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IRAQI POWER AND U.S. SECURITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Stephen C. Pelletiere
Douglas V. Johnson II
Leif R. Rosenberger



Strategic Studies Institute
U.S. Army War College

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**Stephen C. Pelletiere
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FOREWORD

The authors of this report look at the last campaign of the Iran-Iraq War and show how the Iraqis were able to turn that war around, inflicting a crushing defeat on the Iranians. As a result of their victory the Iraqis were able to set themselves up as the pre-eminent Arab military power in the Middle East. The authors go on to explain how the emergence of Iraq as a formidable power has affected the balance of power in the region, particularly addressing the tense relations between the newly powerful Iraq and Israel. They conclude with recommendations for U.S. policy makers and military commanders for dealing with Iraq.

This report should be a useful guide not only for specialists in the Middle East but also for any officer interested in the operational art and the relation of the military to civilian policy making.



KARL W. ROBINSON
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SUMMARY

This report is an examination of the Iraqi defeat of Iran in the 8-year-long Iran-Iraq war and the implications of that outcome on future U.S. Middle East policy. It concludes that Iraq's achievement in forcing Iran to accept a truce represents an authentic victory. The victory was attained because the Iraqis planned for and successfully executed complicated, large scale military operations and shrewdly managed their resources. Claims that they won simply by using massive amounts of chemical weapons cannot be substantiated.

Iraq's success was facilitated by the collapse of Iranian civilian morale. The collapse, however, was not entirely fortuitous. Iraq's breakthrough in developing long-range missiles opened the way to strategic bombardment of the Iranian capital, which in turn produced the collapse.

The report further concludes that—contrary to general belief—Iraq's rulers enjoy significant popular support. The authors base this conclusion on the Ba'athists' ability to order a general call-up during what was perhaps the darkest period of the war. The willingness of the population to comply with the regime's order in effect confirmed its legitimacy.

In the specific sphere of military operations, the study concludes that a cadre of genuinely competent professional officers exists within the Iraqi military. This group is fully capable of keeping pace with the latest innovations in weapons technology. The officer corps understands and is committed to the conduct of combined arms operations to include the integration of chemical weapons. It commands soldiers who, because of their relatively high education level, are able to carry out such operations.

The authors believe that the future of the Iraqi military will be conditioned by the performance of the economy. Iraq is a

potentially wealthy country with huge reserves of oil, a highly trained work force, and a manageable population. Nonetheless, it went deeply into debt to defeat Iran. Its debts must now be paid, and the regime is striving with all its energies to reach accommodation with its creditors. For the foreseeable future, debt repayment will fully occupy the regime; it will have neither the will, nor the resources to go to war. In addition, although the regime claims that it is in the process of developing a national arms industry, the authors do not believe that it has the resources for this at present.

Iraq's leaders see their country as beleaguered. On one side is Iran, which almost certainly will seek revenge for its humiliating defeat. This will take time, however; at present Tehran is militarily prostrate. The Ba'thists will need to keep a close watch on the Eastern Front, but in the near to midterm they seem secure from that quarter.

To the north is Syria, which, like Iran, does not pose a serious immediate threat. Because of their Lebanon involvement the Syrians are currently too preoccupied to threaten anyone. Still, the Syrians and Iraqis are implacable foes, and here, too, the Iraqis dare not totally let down their guard.

The real threat, as the Ba'thists perceive it, is Israel. The Israelis have been impressed with Iraq's victory, which they did not anticipate. Moreover, the development of long-range missiles by Baghdad somewhat offsets Israel's previous advantage in these weapons. There is no doubt that Tel Aviv will try to maintain superiority over Iraq by developing newer, more lethal arms, and there is even the possibility that it will seek to wreck Iraq's bid for technological parity by destroying Iraqi missile sites and research facilities. The report concludes that any such pre-emptive attack on Iraq by Israel would be a most dangerous gambit, and could precipitate a major war in which U.S. interests would be jeopardized.

Given this high degree of tension, Washington needs to decide whether its present policy towards Iraq is well judged.

The policy certainly renders comfort to the Israelis, but it could provoke bitter consequences from Baghdad. A divisive quarrel between the two countries could impinge on U.S. security in the Persian Gulf, and that—given the growing scarcity of oil in the 1990s—could impose serious hardship on the American public.

The report also suggests that the United States needs to give more attention to Soviet moves in the Gulf. Some of Moscow's recent maneuvers have been quite adroit. Unlike Washington, Moscow is now on fairly good terms with every one of the Gulf states.

The report concludes with several recommendations addressed to U.S. policy makers and to military leaders. It reemphasizes the importance of preserving stability in the Persian Gulf, and asserts that this is—and rightly should be—the main aim of U.S. Middle East policy. In line with this we see it as essential that the United States improve relations with Iraq, the most powerful state in the Gulf.

In the military sphere, it is urgent that we reassess our Middle East strategy. There is, we conclude, the possibility of a major military blowup, in which case the United States would almost certainly have to intervene to restore stability, particularly if there is a cutoff of oil to the West. We should ask ourselves whether we are prepared for such action—in our view we are not. The style of warfare in the Middle East has changed, radically, which means that, to perform competently, our forces must be reconfigured, retrained and reequipped.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background. After 8 years of combat, the end of the Iran-Iraq War came with astonishing suddenness. Commencing in April 1988, Iraq unleashed a blitzkrieg that virtually wiped out Iran's army. Five major battles were fought between April and August 1988, and in each the Iranians were badly beaten (see Figure 5). In the first battle, 17-18 April, the Iraqis retook the Al Faw peninsula which they had lost to Iran in 1986. The second battle saw Iran surrender land around the pressure point of Basrah. The Iranians had seized this territory in 1987 after a desperate campaign that went on for over 3 weeks and cost them some 70,000 casualties.¹ The Iraqis took it back in 7 hours. One month later the Iraqis struck at Majnoon, the site of one of the Middle East's largest undeveloped oil fields.² The Iranians occupied this site in 1984, and had threatened to pump it dry to exact reparations from Iraq for having started the war. Again the Iraqis retook it in a matter of hours. The fourth battle occurred in the vicinity of Dehloran and effectively removed any remaining threat toward Baghdad. In the fifth and final battle the Iraqis drove some 40 miles into Iran to Qasr-e Sherin/Kermanshah. Iraq's military commanders apparently were prepared to penetrate farther, but were recalled by the civilian leadership. After the recall the war was essentially ended. Several minor engagements followed, but on July 18, 1988, Khomeini drank the "poison cup" of defeat and agreed to a truce.

The defeat for the Iranians was harsh. At the beginning of 1988 they had been offered favorable peace terms by Iraq's President Saddam Husayn and had spurned them, claiming that they would crush Iraq and put Saddam on trial as a war criminal.³ After this, they boasted, they would dismantle the regime of the Ba'athists⁴ and set up an Islamic Republic to rule in its place.

Iran is now militarily prostrate. Its military machine collapsed after four months of battering by the Iraqis (see Table 1 on force comparison). It now has almost no frontline artillery and only a hundred or so operational tanks.⁵ Fleeing Iranian units abandoned so much equipment in the last days of combat that Iraq has been able to give away captured weapons to its allies.⁶ Iran's casualties in the final battles were low, but this apparently was because—unlike in earlier battles—the Iranian troops either fled or surrendered.⁷

Most galling to the Iranians was the loss of their precious land. In the closing days of the conflict, the Iraqis seized a strip of territory along the border, which to date they have refused to return.⁸ It does not seem likely that they will give this area back; they certainly will not do so under compulsion from the Iranians. According to western analysts, Iran can no longer defend itself, much less take on the Iraqis in another war. It will be another five years, observers believe, before Iran can recoup something of its former military strength.⁹

	Iraq	Iran
Total Armed Forces	1,000,000	604,500
Army	955,000	305,000*
Tanks	5,500	500
Reconnaissance Vehicles	600	100±
Armored Infantry Fighting Vehicles (BMP)	1,000	100±
Armored Personnel Carriers	7,100	500±
Towed Field Artillery Pieces	3,000	800±
Self-Propelled Field Artillery Pieces	500	140±
Multiple Rocket Launchers	200	Unknown

*Estimated to include approximately 250,000 conscripts.

Source: *The Military Balance, 1989-1990*, London: Brassey's, 1989, pp. 99-101.

Table 1. Comparative Ground Force Strengths at Ceasefire.

All of this adds up to a significant alteration of the Middle Eastern balance of power. Iraq is now the most powerful state in the Persian Gulf and one of the most powerful in the Middle East. (See Table 1.) It is being hailed as a regional

superpower,¹⁰ a considerable change from its prewar reputation as the "awkward squad" among Middle Eastern armies.

The Old Iraqis. Prior to the war the Iraqi Army's record was anything but distinguished. Its only experience had been acquired fighting Kurds in a decades old rebellion that it was unable to quell.¹¹ The military also saw action in the 4th Arab-Israeli War, but only briefly and with evident confusion.¹²

When the war with Iran flared, the Iraqi battlefield performance appeared to be incredibly inept. Badly beaten in its initial attempt to invade, it barely turned back a counterinvasion by the Iranians. For 6 years the Iraqis fought a war of purely static defense, refusing to attack, even when given the opportunity.

When, in April 1988, the Iraqis finally took the offense, most observers refused to accept that this was actually happening. It was assumed that the Iraqis would soon run out of steam or would fumble in some egregiously inept fashion.¹³ It seemed incredible that they could so quickly develop their offensive capabilities. When it became clear that the Iraqis would win, theories emerged to explain this extraordinary turn of events. For example, it was suggested that they had relied on chemical weapons and, in so doing, had overcome their enemy.¹⁴ Another theory was that they had received help from the Soviets or the Egyptians.¹⁵ Examination of the evidence behind these claims reveals that, by and large, it is unconvincing.

Assessment. Because the majority views of the Iraqis' victory were unconvincing, an investigation was conducted to determine how good the Iraqis are militarily, and whether Iraq poses a threat to U.S. security interests in the Middle East.

Research was concentrated on the last campaign of the war, when the Iraqis performed most effectively. The authors believe—after a thorough investigation of the last five battles—that we know how they managed to win. As a

consequence, we feel confident in assessing the Iraqis' overall military capability, and, along with this, in making some predictions about their Army's future role now that the war has ended.

The authors' conclusion is that the Iraqis are much better fighters than was formerly believed. They have matured over the course of 8 years of war with Iran. Although they are weak in some areas, the Iraqis are a force to be reckoned with.

Implications for the United States. U.S. post-war relations with Iraq have undergone a 180 degree shift. Throughout most of the conflict the United States was perceived to be pro-Iraqi, largely because an Iranian victory was assumed to be destabilizing for the entire region.¹⁶ Immediately after the war, however, a number of U.S. actions almost completely alienated Iraq. For example, in September 1988, the State Department accused the Iraqis of using poison gas against their Kurdish population in an attack that allegedly occurred after the war had ceased.¹⁷ Although the Iraqis denied this—and conclusive evidence on the attack was never produced—the Congress attempted to impose harsh economic sanctions against Baghdad.

Fortunately, some attempts were made to limit the damage, but subsequently other actions rekindled the hostility. The relationship now is extremely strained, and—to judge from public utterances of leading Iraqis—it would not take much to cause Iraq to terminate diplomatic relations with the United States.¹⁸

In acting against Iraq, we believe, the U.S. Congress demonstrated ignorance of changed conditions produced by the Iran-Iraq war. The Congressmen behaved as if Iraq were still an inconsequential, militarily weak power, when in fact that is no longer the case. Moreover, Iraq—because of its geographic location—is able to jeopardize interests that are absolutely vital to us; it is the preeminent power in the Persian Gulf, an area on which we are becoming increasingly dependent for our oil supply.

In December 1989, the United States passed what analysts have come to refer to as "the peril point," at which we imported more than 50 percent of our oil from overseas.¹⁹ Of this amount, 15 percent comes from the Gulf. The figure has been steadily rising and almost certainly will continue to do so. It does not seem sensible under such conditions to antagonize what is now the strongest power in so vital an area of the world. The authors cannot state this conclusion too forcefully, and, in the latter part of the study specify how they believe the United States can remedy some of the damage that has been done.

Report Organization. The report consists of seven chapters. Following this Introduction, Chapter 2 describes the state of the war in 1986, the year that Iraq decided to scrap its defensive orientation and go on the offensive. The authors examine the new strategy that the Iraqis devised (which they dubbed *Tawakalna ala Allah*),²⁰ and explain its implementation. The focus is on changes that the Iraqis made in their force structure that would permit them to take the offense.

Chapter 3 analyzes the battle tactics employed in the final campaign and evaluates the proficiency of the Iraqi commanders. It includes a discussion of what are viewed to be their weaknesses, and ends with a profile of the military's major features.

Chapter 4 deals with the uses to which the Iraqi military is likely to be put now that the war is over. Iraq, which is currently experiencing a severe financial crisis, will not be eager to go to war with anyone in the near term. At the same time, however, it has enemies who might provoke it into armed confrontations. Some possible danger areas are cited. The major threat to Iraq—the Iraqis feel—is Israel, and the study tries to show exactly how they perceive this threat.

Chapter 5 deals with U.S.-Iraq relations, and describes how they have gone sour in the aftermath of the war.

Chapter 6 contrasts recent Soviet advances in the Persian Gulf with American setbacks, and suggests that Moscow is outperforming us diplomatically.

The final chapter makes specific recommendations for U.S. policymakers and military leaders on dealing with Iraq.

Methodology. The reader should bear in mind that until at least May 1968, it was generally agreed by most Western observers that Iraq was going to fare badly in the war.²¹ At worst it would lose; at best it might achieve a stalemate. Thus, practically all opinion up to the eleventh hour was predicated on this gloomy assessment. This report, inasmuch as it challenges the conventional interpretation—albeit in hindsight—should be read as an alternate view. Like many earlier assessments, it draws primarily on raw intelligence. Unlike them, however, it reaches a quite different set of conclusions.

A great deal of the report is based on interviews with individuals who were either in Baghdad at the end of the war or arrived there immediately afterward and were therefore able to give insights into what had actually occurred. Among these were Americans, Europeans and Arabs. The authors also interviewed some Israelis,²² but were not able to interview any Iraqis because the strained relations between our two countries had temporarily interrupted contacts.

Finally, the team consulted periodicals and newspapers. There are sharp differences in the quality of these accounts. Both sides throughout the war restricted journalists and academics by either withholding information from them or distorting it for partisan purposes.²³ These sources must be interpreted with extreme care.

As with any study of this kind we proceed from a basic approach, assuming that nations have vital interests that they act to protect and to enhance, and that, in the international arena, everything is subordinated to this activity. Additionally, we make the following assumptions. Iraq will try to expand its

influence in the Middle East, with or without the concurrence of its neighbors. It will strive to defend itself by any means necessary against what it perceives as threats from those neighbors. And, finally, the current regime in Iran has been extremely weakened by the war, and could at any time collapse.

The report begins with a discussion of the Iranian capture of Al Faw in 1986, the act which, the authors believe, galvanized the Iraqis to make the bold changes in their military doctrine, which led to their ultimate victory in the war.

CHAPTER 2

THE TURNING POINT

Al Faw, 1986. In February 1986 the Iranians took Al Faw, a city on a peninsula in the northern Gulf. Once the site of a major oil facility, Al Faw had been practically destroyed in the first weeks of the war. At the time of Iran's occupation it was virtually abandoned. Iraqi forces acted quickly to counter the breakthrough. They set up blocking lines to the west and north of the occupied area. At the cost of quite considerable casualties (largely to Iraq's elite Republican Guards units) they stemmed the Iranian thrust, but were not able to do much more. Al Faw is honey-combed with defense works which were utilized by the Iranians to foil repeated Iraqi assaults. Thus a stalemate developed as the Iraqis kept up pressure on the peninsula, while the Iranians kept the besiegers at bay by resupplying themselves across hastily constructed pontoon bridges which spanned the Shatt al Arab. (See Figure 2.)

This situation was awkward for the Iraqis, but not a disaster. Al Faw occupies dead space in the Gulf, and up to this point in the war had been of no military significance. As long as the Iranians could be kept penned up there, their military effectiveness would be nil. Indeed, they could be left there for the duration of the conflict. Saddam, however, wanted them driven off the peninsula immediately, for at least two reasons.

He was personally embarrassed by the Iranians' seizure of Al Faw.²⁴ Since at least 1982 he had been insisting the Iraqis could win the war by merely holding the line against repeated Iranian invasions. Sooner or later, he maintained, Iran's leaders would realize that they could not prevail militarily, and would seek a peaceful solution. This strategy had considerable appeal for the Iraqi public since implicit in it was the aim of keeping casualties down. Other political considerations were involved, but from the standpoint of the

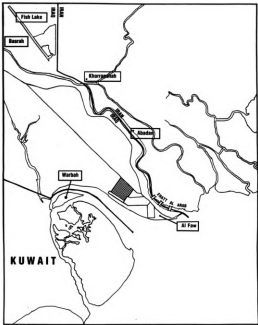


Figure 2. Al Faw.

Iraqi people the strategy's greatest attraction was that it promised a minimum of suffering.

This static defense strategy—as it came to be called—seemed sound for a time. Iraqi generals were able to turn back successive Iranian offensives, and, in the process, kill a fairly large number of the enemy who threw themselves futilely at the Iraqi line in the now notorious human wave attacks. (See Chapter 3)

But after Iran's capture of Al Faw in 1986, the static defense approach lost its appeal. Not only had the Iranians succeeded in capturing an Iraqi city—albeit an empty one—but also they had seized the initiative and promised to exploit this to gain other victories. Specifically, they swore to capture Iraq's second largest city, Basrah, within the year.²⁵ This was too serious a threat to be taken lightly; if Basrah fell, Iraq would most likely be forced to concede defeat. Iraq's inability to regain Al Faw spread a pall of gloom over Baghdad. Western observers in the capital reported that the normally stolid, unflappable Ba'athists were for the first time since 1982 looking sullen and morose.²⁶

A second factor was driving Saddam to recapture Al Faw. The war had wrecked Iraq's economy. Iraq had been funding itself since at least 1983 with borrowed cash—principally from its rich Arab neighbors. By 1986 an estimated \$20 billion had been received from the Saudis and Kuwaitis.²⁷

Iraq justified its borrowings by claiming to have held back the Iranian hordes, thus saving the Gulf monarchs from Shiite Fundamentalism—an effective propaganda line. Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, for all their vast wealth, lack formidable armies. Kuwait has a force of only 16,000 troops.²⁸ Saudi Arabia has a considerably larger army, but it is completely untested in battle. Thus neither was in a position to take on the "legions of Islam" perceived to be available to the Iranian army.²⁹

As long as Iraq appeared to be winning the war, the Gulf states were amenable to financing the effort. After Al Faw,

perceptions changed markedly. Iranian Revolutionary Guards were now positioned at a relatively short distance from Kuwait's capital, which rendered the Kuwaitis distinctly uneasy (and, indeed, within the year the Iranians began launching Silk Worm missiles from Al Faw at Kuwait City).³⁰ There was strong incentive for the Gulf monarchs to rethink their options—at least they might wish to hedge their bets by seeking conciliation with the Iranians—a step which would have undermined Iraq's war effort.³¹

Iraq also had a large non-Arab debt problem. Aid from the Gulf states was not enough to cover Iraq's expenses, and so it had borrowed from international banks as well. By 1986, Iraq owed Soviet, European and Japanese bankers nearly as much as it owed to the Arabs.³² Just before Al Faw's loss to Iran, Iraq had rescheduled these loans.³³ The bankers had agreed on the assumption that Iraq would survive the war and would then become a lucrative market for foreign investment—seemingly a safe bet since Iraq has the second highest proven reserves of oil in the world.³⁴

As had been the case with the Saudis and Kuwaitis, however, the loss of Al Faw caused uneasiness within the international banking community which now saw its investments jeopardized. Certainly the bankers would be unwilling to negotiate further rescheduling unless Iraq somehow recouped its loss.

For all these reasons Saddam felt the need to score a significant victory, yet when his army tried to push the Iranians off the peninsula they were frustrated. At the time of year that Iran had invaded, Al Faw was virtually under water. The Iraqis, as they sought to reach the enemy emplacements, were restricted to traversing three roadways, the only areas not submerged. Unable to stray off these roads, they presented ideal targets for Iranian gunners on the east bank of the Shatt.

Lieutenant General Maher Al Rashid, whom Saddam had tasked with the recapture, sought to protect his advance by laying down a wall of fire behind which his troops inched their

way forward.³⁶ Unfortunately for the Iraqis, the Iranians, using the Iraqi defense works inside Al Faw, withstood this barrage. In addition, the marshy terrain mitigated the effects of point-detonating artillery rounds.³⁶ After 3 weeks of this activity, Rashid called a halt.

Rashid might have been able to speed things up by having his men step out from behind the firewall and engage the Iranians hand-to-hand. This, however, was not an option. It would have meant high casualties, and the Ba'athists were extremely chary of sacrificing human lives. Aware that the Iranians outnumbered them three to one (over 45 million Iranians to around 16 million Iraqis), they had determined to husband their relatively small force, and refused to risk it in reckless fashion. Nevertheless, the dilemma they faced was acute—barring a change in tactics, the recapture effort was unlikely to succeed.

At this point, Saddam unexpectedly ordered the capture of Mehran, an Iranian city situated just over the international border on the central front. Like Al Faw, Mehran had been abandoned in the war. Taken by Iraq in the initial weeks of combat, it was surrendered in 1983, but not before the departing Iraqis had leveled it. The re-recapture was successfully effected and Saddam announced that Mehran would be held hostage for the return of Al Faw.³⁷ If Iran did not give up Al Faw, he proclaimed, Iraq would take other Iranian cities. The Mehran operation, he said, should be viewed as the start of a new Iraqi strategy—Iraq was going on the offensive. It would attack Iran all up and down the 730 mile frontier.

Saddam's announcement was unfortunate. Within a few days after the Iraqi seizure of Mehran, Iran counterattacked in force. The Iraqi garrison abandoned the town and the result was another public humiliation. Indeed, the loss of Mehran, coming on the heels of Al Faw's surrender, seemed to signal the collapse of Iraq's entire war effort.

This was probably one of the lower points in the war for the Iraqis. Had they perpetuated this string of disasters they would not have survived. Instead, the top leadership of the Party gathered in Baghdad to discuss the situation.³⁸ This marathon session went on for several days and out of it came the revised battle plan for the war.

The Extraordinary Congress. The Extraordinary Congress of the Ba'th met in July 1986, within days after the loss of Mehran. Details of the meeting are scanty—since all of the deliberations were conducted in secret—but from interviews and careful culling of documents the main lines of what took place can be reconstructed.³⁹

There appears to have been general recognition among the Ba'thist leaders that their existing strategy of static defense was not working and required drastic overhauls, if not complete abandonment. A significant battlefield victory was urgently needed to restore world confidence in the regime's ability to survive. The problem was where to find the personnel for this.

Under ordinary circumstances, troops already serving on the front at Basrah might have been co-opted. However, Iran had threatened to launch the decisive offensive of the war sometime within the year. Some 100,000 Iranians were massing in the area of the southern city.⁴⁰ Any depletion of its defense would expose it to capture.

What Iraq needed was a previously untapped manpower pool. In fact such a pool existed since Iraq had never drafted its college students, whom it regarded as its hope for the future. In the present emergency, however, the policy of continuing exemptions made little sense. The need to recoup from the Al Faw and Mehran debacles was absolutely imperative; unless Iraq recovered soon it would certainly perish. Unfortunately for the Ba'thist leadership, drafting the students was not an easy proposition. Having become accustomed to not serving, they might be indisposed to comply with a call-up. The last thing the Ba'thists wanted was an explosion of hostile youth.⁴¹

The Ba'thists appear to have hit upon an effective scheme for luring the youth into the service. In effect, they structured a situation in which this might actually appear to be an appealing prospect. Shortly after the Extraordinary Congress ended, the regime announced a further call-up for the regular army. Non-college men born in the years 1970 and 1944 were summoned.⁴² As can be seen from the ages of the draftees, there were very few Iraqis—outside of the students—who remained to be inducted.⁴³ Along with this, the regime ordered an increase in recruiting for the Popular Army. The Popular Army's modus operandi was to form press gangs which literally dragged men off the streets.⁴⁴ Although this tactic was abhorrent, the regime permitted it to go on, apparently because it was an efficient way to counter draft dodging. The regime in effect had ordered a mass mobilization, without formally declaring it. Having done so, it next began to turn the screws ever so subtly on the students.

The Ba'thists announced that schools would not reopen in the fall. Instead, the students would be required to attend summer camp where they would undergo basic military training. This training was presented as somewhat of a morale building exercise. It was felt, the regime's leaders said, that the students would profit from the physical exercise and discipline. The Ba'thists did not specify when the schools would reopen, creating the impression in the minds of the students that their deferments were about to be phased out. At this point the Ba'thists unveiled their snapper, so to speak. They announced that the army would accept volunteers for the Republican Guards, and that youths from anywhere in Iraq could serve—previously only young men from Tikrit, Saddam's hometown, were eligible.⁴⁵ In a country like Iraq, where practically all power is vested in the President, a Palace connection is extremely useful, and thus service in the Guards was an attractive proposition.⁴⁶

The move to reconstitute the Guards apparently was successful because, shortly thereafter, a phenomenal growth was seen in its size.⁴⁷ (See Table 2.) There were only three Guard brigades when Al Faw fell, but by April 1988, when the

Year	ManX100	Corps HQ	Armd Divs	Inf Mtn Divs	Mech Mtr Divs	Rep Gd Bde/Div	SF Bde	Res
1973	102		1	4	1			?
1980	200	3	4	4	4	1/	2	250K?
1981	210	3	4	4	4	1/	3	250K?
1982	300	4	6	4	3	1/	3	?
1983	475	4	6	6	4	2/	3	?
1984	600	4	6	9	5	2/	3	?
1985	?	4	6	9	5	4/	6	?
1986	800	7	5	10	3	5/	6	?
1987	955	7	5	30	3	5/	6	?
1988	1035	7	7	39	*	/4	20/1 Mar**	?
1989	1000	7	7	42	*	6/	20+	850K

NOTES:

This table displays the growth of the Iraqi ground forces although it portrays only a best estimate. They have a three brigade per division structure on paper, but, operationally, one division headquarters may control more brigades. The Republican Guard structure is even more flexible.

*The seven armored divisions figure represents a combination of armored and mechanized division equivalents. The decline in armored divisions from six to five in 1986 probably reflects a rearrangement of armored and mechanized brigades rather than the destruction of divisions although the Iraqis suffered enough casualties in the attempt to recapture Al Faw to raise that possibility.

**The Special Forces (SF) and Marine (Mar) brigades are actually believed to be under Republican Guard control which effectively raises the total Republican Guard structure to about 25 Bdes.

Source: *The Military Balance* for the appropriate year.

Table 2: Growth of Iraqi Military Force Structure.

Iraqis retook the peninsula, that number had swelled to twenty-five. It appears that the Ba'athists had correctly gauged the psychology of Iraqi youth. Faced with what appeared to be the certainty of military service, many elected to get the best deal that they could. By signing up for the Guards they received what were felt to be worthwhile rewards.⁴⁸ The campaign to expand the Guards, in our view, was one of the more adroitly managed operations of the war. The Ba'athists could easily have blundered and the whole affair would then have miscarried. Moreover, a failure at this critical juncture might have had the most far reaching adverse consequences. Instead the plan was a political and eventually a military success. The students who did not elect to join the Guards reported for their summer training, in the process of which many more were persuaded to join the Guards. It appears that the ultimate mission of the Guards was closely held at this time; it was not generally known that it would become the spearhead of the campaign to end the war.⁴⁹

Recruiting college students resolved another problem for the military, and that was how to raise morale. The Ba'athists wanted men who would wrest the initiative from the Iranians. This would take some doing, since the enemy was riding the crest of what appeared to be a great victory. Iran's Revolutionary Guards, the most fanatical element of the Islamic Revolution, were openly boasting that they would crush the Iraqis and then march to Jerusalem. To counter fanaticism of this sort, aggressive spirits were needed. One could not rely on draftees for this because they had been pressured to serve and were unlikely to be highly motivated or aggressive.

Volunteers were also preferable to soldiers already serving in the army for another reason. Men at the front had already been conditioned by the static defense strategy. That is to say, they had become overly cautious and unwilling to commit themselves to risk-taking. Getting such individuals to take the offensive would require extensive mental reconditioning.

It is important to realize the breadth of influence that static defense had over the lives of all the Iraqis. The strategy did

not merely call for holding the line on the battlefield. It was much more than that. Basically it fostered an attitude that the war was an unpleasant fact that the average Iraqi need not confront. The regime did everything that it could to eradicate all thought of the war from the public's consciousness.⁵⁰ In the first 5 years of the fighting it promoted guns and butter, a policy whereby living standards were kept artificially high.⁵¹ This defused much popular resentment against the regime for having initiated the war, and also caused enormous debts, which Iraq is still trying to pay off.

The regime also went to extraordinary lengths to keep the war away from Baghdad. Visitors to the capital were struck by the city's apparent untroubled calm; the conflict seemed not to have affected it. Except for the large numbers of uniforms on the streets, it was hard to tell that there was a war going on.⁵² All this was part of a deliberate policy. It is beyond the scope of this report to explore the psychology of "static defense." The authors point out, however, that static defense made the switch to the offense a tremendously difficult proposition. The Ba'athists' problem essentially was to get the nation to go to war in the midst of war. This dilemma is fundamental to the analysis in Chapter 3, because it will explain moves that the Ba'athists made which might otherwise appear inexplicable.

The reconstitution of the Guards was the first concrete step that the regime took to go on the offensive. It was not, however, the sort of tool that the generals could exploit immediately. The young men recruited into the Guards had to undergo considerable training, since their purpose would be offensive, inherently a more difficult task than the defensive tasks of the Regular Army.⁵³ In the meantime the regime moved on other fronts to change the direction of the war. This included stepping up the air war against Iranian civilian targets and economic infrastructure.

The Air War. Throughout most of the war Iraq's use of airpower against economic targets was erratic at best. At regular intervals Iraq's air force would hit facilities inside Iran, but never on a sustained basis. Various explanations were

offered for this hesitancy.⁵⁴ One, generally overlooked, may have been the deciding influence. In previous Middle East conflicts it had not generally been the practice to destroy an enemy's economic base. To be sure the Iranians had gone after the Iraqis' economic infrastructure in the first weeks of the war, but afterward attacks on economic targets had by-and-large been avoided.

Infrastructure is the developing nations' hedge against foreign domination. To build a steel mill or an oil refinery is, for Middle Eastern peoples, a way of asserting autonomy. Correspondingly, when developing countries start destroying each other's economic facilities, they can be said to be aiding the imperialist powers. Hence, in the minds of the Middle Easterners, the targeting of economic infrastructure is shunned.

In the specific case of Iraq, there was an additional inhibition—Baghdad almost certainly was being pressured by its allies not to go after these targets. The Iranians had threatened to retaliate against Saudi Arabia and Kuwait for any such damage done by Iraq.⁵⁵ There seems to have been a condition tied to the monarchs' aid: they paid as long as Iraq observed certain restraints; chief among them was to go easy on Iran's infrastructure.

At the same time Washington appears to have been pressuring Iraq on this same point. Throughout the war, the United States feared that Iran might "go over to the Soviet camp."⁵⁶ The quickest way to bring this about, it was felt, was to confront the Iranians with the specter of defeat, as they would then embrace the Soviets in exchange for military and economic assistance. Washington believed that the destruction of Iran's infrastructure would most likely have this result.

Until the summer of 1986, the Iraqis were generally amenable to cooperating with the United States, since there were tangible payoffs: Washington appeared to be working to bring the war to a close. Then, with the revelation of "Irangate,"

the atmosphere changed. Washington, it seemed, had all along been trafficking in arms with the Iranians. Initially Iraq reacted to these revelations with restraint. A few Ba'hist leaders, traditionally hostile to Washington, made bitter pronouncements some time after the fact,⁵⁷ but officially Iraq took no action.

At the same time, the Iraqis quite clearly were shocked. The revelations undercut their whole strategy for bringing about a negotiated truce. In order for their scheme to work, there had to be individuals highly placed in the Iranian government who would be willing to end the war short of a complete military victory—a peace party, in other words. The leader of the peace faction—as the Iraqis believed—was Hashemi Rafsanjani. When Irangate revealed Rafsanjani as the principal negotiator for arms, the Peace Party Theory collapsed. This provided an opportunity for hawkish elements within the Ba'ih to come forward—men like Deputy Premier Taha Yasin Ramadan who believed that to end the war Iraq would have to inflict the greatest possible suffering on the Iranian people.⁵⁸ The hawks apparently could count as allies Iraq's air force commanders, who were unhappy that their branch of the service was, as they saw it, being underused.⁵⁹ They agreed with the hawks that, if there was no peace party, no reason existed not to target Iran's economy. In effect, the airmen and hawks were advocating total war. This is what ultimately sealed the fate of "static defense." Once the Ba'hist leadership determined that a peace party did not exist, they opted for total war. The combined diplomatic efforts of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the United States might have been able to restrain the Ba'hist from taking this step, but after Irangate their influence on Iraqi policy was dramatically reduced.

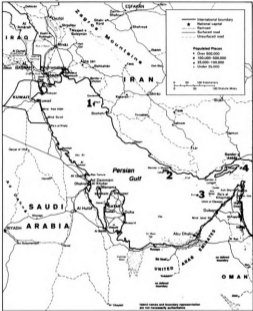
Slowly the Iraqis put together a strategy of striking at key Iranian economic targets. They hit at oil refineries, hydroelectric sites and power stations. The new aggressive air campaign commenced in the fall of 1986 with raids on an Iranian refinery at Isfahan, and the oil loading terminals of Sirri and Kharg Island.⁶⁰ Air activity broke off in early 1987, as the Iraqis were busy repelling Iran's Karbala V offensive against

Basrah. Once that offensive ground down, however, the air raids recommenced—only to cease anew in May 1987 after an Iraqi pilot accidentally fired an Exocet missile into a U.S. frigate.⁶¹ In late September 1987, Iraq launched its longest sustained air attacks against Iranian economic targets.⁶² These began with a raid on Iran's Tabriz oil refinery; the Iraqis wiped out one quarter of Iran's internal oil supply in a single afternoon.⁶³ The air force had also perfected the art of midair refueling and so began going after sites previously considered too remote to be safely targeted, such as Lavan and Larak terminals at the mouth of the Persian Gulf.⁶⁴ (See Figure 3.) By the end of 1987, Iranian fuel exports had fallen to 800,000 barrels a day, down from 1,300,000.⁶⁵ This was barely sufficient to run the country, let alone finance the war. Iranians felt the effects of the air war in the marketplace, where rationing of consumer goods increased. In addition, there were frequent failures of the nation's power supply due to the bombings; and in the midst of winter, Iran was running out of benzene.⁶⁶

While all this was going on, Iran was trying to conduct a major recruiting drive. Because of its huge losses in the ill-fated Karbala V offensive, this was not going well.⁶⁷ The destruction of Iranian economic facilities, and the consequent hardships this imposed, added to the popular resentment and large numbers of Iranian males resorted to draft dodging to escape the military.

Ordinarily, such action would have brought censure from the mullahs. But in this instance many of these were motivated to resist also. Each community in Iran throughout the war was expected to victual its own local recruits at the front. With the economy deteriorating at a rapid pace, this became a great hardship. As a consequence many mullahs refused to participate in the recruitment drives, which practically ensured their failure.⁶⁸ In this way, we may say that the bombardment affected the recapture of Al Faw. Instead of the 30,000 to 50,000 troops generally garrisoned there, in the spring of 1988 that number had fallen to roughly 15,000—largely due to the failure of Iran to obtain volunteers.⁶⁹

Persian Gulf Region



- 1. KHARK
- 2. LAVAN
- 3. SIRRI
- 4. LARAK

Figure 3. Iraqi Air Strikes in the Gulf.

There were several variables that eventually ensured the success of the *Tawakalna ala Allah* campaign. Buildup of the Republican Guards was one, since this gave the Iraqis an effective strike force with which to carry out the operation. Iraq's air attacks on Iran's economy were another, since this led to a breakdown of Iran's economy which, in turn, produced a falloff in volunteers. The last major factor impinging on the Al Faw recapture was the initiation of long-range missile attacks by Iraq against Iran.

The Missile War. In the last week of February 1988, Baghdad, for the first time in the war, successfully targeted Tehran with long-range missiles. It appears that Iraqi scientists had succeeded in modifying the warhead of their Scud B missiles thereby extending their effective range.⁷⁰ Few had anticipated that Iraq possessed this capability which effectively tipped the balance of power in the war in its favor.

Iran had been the first, in 1985, to attack civilian targets with Scuds when it rocketed Baghdad. Iraq was prevented from responding in kind—even though it possessed such missiles—because of its geography. Iraqi territory is located too great a distance from Tehran to hit it with unmodified Scuds. The missile attacks on Iran apparently were the last straw for Iranians who were becoming estranged from their government. As the Iraqi Scuds rained on Tehran, Iranians looked to the clerics to retaliate. This the clerics could not do. Iran had only a limited supply of Scuds, and although it attempted for a time to reply tit-for-tat with the Iraqis, it soon gave up on this. Rafsanjani's only practical advice to the people was to avoid places where the missiles might land.⁷¹ At this point many Iranians were led to conclude their leadership was bankrupt.

In Iraq, the increased rocket attacks had exactly the opposite effect. The Iraqis perceived that they at last had acquired a weapon with which to set the pace of the war.⁷² Between February and late April, Iraq fired over 120 missiles into Tehran, Isfahan, and even into the Shias' holy city of Qom; no place in Iran apparently was safe from missile attack. Ultimately this affected the morale of the frontline troops.

Previously, they had served in confidence that their loved ones at home were protected. Now, as they began to receive word of destruction at home, many began to desert.

By April 1988—when the Al Faw offensive was launched—the military postures of Iran and Iraq had been reversed. The Iranians—after the capture of Al Faw in 1986—had been elated by the prospect of achieving an early defeat over Iraq, and now their hopes had been dashed. Morale was probably at the lowest point in the war. Conversely Iraq had rallied after its disastrous setback and was growing confident that it could achieve victory.

CHAPTER 3

TAWAKALNA ALA ALLAH: STRATEGY AND TACTICS

Background. Early in the morning of April 17, 1988, the Iraqi Army's VII Corps and major elements of the Republican Guard charged out of their positions around the Al Faw peninsula and into the Iranian lines with a force that shattered the Iranian defenses. The battle, which was expected to have taken perhaps 5 days, was over in 36 hours and was a complete victory for Iraq.⁷³

This was the start of a campaign the Iraqis dubbed *Tawakalna ala Allah*.⁷⁴ The campaign consisted of five major battles, accompanied by lesser engagements which ranged over the whole 730 miles of the Iraq-Iran frontier. *Tawakalna ala Allah* lasted 4 months and resulted in the absolute destruction of Iran's military machine.

A reprise of the main five battles, and an evaluation of the Iraqi military's strategy and tactics in the overall campaign follows, plus comments on other aspects of the Iraqis' performance in the closing days of the war.

Al Faw. Of the five main battles (Al Faw, Fish Lake/Shalemcha, Majnoon, Dehloran/Zubaidat, Qasr-e-Sherin/Kermanshah) (Figure 5), the first was the most stunning and complex. The Al Faw attack was a two pronged operation. There was a thrust by elements of the regular army (VII Corps) through palm groves that skirt the Shatt al Arab (see Figure 4). Coincident with this was an attack by the Republican Guards along the Khor Abdullah Channel. With the two main thrusts came amphibious landings behind the Iranian lines.⁷⁵

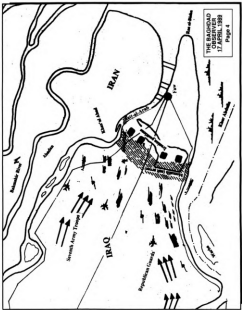


Figure 4. Battle of Al Faw.

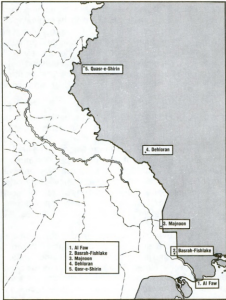


Figure 5. Battles of the Last Campaign.

Surprise and deception were essential to the success of the initial battle. Between September 22, 1980, and April 17, 1988, Iraq had undertaken few large scale offensive actions. Following their Soviet training, these were preceded by heavy, prolonged artillery preparations. On the morning of April 17, the artillery preparation lasted only one hour. By cutting short the preparation time the Iraqis appear to have caught the Iranians off guard. It was, nevertheless, a stunning barrage timed to hit as the Iranians were observing the beginning of the religious observance of Ramadan. The Iraqis also staged visits to the northern theater by Saddam and the Iraqi Minister of Defense in the days just preceding the offensive. This appears to have been meant to convince the Iranians that Iraq was preparing an operation in the far north. Since the Iranians were active in the northern theater, the deception led their expectations perfectly.⁷⁶

One of the most striking aspects of the battle was the huge numbers of Iraqi troops employed. An estimated 15,000 Iranians were attacked by the bulk of the Iraqi Seventh Corps and major elements of the Republican Guards. The Iraqi force may have totalled upwards of 200,000 troops in the immediate operational area.⁷⁷ In support of the massive number of soldiers, Iraq's air force was uncharacteristically committed in force. The effectiveness of the Iraqi Army's attack helicopters was so great that the Iranians immediately charged that the United States had intervened with its helicopter forces.⁷⁸

Despite this overkill, the Iranians did not immediately succumb. Although surprised, the Iranians offered stiff resistance initially and in defense of the command bunker, but were quickly overwhelmed. This resistance must be cited as evidence in refutation of the oft repeated allegation of massive use of chemicals. Iraq, consistently sensitive to casualties, apparently wanted the Iranians to flee, as it left one pontoon bridge over the Shatt untouched, across which the Iranians ultimately rushed in large numbers.⁷⁹ Evidence of this flight was dramatically demonstrated on Baghdad public television which showed gun-camera footage of Iraqi military action to

the viewing public, which further argues against the massive chemical use hypothesis.

Casualties in the battle were comparatively light for an attack of this scope. Iraq lost probably only a few hundred killed. Iran lost more, but not a great deal more because of the Iranians' precipitous flight.⁸⁰ No attempt was made by the Iraqis to pursue the Iranians onto the east bank of the Shatt. Instead they mopped up pockets of resistance and invited in the press.

It is significant what the Iraqis *did not* do next. There was no great celebration, no excessive propagandizing over the great victory. Instead, in a businesslike fashion which is becoming characteristic of this army, they moved to mock battles over similar terrain to that of their next objective—the Fish Lake/Shalemcha area, and began to train intensively for the next engagement.⁸¹ The fact that the Iraqi army moved methodically, at one month intervals, as the ground dried and became suitable for armored operations, and only after intensive, if quick, training, seems to confirm that the army was following a well thought out plan.

Fish Lake. The battle began at 0930 on May 25, 1988, and was over by 1800. There was no subtlety in this attack. It was a straight ahead, crushing affair likely designed to impress Iranians and Iraqis alike with the invincibility of this new army. The Iraqis rolled over the enemy with a mechanized force, including several thousand tanks, against which the Iranians had only a hundred tanks, if that. The attack was preceded by a massive artillery preparation. At the end of this deluge the Iraqi units moved forward, grinding out Iranian resistance.⁸² Again the huge disparity in numbers seems to have tipped the balance in Iraq's favor.

Within 5 hours the Iranians were in full flight.⁸³ In a futile effort to avert disaster, on June 2, Khomeini appointed Hojatoleslam Hashemi Rafsanjani commander of the Iranian armed forces. Rafsanjani's first act was to order a counterattack in the Shalemcha area.⁸⁴ Iran's counterthrust

had some initial success, but the Iraqi juggernaut was not long delayed and it was a matter of hours before the Iranians were once more in retreat.⁸⁵ In the end the Iraqis captured several hundred Iranians and seized large stocks of weapons. Casualties were light on both sides. Again, because of the nature of the attack, the Iranians were able to flee and relatively few were killed or captured.

Majnoon. The third battle was for the Majnoon islands. There the tactical approach showed more subtlety. While the Republican Guards attacked to clear the two islands, III Corps swept around behind the islands, protecting the Republican Guards' east flank and severing the Iranian defenders' links to the dry mainland.⁸⁶ Initial reports reflected capture of 2,115 prisoners of war⁸⁷ and other indicators of a complete collapse of Iranian morale. In addition, large quantities of equipment were captured, much of it abandoned. Again overkill was a major factor. Sun Tzu cautioned that huge numbers can become an embarrassment; Clausewitz, on the other hand, recommended—in a theoretical context to be sure—the maximum possible.⁸⁸ Here, with adequate maneuver space and good command and control, Clausewitz would appear vindicated. As in the two previous battles, Iraqi troops outnumbered the Iranians by an enormous margin, probably as high as 20 to 1.

Dehloran/Zubladat. The Iraqi Army's IV Corps and Republican guards attacked at 0715, July 12, 1988, and completed the decimation of the Iranian forces facing them by 1100.⁸⁹ This battle resulted in a 45 km penetration along a 130 km front clearly shattering any remaining Iranian forces. Massive quantities of equipment were captured, requiring four days to evacuate. The Iraqis then withdrew declaring they had no territorial ambitions.⁹⁰

Qasr-e-Sherin/Kermanshah. The fifth and last major engagement actually took place after the ceasefire was declared. It was a deep penetration raid, designed to send a strong message to the Iranian leadership that their situation was hopeless. The Iraqi Army smashed across the border

where it had 8 years earlier at Qasr-e-Sherin and Sar-e-Pol Zahab. After advancing quickly toward Kerend, some 40 miles inside Iran, the National Liberation Army, the *Mujahidin-al-Khalq*, was launched toward Kermanshah. It penetrated as far as Islamabad (another 20 miles) and held that town for 72 hours, systematically looting all Iranian equipment in the area. The National Liberation Army was then abandoned by the Iraqi Army and Air Force and was destroyed as a fighting force by a last gasp Iranian mobilization in the region.⁹¹

Evaluation. Because of the secrecy that surrounds everything in Iraq it is impossible to make definitive judgments about the Iraqi tactics. Nonetheless there are certain key questions that can—and indeed must—be addressed. For example:

- *Was Tawakalna ala Allah conceived as a Grand Design?*

It does seem that the Iraqis planned the campaign ahead of time, as indicated by the several references to training on full-scale terrain models, actions which take considerable time to develop and prepare.⁹²

The accelerated buildup of Republican Guard troops also argues for a Grand Design Theory, indicating that the Guard was expanded and trained specifically for these final battles. It played prominent roles in each of them. Table 2 shows the growth of the Iraqi army during the war and reflects a spurt of growth in 1988 which was accomplished in fact between 1986 and 1988. Other evidence is the fact that the battles came one month apart; also they were fought at points farther and farther north along the border. As the weather became hotter, the ground dried sufficiently to facilitate the Iraqi forte in armored operations; then, as it became too hot in the extreme south, the Iraqis moved progressively north to fight in cooler areas. Finally there is the Iraqis' own claim that this was all conceived as a single large campaign. The one factor that casts doubt on this theory is the individual naming of the campaign to

recapture Al Faw. This operation bore the title in public broadcasts of "Blessed Ramadan." All other operations were referred to as phases of the *Tawakalna ala Allah* campaign. The authors speculate that Al Faw was indeed the first phase of the larger campaign, but not announced as such. This was done in order not to signal a larger campaign to the Iranians and also to preclude raising Iraqi expectations too highly before success was assured.⁹³

- *Did the Iraqis receive help planning this campaign?*

The Soviets could have helped as could the Egyptians, or the Jordanians. In the Soviet case, however, it is doubtful. The Soviets had just refused to support a United Nations' proposal to apply sanctions against Iran, which Iraq very much wanted (see Chapter 6), and as a consequence, at the time of the final campaign, Iraqi-Soviet relations were strained. The Egyptians and Jordanians were undoubtedly present as advisors, but we have strong reasons for believing that their advice was not critical or solicited. In any event, we do not believe that any foreign mercenaries were employed by the Iraqis.

- *Why did the Iraqis commit such large numbers of troops?*

In every instance the Iraqis used four men when they might have gotten by with one. They also used unusually large numbers of tanks at Fish Lake and Majnoon, where they also fired unusually long artillery preparations.

This probably goes back to the 1986 Congress of the Ba'th (see Chapter 2). Most certainly a major portion of the debate that went on at the Congress involved how to keep casualties down. That issue appears to have been a key consideration throughout the war and goes a long way toward explaining the generally passive Iraqi tactical behavior. It is unlikely that the Ba'thists ever seriously contemplated being prodigal with their troops, i.e., taking risks with them. The authors believe that overkill was resorted to as a way of lowering casualties: by overwhelming the enemy the Iraqis hoped to reduce the loss

rate. We also have to keep in mind that when the Iraqis started planning *Tawakalna ala Allah*, after the July 1986 Congress, Iran did not have a recruitment problem. In the 1986-87 timeframe Iran recruited some 200,000 men to storm Basrah. Recruiting did not fall off until the following year, after Iraqi planning was well along.

- *How were the Iraqis able to outperform the Iranians, after behaving so timorously in the past?*

The authors believe that the Iraqis' performance in the first half of the war has been unfairly denigrated. The Iraqis suffered from severe handicaps going into the war, but by 1986 many of these were being remedied.

For example, at the start of the war, the civilian leaders kept a tight rein on the military. The civilians, who did not want total war, refused to surrender control over battlefield operations to the officers, fearing that they would expand the war out of control. An examination of Iraq's performance in the initial weeks of the war seems to prove this. Iraq's military behaved as if it were on strings, manipulated by the civilians back in Baghdad. Consistently, Iraqi units would move forward, seize an objective and stop, as though waiting to be told by Baghdad what to do next.³⁴ This restrained behavior proved extremely demoralizing. It confused the officers and almost broke the spirit of the men.³⁵

In addition, prior to 1980, Iraq had little experience with conventional war. Its only real previous experience had been fighting Kurds in the northern mountains. Anti-guerrilla operations are not the same as conventional war. Iraq saw some conventional-type combat in the 4th Arab-Israeli War in 1973; however, this experience was extremely limited.

Despite these limitations the Iraqis did not fare badly in the initial invasion of Iran. They managed to occupy the Iranian city of Khorramshar. Since 1948 there has been only one other city in the Middle East that was occupied despite resistance. The Iraqis also conducted an excellent campaign at Susangerd

in 1981. Here they drew an Iranian tank division into a trap and then destroyed it, a battle along the lines of Hannibal's famous victory at Cannae.⁹⁶ The Iraqis' performance in these two actions tells us that they had competent officers and brave troops. They only needed to be given the freedom to perform as they were capable.

After 1982, when the Iraqis fell back across the international border, Saddam conducted a wholesale purge of the military, and in the process many political hacks were cashiered from the Army.⁹⁷ After this, officers were more likely to be promoted for merit. This provided an officer corps able to command respect of the troops.

The repetitive dilution of the Iraqi Army through one expansion after another also had a negative effect.⁹⁸ Such expansions always reduce the competency of a force as the professional cadre is spread thinner and thinner. (Commanders of the American Expeditionary Forces in 1917 and 1918 would have been completely sympathetic with Iraqi problems.) While the Iranian force expanded as well, it was essentially a light infantry force while the Iraqi army was heavily mechanized with many sophisticated weapons systems, which had to be mastered. Because of the enormous buildup of troops, Iraqi officers also found themselves confronted with larger formations than they had been trained to handle. The first such spurt was from roughly 1973 to 1980. During this period the Iraqis engaged in an arms race with the Shah of Iran. Baghdad swore that it would match the Shah man-for-man, tank-for-tank. The second big spurt came after 1982, when the Iraqis realized that they were in for a long war and began to expand their forces to meet this threat. The final expansion came after 1986. (See Chapter 1 and Table 2.) Thus the army at least quadrupled between 1973 and 1988. The Iraqi commanders no sooner had accustomed themselves to handling units of one size, than they were forced to take over bigger ones. And, of course, the Iraqis were continually buying more and more sophisticated arms, which had to be integrated.

All of this experimentation went on during the static defense phase of the war, during which the Iraqi commanders developed innovative tactics and superior defense works.⁹⁹ Some of these innovations were quite impressive. For example, during this period they learned to neutralize the notorious human wave attacks by developing so-called killing zones. The Iraqis would wait for the Iranians to rush their line and then give way slowly. They would next lay concentrated artillery fire on the Iranians which effectively pinned them to the ground. Finally they would counterattack with heavy mechanized forces whose armor-protected firepower slaughtered the lightly armed Iranians.¹⁰⁰ Using this scheme, the Iraqis inflicted enormous casualties on Iranian forces, the basically defenseless Basij and lightly armed Pasdaran (Revolutionary Guards) in particular—20,000 in the February 22- March 2, 1984 Battle of Majnoon, and 15,000 in the 1985 Battle of Badr. In 1987, the Iraqis killed between 20,000 and 45,000 Iranians outside Basrah in the terrible "Karbala V" battle which lasted from January 9 to February 26.¹⁰¹

During the static defense phase, the Iraqis also built up elaborate defenses outside Basrah. In this undertaking, they employed the French Maginot concept. They established a series of defensive regions which were connected by earthen berms. Within the regions were numerous strong points. The Iraqis, however, outdid the French by making certain that this entire system was not only connected by an excellent road network¹⁰² and dispersed with ammunition dumps, but that it was backed up by a large, mobile counterattack force.¹⁰³ The armored and mechanized units of the regular army corps and the Republican Guard performed the counterattack role with efficiency and crushing impact.

- *Did the Iraqis use gas during the blitzkrieg and was that the decisive factor in their success?*

A major component of the Iraqi defensive doctrine which emerged during the static defense phase was the integration of chemical fires. It was apparent in 1982 that the Iraqis were not mentally or organizationally prepared to deal with the

Iranian "human wave" attacks. Given the initial success of the Iranian tactics, and combined with the unlimited nature of Iran's stated war aims, the Iraqis—in a manner that was militarily understandable—reached out for every weapon possible. Chemical weapons offered a nearly perfect solution to the problem posed by masses of lightly armed Basij and Pasdaran. When employed on the supporting artillery positions and assembly areas chemical weapons were singularly effective.¹⁰⁴ Thus, the integration of chemical fires became doctrine. The allegations of their massive use, however, during the 1988 campaign are suspect. Like the allegations of American helicopter support during the Al Faw operation, the Iranians were ready to claim almost anything to explain the utter collapse of their army. At no point in the campaign was the use of chemical weapons required, but there is likewise no reason to assume that a measure which had become doctrine would be avoided either. The authors believe that the Iraqis did use chemical fires in support of their offensive operations, but these were never any more decisive than the initial artillery preparation, the newly invigorated close air support, the masses of armor or the fact that the Iranians were already on the verge of collapse. Attributing Iraqi success solely to chemical weapons is inadequate and perhaps dangerously misleading. We would also like to stress that we have seen no convincing evidence that gas was used to recapture Al Faw; if it was used it was in connection with one of the four subsequent battles.

Overall Assessment. Our overall assessment of the Iraqis' military performance is that throughout the war they showed themselves to be expert problem solvers, and this is apparent in their handling of the static defense phase and the later move to the offense. Initially in the static defense phase, the Iraqis hunkered down and refused combat probably as a desperate measure. However, as the phase became protracted, they began to exploit the situation, in effect turning it into a laboratory exercise in which they gained hands-on experience. As their experience grew, they became more adept, but of equal importance, they trained a large portion of their officer

corps in offensive battle management. The authors view this as the key to the maturation of the army.

When they decided to take the offensive, the Iraqis correctly assessed that the major difficulty to be overcome was inertia (see Chapter 2). There were two keys to dealing with this problem. The first was realistic, intensive training, which was accomplished in part by using terrain very similar to the actual terrain of the attack.¹⁰⁵ The second key was exploitation of new fighting force built upon the traditions of the already offensively-minded Republican Guard Corps.¹⁰⁶ As this force was expanded, it received not only intensive training, but the best equipment. When the time came to employ the reconstituted Guards, no measure to insure success was withheld. The Al Faw operation reminds one of the program Marshall Petain resorted to following the 1917 mutinies of the French Army. Assuring the soldiers that their lives would no longer be wasted in futile assaults, he began a program of strictly limited offensive operations whose success was beyond doubt. Such an operation was the recapture of Al Faw. Force ratios cannot be determined with certainty, but estimates run in the range of 50 to 1 in manpower and only slightly less in tanks and artillery. The team believes that after the initial battle, Al Faw, the Iraqis perceived that the Iranian army had dwindled to a shell, hence their straight ahead attack at Fish Lake. The outstanding mystery, as we see it, is whether Al Faw was originally conceived as the kick off of an overall operation to end the war, or was a discrete event. The fact that newspaper and broadcast accounts refer to it as "Blessed Ramadan" with all subsequent operations designated as phases of *Tawakalna ala Allah* seems to us to be significant.¹⁰⁷ This would appear to support the contention that at the time of the Al Faw battle the Iraqis had not definitely made up their minds to seek a military solution to the war, but that after they perceived their enemy's weakness, they went ahead.

What Were Iraq's Weaknesses? When dealing with Iraqi weaknesses, the conclusions must be speculative since, as noted earlier, very little is known of the decisionmaking process that directed the transformation from defense to successful

offensive operations. The Iraqis can be formidable in defense, but we must also remember that their experience is against masses of fanatical light infantry which had limited artillery or armor support and almost no air support. That is not to discount their experience altogether, but it must be kept in mind. We have seen the Iraqis execute offensive operations, routinely supported by deep fires and integrated chemical fires. These have been executed as short jab counterattacks within a clear doctrinal framework. But we have also seen longer ranging offensive operations which penetrated to depths of 40 plus miles.¹⁰⁸ What we do not know about these deeper attacks is how far they might be pushed and sustained against a balanced enemy who had some capability in the air. We do not know how much mental flexibility the current officer corps has been able to develop. It seems fairly certain that the inflexibility seen in the early years of the war was a product of rigid central control probably aggravated by a promotion policy which had political reliability as its first criterion. Whether innovations made subsequent to 1982 have altered the mindsets of the Iraqi commanders, we do not know.

Conclusions from the Campaign. Military commanders (Iranian, Syrian, Israeli or whomever) assaying to combat the Iraqis would find themselves facing an opponent who is:

- Armor heavy, fielding large numbers of T-72 tanks which they would use in massed formations supported by equivalent numbers of accompanying AFVs.
- Rich in long-range field artillery and apt to take the Soviet approach to fire support, throwing in everything, e.g., stand-off helicopter rockets, tanks in the indirect fire mode, and probably some not-too-close air support.
- Employing large numbers of a variety of types of attack helicopters as hunter-killer groups as well as in the aforementioned fire support role.¹⁰⁹

- In possession of a very large, mostly modern air force which has shown itself capable of conducting deep interdiction and battlefield interdiction missions.
- Capable of, and doctrinally attuned to, employment of chemical weapons by all available means to include mortars, helicopter fire, rockets, aerial delivered bombs, and rockets and artillery. These chemical fires would routinely be integrated in defensive fire plans and might occasionally be employed in offensive situations. If used offensively, they would normally be fired on artillery positions, logistic facilities in-range, suspected assembly areas and any detected command posts.
- Capable of firing large quantities of Scud variants with conventional and possibly chemical warheads with moderate accuracy. Whereas none of these weapons were used in tactical roles during the Iraq-Iran War, there is no reason to assume that they would not be employed against the rear areas of any hostile force. Such weapons pose significant risks to naval forces conducting off-loading operations at some port facility and would be likewise useful against almost any airfield within range.
- Capable of tenacious defense of their homeland and well practiced at the tactical level with intricate defensive systems.
- Capable of, and doctrinally inclined towards fighting set-piece battles seeking to lure their enemy into prearranged killing zones where, once Iraqi artillery had broken the momentum of an attack, an armor heavy counterattack would be launched.¹¹⁰
- Routinely practiced in the art of strategic deception.
- Capable of raising the banner of pan-Arabism against an outside force by identifying it with Israel.

- Viewed with ambivalence by its neighbors who see Iraq not only as the bulwark against Persian expansionism and Shi'a fundamentalism, but also as a potentially ruthless adversary.
- Equipped with some of the Arab Middle East's best educated troops. (Iraq boasts a literacy rate of over 55 percent, superior to Iran, Syria or Egypt.)
- Capable of considerable adaptation to changing circumstances as evidenced by the tremendous speed-up of the Al Faw operation and the successful execution of five major operations, apparently according to some timetable, at the rate of one a month until the end of the war.

Based on this assessment we believe Iraq's military would be vulnerable to a well-integrated combined arms force able to seize the initiative and conduct battle on its own terms, avoid the killing zones, subject the counterattack formations to interdiction, use high quality electronic warfare, and be capable of bringing the air war directly to Iraqi cities, thus demonstrating the relative power of the enemy. Indeed, the authors' opinion is that wresting the initiative from the Iraqi army is the key to neutralizing its operations, but that would be a costly undertaking well beyond the capability of any light force, and would depend in large measure on substantial air assets. The air battle could be won fairly quickly if adequate assets were on hand, but just as any ground force will have to contend with masses of artillery and tanks, the air forces will be faced with substantial numbers of MIRAGE and MiG-29 aircraft with combat experienced pilots. In short, operations against the Iraqis would require high intensity conflict conducted by heavy ground forces with air superiority.

CHAPTER 4

ROLE OF THE IRAQI ARMY IN THE POSTWAR ERA

Introduction. The role that the Iraqi military is likely to play in the postwar era is a critical variable in assessing regional stability. In the authors' view, Iraq's military policies will be restrained. Baghdad should not be expected to deliberately provoke military confrontations with anyone. Its interests are best served now and in the immediate future by peace. Iraq is a resource-rich country; revenue from oil sales could put it in the front rank of nations economically. A stable Middle East is conducive to selling oil; disruption has a long-range adverse effect on the oil market which would hurt Iraq.¹¹¹

At the same time Iraq has enemies. In that sense, the war solved very little. Indeed, some formerly not-too-active foes—such as Israel—have now come to constitute a much greater threat (see below). Iraq will seek to protect itself against these, and to the extent that it is able it will deal with them on a diplomatic basis rather than through force. Force is only likely if the Iraqis feel seriously threatened.

Iran. Iran has experienced the outcome of the war as a national humiliation. The Iranians almost certainly cherish the possibility of revenge. Unfortunately for them, there is little likelihood of this under present circumstances. Their country is prostrate—simply incapable of making war against the Iraqis, at least in the near term.

Moreover, the clerics have lost significant support among the Iranian people for their mismanagement of the recently concluded hostilities.¹¹² To recoup, Iran's new leader, Rafsanjani, must show progress on the economic front, where he is certain to encounter opposition from entrenched interests

who have no wish to see the country's economy redirected.¹¹³ It is likely, therefore, that for the foreseeable future, Rafsanjani's time will be taken up with economic matters, to which the restoration of Iran's war-making capability will be subordinated. Iran's leaders may bluster, but essentially Iraq is secure on its eastern front, for at least the next 5 years. There is, however, the outstanding problem of the Shatt Al Arab.¹¹⁴

Iran almost certainly is not going to negotiate seriously on this issue. It recognizes that as long as the Shatt is closed, Iraq cannot use its major port at Basrah. At the same time, inaction on the Shatt will hurt the Iranians since their major port, Khoramshahr, is situated there. But Iran has hundreds of miles of coast on the Gulf, and other ports; Iraq has a mere 37 miles, and as of now no really adequate alternative facility. Iraq, therefore, will suffer most. Despite this the authors do not believe that Iraq will try to force a decision over the Shatt. To do so it would have to reoccupy the eastern bank of the channel, which it would be extremely loathe to do. Having been badly burnt over this once, it will avoid bogging down there again.

Iraq instead will develop an alternate port at Umm Qasr.¹¹⁵ Admittedly, there is a problem here—the port is poorly located (see Figure 6). For optimum use, it will have to be expanded greatly, and this cannot be done without encroaching on Kuwaiti territory. Ideally, the Iraqis would like to see Kuwait give up two islands at the mouth of Umm Qasr, which would permit them to widen the harbor entrance. Kuwait has refused their request, and also has refused an Iraqi offer to lease the islands for 99 years. Following this last rejection, Iraq changed tactics and invited Kuwait's crown prince for talks in Baghdad,¹¹⁶ where it appears that the two states agreed to disagree. Iraq is expanding the port—and in the process, we believe, violating some portion of Kuwaiti sovereignty—and Kuwait, in effect, is looking the other way.¹¹⁷

In addition to a commercial port, Umm Qasr will become the future home of a flotilla that Iraq has bought from Italy.¹¹⁸



Figure 6. Umm Qasr and Approaches.

The Italians will deliver these vessels as soon as Iraqi crews are trained on them. Once this is done, Iraq plans to sail them into the northern Gulf—a move that Iran has sworn to oppose. This could lead to a significant naval confrontation, to which the United States should probably be prepared to respond. A clash between Iraq and Iran would certainly interrupt oil traffic from the area, and this would mean a repeat of 1987, with the United States once again called on to safeguard the oil lanes.

With this exception, however, the authors see no likelihood of a military confrontation between Iraq and Iran. However, we should add this qualification—Iran will do whatever it can to acquire the means to strike back at Iraq at a time and place of its own choosing. Baghdad will therefore have to carefully monitor Tehran's weapons acquisitions, particularly in the missile and chemical fields.

Syria. Iraq has a score to repay against Syria for backing Iran in the war, and to this end has been arming the Lebanese Christians.¹¹⁹ The latter contest the Syrians' presence in their country and make natural allies for the Iraqis. Iraq's strategy is a sound one since it exploits Syria's basic weakness: Damascus, which has been land poor since World War I,¹²⁰ covets all of Lebanon and parts of Jordan; at the very least it regards this area as its sphere of influence. Syria's loss of the Golan Heights to Israel after the 1967 War was a formidable blow to it—although its subsequent move into Lebanon's Bekaa Valley in the late 1970s compensated it somewhat.

Iraq's strategy has been to expose Syria's continued presence in Lebanon as self-serving. Baghdad contends that Syria is aiding Israel in partitioning the country—a strong argument to take to the Arab League, where Iraq aims to isolate Syria among its fellow Arab states. Practically, it would like to see wealthy states like Saudi Arabia discontinue, or at least sharply decrease, their aid to the Syrians. Money set free in this fashion could then be redirected to Iraq to help in its present financial crisis.¹²¹ It is unlikely, however, that Iraq would go to war with Syria over Lebanon. There is nothing vital in Lebanon that Iraq wants.

Israel. The greatest threat to Iraq—as the Iraqis perceive it—is Israel. Israel backed the Iranians throughout the war. It practically initiated the Irangate conspiracy whereby it supplied Tehran with TOW and Hawk missiles, and, had the Israelis their way, they would have tipped the balance of power to the Iranians.¹²² Iraq is aware that of all the Arab states it probably constitutes the most serious threat to Israel, largely because of its long-term potential. Iraq has vast reserves of oil, an adequate river system and a largely literate population. It has a battle-tested army, and great pride in its accomplishment in the war. This adds up to a powerful state, if Iraq can ever solve its economic problems.

Israel is most concerned by Iraq's growing missile capability since this undercuts its strategy of being able to defeat any combination of Arab states under any circumstances (see Table 3). There were signs immediately after the war ended that Israel might try to destroy the Iraqi missile sites, as it did the Osirik Nuclear Research Reactor site in 1981.¹²³ Iraq responded by warning the Israelis not to try this and apparently the threat was effective.¹²⁴ There have been no further threats along this line.

	MSLS	TANKS	FA	A/C	HELOS
Libya	(SCUD)	1,980	1,720	510	53
Sudan		175	170	40	
Egypt	(SCUD)	2,425	1,580	520	90
Turkey		3,730	200	500	15
Jordan		1,130	250	110	24
Israel	(Jerico I&II)	3,790	1,400	680	77
Syria	(SCUD)	4,050	2,500	510	130
Iraq	(SCUD)	5,500	3,700	510	180
Saudi Arabia	(CSS-2)	550	450	180	20
YAR		660	380	120	
Kuwait		275	90	36	18
Iran	(SCUD)	500	900	190	110
UAE		130	155	60	19
PDRY	(SCUD)	480	430	110	12
Oman		39	75	62	

Source: "Middle East Conventional Forces," The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1989.

Table 3. Comparative Equipment/Weapons Holdings of Middle Eastern Armies.

The problem for the Israelis is that their options are limited. They cannot, as things presently stand, hope to destabilize the Ba'athists with a limited Osirik-type operation. In the past such raids were effective in embarrassing Arab rulers, who found that they could not retaliate and so personally lost face. In the case of the Iraqis, however, this is not possible. The Iraqis have taken pains to scatter and harden their missile sites. They almost certainly would strike back. In the worst case scenario, they would release a barrage of long-range missiles at Tel Aviv. This, of course, would precipitate an international crisis.

Israel appears to be moving on two fronts to counter the Iraqi threat. On the one hand it has concluded an arrangement with the United States to develop the so-called Arrow anti-missile missile.¹²⁵ This could be viewed as the defensive option. The Arrow could intercept Iraqi missiles targeted at the Jewish state. Along with this, Israel is attempting to develop a satellite system. This is a potentially offensive strategy—with the satellite, Israel could acquire real time intelligence, and this in turn would enable it to take out Iraqi missiles in a preemptive strike.

In the authors' view the character of future relations between Iraq and Israel will largely be determined by Tel Aviv. If Israel remains determined to exert hegemony over all the Arab states—and to this end seeks to acquire more lethal weapons—then the present arms race will accelerate, adding fuel to an already volatile situation. The possibility of an accidental war cannot be excluded. Indeed, this may be shaping up now along the Jordanian-Israeli border. Tensions there have escalated recently due to joint surveillance operations carried out by Iraqi and Jordanian aircraft. Israel objects to these flights and—by way of retaliating—has begun overflying Jordanian territory.¹²⁶ This situation could easily get out of hand.

Despite the tensions, however, it is our belief that Iraq is basically committed to a nonaggressive strategy, and further that it will, over the course of the next few years, considerably reduce the size of its military. Economic conditions practically mandate such action.

Iraq's Economy and the Army. Iraq currently has over a million-man army. During the war this was required to match Iran's mobilization, which—although sporadic—could at intervals create large force levels (in addition to outnumbering Iraq three to one, in percentage terms Iran has one of the world's most youthful populations).¹²⁷ There seems no doubt that Iraq would like to demobilize now that the war has ended. And, indeed, it has made one or two assays in this direction but to date nothing really significant has been accomplished.¹²⁸

Iraq's problem appears to be its current financial position, which blocks the transition from a war- to a peacetime economy. In order to mount its end-of-the war blitzkrieg Iraq had virtually to restructure its society. It ordered a total mobilization, a most costly operation both in human resources and in cash. For example, the Iraqis bought large quantities of specialized equipment for use in *Tawakalna ala Allah*.¹²⁹ They also greatly enlarged their arsenal of Scuds to wage the war of the cities.

All this put the Iraqis further into debt. Now the piper must be paid; the bankers want their money, or at least the interest payments. The Ba'thists argue that they should be allowed to invest in economic recovery and industrialization so that they can become productive again and then pay off their debts. The banks want their money now.

The failure so far to find a solution to this problem has put Iraq into a classic bind. It cannot easily bear the burden of so many men under arms, but neither is it able to return them to civilian life as long as there are so few jobs awaiting them. And, of course, every day that passes in which this situation is perpetuated only aggravates Iraq's problem.

Iraq appears to be trying to resolve the situation on a piecemeal basis. By bargaining hard with its creditors, it has been able to reschedule some of its debts. Money freed in this fashion has been invested in industrial projects. As areas of industry are built up, Iraq demobilizes a portion of its troops. Assuming that nothing occurs to derail the process, we would expect to see a steady but incremental drawdown of Iraq's forces over the next few years.

The Lean-Mean Mobile Army. Ideally, Iraq would emerge ultimately with a lean-mean army, quite unlike the one that it now has. The new army would function as a fire brigade, capable of coping with internal disorders. In the event of a more substantial, external threat, it would form the core of a larger force.

We expect Iraq to develop a reserve system on the order of the Israelis'. It has one of the more efficient security forces in the Middle East, and thus keeping tabs on reservists—and inducing them to return to service in emergencies—should not pose difficulties.

Under the setup that we envision, the Republican Guard would play a crucial role. It would remain at close to its present strength, while the brunt of force reductions would come in the regular army. Saddam would certainly favor this option. He regards the Guards as his personal institution since they began as his bodyguards. Moreover, throughout the war the President went out of his way to maintain his association with them.¹³⁰ At the same time, he cannot afford to gratuitously alienate the regular army leaders and thus will act to appease them, most probably with large grants of cash and other rewards.¹³¹ As long as he does not cut too deeply into the army's power base, we do not think such changes will be disruptive.¹³²

A move like this, to build up the Republican Guard at the army's expense, is logical under Iraq's form of government. Saddam is the only powerful figure in the country and the Palace is the premier institution. It follows that the Guard—which is an arm of the Palace—should be favored.

This should not be viewed as a phasing out of the army or its disappearance as an important institution in Iraqi life. Like the party, which also goes through down periods and then springs back, the army will endure.¹³³ In time of danger, or when there is a particular need for it, it will quickly be remobilized.

Iraq will also attempt to develop its technological edge, by continuing acquisitions in the field of missiles and other electronic weaponry. A special department, the Ministry of Industry and Military Production (MPA), is in charge of this. MPA is directed by Saddam's son-in-law, a gauge of the importance that he attaches to its work. MPA has made grandiose boasts,¹³⁴ promising to make Iraq self-sufficient in arms within the decade. To buttress its claims, the MPA put on an arms show just after the war, and a number of products—which the Iraqis claimed were natively produced—were displayed, some of which were quite impressive. For example, they showed off an Iraqi AWACS, actually a Soviet plane that they had refitted. They also had on display modified MiG-23 fighters (equipped for in-flight refueling), and naval mines. The authors do not believe, however, that Iraq has the cash to develop a major arms industry. The most it can do is lay the groundwork for such an institution, which it can then build on when it gets back on its feet financially. In the meantime Iraq will seek to acquire whatever technology it can from the West, and from the United States in particular. This brings us to an examination of the central problem of our report—the future of Iraqi-U.S. relations.

CHAPTER 5

U.S. SECURITY AND IRAQI POWER

Introduction. Throughout the war the United States practiced a fairly benign policy toward Iraq. Although initially disapproving of the invasion, Washington came slowly over to the side of Baghdad. Both wanted to restore the status quo ante to the Gulf and to reestablish the relative harmony that prevailed there before Khomeini began threatening the regional balance of power. Khomeini's revolutionary appeal was anathema to both Baghdad and Washington; hence they wanted to get rid of him.

United by a common interest, Iraq and the United States restored diplomatic relations in 1984, and the United States began to actively assist Iraq in ending the fighting. It mounted Operation Staunch, an attempt to stem the flow of arms to Iran. It also increased its purchases of Iraqi oil while cutting back on Iranian oil purchases, and it urged its allies to do likewise. All this had the effect of repairing relations between the two countries, which had been at a very low ebb.

In September 1988, however—a month after the war had ended—the State Department abruptly, and in what many viewed as a sensational manner, condemned Iraq for allegedly using chemicals against its Kurdish population.¹³⁹ The incident cannot be understood without some background of Iraq's relations with the Kurds. It is beyond the scope of this study to go deeply into this matter; suffice it to say that throughout the war Iraq effectively faced two enemies—Iran and elements of its own Kurdish minority. Significant numbers of the Kurds had launched a revolt against Baghdad and in the process teamed up with Tehran. As soon as the war with Iran ended, Iraq announced its determination to crush the Kurdish insurrection. It sent Republican Guards to the Kurdish area, and in the course of this operation—according to the U.S. State

Department—gas was used, with the result that numerous Kurdish civilians were killed. The Iraqi government denied that any such gassing had occurred. Nonetheless, Secretary of State Schultz stood by U.S. accusations, and the U.S. Congress, acting on its own, sought to impose economic sanctions on Baghdad as a violator of the Kurds' human rights.

Having looked at all of the evidence that was available to us, we find it impossible to confirm the State Department's claim that gas was used in this instance.¹³⁶ To begin with there were never any victims produced. International relief organizations who examined the Kurds—in Turkey where they had gone for asylum—failed to discover any. Nor were there ever any found inside Iraq. The claim rests solely on testimony of the Kurds who had crossed the border into Turkey, where they were interviewed by staffers of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.¹³⁷

We would have expected, in a matter as serious as this, that the Congress would have exercised some care. However, passage of the sanctions measure through the Congress was unusually swift—at least in the Senate where a unanimous vote was secured within 24 hours. Further, the proposed sanctions were quite draconian (and will be discussed in detail below). Fortunately for the future of Iraqi-U.S. ties, the sanctions measure failed to pass on a bureaucratic technicality (it was attached as a rider to a bill that died before adjournment).

It appears that in seeking to punish Iraq, the Congress was influenced by another incident that occurred five months earlier in another Iraqi-Kurdish city, Halabjah. In March 1988, the Kurds at Halabjah were bombarded with chemical weapons, producing a great many deaths. Photographs of the Kurdish victims were widely disseminated in the international media. Iraq was blamed for the Halabjah attack, even though it was subsequently brought out that Iran too had used chemicals in this operation, and it seemed likely that it was the Iranian bombardment that had actually killed the Kurds.

Thus, in our view, the Congress acted more on the basis of emotionalism than factual information, and without sufficient thought for the adverse diplomatic effects of its action. As a result of the outcome of the Iran-Iraq War, Iraq is now the most powerful state in the Persian Gulf, an area in which we have vital interests. To maintain an uninterrupted flow of oil from the Gulf to the West, we need to develop good working relations with all of the Gulf states, and particularly with Iraq, the strongest.

The whole episode of seeking to impose sanctions on Iraq for something that it may not have done would be regrettable but not of great concern were this an isolated event. Unfortunately, there are other areas of friction developing between our two countries. Three are particularly worrisome—human rights, chemicals and missiles.

Human Rights. This issue relates to the Kurds. The Iraqi government undertook to relocate broad sectors of its Kurdish community after the war. The intent was to clear a security belt along the border with Iran. Initially, reports circulated that the Kurds were being forcibly driven from their mountain homes and relocated in the desert lands of the south. Subsequently it developed that this was not the case. In fact, they were being directed to new towns which the Iraqi government had built throughout the Kurdish area. The forced relocation galvanized various human rights groups into conducting investigations, and articles have appeared in national publications—all of which could be the prelude for a move in the Congress to revive sanctions.¹³⁸

The Ba'thists maintain that the security belt is necessary, and that not only Kurdish areas have been cleared, but Arab territories as well. Be this as it may, the Kurdish problem has afflicted Iraq since at least 1961. The persistent revolt of this minority has helped to factionalize Iraqi society. Baghdad has granted a measure of autonomy to the Kurds; it is unlikely that the Ba'thists will do more.

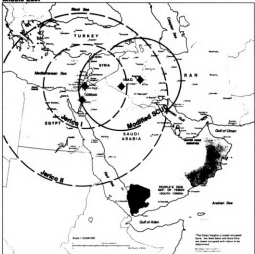
Missiles. The United States is against proliferation of long-range missiles in the Middle East. Their presence raises the level of violence in a region of already-considerable instability. More specifically, the possession of such weapons by the Arabs undercuts Israel's technological superiority and drives it to acquire weapons of even more lethal capabilities. This in turn puts pressure on the Arabs to seek parity with the Israelis, and a cycle of increasing instability results.¹³⁹

The Iraqis maintain that they need long-range missiles if they are to achieve strategic depth against Iran. Because of geographic asymmetries, all of their major cities are within missile range of the Iranians, while Iraq—without missiles of the range of the modified Scuds—cannot reach Tehran or cities located farther east. Any move, therefore, by the Israelis to take out Iraq's long-range missiles would be seen by the Ba'thists as a *causus belli*, since it would, in the Iraqis' view, expose them to Iranian attacks. Moreover, since Israel has missiles of even greater range than the modified Scuds, the Iraqis would regard themselves as vulnerable from that quarter as well.¹⁴⁰

The situation has been recently complicated by Iraq's claim to have successfully tested an intermediate range missile. This has yet to be confirmed, but it appears from initial readouts that the Iraqis are not bluffing, and that they have made a significant advance.¹⁴¹ If true, this complicates the whole security picture in the Middle East. With effective IRBMs the Iraqis could erect a virtually impregnable wall around their country, behind which they could develop an atomic bomb (something they may have been on the way to achieving before Israel destroyed their atomic research facility in 1981). Were Iraq to become a nuclear power, Israel's hegemony over the Middle East would be at an end. (See Figure 7.)

Chemicals. The United States promoted a world conference last January in Paris to argue for a ban on chemical weapons.¹⁴² Washington claimed that they violated canons of civilized society, and called for a total prohibition against their production. Iraq—and all of the Arab states—refused to go along with the ban unless nuclear weapons were also included.

Middle East



- Jerico I & II
- Modified SCUD
- ◆ National Firing Points

Figure 7. Missile Ranges.

The Arabs claimed that it was unreasonable to ask for a ban on chemical weapons when Israel possesses a large nuclear arsenal.¹⁴³ The United States refused to expand its proposal to include nuclear weapons, and the conference ended without taking any significant action.

In the specific case of Iraq's possession of chemicals, Baghdad cited national security as a justification, arguing that chemical weapons are the answer to Iranian zealotry. The chemicals inspire panic in the fanatical Iranians, and are thus effective in breaking up their human wave attacks. Viewed in this light, gas can be seen as the Iraqis' most significant deterrent.

Iraqi Fears. Iraq suspects the motives behind repeated attempts by the United States to interfere in its internal affairs. It is particularly uneasy about the suddenness of the American turnaround—after seeming to support them throughout the war, Washington flip-flopped practically overnight. Moreover, the interference is hardly benign. The aforementioned economic sanctions proposal could prove to be devastating to the Iraqis. For example, under one of its provisions, the United States would withdraw support for International Monetary Fund loans to Iraq, virtually killing its credit rating. Along with this, trade is to be halted, which would interdict tons of grain currently being exported there from the United States. And the proposed sanctions would also have halted all technology transfers.

Of immediate concern to the Iraqis is the fear that the United States will abort their economic recovery. As noted earlier, this is a particularly bad time for them, when they are struggling with an acute liquidity problem. Were the United States to impose sanctions at this crucial juncture the recovery might be doomed, which obviously would turn them against us. Rather than accept this passively we believe they would try to hurt us where we are most vulnerable, in the Gulf. They would be likely to declare the area off limits to us. Before the war, Iraq promoted a so-called Arab Charter to close the Gulf to foreign military forces. It later dropped the idea because it suited it to

have foreigners patrolling the Gulf. But, the Iraqis could easily raise the proposal again. To make the move effective, they would have to line up support of the other Gulf powers. Iran is already on record favoring such a move, and the Soviet Union—although not a Gulf state—is as well. This would leave only the Gulf monarchs as supporters of a continued U.S. presence in the region. The monarchs would almost certainly not want us to depart. At the same time they would be hard put to resist a really determined effort by Iraq to drive us out. The issue of foreign bases is an inflammatory one in the Middle East, and the monarchs would not wish to be attacked on this ground.¹⁴⁴ Moreover, they could not look to Washington for support, after the treatment they have received from the Congress, which consistently refuses to supply them with protective arms. We believe that, under pressure from the Iraqis, all the Arab states of the Gulf—with the possible exception of Oman—would tacitly support a move to withdraw U.S. privileges in the Gulf.¹⁴⁵

We stand to lose a great deal if this comes about—our naval facility at Bahrain and the use of both Saudi airfields at Dhara and Saudi AWACS. All of the inroads that the United States had hoped to make into the area would be blocked—contingency planning, for example, would be unilateral and isolated. Moreover, there is even a possibility that the Iraqis would invite the Soviets to take our place by giving them port facilities at Umm Qasr. Before we draw conclusions from this particular line of argument, we will briefly explore the involvement of Moscow in Gulf affairs. The Soviet factor is potentially disruptive to U.S. interests.

CHAPTER 6

THE SOVIET FACTOR

Background. The Soviet Union was primarily disposed to aid Iraq throughout the war, which strained relations between it and the Iranians. Then just before the war ended Moscow had an opportunity to redress its ties to Iran, which it exploited. The warming trend started during the U.S. reflagging of Kuwaiti tankers in 1987. But it was the Soviet troop withdrawal from Afghanistan and the end of the Iran-Iraq War that really moved it along. Iran and the Soviet Union appear now to be developing a military, as well as an economic relationship, the nature and extent of which remains unclear.

In Soviet eyes, Iran has strategic importance in the Mideast arena because of its location on Moscow's southern border, its size and its potential oil wealth. Ideally, Moscow would like to see a pro-Soviet regime in Tehran. It would be content, however, to prevent its adversaries from achieving predominant influence there. Above all, the Soviets want to lock out U.S. influence, which was paramount in the days of the Shah.

Historically, the Soviets have been concerned about foreign interference in Iran, believing that this would threaten its "soft underbelly." For their part, the Iranians have generally been distrustful of their strong Russian neighbor to the north, notwithstanding those periods when Soviet-Iranian relations were relatively friendly on the surface.

While the former Shah ruled Iran, the Soviets usually were kept at a distance. The Shah saw himself as a strong ruler who could contain Soviet expansionism, not only in Iran but throughout the Middle East. Thus he sought support from the United States and Western governments interested in the region. As far back as the 1950s, Iran acquired generous

supplies of arms and economic assistance from Washington to help it fight internal Communist subversion. This assistance was matched, however, by Soviet aid to Iraq.

In the early 1970s, after the Arab oil embargo sent the price of oil skyrocketing—and in the process brought undreamed of wealth to the oil producers—the Shah sought to turn Iran into a regional superpower. At precisely this juncture President Nixon was looking for a surrogate to contain Soviet advances in the Gulf.¹⁴⁶ The Shah eagerly took on this role. During the years 1972-78, he bought about \$20 billion worth of U.S. arms, which Nixon gladly supplied since he viewed the Shah as a pillar of stability and a firm friend of the United States. Few in Washington were aware of the potential strength of the Shah's opponents at this time.

At the end of the 1970s the Shah adopted a more even-handed policy toward the East and improved Soviet-Iranian economic ties.¹⁴⁷ The Soviets welcomed the initiative, evidently in the hope that political gains would follow. The warming trend could not have come at a better time for Moscow. Once the Shah fell, the Soviets moved to capitalize on the loss of U.S. influence in Iran. In fact, exploiting the strategic windfall of the Shah's overthrow became, in the early 1980s, a major Soviet policy goal.

The overthrow of the Shah's regime in 1979 was carried out by religious followers of Khomeini and numerous anti-Shah groups, some of whom were sympathetic to the Soviet Union. Moscow sought to work through these pro-Soviet elements to influence the revolution. However, in an ensuing power struggle Moscow's clients were defeated by the clerics.

Thus by 1981 Soviet-Iranian relations were chill, and at the root of the estrangement were four factors: 1) the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and its inherent threat to Iran; 2) the religious nature of the Iranian Islamic fundamentalist movement (and its concomitant mistrust of Soviet propaganda); 3) Soviet aid to Iraq in the Iran-Iraq War; and 4)

Iranian mistrust of the Soviet-backed Tudeh Party, which the clerics purged in 1983.

On the Soviet side, Moscow has to fear the spread of the Islamic revolution across the Iranian border into southern Russia. Millions of Muslims inhabit the southern tier of the Soviet Union and are natural targets for fundamentalist propaganda.¹⁴⁸ (As events of January 1990 have shown, the Muslim community in Azerbaijan on the border is particularly restive and prone to give trouble. We will discuss this in more detail below.)

The outbreak of the Iran-Iraq War in 1980, in effect, forced the Soviets' hand in dealing with the Iranians.¹⁴⁹ They disapproved of Iraq's invasion, and therefore tilted toward Tehran. In concrete terms this meant that they imposed an arms embargo on Iraq, cutting off much needed equipment. However, after Iran had repulsed Iraq's invasion and then, on its own, tried to invade Iraq, Moscow did an about-face. It resumed arms deliveries and continued to arm the Iraqis for the remainder of the conflict.

Starting in 1984, Tehran moved to halt the deterioration of Soviet-Iranian relations. In early 1985, it asked the Soviets to curtail arms deliveries to Iraq and offered to expand economic contacts with Moscow. But the Soviets, unconvinced of Iran's sincerity, generally maintained a tough posture toward Iran. Moscow apparently believed that Tehran's primary motive for courtship was to drive a wedge between it and Baghdad.

As of 1986 the Soviets were betwixt and between, as it were, in their dealings with the belligerents. Nonetheless, this did not seem to disturb them—as long as Washington did not return in force to the area, they appeared satisfied. Thus, during the hostage crisis, when it appeared that the United States would intervene militarily in Iran, Moscow warned against such action.

To maintain a modicum of influence in Tehran, Moscow allowed its East European allies to sell arms to the Iranians.

The sales dropped off, however, in 1985.¹⁵⁰ Direct Soviet deliveries of small arms and ammunition also occurred through the mid 1980s, but only randomly. All Iranian requests for advanced Soviet weaponry were rebuffed by Moscow. The Soviets were greatly upset when Libya sent Iran Soviet-made Scud surface-to-surface missiles in the spring of 1985. Soviet reluctance to provide major weapon systems to Iran was probably due to two factors: first, it did not want Iran to expand the war, and, second, it wanted to avoid alienating Iraq.

Origins of Moscow's Tilt to Iran. Soviet-Iranian policy differences over the Iran-Iraq War and over Afghanistan were the two most significant issues separating Moscow and Tehran, and seemed to be the least likely areas for change. But as the war wound down, and as the Soviets began to withdraw from Afghanistan, relations improved significantly. The origins of this improving relationship could be seen as early as 1986. A Soviet willingness to abide by the OPEC decision to cut oil production paved the way for a Soviet-Iranian protocol, at the end of 1986, which provided for the resumption of Iranian natural gas deliveries to the USSR. The protocol was followed by a visit to Moscow in February 1987 of Iranian Foreign Minister Velyati, the first high ranking Iranian official to visit the USSR since the Iranian revolution began.

The reflagging controversy of 1987 gave Moscow the opportunity it perhaps was looking for to solidify its relations with Iran. In early 1986 Moscow agreed to a Kuwaiti request to protect its tankers.¹⁵¹ The prospect of the Soviet fleet defending Kuwaiti shipping, and thereby improving its influence with moderate Arab states, proved so troubling to Washington that it took on the much more ambitious and visible effort of reflagging a number of Kuwaiti tankers. In this way Washington was able to outbid the Russians for the favor of the moderate Arabs. At the same time, however, Moscow was able to exploit America's entry into the Gulf by expanding its ties with Iran.

This was an astute move since it enabled Moscow to cater to Iran's need for international diplomatic support. The Soviets

criticized the United States for militarizing the Gulf, which, they claimed, had the effect of expanding the war. Moscow's expressed unhappiness was no doubt genuine, inasmuch as the Soviets are extremely fearful of any U.S. military activity close to their borders. Further, it would appear to provide a lesson for U.S. military commanders about Soviet perceptions in this part of the world. Because of its geographical proximity, the Soviets view Iran as a special case and not necessarily part of Gorbachev's "new thinking."¹⁵²

Further evidence of this occurred in August 1987 when the two countries signed an economic accord which called for the building of a new rail line and oil pipeline connecting the countries.¹⁵³ If realized, the oil line would be of considerable economic value to Iran, giving it a route other than the Persian Gulf for exporting its crude oil. The rail line, however, could also have strategic significance for the Soviets. It could give Moscow access to large parts of Iran, and—for those who subscribe to the Warm Water Ports Theory—this would be an alarming development. Even if the strategic concerns prove to be overstated, the Soviets have, with this accord, enhanced their position in the region.¹⁵⁴

Limits to the Relationship—1987. During the fall of 1987, it was unclear whether or not the Soviets would be able, or even inclined to capitalize on their gains in Iran. At that point it appeared that the Iranians had only sought out the Soviets for transitory tactical reasons related to reflagging, the tanker war, and limiting Soviet support for Iraq. Soviet-Iranian differences still persisted over the resolution of the Iran-Iraq War, Afghanistan, and Iran's treatment of the Tudeh Party. In Iranian eyes, the Soviet Union was still a satan, albeit a lesser one than America. Islamic distrust of its northern neighbor was still a factor in the bilateral equation, although a difficult one to measure in relation to other factors.

But if Tehran had reason to be cautious about getting too close to the Soviet Union, Moscow also had reason to be cautious in its overtures to Iran. The Soviets had worked hard at broadening and deepening their relations with the moderate

Arab states in the region. All of these relationships would be put at risk if Moscow moved to some form of overt military cooperation with Iran. In addition, the Soviets did not want to give up a bird in the hand—Iraq—for a very uncertain bird in the bush—Iran. Soviet overtures to Iran in the fall of 1987 therefore seemed to be part of a larger balancing act throughout the Gulf as a whole, rather than a prelude to a major military alliance or influence relationship. Nevertheless, there was no doubt that the improving Soviet-Iranian relationship during the tanker war infuriated the Iraqis and made them less willing to go along with Soviet efforts to mediate an end to the war.

By the end of 1988 it had become clear that the motivations behind the improving Soviet-Iranian relationship had expanded beyond simply a tactical response to the U.S. reflagging policy in the Gulf. Two major developments changed the strategic picture and solidified the Soviet-Iranian relationship. First, Iranian perceptions of the Soviet threat diminished significantly after the Soviets began withdrawing troops from Afghanistan. Second, the devastating Iraqi defeat of Iran left the Iranians weak militarily and in need of a strong international ally.

Improvement of ties between Moscow and Tehran was evident at the joint economic talks in Moscow in early December 1988. The Soviets and the Iranians entered into an agreement on a number of significant economic endeavors. These include Iranian natural gas exports to the USSR, joint expansion of the Isfahan and Ahvaz electric power stations, and a joint effort to increase steel production at Isfahan. In the area of transportation, the agreement calls for the free transit of Iranian trucks to and from Baku in order to transport needed material from Europe. Finally, it calls for joint construction of a railroad between Serakhs and Mashhad in Iran to facilitate intercountry travel and transport.

The more benign Iranian view of Gorbachev's new thinking and the Soviet strategic defensive became clearer as 1988 ended. In Khomeini's first and only personal correspondence to another head of state, the Iranian leader sent a letter to

Gorbachev in early January 1989 signalling his approval of the warming trend in relations. While the letter included criticism as well as praise of the Soviet Union, Khomeini's message was clearly intended to defuse Tehran's ideological dispute with Moscow in order to help expand Iranian relations with the Soviet Union.

At a press conference upon his return from delivering Khomeini's letter to Gorbachev, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Larijani said the message had opened a new chapter in Iran-USSR relations at the highest level. He expected the economic ties between the two countries to increase threefold in 1989. He also said that Gorbachev had expressed Soviet readiness to participate in Iran's postwar reconstruction. The Soviets also beguiled Tehran by signaling their intention to implement "glasnost" in Islamic Central Asia, thus allowing Iran some influence among the millions of Soviet Muslims living along the southern border with Iran. (This policy will almost certainly be reconsidered after the recent explosion in Azerbaijan.)

The Soviets made other concessions to Iran on the Afghanistan front where they called for increased participation by local Shias in negotiations between the Mujahidin forces and the Kabul government; the Afghani Shia tribes are clients of the Iranians. There appears to be a trade-off operating here: In return for having been invited into the Afghan political process, the Iranians will prevail upon their Afghani co-religionists to be more sympathetic toward the Soviets' clients in Kabul.¹⁵⁸

The Soviets' Afghan strategy appears to be paying off. In the military arena, Iran had exerted influence on its clients (the Shias, as well as other unspecified groups from among the Mujahidin forces) to remain neutral rather than fight the Kabul government. Many of these groups are complying with Iran's wishes, which in turn has contributed to the pro-Soviet Kabul government remaining in power, despite predictions by experts that it would fall. (Of course, the massive Soviet airlift to

Afghanistan has also helped solidify Kabul's political position.)¹⁵⁶

The Soviets also shrewdly exploited another opportunity to make inroads into Iran at the West's expense. When the Salmon Rushdie incident erupted in February 1989, Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze visited Iran and indicated that Gorbachev was as anxious as Khomeini to improve Soviet-Iranian relations. The Iranians responded positively and in May 1989 the Iranian foreign ministry announced publicly that Iran would sign an arms deal with the Soviet Union. Finally, in June 1989, Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, then the speaker of the Iranian parliament—and shortly thereafter the elected President of Iran—visited Moscow and signed a communique which hinted at a resumption of Soviet military sales to Iran.¹⁵⁷

Reports on the actual discussions between Gorbachev and Rafsanjani remain inconclusive. The Kuwaiti Press cited alleged CIA sources saying Moscow had agreed to provide Iran with 300 T-72 and 150 T-54 tanks as well as 200 artillery pieces and 21,000 military vehicles.¹⁵⁸ Other substantiated U.S. press reports said the Soviets concluded a \$2 billion arms deal with Iran. Tehran reportedly was to pay for these arms with shipments of natural gas to southern areas of the USSR.

These reports must be treated cautiously. Most observers take Gorbachev at his word when he says the USSR will begin shipping weapons to Iran, but the nature of these weapons is all important. It is unlikely that Moscow would give Tehran anything that would significantly destabilize the region.

In March 1989, an Iraqi paper with ties to the regime blasted Moscow for allowing its East European friends to arm Iran.¹⁵⁹ The Iraqis were apparently reacting to reports that Czechoslovakia and Romania have agreed to provide Tehran with tanks, armored vehicles, missiles, antitank rockets, antiaircraft missiles, a naval base at Qishum Island and two nuclear power stations. The paper charged that such "double-dealing" on the part of the Soviet Union and its East

European allies serves to undermine the Soviet-Iraqi relationship.

We do not believe that Iraq's displeasure would be sufficient cause for Moscow to rethink arms sales to the Iranians. A certain amount of arms-selling is bound to go on. But, in our view, the Soviets will mainly seek to promote economic ties. For example, during 1989 the Soviet Union and Iran began negotiating the resumption of Iranian gas exports to the USSR. However, substantial investment is still needed to prepare the infrastructure, and pricing may prove contentious.

In Summary. Moscow saw the conclusion of the Gulf War and the end of its involvement in Afghanistan as changing the strategic equation and also providing an opportunity to improve relations with Iran, thus stealing a march on the United States. Moscow and Tehran are now in the process of defining the nature and extent of their new relationship. The recent disturbances in southern Russia do nothing, in our view, to change this picture. It is significant, we feel, that the Rafsanjani government did not try to exacerbate the unrest in Azerbaijan, even though the Azeris are Shias, and thus co-religionists of the Iranians. This tells us that the regime in Iran, as well as the Soviets, are looking for a calm, peaceful frontier. Indeed, we would say that Azeri unrest should drive Moscow and Tehran closer together—the radical Iranian clerics, who are a source of a great deal of the trouble in Azerbaijan, are Rafsanjani's chief foes. This gives him cause to cooperate with Gorbachev against the radicals.

But Soviet interests in the Middle East go beyond Iran. Moscow is seeking good relations with all the countries in the region. While Moscow views Iran as geostrategically more important than Iraq, the Soviets do not want to lose Baghdad as an arms customer, especially since Iraq has been among Moscow's largest sources of hard currency earnings.¹⁶⁰ Iraq also has vast oil potential—the second largest oil reserves in the world—which at least begins to offset the greater geopolitical importance Iran has for the Soviets. This factor will become increasingly important as the world's supply of oil

drops off sharply in the 1990s and Moscow and Washington compete for Middle East oil.

Moscow's intention therefore would appear to be to develop smooth relations with the two strongest states in the Gulf, a delicate operation but one that is by no means beyond its capabilities. Recent reports that the Soviets are preparing to broker peace talks between Baghdad and Tehran in Moscow—if true—would reinforce this view. Such talks would not be beneficial for America's standing in the region. Moscow's influence throughout the area would be considerably aggrandized, particularly if the talks were to produce a settlement, or even progress toward an eventual settlement.

To sum up, then, the Soviets appear to have played a shrewd game of diplomatic maneuver which has left them in a position to exploit ties with all the Gulf states. They clearly have repaired their relations with Tehran. And, what is in many ways as important, they have done this without completely alienating the Iraqis. In addition, they have made inroads into the Gulf monarchies—Kuwait has established diplomatic ties with Moscow, as have the UAE and Oman, and it appears likely that within the next 2 years the Saudis will open an embassy in Moscow as well. Once the Saudis move, the remaining Gulf states will certainly follow.

The United States, on the other hand, is, in our opinion, losing ground. Thanks to the unremitting animosity of the radical clerics, we remain estranged from the Iranians; due to Congress's unwillingness to approve arms sales, our relations with the Arab monarchs of the Gulf are correct but not cordial. And now, since the end of the Iran-Iraq War, our relations with Baghdad have been deteriorating. We fear that, diplomatically, the Soviets are scoring gains at our expense.

CHAPTER 7

THE U.S. DILEMMA

The United States seems to be on a collision course with the Ba'thists. This is unfortunate and unnecessary. The root of the problem appears to be Washington's inability to appreciate the intensity of Iraq's determination to overcome its present economic crisis.

The regime in Baghdad is committed to rebuilding Iraq after the war. It will do whatever is necessary to accomplish this. If the regime perceives that it is being blocked by the United States it will lash out, using whatever means it has to retaliate. We should not be lulled, therefore, into believing that the Iraqis are powerless, or that they lack the capability or national will to protect what they perceive to be their vital interests.

Within the past decade we have seen remarkable diplomatic and military versatility on the part of Iraq. The leadership has not hesitated to diverge 180 degrees from a stated policy if it believed that this was in its interest. For example, the Ba'thists were in the forefront of the rejectionist states when the war began; midway in the fighting they offered to establish diplomatic relations with the United States, and to make the offer palatable agreed to recognize the existence of Israel and to renounce terrorism. Militarily, they pursued a static defense policy throughout much of the war; but, when they decided that this was no longer working, they switched to the offensive, completely overhauling their military establishment to facilitate the change. Finally, in the late 1970s they led the fight to oust Egypt from the Arab League; but during the war they appealed to Egypt for arms aid, and after the war they became the champions of Cairo's return to the Arab fold. What this says to us is that it is extremely unwise to take the Ba'thists for granted or to underestimate their ability to react or adapt to new circumstances.

The Ultimate Threat. Up to this point we have been focusing on strains between Iraq and the United States over policy issues. In our view, such issues—inasmuch as they complicate the operation of our Middle East policy—are deserving of attention by U.S. leaders. There is, however, a much more substantial threat to U.S. interests that could develop, which indirectly would involve Iraq. We fear that Iraq and Israel might go to war with each other; were that to occur, Washington almost certainly would have to react and the costs of doing so could be considerable. We do not believe that such a war is inevitable—or even a most likely occurrence—but as long as the possibility exists we believe that we must deal with it.

As presently conceived, the national strategies of Iraq and Israel conflict. Iraq is aware that, because of its geographic situation it has no strategic depth, and to compensate for this lack is seeking to develop intermediate range missiles. Israel, on the other hand, bases its strategy on being able to defeat any combination of Arab armies, under any circumstances. It cannot do this as long as one Arab state is protected by a strong missile shield.

As a concomitant to their competing defense aims, the two states have entered into an arms race. At present the race is tentative and not yet determinedly focused. Hence, it could be aborted at any time. Were the race to grow out of control, however, and were perceptions of danger on both sides to sharpen significantly an explosion could occur.

We believe that the United States would have to intervene in a war between the Iraqis and Israelis, since our interests would quite quickly become involved. We have four major interests in the Middle East that we are pledged to protect. We are committed to keeping the oil lines open from the Persian Gulf to the West, to upholding the integrity of the moderate Arab states, to preventing the spread of communism throughout the region, and to safeguarding the security of Israel.

We do not see how the flow of oil to the West could be maintained, in the event of an Arab-Israeli war in which Iraq and Israel were the main protagonists.¹⁶¹ Both states are extraordinarily well armed, and, barring an early resolution of the conflict—which we believe would be unlikely—the war probably would expand to outlying areas, including the Saudi Peninsula, where the major source of the West's oil supply is found.

As noted above, we do not believe that a war is inevitable. Absent any serious effort to defuse the arms race, however, one could come about. Therefore, assuming that shutoff of the arms race does not occur, it is prudent to consider the consequences.

At the present time were we to try to introduce American troops into a Middle East conflict, we would be placing them at great risk. To begin with, we could not field a force of the size required to adequately protect itself. We lack the necessary air and sea lift facilities to deploy troops from bases in CONUS and Europe to the area.¹⁶² And, as discussed above, we probably could not count on the Gulf monarchs for support, which means that we would have to operate from somewhere outside the region. To be sure, if we put our whole energies into the operation we could bring it off, but it would be tremendously costly.

If this were almost any other part of the world we might get by with doing nothing, but this is not possible with the Middle East—not as long as we are dependent on the area's energy supplies. Moreover, our dependency on oil from the region is growing. At the start of the Iran-Iraq War we drew only 3 percent of our oil from the Gulf. By the war's end this was up to 10 percent. And, by 1992, it is anticipated that the Gulf will account for 15 percent of our oil imports.

Even a temporary cutoff would cause considerable hardship in the United States, since we recently passed what oil experts call the peril point. We are now importing more than 50 percent of our total energy supply. It will not be long before

we find ourselves in competition with the rest of the world's economies for energy, most of which will be underground in the Persian Gulf.¹⁶³

In effect, then, this is a situation we must face up to. We must either commit the necessary funds to equip a strike force that would enable us to exert decisive influence in an emergency, or reorient our Middle East policy, particularly as it relates to the present arms race between Iraq and Israel. This brings us to the area of specific recommendations.

Recommendations. Our recommendations are based on our perception of what the Middle East will be like in the 1990s. We view the area as becoming even more volatile than it is now. In fact, we look on the relative calm that prevails there currently as temporary; it is a function of exhaustion. Iran and Iraq certainly are exhausted after their long war, and so is Syria due to its involvement in Lebanon. Israel is badly strained by having to cope with the intifadha. Preoccupied as they are with these problems, the area states do not have the will to go to war. But this, in our view, will change.

The states have been galvanized by the introduction into the area of long-range missiles. Israel was the first to acquire them, followed by Iraq and Saudi Arabia. Syria is trying to obtain them, and Iran and Egypt too are working to acquire them. Under the circumstances, none of the states can rest easy, and thus all parties are looking for a means of protection which can only come from a technological breakthrough.

It seems likely that a breakthrough will not come for at least 3 years. It will probably take that long for the Israelis to perfect their satellite system, and until they have this in place we don't think they will act. At the same time, we could be off in our timing. The Iraqis surprised the world with their recent missile launch; few observers believed they were that far ahead in their research. The Israelis, too, may steal a march on us. Given this setting, we believe it is urgent for the United States to reassess its policy toward the region.

A policy review should focus on defusing tensions caused by the present arms race. Ideally, we should work for a ban on missiles and nuclear and chemical weapons throughout the region, with procedures for conducting spot inspections of the facilities that produce these arms. Clearly, there are problems with this approach: Israel and its supporters in the United States will object strenuously to any attempt to open the Dimona facility to inspection. (In line with this, Iraq has indicated that it will open its missile sites and chemical weapons plants, if Israel agrees to open Dimona.¹⁶⁴) Nonetheless, the attempt should be made, on the basis that vital U.S. interests are at stake. Washington cannot tolerate a shutoff of Middle East oil, which—as we have tried to show—would be the likely result of a sixth Arab-Israeli war.

In working for peace, we should first try innovative diplomacy, including the use of economic influence and whatever nonmilitary means of persuasion we have. By all means, we should work in conjunction with regional states. And, in this connection, we should develop ties to the newly formed Arab Cooperation Council, a coalition of moderate Arab states, including Egypt, Jordan, North Yemen and Iraq.¹⁶⁵ This would be a way of indirectly influencing the Iraqis, perhaps through the agency of the Egyptians.

We believe that the Soviet Union and China should also be involved in our effort. No ban on weapons will be effective that excludes Iran, and Iran certainly will resist complying with any such restriction; the Soviets and the Chinese might be able to exercise some influence here. In any event, we should not be daunted, no matter how formidable the task may appear. Even though we may not be able to solve the problem, we can at least act as a catalyst to assemble the necessary forces to launch an attack upon it.

At the same time we must be prepared to fail; in spite of our best efforts to promote stability and peace, conflict may erupt, in which case—as we have discussed—not only our interests but those of our allies will be threatened. Should we have to intervene we should seek the widest possible support,

including the Soviets. Even so, we must recognize that ours will be the major effort, and therefore we must have the necessary troops and materiel to act effectively. We are going to need force structure, logistics, and transport. In addition, there is worst case planning and preparation to be done. At present we are not prepared for a test like this; at the same time, should it come, we cannot ignore it, given our need—and that of our allies—for oil. The choice as presented may appear stark, but we believe our assessment is a realistic one.

In conclusion, we would like to address a word to American policymakers on the specific question of our relations with Iraq. The fundamental point to keep in mind, we feel, is that Iraq won the war with Iran because of its greater sacrifice. Whereas Iran never mobilized more than a small percentage of its population, the Ba'thists in 1986 ordered what amounted to a total call-up—knowing that their order could backfire on them. The Iraqi people might have refused the regime's demand, which, under the circumstances, would likely have caused the downfall of the Ba'th. By complying—that is, by going along with the regime's appeal—the Iraqi people in effect gave the Ba'thists a vote of confidence. The regime now has a broader political base than at any time in its history.¹⁶⁶

The second point is that diplomatic aid from the United States and financial support from the Arab monarchs notwithstanding, Iraq won the war through its own efforts and skill, and a substantial amount of credit for this must go to the Iraqi military. The officers developed the doctrine needed to take the offensive and then drilled their troops to bring them to a high level of proficiency. Overall, the Iraqi officer corps is professionalized and obviously has pride in its accomplishments. There is virtually no sign that the Iraqi army is estranged from the regime; if anything it appears to be its mainstay.

Thus today in Iraq we have a regime that views its rule as legitimate, and an army that is confident and supportive of the regime's policy; on top of which, all opposition inside Iraq has collapsed. The Kurdish movement has been crushed, and

whatever Shia opposition may formerly have existed has long disappeared. What all this adds up to is this: The Iraq of today is not the same entity that existed when the war broke out in 1980. We should not deny the changes that have occurred. In fact, we must do everything in our power to gain appreciation of the scope of these changes, and of its possible effect on our security.

ENDNOTES

1. This is the Battle of Karbala V in which Iran in January-February 1987 tried to capture Basrah, and in the process was badly defeated by the Iraqis. The battle originally was viewed as a significant victory for Iran, because it was believed that Iran, by pushing its forces to within ten miles of the city, had exposed it to bombardment which would eventually drive the Basrawis to flee, which in turn would destroy Iraqi popular morale (Basrah is Iraq's second largest city.). The battle is now seen as the actual turning point of the war, in Iraq's favor. Iran lost so many men and gained so little territory during the battle that Iranian popular morale soured, and recruitment fell off sharply (to be discussed later in this report). For two divergent interpretations of Karbala V written one year apart by the same author, see Bernard Trainor, *The New York Times*, March 6, 1987, and July 7, 1988.

2. Iraq's oil minister has claimed that Majnoon holds at least 7 billion barrels of oil, with an estimated reserve of perhaps as high as 30 billion.

3. According to *The New York Times* of July 22, 1987, Saddam laid down five principles for ending the war, including a total withdrawal of troops to internationally recognized frontiers, a prisoner exchange, the signing of a nonaggression treaty, a ban on interference in each other's internal affairs, and respect for each other's way of life.

4. The Ba'th (Renaissance) Party has ruled Iraq since 1968. The best organized and disciplined party in the Arab Middle East, the Ba'th is structured along the lines of the Soviet Communist Party. It is extremely hierarchical, with practically all authority vested in the party leader, Saddam Husayn, who is also the head of state. The party controls Iraq through an elaborate security network, of which the party cadre is an integral component. There are probably about one million members, although only a relatively small percentage of these are full members. One becomes a full member by advancing through a series of stages in which one is increasingly indoctrinated in the ideology and practices of the Ba'th. For details on the Party see Phebe Marr's *The Modern History of Iraq*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1985.

5. This is the opinion of Western observers in Iraq in part based on a survey of captured Iranian arms displayed in Baghdad toward the end of the war. Also see *The Baghdad Observer*, July 18, 1988, for an Iraqi account of the weapons roundup, plus *The Armed Forces Journal International*, September 1989.

6. The Iraqis gave away tanks and other equipment to their allies the Jordanians, and all sorts of weapons to the Christians fighting Syria in

Lebanon. *The Washington Post*, July 9, 1989, and *The New York Times*, June 23, 1989.

7. The Iranians did not organize their volunteers, the so-called Basij, into formal units—they rather assembled them in hordes—and hence it was often impossible to estimate their casualties after a given engagement. Scholars doing research on the war must for this reason be extremely cautious when reporting casualty figures.

8. Iraq seized 1,000 square miles on the steppe beyond Baquba to defend, they say, against Iranian positions on the higher plateau.

9. *Iraq: Country Report*, Economist Intelligence Unit, #4, 1988.

10. Former Secretary of State George Schultz told an audience in San Francisco in October 1988 that his worst nightmare was the combination of ballistic missiles and chemical weapons in the hands of a country with a terrorist history. Although he did not say so specifically, *The Washington Post* (October 30, 1988) reported that he obviously meant Iraq. Also *The New York Times*, October 9, 1988, suggested that the victory would enable Iraq "to assert itself in the Arab world." CIA Director William Webster also has claimed that Iraq's possession of chemical weapons and long-range missiles had tipped the balance of power in the Middle East to the Arabs (*The Washington Post*, December 19, 1988). And military analyst Drew Middleton, writing in *The Army Times*, September 26, 1988, claimed that "Iraq must now emerge to stand with Syria as (Israel's) most formidable potential enemy."

11. The Kurdish rebellion in Iraq began in 1961 and has gone on intermittently up to the present day.

12. Commentators differ over how effective the Iraqis were in this war. Some say they arrived too late to do much, others that their mere unexpected appearance was enough to dissuade the Israelis from taking Damascus.

13. In October 1987, the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee filed a report claiming that an Iraqi defeat in the war "is a realistic possibility." On March 26, 1988, just before Iraq launched its blitzkrieg, the foreign correspondent for *The Washington Post* covering the war predicted that Iran would win. On March 2, 1988, *The Christian Science Monitor* speculated that Iraq's use of long-range missiles would backfire against it, causing the Iranian people to close ranks behind their leaders and bring about Iraq's defeat. The military correspondent for *The New York Times* commented on April 19, 1988—just after the recapture of Al Faw—that "while successful Iraqi military operations have lent heart to the Iraqi Army, they have not changed the basic military equation in the war, which still favors Iran." Robin Wright in *The Christian Science Monitor* on August 19,

1988—just before the Iranians stopped fighting—said that Iran might voluntarily end the war, not because it faced military defeat but because it wanted to get on with the more important task of rebuilding the revolution. Jim Muir, in a related article appearing in the same publication on the same day, criticized the Iraqis for behaving as if they were winning the war.

14. *The Washington Post*, July 19, 1988.

15. David C. Isby, "Arms for Baghdad," *Amphibious Warfare Review*, Winter 1988, p. 53.

16. For stories on Iraq-U.S. cooperation, see *The Christian Science Monitor*, November 19, 1984; *The New York Times*, July 11, 1984; and *The New York Times*, September 9, 1983.

17. Other disturbing incidents were the U.S. decision to cooperate with Israel in the production of the Arrow anti-missile missile (see *FBIS-NES-89-078*, April 25, 1989), a series of articles reporting that Iraq was developing A-weapons (see *The Washington Post*, March 31, 1989, p. A1), and Washington's sponsorship of a conference in Geneva to ban chemical weapons, which the Iraqis felt was aimed at chastising them. All these issues will be discussed later in the report.

18. For example, Iraq in 1988 expelled a U.S. diplomat, and the United States retaliated by expelling one Iraqi from the United States. *The New York Times*, November 18, 1988.

19. *The Washington Post*, February 16, 1989.

20. "In God We Trust."

21. Public accounts tended to be negative about the Iraqi military, although there were exceptions. *The New York Times'* Charles Mohr produced some perceptive and supportive reporting. On the other hand, *The Times'* John Kilner, and *The Washington Post's* Patrick Tyler were consistently negative.

22. Dr. Rosenberger conducted interviews in Israel; Dr. Pelletiere in the Arab States.

23. Because the belligerents drastically censored the news, newsmen came to depend on diplomats in Baghdad and Tehran for information. Often these diplomats were not much better informed than the newsmen themselves, but that did not stop them from giving their views which often clashed wildly with reality. It was an unfortunate feature of this war—from the standpoint of gathering accurate information—that Iran and Iraq are probably two of the world's most closed societies.

24. *The Washington Post*, February 11, 1988.
25. *The New York Times*, January 19, 1987.
26. *The Washington Post*, March 3, 1986.
27. *The Economist*, August 20, 1988, estimated that Iraq owed about \$10 billion to the Soviet Union, and about \$26 billion to the West. *The Economist* further estimated that in 1988 Iraq would have to meet debt service payments to the Western bankers of around \$7 billion, with only about \$2 billion in available funds.
28. *The Military Balance, 1988-89*, London: IISS, 1988.
29. David Segal, "The Iran-Iraq War: A Military Analysis," *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1988, p. 961.
30. *The Washington Post*, April 19, 1988, reported that 16 Silkworms had been fired from Al Faw into Kuwaiti territory since Iran had captured it.
31. Saudi Arabia did briefly seek to conciliate Iran by yielding to it on setting oil pricing in the summer of 1986, which enabled Iran to stave off financial crisis for a year.
32. Frederick W. Axelgard, "Iraq and the War with Iran," *Current History*, February 1987, p. 59.
33. *The Economist*, August 20, 1988.
34. Iraq has 100 billion barrels in reserve, Saudi Arabia 170 billion, the Soviet Union 58.5 and the United States 26.5.
35. *The Washington Post*, February 19, 1986, and February 25, 1986.
36. David C. Isby, "Arms for Baghdad," *Amphibious Warfare Review*, Winter 1989, p. 53.
37. *The Washington Post*, February 11, 1988.
38. An Extraordinary Congress would have brought together about 250 top party leaders.
39. See Frederick Axelgard, "Iraq and the War with Iran," *Current History*, February 1987. This account, while overall quite good, differs from our interpretation of what went on in a number of important particulars.
40. *The Washington Post*, March 22, 1987.

41. Elraim Karsh, *Adelphi Papers 220, The Iran-Iraq War: A Military Analysis*, London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1987, p. 49. Note: This and the following footnotes 42-46 are based in part on conversations with a variety of sources in Baghdad during Dr. Pelletiere's visit.

42. Conversations with Iraqis in Baghdad.

43. The year group 1970 would have represented 16 year olds; 1944, 42 year olds. This comes close to scraping the barrel.

44. The Popular Army was the militia of the Ba'th Party. Initially it was manned strictly with party members. Originally it was used as a regular fighting arm of the service, and fought in the front ranks, but it fared so badly it was withdrawn and used to guard rear areas. At top strength it had about 750,000 troops. David Segal, "The Iran- Iraq War: A Military Analysis," *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1988, p. 955; also Edgar O'Ballance, *The Gulf War*, London: Brassey's, 1988, pp. 28 and 80; also see Patrick E. Tyler, "Western Aides Dispute Iraq's Charge," *The Washington Post*, January 22, 1987, p. A27.

45. This information came to light during conversations with a variety of people in Baghdad. It was plainly evident that the need for manpower had exceeded the capability of the Tikriti to provide it. In this deft fashion, the President may have also sought to use this device to bind a greater segment of the population to him.

46. The move to entice the students into service was risky from another aspect. Throughout the war, Iraq—unlike Iran—had forbidden Iraqis to emigrate overseas, or even to go abroad for brief periods. This prohibition would have fallen heaviest on the wealthy, who, presumably, would have sent their sons-abroad to escape military service. Thus, the regime had no idea what to expect when it assayed to induct middle class youths into the armed forces. Iran, on the other hand, which had permitted the wealthy to emigrate—after paying exorbitant bribes—could fairly well count on the fact that any youths remaining in the country were willing to serve because otherwise they would have emigrated, or else they were too poor to resist effectively.

47. The Guard effectively went through three transformations over the course of the war. At the start of the war it was Saddam's personal bodyguard. As the war began, it became an elite unit, entrusted with missions the regular army might not be able to perform. After 1986, it became the Iraqi Army's offensive/counter-offensive arm. Edgar O'Ballance, *The Gulf War*, London: Brassey's, 1988, p. 70.

48. Besides the enticements we have cited here there was also what we might term psychic rewards for serving in the Guards. There was a

considerable mystique about them. Among Iraqis the Guards were the elite of the elite. To wear the red triangle emblem of the Guard distinguished someone as far above the ordinary. Further, according to a source in Baghdad, some of the privileges extended to the Guardsmen were quite extraordinary, given the nature of Iraqi society which is in all respects a police state. Republican Guards are able to bear sidearms in public anywhere in the capital without hinderance. To the average Iraqi this is viewed as a remarkable concession.

49. The most intriguing aspect of planning for the final campaign is that it was kept so secret. In a less security-conscious society than Iraq's this would not have been possible.

50. Bob Levin, "Death in the Garden of Eden," *MacLean's*, January 26, 1987, p. 19; also Godfrey Jansen, "Iraq—Quietly Confident," *Middle East International*, December 19, 1987, p. 10; also Alan Cowell, "Iraq's Dark Victory," *The New York Times Magazine*, September 25, 1988, p 34.

51. Iraq's annual per capita income when the war began was \$2600. The high living standard of before the war surely influenced many Iraqis to go on supporting the regime, believing that a victory would bring back the good times.

52. Iraq's leaders adopted wearing uniforms, even those not in the army. From Saddam down to minor bureaucrats, everyone in Iraq was militarily garbed.

53. David Segal, "The Iran-Iraq War: A Military Analysis," *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1988, p. 955.

54. See for example Anthony Cordesman's critique, "Lessons of the Iran-Iraq War: The First Round," in *The Armed Forces Journal International*, April 1982.

55. *The Washington Post*, March 14, 1986.

56. The best exposition of this line is the Graham Fuller memo contained in the "Report on the President's Special Review Board (on the Iran-Contra hearings)," p. B-6.

57. Ramadan alleged Washington deliberately fed the Iraqis false intelligence reports which led to the fall of Al Faw in 1986. *The Washington Post*, January 22, 1987.

58. Ramadan consistently pushed the line that the United States was trying to perpetuate the war to "bleed Iraq white."

59. Frederick W. Axelgard, "Iraq and the War With Iran," *Current History*, February 1987, p. 59.

60. *Iraq: Country Report*, Economist Intelligence Unit, #4, 1986.

61. *The New York Times*, May 18, 1987.

62. *The New York Times*, September 10, 1987. According to *The Times*, on this day the Iraqi air force flew 122 missions, and helicopter gunships an additional 43. Iraq billed its offensive as a "Day of Revenge," in retaliation for the firing of a Silkworm missile at Kuwait.

63. Godfrey Jansen, "Pouring on the Pressure," *Middle East International*, October 24, 1986, p. 9, also Michael S. Sherrill, "The Gulf—Iran on the Defensive," *Time*, June 20, 1988, p. 33.

64. *The Washington Post*, August 30, 1987.

65. *The Washington Post*, August 19, 1987.

66. *The Washington Post*, May 17, 1987.

67. *The Washington Post*, July 10, 1988.

68. The Mullahs generally served as the directors of the recruiting drives in the rural areas.

69. *The Christian Science Monitor*, April 26, 1988.

70. *The New York Times*, March 2, 1988.

71. *The Washington Post*, March 28, 1988.

72. For a discussion of this phenomenon, see Hirsh Goodman and W. Seth Carus, *The Future Battlefield and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1990, p. 169.

73. Michael S. Sherrill, "Iran on the Defensive," *Time*, June 20, 1988, p. 33; also Richard Reynolds, "Iran-Iraq: The Winning of the War," an unpublished article, 1989; also Frederick W. Axelgard, "Iraq: Looking Beyond the War," *Middle East International*, June 29, 1988, p. 19; also Jim Muir, "Rout of the Revolutionaries," *The Sunday Times* (London), April 24, 1988, p. 13; also John Laffin, *The World in Conflict 1989: War Annual 3*, London: Brassey's, 1989, p. 107.

74. War Communique #3,191, 1217 GMT, 25 May 88, *Foreign Broadcast Information Service-NES-88-101*, 25 May 88, p. 18; War Communique #3,189, 0730 GMT, 25 May 88, *Baghdad Voice of the*

Masses, *FBIS-101*, 25 May 88; War Communique #3,192, 1510 GMT 25 May 88, *FBIS-102*, 26 May 88, p. 13.

75. Muhieddin Rashad, "Faw-Occupation, Liberation, Reconstruction," *The Baghdad Observer*, June 25, 1989, p. 4; also John Laffin, *The World in Conflict 1989*, War Annual 3, London: Brassey's, 1989, p. 107.

76. Jim Muir, "Rout of the Revolutionaries," *The Sunday Times* (London), April 24, 1988, p. 13; also John Laffin, *The World in Conflict 1989*, War Annual 3, London: Brassey's, 1989, p. 107.

77. Numbers of corps and divisional headquarters are not particularly useful indicators of the number of troops actually employed. The Iraqis have been silent as to the actual numbers of units committed to this operation. On the basis of our interviews we feel confident in saying the Iraqis overwhelmingly outnumbered the Iranians in all battles.

78. John Laffin, *The World in Conflict 1989*, War Annual 3, p. 106.

79. *FBIS-NES-88-107*, 3 June 1988.

80. Patrick E. Tyler, "Rout of Iran From Faw Still Puzzling to West," *The Washington Post*, May 3, 1988, p. A-20; also Richard Reynolds, "Iran-Iraq: The Winning of the War," unpublished article 1989, p. 5; also Jim Muir, "The Gulf War—Catching Them Napping," *Middle East International*, April 30, 1988, pp. 4-5.

81. "Iraq's Victory Rewrites Military Science for the 29th Century," *The Patriot News*, Harrisburg, PA, October 10, 1988, p. A-7; Frederick W. Axelgard, "Iraq: Looking Beyond the War," *Middle East International*, January 24, 1988, p. 19; Jim Muir, "The Gulf War—Catching Them Napping," *Middle East International*, April 30, 1988, p. 4; Jim Muir, "Rout of the Revolutionaries," *The Sunday Times* (London), April 24, 1988, p. 13; G. H. Jansen, "Gulf War—Ominous for Iran," *Middle East International*, July 8, 1988, p. 14; Nadim Jaber, "The Gulf War—Contemplating Pain?" *Middle East International*, June 24, 1984, p. 11; Godfrey Jansen, "The Gulf War—Iran in Disarray," *Middle East International*, June 1988, pp. 10-11; also James A. Bill, "Why Tehran Finally Wants A Gulf Peace," *The Washington Post*, August 28, 1988, p. B1; Alan Cowell, "Iraq's Dark Victory," *The New York Times Magazine*, September 25, 1988, p. 34; Alan Cowell, "Cease Fire Takes Effect in 8 Year Iran-Iraq War," *The New York Times*, August 21, 1988, p. 6; Dilip Hiro and Kambiz Foroohar, "Upheaval on All Fronts," *The Middle East*, July 1988, p. 18; and Safa Haeri, "Iran: At A Crossroads," *Middle East International*, June 24, 1988, p. 12.

82. War Communique #3,189, 0743 GMT 25 May 88, *FBIS-101*, 25 May 88, p. 15; War Communique #3,191, 1217 GMT 25 May 88, *FBIS-101*, 25 May 88, p. 16; War Communique #33,193, 1616 GMT 25 May 88,

FBIS-102, 26 May 88, p. 13; Frederick W. Axelgard, "Iraq: Looking Beyond the War," *Middle East International*, June 24, 1988, p. 19; Michael S. Sherril, "Iran on the Defensive," *Time*, June 20, 1988, p. 33.

83. Patrick E. Tyler, "Iraq Dislodges Iranians From Outside Basrah," *The Washington Post*, May 26, 1988, p. A-14.

84. Scheherazade Daneshkhu, "Iran—Rafsanjani Moves Up," *Middle East International*, June 11, 1988, p. 11.

85. Nadim Jaber, "The Gulf War—Contemplating Peace?" *Middle East International*, June 24, 1988, p. 11; also "Iran Says It Retook Area Near Basra," *The Washington Post*, June 14, 1988, p. A-17; also Reuters, "Baghdad Claims to Crush Major Iranian Offensive," *The Washington Post*, June 15, 1988, p. A27.

86. "Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic," 1000 GMT, June 25, 1988, FBIS-NES-88-123, June 27, 1988, p. 22; also Warren Richey, "Iranian Morale Sinks in the Marches," *The Christian Science Monitor*, July 1, 1981, p. 9.

87. "Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic," 1042 GMT, June 26, 1988, FBIS-NES-88-123, p. 23.

88. For greater insight into the theory of the relative effectiveness of larger numbers the reader is referred to James J. Schneider, *The Exponential Decay of Armies in Battle*, School of Advanced Studies Course Special, Ft Leavenworth, 1985. Mr. Schneider challenges the conventional wisdom of numbers especially as embodied in the Lanchester Equations upon which most U.S. Army war games are based. He suggests that beyond a certain point Sun Tzu is correct; not only are extreme numbers an embarrassment but will lead to higher casualties. There is a fascinating interview with General Balck, a Wehrmacht tactical expert, on page 19 in which the general says that too many tanks will lead to too many losses.

89. "Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic—Communique No. 3,257," 1009 GMT, July 12, 1988; also Communique No. 3256, 0600 GMT, July 12, 1988, FBIS-NES-88-133, pp. 21-22.

90. "Iraqi Forces Pull Out of Dehloran," *The Baghdad Observer*, No. 6570, July 18, 1988, p. 1. Also Youssef M. Ibrahim, "Iraqis Say They Plan To Give Up All Land Captured Inside Iran," *The New York Times*, July 18, 1988, p. A-8.

91. John Laffin, *The World in Conflict, 1989*, War Annual 3, London: Brassey's, 1989, p. 114. The Mujahidin were attempting to incite an anti-Khomeini revolt. It appears the Iraqis abandoned them because they did not want to bog down inside Iran.

92. Alan Cowell, "Iraq's Dark Victory," *The New York Times Magazine*, September 25, 1988, p. 34; also "Iraq's Victory Rewrites Military Science for Late 20th Century," *The Patriot News*, October 10, 1988, p. A-7.

93. What is impressive about all this is the ability of the Ba'athists to cloak their actions with secrecy. One would have anticipated that gossip among the men at the front would have leaked the Army's plans to the homefront.

94. Edgar O'Ballance, *The Gulf War*, London: Brassey's Defence Publishers, 1988, pp. 48-49, 66-68, 70-71, 80-81; also Shirin Tahir- Kheli and Shaheen Ayubi, *The Iran Iraq War: New Weapons, Old Conflicts*, New York: Praeger, 1983, p. 40.

95. Efraim Karsh, *Adelphi Papers 220. The Iran-Iraq War: A Military Analysis*, London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1987, p. 34.

96. Edgar O'Ballance, *The Gulf War*, London: Brassey's Defence Publishers, 1988, pp. 62-63; also Anthony R. Tucker, "Armored Warfare in the Gulf," *Armed Forces*, May 1988, p. 226; also Richard Gabriel, ed., *Fighting Armies: Antagonists in the Middle East, A Combat Assessment*, Westport: Greenwood Press, 1982, p. 69.

97. Edgar O'Ballance, *The Gulf War*, London: Brassey's Defense Publishers, 1988, p. 91.

98. The drop in efficiency of any force is a normal phenomenon that accompanies its expansion unless expansibility is a feature of the peacetime army. COL John MacCauley Palmer attempted to develop the traditions of Alexander Hamilton and create an "Expansible Army" for the United States. He could write with sufficient justification that the failure to adopt such a proposal led to the low efficiency of the American Expeditionary Force in Europe between 1917 and 1918. Unless there is a large cadre, as has existed in the German Army since the time of Frederick the Great, wartime expansion will inevitably bring a loss of efficiency. Also "The Gulf First Lessons," *Defence Update/91*, December 1988, pp. 40-41.

99. In addition to formidable concrete bunkers and earthen berms defending Basrah, dubbed the Iron Ring, army engineers electrified Fish Lake to electrocute invading Iranians, flooded whole areas of the front to baffle the invader, and built roads everywhere. See Edgar O'Ballance, "Iran vs. Iraq: Quantity vs. Quality?" *Defense Attache*, No. 1, 1987, p. 31.

100. Edgar O'Ballance, "Iran vs. Iraq: Quantity vs. Quality?," *Defense Attache*, No. 1, 1987, pp. 30-31; Philip Marfleet, "The Gulf War: Iran's Lapping Tide," *The Middle East*, March 1987, p. 14; Godfrey Jansen, "The Battle for Basrah," *Middle East International*, January 23, 1987, p. 3; William

E. Smith, "Iran Strikes on Two Fronts," *Time*, January 26, 1987, p. 29; David Segal, "The Iran-Iraq War: A Military Analysis," *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1988, pp. 948, 955-957; John Barnes, "Lashing Iraqi Fighting Spirit," *U.S. News and World Report*, February 24, 1986, p. 43.

101. Edgar O'Ballance, *The Gulf War*, London: Brassey's Defense Publishers, 1988, pp. 147, 164 and 196-203; James Bruce, "Gulf War—A Dangerous Legacy," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, November 12, 1988, p. 1205; also Philip Marfleet, "The Gulf War: Iran's Lapping Tide," *The Middle East*, March 1987, p. 4; Frederick W. Axeigard, "Iraq: Looking Beyond the War," *Middle East International*, June 24, 1988, p. 19; Godfrey Jansen, "The Battle for Basrah," *Middle East International*, June 23, 1988, pp. 3-4; Peeter Kopvillem, "Rage in the Marshlands," *McLean's*, February 2, 1987, p. 29.

102. David Segal, "The Iran-Iraq War: A Military Analysis," *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1988, p. 952; also Godfrey Jansen, "Iraq—Quietly Confident," *Middle East International*, December 19, 1987, p. 9.

103. David Segal, "The Iran-Iraq War: A Military Analysis," *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1988, pp. 955-957; also Edgar O'Ballance, "Iran vs. Iraq: Quantity vs. Quality?" *Defense Attache*, No. 1, 1987, pp. 30-31.

104. M. J. Cunningham, "Iran-Iraq, Who Fuels the Fire?," *Defense Attache*, No. 1, 1987, p. 35; also David Segal, "The Iran-Iraq War: A Military Analysis," *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1988, p. 956.

105. "Iraq's Victory Rewrites Military Science for Late 20th Century," *The Patriot News*, Harrisburg, PA, October 10, 1988, p. A-7; also "The Gulf War—First Lessons," *Defense Update/91*, December 1988, p. 41; David Segal, "The Iran-Iraq War: A Military Analysis," *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1988, p. 956.

106. There was an anecdote current in Baghdad at the war's end, that General Rashid was so offended by Saddam's obvious preference of the Guards over the Regulars that he stalked out of an awards ceremony. This seems apocryphal.

107. War Communique #3,263, 1605 GMT 16 July 1988, *FBIS-137*, 16 July 1988, p. 25.

108. Godfrey Jansen, "Iraq Continues the Punishment," *Middle East International*, August 5, 1988, pp. 5-7; also "Iraq Forces Pull Out Of Dehloran," *The Baghdad Observer*, July 18, 1988, p. 1; also Yousef M. Ibrahim, "Iraqis Say They Plan to Give Up All Land Captured Inside Iran," *The New York Times*, July 18, 1988, p. A-8.

109. Edgar O'Ballance, "Iran vs Iraq: Quantity vs Quality?" *Defense Attache*, No. 1, 1987, p. 31.

110. David Segal, "The Iran-Iraq War: A Military Analysis," *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1987, pp. 955-957.

111. Disruption also drives the price up, but if prices climb too high it becomes economically feasible to work available but difficult to exploit oil fields elsewhere in the world, which makes for competition with the OPEC members. It also makes nations enforce conservation.

112. *The Christian Science Monitor*, June 3, 1988.

113. See Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS-NES), Daily Report for 19 May 1988, concerning clashes by conservatives who objected to Rafsanjani's handling of the economy.

114. The Shatt dispute is the crux of the fight between Iraq and Iran. Briefly stated, in 1975 Iraq—in order to buy peace with Iran, then ruled by the Shah—agreed to sign over half its rights to the Shatt to the Iranians. In return, the Shah promised to stop subsidizing the revolt of the Iraqi Kurds. When Khomeini came to power, and began stirring up the Kurds again, the Iraqis abrogated their agreement on the Shatt and went to war. During the war, the Shatt became clogged with ships, ordnance, and chemical rounds. It needs to be cleared. Iran refuses to agree to this, unless Iraq affirms its original concession to the Shah. The Iraqis refuse, claiming the entire Shatt belongs to them, since the former accord with the Shah has been abrogated.

115. FBIS-NES-89-162, 23 August 1989.

116. FBIS-NES-89-032, 17 February 1989.

117. One of the two islands Iraq would like to take over from Kuwait, Warbah, is a mud flat. It would be an easy matter for Iraq, in the process of dredging the channel leading to Umm Qasr, simply to overdo it and dredge Warbah out of existence, thus solving the problem.

118. Anthony H. Cordesman, *The Iran-Iraq War and Western Security, 1984-1987: Strategic Implications and Policy Options*, London: Jane's 1988, p. 42, notes that ships that order and paid for include one Stromboli Class support ship, four Lupo Class frigates, and six Wadi Class patrol boats.

119. *The Christian Science Monitor*, July 17, 1989.

120. We refer to what has come to be known as the imperialist peace, which set up the mandate system in the Middle East. Under it, Lebanon was split off from Greater Syria, and Israel created out of Palestine.

121. One of Iraq's ongoing battles is to keep the Saudis and Kuwaitis paying subsidies to it even though the war is over. The Iraqis have noted

pointedly that the Gulf Arabs are not as forthcoming now that the danger from Iran is past.

122. The Israelis were planning to sell the Iranians 3,300 TOW missiles with which the Iranians could presumably have overcome the Iraq's advantage in armor. Just after Irangate was revealed, the Israeli's defense minister, Yitzhak Rabin, blasted the United States for its "tilt" toward Baghdad in the war (*The Washington Post*, October 29, 1987). Rabin made it clear that, in his mind—and presumably that of other Israeli leaders—of the two belligerents, Iran was much to be preferred. This anti-Iraqi attitude is not, however, shared by all Israelis. See Ze'ev Schiff's article in *Haaretz*, July 22, 1988, in which he argues that Israel lost a golden opportunity by failing to abandon its support of Iran before the war ended. At the same time, individual Israeli scholars, like Amazia Baram, also have disputed the wisdom of backing Iran: "If you are ready to risk an Iranian victory, then you could be risking the very existence of Israel," he told *The New York Times*, October 31, 1987.

123. *The Washington Post*, on December 19, 1988, published a report claiming that Israel's Air Force is planning to destroy not only Iraq's missile sites, but those of Syria and Saudi Arabia as well. The Saudis, toward the end of the Iran-Iraq War, purchased missiles from China with a range of 2,000 miles. The same story claimed that this is why Israel is now developing a satellite system—to provide it with real time intelligence that would enable it to set up these raids.

124. Saddam stated in an interview in February 1989 that "direct aggression from Israel is expected but Iraq's capabilities will certainly halt Israel from doing what it wishes." *FBIS-NES-80-032*.

125. *The Washington Post*, June 29, 1988.

126. *FBIS-NES-89-160*, 21 August 1989.

127. It was a peculiarity of the Iranian mobilization process that they would call up troops for specific offensives. The Basij would volunteer to spend three months at the front. Those who survived had then fulfilled their military obligation and need not return to service. In this way the Iranians, unlike the Iraqis, never gained experienced troops. To be sure, the Revolutionary Guard were permanent and experienced, but this cadre was drastically reduced in numbers after Karbala V.

128. "Iraq Halts People's Militia Recruitment," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, Vol. 10, No. 19, December 11, 1988.

129. David C. Isby, "Arms For Baghdad," *Amphibious Warfare Review*, Winter 1989, p. 53; also Alan Colwell, "Iraq's Dark Victory," *The New York Times Magazine*, September 25, 1988, p. 43; also James A. Bill, "Why

Tehran Finally Wants A Gulf Peace," *The Washington Post*, August 28, 1988, p. B-1.

130. Saddam, in his speeches, refers to the Guards using the possessive pronoun. There is also an increasing tendency to refer to them as the "Presidential," rather than the "Republican" Guards.

131. General Rashid's daughter is married to Saddam's son. Air Force General Shaban has been made a Presidential advisor for the military.

132. After eight years of war many of the officers would probably be glad to quit the Service, if good jobs in the civilian sector were assured.

133. For example, after the setback of the initial invasion, 1980-1982, the party, which had been pushed to the background, became a highly visible presence again. For a while the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) seemed to have equal weight with the President, and all decisions were arrived at through a consensus of the nine member RCC. Now, the President is once more ascendant, and the party and RCC have receded.

134. *International Defense Review*, 6/1989.

135. Schultz made his announcement two hours before Iraq's foreign minister was set to appear at the State Department for official talks. The minister walked unprepared into a barrage of media questions about Iraq's alleged activity. In *FBI/S-NES-88-180*, 16 September 1988, Sa'dun Hammadi, the Iraqi Foreign Minister on the receiving end of Schultz's blast, discussed this incident with a reporter from *Al Sharq Al Wusat*, and said, "I do not understand the true motives behind this campaign. Why at this particular time and on this scale? There seems to be a desire to punish Iraq because it emerged victorious from the war." What Hammadi is implying is that the whole affair was orchestrated by some group inimical to Iraq. It is beyond the scope of this report to speculate about this.

136. The evidence rests on the interpretation of some language which does not translate directly into specific weapons systems and leaves considerable room for doubt. We also feel that in a matter as serious as this there must be corroborating evidence, and there is none. At the same time, we recognize that there are observers who do not share our view on this.

137. "Chemical Weapons Use in Kurdistan: Iraq's Final Offensive," A Staff Report to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, September 21, 1988.

138. *The Christian Science Monitor*, August 31, 1989, carried two long articles on the plight of the Kurds. It is important in evaluating reports of atrocities to keep in mind that Iraq never denied using gas, but has claimed that this was absolutely essential if the nation was to survive. Thus, at

Majnoon in 1984, and again at Halabja in 1988 (to name the two most publicized incidents) the Iraqis used chemicals when they felt military disaster threatened. On the other hand, they maintain they have never employed the weapon wantonly, and never against civilians as part of a program of genocide.

139. Among the Arabs, Iraq and Saudi Arabia may have a long-range missile capability. Also, both Syria and Egypt are suspected of possessing chemical weapons. The combination of long-range missiles and chemicals is viewed in the West as "a poor man's atom bomb."

140. We are alluding to Israel's JERICH0 2 missile which could hit Riyadh, Damascus or Baghdad when fired from Tel Aviv.

141. In late 1988, the Iraqis unveiled their own version of an anti-missile missile, the Al Faw. They claimed, at the time, that the development of this missile was made necessary by Israel's production of the JERICH0 1 and JERICH0 2, capable of reaching Baghdad. See FBIS-NES-88-248, 27 December 1988.

142. *The Washington Post*, January 13, 1989.

143. FBIS-NES-89-134, 14 July 1989.

144. It was, for example, a dispute over British bases in Iraq that precipitated the bloody 1958 revolt in Iraq that destroyed the Hashemite dynasty there. Part of the Shah's difficulty with Iranian nationalists was the presence of U.S. bases in Iran. And, of course, Libyan unhappiness with the U.S. base at Wheelus led to Qaddafi's seizing power.

145. It is also reasonable to expect that the Iraqis—should they decide to put pressure on our presence in the Gulf—would cast their action as a pan-Arab crusade. Indeed, there is already some indication that they may be preparing the ground for this. They have hinted that the Israeli missile build-up, with American support, is an attempt to "consecrate" Israeli occupation of Arab lands. This would be a persuasive argument in some Arab circles.

146. Richard W. Cottam, "Goodbye to America's Shah," *Foreign Policy*, Spring 1979, pp. 3-14.

147. Aryeh Y. Yofat, *The Soviet Union and Revolutionary Iran*, New York: St Martin's Press, Inc., 1984, pp. 27-31.

148. This particularly became evident in 1988 after riots erupted between Muslims in the Soviet Republic of Azerbaijan and the Armenians. The Muslim rioters were Shias, and many, reportedly, displayed pictures of Khomeini during the rioting.

149. Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Soviet Policy Toward Turkey, Iran, and Afghanistan: The Dynamics of Influence*, New York: Praeger, 1982, pp. 110-111.

150. This section draws from discussions in Tel Aviv with Israeli analysts at the Dayan and Jaffee Centers, and at the University of Jerusalem, June and July 1989.

151. Gary Lee, "Soviets Helping Kuwait in Shipping Crisis," *The Washington Post*, April 15, 1987.

152. See Francis Fukuyama, *Gorbachev and the New Soviet Agenda in the Third World*, The RAND Corporation, March 1988. Fukuyama argues that the Soviets have displayed a highly competitive, zero sum game vis-a-vis the United States in the Gulf.

153. See Jackson Diehl, "USSR and Iran Plan Joint Economic Projects," *The Washington Post*, August 5, 1987.

154. Robert O. Freedman, "Gorbachev, Iran and the Iran-Iraq War," unpublished manuscript, March 1989, provides a good, detailed description of Soviet-Iranian relations through August 1988.

155. As a result of an alleged Soviet-Iranian "deal," Iran may already be curtailing its role in the Afghan civil war and advising its Shia Muslim rebels to cooperate with the Kabul government. In return for Iranian support for the Soviet client state in Kabul, the Afghan government reportedly granted administrative and political autonomy to the Hazarajat region of Central Afghanistan, the main Shia area. See *The Economist*, Foreign Report, September 21, 1989.

156. *The Washington Post*, September 10, 1989.

157. See Dilip Hiro, "Why Iran Came to Call on Its Soviet Neighbor," *The Wall Street Journal*, July 7, 1989, p. A-8; David B. Ottaway, "White House Cautions Soviets on Major Arms Sale to Iran," *The Washington Post*, June 21, 1989, p. A19; and "Soviet-Iran Ties Make U.S. Uneasy," *The Washington Post*, June 24, 1989.

158. *Al Qabas*, June 26, 1989.

159. *Al-Iraq*, March 27, 1989.

160. See Melvin A. Goodman and Carolyn McGiffert Ekedahgi, "Gorbachev's 'New Directions' in the Middle East," *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 42, No. 4, Autumn 1988.

161. Then Assistant Secretary of State Richard Murphy said in testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee's Subcommittee on the Middle East on June 11, 1984, that two of America's foreign policy goals in the Middle East were to safeguard Israel and to maintain the integrity of friendly Arab states. He added that some saw these two goals as contradictory; however, he said, "they are complementary." We are suggesting that, following the Iran-Iraq War, the policy is contradictory in another area.

162. Ted Cimral and Douglas V. Johnson, *The Impact of Prepositioning on U.S. Southwest Asia Strategy*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 1987; also *The New York Times*, July 22, 1988, and "Navy League's 1989-90 Resolutions," *Sea Power*, July 1989, pp. 49-50.

163. *The Christian Science Monitor*, February 2, 1989; *The New York Times*, February 16, 1989; *The Christian Science Monitor*, January 26, 1988, and *The Washington Post*, March 10, 1988.

164. *FBIS-NES-89-074*, 19 April 1989.

165. An interesting article in *The Washington Post*, May 13, 1989, detailed Iraq's attempts to align itself with the Arab moderates and the West. The story concluded that under Iraq's new pragmatic stance, its foreign policy would emphasize stronger alliances with moderate Arab states, fresh appeals for Western technology and a less bellicose relationship with Israel. This, of course, was before the campaign over gassing erupted in the media in the United States.

166. Saddam told his people in a speech last November that "you entered the war with 12 divisions . . . now we have about 70. The entire world has not seen such a development. Neither in World War I or World War II . . . has the world witnessed a country of 19 million producing 70 divisions. We could have formed more than 100 divisions and still continued normal life had the war continued." *FBIS-NES-88-221*, 16 November 1988.

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