstrate that it has no intention of undermining other Arab States in the Gulf and will help build constructive Arab security alternatives to direct US involvement through a workable regional system. This lies somewhere between enstrangement and alliance.

The road 'towards improvement' of United States - Iraq relations would be a 'long one'.

USSR and Iraq

Before July 1958 revolution, Iraq was described in the Soviet Union as a semi-colonial country, nominally independent but actually subject to British colonial domination. Its economy was considered to be mainly pre-capitalist ; and relations of production in the countryside were largely semi-feudal. The petty bourgeoisie were more numerous. ²²

The Iraqi revolution of July 14, 1958 was welcomed in the Soviet Union as a great victory for the Arab national liberation movement, which put an end to the Baghdad Pact and to Iraqi dependence on Britain. Moscow recognized the new regime on July 16, and exchanged diplomatic representations with Iraq.

22 Quoted in Aryeh Yedfat - 'Arab Politics in the Soviet Mirror' (Israel University Press, 1973) pp. 146 and in J Mohammed, WMR (World Marxist Review) September 1958. p.70

The new government's announcement of its support of the Bandung Conference Principles, its decision to withdraw from the Baghdad Pact, which changed its name to CENTO, made it indulge in an arms deal with the Soviet Union. Thus, the 1958 revolution, brought a force in Iraq that was ready to cooperate with the Soviet Union and the local communists.

The Iraqi republic established trade agreements on economic and technical cooperation and on cultural cooperation in March 1959. Iraq expressed its positive neutrality by abrogating the Anglo-Iraqi agreement, the agreements with the USA on American aid to Iraq and the agreement based on the Eisenhower Doctrine.

Further, as per Khrushchev's desire, the Iraqi communist party (ICP) was given support and aid from Russia and he also opposed the UAR-Iraq merger. Khrushchev preferred for a "more advanced" Iraq and economic reforms were carried "within the framework of the capitalist mode of production."

The Ba'ath party was a special target of Soviet attacks. On the other hand they aimed to make the Iraqi Communist Party as the strongest and the most influential party in the country. Its, perhaps this which made the ICP succeed in suppressing the Mosul revolt of March 1959, and the massacres of anti-communists and Muslims.

Soviet Reservations in the Qassem Regime

During Qassem's regime (1960-1963), there were tremendous changes in Iraq's foreign policy. It rejected the Western alliances and aid, but whole heartedly welcomed Soviet's friendship and the unselfish Soviet aid to the new republic. A new agreement on economic and technical cooperation was signed between the two countries on August 18, 1960.

Qassem utilised the ICP to combat Nasser's followers in Iraq. Soviet leaders aided Iraq with economic and military aid for this. Despite this aid Qassem proved to be a difficult person for the Soviet leaders to work with. He skilfully played the communists off against the Nassarites, weakening both and then emerged as the dominant force in Iraq.

On several occasions there were clashes between the Muslims and the Communists due to their party ideology. By October 1961, the real ICP had refused legal status and that a dummy party, consisting of police agents and shady adventurers was officially listed as the "Communist Party".

This indicates the desire of the bourgeoisie to disrupt the party and the unity of the working class. In short, the strong Russian hold was deteriorating.

Soviet appraisals of the last years of Qassem's regime came only after the Ba'thist camp and Qassem's downfall on February 8, 1963. Though Iraq withdrew from the Baghdad Pact, under him, it

stood for neutralism and non-alignment. Thus he conducted the policy of 'balancing' between the Right and Left until the very end. It was the imperialists, the supporters of the monarchy, the Ba'thists and pro-Nasser elements who, despite the contradictions in their aims and interests, wanted to get rid of Qassem.

His overthrow, was a result of his clash with the Russian ideologies of Communism and he had no chance to live up to the masses interest.

The Ba'th Regime - February 8th - November 18th, 1963

Soviet appraisals of the Ba'th party in Iraq, as in Syria, were negative almost from the first days of the Iraqi republic. With the entry of the Ba'th Regime in 1963, Iraq was moved towards fascism.

The Ba'thist indulged in mass repression and bloody terrorism of communists on the pretext of declaring them partisans of the Qassem regime. The CPSU (COMMUNIST PARTY OF
SOVIET UNION) was alarmed at this act and held mass meetings and demonstrations in Moscow to condemn the killings. Later, Moscow accused the Chinese of supporting the Ba'th regime in Iraq.²³

23 Ibid pp. 168

All Ba'th schemes had come to naught, when the Ba'th regime came to an end on November 18, 1963, after a coup led by President 'Arif', seized power at the Centre. All soviet comments and references to Iraq revealed great satisfaction at the end of the 'fascist' Ba'th regime.

The Arif Regime

Soviet relations with Iraq and the Soviet view of its internal policies became more favourable from the end of 1963. The CPSU expressed satisfaction over the failure of the Ba'tha Party and welcomed relations with the Arif regime.

The Soviet Prime Minister, Kosygin, sent a personal envoi on July 28, 1966 to President Arif and expressed its intention to extend their protocol ties with Iraq and also agreed to expand economic and technical aid to Iraq.

The Iraqi foreign minister visited the USSR on April 17-22, 1967 and the Soviet side "expressed high appreciation for the anti-imperialist policy of the Iraqi Republic as a non-aligned state, and for its possible role in supporting the Arab and other states against the intrigues of imperialism."²⁴

The Soviet supported the grievances of the Kurds in north Iraq. In fact, on July 9 1963, a soviet delegation

24 R.N. Andreasyan, 'The Soviets in the Middle East', International Affairs No.5, 1967, p.71

submitted the Kurdish problems to the UN and even threatened the Iraqi government of interference by CENTO states, and also warned Iran, Turkey and Syria, against intervention in the war against the Kurds.

On November 18, 1963, the Arif government, backed by the Soviet Union, was quoted as saying that equal rights to all Iraqi citizens and requested the Kurds to lay down their arms and set back to work.

Soviet commentators welcomed the ceasefire in Iraqi Kurdistan. As there were Kurds in Iran and Turkey, Soviet indulged in cautious moves in Kurdish Iraq and gave less publicity about the Iraqi Kurdish minorities.

The new Iraqi government formed by General Tahir Yahya on July 10, 1967, broke diplomatic relations with the USA, Britain and Federal German Republic and joint the oil boycott of those countries declared by the Arab States. It also declared its adherence to the anti-imperialistic camp; its consequences of the Israeli aggression, to achieve the unity of the Arab countries following a socialist line to establish security and justice in Iraq and to strengthen relations with the USSR and other socialist countries.

Chairman of the Supreme Soviet, Podgorny visited Iraq

in 1967 and Iraq took a pioneering step to play a nationalising role in the Gulf region and strengthening of friendly relations and co-operations between the Soviet Union and Iraq. Backed by the Soviet Union, Iraq adopted an extreme anti-western position in regard to the Arab Oil boycott and Arab economic relations with the west in general; it also nationalised the American and British shares of the Iraq Petrol Company.

In 1968, Soviet Union listed out what is considered to be Iraq's achievements:

- Introduction of agrarian reform;
- nationalization; - building of new industrial enterprises; - establishment of a state sector of the economy; - restriction of foreign oil companies rights; - the establishment of INOC; - Soviet - Iraqi cooperation - and soviet assistance to Iraq.

The Regime of Arif, in which the USSR had invested so much effort and hope, was overthrown on July 17, 1968. The camp was organized by a group of army officers headed by general Bakr - the return of the Ba'th party.

The establishment of closer relations between Iraq and the USSR made the latter still more interested in a continuation of the existing ceasefire situation.

Kurdish 'extremism' was thus criticised. The USSR was interested in peace in Iraqi Kurdistan, even if that would require Kurds to yield on certain points, as the USSR had done in its acceptance of the Ba'th regime. In spite of the internal Kurdish problem, Iraq concentrated on its international affairs and on its anti-imperialistic orientation.'

The signing in Baghdad on April 9, 1972, of a USSR-Iraqi treaty of friendship and cooperation and the opening on that day of the oil fields and the oil pipelines in North Rumaylah, which was built with Soviet assistance, was praised by the Soviet Union for Iraqi's achievements and ties with the Soviet Union.

On 17th October, 1978, Saddam Hussain spoke in one session of the camp David accords:

"The Soviets are our best friends. The USSR always sides with the Arabs, we act accordingly."²⁵

In December 1978, Hussain and some of his top aids visited the Soviet Union and signed two new economic and technical cooperation agreements.

The Soviets stand concerning the imposed war, since its inception, varies according to 3 stages:

25 Aryeh Yedfat, Arab Politics in the Soviet Union
(Israel University Press, 1973), pp. 181

- 77
- A) From the beginning of the war until Bani Sadr's ouster.
 - B) From the ouster of Bani Sadr until the liberation of Khorramshahr.
 - C) From the liberation of Khorramshahr until the 5th stage of operation Ramadhan.

The first phase of the war was advantageous for Moscow. In the second phase of the war, the Soviets provided Iraq with arms at the same time as attempting to end the war with the stabilization of Saddam. The third of the war, delayed due to the Lionist invasion of southern Lebanon and the United Nations Security Council's resolution, which bearing the endorsement of the U.S and Soviet Union called for a ceasefire, was marked by the beginning of the Ramadhan offensive, eliciting from the Soviets an implicit expression of anxiety over Iran's thrust into Iraqi territory.

In the beginning of the war when Iraq achieved a series of its military objectives like : Khorramshahr, Qarr - e - Shirin, Susangerd and other boarder cities, Moscow failed to react at this. Moscow's portrayal of Iraq as an anti imperialistic country, at the beginning of the war, precluded any sort of condemnation of this aggression.

The Soviets openly declared that they were against the aggressor while openly declaring Iraq as anti-imperialist. It was for this reason that Moscow never put pressure on Iraq

to withdraw its forces but on the other hand supplied Iraq with arms worth one billion dollars, alongwith two other parties of the eastern bloc.

Iraq is linked to the Soviet Union through ties of friendship. In short, Iraq cannot be viewed as a satellite of the Soviet Union and despite friendly relations between the two, there is nothing permanent or inevitable in their ties.

The Iraqi model of the Ba'thist regime revolves around the leftist ideology in the Gulf. The Ba'thist regime came to power in 1963- (end of Qasim regime). Besides its constant boundary disputes with Iran in the Shatt al - Arab area and its territorial disputes with Kuwait, Iraq has had to deal with the Kurdish problem at home. Iraq failed to build a sound ideological bridge to its political elites in the gulf. It has link in a vague Soviet - Iraqi-Indian relationship in the Gulf. Generally speaking, Iraq has suffered from three constraints:

- (1) Diplomatic isolation from its neighbours,
- (2) the lack of a deep-water port on the gulf and
- (3) shaky internal political stability.

Through this preposterous travesty, Iraqis have sought in vain to portray us, in this Islamic land, as accomplices of the Zionist regime.

Chapter III

THE CONFLICT

Chapter-III

THE CONFLICT

The Iran-Iraq war - the world's most inexplicable war and the most costly war in the developing world -- has entered its seventh year. The gulf, today, is the cynsure of world attention and this war between the two cynical neighbours has surfeited the appetite for violence to the entire world, without any purposeful sense of remorse.

Both, Iran and Iraq, are remarkably similar countries. Their populations are predominantly Muslim, with Shia majority -- although the sunni minority has captured state power in Iraq. Among the gulf states both are most developed, with oil production dominating their economies, both adopt non-alignment in their foreign policies, their leadership ideologies though fundamentally at variance, are expansionist by nature. But regimes have their detractors at home, and both have succoured the anti-establishment fugitives from the other side. If despite the many similarities, apart from geographical contiguity historical commonness, community of political experience, similar development heritage and the lately assumed anti-imperialist and non-aligned postures these two neighbours have taken to a collision course, there being clear-cut variables between the two countries of historical geostrategic, human,

ideological, military, economic, domestic, regional, international and diplomatic nature. The differences often coalesce and, given the varying perceptions, they build up the fear psychosis and tension.¹

The Iran-Iraq conflict has deep-seated historical, legal and ideological dimensions.

Roots of Conflict

In this framework, three successive periods can be identified in the history of the Shatt al-Arab dispute:

- 1 The rivalry between regional empires, where the conflict over boundaries was manifested in efforts to demarcate them through fluid tribal allegiances.
- 2 Imperialist penetration, where the conflict over boundaries was manifested in efforts to demarcate them through fixed geographic points, and
- 3 Nationalist rivalry, where the conflict over boundaries has been manifested in efforts to demarcate them through variable cultural characteristics of populations.²

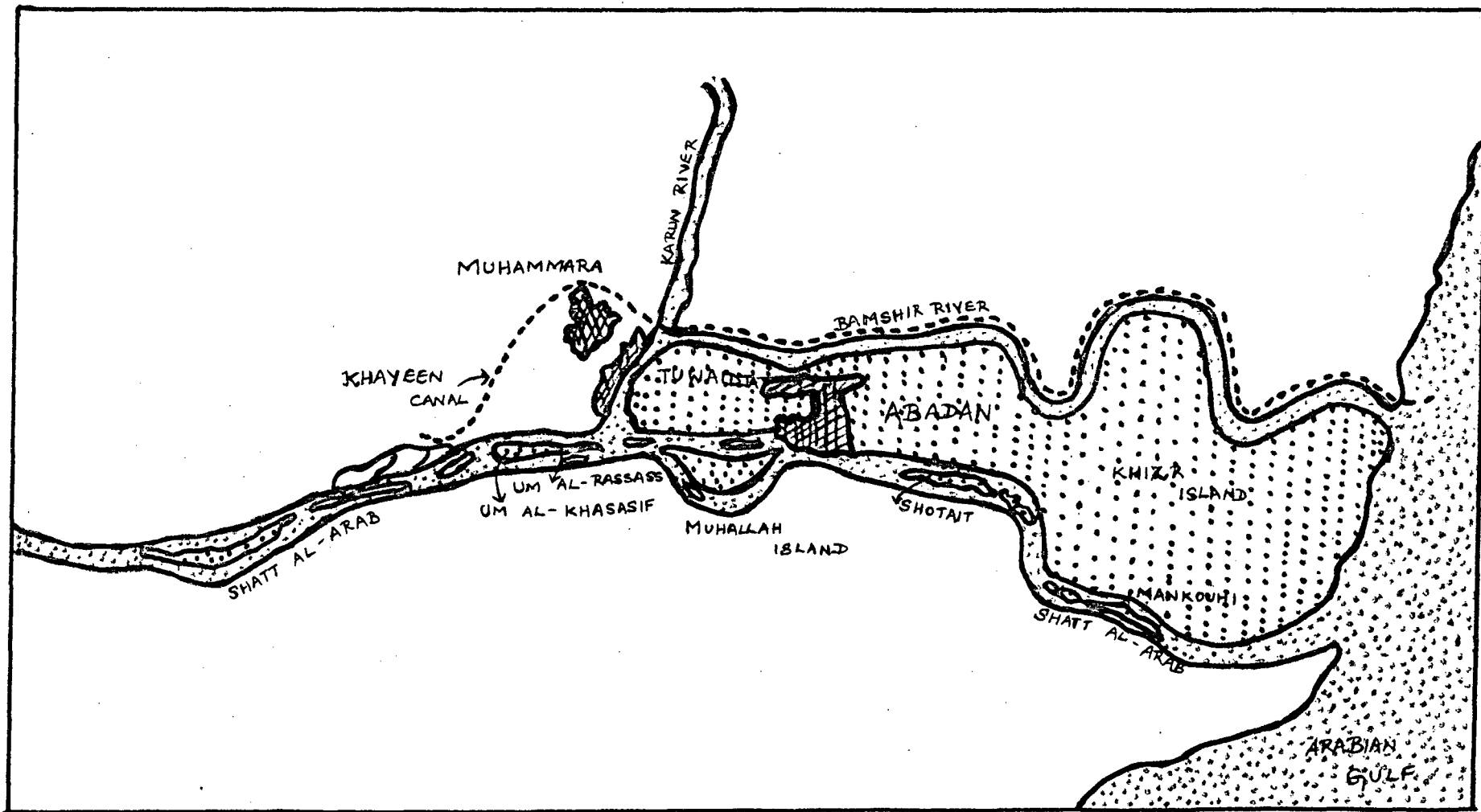
1 A.H.H. Abidi, "The Iraq-Iran War - A Balance Sheet" R.C. Sharma (ed) in Perspectives on Iran-Iraq Conflict (Rajesh Publications, New Delhi, 1984) p.69

2 Ismael Tareq Y - Iraq and Iran : Roots of Conflict (Syracuse University Press, New York., N.Y:1982), p.1

The first period, rivalry between regional empires, may be traced from the early Islamic period. With the rise of Islam in the seventh century, the emergence of the Shi'i-Sunni Schism was the first manifest sign of the fragmentation of the empire. The safavid Dynasty (the protector of the shi'is) in Persia in the sixteenth century and the Ottoman Empire (the protector of the sunnis) in the 14th century, created loggerheads in the Middle East, each seeking expansion at the expense of the other.

These two regions indulged in a tug-of-war over Mesopotamia (Iraq) and this reflected the precarious military balance between the two empires and the administrative weakness of each of them. Soon a political solution was attempted in the first treaty, between the two empires, the Amassia Treaty of 1555. Further conflict between the two empires called the 1639 treaty, which demarcated the frontier zone was over one hundred miles wide, between the Zagros Mountains in the east and the Tigris and shatt al-Arab rivers in the West. This treaty is significant as it became the basis of future treaties and established the framework of future contentions over borders. Another treaty in 1746 accepted the 1639 treaty and gave recognition to the effective autonomy of the Arab tribes of the region, which the Ottomans could not change and to their nominal Persian allegiance, which the

FRONTIER BETWEEN OTTOMAN
AND THE PERSIAN STATE
BEFORE 1847



MAP - I

SOURCE: TAREQ, ISMAEL Y., IRAN AND IRAN: ROOTS OF CONFLICT.

Persians could not enforce. Map-I³ delineates this nominal frontier line between the two empires.

Throughout the eighteenth century, hostilities between the Persian and Turkish empires continued to wax and wane. One of the most significant events was the Persian occupation of Besra in 1776. They held it until 1779. In 1821, the two empires again went to war. This conflict was resolved by the first Treaty of Erzerum in 1823.

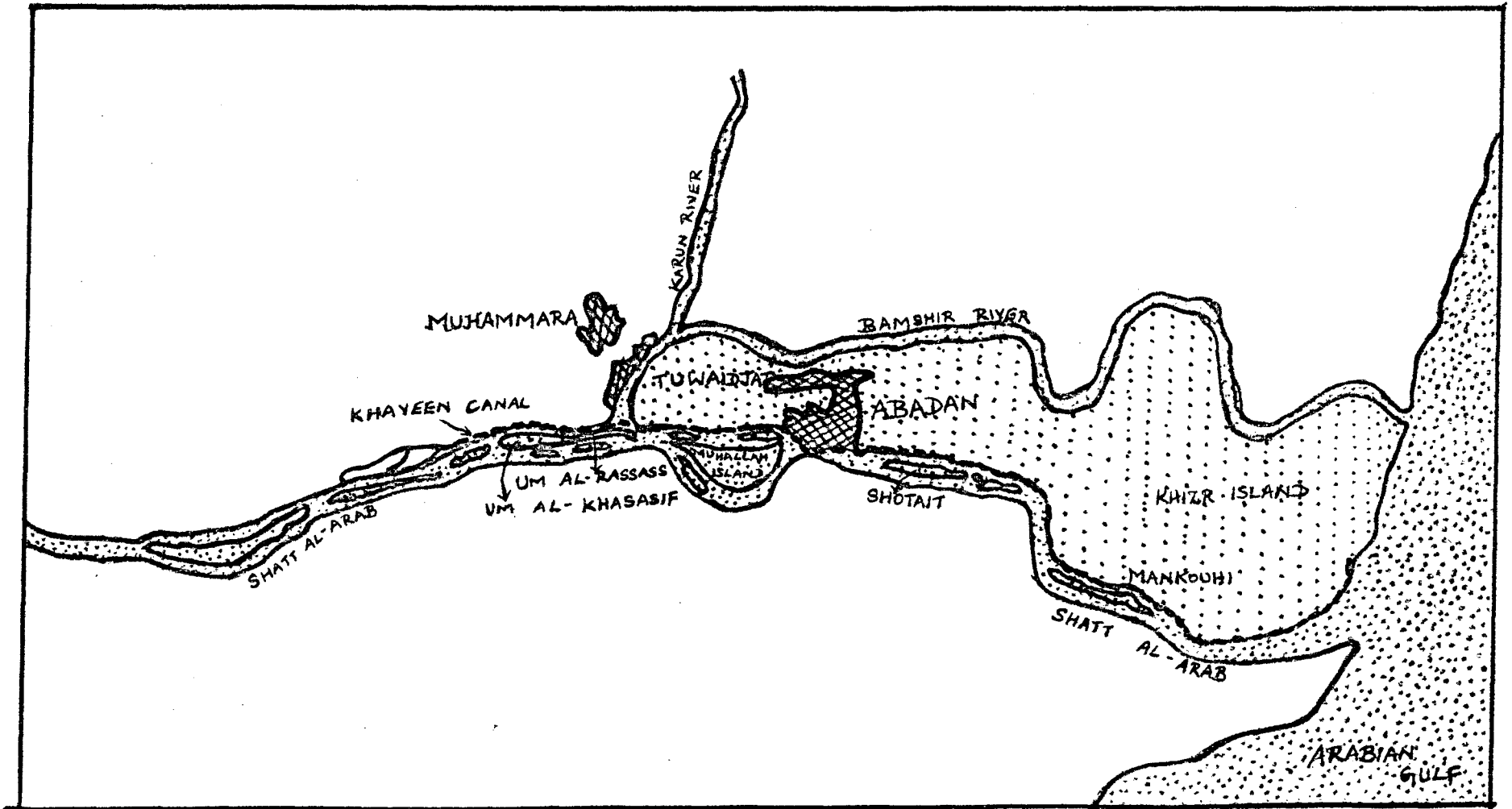
By 1820, Britain exercised its imperialist character on Persia and Iraq. By the nineteenth century Russia was Britain's only serious imperialist rival in the Middle East. In effect, Britain and Russia had control of Persian affairs and were cooperating to share power between themselves. The Turko-Persian Commission of 1843, had both Russia and Britain as mediating powers and this Commission signed the second Treaty of Erzerum in 1847. This is reflected in Map-II,⁴ which shows that the treaty extended Persian sovereignty to include the island of Khizr (Abadam), Muhammara (including its Karun river anchorage) and the eastern banks of the shatt al-Arab.

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3. Map I - Frontier between Ottoman and the Persian State Before 1847.
 4. Map-II The Shatt al-Arab Frontier. The Treaty of Erzerum (1847)

THE SHATT AL-ARAB FRONTIER

THE TREATY OF ERZERUM

1847



MAP - II

SOURCE: TAREQ, ISMAEL Y., IRAQ AND IRAN: ROOTS OF CONFLICT.

Until 1924, relations between Iraq and Iran remained tense. Finally, with the consent of the British, Iran recognized Iraq on April 20, 1929. Through Baghdad Pact of 1955,⁵ the Middle East became the West's frontline tier against Soviet expansion. Thus, Iraq and Iran became allies in a Western military alliance formed to forestall Soviet penetration of the region.

With the military withdrawal from the Gulf in 1971, the Shah of Iran occupied the three gulf islands of Abu Musa, Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb on November 30, 1971. A military clash between Iraq and Iran erupted on April 14, 1971, in the Khanaqin region of Northern Iraq. Iraq severed its diplomatic relations with Iran and Britain in protest against the occupation. Protest notes were sent to the Security Council, the Arab League and to members of the diplomatic corps in Iraq. No military action, however, was taken by Iraq on any other Arab country against Iran.

While border clashes between Iraq and Iran recurred throughout the period 1971 to 1974, the Iraqi army was unable to resist Iranian pressures as the Kurdish rebellion

5 According to Baghdad Pact (1955), Iraq, Iran, Turkey and Pakistan joined with Britain in forming the Middle East Treaty Organization (METO)

was a serious drain on Iraqi military and economic capabilities. In February 1974, Iraq took the border dispute to the U.N Security Council. Following year, Saddam Hussein, the present President of Iraq and the Shah of Iran met in Algiers on March 6 and signed the (Algiers) Agreement the same day i.e. on March 6, 1975.⁶ Map-III reflects the frontier adjustments between Iraq and Iran according to the Algiers Agreement.

Over centuries, the Shatt al-Arab has always remained as a disputed waterway. Shatt al-Arab traverses for 160km along the 880km Iran-Iraq common border. Geographically, this estuary is the confluence of the two mighty rivers Tigris and Euphrates which is further joined by Iran-born Karun river from the east at Kharramshahr before it finally drains into the gulf waters. The dispute over this waterway is justified by Iran that 60% of the volume of water could be accounted on the basis of the supplies through the Iranian rivers like Karun, Upper and Lower Zeb, Dialeh and Kabur. Being fully landlocked Iraq contends that its opening on the gulf is only through its 48km wide marshy coast with its single outlet

6 Algiers Agreement 1975 : The terms were : (1) Iran would cease its support for the Kurdish rebellion (2) the frontier between Iraq and Iran would be adjusted, including the following of the Thalweg along the entire length of the Shatt al-Arab (3) the propaganda war between the two countries would cease and no interference in each other's internal affairs.

along the Shatt al-Arab,Ⓢ

Friction between Iraq and Iran continued to escalate, erupting to fullscale war. On September 17, 1980, Iraq abrogated the 1970 treaty. Within weeks of Iran's Islamic revolution, a war of words had erupted between Iraq and Iran. On the surface, this appeared to be a personality conflict between the two prominent Leaders - President Saddam Hussain of Iraq and the Iranian leader Ayotallah Khomeini.

Legal Dimension of the Conflict

Four legal arguments justify this aspect of the conflict:

- 1 Iran refused to accept the second Erzerum Treaty of 1847, as it was forced to sign the treaty by Britain and Russia. Moreover, it was a relic of the colonial era and could not be applicable to free and independent Iran. Iraq, for its partⓈ argued that this treaty was unjust to Iraq as it was signed by the Ottoman Empire and not Iraq and it refused to respect the then agreed Persian sovereignty over Arab territory Muhammara (Khorramshahr), Abadan and the left bank of the Shatt al-Arab.
- 2 Secondly, Iran argued that the signing of the 1847 treaty by Mirza Mohammad Ali Khan's action was unauthorized and , therefore, it viewed the treaty as null and void. Iraq, on the other hand, argued that Iranian protestations did not

prevent Iran from signing the Teheran Protocol of 1911 and the Protocol of Constantinople of 1913, which affirmed the validity of the 1847 Treaty.

3 The third argument used by Iran to justify its unilateral abrogation of the 1937 Treaty claimed that the abrogation was justified on the basis of Iraq's failure to abide by the terms of that treaty. Iraq argued that even if this was true, Iran would have been on more solid legal ground had it referred the matter to the International Court of Justice or attempted to resolve it through bilateral negotiations.

4 Finally, Iranian argument centered on the understanding of

'rebus sic stantibus', or a fundamental change in circumstances.⁷ Iraq argued that Iran's abrogation of the Treaty of 1937 was in violation of international law: the 1937 treaty was a boundary treaty and, therefore, could not be abrogated unilaterally without the approval of the other party. However, at this stage, Iran invoked principle of 'rebus sic stantibus' in order to justify its claims for changing its boundary with Iraq in accordance with the principle of thalweg. Iran maintained that the Shatt al-Arab is a boundary river and must, therefore, have a joint sovereignty with Iraq. The Iraqi government rejected this

7 Ramesh Sanghvi, Shatt al-Arab : The Facts behind the Issue (London : Trans Orient Books, 1969), p.21

logic on the grounds that historically and in accordance with all the treaties between Iraq and Iran, the Shatt al-Arab has always been considered an Iraqi national river.

The Algiers Treaty of 1975 was abrogated by Iraq in September 1980, on grounds that the Shatt al-Arab river along with the province of Ahwaz in Arabistan, are Iraqi territories. However, to gain a thorough hold over this region, Iran indulged in acts of terrorism, through the imported aid of the sons of Mustafa Barzain (leader of the Kurdish rebellion), Iraq also maintained that between June and September 1980, there were 187 Iranian violations and military actions across the Iraqi border.

Ideological Aspects

The present conflict between Iraq and Iran also represents a conflict of two diametrically opposed ideologies. Iraq adheres to an ideology that is basically secularist and nationalist, while Iran is a religiously oriented ideology with a messianic universalist doctrine.

Besides the historical divisions, the Iraqis called themselves as a United Arab Nation and viewed the Iranian revolution as another imperialist attempt to destabilize Iraq and bring about the downfall of the liberal and social regime in Iraq. The battle with Iran was viewed as an act of national

defense to keep the area free from foreign interference and encirclement. They further pronounced the war as one, not for expansion but on Arab war and as an acid test of Arabism.⁸ Iraq sees its conflict with Iran as Arab nationalism locked in a struggle with Persian nationalism it is not a religious war in which sunnis are fighting shi'is. In fact, after the downfall of Sadat's image in Arab world, due to Camp David treaty and Shah of Iran, Hussein saw himself as the new fulcrum of Arabs military and political affairs.

Both are citadels of two ideologies -- Ba'ath and Islam respectively. Ba'ath ideology is modern in origin and application and is confined to the Arab fold alone but Islam is universal.

The reason for a Ba'ath's demand for a secular state and socialism was to avoid religion being weighted down by the burden of politics. The Arabs believed that religion instead of being a unifying force can play a divisive role. Thus, they looked for the secular character with assured freedom in its spiritual and moral aspect.

Such arguments, from the point of view of Ayotallah Khomeini and the Iranian Islamic revolution, are heresies.

8 Ismael Toreq Y - Iraq and Iran -- Roots of Conflict
(Syracuse University Press, New York; N.Y. 1982), p.30

Here, it was believed that religions cannot be separated from the state and emphasized on Islamic unity to rebuff imperialism and create an active and sincere Islamic government to function according to the laws of God. Khomeini, being a Shia, called the Saddam Hussein's (a Sunni) regime as a "satanic regime" and urged the Iraqis to oust Saddam Hussein.

The Iranian permanent representatives at the UN suggested that negotiations could begin if President Hussein were replaced by Mr. Ali Salen, a former Iraqi permanent representative at the United Nations.

The quarrel was pitched around a complex mixture of personal hatred and bitter religious sectarianism.

Personal animosity between Khomeini and Saddam Hussain is another factor. Rivalry between them started when Saddam Hussein, to appease the Shah drew out Khomeini from his refuge in the holy city of Najan, south of Baghdad. Khomeini had been in Najaf, south of Baghdad. In fact, Khomeini had been in Najaf ever since he was expelled from Iran by the Shah in 1964 for supporting the anti-Shah movements. Immediately after this thousands of Shias were departed from Iraq to Iranian border. This was a sad mistake of President Saddam Hussain. Khomeini adhered to his stand that Saddam must step down and let the Iraqis decide their future freely.

However, the terms demanded by those who rule Iran today do appear extortionate, from a financial as well as political standpoint. By the same token, it is difficult to appreciate the stubbornness of the ruling group in Iraq in refusing to jettison a leader like Saddam Hussein, who cannot avoid bearing a heavy responsibility for the dismaying plight in which his country and people are trapped as a result of the interminable war. If that is the political price to be paid to make the Ayotollahs accede to some kind of ceasefire, it is a light one compared with the counting drain on resources, above all human resources. Iran aims at overthrow of Ba'athist seizure of rich oil fields of south Iraq and Iranian influence on the shi'ite holy shrines at Karbala, Kuja and Najaf.

Thus, the diametric pressures created on the governments of the region are due to the ideological conflict between Arab Nationalism and Islamic universalism as well as that between the state legitimacy and revolutionary transformation. Also these tensions were manifest in the dilemma which Iraq's invasion of Iran posed.

Development of the War

Official propoganda from Iraq and Iran during the previous three months prior to the war has served up an apocalyptic view of the Gulf war. Though ostensibly, the stakes at issue are high -- the very survival of Iraq in

its current form is under challenge -- the war has not been conducted as a total, all-out affair.

For Iran, the war is strictly a boarder affair, has been conducted as an indispensable intense ritual sacrifice, a test of revolution and a species of grotesque 'street theatre', than as a war directly engaging the nation's physical safety.

While Iraq's terms now amount to an acceptance of status quo ante bellum based on the March 1975 Algiers accord, Iran remains adamant on the renounce of President Sadam Hussein from power and financial compensation for the initiation of 'aggression' by Iraq. Three aspects of the war stand out:

- 1 The initiation of the conflict, that is the expectations and conditions pertaining to the resort to arms,
- 2 the conduct of the war with special reference to the existence of asymmetries involved, and to the 'functions' of the war; and
- 3 the problems in its termination.

Background for Dispute

The situation relating to the Iran-Iraq border in the Shatt al-Arab area prior to 1975 was based on the Treaty of Erzerum of 1847 and on inter' agreements concluded in 1913

and 1937 but subsequently disputed.

According to Article 2 of the treaty of Erzerum 1847, the then existing frontier between Iran (Persia) and Iraq (part of Ottoman Empire) the whole of the Shatt al-Arab river was allotted to the Ottoman Empire. Following the discovery of the crude oil at Masjed -- Sulaiman in 1908 and the growth of the port of Muhammerah (called Khorramshahr by Iran) on the waterway's eastern bank, a protocol relating to the delimitation of the Turco - Persian boundary was signed in Constantinople by Turkey, Persia, Britain and Russia on November 17, 1913. This left the Shatt al-Arab under Ottoman sovereignty except for certain islands and it left Muhammerah under Persian jurisdiction in conformity with the Treaty of Erzerum but without affecting the Ottoman right of usage of this part of the river.

A four-party mixed Commission subsequently moved the boundary line, in the vicinity of the part of Muhammerah only, to the median line of the rivers' deepest channel (i.e. the Thalweg) and thus placed the immediate roadstead of the part in Persian hands, in return for which the Persian government ceded territories in the north to the Ottoman government.

During World War I, the river was controlled by British military authorities after their invasion of the area, and finance for the British operations was raised from levies on

all commercial shipping at Fao (on the western bank, near the mouth of the river). As a result of Iranian pressure to remove the anomaly of the bulk of the revenue coming from Iran but being used for the benefit of Iraq (which became an independent sovereign state in 1932), a new treaty was eventually concluded in 1937, which confirmed the earlier agreements but applied the "Muhammerah principle" to the Iranian port of Abadan, so that the docking and berthing areas in the Shatt al-Arab were placed under Iranian control. However, in 1969, the Iranian government declared the 1937 agreement to be null and void, inter-alia because the Iraqi government had allegedly not implemented provisions which that agreement had contained on joint control and the use of Iranian pilots.

In short, the dispute over shatt-al-Arab was basically created by old colonial policies of British and Ottoman Empire from the early 16th century. It became more acute when Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi of Iran pronounced the 1937 treaty as well in 1969. After the evacuation of the Gulf by the British the Shah occupied on November 30, 1979, the three strategic islands - Abu Musa, Greater Tumb and Lesser Tumb.

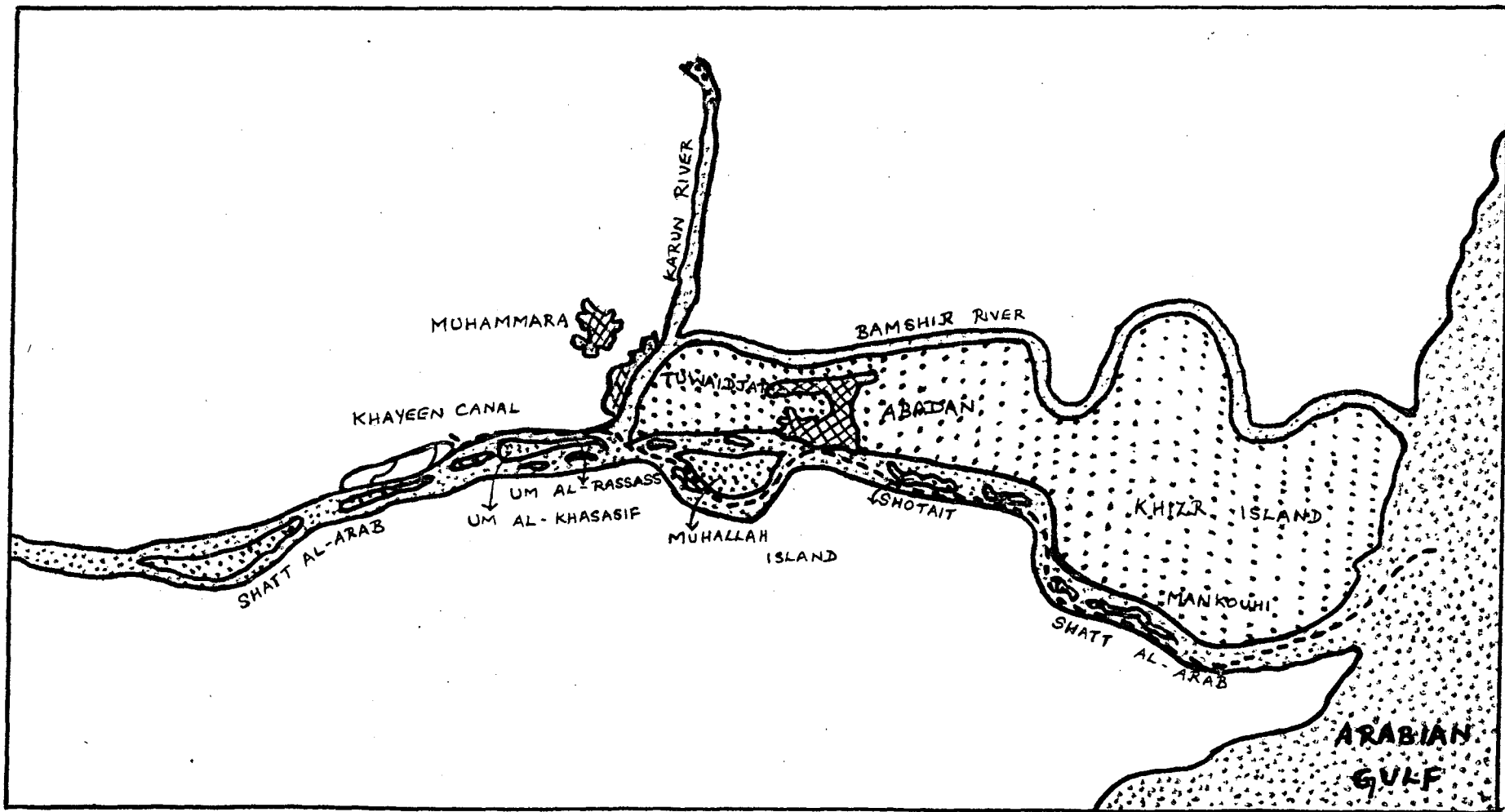
Deterioration of Relations between Iran and Iraq

Full-scale hostilities broke out along major sections of the border between Iran and Iraq in mid-September 1980, after

THE SHATT AL-ARAB FRONTIER

ALGIERS AGREEMENT

1975



MAP - III

SOURCE: TAREQ ISMAEL Y. IRAQ AND IRAN: ROOTS OF CONFLICT

Iraq had unilaterally abrogated the mutual "reconciliation" treaty which had been signed in Baghdad on June 13, 1975. This treaty was based on an agreement reached in Algiers on March 6, 1975 (Map-III)⁹ and its terms had included in particular the recognition of the two countries common border in the previously disputed Shatt al-Arab waterway as running along the Thalweg line (i.e. the median line of the waterway's deepest channel) rather than along the Eastern bank as hitherto.

On October 31, 1979, Iraq announced three specific demands, namely:

- 1 The abrogation of the 1975 "reconciliation" treaty and the restoration of Iraq of its former rights.
- 2 The evacuation by Iran of Abu Musa and the Tumbs Islands in the strait of Hornuz, at the mouth of the gulf, occupied by Iran in 1971, and
- 3 The granting of autonomy to the Baluchis, Kurds and Arabs in Iran. Provided these three demands were met, the Iraqis agreed to accept the Iranians as friends of the Arabs, but otherwise they were not friends.

The government of Iran rejected these demands on November 1, 1979, as constituting unwarranted interference in Iran's internal affairs and during the following months relations between the two countries deteriorated sharply.

9 Map III - The Shatt al-Arab Frontier Algiers Agreement - 1975

TERRITORIES CAPTURED BY IRAQ

(MARCH 1980)



MAP: IV

SOURCE: KEESING'S CONTEMPORARY ARCHIVES

VOL. XXII, JULY 1986 pp. 34514

On November 4, 1979, the Iraqi embassy in Tehran was bombed by Iranian revolutionary guards and on December 14, the Iraqi forces shelled Iran's border region, see map-IV¹⁰ In March 1980, both the countries ambassadors from each other's capital city were expelled. Repeated attacks on the border region were done by both Iraq and Iran in April 1980.

On April 6, 1980, the Iraqi foreign Minister Dr. Sa'adonn Hammadi sent a message to Dr. Kurt Waldheim, UN Secretary-General, calling for the immediate withdrawal of Iranian troops from the three Gulf islands and accusing the Iranian government for its aggressive and expansionist policy in the Gulf region. But Sadeq Ootbzadeh, then Iranian Foreign Minister stated that his country's differences with Iraw went beyond the disputed islands.

On April 7, 1980 , Iran placed its Army on full alert along the frontier and launched an anti-Iraq propaganda campaign, while in a broadcast on April 8, Ayotallah Ruhollah Khomeini (Iran's spiritual leader) called for the overthrow of President Saddam Hussein of Iraq, whom he described as "an enemy of Islam and Moslems", and urged the Iraqi armed forces to desert "the imposed, inhuman and illegal regime of Baath".¹¹

10 Map IV Territories captured by Iraq (March 1980)

11 Keesing's Contemporary Archives -- (Keesing's publications, Lenghman Group Limited, London) Volume XXVII, 1981, p.31005

The impact of this enmity, turned on religion when the Shia Moslems of Iraq were expelled, who crossed the border into Iran. Iraq is ruled by Sunni leadership while Iran by Shia leadership.

On April 16, 1980, the Supreme command of the Iranian armed forces announced in broadcast the formation of a "Revolutionary Islamic Army for the Liberation of Iraq" and called on the people of Iraq to rise against the ruling Baath party which, it was alleged, was serving a "world imperialist conspiracy". At the same time Tehran radio called for "holy war" (jihad) against the Iraqi Baath regime.

In response the Iraqi President reaffirmed that Iraq would fight if "collision" became "a national duty", and also demanded general recognition of the Arab character of the Iranian province of Khuzestan (called Arabistan in Iraq). As a retaliation to Iran's statement Iraqi press continued its recriminations against the Khomeini regime in Iran, describing it as the product of "hostile US scheming written and directed by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)" and as consisting of "racists and enemies of the Arab people".

By August 1980, clashes between the two countries had extended "to all border posts" and both Armies used ground-to-ground missiles. Soon the Iraqi air forces attacked Tehran, Tabriz, Hamadan, Sonandaj, Khermanshah, Abadam and Kharg island

in the Gulf, the Iranian main oil-port, which invited a counter-attack by Iran on Baghdad, Mosul, Kirkuk, Erbil, Basra and the oil-port of Fao and parallel attacks on either side of the Shatt al-Arab on Abadan and Basra.

Iraq failed to use its military, due to the American military aid to Iran. Therefore, the then concluded (Vice-President Saddam Hussein and the Shah of Iran) Algiers Agreement of March 6, 1975 was abrogated.¹²

On September 10, 1980, Iraq and Iran directly admitted that they were involved in the conflict. The Iraqi President, further stated that Iraq did not want war but would defend itself against attempts to wrest from its territory which belonged to it. It also "liberated" the Zein -- el -- Kaons Zone (which was occupied by Iraqi forces) which had been "usurped" by Iran 10 years earlier.

Fighting was also reported from the Basra area on September 14, 1980, when Iraqi forces occupied about 90 square miles in the Musian area (some 150 miles north of Basra) and on September 19, Iran admitted that two of its (US built) F-4 Phantom fighters had been shot down and 11 Iranian soldiers were killed.

Out Break of Full-Scale War

On September 17, 1980, President Saddam Hussein announced that Iraq had formally and unilaterally abrogated the "reconcil-

¹² Ibid .

iation" treaty of June 13, 1975 and had restored full sovereignty over the Shatt al-Arab Waterway.

Full scale fighting broke out with a major Iraqi offensive on September 21 and Iraqi troops occupied the Iranian border areas and captured the port of Khorramshahr and Abadan -- Iran's rich oil refineries. However, Iraqi's advance was hampered by

- 1 the strength of Iranian resistance
- 2 the difficult terrain (mountains in the central sector and swamps in the South) and,
- 3 Iraq's failure to master the logistics of modern warfare

Iraq claimed to have destroyed on September 21 five Iranian patrol boats near the mouth of the Shatt al - Arab and (on September 22) it bombed Tehran airport and ten other Iranian military bases on a 1000-k.m. front border. While Iran claimed to have shot down 20 Iraqi aircraft and to have killed "at least 244 Iraqis" in retaliation. Subsequently, both indulged in destroying each other's airports, oil fields and industrial areas.

Both Abadan and Khorramshahr were (on October 3) reported to be burning and the Iraqi city of Fao (Al Faw) was badly shelled by Iranian artillery.

Iran was strongly supported by the (Marxist) "Fedayeen al-Khalq" guerrilla group and by the people's Army (the

Mostafazin Militia) which mobilized the Iraqi Kurds and Iraqis to raise against the war and weaken their ruler - Saddam Hussein.

On October 13, a tank battle was reported to have been decisively won near Abadan by Iraqi Soviet-built T-55 tanks against Iranian British-built centurions and at least one Chieftain tank. Almost everyday casualties were reported with constant attacks by both nations. Iraq made use of the US-made weapons captured from Iran, including 155-mm guns, M-60 tanks and TON anti-tank missiles.

The war continued the following year (1981). On 5 and 8 January, there were center attacks from both sides and each claimed to be military superior than the other.

Of the most dreaded battles fought were the susangerd battle (in which Iraq succeeded in totally destroying Iran's brigade) and the Qarr-e-Shirin battle, where Iran destroyed three battalions of Iraq's eighth Mountain Division. In the first week of January 1981, Iranians used their sophisticated equipments, including armour, heavy artillery, Phantom aircraft and cobra helicopter.

Again on April 1981 Iranians made a surprise attack with no fruitful results. The new Iranian counter-offensive, code-named 'Allah-o-Akbar' was launched in September 1981, all

along the frontier. Despite their efforts, the Iranians faced very counter attacks from the Iraqis. Large-scale Iranian attacks were launched in February and March 1982. In their operation, Ya Sahra, in the last week of March, the Iranians gained large areas in Shush and Susagard sector.

In May 1982, during their operation Jerusalem in the southern sector, along the river Karun, north of Khorramshahr, the Iranians laid heavy pressure on Abadan and their main battles were fought in the southern sector. Khorramshahr was occupied by the Iranians in late May 1982. Khorramshahr became a bloody centre of the war and has the earliest target to be captured by Iraq. At present the land operations are being conducted throughout the 800 kilometer border from Qasr - e - Shirin to the Gulf.

In the summer of 1982, to rebuff the war, Iraq withdrew its troops from the occupied territory of Iran with the intention for a ceasefire and to end military operation. The Iraqi Revolutionary Command Council declared on June 10, 1982 that it was ready to return to the international borders, i.e. to the borders defined by the Algiers Agreement of 1975. Iraq also accepted the peace proposals put forward by the mediatory millions of the non-aligned and Muslim countries.¹³

13 New York Times, No.33, August, 1983, p.19

On June 20, 1982, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein announced to unilaterally withdraw Iraqi "military units" from Iranian towns and territory to "the international frontier" within 10 days. But Iranian leaders rejected this Iraqi offer as "a ruse and Iranian forces attacked Basra on July 13.

Again in June 1983, Saddam Hussein offered new peace initiative to Iran to conclude an agreement on suspension of military operations in the Gulf area to ensure freedom of navigation for all countries, non-infliction of damage on cities and towns and a ceasefire of the duration of Ramadan the month of Muslims' fast.¹⁴

The Foreign Ministers of Kuwait and UAE went to Baghdad and Tehran, on the instruction of G.C.C. with concrete proposals for a partial ceasefire in the Gulf to prevent leakage of oil from the damaged Iranian wells. But Iran strongly rejected the proposals of the G.C.C.

The Gulf war sought more external interference during the third week of May 1984. The Iranian war planes attacked oil tanks from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. A tanker of Panama was sunk. This incident invited emergency meeting of the G.C.C. foreign ministers, on May 17, 1984 and condemned Iran for the

14 Ibid

aggression. The G.C.C. Secretary General Abdullah Bishara, flew to New York to formally move the issue of attacks on oil tankers of the G.C.C. members, in the UN Security Council. This matter was also discussed at the meeting of the 21-nation Arab League on May 19, 1983.

The UN Security Council in its meeting on June 2, 1984 condemned then attacks on the commercial ships in the Gulf and demanded that such attacks should "cease forthwith"¹⁵ On June 3, 1984, three crewmen of the Turkish tanker "Buynk Hun" were burnt to death when their ship was hit by an Iraqi missile.

A shortwhile after the Saudi Arabian warplane was equipped with the US stinger missiles reached, guided by American controlled AWACs planes shot down two Iranian fighter bombers on June 5, 1984 and recaptured Khorramshahr. This feared the entire Gulf that Iran would invade Iraq. Within days of Israel's invasion of Labenon (in early June 1982), Iraq announced its withdrawal from all Iranian territory and even offered Iran a complete ceasefire to which Iran rejected the offer.

Iran soon seized the Rustom Island and Abu Musa island, and gained an effectively exercise naval control over any vessel destined for any Gulf port. This measure is interpreted as a

15 Patriot, New Delhi, May 20, 1984

demonstration of Iran's ability to strike indirectly at Iraq's economy. Iran, agreed to have the U.S navy in Gulf under the flag of the "Middle East Force".

Almost daily air attacks on Iran-bound shipping were carried out by Iraq, which has 10 large and medium targets around the Iranian Oil terminal - Kharog island. Iran's oil sales were detained and in 1984-85 oil revenues of Iran fell 35% short of Budget Estimates.

In April 1984, for the first time during the Gulf war, a tanker actually sunk with a full cargo of 60,000 tons of jet kerosene aboard, after being hit by an Iraqi Exocet missile.

Iranian forces killed more than 2000 Iraqi troops near the southern port of Basra on January 9, 1985. Two weeks later, an Iranian assault on four islands in the Shatt al-Arab in which Iran said 9,500 Iraqis were killed or wounded.¹⁶

Salamchah, on the southern front, is in a marshy region northeast of the Iraqi port of Basra, where Iran launched its latest Kербala - 5 offensive overnight in January 1985. The Iran-Iraq war continued throughout 1985. The Iranian forces, benefitting from superiority in numbers and motivation, succeeded in early 1986 in overwhelming Iraqi defences at the

16 The Hindu (Madras), January 9, 1985

port of Al Faw (Fao) and they made further gains with the assistance of Kurdish rebels in north-east of Iraq. The Iraqis continued to employ chemical weapons against Iranian infantry. For their part, the Iraqis captured some Iranian territory in the Central Sector including the abandoned town of Mehran - which was recaptured by Iran in early July. Both sides continued to attack merchant ships in the Gulf, particularly oil tankers and also satellite ground stations.

After a six week pause Iraq resumed bombing on May 20 and in the ensuing three weeks mounted regular, large-scale raids against Tehran and other Iranian cities, with the renewed intention of forcing the Iranian government to agree to negotiations and to end the war, of stimulating internal opposition to the war within Iran and of exacting revenge for "Iranian terrorism".

President Saddam Hussein of Iraq offered (on June 14) to halt the bombing for a period of two weeks, to give the Iranian government time to respond to his call for a ceasefire and a mutual withdrawal of forces, the exchange of prisoners and an agreement to start negotiations on a peace treaty. This offer was rejected by Iranian Prime Minister, Mr. Hossein Mousavi.

Renewed land fighting broke out in mid-July 1985 when Iraq claimed to have repelled an Iranian offensive in the

mountainous north-eastern region.

Severe fighting culminated in the recapture of Mehran by Iranian forces. Iraq used chemical weapons as a retaliation and killed at least 4,600 Iranians and wounded several others. The Gulf co-operation Council in an effort to avert the danger of the fighting spilling over into Kuwait, whose border with Iraq lay within sight of the Iranian forces. Iran refuses to end the conflict and is determined to fight. A most curious aspect of Iran's determined attack on Iraq is the claim that it aims the ouster of Saddam -- is linked to the liberation of Jerusalem -- in other words, a popular insurrectionary situation in the whole Arab World.

Iraqi warplanes bombed a refinery and three power stations deep inside Iran and on Kharg island oil terminal in September 1986. Iraqi also attacked the two oil terminals of the Panamaman - registered 141,000 tonne Megnum and a Liberian Vessel, the 117,000 - tonne Mistra owned by Iran.

Conduct of the War (a) on Iran

With withdrawal of the British power from the Persian Gulf, subsequently gave more room for full expression of the antagonism and competition between Iran and Iraq. The late Shah rebuffed this antagonism and sought for state sovereignty. Since Iran was a status-quo power in the region at that time, this military imbalance buttressed the existing order and

deterred threats to it.

These conditions changed drastically with the Iranian revolution. The traditional secular and conservative Iranian state had now become one that recognised only the community of believers, saw its role as a proselytiser among Muslims, especially the oppressed Shia (who constituted a majority Iraq's population) and criticized Iraq for its secular and oppressive government.

Iran was chronically threatened as it exuded ideological - religious militance and rejected the notion of any restraints on its field of activities. The superpowers were at loggerheads - the US pre-occupied with the Revolution and then the hostage crisis, USSR with Afghanistan. After the Camp David affair, Egypt was diplomatically estranged from the Arab World and Iran was isolated. Iraq appeared to be a virtual client of the USSR. Iraq's desire to expand its leadership in the region thus seemed to have coincided with an environment both conducive and positively supportive of it. Iraq assumed to be the sole protector of the Arab World and emerged as an undisputed leader.

(b) On Iraq

Iran's qualitative new threat posed Iraq to change its attitude with glory and political ambitions as:

- 1 When Saddam Hussein assumed official power in Iraq in July 1979, he immediately discovered Shi'ite and Syrian conspiracies against the state, which were ruthlessly repressed.

- 2 The revenge for the settlement which Iraq has been obliged to make as a result of Iran's military strength in 1975. Saddam failed to realise that at this early stage the war was inevitable, that Iraq not Iran should choose its timing and that the domestic economy's base will be shattered.

In 1980, Iraq exaggerated its own capabilities and also denigrated that of its putative foe. The ambitious and punishments of a regional rival coupled with opportunism and overconfidence motivated Iraq to decide on war in haste, because this tempting period might have never promised another opportunity for defeating Iran.

Iraq saw Iran in a military chaos' but its estimation of Iran's military situation was only a type of "window of opportunity" analysis. Iraq believed that a limited but decisive thrust into Iran would lead to the fall of the regime or else to Iraq's capture of key areas, which would spur Tehran to make a quick peace conceding to Baghdad the denied areas in 1975,

including the Shatt al-Arab. Iraq's miscalculation was that it would gain victory as defender of the Gulf's 'Arabism' and to gain territories for its project role in Gulf affairs and that this attack would be welcomed by the regime's opponents.

In short, Iraq failed to assess the military balance without including the kind of political resilience and implacability that could be military assets. Its total ignorance denied it to know thine enemy.

(c) Why Iraq failed ? ? ?

At the start of war, Iraq had much more to lose, a flourishing economy, political stability, increased international acceptability -- as reflected in its role in the non-aligned movements and foreign exchange reserves of some \$ US 35 billion. All these had been squandered in the war and Iraq now owes at least \$ 40 billion to foreign creditors. Nevertheless, Iraq began the war well equipped and confident. The military's skill and performance was not satisfactory due to the pervasive presence of Ba'th party officials in senior positions. However, the Iraqi military was initially confused as to their definite objectives and failed to give superior attacks with their forces. This act remained uneasily perched between a mission aimed at destroying Iran's military and the capture of towns of economic and psychological significance. The devastation

that accompanied its entry into Khorramshahr and the anti-Iranian propoganda made any possibility of separating the Iranian people from their regime much more difficult.

Iraqi's offensive forces failed after the first fortnight of the war and Iraq surrendered the initiative to Iran, never to regain it again. It also lost the capacity to dictate the course of the war, thus giving scope for Iran to re-organize and bring its superior assets into play. Among the latter were a 3:1 advantage in military forces - Iran threatened the Iraqi coastline. Iraq sought to insulate its population from the stringencies of war opting its population from the stringencies of war opting for 'guns and butter' until forced to choose in 1982. As a result, Iraq became more dependent on the outside powers; the Gulf States were responsible for some \$35 billion in subventions, Kuwait for assistance of an important position of Iraqi oil through the Red Sea and France for the provision of generous credit terms.

In contrast, Iraq has also had access to finished weapons - systems, spare-parts, technical assistance and training from the USSR, France, Egypt and Brazil.

In 1982, when Iraq shifted to the defensive and retreated to its original frontiers, it set up a series of fortified lines to act as barriers against massed offensives. Over the last few years Iraq has repulsed several Iranian frontal offensives

using artillery barrages, tankfire and air-powers to compensate for deficiencies in numbers and will. After 1982, Iran never insisted for peace other than on its own terms. Iraq found the defensive strategy far too congenial and failed to take superiority of its air (4 or 5 : 1) to face the war. The war now plays a symbolic role in the Islamic republic and Iran has created its own excessive faith in some technical panacea or short cut to end the war - for example it over-estimated the effectiveness of Exocet missiles mounted on the 'Super Etendard' in destroying oil tankers or facilities. It frequently refers to some painless transformation of the war thro' some magical 'wonder weapon' available just over the horizon. The Iraqi defence minister General Adnan Khairallah says that in the past five years, Iran has lost between 700,000 and 1 million dead, three million wounded while morale in the armed forces has declined and material weakness are evident.¹⁷ After 1981-82, this static defence appears to have been more congenial to Iraqi armed forces and it continued to be so. Despite the casualties and material advantages, it inflicts on Iran, Iraq is still at a disadvantage. The asymmetry it stakes are apparent.

17 BBC Summary of World Broadcasts
(SWB) ME/8147/1, 3 January 1986

The earlier claims and counter-claims in historical terms pronounce that the border between these two states was set by their foreign masters -- the Ottoman Turks and the British. Until 1958, the governments in Tehran and Baghdad were systematically similar in organization and functions and till then the Shatt al-Arab issue remained dormant. This issue was clearly defined in June 1975 - Algiers Agreement. Until three and a half years, this issue remained 'sub judice'. A joint Commission of Experts from both countries was set up to settle the issue. The Shah government expressed its readiness to begin the transfer and transition process but the Iraqis delayed this work of the Commission. The Iraq is on the other hand maintaining that it was "not delivered to Iraq before the fall of the Shah's regime." Why did the Iraqi government keep mum at that time?¹⁸ Its because, Shah's Iran was at its zenith of power as this power was weakened by the Islamic revolution, Iraq found this opportunity to reopen the border dispute. This led to potential spill over effects all over the two regions.

18 Statement of his excellency Mr. Saddam Hussein, President of Iraq, on the Iraq-Iran Conflict before the Summit Meeting of the Islamic Conference; 25th-28th January 1981, Saudi Arabia: (The Press Attache Department, Sydney, n.d., p.15)

Though Iraq's planning and implementation was imperfect their objectives were clear from the beginning. Initially, their objective was to acquire their lost territory, but later they intended to defeat the Khomeini government and thus they attacked at a time when the Iranian military and law was paralysed to give Iran defeat, humiliation, mass approbrium and wreck the economy. Iraq's objectives and planning were erroneous. In fact, Iraq decided on war in an almost clausewitzian fashion after a pragmatic consideration of all options available.¹⁷ Most of their soldiers were shias and Saddam found it hard to convince them to overthrow their rival-brethern. More astonishing is the fact that there are 3 Iranians for every one Iraqi.

Iraq's initial unwilling and uncertain attacks, objectives and ponderous, made it resemble not a blitzkrieg but a promenade and impressed no. one.

(d) Why Iran failed ? ? ?

During the early 1980s defence was not given top priority in Iran, the people were not stressed on its importance nor was there any morale of defence. Iran possessed all the characteristics necessary to provoke any neighbour. The

19 Clandia Wright, "Implications of the Iraq-Iran War" Foreign Affairs; 59 (1980/81) : p.275

probable reaction of Iraq to their provocations was ignored and misguided by the Iranians. But once attacked, they took the challenge as a test of the revolution. Iraq's armed forces tended to be rigidly hierarchical and centralized, but Iran's were characterized by informality and decentralization, with much importance to Commitment rather than technical training. Iran assumed that, what had worked in for the revolution would work in this war and it quickly formulated its terms for ending the war in uncompromising conditions and has not retracted them since. Indeed, it was largely due to the skills of the professional military that Iran was able to organize its counter-offensives in mid to late 1982, using airpower in close air-support missions, to eject the Iraqis from Iranian soil.

The logical reason to take war into Iraq was from the desire "to punish Saddam Hussein" and to take the Islamic Revolution to predominantly Shi'ite Iraq.

Between 1982-84 leadership of the armed forces was handed over to the more enthusiastic Pasdoran who were eager to demonstrate the mileage that could be extracted from a combination of spirituality, indifference to death and improvisation.²⁰ This period of frontal human-wave offensives against entrenched

20 Care, Kaysen, "American Military Policy" Survival
Vol. XXII July/August 1982, p.313

defences had at least the effect of shocking and frightening the opponent, but yielded little in concrete terms.²¹

After several costly offensives had failed to dislodge the Iraqis in 1984, a major operation at Majnoon and a private war policy was debated in Tehran and it was decided to restore the responsibility of the conduct of the war to the professional military.

From the rejection of traditional concepts of war and exulting the new warfare, Islamic Iran recognized the limits of substituting morale for weapons and training when it faced an unlikely breakthrough in war due to Iraq's heavy defences and Iran's logistical weakness.

By mid-1985 the shift military emphasis was formalized in the doctrine of the 'defensive jihad'. This emphasis on attrition and on the political breakdown of the foe reflected little success and in too many casualties.

Iranian operations patterns are so designed so as to stretch Iraqi resources along the entire length of the frontier. Iraq, though very precautions, cannot afford to be caught on the wrong foot or allowing a feint to develop into something more serious. Like Israel, it cannot afford a major defeat. Iran has no secret about their strategy. Its moves can be easily

21 Ibid

guessed by its foe. While unable to achieve strategic surprise, Iran is able to use inclement weather, night-attacks and the superiority of numbers to gain tactical surprise. Iran called for volunteers and their moves to the front were called Basij or mobilization corps, November-December 1985. In a real sense the war is virtually indistinguishable from the revolution, though it started some 20 months after the revolution.

The conflict has allowed the regime to function in an atmosphere of embattlement, siege and sacrifice, to repress its domestic enemies by draconian measures and to rebuff its lamentable economic performance. Iran also made a virtue out of necessity in extolling the benefits of self-reliance in domestic arms production.

Despite of possessing sophisticated missile systems by both Iran and Iraq, Iran failed militarily. According to the US Defence Department observations, Iran's failure to dislodge the Iraqi forces was due to its non-usage of the Phoenix missile, the main weapon of the F-14 Tomcat (Iran's most advanced aircraft); that the sensitive identification systems of the Iranian Phantoms were apparently not working; and that Iran had refrained from sending large concentrations of tanks into action.

Over and above what it was bequeathed by the Shah's military

build-up in the days he used to strut the regional stage as the "policeman of the Gulf" - has been got readily enough from unorthodox channels allegations against U.S for contra affairs (4 lines) such as Israel passing on, without objection from Washington, USmade arms. Initially Baghdad's attack was day dreaming for Khomeini. Iran saw the attack as 'an imperialistic plot' designed to strangle the infant Islamic republic in its cot.

The war served various purposes : it had been used to appeal to the darker side of the national consciousness, it used to demand national unity and to preclude deviation from the government's line and it provides the only tangible achievement to the Islamic Republic and focuses that the dangers of peace and normalcy outweigh those of the war.

Arms Supply

The success reverses and stalmate in the war have not been merely a matter of tactics and strategy. The other contributing factors have the assessment by Iraq and Iran of each other's military potential and capabilities. Here a broad assessment is made on the armour, air and naval forces of both nations.

Iraq

(1) Armour:

Iraqi-Soviet arms relationship began with Kosygin's visit

to Iraq in 1976, when it was agreed for supply of nearly \$ 1 billion worth of Soviet arms, mostly MIG-23s and T-62 tanks. Iraq also relied on France for this. By November 1981, the Soviets are believed to have delivered about 400 T-55 and 250 T-72 tanks. Reports of more T-22 tanks and MIG 25 aircraft deliveries came in September 1982. Iraq's other sources include the Arab countries like Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Egypt, France, Italy, U.K. and Brazil. By 1983, Iraq had four armoured divisions, four mechanized infantry divisions, four mountain divisions, two special force brigades and one Republican Guard Brigade. Each division was equipped with about 2500 tanks, 2500 armoured fighting vehicles (AFV), radar-controlled ZSU-23-4 and ZSU 57-2 anti-aircraft guns. It had also 26 FROG - 7 and 12 Scud-B long-range surface to surface missiles, several T-62 and AMX-30 tanks, anti-tank guns and armoured personnel carriers (APC) and 200 French AS-30 laser - guided missiles.

The Iraqi army, despite, Iraq's small population, outnumbered the Iranian forces, 16 divisions to 12 and it has more artillery and the larger number of tanks, 3000 in all. Yet, what is depressing Iraqi morale is the apparent endlessness of the war. It has been going on for more 82 months (the first World War lasted 50 months).

Air Force

Iraq's Air force is about 38,000 strong and has 332 combat

aircraft. These include one bomber squadron each of TU-22 and 11-10 equipped with long-ranged air-to-surface missiles (ASM), 80 MIG-23B, 40 SU - 7 B and 60 SU-20-(all fighter aircraft) and five interceptor squadrons with 115 MIG - 21s. In July 1985, Iraq took delivery of 48 US Bell 214 ST troop - carrying helicopters, which were subsequently fitted with rocket launchers. 12 TU-22 language supersonic bombers, 80 MIG-23, 60 SU-22, 40 SU-76 and 15 Hunterfighter bombers as well as 115 MIG - 21 interceptor - fighters, armed with the Russian Atoce and French Matra Miagic air-to-air missiles (AAM). It has 100 Soviet helicopters and 100 French helicopters and 40 MI-24 assault helicopters of the Soviet design. Besides this, it has 150 MIG-23/25/27, 60 mirage F-1 and SA 2-3/6/7 SAMs as well as guns. Iraqi's have air superiority.

Navy

Iraq's navy is its weak point. The naval facilities at Basra and Umm al-Qasar are not upto mark. In 1982, it had twelve Osr missile boats, five large patrol crafts, ten coastal crafts and four landing craft tank (LCT). Iraqi Navy, over 4,000 personnel, about six patrol craft and 12 mechanised fast attacking craft with Styx - SS Ms.

Iran

The Shah of Iran was armed to the teeth with all types of the latest and most sophisticated weapons of air, sea and land warfare.

According to the Institute of Strategic studies in London, Iran's armed forces had by 1980 declined from 4,00,000 men (under the Shah) to about 240,000 i.e. about the same number as those of Iraq although the latter's armed forces were considered to have the better command structure.

Armour:

By 1984, Iran had 1,125 (British-built) Chieftain and Scorpion tanks together with other medium tanks including (US made) M-60s, against Iraq's more than 2,700 Soviet-built T-34 to T-62 and T-72 and 100 French built AMX tanks. Iran had 445 fighter or fighter bomber aircraft, principally US-made F-4, F-5 and F-14 planes (of which only 30% and 40% were used), while Iraq's Air Force consisted of 322 aircrafts including 230 Soviet MIG-21 or MIG-23 fighters and 600 helicopters

Syria is a big aid to Iran. Its arms supply includes SAM-7 ground-to-air missiles (Soviet) Sagger anti-tank launches with rockets and also artillery ammunition and mines.

On March 4, 1981 it was reported that the Italian government had authorized the exports to Iraq of warships worth the equivalent of £ 829,000,000 consisting of four 2,500 tonn Lupo class frigates, six 600-tonn Covvettes or Stromboli class support vessel and a floating dock. Iran has 825 such armoured personnel carriers.

According to one estimate by December 1981, the US had

completed shipments of arms worth \$ 480,000,000 to Iran and negotiations had been going on for the further supply of spare parts for the F-4 and F-14 aircraft.


Iranian armour consisted primarily of M-47, M-46 and M-60 A1 - all American and British chieftan MBT of the MK3/3(P) and MK 575 (P) variety. Both, Iran and Iraq lacked any manufacturing capability, but unlike Iraq, Iran had servicing and vehicle repair plants near Tehran.²² There is no direct evidence of Soviet supply of arms to Iran. But through Libya and Syria, Iran is said to have received 190 Soviet manufactured T-54/T-55/T-62 tanks to Iran and other artillery shell requirements countries which supply arms through their private arms dealers are Taiwan, Singapore, South Korea etc..... West Germany was Iran's leading supplier with \$ 1600 million worth of export in first seven months of 1983, while Japan and Turkey held second and third places. The U.K in 1983, displaced Italy as Iran's fourth biggest supplier with export of £ 550 (\$ 770 million) in first eleven months of 1983.²³ Also U.K, F.R. Germany, Spain and South Korea supply arms to Iran.

Navy

Iran's navy is the smallest in terms of manpower and firepower. Iran's navy of 20,000 men was almost five times as

22 Financial Times (London), May 28, 1982

23 Middle East Economic Digest (London). February 10. 1984 p.2



strong as that of Iraq and included three destroyers and four frigates. Moreover, both sides possessed considerable strengths of surface-to-air missiles in particular Iraq had Soviet SAM-5s, SAM-6s and portable heat-seeking SAM-7s while Iran was equipped with British Rapiers.

Though numerically weaker than Iran (14,000,000 Iraqis against 36,000,000 Iranian inhabitants), Iraq was regarded as politically and economically the stronger of the two countries. Since this study is confined till the period 1985, the above statistics are likely to be renewed or changed.

Effects of War

Speaking in economic terms, Iraq was a stable regime in power since 1968, second largest exporter of oil to the world and it was sound in both industrial development and in solid infrastructures like tele-communications, railways, roads hospitals school and the like. Iran was also a stable political and economic standard in the country until 1978. But Iran's economy was already shattered due to the Islamic revolution before the war and the war paralysed the already crippled economy. The damage to the economics of both the countries is incalculable.

(a) On Oil

During the pre-war period, Iraq touched a peak of 3.5 million barrels oil export in a day. The closure of the Basara

Port on the Gulf by Iranian bombs reduced the country's export capacity to 1.4 million barrels in a day which was what its three oil terminals in Lebanon, Syria and Turkey could handle. But in April, 1981 Syria closed the border with Iraq and cut Iraq's pipeline open to the sea from Kirkurk to Dortvol in Turkey. According to diplomatic estimates Iraq was loaned a sum of \$ 25 billion in 1980 by a group of Gulf states headed by Saudi Arabia. Iraq's own foreign exchange reserves have been drawn from \$ 25-30 billion to half. Al-Fao-Oil Export terminals, Kirkurk, Moseal oil centre Barara-Khor-at-Zubair's petro-chemical complex were bombed. All in all, Iraq's oil income is likely to decline from 30 billion \$ a year before the war to just 5 billion \$ or less. Iraq estimates that the reconstruction of oil facilities to restore pre-war levels of oil production and export will cost some \$ 30 billions and it will take 5 to 7 years.

Iraq's oil fields had unscathed from the war, terminals at Fao, Khoral-Amaya and Mina al-Bakr were damaged while the pipeline to the Turkish coast carried about 600,000 barrels per day for export. Iraq has suspended deliveries of all grades of Iraq oil and gets supply from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

Iran : The strain of the war on Iran has been no less because its economy was insolvables long before the eruption of

hostilities. Its currency reserves have since fallen from \$ 14 billion to a meagre \$ 1 billion but it has managed to muddle through once Iran achieved a peak output of 6-7 million barrels in a day in the days of Shah. But because of war, it is producing only 7,00,000 barrels per day. Repair of its war-ranged oil facilities at Abadan, Khorramshahr and elsewhere will cost \$30 billion.

By September 23, 1980, when the war had extended to the whole Iraq - Iran frontier, about 10% of the production of oil member states of the OPEC was lost to consumers. However, Iraq arranged alternatives through Turkey and was able to move about half its current exports of crude oil. According to reports from the oil Ministry in Tehran on September 25, 1980, Iran's oil output had fallen to about 500,000 barrels per day from 1,700,000 bpd, Before the war.²⁴ Of late, whereas Iran boosted its output to between 1.5 to 2 million barrels a day, Iraq's production level had to be kept low at 250,000 barrels a day due to the closure of the port and pipelines of Syria at Basra.²⁵

A total war in the Gulf can affect about 8 million barrels of crude oil a day. Out of the total Gulf oil, US gets 6%, Japan 37% and Western Europe consumes 54%.

(b) On Money

According to the Kuwait reports of April 16, 1981, the Gulf states had undertaken to lend Iraq the equivalent of

\$ 14,000 million - the total amount was said to be equal to one-quarter of Iraq's 1981 budget. Iraq also borrowed a \$ 2,000 million interest - free loan repayable to Kuwait in 10 yearly instalments from 1983. In November, the same year, Saddam stated that Saudi Arabia gave \$ 3,000 million to Iraq for war against Iran. Iran is pumping out 3.2 million barrels a day against the 800,000 barrels by Iraq. Iran now has the money to replenish its arsenals; but Iraq does not. Iraq borrowed \$ 256.59 million Eurodollars in 1984.

For Iraq, the war effort requires at least \$ 500 mn per month, which amount goes up during major offensives starting the war with \$ 30 bn in hard currency reserves. Iraq is now left with no more than \$ 2 billion. Its annual foreign currency requirements now run to \$ 15 billion of which it is not able to provide more than one-fifth while fairly large credits have been extended by the Arab States of the Gulf, with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait leading the list, Iraq has also received \$ 1bn in military credits from France for purchase of military credits from France for purchase of French arms. An equally important source for Iraq is the Soviet Union which resumed supply of arms and spare parts in early 1983. East Germany extends to Iraq credit facilities worth \$ 200 million in 1985.

Iran : On March 29, 1981, massive withdrawals of savings from the banks of \$ 5,400 million were issued by Iraq's central bank in new notes and coins, that the money was to cover the "chronic budget deficit" estimated at \$ 10,600 million.

Inflation was at the annual rate of 27% with the poor suffering from a much higher rate of price increases on essentials and rationing created a black market and fuelling a smuggling boom. High government spend, increasing unemployment, political instability and lack of law and order led to social and political unrest in the country. Iran faced a loss of \$ 15,000 million within six months of the start of the war. On April 26, Iran announced \$ 7,300 million or 16.6% of Iran's budget of 44,000 million for the following year, would be allocated to the war effort.

Damages to each side would amount to 25 to 35 billion dollars, to which add another 10 to 15 billion for each side lost oil revenues during the first 18 months of the war.

The gulf war inflicted 90 billion dollars of damage on public sector in two years. A report in May 1983 on Iran's intention to demand \$ 90 billion in war reparations from Iraq for damages inflicted from September 22, 1980 to September 22, 1982. According to a book published by the Iranian Plan and Budget Organisation \$ 80.8 billion in damages were sustained by the Iranian public sector. In 1984-85 oil revenues of Iran fell 25% short of Budget Estimates.

(c) On Human Resources

In the main phase of conflict Iraq had claimed (at the

end of November 1980) to have killed more than 4,000 Iranian troops and wounded 11,000 and to have destroyed 420 aircrafts, 700 tanks and 18 ships. Iran claimed the killing and wounding of nearly 20,000 Iraqis and the destruction of 500 aircrafts, nearly 4,000 tanks and armoured cars and over 500 missile launchers. About 50,000 of Iraq's labour force left Iraq and in Iran about 10,000 people were probably executed in 1982. The war has taken a staggering toll of at least 175,000 killed and 600,000 wounded. The most scandalous aspect was Khomeini's order by which thousands of children were sent to the war front in accordance with the "wave theory". They were massacred by the Iraqi forces.

Iran is still plagued by high unemployment, a fall in production levels, cash shortages, food crisis, runaway inflation (more than 50% last year), an adverse trade balance and now the problem of the POWS. Iran - has resorted to the old barter system of trade and signed agreement with Syria, Pakistan, Nicaragua, Greece, Turkey and USSR. Oil will be exchanged for commodities like meat, grain, coffee, livestock, textiles and steel goods. It now purchases arms from the west as well as from countries such as Libya, North Korea and Syria, which have large stock of Soviet arms.

Iran had become a member of the League of Nations at the

end of 1919 and was also appointed a non-permanent member of the Council until 1937. She has good relations with Japan, Mexico, U.K, Argentina and Italy even tried to mediate in Iran-Iraq frontier problem.

Iraq is regarded as the West's biggest trade partner. Iraq exchanges commercial goods and light industrial goods and food stuffs for war material from France and Italy. The Arab government has extended 22 to 30 billion dollars aid to Baghdad for arms purchase. Kuwait has given her an aid of 2 billion dollars. Its relations with its Middle East neighbours are rather more ambiguous.

The Iranians procrastinate the coming offence in which they say, half a million men will make simultaneous attacks at several points along the 800-mile frontier. The delay in their offensive attacks in late 1985, was to give enough time to the pilots to familiarise themselves with the 50 MIG-21s which Iran has obtained from China in a swoop deal of oil.

Iraq's tactical air power have played a decisive role in breaking up earlier Iranian offensives. Its long-term prospects involve the success or otherwise of its air and maritime offensive against Iran's oil export. Since August 1985, the Iraqis have made around 120 attacks on Kharg and many also on the pumping installations at Govaneh on the manisland.

Because of the danger to foreign tankers approaching and leaving Kharg the Iranians began ferrying oil from Kharg to Sirri in a fleet of 20 chartered tankers and then off-loading the oil into foreign vessels at the Siri terminal. When Iraq's new long-range Mirage F-1 fighter bombers began making reconnaissance flights over Sirri in June, the Iranians moved apart of their trans-shipment operations to a temporary installation of Larok Island, 100 miles nearer the mouth of the Gulf. It thus proves that all Iran's export outlets are now invulnerable to Iraqi attacks because the Mirages have a long range of well over 2000 miles. The Iraqis claim to have made the shuttle operation very expensive for Iran, thus curbing Iran's oil earnings -- which is the objective of the tanker war. The entire shuttle operation is costing Iran \$ 60m a year.

Iran does not intend to widen the war but aims at blockade of all success of Iraq's economy. Iran seeks to continue the war within definite restraints, with no international involvement. Iran's shift to a strategy of attrition aimed at Iraq's eventually exhaustion and collapse economically and politically. Iran's strategy is to escalate the war through prolongation based on a better political and economically able assessment to outlast its neighbours.

Iraq, on the other hand has been unwilling to forego the bombing of Iranian targets. It thus sought a total, not

selective end to the war. Iraq will have to fight the war on Iran's terms, which it is ill-equipped to do, in spirit, training or numbers.

Chapter IV

SUPER POWERS AND THE WAR

Chapter-IV

SUPERPOWERS AND THE WAR

A Brookings Institution study has recounted 215 and about 190 occasions by the United States and the Soviet Union, when they used their respective armed forces in the post-war period as instruments of coercion to:

"influence or to be prepared to influence, specific behaviour of individuals in another nation without engaging in a continuing contest of violence."¹

These exercises, however, have been only partially successful.

While temporarily subdued from time to time, the tensions have merely been rekindled with shifts in the balance of power. The superpowers are playing a zero-sum game -- the Soviet Union's gain is America's loss, and vice-versa. In fact, they are harvesting on the war, thus preserving their interests through their surrogates.

Judging the superpowers conduct and interaction in four international crisis, namely Suez 1956, Taiwan Straits 1958,

1 Stephen S. Kaplan, Barry S. Blachman, Force Without War : United States Armed Forces as a Political Instrument, (Washington, D.C. The Brookings Institution, 1978) and Stephen S. Kaplan, Diplomacy of Power : Soviet Armed Forces as a Political Instrument., (The Brookings Institution, 1981)

Cuba 1962 and the Middle East 1967, Carsten Holbraad in his study suggests five types of dual efforts on part of the super powers to manage such crisis.² For increasing co-operation, first would be that of "parallel but unconcerted and uncoordinated steps", to restrain the parties involved in conflict. Second, besides taking parallel and separate measures to restrain the allies, they also "urge or warn each other to do so". Third is a more advanced stage, where this dual effort to restrain thro' parties is marked by facit co-ordination of the measures taken by the principal powers. Fourth, direct negotiation with each other. Lastly, Helbraad suggests the possibility of joint military action and diplomatic steps as the highest conceivable level of dual crisis management of the type directed at third parties.

In short, Holbraad's analysis points out certain factors which pronounce the validity in examining superpowers conduct in international crisis.

The USA and USSR are unmatched in their acquisition of the hardware of war. Not only do they command the full panoply of modern weapons, they define its extent. They set the

2 Carsten Holbraad, Superpowers and International Conflict (London : The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1979) pp. 100-102

standards and the fashion for states lower down the hierarchy. There are over 50,000 nuclear warheads in the world. About 30,000 are owned by the USA and about 22,000 by the USSR. UK owns more than thousand.

United States and the War

If ever there were an area to which psychologists Else Frenkel-Brunswiks concept of "intolerance of ambiguity" is applicable, it would be the Gulf with its complex and dynamic political relationships. According to Frenkel Brunswick, as situations become increasingly complex, human beings have a tendency to reduce "frustrating or anxiety producing uncertainties and contradictions" by over simplifying them into "neat dichotomous categories -- black and white, good and bad, friend and foe."

This phenomenon does not auger well for the success of U.S policy in the Gulf, especially in case of Iran. In the Gulf, Iraq and revolutionary Iran have led the propaganda barrage against the U.S.

Iranian Hegemony

The Shah announced in 1968 that following the British withdrawal, the regions' stability and security was to be

henceforth preserved by Iranian military might. 'Pax Persiana' was to replace 'Pax Britannica'. With the approval of the Western powers, especially the U.S, the Shah proceeded to establish himself as the defender of the peace in the Gulf and to amass by far the largest arms arsenal in the history of the region. He felt it necessary to fill the political and ideological vacuum which would serve as an inviting target for outside powers.

Iran saw this posture as serving at least three main objectives:

- 1 to protect the regime against subversion, be it internal or external source.
- 2 to guarantee free shipping in the Gulf.
- 3 to protect Iran's oil resources and facilities.

The application of this theory of deterrence has led Iran to adopt a two-fold strategy:

- 1 the build up of a credible military machine,
- 2 and the pursuit of an active diplomacy.

The concerted build up of Iran's new armed forces began after 1968 and has accelerated at an astonishing pace. U.S

was from then, a constant supplier of weapons, which makes the Iranian army and air force possess the world's most sophisticated weapons systems and its navy presently boasts of U.S landing craft, air-cushion vehicles, minesweepers, patrol ships and warships. However, Iran's military statistics is mounting at an astonishing rate and is not likely to change in the foreseeable future.

During the seventies America suffered serious setbacks in the international arena : by abandoning Taiwan lost in Vietnam, lost its hold in parts of Africa and the defeat of Pakistan under Bangladesh. At the same time the Shah of Iran was ousted from power and thus U.S turned its eyes on West Asia.

U.S Goals and Options:

United States Security interests in the Persian Gulf are:

- 1 containment of Soviet military power within its present borders;
- 2 access to Persian Gulf oil and,
- 3 continue free movements of U.S ships and aircraft into and out of the area.

These interests are based on three primary considerations:

- 1 The Gulf as a source of oil
- 2 The Gulf as an extension of the Indian Ocean and

3 The Gulf as an extension of the traditional Middle East and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

U.S.'s primary national goal has been to contain Soviet influence in the Gulf, and to maintain a pro-American balance of power in the region with chronic renewal of treaties for economic and military assistance to the Gulf States.

Since American economic relations with the Gulf center around oil, its goals may be succinctly defined as follows:

to get as much oil as possible, as cheaply as possible and as long as possible.

As a counterview and in the best tradition of free enterprise, the Gulf States' obvious goal ironically is to sell as much oil as possible, as much as possible and as long as possible.

Diplomacy, the art of the possible, must harness these contradictory goals into a harmonious equilibrium. Although these two goals are by no means mutually exclusive, a considerable number of difficulties have hindered their fulfillment. America adopted a "twin-pillar policy" for achieving its targets.

The Carter Administration

On 22 September 1980, when the Gulf War broke out, U.S faced many difficulties and potential dangers. These stem

basically from the overriding strategic fact that 60% of the world's oil trade comes from the Gulf region. With the Iraqi and Iranian shipments already disrupted, the Carter Administration feared that a spread of violence in the region might result in a severe petroleum shortage which would undermine Western economic strength and political cohesion. President Carter underscored this concern when he declared that, while the West was in a position to cope with an interruption of Iranian and Iraqi supplies, it was nevertheless imperative that there be no infringement of the ability of other suppliers to ship oil out of the Gulf.

However, reluctant to extend its military commitments following the trauma of the Vietnam War, the U.S found it necessary to define more precisely its posture towards the Gulf and to announce the Carter doctrine of January 1980.

U.S reaction to the war came on September 23, when President Carter took up a position of 'strict neutrality':

"We are not taking position either for Iraq or Iran except to encourage them through U.N and other means to end the conflict and bloodshed."⁵

4 New York Times, 25 September 1980

5 Quoted in The Statesman (Delhi) 24 September, 1980

Though substantial western interests were involved, the Carter Administration proved virtually powerless to influence the course of fighting on the Shatt waterway. Ruling out any direct US military intervention it adopted a neutral posture; only in the event of an attempted Iranian blockade of the Strait of Hormuz would American war forces be called upon. Ever since the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan (a year earlier), the U.S Naval task force had been stationed in the Arabian Sea. Within twenty-four hours of the Carter Administration's neutrality declaration, the Saudi Arabian leaders requested US military assistance against possible Iranian attack. Here, in the Middle East, as the case is often, events seem to shape decisions rather than the reverse.

As a response to this call the Carter Administration sent four AWACS (Airborne Warning and Control Systems) reconnaissance planes with their ground support systems to the Kingdom, as was done before, in March 1979, during the border war between North and South Yemen. In this instance, it proved an ideal means by which the United States could demonstrate its concern for the security of Saudi Arabia without provoking the Soviet Union by introducing new 'offensive' military systems.⁶

The Carter doctrine proved to be consistent with the AWACS

6 New York Times, 30 September 1980

dispatch and that the U.S was ready to use military forces to protect the Gulf oil from external threats. Inspired by Saudi Arabia's request for military protection, the U.S embarked on a co-operative military effort with its Western allies to increase their collective naval presence in the Arabian sea and Indian ocean area. Within three weeks, the naval/warships increased from thirty to sixty including ships from Britain, France and Australia and the U.S. The U.S took this decision in great haste as she believed that this action on a multi-national basis was likely to be more politically acceptable to the Gulf States than unilateral American action.

The actual increase in allied naval presence in the area received minimum publicity in contrast to the AWACS dispatch -- which perhaps was intended as a psychological deterrent to Iran. The Carter doctrine signalled to the Soviet Union that it would not hesitate to use military power, to protect its "vital interests" in the Gulf. All this, the U.S performed to avoid provocation of the Soviet Union, while it was strengthening its quick reaction to Rapid Deployment Force (RDF), still then in the early stages of its development.

During the early weeks of the war, the worst from the U.S standpoint, did not happen; indeed, as a by-product, the crisis may even have strengthened America's defence posture

in the region. By positioning more planes and ships within striking distance of the fighting, the Carter administration was able to exercise a deterrent effect against a widening of the war.⁷ It was thought at the time that Iraq was planning to launch attacks against Iran from Oman and Saudi Arabia.⁸ In this case, the Carter Administration would discourage these two countries to militarily get involved and so to contain the conflict. Iran and Iraq were reminded at the same time that the U.S would rebuff the war between them by shutting off the flow of oil to the rest of the world.

As a mark of appreciation of the Western stand, the Saudis decided to increase their oil production and organized similar efforts with other major producers, including Kuwait and United Arab Emirates (UAE). This, however, insulated the international petroleum market against the effects of the war. It need however be pointed out that prior to the Saudi decision to raise oil production, the Carter administration had successfully defused some of the tension generated by the crisis by announcing that 'oil inventories of the world's major oil-consuming nations were at an all-time high.'⁹

7 M.S. El Azhary - "The attitudes of the superpowers towards the Gulf War", International Affairs, April 1983, p.610

8 New York Times, 12 October 1980

9 Ibid , 25 September 1980

Following the attitude of 'strict neutrality', President Carter announced on September 30, 1981 to equip Saudi Arabia with four E-3A AWACS aircrafts to enable the Saudis to obtain advance warning of any Iranian attack. This was strongly opposed by the Iraqi government, who accused USA of indirectly aiding Iran. President Carter in his election speech (during the hostage issue) called Iraqis as "intruders" and their action as "aggression" and pledged to maintain Iran's territorial security and integrity. This was strongly opposed by Iraq who stated that an axis was created between Washington, Israel and Tehran, against Iraq and the entire Arab nations.

The U.S took this stand as an encouragement in its initial military strategy in southwest Asia and as long as the war would not spill over into the neighbouring states, it had achieved its immediate objective of maintaining the flow of oil out of the Gulf region, administration policy was expressed in words rather than deeds, reflecting its lack of leverage with the Combatants.

Moscow had diplomatic advantages with both belligerents and was also the principal supplier of the Iraqis. The U.S feared that, as in the 1971 war between India and Pakistan, the Soviet Union might offer itself as a mediator in peace talks between Tehran and Baghdad. If this happened, Moscow would

acquire a new political influence in the region as a whole -- a development the U.S had long sought to prevent. President Carter's suggestion of U.N mediation could hardly conceal the fact that the U.S at that moment had no 'locus standi' to mediate in the affair and feared Soviet Union's intervention in it.

With this in mind, former U.S Secretary of State, Edmund Muskie enunciated two key 'principles' in a proposal to end the Gulf war:

"We believe this conflict can and must be resolved through respect for international law -- that territory must not be seized by force of arms, that disputes should be resolved by practical means. And let us also affirm another principle that will be essential to a peaceful resolution of this conflict. It is the principle that neither side should seek to interfere in the affairs of the other."¹⁰

Another point that caused anxiety to the Carter administration was the possibility of a definitive Iraqi victory, which was termed by President Carter as the

10 M.S. EL AZHARY - "The attitudes of the superpowers towards the Gulf War", International Affairs, Vol. 59, no.4 Autumn 1983, p.611

dismemberment of Iran. Carter noted that the Iraqi forces had exceeded the war goal and if the Shatt al-Arab was occupied by Iraq, then it was U.S concern and Iran would be forced to plunge into a civil war which would invite the Soviet Union to intervene. One of the Carter's advisers (Zbigniew Brzezinski) argued that since Iraq was receiving spare-parts for her Soviet made equipment, the United States should correct the imbalance by supplying the needed spare parts to Iran, which it was hoped would prevent the collapse of Iran. Carter believed the Khomeini regime to be anti-Soviet as well as anti-American.

In addition, the Iranian leaders felt then American presidential elections campaign as a factor in tackling with the hostage crisis held in Tehran. Hence, an offer of spare-parts in exchange for the hostages release, was a very tempting way of enhancing Carter's chances of re-election. This is reflected in President Carter's remarks:

"If the hostages are released safely, we would make delivery of those items which Iran owns -- which they have bought and paid for"

President's reference was to an estimated \$ 240 million worth of military equipments already purchased but not received by Iran and which had been frozen with Iran's other assets

when the hostages were seized. The U.S had then declared that it would maintain its neutrality by refraining from selling 'additional' military equipment to Iran. However, none of the terms of the agreement for hostages release mentioned of military spare parts. They were freed when President Reagan's inauguration was in progress and the Gulf War had reached a stalemate and Iran was out of danger. The Carter administration had reportedly made a secret plan to invade Iran with military forces and assessed its political consequences and concluded to be approved by the electorate.

The Reagan Administration

The Reagan administration prohibited any defence contractor to supply spare parts to Iran. It maintained the neutral stance and followed policies similar to those established by the preceding administration. At the release of the hostages, when President Reagan's swearing-in-ceremony was still in progress, it seemed as if the Iranian leaders disliked the Carter rule and welcomed Ronald Reagan in his place.

The new administration continued to strengthen the U.S presence in the area by concluding an access agreement to use air and naval facilities with Pakistan.¹¹

As demonstrated in the U.S organized military exercises, several RDF military units became operational in several places in Arab and African countries in 1981 and 1982. Moreover the

11 The use of the Pakistani naval base at Gwandar and air base at Peshawar. See for details New York Times, 5 March 1984

Reagan administration cemented U.S-Saudi military co-operation by aiding the Saudis with more AWACS and assured them of its supports despite its closeness to Israel. All of this seemed to advance the capabilities of US military intervention in the Gulf. With Iran, Reagan put some gap between his administration and the preceding one by an indirect rebuke for making the hostages deal. The Carter administration's promise of \$ 240 million in military spare parts was cancelled. The repeated Iranian requests for supply of military spare-parts from the U.S, particularly for the American-built fleet of eighty F-14 fighter planes inherited from the time of the late Shah were ignored. The request was renewed in December 1981. The Reagan administration prohibited the export of all military equipment and high technology items to Iran.

In contrast to this stern attitude towards Iran, the Reagan administration wanted to improve relations with Iraq. Early in 1981, the secretary of state, Mr. Haig, proposed to Iraq the administration's plan to develop a strategic 'consensus' to counter Soviet expansion and to improve US-Iraqi relations. The U.S viewed a pattern of change in Iraqi diplomacy from a more radical to a modern stance. That change encompassed close ties with Jordan, a rapprochement with Saudi Arabia and a decline in Soviet-Iraqi relations. The U.S also hoped that Iraq would make a more favourable view of the U.S role in the

Gulf security and a centrist position on the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Despite the bombing of the Israelis of a nuclear reactor near Baghdad in June 1981, the US-Iraqi relations improved. The Reagan administration condemned the Israeli attack and censured Israel in a United Nations Security Council vote. The resolution by the U.N on Israel was considered the harshest censure of Israel ever endorsed by the U.S at the U.N. Thus, this promoted better relations between the two nations.

Over the following three years, both countries were interested in expanding diplomatic contacts with each other. Iraq was removed from the list of countries accused of aiding and abetting terrorism, thus lifting U.S restrictions against exports to Iraq. The U.S trade with Iraq is estimated at \$ 1 billion a year. Though the U.S did not then supply arms to Iraq, it consistently supported France's policy for supplying military equipments to Iraq.

Iran turned to a number of countries both eastern and western Europe as well as to Israel, Syria, Libya and North Korea, to circumvent the U.S embargo of arms denial to Iran. One estimate puts the figure for arms, spare parts and ammunition delivered to Iran from western Europe in the first eighteen months of the war at between \$ 100 million and \$ 200 million. Iran still had a better command in its stockpile

of arms, with massive stockpiles of arms accumulated during the Shah's rule and its international arms aid.

The U.S viewed that a pro-Soviet regime next door to Iran in Afghanistan required a strong anti-communist Iran as an important barrier to the extension of Soviet influence in the Gulf region. Iran continued her revolutionary zeal, which was viewed with alarm by its more conservative Arab neighbours as destabilizing to their regimes. The Gulf states, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, pressurized the Reagan administration to shore up Iraq's resistance to Iran. In response, the Reagan administration reiterated the U.S commitment to its friends in the area.

By July 1985, the U.S expressed its neutrality in the Gulf war and that the U.S would actively participate in seeking a peaceful solution to the Gulf war. This signalled to Iran that the U.S wished for better relations with Iran in future.

Despite repeated pleas from the U.S for Iran to submit a peaceful settlement, Iran paid no heed to the advice and invaded Iraq in July 1985 and openly it declared that it not only aimed at bringing down the government of Saddam Hussein but it also desired to establish an Islamic republic in Iraq and ultimately spreading Islamic revolution to the other Gulf states. However, the Iranian invasion failed and again the

war reached a stalemate. Iraq successfully repulsed several other offensives.

Nevertheless, by December in the same year, it was reported that the U.S had completed shipments of arms worth \$ 480,000,000 and negotiations had been going on for the further supply of spare parts for the F-4 and F-14 aircrafts.¹² As contrary to the previous statement of 'no arms supply to Iran' -- the U.S efforts have been to create a back-door policy and arm Iran to its teeth, indirectly.

The U.S policies in short relate to (a) its policy of containment of communism,¹³ (2) and the economics of oil which the U.S is increasingly trying to link up with its security interests.

The Reagan administration's obsession with the Gulf security has several facets. These are : a quick fix force for the region, a role for the Gulf states in its deployment, integration of a willing Pakistan into its grand strategy, raising the level of American arms assistance to Afghan rebels and last but not least, a collective western strategy, including a multinational naval fleet.

12 Financial Times (London) May 28, 1982

13 Carl Kaysen, "American Military Policy", Survival Vol. XI No.2, February 1969, p.51.

14 S.P. Seth, "Gulf Security and the U.S : How Real is the Soviet threat?" Times of India (Bombay) 23 March 1981

The unrestricted repeated attacks by both Iraq and Iran on each other's territory in 1 te 1984 has made Iran both a "strategic initiative" and a major "psychological advantage" over Iraq.

In the United States, there are two schools of thought about Washington's view of the Gulf War (1) According to one school, there is a feeling that Iran cannot lose the war but that it may very well win at some point. As an unnamed administrative official put it, in more positive terms -- "the war is still Iraq's to loose". This view of thought is buttressed by two corollary concepts: that there are elements of moderation in the Iranian regime (witness its improved ties with France and the release of hostages by pro-Iran groups in Lebanon) and that the U.S must eventually resume relations with Iran because it is the superpower of the Gulf region. This belief reportedly exists more prevalently in the defence department and the White House. If so, it is predictable, given the political abhorrence of any commitment to an Arab country in the latter and the former's nostalgia for the days when the Shah used U.S weapons to keep the Gulf quiet.

Another view is that by attacking Iran, Iraq has committed a grave blunder. A profound panic has been caused by Iraq's

strategic blunder. They are fighting a revolution which has no symptoms of declining and as long as no drastic changes are made in Iran's political stand, no military operations by Iraq is likely to bring about the fall of the Revolution. This has been the principal lesson learned in this war. Washington endeavours to keep Saddam in power by establishing peace, and to carry out its objective, Washington tackles a two-fold strategy. American sources pronounce that U.S has asked Turkey and Pakistan to contact Imam Khomeini's government and encourage him to end the war by peaceful means.

The war brought a quick victory to Saddam, did not bring Khomeini to his knees; it did not solve the release of U.S hostages nor did it secure Carter his second term. Despite all this, U.S stood firm to reap a rich harvest from the consequent future happenings.

Apparently, the United States is still considered 'an oppressor, hegemonist and imperialist power', whereas these objectives are not used to describe the Soviet Union.¹⁵

The U.S should establish economic ventures with Gulf states on an equal basis. This type of partnership seems to be the only truly viable prospect for the future. Consistently,

15 FBIS, Middle East and Africa, 8 January 1982

the Soviets blamed the Americans for creating in Iran military base and gendarme post of imperialism.

For the U.S, the Gulf covers all the major issues in its foreign policy, its relations with the Soviet Union, the politics of the NATO alliance, its attitude towards the Third World and of course its energy policy.¹⁶

Egged on by a Congress now dominated by assertive Democrats and an alert press, the administration which only a few months ago glowed with cheeky self-confidence, has been thrown on the defensive. Mistrusted at home and resented by its allies abroad the lame-duck administration runs the serious risk of being paralysed.

Soviet Union and the War

The initial shots of the war, urged many western analysts to anticipate for a possible Soviet intervention like in Afghanistan in the Gulf War. But in his statement in 1976 the then President Brezhnev said:

"Neither Iraq nor Iran will benefit from the destruction and blood and from undermining each other's economics, the only one to be benefited is a third party, one to whom the interests of the people of this region are alien.

16 Shahram Chubin's essay on "U.S attitudes towards the Gulf" in John F. Reichart and Steven R. Sturn (eds), American Defence Policy (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982)

The third party is imperialism"¹⁷

He repeatedly refuted the charge of possible intervention and reiterated:

"We are not going to interfere in the conflict between Iraq and Iran. We stand for earliest possible political settlement through the efforts of both countries, for neither Iraq, nor Iran can gain anything from the bloodshed"¹⁸

Soviet-Iraqi relations have been cooling since the late 1970s. The factors which contributed to the chill in their relations are: the invasion of Afghanistan, Soviet support for Ethiopia and South Yemen together with Iraq's increased shift towards West European nations for armaments and trade. The Soviet Union also warned both Iraq and Iran that such a war would only benefit "Western imperialist", and its neutral position might have been dictated by a fear of American military action in the Gulf. Moscow is also partially concerned about Khomeini's possible future influence on Soviet Muslims who, it is estimated that by the year 2000, there will be 100 million muslims in the USSR, compared to 150 million Russians.

The Soviet stand concerning the imposed war, since its inception, varies according to three stages:

17 New York Times No.41 October 1980, p.8

18 Ibid., No.49 July 1981, p.11

- A) From the beginning of the war until Bani Sadr's ouster,
- B) From the ouster of Bani Sadr until the liberation of Khorramshahr,
- C) From the liberation of Khorramshahr until the fifth stage of operation Ramadhan.

The first phase of the war was advantageous for Moscow. In the second phase, the Soviets provided arms to Iraq, and also aimed to end the war with the stabilization of Saddam. The third phase of the war delayed due to the Zionist invasion of southern Lebanon and the U.N Security Council's resolution, which bearing the endorsement of the U.S and the Soviet Union called for a ceasefire, was marked by the beginning of the Ramadhan offensive, eliciting from the Soviets an implicit expression of anxiety over Iran's thrust into Iraqi territory.

Study of Moscow position during different stages of the war reveals that the heavy-handed manipulations by the Pentagons and CIA, within the Iraqi government, motivated the Soviet Union to adopt passive and self-centered policies in order to secure its own interests. The Soviet interest in Iraqi aggression upon the Iranian territory was more of an indirect nature. The most important advantage of the war from the Soviet point of view was that it overshadowed its occupation of Afghanistan.

The occupation of Afghanistan was considered a Soviet attempt to reach warm waters. But soon after the outbreak of Iraqi imposed war, the situation in the Middle East changed and the Palestine and the Afghan issue took a back seat. Due to the American aid to Iraq, it was not difficult for the Soviets to foresee Iraq's intention to invade Iran. But it was in the interest of the superpowers to remain silent until the last days of the war. In fact the Soviet Union could get concession in the issue of Afghanistan in return for granting concession to the U.S to start the war. The Soviets also hoped to weaken and eliminate Iran's role in the Afghanistan nation's resistance. Moscow's understanding of this war was similar to that of other wars between belligerent countries. It hoped that by bringing Iran and Iraq together, while Iraq was in Iran's territory, it could both revive Soviet influence in Iraq and infiltrate as well in Iran through the establishment of peace between the two countries. The Soviets openly declared that they were against the aggressor while openly declaring Iraq as anti-imperialist. It was for this reason that Moscow never put pressure on Iraq to pull its forces from Iran i.e. it never denounced and condemned this action of Saddam. From the Soviet point of view the termination of the war with a peace concocted by the non-aligned mission could achieve many Kremlin objectives. But Moscow's alleged

neutrality served as a rebuff to direct Soviet aid to Iraq since the downfall of Saddam and the Baath party, had seriously endangered Soviet interests, Moscow sent military aid to Iraq through three parties of the eastern bloc -- Czechoslovakia, Poland and Bulgaria -- and expanded its economic relations with Iraq. The Lebanese weekly 'Alshara' wrote that Iraq purchased arms worth one billion dollars from these three parties. Upon Bani Sadr's downfall, the Soviet hope for a compromising end to the war was completely ruined. The Soviet considered Iraq as valuable and would not let Iran topple Iraq's government. Moscow on the one hand tried to cover up its secret military support for Iraq, on the other it showed direct and indirect support for Iran to urge her to end the war. Later Moscow wanted the war to end because Iraq showed signs of joining the West.

Unlike the U.S, the Soviet Union did not face any threat by the loss of access to the Gulf Oil because it is self-sufficient in energy. The war, however, found the USSR in a mass of cross-currents regarding its interests and vulnerabilities. On the one hand, Iraq is an officially linked to Moscow since the 1972 treaty of friendship and cooperation, on the other, the anti-Americanism of the revolutionary regime in Iran had brought important gains to the Soviet Union.

Very early in the war, Andrei Gromyko, the Soviet Foreign Minister, affirmed the neutral posture of the Soviet government. The late President Brezhnev, then called on leaders of both sides to go to the negotiating table. He warned them that under the pretext of this war, the U.S would move into Iran militarily and control the Gulf oil.

The Soviet media also criticized the U.S aid of AWACS to Saudi Arabia and its naval force presence in the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean. However, the presence of Soviet fleet included twelve combat vessels and seventeen support ships in the area.

Reflecting Soviet concern on the growing military presence of U.S in the Middle East, Brezhnev invited the U.S and other world powers to join the Soviet Union in 'a formal pact to forswear military intervention in the Gulf and to guarantee the flow of oil to the rest of the world'. This proposal was repeated on 23 February 1981 -- to the new Reagan administration.

At the end of talks between Brezhnev and Syrian President Hafiz Assad in Moscow, there was no mention of the Gulf war and they declared that Moscow and Damascus supported/the unalienable right of Iran to decide its destiny independently without foreign interference. Hence, with regard to the combatants

in the Gulf war, the Soviet Union maintained an attitude of aloofness towards Iraq.

Perhaps this was not totally unexpected; Soviet-Iraqi relations had been strained since the late 1970s. The Soviet leaders were particularly vexed when, in 1978, the Iraqi government ordered the execution of twentyone communists, for attempting to subvert the army, inspite of intervention by the Soviet Union, Bulgaria and East Germany. After this Baghdad strained its economic and military cooperations with Miscoow and reduced the number of Iraqis to receive military training in Soviet Union as an expression of its concern about Marxist indoctrination. On the contrary, it began to receive aid from the West for trade, technology and military equipments.

Another indication of further deteriorations in Soviet-Iraqi relations came during the twenty--sixth CPSU Congress, when the head of the Iraqi Communist Party, Aziz Mohammed - presumably with the Kremlin's approval -- condemned the war against Iran and demanded the immediate withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Iran. In contrast to the previous Congress in 1976, the Iraqi Baath Party did not send representatives.

The peak of Iraq-Soviet Union arms relationship was the Kosygin visit to Iraq in 1976, when an agreement for the supply

of nearly \$ 1 billion worth of Soviet arms, mostly MIG-23s and T-6₂ tanks was signed. Through the press Soviet leaders expressed their support for the revolution in Iran. President Brezhnev seemed far more cordial to Iran than to Iraq and wished the Iranians success in their revolution and offered to create good relations with Iran on the principles of equality and reciprocity. His words also seem to reflect that the Soviet leadership is no longer apprehensive but it will inspite the religious revivalism or disaffection among the Muslim population in the central Asian Republics of the U.S.S.R.

The Soviet leaders hoped that Iran would seek its co-operation after the hostage crisis led to a rapprochement between U.S and Iran and U.S's refusal for supply of military spare parts to Iran. Moscow was prepared to supply Iran with Soviet arms, but evidently Iran rejected the offer. Moscow failed to capitalize on the highly strained U.S.-Iranian relations.

When the Israelis bombed the Iraqi nuclear reactor-Osiraq - the Soviet resumed its subsequent supply to Iraq of about 400 T-55 and 250 T-72 tanks in November 1981 and T-72 tanks and MIG 25 aircraft deliveries came in September 1982. The Iranian demanded for renegotiation of the price of natural gas shipped to the Soviet Union through the Iranian Natural Gas Trunkline

(IGAT) is a further unresolved issue between the two countries. In March 1980, when Moscow rejected Iranian demands for a five-fold increase to bring the ~~price to world~~ market levels, the Iranian government completely cut-off the flow of natural gas to Russia.

The Soviet Union's unrewarded courtship of Iran was clearly causing frustration in the Kremlin, which complained about a number of Iranian policies, including anti-Soviet comments from the Iranian leaders. Libya and Syria have acted as conduits for arms supply to Iran of Soviet origin. In March 1982, Pravda listed the increase in its trade with Iran from R 700m in 1978 to R 800m in 1981, the closing of the Soviet Consulate in Rasht, the closing of the Soviet -- Iranian Cultural Relations Society & Iran -- Soviet Bank, the ban on Soviet reporters, and closing of several other joint enterprises as examples.

The Soviet Union had granted Iran transit rights through Soviet territory after the U.S had ordered a blockade of alternative route through the Gulf during the hostage crisis. Although the blockade is no longer in force, these rights are still open to Iran, during the war with Iraq. The Soviet press avoided criticism of Ayotallah Khomeini and suggested instead that Iranian anti-Soviet attitudes were encouraged by 'right-wing' groups. The idea to be conveyed here is that these

groups create 'obstacles to the expansion of Soviet-Iranian relations' and are doing harm to 'the Iranian economy and Iran's ability to fight imperialist pressures.'²⁰ This uneasy liaison came to an end in February 1982 when about seventy Tudeh party members were arrested and accused of spying for the Russians. The Soviets retaliated by ordering their eight diplomats to leave the country.

The Soviet failure to establish a closer link with Iran, made Moscow keep its options open towards Iraq and to keep intact of their friendship treaty. In April 1981, the Soviet Union and Iraq celebrated the ninth anniversary of their treaty. Both leaders swore to strengthen the ties based on mutual cooperation. Iraq was more in need of this reunion as it needed Soviet made military spare parts.

About two-thirds of the Iraqi military equipments is Soviet-made; the remainder comes from France and to a lesser extent, Britain and Italy. Iraq has a billion dollar contract with the Eastern and Western European countries for military equipments, in the near future. The Soviet Union is continuing its indirect flow of military supplies to Iraqi armed forces and repair assistance for war damages. In addition, the two

20 Foreign Broadcast Information Service/USRR
International Affairs, 10 March 1982, pp. H1-H2

countries have signed a number of commercial and technological agreements. Much of Iraq's trade now is with Japan, West Germany, France and the U.S. In 1980, the Soviet Union ranked fourteenth among Iraqi trade partners. A strong possibility is that, in a postwar reconstruction efforts, Soviet-Iraqi economic ties will strengthen considerably.

Lacking Leverage with both combatants, the USSR has succeeded by the use of caution and restraint, in avoiding irreparable damage to its relations with either side. What Iraq and Iran achieve on the battlefield will determine the nature of Soviet Union's future policy. Though Iraq has so far succeeded in repulsing Iranian attacks on her territory, the two sides appear locked in an inconclusive war. In short, the Soviet Union has no option but to continue its policy of courting both countries, lest one of them totally shifts to the United States. But if the Ba'ath regime is overthrown and if Iraq is defeated, it must eventually would not necessarily serve the interests of the Soviet Union. It would, however, bring important gains to the USSR in terms of anti-American and anti-Western actions which would probably damage existing Western interests and relations in the region.

In short, the scene of Soviet's proximity on the battle-theatre has a few ideological considerations.

The war came at the most inopportune time. The Soviets

were bogged down in Afghanistan and has been embroiled in a guerrilla war in Afghanistan. The Soviet Union then was deeply involved in Poland and at the outbreak of the war their relations with Iraq was at the lowest. Thus, the outbreak of the war was totally unawares to Russia and she was truly on the horns of a dilemma as to whom to support and how. As the Soviets got over the shock, it was too late to get anyone side totally on its side. Thus, the Soviets stocks were falling rapidly with Iraq without any compensatory gains with the Iranians.

The Soviets' main feature of their relationship with Iran was the Transit Agreement between the two which included the over-land route to and from Western Europe, the Trans-Siberian rail-route to and from Japan and the sea-route from East Europe to the Iranian ports on the Caspian Sea. By the end of 1981, the Soviets and Iranians were jointly carrying on verbal attacks on the US expansionist and war -- mongering designs in the Indian ocean and the Gulf.

It has been quite clear, all along that the linkages of the Superpowers never operated on behalf of their traditional allies, no were they on each other's pet horses. The equally unpredictable feature of this war -- is the stand of the superpowers and their influence in the war.

The U.S instigated the war in pursuit of its own objectives, which it achieved only partially. The Soviet Union did not approve the war initially but was forced into it due to the increased western influence in the Middle East and it can do

Chapter V

CONCLUSIONS

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CONCLUSIONS

Woven into world politics there is a self-perpetuating international military order. It is a hierarchy of power based on war, on the threat of war and on permanent preparations for it.

U.S and Soviet nuclear forces are each justified by references to the other. The impact of sophisticated weapons by one state sustains the arms industry of another. The need for solidity in one military bloc is affirmed by the seeming solidarity of the other. Intent on safeguarding "national security", each contributes to the ambient insecurity on which they all thrive. Their mutual relations are regulated by the threat of war rather than by war itself, by insistent preparations for a war that would be suicidal. But cold war has not resolved their conflicts; rather, it has exacerbated and entrenched them. War between them has been deferred, not deterred.

The contemporary conflict, then, is the latest manifestation of a centuries-old drama. What sort of climax will this penultimate chapter of the war have -- is a multimillion dollar question. However, the present stalemate appears stable and entrenched. From the superpower perspective, the war is not a dreaded one as no war damage other than the dissipating of energies and resources of these two countries.

Thus, to an extent the war is safely circumscribed to Iran and Iraq -- and there are no powerful external pressures to bring the war to an end.

The internal pressures resulting from this dissipation of energies, resources and lines, however, do generate a rationale for compromise and negotiation. But the response to Iraqi overtures for negotiations is well reflected in Ayotollah Khomeini's message:

"Saddam Hussein is asking for a compromise. We cannot compromise with him. He is a pagan. He is corrupt. He is an infidel. We cannot compromise with such a person. We do not care if other countries extend their assistance to the Iraqi regime because we have to implement our religious duties. We are religiously bound to protect and preserve Islam."

Systematically, the Islamic regime has crawled towards despotism and dictatorship. Thousands of the patriots and democrats who have fought the Shah regime throughout their lives, have been arrested, tortured and executed on false charges of spying for Soviet Union under the guise of fight against "imperialism". Khomeini has been converted into billions of dollar's co-operation with the NATO bloc.

Though Saddam Hussein submits to peaceful negotiations

and to amicable solutions, Khomeini's ardent efforts to destroy Iraq's targets has made him blood-thirsty. He also accuses Iraq for following the Western strategies.

Khomeini remained in exile for 14 years in Iraq and left it only six months before the historic revolution in 1964. He then lived in Paris and kindled the various Iranian political parties and promised them freedom. After he came to power, his promises were shattered and he even accused the concept of basic democracy as 'Western'. Khomeini seems to be blinded with the fact that the policies which he had been following (Capitalism and dictatorship based on lies and frauds) are also 'Western'.

It is clear that the Iranians are still far from winning the war. But Iraq lost an important battle, one which does not augur well for the future. Iraq cannot afford to lose many more battles like the one it lost at Shoush and Dezfoul. Saddam Hussein ordered his division across the border in September 1980; with a view to rapidly collapse Iran's chaotic Islamic revolution. That was a terrible miscalculation.

Now that the tide has turned, Iraq is fighting a defensive war along a 750-mile front against an enemy whose population is three times the size of Iraq's. Even today, Iraq is willing to withdraw to the border if only Iran will accept peace and

coincide as a bare minimum, Iraq's claim to the Shatt-al-Arab. It has become an undoubted reality -- that Saddam Hussein is fighting the war on behalf of all the Arabs though not in a geo-military sense.

It's quite clear that Iraq is sincerely not interested in war. She on the other hand is forced for aggression as its aggressor is conspiring for the destruction of Iraq. In spite of the severe economic strains, Iraq has (if not improved) at least maintained its economic and industrial advancement to an extent. The long war of attrition has not marred the Iraqi psychology. On the other hand, seeing the chronic attacks and strong determination for war, one concludes that Khomeini is not interested in progress, freedom and emancipation. Comparing the shattered condition of Iran, with Iraq's progress, the cause of Khomeini's obstinacy and fundamentalism is clearly revealed.

Khomeini's country is not a North Korea or Albania or Libya -- a little place more or less containable by its neighbours and by its own follies. Iran is too big for that and too awkwardly placed on the world's map, too explosive in its example of revolutionary religion. Iran should think urgently and coolly on its peace stand with Iraq. But being stubborn, Iran is hampering its own economic resources

and will be left back in today's race for advancement in all fields. But no stalemate can go on forever; at some stage, soldiers run, planners give up, even tough leaders like Khomeini and Saddam Hussein can be overthrown.

What then does the Iran-Iraq war suggest about the incidence of future wars, their characteristics, their conduct and their termination???

Wars are made possible by rapid changes in the existing military balances, especially where there are rival states and one of them seems a temporarily pronounced advantage. Resort to force is made thinkable, if there are no regional or global restraints on it due to the distraction, or even approval of the great powers. In the Iraq's case, its military balance clearly figures more in its military calculations, than the less definable political dimensions of power. In short, this experience suggests that deterrence through tangible and even flashy new equipment may be more effective than reliance on more solid but less conspicuous forms of military power.

Future conflicts may be influenced by certain lessons to be learnt from the Iran-Iraq war, namely : the incalculability of events overtime and the need, if war is inevitable, to maximize the effect of surprise in order to make it decisive; the need for diversified sources of arms; the importance to articulate war

aims that relate to military capability; and the risks of relying on the super-powers to bail out regional adversaries. In most respects, the Iran-Iraq war will not serve as a model for future conflicts. The future war will be life and death issues and since this conflict is only an issue on territorial disputes; its high time Iran and Iraq solved this minor dispute and got prepared for more heinous wars in future.

Iran's stakes, since 1982; have been more metaphysical than material. Its very difficult to believe that for the removal of Saddam Hussein, Iran has spent thousands of lives - this suggests either Khomeini's excessively high estimate of Saddam's worth or else an extremely low opinion of the value to be placed on Iranian lives.

In Iran, support for the continuation of the war is, in any case, a test of one's revolutionary credentials, and there are few incentives for moderation in that society. However, there are no practical constraints on Iran to prevent it prosecuting the war, in its own phrase, 'until victory'

If neither exhaustion nor a decisive result look imminent, what of an imposed end to the war? Either, the super powers should rebuff their stubborn stands and submit to peace or the U.N.O. should impose peace in these areas, or else this type of decoupling is a war that continues without discernible purpose or end.

An obvious fact of the war is that mere piling of sophisticated fighting material does not grant victory to a nation if it lacks the infrastructure and the human factor to absorb it. If it is the policy of some external powers to let the potentially powerful states of the Gulf fight against themselves and pre-empt the harnessing of their resources and energies behind larger causes, the plan is working to near-perfection. What is happening in the West Asia reflects the happenings of the Third World as a whole. There is no such thing as an inevitable war. If war comes, it will be from failure of human wisdom.

Militarily speaking, a trench war has shown us a see-saw game without tilling the strategic balance one way or the other. An open 'armsbaryar' is there were hardly any ideology interacts.

All peace efforts by the non-aligned movement, the United Nations and the Islamic Conference Organization have turned fruitless.

And, it is even less credible that, in a world of finite resources and in so many parts of which basic human needs remain unsatisfied, nearly \$400 billion in resources have to be spent every year for purpose of security, in Iran.

If its the super powers rivalry which is keeping the war alive, it will lead to an intensification of the arms race,

that someday will make deterrence ineffective. This must inevitably culminate in the world-wide disaster of large scale thermonuclear war.

Indeed, there are days when to fight for a cause so absolutely just, is the highest human command. Only in honouring that command comes the regeneration of the concept of peace.

You rise, you struggle, you make sacrifices to achieve and guarantee the prospect and hope of living in peace -- for you, and your people, for your children and their children. This is our common maxim and belief -- that if through your efforts and sacrifices you win liberty and with it the prospects of peace -- than work for peace, as there is no mission in life more sacred.

Let us always remember the magnificent written words of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It runs :

"All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood."

To establish peace and friendship is the beauty of our lives and give ourselves the most momentous pledge of

'No more war, No more blood shed -- but
to negotiate, understand and indulge in peace'

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