

**U.S. POLICY TOWARDS IRAQ SINCE THE
GULF CRISIS:
A STUDY OF US SANCTIONS POLICY**

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation titled “**US POLICY TOWARDS IRAQ SINCE THE GULF CRISIS: A STUDY OF US SANCTIONS POLICY**” by **SANDEEP KUMAR PANKAJ** is in partial fulfilment for the requirement of the award of the degree of **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**. This dissertation has not been previously submitted for any degree of this or any other university. To the best of my knowledge this is his own work.

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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Errors if any are mine.

Sandeep
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Date : 20.7.2001

Place: NEW DELHI

PREFACE

“Since war begins in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the foundations of peace must be laid.”

Preamble of UNESCO

The dawn of 2 August, 1990 caught the community of nations unaware as the Iraqi troops crossed into and occupied the neighbouring country of Kuwait. Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's decision of annexing the small Sheikdom was not actually a bolt from the blue but keeping in mind his earlier game of manoeuvring of situations in his own favour, it should have been more predictable. But unfortunately Saddam over played his strategic stakes and had to face the wrath the world community forced on him through Operation Desert Storm. The consequences of the Sanctions are still imminent, even though these sanctions have been loosened since December 1996.

The Gulf crisis happens to be a major jolt in the international political scenario in the immediate post-Cold War period with the fragmentation of the Soviet Union, and the internal changes in communist break away factions there was a rapid shift in the balance of power. The bi-polar world gave way to a unipolar world solely dominated by the United States.

The United Nations which hold a unique position since its inception has been facing challenges due to the over dominance of the US and its allies in its Security Council meetings. So as to protect its interest in the various parts of the world, United States has manipulated votes in its favour by promising its supporters economic aid, grants etc. As on today, such manipulative tactics as advocated by United States has jeopardized the credibility of UN.

The objective of my M.Phil research work has been to understand the nature and implication increasing dominance of United States in the world today. It went a step further in the Gulf war of 1991 where by using the banner of UN to pursue its own objectives, diplomatically in the region. Infact, such an instrumentation of the UN at the hands of the reigning superpower leaves an insecure world behind at the turn of the century.

The first chapter, in fact, deals with these diplomatic objectives and the evolution of US policies towards the Persian Gulf in general and Iraq in particular. I have tried to sketch the pattern of US presence and its formulation of policies for this region, from sheer absence to a growing dependence on Gulf oil for its economic development.

In the chapter II, I have dealt with the Gulf crisis and the United States diplomatic response. In this chapter, I have tried to show how big nations played their card of balance in the Iraq. I have traced these developments as leading to the annexation of Kuwait keeping in mind that the ensuing crisis found mentioned is the US strategic stake and now it uses the tools of diplomacy to fuse this situation. With the failure of the diplomacy, US musters up coalition force under the flag of UN to push back the Iraqi troops.

Chapter III, is basically about the huge bombardment of Iraq by coalition forces and our appraisal of the UN Security Council Resolutions during the crisis and the war. The politics of Sanctions during this period clearly indicates foul play on the part of the United States. But nonetheless, it

has drastically helped in almost full implementation of the embargo and the Economic Sanctions.

Chapter IV, deals with the scourging impact of sanctions on the people of Iraq. In this chapter I have basically analysed the effects of miscalculated and misdirected steps on the Iraqi population. Sanctions have not been able to hit the targeted regime but the vulnerable section of society.

The fifth chapter i.e. final and concluding one deals with the ineffectiveness of the Sanctions. The negative side effects of this tool of coercive diplomacy is too humane costly to be used in such a crisis and for such a long time.

The War which the US launched against Iraq on 17 January, 1991 was, in fact, a war to destroy Iraq's power, remove its leader, Saddam Hussein, and impose on the region a political order which will respect American interests and legitimise its presence in the region.

To sum it all, 1991 may now be remembered as the year when the Vietnam syndrome was replaced by the Iraqi syndrome. The world politics may have returned to near normal situation in the world's volatile region but the effects of the disastrous war will be long felt by the people globally.

Dedicated to...

My Parents

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CHAPTER – I

**THE EVOLUTION OF US POLICY TOWARDS PERSIAN GULF
IN GENERAL AND IRAQ IN PARTICULAR**

The United States has had significantly more opportunity to exert its will in the Middle East since the end of World War I. Before the war, Middle East was the stronghold of the Ottoman Turks, but when the war ended, Great Britain and France assumed control of the region. In 1919 those two countries signed an agreement dividing Ottoman empire between them, with the north to be controlled by France and south by Britain. (Palestine was originally to be international territory). The Middle East for decades have been a key region for the industrial west because of its oil reserves. Keeping the straight of Hormuz open, therefore, has been seen as an essential element in the defence of the western world. Although Great Britain and, to a lesser extent, France were accorded the status of custodians of the Middle East immediately after the World War II, the US policy makers soon began to assert that the US had responsibilities in the region. US aid to Greece in 1947, for example, was justified in part by the need for stopping communist expansion in the Middle East. By the mid of 1950s, the US had gained major concessions in the Middle East for its oil companies at the expense of British interests. The US position in the Persian Gulf descended from the British, who dominated the region for nearly 150 years before the arrival of the Americans. The US inherited not only its mantle of leadership and much of its strategic infrastructure from the British but also its way of thinking about its interests and how to pursue them. The US'

pre-occupation with containing the expansion of Soviet influence in the region could be seen as an extension of the great game, as practiced by the British throughout the 19th century. The other major concern of US foreign policy-how to ensure access to the oil reserves of the region was in turn reminiscent of British protection of its markets and lines of communication east of Suez. Thus, at least partly as a consequence of this historical evolution, there was a line of continuity in US policy.

The Tehran conference of 1943 was the first visit by an American President to the region and President Franklin D. Roosevelt's encounter with the young Mohammed Reza Shah Pahalavi marked the first high level US interests in the regional political developments. Roosevelt later commented that he was rather thrilled with the idea of using Iran as an example of "what we can do by an unselfish American policy."¹ With respect to the Middle East, the economic, strategic and ideological threat to the US was said to have two sources, one was internal and the other was external. The prime internal threat was said to come from Islamic fundamentalism. Other regional threats were attributed to such ambitious rulers as Libya's Muammer Guddafi and Syria's Hafez-Al Assad. The major external threat was said to come from the Soviet Union. Consequently, although the Soviet threat was often portrayed as the major concern, there was reason to believe that since the World War II the primary targets of the US involvement in the Persian Gulf had been internal upheavals, jeopardizing US influence in this highly coveted area. The Persian

¹ Bruce R. Kuniholm, *The origins of the Cold War in the Near East* (Princeton, New Jersey) Princeton University, Press, 1980, p.169.

Gulf has long been seen as “a stupendous source of strategic power and one of greatest material prizes in the world history.”²

US - Soviet rivalry in the Persian Gulf

The first direct confrontation between the US and the Soviet Union in the post World War II era and one of the opening salvoes of the Cold War, was the dispute over the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Northern Iraq in 1946. Although this issue was resolved peacefully by US and British diplomatic pressures in the United Nations. The incident made a vivid impression on the US leadership and Iran came to be perceived by several generations of US leaders as the most likely site outside the European theatre where an armed clash with the Soviet Union might escalate into a global conflict.³

In US strategic planning, the scenario of the Soviet armed attack across Iran towards the Persian Gulf was used to size American rapid deployment forces and to calculate left requirements. It did not imply that such an attack was regarded as imminent, but in the familiarity of the Iranian Persian Gulf scenario meant that US military and Government officials perhaps have been more conscious of the Soviet threat in that sector than in other possible trouble spots around the world.”⁴

Keeping the Soviet threat in view, in 1951 Britain and the US attempted to create a Middle East Treaty Organisation (METO), which was resisted by

² Foreign Relations of United States, Vol. 8 (Washington D.C., Government Printing Office), 1945, p.45.

³ Ibid, p.59.

⁴ Gary Sick, “The United States and the Persian Gulf”, in *The Gulf War Regional and International Dimensions* (ed.), Hanns W. Maull and Otto Pick (London) Printers Publishers, 1989, p.122-123.

the Egyptians. Egypt also rejected the joint British – French – US – Turkey proposal for a Middle East Command with Headquarters in Cairo. A collective security organisation did succeed in 1955, however, with the conclusion of a Turko-Iraqi agreement on mutual security. This formed the nucleus of the Baghdad Pact, which was later expanded to include Britain, Pakistan and Iran in the same year.⁵

Egypt, which had been denied American aid after an Israeli raid on Gaza in 1955, concluded major arms deal with the Soviet Union. Egypt also countered the Baghdad pact with the formation of a series of security pacts with Middle Eastern and Gulf States in 1955-56. Egypt formed a joint command with Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Syria, and concluded a separate defense treaty with Saudi Arabia.

Alignments among Gulf and Middle East actors continued to switch in the ensuing years in a dynamic balance of power style. The 1958 coup in Iraq, which over threw the monarchy, brought Sultan Qasim to power. Iraq turned towards the Soviet Union and abrogated the Baghdad Pact. Iraq also engaged in rivalries with Nasser's Egypt and the Syrians both of whom in 1958 formed the United Arab republic. During this period the alignment of Egypt and Saudi Arabia turned into opposition as each backed different sides in the Yemeni civil war in 1962. Iran's foreign policy during this period remained acutely sensitive to potential pressure from the Soviet Union on its northern border.

⁵ Lenorea Martin, *The Unstable Gulf: Threats from within* (Toronto) Lexington Book Publications, Toronto, 1984, p.21.

After Iraq withdrew from the Baghdad pact, the remaining allies renamed it as the Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO) and obtained the pledge of US military assistance. Although Iran remained a member of the CENTO-the Shah retained some flexibility in his relations with the US. In 1962 he refused to permit US missiles on Iranian soil and in 1966 concluded an arms deal with the Soviet Union to build up its military capabilities. As the British withdrew from the Gulf, the Shah Iran sought to act as the policeman of the Gulf.⁶

The United States got an edge over the Soviet Union after constructing the Diego Garcia military base in 1973. The perception of expansive US interests had repercussions in the attitudes of littoral states. The British announcement in 1968 of its intent to withdraw its military presence east of Suez by 1971 came at a moment when the Soviet Union was beginning to develop a new maritime policy of power projection in areas far from the Soviet land mass. Almost simultaneously with the British announcement, the Soviet Union began to deploy naval forces to the region on a regular basis. In 1968, twenty four Soviet combat vessels were maintained in the area, together with supporting auxiliaries, for a total of about 1900 ships which increased upto 8,800 ships. General Secretary Leoniel Brezhnen launched a political campaign to reduce the western Presence in Asia. His call for an Asian collective security arrangement attracted no support in the region, but it was generally interpreted by the western powers as a transparent effort to play on the nationalist

⁶ J.B. Kelly, *Arabia, the Gulf and the West* (New York, Basic Books Publication; 1980, p.276.

sentiment of the regional states and to add up a political dimension to the increased soviet military presence.⁷ The British withdrawal from the Trucial States in the late 1971 left as Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia major actors within the system. All three major actors have vastly increased their military capabilities during the passage of time. Both the Soviet Union and the United States had become active participants in the international politics of the region. The Soviet Union participated primarily through major arms sales to Iraq and military assistance to North Yemen, with which the Soviets had an ideological connection. The Soviet Union had obtained the use of military facilities from these states varying from access to ports to control air base facilities. The United States participated primarily through major arms sales such as those to Iran before the Iranian Revolution as well as to Saudi Arabia and the other traditional states. With respect to Oman and Baharin the US obtained the use of certain military facilities.

The Two Pillar Policy

In 1969 on the Island of Guam, Richard Nixon announced what came to be known as the Nixon Doctrine, which proposed that the US would support and place greater reliance on regional powers to help protect its interests world wide. Perhaps the clearest translation of this policy into concrete action was in the Persian Gulf, where the US had significant national interests but was hampered by regional public opinion. Washington enhanced its ties and security co-operation with Iran and Saudi Arabia – the so called twin-pillar

⁷ Gary sick, no.3, p.123-124.

policy to achieve the new objective. From the beginning, Iran was acknowledged as the predominant and stronger pillar. President Richard Nixon and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger visited Iran in May 1972 and concluded a series of agreements. In return for Iranian support to the protection of US interests in the region, the US agreed to increase the level of its military advisory presence in Iran and to accede to any of the Shah's requests for arms purchases from the US.⁸

By mid-1973, the US had every reason to be satisfied with its basic strategy. The political transition to independence by the mini states of the Persian Gulf following the British withdrawal had been orderly. The Iranian seizure of the small Islands of Abu Musa and the Tunbs at the mouth of Gulf in late 1971 had been balanced by the retraction of Iranian claims to Bahrain. The initial Arab outrage seemed to subside into acceptance of the fait accompli. The Iraqi threat to Kuwait in March 1973 and a nearly simultaneous upsurge of tension between Saudi Arabia and South Yemen were managed without any need for direct US intervention. Both the pillars of US policy, Iran and Saudi Arabia, appeared stable and increasingly self-confident. In its role as protecting power, Iran provided troops to assist the new sultan of Oman to put down the externally assisted rebellion in Dhofar province. Despite the growing importance of oil, the balance of trade between the US and the Persian Gulf states strongly favoured the US and was expected to stay that way as the oil producers sought western technology and products with their increasing oil

⁸ Garry seek, *All Fall Down: America's Tragic Encounter with Iran*, (N.Y., Random House Publications, 1985), p.15.

revenues. The US Middle East Force—an Auxiliary Command Ship and two destroyers—seemed securely established after successful negotiations of a lease with the government of Bahrain. However the tranquility was broken by the events resulting from the Arab-Israel War of 1973. The oil embargo by Arab states against the US and the allies for supporting Israel demonstrated that business and politics in the Persian Gulf could not safely be separated from each other. The resulting panic in the world markets, including massive disruption in US domestic distribution systems, created the impression that the US was much more vulnerable than had been imagined. The threat of possible naval actions against shipping destined for Israel, drew attention to the vulnerability of oil shipping lanes. The government of Bahrain demanded that US forces terminate their use of military facilities there.⁹

The US sent a carrier task force into the Arabian Sea in October 1973 as part of a global alert of US forces during the war, and maintained a greatly increased naval presence for about six months. Secretary of Defence James Schlesinger subsequently announced that the US would conduct more frequent and more regular naval deployments to the region, and requested the upgrading of the facility at Diego Garcia without delay. The Soviet Union doubled its warship presence in response to US naval deployments and began development of a major military airfield and missile handling facility at Berbera in Somalia, raising US fears of the imminent introduction of Soviet long-range surveillance and strike air craft into the region.

⁹ Francis Fukuyama "Soviet Civil Military Relations and the Power Projection Mission" *Rand Report*, R-3504-AF, April 1987.

The Oil and US Policy

Oil as commercial commodity was first discovered in the Middle East by an Australian, William D'Arcy, in 1908 at Masjid-I-Suleman at the head of the Persian Gulf in Iran. The first shipload of oil from that field passed through the Straights of Hormuz in 1912. Most of the major oil fields were in Iraq. Sources of oil is the Eastern province of Saudi Arabia and the Arab principalities of the Gulf were located and developed largely by European and US companies beginning the 1930s. However, the political and strategic importance of the Persian Gulf oil in international politics did not emerge until after the World War II.

Initially, the vast oil reserves of the Persian Gulf were viewed as important primarily for commercial and financial reasons. The exploration of oil, as well as its extraction, refining, shipment and marketing were under the control of a small number of giant oil companies the so called "seven sisters". It was often difficult to distinguish between US interests in Saudi Arabia, for example, and the interests of the Arabian-American oil company (ARAMCO).¹⁰ The enormous profits generated by the oil companies were crucial to the financial health of a number of governments and some of the most dramatic political developments in the region were directly related to these lucrative operations. Thus, the US covert action in 1953, which overthrew premier Mohammed Mossadegh and restored the Shah to the throne, was inspired by the British after Mossadegh had nationalized the Anglo-Iranian oil

¹⁰ Garry Sick, no.3, p.127.

company. Although US had already established a foothold in the Persian Gulf through the oil concessions gained from Saudi Arabia in early 1930s by the ARAMCO, its first significant entry into the Persian Gulf was through Iran in 1959. In putting the post-war Iranian finances in order the US President Roosevelt, through his nominee, Arthur C. Mielspang played a key role.¹¹

The United States effectively sustained and bolstered the Shah's regime in Iran from 1953 till 1978-79. Indeed Iran turned out to be the first of America's client states in the Persian Gulf. The oil producers in the region had partially nationalized the oil industry which could not cut into "continued access to the Persian Gulf oil supplies at reasonable prices and in sufficient quantities¹² and the US demand from outside oil, particularly from the Persian Gulf, was growing."¹³

With growing domestic demand for oil, the American involvement in the Persian Gulf region increased. Even the nationalization of oil by the Gulf countries did not inhibit the process of US involvement. In a nut shell, the main American objectives in the Persian Gulf was the continued access to the Persian Gulf oil supplies at reasonable prices and in sufficient quantities.

In the early 1970s, when the industrialized world was becoming increasingly dependent on oil as an energy source, Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) was instrumental in asserting the rights of the producer countries to greater participation in the operation of the industry. This

¹¹ Peter Avery, *Modern Iran*, London, 1965, Harpes and Row Publication, p.356.

¹² J.C. Cambell, "Super Powers in the Persian Gulf", in Abbas amirce, (ed.) *The Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean in International Politics* (Tehran, 1915), p.47.

¹³ *Ibid.* p.56.

assertion reflected the new realities of the world oil market. From the end of Second World War until the mid-1960s, the US was the largest oil producer in the world and was therefore able to exercise the dominant influence on the international oil market. However, as the US production in the 1970s began to decline, Gulf production soared. By 1979 Saudi oil production substantially exceeded that of the US, and the Gulf region was producing nearly three times as much oil as the United States.¹⁴ As a world-wide demand for oil increased, the Gulf States with their massive oil reserves, were in a position to assert greater independent leverage over pricing and production. This new power was vigorously demonstrated in the wake of the October 1973 Arab-Israel war, when the Gulf States ordered production cut backs and imposed a partial oil boycott. This disruption of normal supply patterns and the resulting fears of a global oil shortage permitted OPEC to quadruple the price of oil from \$2-3 range to nearly \$12 per barrel. Thus, the entire production and the pricing system of international oil was transformed. The role of the US as key producer and exporter of oil was supplanted by the Gulf States in general and Saudi Arabia in particular. The strategic dependence of the industrialized states on the oil of the Persian Gulf became manifestly apparent. And the earlier perception of oil as a matter of primarily commercial interest was replaced by a perception of oil as a strategic, political concern.

The US responded to this series of reversals by political and strategic improvisation. After the oil shock of 1973-74, Secretary of Defense James

¹⁴ Gary Sick, no.3, p.128.

Schlesinger pointedly noted that the US possessed the necessary military capability to respond if the oil weapon was used to cripple the industrialized world. In November 1974, the Carrier USS Constellation broke off from routine exercises in the Arabian sea and conducted air operations during a 36-hour circumnavigation of the Persian Gulf – the only time a US Carrier has ever entered the constricted waters of the Gulf. There was a talk in the media of a US invasion of the Gulf¹⁵ and the US raised its level of naval presence in the region, sending alternative deployments of carriers and surface ship task forces to the region every four months. If the objective of these maneuvers was to get the undivided attention of the Gulf rulers, then certainly they succeeded.

Hennery Kissinger's brilliant negotiations of Israeli disengagement from Sinai in 1974-75 led Anwar Sadat to surprise everyone by abrogating Egypt's treaty with the Soviet Union and moving closer to the US. This event plus reopening of the Suez Canal in 1975, helped US Arab policy and greatly increased US capability to insert forces into the region on the short notice. The political process of reconciliation with Egypt was intensified and extended by President Jimmy Carter, whose extraordinary personal diplomacy culminated in the 1978 Camp David Accord and in 1979, the first peace treaty between Arab States and Israel.

The Iranian Revolution

At the same time as the United States was gaining a new partner in Egypt, it was losing one in Iran. The sudden and total collapse of the Shah

¹⁵ Robert Tucker Oil : The Issues of American Intervention, *Commentary*, March 1975, p.105.

regime in Iran at the end of 1978 effectively demolished a decade of US strategy in the Persian Gulf region. Without Iran the Nixon doctrine was invalidated, and the US was left strategically naked, with no safety net.¹⁶ This sense of imminent concern was magnified in February 1979 by reports of an incipient invasion of North Yemen by its Marxist neighbour to the south. This event coming in the wake of the Marxist coup in Afghanistan in April 1978, the conclusion of Ethiopian and Soviet peace and friendship treaty in November 1978, the fall of the Shah and the assassination of US Ambassador Adolph Dubs in Kabul in February 1979, created the impression that the US had lost all capacity to influence regional events. That impression was strengthened when Turkey and Pakistan followed Iran in withdrawing from the CENTO in March. The US responded to the Yemen crisis by sending a carrier task force to the Arabian sea and establishing a new baseline of constant US military presence for years to come.

Over the remainder of 1979, the US undertook a systematic effort to develop a new strategic framework for the Persian Gulf. By the end of 1979 the outlines of a strategy had been sketched, including initial identification of US forces for a Rapid Deployment Force, for an increased US military presence in the region.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan just before Christmas in 1979 can be explained variously in terms of Soviet interests, perceptions or strategy. On the US side, however, the result was rather simple. The invasion aroused latent

¹⁶ Martin, "Patterns of Regional Conflict and US Gulf Policy", in (ed.) *Wm. J. Olson, US Strategic Interests in the Gulf Region*, (Colorado, USA), West View Press, 1987, pp.20-21.

fears of Soviet expansionism that were never very far beneath the surface of US foreign policy. The Soviet invasion was widely perceived not as a political gambit to preserve a Soviet position in Afghanistan but as an initial step towards more lucrative targets at a time when US power and influence were considerably impaired. The practical effect of the Soviet invasion was to terminate the efforts of the Carter Administration to seek mutual accommodation with the Soviet Union, including support for SALT II treaty.¹⁷ It under cut the consistent effort of Secretary of State Cyrus Vance to pursue a low key negotiating approach with the Soviet Union and persuaded President Carter to rely more heavily on the advice of the Hawkish advisers, particularly Zbignien Brzezinski.

Carter Doctrine and RDJTF

The policy shift was articulated by Carter in his State of the Union Address on 23 January 1980, where he stated that any attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region would be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the US and such an assault would be repelled by any necessary means, including force. This declaration came to be known as the Carter Doctrine.¹⁸ The statement reflected the US desire to establish itself as the protector of the Gulf region and effectively completed the transfer of Great Power responsibility in the Persian Gulf from the British to the Americans. When Carter Doctrine reflected US intentions rather than capabilities. Despite the planning that had been conducted over the previous year, the US was

¹⁷ Leorea Martin, No.4, pp.118-120.

¹⁸ J.C. Hurewitz, *The Persian Gulf after Iran's Revolution*, Foreign Policy Series 244, April 1979, p.22.

poorly equipped to respond to a major Soviet threat in the Persian Gulf region. A number of additional steps were thus taken, including the formal establishment of a Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force (RDJTF) to remedy the situation. It led to the deployment of seven propositioning ships to Diego Garcia. US Congress was requested to purchase fast roll on, roll of ships that could reach the Suez Canal quickly. AWACS aircraft were deployed to Saudi Arabia to enhance air defences in the Gulf after the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war.

Despite these efforts, by the time the Regan administration took office in Washington in January 1981, it was equally apparent that the developments of 1980 marked a major threshold in the evolution of US strategy and a new conviction that this region represented a major strategic zone of US vital interests, demanding both sustained attention at the highest levels of US policy-making and direct US engagement in support of specifically US interests. That was without precedent.

The Regan Administration followed the Carter Doctrine and took steps to put more substantial military power and organisation behind its words. The RDJTF was reorganized in 1983 as a unified command known as the Central Command (CENTCOM), based at Mac Dill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida, with earmarked forces totaling some 230,000 military personnel from the four services. Its basic mission reflected the two themes that had wound through US regional policy from the very beginning: to assure continued access to Persian

Gulf oil and to prevent the Soviets from acquiring political military control directly or through proxies.

The Iran-Iraq War

Despite the shadow of Soviet military power just north of Iran and Turkey, all of the recent threats to oil supplies and to regional stability came not from the Soviet Union but from indigenous political developments within the region. The most dangerous of those threats was the Iran-Iraq war, which began with an Iraqi offensive in September 1980.

At the beginning of the war, the US took a neutral stand though it tended to tilt towards Iraq. In 1985-86, in an abortive effort to free the US hostages in Lebanon, the US and Israel undertook a series of secret contacts and substantial arms transfers to Iran. It constituted a shift in the US policy- at least at the covert level- towards Iran.

During much of the war, the US and many other powers took a hands off posture on the ground that they could have little effect on the outcome of the conflict. Moreover, it was having relatively little impact on oil supplies. That began to change in 1985-86 when Iran began to retaliate against Iraqi air attacks against its shipping in the Gulf.

In 1986, Kuwait asked both the US and the Soviet Union to place Kuwaiti tankers under their flag and provide protection. In April 1987, the Soviet Union agreed to lease three of its tankers to Kuwait and the United States quickly followed suit by placing US flag on eleven Kuwaiti tankers. It was Iraq which started the tanker war by attacking the area around the Kharq

Island, Iran's main oil terminal. Iran responded, as it had promised by striking at ships travelling to and from Iraq "since early in the war, Iraq had been denied access to the straight of Hormuz, and has instead exported its oil through an overland pipeline."¹⁹ Iran continued to ship exports through the straight.²⁰ The tanker war caused a temporary rise in the price of oil and the insurance rates on tankers. At the beginning of 1987 Iran was engaged in a massive offensive designed to break through the formidable Iraqi defences around the southern city of Basra. In the end Iran began to arm and train Kurdish forces for sustained guerilla operations in northern Iraq.

On 20 July, 1987, the United Nations Security Council unanimously voted a binding resolution calling for an end to the war. It was generally known in the diplomatic circles in the UN that this resolution was intended to lend support to Iraq and to punish Iran. It was anticipated that Iran would reject the resolution, there by triggering a second resolution to impose an embargo. To the surprise of many Iran did not reject the resolution. This negotiating process came to an abrupt end in late 1987, with a measured exchange of military blows between the US forces and Iran in the Gulf. The escalatory cycle began on 21 September with the US attack on an Iranian mine laying ship and ended essentially in a draw with the Iranian missile attack on an oil loading platform in Kuwaiti waters on 22 October.²¹ By the end of December, tempers had cooled. Iran, perhaps realizing the futility of its offensive, indicated that it was

¹⁹ Garry Sick, no.3, p.140.

²⁰ "Attacks on Tankers fail to slow Gulf Oil Exports" *Washington Post*, June 17, 1984, p.1.

²¹ V.Mikhin, *Western Expansionism in the Persian Gulf*, (New Delhi), Allied Publishers, 1988, pp.141-142.

prepared to call off its attack, and began talks with the regional countries. This event pleased the US, which began to chart out a new approach towards the regional security in the Persian Gulf.

Therefore, in brief, we can say that throughout the 1970s and 1980s, US objectives in the Persian Gulf were generally accomplished. However the Persian Gulf witnessed early in 1990s an episode which rocked not only the region but the whole world.

US-Iraq : Ups and Downs

The US policy towards Iraq seeks special mention because in the advancing chapters US concerns (responses) towards the Gulf crisis of 1990 is dealt with.

Notlong after the war with Iran, in August 1990, Iraq invaded and occupied Kuwait in an attempt to assume the leadership of the Arab world. The International community promptly reacted to the Iraqi invasion which was unprecedented in the recent history of the region. The Iraqi action was reprehensible. For the US and its European and Far Eastern allies, it was a cluster of economic interests which were at stake: oil, arms market etc. Hence before entering into the US reactions and responses over the Gulf crises, a brief account of the historical background of the evolution of US policy towards Iraq is necessary.

Within two years, from 1988 to 1990, Iraq went from being a virtual US ally to becoming the first Arab state to fight a war with US. The development of this rocky relationship is one part of the most interesting chapters in the

history of US policy towards the Middle-East. At the start of the 1980s, US-Iraq relations were extremely hostile. Hostility gave way to a level of cooperation due to their common interests during the Iran-Iraq war. In September 1989, diplomatic relations between the two countries were restored. The US government intended to open a new chapter in its relations with Iraq. But when Baghdad grabbed Kuwait in August 1990, the US reacted strongly, used diplomatic pressure and then used force and defeated Iraq in the January-February 1991 Gulf War. Thus the temporary harmony, during the Iran-Iraq war came to an end.²²

Two essential factors have dominated US-Iraq relations. First, the essence of Gulf politics was strategic equation between two stronger regional powers—Iran and Iraq—and the weaker Gulf monarchies. This last group sought US help to deter their mightier, aggressive neighbours. Towards this end, in the 1970s, the US supported Iran against Iraq and in the 1980s, it backed Iraq against Iran to prevent either of them from assuming too much power and weight in the region. In the 1990s with both Tehran and Baghdad hostile. Washington had to intervene directly to save Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. In the long run, Iraq's goal was to dominate these states and the Gulf while the US objective was to support regional stability and defend the monarchies.

Second, fundamental differences between the two states systems made a clash inevitable. This point, so obvious between 1958 and 1978, became obscured after Iran's revolution. Thus, according to president Carter's national

²² Amatzia Baram & Barry Rubin, *Cauldron of Turmoil: America in the Middle East*, (New York, 1992). pp.121-23.

security advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski, “America and Iraq wanted the same thing, a secure Persian Gulf”.²³

The view that Iraq was being transformed into a moderate state was encouraged by US commercial interests. After Iraq’s oil income zoomed upward in the mid-1970s, American business magazines ran headlines such as, “The Dramatic turnaround in US-Iraq trade”, “New scramble for \$ 8 billion in contracts”. In May 1977, Carter sent a senior State Department official to Baghdad offering conciliation as part of a plan to aggressively challenge Moscow for influence in radical states. Brzezinski announced in April 1980, “We see no fundamental incompatibility of interests between the US and Iraq”.²⁴ Whatever their intentions, such statements were taken by Baghdad as encouragement to attack Iran. This new attitude was in large part due to events in Iran, which became the common enemy of US and Iraq after the 1979 Revolution in Tehran and the seizure of the US diplomats as hostages, as well as Iraq’s 1980 invasion of Iran. Now, the US wanted to rebuild relations with Iraq, a country that had long been perceived as an anti-American country. Iraq on the other hand, needed help from the US, a nation it had long portrayed as the headquarters of imperialism and Zionism. Thus, the US motive was a byproduct of its effort to defend the Gulf monarchies. Iraq’s incentive was to obtain help for its war against Iran.

Trade between US and Iraq increased and Iraq was dropped from the State Departments’ list of countries sponsoring terrorism. Iraq also became a

²³ *Washington Post*, June 12, 1977.

²⁴ www.csis.org/hill/t5990310.html

large market for US agricultural exports, which supplied about 30% of its needs. Iraq was the second largest US export-loan recipient, receiving about \$ 4 billion in the 1980.²⁵ More quietly, the US gave Iraq satellite photographs of Iran's military positions and operations. While initiating operation to block arm sales to Iran in 1983, the US encouraged the allies to sell weapons to Iraq. In many respects, Iraq was treated as an ally. There was never any criticism for its being the aggressor and the party responsible for starting the tanker war. And in 1989, full diplomatic relations were restored.²⁶

Upto this point, the Regan administration had followed a consistent position on the war. By being ostensibly neutral, it avoided entanglement in the fighting or pushing Tehran to ally with the Soviet Union, which had a long border with Iran and 1,00,000 troops in neighbouring Afghanistan. At the same time by tilting towards Iraq, Washington also helped block an Iranian victory that might turn the whole Gulf into an anti-American inferno of radical fundamentalism. Thus, the US gave Iraq trade credits and intelligence. It did not discourage allies from selling arms to Baghdad while embargoing weapons to Iran.

The turning point for Teheran came when a US warship shot down an Iranian Airline on 3 July 1988—mistaking it as an attacking plane—and killing 290 passengers. While labeling this incident a “barbaric massacre” Iran interpreted it as signaling an open US-Iraq military alliance. Iranian President

²⁵ Susan Epstein, “The World Embargo on Food Exports to Iraq”, *Congressional Research Service*, September 25, 1990. (Through ACL).

²⁶ *Washington Post*, April 11, 1981.

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Ayatollah Khomeini decided to end the war and announced a ceasefire on 20 July 1988.²⁷

Iraq's leaders then were armed desperate, and dangerous. They drew confidence from their total control at home, victory over Iran and huge military machine. Saddam had never trusted the US even though the Reagan and Bush administrations largely trusted him. At the regional level, Saddam wanted to make it impossible for any Arab state to seek US help against him. In bilateral relations, he shafted America at every opportunity and the United States exacted no price from him for this behaviour.²⁸

The Reagan and Bush administrations also resisted any pressure to put sanctions on Iraq for its murderous treatment of the Kurds. Despite Iraq's crimes against US laws on Human Rights, the White House did nothing, calling sanctions, "terribly premature and counterproductive, endangering billions of dollars", of business for US companies. Thus, in response to Saddam's continued verbal attacks on the United States, Washington sent signals of weakness to Baghdad. Saddam interpreted such behaviour as proof that the US feared confrontation. Each act of appeasement increased Iraq's boldness without ever convincing it that the US wanted friendship.²⁹

By showing no strong reaction to Iraq's use of chemical weapons on Kurds, threats against Israel, outspoken anti Americanism, and ultimatum to Kuwait, the US had helped convince Saddam that he could get away with

²⁷ Barry Rubin, "The United States and Iraq: From Appeasement to War" in Amatzia Baram and Barry Rubin, ed., *Iraq's Road to War* (London 1994), p.259.

²⁸ www.ForeignRelations.org/public/pubs/hamilton.

²⁹ Rubin, n.17, p.261.

occupying and annexing his neighbour. By seeking to avoid any friction with Iraq, the US policy had helped precipitate a much bigger crisis.

Having protected the Gulf Arab states from Iran in the 1980s, the US now had to help defend Saudi Arabia and save Kuwait from Iraq. Otherwise Saddam would be the master of 20% of OPEC's production levels, use his income to build more horrible weapons, invade other countries, intimidate any opposition, and drive the US interests from the Gulf.³⁰

The post-Cold War era provided an opportunity for the US leadership to reduce international conflict. Yet, failure to act strongly against Iraq's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait would make that event the first in a series of international depredations and crises. In line with these considerations, President Bush condemned Iraq's assault on Kuwait, demanded a quick withdrawal, froze the two countries assets in the US and imposed sanctions on Iraq. He was backed by the European allies, the Soviet Union and the Arab League. A US-lead multinational force and an international coalition to embargo Iraq economically and isolate it politically were organized to make Iraq withdraw its troops without violence, if possible, with force if necessary. Bush called Saudi Arabia's defence a vital US interest and named the principles guiding US policy: protection of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf; protection of US citizens; the complete, immediate, unconditional withdrawal of Iraqi troops, restoration of Kuwait's government. On 30 August, Bush commented that he would not be disappointed if the Iraqi people overthrew

³⁰ *Washington Post*, February 9, 1990.

Saddam but that this was not a US objective.³¹ The Bush administration put Iraq on the list of countries supporting terrorism, reduced by 2/3rd the Iraqi embassy's staff in Washington (after Baghdad closed the US embassy in Kuwait) and cancelled almost \$ 7 billion in debt. In a speech broadcast on Iraqi television, Bush explained to Iraqi people: "The pain you are now suffering from is the direct result of the course of action chosen by your leadership". He assured them, "It is impossible for Iraq to succeed."³²

Unfortunately, after so much appeasement Bush was unable to convince Saddam that he would back warnings with force. "The sanctions after August 2, 1990 was very rich in irony. To avoid war and secure Iraq's withdrawal, the United States had to convince Iraq of its readiness to attack. To keep Kuwait, Iraq had to convince America of its fearlessness and the futility of fighting. Thus conflict was a recipe for confrontation."³³

Having committed his prestige and army to force Iraq out of Kuwait. Bush knew a failure to do so would be a devastating blow. It was tempting to believe that the anti-Iraq coalition could be maintained for many months or years if necessary to tear down Baghdad. Yet this seemed unlikely. If Saudi Arabia decided that the US was bluffing, it would make its own peace with Baghdad and ask the expeditionary force to leave.

³¹ Rubin, n.17, p.263.

³² www.foreignRelations.org/public/pubs/hamilton.

³³ Ibid.

CHAPTER – II

WASHINGTON'S RESPONSE TOWARDS GULF CRISIS

President Saddam Hussein's unprecedented step of invading, occupying and threatening to annex a sovereign and independent state added a new and disturbing dimension to the volatile politics and economics of Persian Gulf region. It is the first crisis confronting the world during the closing years of the Cold War era.

The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on 2 August 1990 abruptly ended the great prospects of peace in the Middle East and world at large, which the relaxation of Cold War seemed to promise. Several trends at various levels had emerged which pointed towards a possible relaxation of tensions in different regions of the world and the most volatile region of the Middle East was not an exception. Many a notable developments held the promise of transferring the turbulent Middle East into a zone of potential stability. These included the mid-1988 ceasefire in the 'Eight year Iran-Iraq war', the reduction of the US Naval presence in the Persian Gulf and end of the Palestinian uprising (intifada) in the Israeli occupied territory, which put high degree of pressure on Israel to concede the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination.¹

However, all these promises were negated by the bravado of the strong man of Iraq, Saddam Hussein. Despite the East-West détente and reconciliation, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait dramatically altered the regional

¹ Amin, Saihal, "The Persian Gulf Crisis: Regional Implications", *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 44, no.3, December 1990, p.237.

geo-political structure and generated a Persian Gulf crisis with serious implication for the region and the international system.

Saddam Hussein's aggression against a neighbouring state had less to do with a "pre-mediated grand design" than with his sense of insecurity. War did not appear to be his first choice but an act of last resort, taken only after trying other means, for sharing up his position in the face of prevailing adversity. The occupation of Kuwait was designed to provide a vital financial resources for the economic reconstruction of Iraq on which Saddam Hussein's political survival hinged.²

Right from the beginning Washington's response to the crisis was strong and well pronounced. With a careful mixture of political will, military might and economic incentives Washington assumed the leadership role in confronting the crisis.³ The Bush Administration was the leading actor in this astonishing rush of events backed by Britain. Therefore, it is worthwhile to explore and explain the motive, rationale and justification behind the American move.

According to the Bush administration the USA, was fighting Iraq because Saddam Hussein was a ruthless tyrant who had carried out an unjust invasion of Kuwait. In the State of Union address President Bush stated that "what is at stake is a new world order, where diverse nations are drawn together in common cause to achieve the universal aspiration of mankind peace

² Efralm Karsh and Irari Rautsi, "Why Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwat", *Survival*, vol.33, no.1, January-February 1991, pp.18.19.

³ P.R. Kumar Swamy, "The US Response to the Gulf Crisis", *Strategic Analysis*, vol. 13, no. 7, October 1990, p.764.

and security, freedom and rule of law. Saddam Hussein's unprovoked invasion will not stand. It is important to take the rhetoric seriously because what might be called its empirical premises are in one respect obviously correct. Saddam Hussein is a ruthless tyrant and his invasion of Kuwait must be condemned."⁴ However, the popular support in the United States for Bush administration was based to an important degree on the perceived nature of the Iraqi regime and above all the injustices of his invasion.

Objectively speaking, the US policy in the recent Gulf crisis cannot be treated in isolation but as a logical extension of the overall process of US involvement in West Asia. In its broad aspect, US policy objectives have remained remarkably constant despite the multitude of changes occurring throughout West Asia. The constancy and transparency was evident in a presidential statement on national security, "In the Persian Gulf region, we pursue an integrated approach to secure our four long standing objectives, i.e. maintaining freedom of navigation, strengthening the moderate Arab states, reducing the influence of anti western powers such as Soviet Union and Iran and assuring access to oil on reasonable terms for ourselves and our allies."⁵ The last one is very important. Bush was also impelled by the same imperatives as his predecessors. President Saddam Hussein provided the gravest challenge to the US by sending Iraqi troops to the neighbouring Kuwait to occupy the entire territory of that country.

⁴ Robert, Brenner, "Why is the US at War with Iraq", *New Left Review*, no.185, p.122.

⁵ US President's Annual address to the Congress in January, 1988, *Department of State Bulletin*, April, 1988, p.23.

The Gulf region holds in its bosom 65% of the world's proven oil reserves. By occupying Kuwait Iraqi president not only sought to control over 20% of the world oil reserves in that country but also threatened the political stability of the entire region that accommodated quite a few tiny states like Kuwait. Besides this, the Middle East oil is vital for the Americans in two other respects, first, Double economic value of oil revenues and second, the importance of oil control for US global political power.

The crisis radically altered the co-relation of the forces in the region and by the rise in price of oil hurt the economy of every oil importing countries in the world. The international community was united as never before in demanding the complete withdrawal of Iraq's forces from Kuwait and the restoration of its independence and sovereignty.

The world became aware of Iraq's grievances against its small neighbour when on July 17, Foreign Minister of Iraq, Mr. Tariq Aziz addressed a letter to the Arab League accusing Kuwait of stealing oil from Rumaila oil field, which he claimed legitimately belonged to Iraq. He accused Kuwait and UAE of deliberately marketing more oil than their OPEC quota with a view to lowering the international oil prices and thereby ruining the economy of Iraq. It demanded that Kuwait should renounce its claim to the Rumaila oil field, pay \$ 2.4. billion in compensation for the lost revenue, write off \$ 10 billion interest free loan given during Iran-Iraq war, either renounce its claim to the Bubiyan

island or give it to Iraq on a long term lease.⁶ The demand for action against Iraq were made in the US Congress. The Bush administration, however, initially adopted a softer policy option with the belief that it would be able to restrain Saddam Hussein's actions. On July 15, John Kelly, Assistant Secretary of State for Near East and South Asia, appearing before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, argued against imposing any trade restrictions against Iraq "because unilateral trade sanctions would not improve our ability to exercise a restraining influence on Iraqi actions."⁷ Moreover, if the United States decided to impose any trade sanctions unilaterally, it would only benefit its competitors—Canada, Australia and Argentina. The State Department's presentation of Iraq and Saddam was hardly that of a power hungry and aggressive dictatorship. The Senate was not impressed by the arguments of the State Department and on July 27, approved an amendment moved by Senator D. Amato (Republican, New York) to cut off farm credits to Iraq. The amendment, however, provided that if the President certified that Iraq was living under its international obligations, the sanctions could be lifted. The House of Representatives had approved similar sanctions earlier.⁸

On July 25, a week before the planned Iraqi invasion, April C. Glaspie, US Ambassador in Baghdad, had met President Saddam Hussein. During the course of conversation Hussein bluntly warned that he would take whatever steps he deemed necessary to stop Kuwait from continuing an economic war

⁶ B. K. Srivastava, "The Great Powers and the Gulf Crisis: The Course of an Uneasy Alliance" in (ed.) AHH Abidi and K.R. Singh, *The Gulf Crisis*, 1991, Lancer Book Pub., p.42.

⁷ Wireless File, June 16, 1990 (a mimeographed serial issued by the OSIS, New Delhi).

⁸ Wireless File, August, 1991 (issued by USIS, New Delhi).

against Iraq. As the records released by the government of Iraq showed, Ms. Glaspie assured that the US took no official opposition on Iraq's border with Kuwait.⁹ It gave the impression that the US completely misunderstood Saddam Hussein's motives and his willingness to risk a war to achieve his objectives. Had the US told Saddam bluntly that Iraq's aggression of any Gulf country would be met with all the means at its disposal, it might have deterred him.

On August first, the Iraqi Ambassador in Washington, Mr. Sadiq Al Mashat, was summoned by the State Department and was told that the dispute must be solved peacefully. The American Embassy delivered the same message to the Iraqi Foreign Office in Baghdad. But these diplomatic rituals do not prove that the US knew that the Kuwait was going to be invaded. Subsequent statement by the officials revealed that Iraqi action came as a total surprise to the Bush administration. Indeed CIA had informed the administration about the possibility of invasion of Kuwait but the State Department chose to rely on the assessment of friendly Arab states like Egypt and Saudi Arabia, that Iraq will not invade Kuwait.¹⁰

The Washington's immediate response was to impose strong bilateral economic sanctions on Iraq. Within hours of the news of the Iraqi invasion reaching the White House on 2 August, the United States took steps to freeze all Kuwait's assets under US control anywhere in the world to prevent their use or acquisition by Iraq.

⁹ International Herald Tribune, September 14, 1990.

¹⁰ The New York Times, August 5, 1990.

At the same time, Washington also froze Iraq's assets in the US and imposed a comprehensive economic embargo on Iraq. To implement sanctions, President Bush invoked his authority under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), the National Emergency Act (NEA), the Export Administrative Act (EAA), and the Arms Export Control Act (AECA). These various laws provided the President with a broad authority over exports, imports and Financial transactions. The president issued a series of executive orders under the relevant laws, which were followed by various implementing regulations issued by the Department of the Treasury's Office of the Foreign Assets Control.¹¹ President Bush declared that there is no place for this sort of "naked aggression in today's world" and called for immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Iraqi forces.

On August 3, President Bush raised a new issue-the possibility of an Iraqi attack against Saudi Arabia. He said that invasion of other Gulf states would be unacceptable. He reportedly stressed that in response to Iraqi action use of all options – economic and otherwise-were open. But he did not provide any clue as to why he feared further attack by Iraqi forces and why he offered help when no one had actually asked him to do.¹² Dick Cheney, US Secretary of Defence, arrived in Saudi Arabia on 6 August, to discuss security issues with the Saudi leaders. On that very day, the UN Security Council for the first time in twenty-three years, imposed mandatory sanctions against Iraq. Disturbed by the prospect of an Iraqi invasion, the Saudi government asked the US to deploy

¹¹ Eric D.K. Melby, "Iraq" in Richard N. Hass (ed.) *The Economic Sanctions and American Diplomacy*, A Council of Foreign Relations Press, Inc., Washington D.C., 1998, p.109.

¹² B. K. Srivastava, no.7, p.47.

American troops on its territory. Soon the US 82nd and 101st Airborne divisions and 24th Infantry divisions were digging in along the desert border between Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Kuwait, under an operation codenamed “operation Desert Shield”. The US Congress, by an overwhelming majority, supported Bush’s policy. The Senate passed a resolution by a 97 to 0 vote endorsing US imposition of sanctions against Iraq and urged the President to organize an international boycott of Iraq. The House of Representatives adopted another resolution by 416 to 0 vote which cut off \$ 20 million in Export-Import Bank credit and further tightened the control of the dual purpose export to Iraq.¹³

The United States with the backing of the permanent members of the Security Council was successful in persuading the UN to be possessed with the matter. In August 1990 alone it could get five resolutions passed by the Security Council, under the Articles 39 and 40 of the UN Charter.

On August 2, acting pursuant to the IEEPA and the National Emergency Act (NEA), President Bush issued Executive Order 12722, blocking Iraqi government property and prohibiting transactions with Iraq, and Executive Order 12723 “Blocking Kuwait government and property”, declaring a national emergency in the preamble of each of these two orders. All US Exports and Exports from third countries by US citizens to Iraq were prohibited, except for certain informational materials and donations of articles needed to relieve human suffering such as food, clothing, medicine and medical supplies.

¹³ M.J. Von, “US Role: Undisputed Leader” in A.K. Pasha (ed.) *The Gulf in Turmoil: A Global Response*, S. Kumar Lancer Book Pub., New Delhi, 1992, p.180.

On 6 August 1990 United Nation Security Council (UNSC) passed Resolution 661 (13-0, with Cuba, Yemen abstaining), the first of the sanctions resolutions. Now the full scope of the world action against Iraq was made plain. This resolution imposed comprehensive mandatory economic sanctions on Iraq, which specifically exempted supplies intended strictly for medical purposes and in humanitarian circumstances, food stuffs. The resolution also established a sanctions committee, composed of all the Council members, to monitor implementation and compliance with the sanctions by the UN members. Resolution 661 was issued under UN Charter without reference to any particular article. The resolution affirmed in its preamble the inherent right of individual or collective self defence, in response to the armed attack by Iraq against Kuwait, in accordance with Art 51 of the Charter, but did not provide for any military enforcement of the sanctions leading to the assumption that it was issued under article 41. On August 7 President Bush initiated “*Operation Desert Shield*”. Mindful of the consultational requirements under the War Power Resolutions, the President “Shared his decision with the congressional leadership” to deploy substantial elements of US armed forces into the Persian Gulf region to help defend Saudi Arabia.

On 13 August 1990 Secretary of State James Baker declared that the US was ready to impose an “interdiction of Iraqi oil exports as a means of enforcing the UN sanctions regime. He refrained from using the term blockade – which is widely perceived internationally as an act of war – but expressed the

hope that other western navies would help to interdict Iraqi oil exports”¹⁴. Already there was some dissent in the Security Council. The Soviet Union considered that a separate council resolution would be required to authorize what amounted to a military blockade on high seas. Even Britain, normally supine in the face of US pressure, inclined to the view that Iraqi traffic should be monitored for sometime before any resort to force.¹⁵ At the same time there were some signs that the trade embargo was not total. For example the Jordanian authority appeared to be doing little to block the movement of trucks crossing into Iraq at their usual rate. There were reports of oil tanker trucks moving in a steady flow, carrying Iraqi crude oil to the refineries at Zerya. Some tankers, it was noted, bore Kuwait license plates, more lorries, with Jordanian, Iraqi and Egyptian haulage plates, plied their way into Iraq. King Hussein of Jordan commented that the government fully understood its obligations under the UN charter.¹⁶ Fahed Fanek, a leading Jordanian economist noted that a total trade ban against Iraq would be a disaster for Jordan, accustomed to Iraqi oil and its export market in that country. “Such a step will break the back of the Jordanian economy. The imposition of sanctions by Jordan against Iraq might not cause major damage to Iraqi economy or to its military effort, but it will devastate the Jordanian economy and cause a loss in excess of half a billion dollars a year. It will also raise unemployment by a further 12.4% over the current rate of 16% and this is before adding the tens of

¹⁴ Peter Gowan, n. 6, p.190.

¹⁵ Geoff Simons, “*The Scourging of Iraq: Sanctions, Law and Natural Justice*”, (London, Macmillan Press Publication 1998), p.36-37.

¹⁶ Charles Ruchards, Jordan is “Breaking embargo says Iraqi officials”, *The Independent*, London, 13 August, 1990.

thousands already working in Kuwait and expected to join the army of unemployed.”¹⁷ In such circumstances, considering also the popular support for Saddam Hussein in Jordan, it is easy to understand the Jordanian tilt in favour of Iraq during Gulf crisis. It is equally easy to see why Washington worked so hard to drive a political Wedge between Iraq and Jordan in the interests of further isolating and punishing Iraq.

On 14 August the US offered to provide King Hussein financial assistance in return for Jordan’s full compliance with the embargo, but warned that unless Jordan closed the red sea port of *Aqba* to all prohibited Cargo destined for Iraq, the US Navy would blockade the port. The total blockade of *Aqba* would have been even more devastating to Jordan’s economy than the embargo of trade with Iraq as this port is Jordan’s main outlet to the sea.

President Bush did not appear to have consulted with the Congress which fortuitously had recessed just before he announced his “*interdiction program*” (renamed “interception operations” on the day they became effective). But this was probably not required in view of the consultations that had occurred a week earlier regarding the over all deployment of US forces in the Persian Gulf region and of resolution enacted by each of the two Houses on 2 August. Endorsing multilateral efforts to end the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait on 16 August, the interception operations took effect and the US formally notified the council, that this action was being taken at the request of the government of Kuwait in the exercise of the inherent right of the individual and

¹⁷ Ibid.

collective self-defense recognized in Article 51 of the charter. The military forces of US would use force only if necessary and then only in manner proportional to prevent the vessels from violating such trade sanctions contained in Resolution 661.¹⁸

The Bush administration was continuously pressurizing Jordan to close the only serious loopholes, in the form of oil supply pipelines, in the trade embargo. On 15 August King Hussein arrived in the US, with most commentators predicting that he would be given a frosty reception. Turkey, at one time a double player, was now supporting the US policy of blocking food shipments to Iraq. By mid-August the transport of food across Turkey – Iraq border had been brought to an almost complete halt. The reasons for this rigorous implementation of the sanctions regime – in violation of the exemption provisions in Resolution 661 - were not hard to fathom. US Secretary of States James Baker had recently visited Ankara and the usual American intention was evident in the interests of securing strategic objectives. There would be cash for arms, World Bank loans, and American support for Turkey in such problem areas as Cyprus, Armenian charges of genocide and Turkey's application on European Community (EC) (Now European Union) Turkey, like most states keeping an eye on the mercenary main chance had been bought off, Jordan was a more difficult case mainly because of the traditional links between the country and Iraq.¹⁹

¹⁸ www.Bakerinstitute.org/pubs
¹⁹ Geoff Simons, no.15, pp.40-41.

It was now being reported that even in the absence of UN authorization US warships had been ordered by President Bush to fire on recalcitrant merchant vessels sailing to and from Iraq. In fact the country had established three primary interception zones, to cover the Gulf, South of Kuwait, the North Eastern waters of the Red Sea (including the Gulf of *Aqba*) and the Gulf of Oman outside the Straits of Hormuz. Here illicit Cargo was detected. The US captains had orders to take the ship into custody with minimum force—disabling shots fired at the ship’s engine or rudder—to be used against vessels that refused to stop.

Meanwhile Iraq escalated the confrontation acting in opposition to the interdiction program by announcing that it had detained nationals, of certain foreign (western) nations, who were still in Kuwait and Iraq. Iraq threatened to relocate some of these to strategic sites to deter the US from launching any armed attacks. In a statement denouncing the US interdiction programme, the Iraqi ministry of labour and social affairs branded it as act of war under international law.²⁰

On August 18, the Security Council passed Resolution 664 demanding that Iraq allow the departure of all third state nationals from Kuwait and Iraq and that it rescind its order closing all diplomatic and consular posts in Kuwait by 24, August. On the following day, France reacted to the removal of some French nationals from their hotels to unknown locations by directing its naval forces to enforce the sanctions, in effect, joining the US and UK in the naval

²⁰ *The New York Times*, 16 August, 1990.

enforcement it had criticized only a weak earlier. The nine member Western European Union also decided to endorse naval enforcement of the sanctions. Belgium, Italy, Greece, Spain and the Netherlands all announced that they would contribute naval forces. The Maritime Interception Force (MIF), until then only included US and British warships, became an international effort, although still not expressly authorised by the council.

Since the inception of the naval enforcement program, the US had been anxious to obtain a clear mandate from the council but had been thwarted by the insistence of the Soviet Union, China and some of the NAM nations that any naval blockade sanctioned by council should be under the UN command. Finally on 25 August, the council issued Resolution 665 after compromise language was agreed to, leaving the US and other nations already participating in these operation in full control of their respective naval forces and of their rules of engagement and assigning to the UN military staff committee the purely administrative role of coordinator.²¹

While the US Congress was still in recess, US legislatures were growing restive over the escalation of the Gulf crisis. Accordingly on 28 August, the US President briefed more than 170 members of Congress on his Iraq policy and won their overwhelming support. From the outset of the Operation Desert Shield, the President and his Secretary of State, James Baker, had stayed in continuous contact with all major world leaders as well as with US law makers over the Gulf crises, exchanging views and enlisting their support. However, as

²¹ Colin Hughes, "US insists Iraq Cordon is not an act of War", *The Independent*, London, 14 August, 1990.

the costs of deploying US forces and maintaining the naval blockade in the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf continued to mount, the President became concerned that the American public, already worried by recession, would turn against these operations. Accordingly President Bush launched a burden sharing program, dubbed by the American media as the “Bush Economic Action Plan”. Under this plan all participating nations would share the financial costs of military deployment and give compensations to nations suffering financially from the sanctions because of their special trade relation with Iraq.

However, another development threatened to unravel multilateral support for the sanctions against Iraq. According to media reports, Saddam Hussein was alleging that the children of Iraq were dying because they were being deprived of milk, food and medicine by the international sanctions. China and Iran signaled that they might begin sending food and medicines to alleviate social suffering in Iraq. While India and several other nations with a large number of their nationals trapped in Iraq sought to provide humanitarian relief to their own citizens. They called on UN Sanctions Committee, that had been established under Resolution 661, to provide a mechanism to extend humanitarian relief.²²

Saddam’s ploy to drive holes into the embargo soon failed in part because when the International Committee of the Red Cross, offered to provide food in exchange for access to the detained foreigners, Iraq refused. On 13 September following the news that Iraq was refusing to allow distributions of

²² Geoff Simons, n.15, p.141.

food to several hundred thousand Asian stranded in Iraq and Kuwait, the Security Council passed Resolution 666. This resolution emphasized that it was for the Council alone or acting through the Sanction Committee to determine whether humanitarian crisis had arisen needing appropriate action. To this end it directed the Sanctions Committee to keep the situation regarding availability of foodstuffs in Iraq and Kuwait under constant review.

All these developments created an impression that the economic embargo – at least in the short-term – would be unlikely to secure the eviction of Iraqi forces from Kuwait. And there would be no long-term attempt to test the efficacy of the sanctions regime. Washington was impatient with the impact of sanctions on Iraq that had been in place for about six months. And US allies too echoed US impatience.

At a press conference on 29 October, 1991 President Bush, was reminded that senator Cohen of Maine had stated that congressional approval would be required to commit US forces to hostilities in the Persian Gulf.²³

Although 5 November the President signed into law the Iraq Sanctions Act of 1990, this enactment did not authorize US military intervention to liberate Kuwait, it was only supportive of the embargo against Iraq.²⁴ President Bush then resorted to diplomatic measures which led to the successful passage of Resolution 678 in the Security Council on 29 November. This resolution authorised the use of “all necessary means” to uphold and implement all the

²³ Dan forth New Comb “Old took for New Job: US Sanctions against Iraq” in Barry R. Campbell and Dan forth New Comb (edt.), *The Impact of the Freeze of Kuwaiti and Iraqi Assets* (London: Graham and Trotman International Bar Association, 1990, p.27.

²⁴ Ibid.

Councils resolutions pertaining to the Persian Gulf crisis, unless Iraq fully complied with them on or before 15 January, 1991. In other words, the Security Council had provided Iraq and Saddam Hussain a month and a half as one final opportunity, to complete its unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait and to comply with the Council's other previous directives. After this deadline, the US and the other members of the international coalition force would be authorised to initiate combat operation against Iraq.

On 14 January, the day before expiration of the deadline the US Congress passed a Resolution authorising use of military force against Iraq. After a lengthy preamble describing Iraq's misdeeds the joint resolution called on the President, before using military force, to report to the Speaker of the House and to the President of the Senate that he had exhausted all appropriate diplomatic and other peaceful means and those efforts had not been and would not be successful.²⁵ On 16 January, at 1900 hrs Eastern standard Time, US-led coalition forces began aerial bombardment of Iraq and Kuwait. The beginning of hostilities concluded Operation Desert Shield and phase one of the economic sanctions against Iraq, although these sanctions remained in full force and effect through out the operation Desert Storm.

²⁵ www.cato.org

CHAPTER III
THE GULF WAR AND ITS AFTERMATH:
US ROLE IN IMPLEMENTATION OF SANCTIONS AGAINST
IRAQ

For the first time since the end of the Vietnam War the US once again got involved in a War and painstakingly managed to unite several countries behind an American led anti-Saddam alliance. This was achieved by a remarkable change in America's international posturing, unlike the "unilateralism and jingoism" it had displayed in Grenada, Nicaragua and Panama. Such an alliance came as a pleasant surprise as a metamorphosed USSR and a mellowed US, came on the same wave length in dealing with Iraq's military misadventure in Kuwait. Co-operation among the major powers was possible largely because of US-Soviet détente the emerging East-West harmony and the importance of oil.

Initially Moscow was quite ambivalent about what course of action to pursue against Saddam Hussein. Like most of the states, the Soviet Union had no doubt that Saddam Hussein had to be brought to his senses. That was never the issue, the issue was how to achieve it. In the end the Soviets abandoned other possible courses of action and UN imposed sanctions. Moscow needed economic aid and the US support to maintain stability in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and other Soviet Republics. Moscow could not have opted for any other policy.

The US also knew it had a very strong card to play vis-à-vis China. China at this time was still struggling to restore its image in the international community after the horrors of Tiananmen Square. The UK needed no extra persuasion to follow the US leadership, France appeared recalcitrant, but was expected not to oppose its NATO ally. Canada faithfully and predictably endorsed to the US policy.

Washington gave Egypt the promises of debt forgiveness, Euthopia the promise to assist in its fight against the rebel groups and Malaysia with the hints of foreign aid.

Saddam Hussein did not expect the world to react the way it did when he invaded Kuwait. Nor did he foresee the grit and meticulous planning and execution of the war by the US. Some fissure did appear in the consensus that emerged in the Security Council but this was contrary to what he believed. It did not disrupt the ranks of coalition. Then again he failed in dragging Israel into the war. He hoped that sudden escalation of public opinion in his favour would lead to the overthrow of the Arab regimes, which had cast their lot with the US. Despite forty-three days of braving the awesome offensive of the coalition, first from air, and later from ground and the sea, he failed to exploit Pan Arab and Pan Muslim sentiment.¹

It would have been difficult for the US to wage a War against Iraq if the latter would have agreed to a partial withdrawal from Kuwait. This would mean that Iraq could have retained the two disputed islands of Bubiyan and

¹ Times of India, 27th February, 1991.

Warbah and Rumaliah oil fields and vacate the rest of the Kuwait. Even this move would have put the Hawks on defensive. This would have caused anti-war groups to say that coercive diplomacy had paid dividends and should not be derailed to exercise the war option. This option would have suited Iraq at that juncture in many ways. Any Iraqi move to withdraw would have made the war options less effective.

However, before the countdown to the war with Iraq, the US used its control of modern communication to mobilize world opinion in its favour. And in a sense it won the media war before a shot was fired. Having satisfied with its performance in the UN Security Council and garnering adequate support from the Arab world it went to the Congress for final approval to begin “Operation Desert Storm”. The Congress voted a resolution on 12 January, 1991, authorizing the US President to wage a war, if necessary, in the Persian Gulf. Although the support for the Gulf War in the Congress was not overwhelming, things began to change once the bombing of Baghdad started on 17 January 1991. The Senate adopted a resolution 98-0 and House of Representatives approved the same by 299-6. The following day commended and supported the efforts and leadership of the President as commander in chief in the Persian Gulf hostilities and unequivocally supported the ‘men and women’ of the US armed forces.²

Thus US resorted to warfare to protect its regional and global interests when all diplomatic efforts failed. The US under the mandate of UN and

² Chintamani Mahapatra, “Gulf War Aspects of American Approach”, *Strategic Analysis*, May 1991, Vol. XIV, no.2, p.210.

supported by a multinational force from some thirty countries initiated war operations in the Gulf only when Iraq despite all diplomatic efforts refused to budge from its rigid stance on the occupation of Kuwait. Even the last minute peace efforts of the UN Secretary General failed to make Iraq accept the UN resolution and withdraw unconditionally from Kuwait.

By the time the decision to launch the “Operation Desert Storm” on 16 January 1991 was taken the US war aims had been enlarged. It included Iraq’s withdrawal from Kuwait, Iraq’s reduction of military potential to minimize the threat to the security of Israel as well as other regional countries. Neutralization of chemical and biological production centers was imperative since President Saddam Hussein had already threatened to use them. As part of a careful and planned strategy the Americans deliberately overrated their adversary in order to ensure absolute superiority and engage the largest possible numbers of multinational troops. The ratio of forces in the conflict was so disproportionate that combat operations existed virtually only on one side without any appreciable enemy resistance. This is the reason why for most of the six weeks of the war, the US-led coalition forces were even kept out of the range of the Iraqi artillery on Kuwait-Saudi border. But the primary instruments of its engagements-avoidance strategy were air power and electronic warfare capabilities.

The airpower basically possessed the potential of optimum control over engagement and with its own air power neutralized with a massive dose of air-offensive and electronic warfare. The only way Iraq could engage its

adversaries was through Ballistic missiles and anti-aircraft artillery which it used to the optimum degree. Even here the coalition rapidly switched to long ranges and stand off weapons launched from outside the lethal zone of defending guns and the patriot air defence system. At the same time preponderance of air attacks at night was once again resorted to, in order to deny Iraq an opportunity to counter attack.³ The Iraqis lacked adequate forces and were powerless to resist such strength.

The US and its allies launched a massive air campaign against Iraq on 17 January 1991. The objective of the campaign was to induce an Iraqi compliance with the demands of the UN Security Council for a prompt withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait. The US air campaign against Iraq had four overlapping phases. The first phase involved attacks against Iraqi command and control targets; against nuclear, chemical and biological warfare manufacturing facilities and other military infrastructure. In the second phase, the suppression of Iraqi air defences was emphasized in order to clear the sky ways for the operations of coalition aircraft throughout Iraqi battle space.

In the third phase, an interdiction campaign was designed to isolate Saddam Hussein's Republican Guard and other forces from reinforcement and supply. In the fourth phase, air support had to be provided to the ground forces of the coalition as they moved against the Iraqi forces remaining in Kuwait.⁴

The initial attacks were devastating, clobbering Iraqi air defence command and control targets with such precision and effectiveness that the

³ Jasjit Singh, "Lessons of Policy and Strategy", *Frontline*, March 2-15, 1991, p.117.

⁴ Dugan Richard, "The Air War" *US News and World Report*, February 11, 1991, p.78.

Iraqi air force was essentially out of the picture. The UN mandate which authorised the use of force against Iraq was received just hours before the air campaign. The Iraqi intelligence could not predict the quick air campaign, which crippled the Iraqi air force significantly. For the first thirty-three days of Desert Storm, the war was waged from the air. The brunt of the allied attacks was focused on Iraq's army in Kuwait. One goal of the air campaign was to degrade those forces through a conventional bombing campaign. But the air war had another, equally important goal: the destruction of Saddam Hussein's command and control apparatus. That objective took the battle to Iraq's capital, Baghdad. Black and white pictures from the alliance underscored the accuracy of the so-called "*smart bombs*", designed to surgically strike pre-selected targets. But smart bombs made up less than five percent of all the ordnance used against Iraq during "*Desert Storm*". The dramatic images did not show the impact these bombs had on Iraq's troops or civilian population.⁵

Twenty-eight days into the war, it became apparent that even the smartest technology could not prevent civilian casualties. Laser-guided weapons struck a presumed military target that turned out to be a bomb shelter. Iraq's infrastructure bridges, roads, water and electrical power systems was severely damaged. Many Iraqis lost services vital to daily life. By the war's end, one of the most prosperous and modern Arab countries in the Middle East lay in economic ruins.

⁵ Ibid, p.89.

The initial success in the strategic air war left the missions of interdiction and close air support for ground phase of the war to be accomplished. The objectives of the interdiction campaign were to further weaken the command and control of the Iraqi armed forces so that they would be forced to fight in disaggregated globules, reducing of the combat power of Saddam's Republican Guards.⁶

The ground war strategy that General Norman Schwarzkopf and his team devised called for a thrust directly north from Saudi Arabia by US marines and Arab forces that would "fix" the Iraqi forces in Kuwait in battles, while two US army corps, including British and French divisions swung far to the west and north through Iraqi territory to cut off the Iraqi lines of retreat and engage the Republic Guards, which were positioned just north of the Iraq – Kuwait border. According to military experts, the only flaw in this plan was that progress in the eastern sector was so rapid that it exposed the flank of the advancing forces causing Schwarzkopf to push forward the launching of the two western corps by nearly twenty-four hours. Then, as the conflict turned into an Iraqi rout, it was feared that the left hook would not arrive in time to engage the Republic Guards Division before most of them had been withdrawn northward across the Euphrates river.⁷

On the other hand, Saddam Hussein's strategic objectives were apparently threefold. First, he sought to create a war of attrition, including an extended phase of ground fighting, that would make war unpopular with the

⁶ Ibid, p.92.

⁷ Monte Palmer, "Understanding US Policy in Iraq Crisis", *Mainstream*, January 19, 1991, p.15.

US public, Congress and the media. Extended ground fighting with high casualties would also alienate allied members from the US coalition. Saddam Hussein's second objective was to expand the war geographically by bringing in Israel. This would divide some Arab members of the coalition from the US. The third Iraqi objective became clear in February 1991 when Saddam spoke to visiting Soviet officials who came offering to mediate in the conflict. The objective was to hold the US to its declaratory objective of "expelling" Iraqi forces from Kuwait only and prevent the coalition from destroying all of Iraq's military power and to dethrone Saddam Hussein.⁸

Even so after four days of fighting between 24 & 27 February, 1991 the results were overwhelmingly impressive. Kuwait city had been liberated, most of the Iraqi divisions in Kuwait had been overrun with minimal resistance. Some 82,000 Iraqi soldiers had been captured in tank battles. Several of the Iraqi Republican Guards' heavy divisions had been badly mauled and US forces were astride the main road between Basra and Baghdad. All these had been accomplished with an almost miraculously low allied casualty rate.⁹

According to General Schwarzkopf's account, he received a call mid-afternoon on 27 February from General Collin Powell, who said it was time to give thought to a ceasefire. The stated objectives of the war were practically achieved by the morning of 28 February 1991. On 24 August 1990 UNSC Resolution 665 was passed authorising maritime forces to stop and search vessels to enforce the UN embargo. Fourteen countries agreed eventually to

⁸ Michael J. Mazarrs; *Desert Storm: The Gulf War and What We Learnt* (Boulder, West view Press, 1993), p.96.

⁹ Monte Palmer, *Understanding US Policy in Iraq Crisis*, Mainstream, 19 January, 1991, p.15.

deploy naval forces to enforce the UN sanctions. This proved to be the final linkage in isolating Iraq and strengthening UN solidarity. As a result, it reaffirmed the UN pledge to restore peace in the area.

The Security Council Resolution 687 of third April 1991 enunciated more detailed and comprehensive terms of the ceasefire. Accordingly, the resolution held that Iraq would unconditionally agree not to acquire or develop nuclear weapons and unconditionally accept international supervision of the destruction, removal or rendering harmless of all its chemical and biological weapons and its ballistic missiles with a range of 150 kms or more. It further stated that the UN would establish and administer a fund, to which Iraq would contribute, to compensate foreign nationals and corporations for losses, damages and injuries suffered in the course of Iraq's invasion and occupation of Kuwait.¹⁰ The devastation in the course of the war weakened Iraq so much that the country faced rebellions by the Kurds in the north and by Shi'ites in the south. Saddam Hussein proceeded to employ combat helicopters to suppress the insurgencies. As a result, the Kurds fled into Turkey and Iran and deep into southern Iraq. Turkey and Iran were reluctant to accept them for the fear of insurgencies in their own territory.

The initial indifference of western governments to this human sufferings changed only in April 1991, as a result of media reports on the plight of the

¹⁰ Dixon, Elizabeth Riddel, "The United Nations After the Gulf War", *Inter National Journal*, Spring, 1994, Vol. XLIX, p.255.

Kurds, hurled along the Turkish border and the public outcry which it engendered.¹¹

On 5 April Security Council adopted Resolution 688 defining Iraq's repression of its own civilians as a threat to international peace and security in the region. Furthermore it ordered Iraq not only to allow international humanitarian organisations access to those needing assistance throughout its territory, but also to provide the facilities necessary for their operations. In spite of Iraqi protests, Americans, British, French and Dutch troops proceeded to implement "*operation provide comfort*" which afforded military protection to Kurds as part of an international relief effort coordinated by the UN.¹²

In addition, the allied forces declared two "*No-flying-zones*"- one in Northern Iraq and the other in Southern Iraq to protect the Kurds and Shi'ites respectively from Saddam's oppression.

Even before the desert storm it was evident that the mere return to the status quo prior to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait would not permanently restore international peace and security, given Iraq's total disregard for human rights, its support to international terrorism, its hegemonic ambition over the entire region and most importantly, its development and willingness to use of weapons of mass destruction and missile delivery system to achieve its goals. Moreover, following the suspension of the combat operations came the

¹¹ Mayall, James, "Non Intervention, Self Determination and The New World War", *International Affairs*, Vol. 67, July 1991, p.426.

¹² Weiss Thomas, "New Challenges for UN Military Operations : Implementing An Agenda for Peace", *Washington Quarterly*, Winter, 1993, Vol.16, p.57.

question of war reparations for losses, injuries, and damages resulting from Iraq's invasion and occupation of Kuwait.

In fact the winning of the war gave Washington the chance to impose a fresh sanctions resolution. The goal posts changed – at the time of ceasefire and repeatedly thereafter - with express intent of maintaining sanctions on Iraq for the indefinite future. No attempt was made to articulate the new objectives in a consistent fashion, they varied from week to week and from month to month. Of the few constants in the post-Gulf War situation one of the most evident—as the pitiful suffering of the Iraqi people. On 17 January 1991 Thomas Pickering, the US ambassador to UN, gave no indication in his address to the Security Council of how Iraq would be treated after the war. But the diplomatic sources were in no doubt that ironclad sanctions would remain in force against Iraq so that it could not easily rebuild itself militarily.¹³ There were signs also that Washington's immediate aims went far beyond the objectives set in about a dozen Security Council Resolutions. The main aim of ejecting the Iraqi forces from Kuwait, as specified in Resolution 678 (referring to 660), was to be supplemented by various objectives. These objectives included, overthrow of Saddam Hussein, putting him on trial for war crimes, destruction of Iraq's chemical and nuclear warfare potential and reduction of Iraq's conventional military capacity.¹⁴

¹³ Leonard Doyle, "Iraq will Face Sanctions After Crisis", *The Independent*, London, 18 January, 1991.

¹⁴ Martin Walker and Hella Pick, "British and American Aims include Finishing Saddam", *The Guardian*, London, 23 January, 1991.

Accordingly, the first UNSC resolution 686 of 2 March 1991 was essentially an interim measure to bring hostilities to a provisional end and to impose several obligations that Iraq was required to fulfill immediately. It retained in full force and effect all 12 preceding resolutions, including authorization to use military force and to maintain the embargo against Iraq. Whereas the Council determined what additional conditions Iraq should be required to fulfill before the sanctions would be lifted and Iraq fully reinstated into international community.¹⁵ On 3 March Iraq agreed to comply with all the obligations set out in the Resolution 686, in order to deny the coalition any excuse to inflict further harm on the Iraqi population. Finally, Iraq expressed the hope that the Council would ensure the prompt withdrawal of all coalition forces from Iraqi territory and complete end of embargo. On that same day the Council also noted the decision of the Sanctions Committee to allow the shipment to Iraq of humanitarian assistance.

While these humanitarian assistance was under way and Iraq was in the process of complying with its obligation under Resolution 686, the Council members spent the ensuing month consulting over the list of measures to be required as preconditions to restoring permanent peace and security in the region. On 3 April, having reached an agreement, the Council issued Resolution 687, arguably the most important, but certainly the most lengthy and complex, of all the resolutions issued, following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

¹⁵ www.iraqwatch.org

Where as resolution 686 had been of punitive nature, resolution 687 was intended to be the blue print for Iraq's rehabilitation. It was divided into nine (9) parts:¹⁶

1. Boundary settlements between Iraq and Kuwait.
2. Establishment of UN military observer unit in a demilitarized zone along the border, such deployment to establish the conditions for the departure of the coalition forces from Iraq.
3. Permanent elimination of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction of its ballistic missiles with a range of over 150 kms and its nuclear weapons capability.
4. Return of Kuwaiti property.
5. Future establishment of a UN compensation fund and a UN compensation commission to provide a settlement procedure.
6. Subject to council review every 60 days, lifting the embargo on imports of food stuffs and with the approval of the Sanctions Committee, allowing limited imports into Iraq of materials and supplies for essential civilian needs, as recommended by secretary general's fact finding mission and already endorsed by the Sanctions Commission.
7. Repatriation in cooperation with red cross, of all Kuwaiti and third country nationals still in Iraq.

¹⁶ Cambridge document, Vol. I, 1991, p.29-30.

8. Iraq's renouncement of all support and participation in international terrorism and
9. Establishment of a formal ceasefire upon Iraq's acceptance of all the conditions in this resolution.

These uncertain conditions underscored the need for new arrangements to maintain stability in the Gulf region. On 6 March, 1991, just after the fighting ended, representatives from the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, Egypt and Syria met in Damascus to map out a post-war security plan. The resulting agreement, known as the "*Damascus Declaration*" envisioned a combined force from the GCC countries supplemented by contingents from Egypt and Syria. The plan languished, throughout the remainder of the year until on 23 December, 1991 a summit conference of GCC states reaffirmed the combined force concept but postponed implementation pending further studies.¹⁷

Edward P. Djerejian, Assistance Secretary for Near East Affairs in a statement before the Subcommittee on Europe and Middle East of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, on 9 March, 1993 said that the Clinton administration had reaffirmed the continuity of policy towards Iraq. The President stressed that 'Iraq must fully comply with the UN resolutions, which mandate an end to the repression of the Iraqi people as well as a measure designed to achieve the security of Iraq's neighbours, before lifting of the

¹⁷ Migdalovitz, Carol, "Middle East Peace and Security Issues CRS Issue Brief, Updated March 3, 1992, P.CRS.4.

economic sanctions can be considered.¹⁸ Infact, US still continued to fund relief programmes in northern Iraq to support UN efforts to establish relief in central and southern Iraq, and to support the recent recommendations of UN special representative Maxvanderstoel that the UN should station Human Rights monitors throughout Iraq.¹⁹

As for Iraq was little evidence that sanctions had seriously weakened Saddam Hussein's regime so far Baghdad seemed to be slowly deepening its control over the rebellious Shi'ites in the southern part of the country, despite the "no fly zones" imposed by US, UK and France. It was also increasing its economic squeeze on the autonomous Kurdish zone in the north.²⁰

But, such a situation did not last for long and by beginning of 1996 Saddam Hussein could feel the weight of the sanction. Iraq in the recent years had begun lobbying for the lifting of sanctions. The Iraqi leadership had maintained that Iraq had met the terms under which the sanctions were to be rescinded. Iraq also said that the trade embargo had unfairly caused widespread malnutrition in Iraq and dramatically raised the country's mortality rate.²¹

On 9 December 1996, UN Secretary General Boutrous Ghali gave final approval to a deal that allowed Iraq to resume its exports of oil. On 10 December 1996, Saddam Hussein symbolically marked his country's re-entry into international oil market after six years. This agreement was reached on the condition of Iraqi destruction of its weapons of mass destructions. On 20 May

¹⁸ Ibid, P.CRS.6.

¹⁹ Dispatch, US Department of State, March 15, 1993, Vol. 4, no.11..

²⁰ Michael C. Hudsons, "The Clinton Administration and The Middle East", *Current History*, February 1994, Vol. 93, no.580, p.52.

²¹ Facts on File, Vol.56, no.2881, p.94.

1996, the UN and Iraq signed an accord that would allow Iraq to export oil on a limited basis so as to ease a shortage of food and medical supplies in Iraq. This accord marked the first easing of sanctions, whereby Iraq agreed to UN terms, of “*oil-for-food*” deal.²²

The cease-fire agreement that ended the Persian Gulf War contained several limitations on Saddam Hussein’s military power. The clause that has proven troublesome in the decade concerns Iraq’s programs to develop chemical, biological and nuclear weapons, collectively labeled as weapons of mass destruction, (WMDs). After ten years of military strikes and on-again-off-again inspections, the status of Iraq’s weapons programs remains uncertain. Under the cease-fire agreement and the UN Security Council resolution–Iraq was to destroy its existing WMD stockpiles and missiles with a range greater than 150 kilometers (93 miles) and halt any development efforts. The resolution also created the UN Special Commission (UNSCOM) to carry out inspections and verify compliance.

“When these resolutions were passed, it was expected that compliance would require no more than ninety days”, one US State Department document says. But from the beginning, Iraq sought to thwart inspections of its WMD facilities. UNSCOM has accused Iraq of destroying weapons without outside monitoring, then claiming to have destroyed more weapons than they did; offering false documents on their development programs; claiming that documents did not exist, documents that were later found; and hiding weapons

²² Facts on File, Vol. 56, no.2894, p.349.

and the materials to make them at “presidential sites” that they declared off-limits. In the early years of the inspections, things seemed to be going smoothly. Rolf Ekeus, the first executive chairman of UNSCOM, said in December 1992 that the ballistic missile program was effectively destroyed. But over the next few years, UNSCOM interrupted Iraqi efforts to buy contraband missile guidance systems from Russia and Romania and rocket motors from Ukraine.²³

As the inspections continued, Iraq became increasingly irate, demanding an immediate end to economic sanctions and offering ever more interference to inspections. In 1998, Iraq claimed that Scott Ritter, an UNSCOM inspector who had served as a US Marine in the Gulf War, was spying for the US and Israel. Conditions deteriorated throughout the year, and in December, 1998 UNSCOM withdrew all its personnel. Hours after the last of the inspectors were out of the country, the United States launched in vain the operation “*Desert Fox*” against Iraq in an effort to make it submit to inspections.²⁴ There have been no inspections since then.

Iraq’s work in chemical weapons was quite advanced; according to international observers. Iraqi troops had used chemical weapons against Iran in the 1980-1988 war and against rebellious Kurds in the northern part of the country in 1988. Inspectors found evidence that the Iraqis had produced nerve gas and mustard gas. Traces of nerve gases were found on destroyed Scud missile warheads, but Iraqi authorities said that their nerve gases use never got

²³ Weiss Thomas, n.12, p.67.

²⁴ Washington Post, June 1998.

past the test stage. Hundreds of mustard gas-filled artillery shells remain unaccounted for, according to UNSCOM.

Until 1995, Iraq flatly denied ever having a biological warfare program. In that year, Hussein Kamal, Saddam Hussein's son-in-law and the head of Iraq's WMD development efforts, defected to Jordan. He revealed that he had armed 25 Scud warheads and 157 bombs with biological warfare agents. Iraq admitted that it had developed biological weapons, and from July 1995 to September 1997 released three times, its full, final and complete disclosures. According to UNSCOM, they were "anything but complete".²⁵ The Iraqi government admitted to loading 16 warheads for its long-range Al-Hussein missile with botulinum toxin, and five with anthrax. It also admitted producing 200 air-dropped bombs with biological weapons, and claimed that they were all destroyed. UNSCOM said that it could not confirm "those numbers at all".

Iraq apparently never built a nuclear device, though not for a lack of efforts. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the organization charged with inspecting Iraqi nuclear sites, faced less resistance than UNSCOM, but it has been allowed only one visit since 1998, a four-day visit to confirm the presence of sealed nuclear materials at one site. The IAEA said in its June 2000 report that it "cannot at present provide any assurance that Iraq is in compliance with its obligation."²⁶

Saddam Hussein now presides over a country still locked in a conflict with the United States and Great Britain. These two nations alone deny

²⁵ www.Bakerinstitute.org/pubs.

²⁶ www.CNN.com.

freedom of movement for Iraq's military through two "*no-fly-zones*", one north of the 36th parallel and another below the 33rd parallel. Since the creation of these "*no-fly-zones*", more than 275,000 sorties have been flown over Iraq. Says Sir Jeremy Greenstock, British ambassador to the United Nations, "The US and the UK and, for a while France took steps by establishing the "*no-fly-zones*" to make sure that the Iraqis couldn't use their full military to repress their own people."²⁷ This also had the added effect of restraining Iraqi military power from again threatening Kuwait. Today, whenever Iraq activates its surface-to-air defenses in the "*no-fly-zones*", British and American pilots respond militarily. And civilians have not been immune to their attacks.

About ten years ago, the use of force and sanctions to punish Iraq was supported by all five permanent members of the UN Security Council: America, Britain, Russia, France and China. Today, the United States and Great Britain are increasingly isolated in their stance towards Iraq. In the last few months, aircraft from Russia, France and China as well as from many other former coalition countries – have landed in Baghdad. These flights have occurred despite the vocal opposition of the United States. Russia claimed that it had lost tens of billions of dollars because of the continuing UN sanctions imposed on Iraq. Russia hopes to recoup some of Iraq's multi-billion dollar Soviet-era debts, if the sanctions are lifted. France and Russia recently defied the UN committee overseeing the sanctions by allowing air flights to Iraq. Other countries have since followed their lead. Some of the flights have carried

²⁷ New York Times, May, 1996.

humanitarian aid but others brought passengers who openly sought the possibility of business deals with Iraq.

The human cost of the sanctions to the Iraqi people has been extraordinary. Which is why the UN Secretary-General has constantly emphasized the need to reduce the humanitarian costs of the sanctions and that is why over the last two or three years he has been increasingly promoting the idea of so-called “*smart sanctions*” which target regimes and not people. In the case of Iraq, smart sanctions would relax the restrictions on civilian goods, while increasing pressure on the rest of the regime’s assets. However, it is nowhere near a done deal. It will be quite difficult to start a new approach in the Security Council, to start with a new track that delivers sanctions much more pointedly against the regime. What is certain is that the UN Sanctions have left Saddam Hussein’s power over his people undiminished.

Operations carried out by the US through UN Security Council for monitoring, and inspecting the implementation of the various Security Council resolutions continue to face some obstacles and lack the Iraqi co-operation required for full compliance with these resolutions. In the Gulf War of 1991, the UN did indeed support American actions, but it was hardly an application of the doctrine of collective security. Not waiting for an international consensus, the US had unilaterally dispatched a large expeditionary force. Other nations could gain influence over America’s actions only of joining what was in effect an “American enterprise”, they could not avoid the risk of the conflict by vetoing it. Additionally domestic upheavals in the Soviet Union and

China induced them to maintain America's goodwill in the Gulf War. Collective security was involved as a "justification of American leadership, not a substitute for it."²⁸

²⁸ H. Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, (New York, Simon and Schuster Publication, 1994), p.250.

CHAPTER IV

IMPACT OF SANCTIONS ON IRAQ: AN ASSESSMENT

Economic sanctions as a “silent, deadly remedy, a very potent measure” – represent the prosecution of war by nominally non-violent means. In public relations term, sanctions are more respectable than biological warfare, more ethically acceptable than bombing, unlikely to generate a heavy toll of fatalities. Instead people are supposed to believe that economic sanctions are relatively civilised. It is undeniably a method of coercion, when adequately enforced, but one that is unlikely to cause the vast suffering associated with a military onslaught.¹

The scale of western onslaught on Iraq in the Gulf War, totally disproportionate in view of the declared objective of expelling Iraqi forces from Kuwait, resulted in the virtual destruction of a civil society. The early post-war reports from journalists, aid agencies, UN documents and official reports and others conveyed a consensual picture of a civilian population facing unprecedented catastrophes. In the post-Desert Storm Scenario, one can easily visualize a spate of unambiguous portrayals of collapsed communities, of traumatised and confused people struggling desperately to survive in a shattered environment.

Sanctions, unless applied in a manner which safeguards the civilian population, threaten the more vulnerable member of society-especially children and women. Indeed, a fundamental contradiction remains that politically

¹ Geoff Simons, *The Scourging of Iraq: Sanctions, Laws and Natural Justice*, (London, MacMillian Press, 1998), p.33.

motivated sanctions (which are by definition imposed to create hardship) cannot be implemented in a manner which spares the vulnerable. When people go through the “The Ahtisaari Report, the Save Children Fund Report (SCF) and report from Oxfam Care, the Jordanian, Iraqi and Libyan Red Crescent about the status of children in post-war, their hearts are bound to be squeezed inside. What the West did and continues to do to the children of Iraq is almost one of the “genocidal crimes” of the century, according to some analysts. A team of Harvard University study group reported in 1991 that at least 170,000 young children under five years of age will die in the coming years” as a result of the Gulf war and the economic embargo. The early testimonies painted a grim picture that was set to deteriorate yet further in the years to come. When Margit Fakhoury, a German pediatrician, visited hospitals in Iraq in March 1991, she reported the unprecedented incidence of ‘malnourished babies and toddlers with Kwashiorkor, severe deficiencies of vitamins or dying of a simple flue or diarrhea.’² After her second visit four months later she reported a worsened situation. The water was contaminated and malnourishment among people inevitably depressed their natural resistance to infection. In all hospitals, be they in Baghdad, or South Iraq, the doctors saw the increasing number of cases of cholera and typhoid fever.

Before the sanctions Iraq was able to produce penicillin, ampicillin and other basic antibiotics in enough quantity. The bombing destroyed the production plants and the sanctions meant that the Iraqis were prevented from

² Mohan Rao, Sanctions Kill Children in Iraq, *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol.35, no.18, April-Mary, 2000, pp.20-21.

rebuilding such facilities. One consequence of this was that doctors were being forced to use the increasingly unavailable antibiotics in lower and lower doses via intramuscular rather than intravenous technique. This process often led to ineffective treatment, long term brain damage, and fulminating infection. In children this has caused mental and physical disablement and early death.

It was also apparent that the youngest were being severely affected by the sanctions regime in the aftermath of the war. From January to August (1991) infant deaths (under one year of age) per 1000 live births increased to 80 from 23 i.e. more than three times. In the same period the under five mortality rate had almost quadrupled, and the situation was set to deteriorate. Reduced birth weight was one of the factors contributing to the higher infant mortality rates. Thus in 1990 a monthly average of 4.5% of babies were under 2.5 kg at birth and in May it was 17.1%.³ At the same time, the nutritional status of surviving infants was seeing massive deterioration. For the under fives the incidence of Kwashiorkor had risen from 485 cases in 1990 to 5578 for the period from January to May 1992. Thus in a period of two years, one of the principal nutrition deficiency diseases saw a 27 fold increase. Over the same period Marasmus saw a 20-fold increase for the under-fives.⁴

To the catastrophic impact of sanctions regime on the physical health of Iraqi children was the added traumatic devastation of their psychological conditions. Thus Magne Raundalen, Atle Dyregrov (both were attached with the centre for crisis psychology, Bergen, Norway) and others reported that the

³ Geoff Simons, n. 1, pp.123-124.

⁴ Ibid, p.124.

substantial research had revealed a highly disturbed child population characterized by intrusive thoughts about the war and the various patterns of avoidance behaviour. Around two thirds of the children were experiencing sleep problems, and about half (44.9%) were worried that they might not live to become adult.⁵ For a whole generation of Iraqi children, the world was not a safe place any more, anything could happen. A majority of the children felt more alone inside. They had lost all sense of security and optimism. They could not talk to their parents because they too were traumatized. The other generation lacked both the skills and the psychological resources to help their children emerge from disturbance and pains.

More than a decade after the crisis, there is no relief, the war continues albeit by other means. Iraq remains under constant threat of further bombardment. In the consequence the Iraqi people, particularly the children, are denied any route to a post-war psychological security. For the traumatized children, time seemed to have stopped, where as Saddam Hussein's regime remains intact in power. The surviving Iraqi children typically malnourished, sick and facing premature death – inevitably suffered in other ways as well. Many were orphans, without adequate housing and facing shattered educational provisions. Thousands of schools had been destroyed or damaged by bombing and needing urgent repair and other basic infrastructure. There had been a massive increase in dropout rates, and where education was still being attempted it was necessarily deteriorating. The blockage of paper imports

⁵ Magne Raundelen, *The long term impact of the Gulf War on the Children of Iraq*, Bergen, Norway, Centre for Crisis Psychology, 1991, p.21.

because of the sanctions meant that an ever reducing number of children's books was available from one year to the next. Teachers now often malnourished themselves and facing rocketing inflation, were growing accustomed to falling class sizes and children fainting from hunger.⁶

Now, let us have a look on the impact of sanctions on women. Iraqi women have experienced this whole crisis not only as victims, but also as crucial actors who have sustained the family and society. The basis of Iraqi society, the house has been held together by their ingenuity and strength despite their own economic social emotional and psychological deprivation. Women suffer, as do men, at the pain of their children. And women suffer also in unique ways. Only the desperately hungry pregnant women can experience the anguish of knowing that her foetus is already malnourished, that her baby will stand a great chance of being born disabled or dead, and that if it survives it is destined to suck in vein on shriveled breasts. Iraqi women, having lost husbands, sons and brothers in war, were forced to shoulder an immense burden. More than 10% of Iraqi women became widows, and so often the sole wage earners in their families. Economic sanctions produced greater unemployment, making it difficult for women to earn the money not being provided by war maimed or absent husbands. So a generation of malnourished women has been driven to scavenging, prostitution, begging and the black market. Women typically go hungry to provide for their children and elderly relatives.

⁶ Ibid, p.25.

By August 1991, long before full impact of sanctions was being felt, many Iraqi families had exhausted their savings and were being forced to sell their most valued personal possession solely to obtain food. Many families sold their furniture, domestic appliances, carpets, cloths and even the doors of their houses. Half of all families had incurred heavy debts, increasing the economic vulnerability of women and their family. Nearly two-thirds of women were suffering from such psychological problems as depression, anxiety, headache and insomnia. Other problems included severe malnutrition, increased susceptibility to diseases, menstrual irregularity and breast feeding difficulties, sick and weakened women now had to queue for water, to collect food and to cope with the consequences of marital breakdown through increased domestic tensions. The erosion of the education sector, the increased incidence of crime, the collapse of the family, all exacerbated by sanctions, were now combining to produce unprecedented levels of social dislocation. This deteriorating situation has impacted drastically on the condition of the Iraqi women, by now increasingly bereaved, sick, abandoned, divorced and poor.⁷

Many women had taken their sick children to health centers and hospitals, only to find that sanctions have blocked the medical access to drugs and to the spare parts necessary to keep medical equipment working. The women then stayed with their dying children in hospital wards denuded of effective medical care provisions, so putting further burden on the rest of the women families at home.

⁷ Geoff Simons, n.1, pp.127-130.

The 21 year old Alie from Najaf testified before one of the NGOs-
“Most women suffered terribly from trauma of miscarriage during the war and the disturbances. Many could not find medical treatment at the time and had continuing problems with their health. Effective treatment seems unavailable for most women.”⁸

In 1991, Sadruddin Aga Khan report⁹ estimated that about a third of all pregnant and lactating women were undernourished and in need of nutritional support. To add further, Dr. Abad al-Amir, Head of the Babylon Pediatric and maternity hospital, stated that the much increased incidence of miscarriages premature labour and low birth weight babies was caused by the mounting physical and psychological pressure on women, the lack of medicines and prenatal care and the difficulty in reaching hospitals because of transportation problems.

Lack of contraception facilities was a further consequences of war and sanctions regime. Now contraceptives were only being made available to women for medical reasons and in rare cases to older women with large families. Aid worker were soon to report caesarian operations taking place without anesthetics-yet another consequence of sanctions. Another consequence was an increase in the incidence of illegal abortions and a related increase in the number of maternal deaths. The widespread deprivations, making it difficult for families to support existing children, constituted an

⁸ Bela Bhatia, Mary Kwar and Mirian Shahim, *Unheard Voices: Iraqi Women on War and Sanctions*, (London, International Study Publications, 1992), pp.36-38.

⁹ Aga Khan was the executive delegate the Secretary General for a United Nations Inter Agency Humanitarian Programme for Iraq, 1991.

additional pressure on women to abort. A large number of women were now testifying that they or their daughter were now suffering from irregular menstruation, excessive bleeding and severe pains. The plight of Iraqi women like that of Iraqi civilians as a whole is well reported and widely known. In April 1994 an international forum 'Human Rights and Women', was held in Baghdad. There the French representative Andree Michel denounced the barbaric blockade'. Which, according to her, violated all the resolutions of international law, particularly the articles of "Geneva Convention" that forbid depriving a civilian population of the basic needs of survival. The UN Security Council appeared to have lost its credibility, choosing only to implement the "law of the strongest", the "law of the dollar", the "law of the oil" and the arms trade. Michel then denounced Francois Mitterrand for complicity in war crimes and crimes against humanity in participating in the Gulf War and the economic embargo.¹⁰ The plight and example of Iraqi women demonstrates plainly enough the character of the silent holocaust being perpetrated by continuing the sanctions.

Control over food confers ultimate power. Prevent people from eating for a few weeks and they will not cause you much trouble there after. The United States today celebrates this simple truism in various ways; for example by blocking food aid if a country does not act in accord with US strategic interests and by maintaining the tightest possible food blockade in perpetuity on such countries as Cuba and Iraq, Washington began to apply this policy in

¹⁰ Geoff Simons, n.1, pp.135-136.

Iraq in August 1990, which still prevails today. Many observers and researchers have charted the growing incidence of malnutrition in Iraq as a result of sanctions. Through the 1980s, despite the war with Iran, Iraq maintained a very low rate of malnutrition. Food was heavily subsidised by the State and was in plentiful supply, while the health services were seeing significant improvement. By 1988 the average per capita food intake was 3340 kilocalories, but the draconian economic sanctions soon activated a massive decline in the amount of food available. The systematic bombing of Iraq's infrastructure had helped to erode the civilian access to food. Food processing plants were destroyed, refrigeration facilities had no electricity, and the normal mechanisms for food distribution (roads, bridges, transport) were totally disrupted. As early as February 1991 a WHO and UNICEF mission to Baghdad estimated that the daily per capita Calorie intake had fallen from the pre-sanction level of 3340 kilocalories to less than 1000 kilo calories. This was one-third of the WHO recommendation. In June 1991, UNICEF reported an alarming and rising incidence of severe and moderate malnutrition among the children under age five. And in July, the UN Food and Agricultural Organizations (FAO) warned that Iraq was approaching the threshold of extreme deprivation.¹¹

By August 1991, official Iraqi sources were claiming that deaths due to starvation had reached 11,000.¹² Now the gravity of the deepening food crisis

¹¹ United Nations Childrens Emergency Fund (UNICEF) Report, Children and Women in Iraq, March, 1993.

¹² Sanctions Hit Poor Iraqis but Saddam's rule stays secure, *The Guardian* (London), 1 August, 1991.

was being acknowledged by UN officials and workers, journalists and other observers. On 13 September 1999 the UN Security Council passed Resolution 660 emphasizing that food stuff could only be exported to Iraq in the case of 'urgent Humanitarian need.' Far from any genuine attempt to relieve the suffering of the Iraqi people, Resolution 686 simply consolidated the bureaucratic delay and obstruction. It also had loop holed which allowed every opportunity for obstruction and procrastination. Can any one absolve the US of responsibility for a such a state of affairs? After all, Washington had the maximum influence over the Sanctions Committee. So much for urgent Humanitarian need. Despite the acknowledged urgency of the food need in Iraq, no information was gathered under the terms of the Resolution 666 until 16 February 1991. The WHO/UNICEF mission duly reported their dire finding, weeks after a reluctant Security Council declared a humanitarian emergency. Still no food stuffs were to be allowed into Iraq unless provided by the UN or by appropriate humanitarian agencies working with the UN. Iraq was still not to be allowed to purchase or distribute its own foods stuffs. Again this was a formula for blocking the supply of food to the Iraqi civilian population.

Moreover, the US dominated Sanctions Committee was reluctant even to declare the recognized aid agencies as appropriate under Resolution 666. If an aid agency, wished to ship food to Iraq, it was first required to submit in advance a detailed application to the Sanctions Committee. Washington's success in blocking the Iraqi populations access to food is indicated by the fact that, where as Iraq's daily grain requirement was approximately 10,000 tons,

this was about the amount that Iraq was allowed to import from August 1990 to April 1991. The UN itself declared that a minimum of \$178 million was necessary to address the acknowledged humanitarian crisis in Iraq, in the event, less than a fifth of this amount was forthcoming.¹³ Washington's strategic policies were having their anticipated effects, but on the people, not on regime.

The evidences were found of both acute and chronic malnutrition in large number of children examined. Nutritional signs of impending famine were not evident, notwithstanding epidemic levels of infectious diseases. The child nutrition was a serious problem in that country and that the embargo was bound to make the matter worse, risking the health and very lives of hundreds of thousands of children at enormous risk. Food crisis had enormous social implications too. There were evidences of growing social dislocation as hungry Iraqi civilians became increasingly disparate. In different parts of the country food riots erupted as people took to stealing and looting in order to stay alive.

One of the main causes of hardship was the rocketing prices of many food stuffs, an inevitable consequence of the shortages caused by sanctions. The market prices of basic food items increased three to twenty times pre-sanctions levels. The massive price escalation that occurred in the early years of sanctions, continued in subsequent years, with the result that by August 1995 the average salary in Baghdad of 4000 dinars a month was worth \$2.¹⁴ This meant that ordinary Iraqi families had no opportunity to supplement the necessarily inadequate government rations by purchasing food on the open

¹³ Geoff Simons, n.1, p.139.

¹⁴ Mueller, John and Mueller Karp, "Sanctions of Mass Destruction", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 78, no.3, 1999, pp.43-53.

market. The only remaining alternatives were begging, prostitution, scavenging, theft, looting, malnutrition, starvation and death.

The food crisis, created by the virtually total block on food imports, was exacerbated by denying Iraq the opportunity to reconstruct its own devastated agricultural sector. It is noteworthy that sanctions applied not only to food stuffs but also to seed, pesticides, agricultural machinery and plant, and the spare parts that would have allowed the repair of the existing equipment. The bombing of the power stations had impacted dramatically on the industrial sectors. Soil fertilization in much of the central and southern Iraq had depended on the highly developed irrigation system. The collapse of the power system resulted in the long-term flooding of much agricultural land and increased the salt concentrations in the soil. With the spare parts for damaged pumps no longer available, large areas of agricultural land were lost.¹⁵

In the same way Iraq's animal wealth had seen significant decline. Total number of animals in December 1991 was 50-60% of the pre-sanctions total. A number of factors had contributed to the decline. Some of the animals had been killed in the war, others had succumbed to the increased incidence of water born diseases, and others fell victim to the block on veterinary supplies. In addition the collapse of the crop sector, coupled with the embargo meant that animal feed was not adequately available.

The UN was not ignorant about what was happening in Iraq. The UN linked bodies active in the field had accumulated enough information about the

¹⁵ Baran, Amatzia, "Effects of Iraqi Sanctions, Statistical Pitfalls and Responsibility", *Middle East Journal*, vol. 54, no.4, 2000 spring, pp.194-223.

plight of Iraqi people. The World Food Programme (WFP) in fact noted in mid-1995 that critical food shortages and international indifferences were threatening the lives of more than a million of the most vulnerable people in Iraq.¹⁶

The deterioration of the economic situation in the country and dwindling foreign exchange resources has to result in a further reduction of food imports. This coupled with below normal domestic production, was to result in a sharp decline in the country's per capita food supply. And yet again the inadequacy of the humanitarian assistance programmes was emphasized.¹⁷

The lasting solution to the current food crisis would lie in the regeneration of the Iraqi economy which cannot be achieved without a resumption of international trade by the country. Such an action will not only relieve the grave human suffering in Iraq, but will also allow a release of scarce humanitarian assistance resources. These resources could be used for their most appropriate allocation to the benefit of large numbers of starving people elsewhere in the world.

The situation in the health sector has remained critical over the past ten years despite concerted efforts and interventions from various relevant UN agencies and in particular UNICEF. In late 1991 it was estimated that, following the imposition of sanctions and the destruction of medical facilities in the war, less than one-third of Iraq's medicine requirements were being met. Iraq had been accustomed to importing medicines worth \$500 million a year

¹⁶ Iraq, *News Summary*, 12 April-12 May, 1995, United Nations Information Centre, New Delhi, 16 May, 1995.

¹⁷ Geoff Simons, n.1, p.149.

and other medical supplies on a massive scale a practice that was almost totally blocked by the embargo. This meant that soon all medicines – including medicated milk for infants with diarrhea, vaccines, drugs (for diabetes, asthma, angina, tuberculosis, etc.), anesthetics and antibiotics-were in short and diminishing supply. In the same way all other medical supplies (such as syringes, intravenous fluids, surgical supplying, medical equipment and spare parts for x-ray machines, incubators, etc.) were rapidly becoming unavailable. This was caused either by deliberate blockade by sanctions committee or mischievously delayed by cumbersome and bureaucratic procedures. In addition the destruction of the infrastructure, short supply of power, lack of clean water, transportation facilities etc. meant that many of the formerly sophisticated health provisions could no longer operate, substantially reducing people's access to health care.

Despite the token exemption in Resolution 661 (not including supplies intended strictly for medical purposes) and later associated provisions and assertions remained illegal for the government of Iraq to purchase and import any medicines and medical equipment. Many pharmaceutical companies, often intimidated by Washington, refused to supply their products to Iraq, even when a formal permission had been granted by Sanctions Committee. This often resulted in a block on the shipment of products for which Iraq had already paid. The wording of the Resolution 661 exemption (strictly for the medical purposes) gave the Sanctions Committee licence to insist on detailed

applications, protracted discussion, requests for further information, more deliberation – all recipe for inordinate delays.

The Save the Children Fund (SCF) reported that, because of the shortages of fuel and electricity, hospitals and clinics were working at around 20% of normal capacity. The availability of stockpiled drugs were not sufficient for current medical services in their much reduced conditions. The collapse of the transport infrastructure meant that fewer people could reach the hospitals that were still working. Only a quarter of the 400 beds in the ‘Saddam Children’s Hospital’ in Baghdad were occupied, and surgeons and physicians were only turning up for work every third or fourth day. It was considered that the conditions would be even worse in more remote hospitals.¹⁸

The Iraqi immunization programme, formerly achieving around 95% coverage and considered by WHO/UNICEF to be one of the best in the Middle East, had been totally disrupted by the bombing of electronic power infrastructure and embargo. Where no cases of polio had been reported in eight years, this disease with others formerly eradicated, was again emerging as a public health threat.

The nominal medical exemption specified in Resolution 661 was clearly meaningless. Many drugs required by the Iraqi Health Ministry were produced only by specialist companies in the United States and Britain and the Governments in these countries were effectively blocking all exports to Iraq. In consequence cardiac, cancer and other serious diseases were no longer

¹⁸ Iraq Situation Report for SCF, The Save Children Fund, London, March, 1991, pp.2-3.

receiving proper treatment. The value of medicines reaching Iraq had been reduced from worth \$2 million per day to \$2 million a month, 30 times less than before.¹⁹ All the medical contributions of humanitarian organisations and bodies, meet only a small portion of the actual needs of drugs and medical services.

Iraq had relied upon sophisticated medical technology imported from around the world. Now Iraq was prohibited by sanctions regime from importing such equipment and necessary parts for equipment already in Iraq. Iraq was no longer allowed to acquire X-ray plates, laboratory scanners, spare parts for incubators and intensive care units, inks, paper and much else for which there was a clear medical need.

The country which used oil revenue to purchase and import 70% of its basic needs cannot now even obtain Aspirin, toilet paper or disinfectant. The crisis of the healthcare system in Iraq is reflected in the high infant mortality rate which UNICEF puts at 4500 infants (five years old) per month (150 children per day). The infant mortality rose from 61 per thousand in 1990 to 117 per thousand in 1996. Apart from the dire consequences of economic sanctions, Iraq is also grappling with the rise of diseases such as Leukemia, cancer and childhood deformities, a direct result of the exposure to toxic depleted uranium weapons used by the allied forces during Gulf War. The contamination of Iraq with over three hundred pounds of depleted uranium requires the urgent attention of the international community. In a strongly

¹⁹ Ibid, p.5.

worded critique of the UN sanctions against Iraq, former US Attorney General Ramsey Clark described the sanctions against Iraq as “genocidal”.²⁰

In September 1998, UN Assistant Secretary General Denis Halliday resigned his post in protest of the terrible situation inside Iraq. Speaking in an interview, Halley commented that “conditions in Iraq are appalling, with malnutrition running at about 30% for children under 5 years old. In terms of mortality, he said that probably five or six thousand children are dying per moth and this is directly attributed to the impact of sanctions, which have caused the breakdown of the clean water system, health facilities and all the things that young children require.”²¹ Conscience including the Vatican, the World Council of Churches, humanitarian relief agencies, educators and socially responsible professionals have called upon the UN to end the silent sanctions of war to bring an end to sanction against Iraq as a weapon of mass destruction. Despite dire warning from eminent international organizations, including UN’s own food and agricultural organsations, the regime of sanctions against Iraq remains in place.

The economic situation has been rendered vulnerable under the heavy weight of sanctions. The current economic situation in government controlled areas has deteriorated at an incredibly rapid pace with soaring hyper-inflation rate and colossal depreciation of the local currency, Iraqi Dinar (ID), vis-à-vis the US Dollar as Iraq remains unable to resume full oil sales due to long lasting economic and trade sanctions. Oil is the mainstay of Iraq’s economy and today

²⁰ www.southmovement.alphalink.com.au.

²¹ www.iacentre.org

only limited sales are carried out to Jordan in comparison to the countries huge oil export capacity of more than 2.5 million barrels per day worth more than US\$12 billion per annum at a modest price of US\$14 per barrel. The inflation rate of prices has been persistently increasing by 25-30 percent per month since 1991 and the local currency has lost its value against all hard currencies. In 1994 the Iraqi Dinar has become 400 percent weaker against the US Dollar in the parallel market where all transactions are calculated in Dollar terms and expressed in Dinars. Today, one US\$ is worth more than ID 2,000 against ID 500 a year ago.²² At the same time household incomes have deteriorated drastically as salaries and wages witness insignificant increments in comparison to the soaring inflation which has led to the total collapse of most household incomes. To maintain survival many families have been forced to sell personal and house effects to buy food and other basic commodities. Most government employees are undertaking part time jobs, either as taxi drivers or venturing into private business after working hours, to generate additional income to make ends meet. The average government civil servant receives a net monthly salary of ID 5,000 which is equivalent to less than US\$3.

Although the Government is still providing a highly subsidized food basket of five basic items to all population except in the three autonomous governorate in the North, this food ration covers about 40 percent of nutritional requirements. Subsequently, the rest is sought from the free food market where prices are far beyond the purchasing power of the vast majority. Even a

²² Patrick Clawson, "Iraq's Economy and International Sanctions" in *Iraq's Road to War*, (ed.) (Houndmills, The MacMillan Press, 1994).

monthly allowance of ID 2,000 to all civil servants, in effect since October 1994, is insufficient to make up for the shortfall. The Government of Iraq has accorded utmost attention and priority to the agricultural sector in search for food security and self-reliance after 1993. But despite efforts to enormously increase purchase prices of grains and cereals from farmers, Iraq today seems more dependent on food imports than last year or five years ago due to modest harvest and poor performance of the agriculture sector, where lack of machinery and spare parts as well as other agricultural components are not available.

The poor economic situation in the country has had its adverse effects on the social sector where social characteristics and behaviour are undergoing a total change in the society. By contrast, crime rate of theft has been on the rise day by day and even television stations daily telecast advertisements of “mission” private vehicles. Car theft has also included government, UN Agencies and other diplomatic missions operating in the country. House theft and murder cases, driven by economic hardship have significantly risen, although no official statistics are available. Street children are today widely visible in the country and even in the capital Baghdad. Since beginning of the Gulf crisis, children have been seen selling petty things at traffic lights, but today many more have turned to beggary, one step before delinquency. Child labour is also visible in the streets where small young girls are seen selling a variety of items even drinking water. This situation is unlikely to witness immediate improvement even if the economic and trade sanctions are lifted to

eased. Large numbers of boys and girls are still leaving or postponing schooling in order to support their families by working in the market.

The sanctions against Iraq have also had significant collateral impact on Jordan and Turkey, both major trading partners with Iraq prior to the Gulf crisis. Jordan's trade volumes with Iraq plummeted from their levels in August 1990, especially as sanctions enforcement severely curtailed Iraq's imports and exports. Nevertheless, Jordan and Iraq remain linked economically, as Iraq still provides the majority of oil used by Jordan. In the early years of the sanctions, Jordan's enforcement was lax. Since 1995, however, Jordan has enforced the sanctions stringently, and Jordan has realigned itself away from Iraq and toward the west.

Turkey denounced Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, and immediately turned off its pipeline for Iraqi oil and severed all trade ties with Iraq. The embargo has cost Turkey \$30 billion. Turkey must also contend with the defector Kurdish state that had emerged in northern Iraq, threatening Turkish territorial integrity and political unity.

The US is "adamant" that the Security Council will maintain the full sanctions as long as is required to force Iraq's full compliance with relevant Security Council resolutions. If sanctions are removed prematurely, Saddam Hussein's cooperation to date, though lacking, would surely cease. And, when Iraq's oil again flows freely on the world market, it will be very hard to shut it off.

As previously mentioned, sanctions have been disastrous to Iraq's economy and environment: They have caused shortages of goods in the marketplace and have contaminated Iraqi water supplies. The sanctions purpose was to force Saddam out of power; however, the sanctions have strengthened his resolve, while weakening his opposition.

Of the 30 nations that contributed to the American-led, Gulf War coalition, only Britain, Germany and Kuwait openly supported Clinton's September 1996 cruise-missile retaliation. Even Saudi Arabia, the oil-rich crown jewel of American interests in the Persian Gulf region, pointedly demurred from endorsing a new round of retaliatory action against Saddam. It is not that Saddam is any less despised by his neighbors today than he was five years ago. The difference now is that the region deems him likely to survive. Moreover, the Saudis and others see the world's will to subdue Saddam steadily eroding. After all, Russia, France, and China have publicly called for an easing of U.N. sanctions; and Western multinational corporations, such as *Total and Elf*, have recently signed oil agreements with Iraq, to be implemented after the lifting of sanctions. As a result, Saddam seems no worse off today, than he was before the Gulf War and in several respects he may have actually improved his prospects.

On the one hand, the impact of the sanctions were direct, because they directly impacted Iraq. However, on the other hand, the sanctions impact were indirect or, more appropriately put, were misdirected. The sanctions were misdirected because they strengthened the power and resolve of Saddam

Hussein and his regime, while they weakened the Shiites and Kurds. The worst victim of the sanctions have alone been the innocent Iraqi citizen who played no role in the decision making process of the country. Hussein's power was strengthened because the regime was able to circumscribe the intended effects of the sanctions, i.e., to make him weaker.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Sanctions as a tool of coercive diplomacy is as old as the history of International Relations. However, it is difficult to define, articulate and conceptualise sanctions, because of the differences in the nature and type of sanctions. The target nations and the sanctioning authorities of major powers and the rationale behind imposing sanctions further complicate drawing general conclusions on sanctions.

The present study is an extremely modest attempt to understand the nature of sanctions and its impact. On 2 August 1990, when President Saddam Hussein of Iraq sent his military and occupied the entire territory of Kuwait, the whole world was shocked at the development. Oil being the lifeblood of world economy, any individual, group or national authority which seek to control the flow of oil, automatically threatened global security. A similar thing happened in the wake of Kuwaiti crisis.

This incident occurred at a time when there was relaxation of Cold War between two super powers. With the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and on going 'glasnost' and 'perestroika' in former Soviet Union, there was no doubt that imposition of any sanctions against Iraq could be done with consent and consensus among major power.

The United States was the obvious leader in taking swift action on this grave situation of the Gulf. The UN Security Council became quickly active in

announcing measures against Iraq in the face of Saddam Hussein's determination to continue his occupation of Kuwait.

Sanctions against Iraq have two phases. The first phase spanned over more than five months, when political, diplomatic and economic sanctions were imposed against Iraq to pressurise Saddam Hussein to withdraw the occupying troops from Kuwait.

While these sanctions were important and had the support of United Nations and international community, the fact remains that these sanctions failed in achieving the desired goals of resolving the Kuwaiti crisis. In mid January 1991, after failing to persuade and pressurise Saddam, the United States launched a massive military operation to liberate Kuwait. Thus 'Operation Desert Shield' gave way to 'Operation Desert Storm'.

The defeat of Iraq was almost foregone conclusion. There was no way Saddam Hussein's military could have faced the massive onslaught and the highly sophisticated aerial warfare launched by an international coalition force led by the mightiest nation on earth. The outcome of the war was humiliating defeat for President Saddam Hussein. The Iraqi troops had to practically run away ending their occupation of Kuwait.

Significantly the end of the war was not the end of the story. Iraq continued to be under yet another round of sanctions. This time around, the sanctions were more devastating. These sanctions were imposed on a defeated country. One of the main purposes of this phase of sanctions was to ensure that

Iraq would not be able to threaten any of its neighbour in the foreseeable future.

The sanctions in Phase II (after Operation Desert Storm) has succeeded to some extent. It has prevented Saddam from significantly rebuilding his military machine, which he doubtlessly would have done otherwise. The sanctions were essential to enable UNSCOM to pursue its mission in Iraq, though under very difficult circumstances. Without the sanctions, Saddam could have refused to co-operate with UNSCOM. It is reasonable to assume that he could have been more defiant in the absence of sanctions. From this perspective economic sanctions continue to be partially successful.

However, after the end of the Cold War the United States has become more “aggressive” in asserting its global preponderance. The disintegration of the erstwhile USSR leaves the United States as the sole super power in a “unipolar world”. The US has often used economic sanctions as a tool of coercive diplomacy to further its national interests.

The US has remained in the forefront of the Sanctions Committee, which has been supervising the implementation of sanctions against Iraq. However, the sole superpower seems oblivion of the impact of sanction on the innocent civilian. Economic sanctions often inflict significant human costs on the populations of the target states, including innocent civilians who have little influence over their governments behaviour. Recent evidence suggests that the international economic sanctions on Iraq since 1990 have led to the “deaths of as many as 567,000 Iraqi Children, compared with the reported 40,000 military

and 5000 civilian deaths during the 1991 Gulf War.” Iraqi people are dying due to lack of food, medicine and potable water. The whole infrastructure of the civil society in Iraq have been smashed to ashes, where as the main target Saddam regime continues to enjoy the power. This impact has been dealt in chapter IV at length.

The question then arises why does the United States adopts the tool of economic sanctions, even when it does not serve the purpose? It is because sanctions can offer a proportional response to a challenge in which less than vital interests are at stake. In addition, they constitute a form of expression, a way to communicate official displeasure with certain behaviour or action. They thus satisfy a domestic political need to do some thing and can serve to reinforce a commitment to a behavioural norm. In principle, such messages also have the potential to affect the behaviour of uninvolved but observant third parties, possibly deterring them from taking similar action in future for fear of being penalized.

American reluctance to use military force is another motivation particularly in those instances in which US interests are not deemed sufficiently important to justify risking heavy casualties. The great frequency with which sanctions are used is also a result of the increased strength of single issue constituencies in American politics. The growth of Congressional power also helps explain the prevalence of economic sanctions. Thus sanctions are frequently introduced by members of Congress often at the behest of single or

special interest groups through legislation. The greater reach of media is another factor.

There is also executive-legislative angle to sanctions policy. Congress has increasingly forced Presidents and constrained his discretion in various foreign policy situations by passing legislation requiring the use of economic sanctions.

Why most of the times Sanctions do not work?

Robert A Pepe in his studies, 'Why economic sanctions do not work' challenges the emerging optimism which is found in Hufbauer, Schott, Elliot studies about the effectiveness of economic sanctions and puts forth reasons for it.

Even if sanctions become somewhat more effective after the Cold War, they still have far to go before they can be a reliable alternative to military force.

➤ Sanctions have been successful less than 5% of the time, not 34% of the time as Hufbauer, Schott, Elliot claim. Thus the world would have to change considerably, before sanctions could become a credible alternative to force. It is not clear that the early burst of the political cooperation among the world's leading economic powers that we saw in the early 1990s will continue; for example US Japanese relations have become some what rockier while the domestic institutions and foreign policy of both China and Russia are highly uncertain. And none of these

countries is likely to adopt western policies, without first thinking of their own interests.

- The key reasons why sanctions fail is not related to the cooperation of sanctioning states but to the nature of the target. Iraq for example has been subjected to the most extreme sanctions. In history 48% of its GNP has been eliminated by sanctions for over 5 years (1990-96) and it has not buckled, rather the key reason that sanctions fail is that modern state are not fragile. Even in the weakest and most fractured states, external pressure is more likely to enhance the nationalist legitimacy of rulers than to undermine it.¹ Even much more severe punishments that economic sanctions can possibly inflict rarely coerces. The strategic bombing badly damaged the economies of North Korea, North Vietnam and Iraq, without causing their population to rise up against their regimes. The Germans and Japanese were fire bombed. If modern nations states can withstand that, they are unlikely to surrender to the threats of partial or even total trade disruptions.
- Modern states can adjust to minimise their vulnerability to economic sanctions because administrative capabilities allow states to mitigate the economic damage of sanctions through substitution and other techniques.
- The deductive case that greater multilateral cooperation will make economic sanctions more effective rates on two expectations: that

¹ "Making Monkeys of the UN", editorial *The Economist*, (10 July, 1993), p.34.

greater cooperation will increase the economic punishment on target states and more critically that increased punishment will make targets more likely to be conceded. The second proposition is dubious. If it were valid we should expect to find a significant correlation in past cases between economic loss to the target state and success of sanctions, but an examination of the recorded HSE database by Robert Pepe does not support it.²

- Despite economic sanctions, if a state could sustain relationship with Multi National Corporations (MNCs), the effectiveness of the sanctions is put to question. The continually evolving dependence on vast, sophisticated communications and information management system makes it difficult to isolate economic rewards and punishment to a single nation.³
- Secondary sanctions can seriously harm relationship with the secondary states. Some of these secondary countries, long since recognizing the ineffectiveness of the unilateral sanctions, have threatened to retaliate US for this policy, it has had to retaliate against US for the element of law, that could punish European companies doing business in Cuba.⁴

² Robert A. Pepe, "Why Economic Sanctions do not Work", *International Security*, Vol. 22, no.2, (fall 1997), pp.106-108.

³ G.R. Berridge, *International Politics: States and Power Conflict since 1945*, (New York, 1987), p.101.

⁴ *The Wall Street Journal*, 19 June, 1998.

Lessons from the Analysis of US Economic Sanctions:⁵

- Sanctions alone are unlikely to achieve desired results if the aims are large or time is short. Sanctions, even when they were comprehensive and enjoyed almost universal international backing for nearly six months, – failed to get Saddam Hussein to withdraw from Kuwait. In the end, doing so took nothing less than Operation Desert Storm.
- Under the right circumstances, sanctions nevertheless can achieve (or help to achieve) various foreign policy goals ranging from the modest to the fairly significant. Sanctions introduced against Iraq in the aftermath of the Gulf War clearly have increased Iraqi compliance with resolutions calling for the complete elimination of its Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). Such sanctions also have much diminished Iraq's ability to import weapons and weapons-related technology of any sort. The result is that Iraq today is considerably weaker militarily and economically.
- Unilateral sanctions are rarely effective. In a global economy, unilateral sanctions tend to impose greater costs of American firms than on the target, which usually can find substitute sources of supply and financing.
- Sanctions can be expensive for American business, farmers, and workers. There is a tendency to overlook or underestimate the direct cost of sanctions, perhaps because the cost of intervening with sanctions (unlike the costs of military intervention) do not show up in US

⁵ Richard N. Hass (ed.), *Economic Sanctions and American Diplomacy*, (Washington D.C., 1998), pp.197-205.

Government budget. Sanctions do, however, affect the economy by reducing revenues of US companies and individuals.

- Military enforcement can increase the economic and military impact (although not necessarily the political effect) of a given sanction. The sanctions against Iraq, for example, were far tighter than they would have been, had compliance been voluntary.
- Sanctions can increase pressures to intervene with military force when they are unable to resolve the crisis at hand. Such pressure was welcomed by the Bush administration in the aftermath of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, a position that reflected concern over what the passage of time would mean for coalition cohesion (not to mention the survival of Kuwait and its people).
- Sanctions tend to be easier to introduce than lift, whether it is established through a UN Security Council resolution or a law passed by Congress.
- "Sanctions fatigue" tends to settle in over time, and as it does, international compliance tends to diminish. In part this is because the issue that led to sanctions loses its emotional impact. International support for sustaining sanctions fades as the cumulative cost of maintaining the sanctions mounts. Concerns over the humanitarian impact of sanctions also weakens resolve.

The United States leads the list of countries which use sanctions as an instrument of foreign policy. The American society and policy community

have debated this issue for decades. A general consensus has emerged in the United States that sanctions should be carefully used and the following points should be taken into account.

- Economic sanctions are a serious instrument of foreign policy and should be employed only after consideration no less rigorous than what would precede any other form of intervention, including the use of military force.
- Multilateral support for economic sanctions normally should constitute a prerequisite for their introduction by the United States.
- Secondary sanctions or boycotts are not a desirable means of bringing about multilateral support for sanctions and should be avoided.
- Economic sanctions should focus to the extent possible on those responsible for the offending behaviour.
- Sanctions should not be used to hold major or complex bilateral relationships hostage to a single issue or set of concerns.
- Humanitarian exceptions should be included as part of any comprehensive sanctions.
- All sanctions embedded in legislation should provide for presidential discretion in the form of a waiver authority.
- US intelligence capabilities must be reoriented to meet the demands created by sanctions policy.
- Any Sanction should be the subject to an annual impact statement.

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