Islam
and the
New World Order

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Islam and the New World Order

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Foreword

The Peaceful Mind

War in the Gulf had thrown the biggest challenge of the post World War Second era not only to the humanity, but also it is spin out questions of grave dimensions and lasting repercussion to the countries and people of Africa and Asia. It has caused an irreparable damage to economic strength of the region with a serious most setback to the movement of attaining a place due to them in the international relations. It has also weakened the movement of liberation from political and economic stranglehold of the vested interests.

It needs no overemphasis that the invasion on 2 August, 1990 and annexation of Kuwait by Iraq set the region into the bloody war. No country, in particular, developing country, small or big, can accept the assaulat on the concept of sovereignty of nations. But the events do not also exonerate the Big Powers of their dubious role. Each day unfolded a Pandora Box of problems wide open not only for the Middle East but also to the Afro-Asian region as a whole.

In initiating the move for world support, and in dispatching the war machine to the Arabian peninsula, United States and set out clear cut goals: (1) retaking of Kuwait in order to deny the gains of military action, (2) deter Iraq from attacking Saudi Arabia and possessing the largest share of proved oil that could be detrimental to the interests of the industrialized nations, and (3) destroy Iraq's emerging chemical and nuclear installations that threaten their nuclear weapon hegemony. In contrast to its stated goals and expected role as a strong democracy based

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"international policeman', there appeared to be preference in US policy to economic considerations and tightening of a military hold on the strategic zone that links the South with the North. To achieve this, there was a call for "a new regional security structure" on the lines of NATO-style alliance with US presence in the Middle East. Therefore, there was a genuine apprehension in the region that it leads to 'redrafting of the strategic map in which the fault lines would no longer run East-West but North-South.' Making of the North hegemony impregnable had been a long cherished design.We are reminded of such a strategy initiated, early 1950s in the garb of Baghdad Pact and SEATO. Reacting to these Pacts, Jawaharlal Nehru had cautioned (23 March 1956) that "It sets in motion all the wrong tendencies and prevents the right tendencies from developing". The new strategy would be severally detrimental to the interests of Asian and African countries. Now the englightened mind is bogged down with the most complicated question: What is the likely post war dispensation in the Middle East and the Third World as a whole?

The war had however, overshadowed all these concerns. UN Secretary General had expressed his grave concern about war in exceeding all the limits and purpose of the UN Resolutions of the question had teared down all the convections drawn by the statesmen. Did it leave even Kuwait habitable for its people? Can there be a sensible dialogue in the midst of strong positions taken by the combatant parties to the War? Therefore, there was a growing demand all over the world for the immediate cessation of war. It was only an end to war that is likely to create an atmosphere for the resolution of the issues through peaceful negotiations.

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Preface

The Soviet Union has glided into an abyss in recent months. All its non-Russian republics are falling apart. What was once a Union is no longer so. Having strongly taken up issues with the Kremlin on centre-republican relations, the non-Russian republics have been increasingly demanding independence. Following the abortive coup of August 19, 1991, there is a discernible upswing in pro-independence movements. While the central authorities are hammering out an accord among the discordant republics, the letter are becoming festiless in the quest for total independence, in recent months even the most pliant of Soviet republics in Central Asia have thrown challenges to the centre. "A notable element of Central Asian pan-Islamism has recently been manifested in the form of joint efforts to chalk out a solution to pressing regional issues. On August 13, 1991, the Presidents of Kazakhistan, Kirghizia, Tadjikistan, Turkmenian and Uzbekistan met in Tashkent of discuss the problems of the densely-populated region. The meeting also invited Azerbaijan's Prime Minister, Gasan A. Gasanov, as an observers. The invitation to Azerbaijan from the Causasus, and not any other republic, to attend the Alma Ata and Tashkent meets provided a religious undertone to the likely desire for unification on the basis of religious identity. Islam as a potential catalyst has played its role in uniting the Muslim republics despite their numerous differences, it seemed the differences between the Shia and Sunni Muslims were subdued temporarily by the euphoric endeavor for regional co-operation. One may recall that the first collective meeting to arrive at a consensus approach to regional development was held in Alma Ata in July 1991. Then and since, these meetings have indicated avenues of co-operation among the Muslim republics independent of the Kremlin. Although the

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meetings did not provide any inkling of the religious aspects of co-operation, it was clear that the Muslims were trying lay a strong foundation for their Islamis unity by emphasising their economic linkage. It was on this foundation of intimate interaction that these republics have visualised an Islamic role. The arena of cooperation is vast. It covers the economy, ecology, education, culture, science and social activity.[1]

In the case of the Soviet Central Asian republics, it has been a constant clash of two potential elements; a democratising polity and a "marketing" economy. When, fettered in the rigid centralised system, these two essential elements of glasnost were found to be not in consonance with the nonolith power structure, there was an exodus of spontaneity in favour of perestroika. The hopes for autonomy and independence rallied the people around the economic requirements of their respective republics. The economic issues got finally diffused in the overall ethos of the prevailing cotton monoculture and ecological disaster. The Arab Sea was disappearing, infant mortality was rising and the economic sufferings of the people knew no grounds. The people could eat, but cotton is not edible. They could drink, but the available water was not potable. While resenting the highly anomalous centre-periphery economic relations, people began looking for alternative paths to development which were not readily available. This search was opened up three likely possibilities in Central Asia's future development. First, within the Soviet Union, in a loose confederation under one economic space of which Gorbachov has been insisting. This integrative tendency has been fraught with risk, following the August coup, when the Central Asian republics declared their independence. Secondly, the feasibility of isolating the exploitative centre and evolving regional unity to alleviate the economic misery of the Central Asian inhabitants added ambiguity to the whole range of centre-republican relationship. The rising sentiments of nativism posed a challenge to the non-natives and non-Muslims. Thirdly, there is the external influence of the World's Islamic quarters on Soviet Muslims in favour of greater unity. This has precipitated an Islamic challenge to the Soviets at a crucial juncture of perestroika. Ever since the Russian empire acquired its first Muslim subjects in 1552 with the conquest of Ivan the

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Terrible over the Kazan Khanate, Muslims in the Russian empire have continued to grow in influence and proportion. The 1989 USSR census results show that Muslims accounted for 50 per cent of the country's total population growth in the period 1979-1989 between the two censuses. Over the years, Central Asian Muslims have transformed themselves from peripatetic tribes to modern nation-states. During their formation, they suffered from an actute sense of inferiority; the Muslims versus the Salvs, and Islam versus atheism. Years of coercive administration suppressed ruthlessly the Muslims desire for unification with Dar-ul-Islam. Although some contacts with the Islamic world were established, they were strictly limited to the officially approved contacts. Muslims in the Soviet Union had never been so free to practice their faith until the advent of perestroika. The revival of Islam in Soviet Muslim republics during the past five years follows the massive grassroot support encouraged by the process of democratisation. As a way of life and as an essential part of their national and cultural identity, Soviet Muslims are reasserting their allegiance to Islam. This self-assertion has taken to distinct from: self-assertion within the system, and self-assertion under external impact. The rising tide of Islamic consciousness has been especially high since 1988. Between 1984 and 1988, the number of Islamic religious unions registered with the Council of Religious Affairs rose only from 7 to 34. In a brief span of only nine months in 1989, there has been a clear upswing in this trend, realising there could be no reversal to the earlier position of suppression of the religious feelings of Muslim believers.[2]

The Muslim republics have been throwing an open challenges to the central leadership. Strongly opposing the officially patronised Muffiates, the believers have discrediting the Muftis. The new Mufti Mohammed Sodik, was charged with profanity at the July 1991 conference of Muslim community representative. For his inability to ensure a smooth distribution of free Kornas received from Saudi Arabia as gift, a group of Imams found Sodik guilty of readiness to obey state orders. The Korans were not distributed among the believers free of cost they were ordered by Sodik to be sold to Soviet Muslims. Recently, a group of Imams from Tashkent and its periphery decided to do away

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with the Muslim Board of Central Asia and founded a new board. For quite some time, the existing board was ridden with factionalism. The proponents of officialdom had been at loggerhead with those in favour of believers. The break-up of regional Muslim communities into sects along with their vacillation between official and non-official Islam have precipitated the likelihood of new board being formed. The fragment character of Islamic tendencies is evident in three directions defined by the three branches of Islam prevalent in the Soviet Muslim republic. Sunni Islam is the immense majority in Soviet Central Asia, Shia Islam has considerable influence in the Caucasus; and there are the Ismailis of the Pamir and Tadjikistan. To a varying degree, all these groups together and each of them separately view for self-assertion. A disturbing development has recently taken place in the political life of central Asian Muslims. There has been an incessant endevour to register the militant Islamic Party (IP). In a report entitled "Islamic Party still outside the law", a reporter. A Karpov, wrote in Izvestia on September 12, that there was a huge rally in front of the Supreme Soviet building throughout the days the Tajik Parliament was in session. The demonstrators were demanding permission for the IP to function officially, field its candidates for the republican presidency and usher in Tadjikistan an era of Islamic rule. The moving forces behind this new trend on revival are the Kazakh Writers' Union in Kazakhistan, the Gala and Chanlibel groups in Azerbaijan, the Baku Centre for Arts (all of them trying to preserve history, culture, art and architecture): Khazina and the Tadjik Language Fund in Tadjikistan (both trying to re-establish the linkage between Tadjik and Persian cultures), and many other groups, like the Birlik in Uzbekistan, the Ogzy Birlik in Turkmenia and the Rastokhez in Tadjikstan. These are all nationalist movements, some cultural and others political, heavily laden with Islamic feeling. Soviet Central Asia and the Caucasus have been infused with the ideas of Islamic fundamentalism from across the border. For some years, the sources, of inspiration were three: (1) Iran's Khomeinism directly called upon Soviet Muslims to demand greater freedom from Moscow; (2) the religious, ethnic and linguistic kinship and other bonds between the Soviet Muslims and their brethren abroad inspired feelings of unity; (3) the militant influence of

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Aighan Mujahidin from across the territories of adjacent Pakistan advocated destabilisation as much within Afghanistan as in Soviet Central Asia. The sources of inspiration for Soviet Muslims have recently changed dramatically. Foreign broadcasts and tourists are no longer among these sources nor are Afghan weterans. With growing personal contacts, thanks to travel, people began to realise the true differences between religious practices allowed by the Muftis and those in the real Islamic world they witnessed themselves. It was this contrast that emboldened them. Glasmost made their conviction to practice Islam stronger. Apart from the traditional parameters of influence, the outer Muslim world has had a profound impact on Soviet Muslims. There have been reports of instability fuelled by Islamic fundamentalism. A "foreign hand" has always been claimed to be a provocative source, in May 1990, a Soviet reporter Victor Panamarev, wrote in Pravda about Afghan and Pakistani involvement in the Dusha-be riots. In any case, panamarev was not the first to suggest Pakistani meddling in central Asian affairs. A Soviet Ambassador to Afghanistan, Boris Postukhov, alleged that special services of the United States and Pakistan had helped to create a group known as the "Union of Northern People" in order to destabilise the southern Soviet republics and were smuggling arms, subversive literature, money and illegal drugs to the Soviet Union. In the present chaos admist Soviet economic collapse, Pakistan seems to be offering its prescription for Islamic banking to Central Asian Muslims. On the basis of Islamic taxation and profit sharing, this idea may sell for a short period by virtue of its religiosity unitl other viable froms of banking take deep roots. Iran is another advocate of Islamic banking in Soviet Muslim republics.[3]

Khomeini's apparent unwillingness to allow significant increases in freedom of political expression even after the end of the war with Iraq was illustrated in late March 1989 when the forced the resignation of Ayatollah Montazeri, whom the Assembly of Experts had previously designated as Khomeini's successor in the role of Faqih of the Islamic Republic. Montazeri, once Khomeini's prize student, had called for greater political tolerance, charged that the revolution had failed to fulfill important promises to the people, accused the Islamic Republic's security

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forces of physical abuse of prisoners, and associate with critics of Khomeini's politics such as Mehdi Bazargan (New York Times, May 22, 1989, p.Al). Montazeri had also declined to support publicly Khomeini's call for the each of author Salman Rushdie for writing Satanic Verses, a book considered blasphemous to Islam by the ulama.

After Khomeini's death in June 1989, the government of Iran continued to be largely in the hand of clerical politicians loyal to the Ayatollah's basic concept of the Islamic Republic, but divided with respect to the degree of adherence to extreme fundamentalist principles in the face of the pragmatic requirements of domestic and foreign policy-making. On June 4, the day after Khoeimi's death, the eighty-three member assembly of religious experts selected Hojatoaislam Ali Khomenei, who had served for eight years as President of Iran, as Khomeini's successor in the role of supreme religious-political leader (New York Times, June, 5, 1989, p.Al).

With Khomeini no longer in control and the war with Iraq concluded, the possibility increased that conflict over the future course of the revolution would intensify. The result might be a shift in government priorities regarding economic policies. Millions of Iranians wanted the government to do more to redistribute the nation's wealth. However, the framers of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic had included a provision stating that individuals had the right to private ownership as long as the property in question was the result of the owner's honest labour. High-ranking ulams on the Council of Guardians have used their interpretation of this principle to block parliamentary proposals to transfer some privately owned wealth to the improvirished. Disagreement over this issue between top (generally antire-form) and lower-level personnel in the Islamic Republic party was so great to minimize divisive confrontation Khomeini took the extraordinary step of ordering the dissolution of the IRP in July 1987. However, with Khomeini no longer present to restrain or intimidate discontented groups it is possible that internal popular pressures will eventually shift the ideology and policies of post revolutionary Iran in the direction of greater redistribution of wealth and perhaps even

toward economically beneficial policies of reconciliation with the United States, Europe, and the USSR. The latter possibility appeared even more likely when Iranian leaders expressed gratitude for foreign assistance following a devastating earthquake in 1990, which took more than 30,000 Iranian lives (*New York Times*, July 6, 1990, p. A2). Whether such changes are carried out exclusively by clergy or by a wider coalition of political forces, it seems very likely that the Iranian Revolution will remain firmly in the hands of those identified with Islam rather than any secular ideology.[4]

The central themes of Islamic fundamentalism included the concept that Islamic religious ruler and more principles must be profoundly integrated with government and must indeed permeate and influence all areas of social life. Ayatollah Khomeini and other like-minded religious leaders asserted that Islamic fundamentalism must become the dominant political ideology among both Shia and Sunni Muslims and that Iran was to be only the first of many Islamic republics. The unsuccessful attempt of some Shia Iraqis to organize a revolution in Iraq helped provoke the Iraqi government's attempt to crush the Iranian Islamic Republic. The eight-year conflict between Iran and Iraq not only resulted in hundreds of thousands of casualties and billions in economic losses, it also temporarily led to the erroneous perception of Islamic fundamentalism as a uniquely Iranian or at least Shia phenomenon. Once the war was over, Islamic fundamentalism could no longer be easily deputed as a manifestation of Persian cultural and political imperialism. Advocates of fundamentalism could more of actively present their local religious movements as domestic developments in response to popular needs and aspirations. By the end of the 1980, significant Islamic fundamentalist movements existed in Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia, Turkey, and in the Arab-populated lands under Israeli control. The reasons for the growth of fundamentalism outside of Iran, apart from the easing of Arab-Iranian hostility following the end of the Iran-Iraq War, were diverse. One powerful cause appeared to be the quest for a genuinely homegrown culture capable of instilling a sense of pride, dignity, and selfworth. The process of modernisation in Muslim countries had exposed many educated

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persons not only to advanced technologies and managerial skills but also to foreign values and norms and relatively non-religious life-styles. But the largely secular ideologies, whether procapitalist or pro-socialist, characteristic of the ruling elites and skilled-occupation classes of a number of Islamic societies, often appeared to offer little to the middle and lower classes except a perpetual sense of cultural and technological inferiority and the threat of the progressive erosion of cherished moral values. In contrast, the fundamentalists put forward the appealing notion of a value and belief system ordained by God and, thus, immeasurably superior to all other cultures. Financial hardships in several Arab states also motivated many members of the middle class to turn to fundamentalism. Some apparently sought a sense of renewed moral status in compensation for reduced economic benefits and opportunities, whereas other viewed fundamentalism as a new political force through which middle-income groups, alliance with religiously motivated persons from the lower classes, could successfully overcome the domination of privileged governing elites. The continued expansion of popular support for Islamic fundamentalism, whether a response to moral delay, cultural subversion, or economic deterioration, was exemplified in 1990 electoral victories in which fundamentalist-oriented candidates won thirty-six of eighty parliamentary seats in Jordan and the majority of the vote in Algerian local election (*New York Times*, June 14, 1990, p A1; July 1, 1990, p.E5).[5]

Will there be a coup in Algeria? According to reports in the western press, there is a strong possibility that the army will intervene to prevent the Islamic Salvation Front (ISF) from coming into power. The fundamentalists won 188 seats in the first round of elections held on December 26, 1991 to a Parliament which will consist of 430 members and require only win 28 seats in the second round to be held on January 16, 1992 to secure an absolute majority. The plan, according to reports, is for the army to intervene before the elections because of the alleged frauds committed by the fundamentalists. It is surprising but some of the staunchest supporters of the demand for action to deny the Islamic Salvation Front the fruits of victory are those who have been in the forefront of the struggle for a democratic Algeria, though there is every reason to doubt their commitment to

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democracy. The leader of the Rally for Culture and Democracy Said Saadi who does not enjoy popular support wants the people to demonstrate in the streets to prevent a second round. The Avant Garde Socialist Party (the former Communist Party) too is in favour of cancelling the second round. A National Salvation Committee has brought together the secular parties, the trade unions and other organisations, and back by the ruling National Liberation Front, is organising demonstrations against the "enemies of democracy". The NSC is hoping to organise a general strike "to block the path of all totalitarian force and reject the totalitarian state. There is every reason for all secular minded persons in Algeria, irrespective of party affiliation, to be concerned if the fundamentalists come into power but fundamentalism need not necessarily be anti-democratic. Iran is by no means a secular state but it holds elections regularly to the Majlis and a parliamentary opposition does function. What is threatened in Algeria is not democracy this is the first multi-party election and the FLN has fared disastrously in the first round but secularism.[6]

It is important to draw the distinction because at the present juncture a fair and free election in most Arab countries would lead to the fundamentalist amerging as a formidable force, if not actually securing a majority. The emergence of the Muslim Brotherhood as a force in the last Jordanian elections, the rapid growth of Hamas in the occupied territories and the fear that the fundamentalist groups of various hues engender in the established regimes are sure signes that they enjoy considerable popular support. In Algeria, the President, Chadli Bandjedid, and the Prime Minister, Sid Ahmed Ghozali, are perfectly aware of the strength of the fundamentalists, in the local government election held in 1990, the Islamic Salvation Front had secured 55 per cent of the vote. It was after this the serious clashed took place between the fundamentalists and troops in Algiers and resulted in the arrest of the leader of the Salvation Front Abbas Madani and his deputy Ali Belhadj, who are still in prison. There is no certainty that fundamentalism has not won adherents in the army, particularly among junior officers and other ranks and a prolonged repression could undermine the loyalty of the armed forces. Certainly no army likes to behave like an occupation

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force in its own country and treat the people, whom they are supposed to defend, as enemies. As for allegations of electoral fraud, it need not be taken seriously. There must have been electoral fraud, but with General Larbi Belkheir, the President's right hand man and interior minister in charge of elections, it would be difficult to believe that the Islamic Salvation Front would have got the opportunity to rig the elections, the National Liberation Front is quite adapt at manipulating elections. It should not be forgotten that after the fundamentalist victory in the local elections the number of seats in Parliament was increased from 295 to 430 and the government resorted to gerrymandering on large scale, favouring the rural areas at the expense of the towns. It was believed that the rural areas were the strongholds of the FLN, the local party bosses, it was assumed, would deliver the votes. That was how it was done under the one party regime. It was the failure of this strategy that led to the collapse of the FLN.[7]

There was one region which successfully defined the Islamic wave. The Berber dominated Kabyilie region, the stronghold of Hocine Ait Ahmed, one of the historic leaders of the FLN and the only one to be active in politics, Ben Bella having been marginalised, voted solidly for the Front for Socialist Forces. Ait Ahmed's nationalist, democratic and secular credentials are above suspicion. Ait Ahmed is bitterly oppose to the fundamentalists but he believes that the opposition should stay within the constitution. Apparently if the January 3 demonstration is any indication, he has been successful in persuading the other leaders. Even now it is possible to check the fundamentalists, if the secular parties combine to confront it in the second round. But the National Liberation Front is part of the problem. It has been continuously in power since independence; it is secular but hardly democratic and the Socialist Forces Front and like minded parties will find it difficult to choose between the two Front. The party stalwarts put forward by the FLN as its candidates are hardly worthy of support; they represent the corrupt regime which most Algerians consider as having failed. Support can therefore be only on a case by case basis that means the Islamic Front will come into power. If and when that happens a confrontation is likely, though it need not take place immediately, Chali Bendjedid's

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term will end only in December 1993 and the President will continue to control defense and foreign affairs. The Islamic Salvation Front would like to change the constitution to deprive the President of this right. In the meantime, it is willing to form a government under Chadli but as one of the Salvation Front's leaders pointed out "this is not a solution. We will demand early presidential elections." The importance of the Algerian elections should not be underestimated. It has raised fundamental issues which have to be faced. If democracy is government by the people, for the people, of the people, can an external body intervene and cancel an election if the results are not favourable? Should religious, fundamentalists, Communists and other be excluded from the democratic process?[8]

Democracy cannot be defended by undemocratic methods; by banning the democratic road to power to the Islamic fundamentalists, Algerian will only force them to try to seize power by extra-constitutional methods. They have already, and more than once, demonstrated their capacity on the streets of Algiers.

Equally important is the fact that if the military is encouraged to prevent a particular group from winning the elections, then democracy itself is weakened. Instead of the people, the military become the arbiter of politics; today it might be to prevent the fundamentalist, tomorrow the socialists might be the enemy. The argument that allowing the fundamentalists to come into power will undermine secularism is hardly valid; it is for the people to choose and if they prefer to vote for an Islamic republic rather than a secular state, the choice is theirs; they have to live in such a state. Those who insist on a democratic system should not cavil if the results do not come up to their expectations.[9]

Imagine for a moment that Pakistan was but a few hundred miles over the horizon beyond Dover and you will have some idea of why relations between France and Algeria are so intense and so delicate.

As the former French colony struggles through the *pains of its first democratic elections*, which look almost certain to result

in the establishment of an Islamic state, shockwaves are spreading through the erstwhile mother country. The government in Paris has said almost nothing in respone to the Islamic Salvation Front (FIF) gaining 188 seates in the first round, leaving it with only 28 seats to win in round two on January 16, to assure a majority in the National Assembly. The result is being reviewed by Algeria's constitutional council after allegations of electoral malpractice by the FIS. If it is declared invalid and a new vote had to be taken, chances are that the Islamic majority will be reduced.

A military take-over or a civil war would be a much worse option for Paris. Anyway, as one commentator here cynically remarked, if France could support the Marxism of the national Liberation Front (FLN) in Algeria for all those years, why not now the FIS, another form of totalitarianism? There is a weary sense of Algeria being domed to play Cliban to France's Prospers: a Quai d'Orsay official recently noted sourly that France is the only Western power that cared a jot about the place; without French aid, for instance, the country's dire economic situation would be even worse. But there is also a self perpetuating paranoia, laced with guilt, about Algeria in France: the geographical proximity leads to exaggerated fear of waves of invading Arabs hitting the Coted' Azur, ready to continue the erosion of French identity and Republican values. The recent past is darkened by a war of liberation in which some 800,000 Algerians died fighting off the French.[10] Most of all, there are the omnipresent living legacies of colonialism, the Algerians who have already chosen for economic or other reason to come to France. "Arab" in France means first of all Maghrebian; among the 4.5 million legal immigrants in France nearly half come from North African countries, about 700,000 of those from Algeria. No-one knows how many illegal immigrants there are in addition, but serious estimates put the figure at around the million mark. These figures take no account of second or third generation North Africans born as French citizens. Arabs are at the bottom of almost every heap in France; they tend to be disliked even where tolerated. They have high rates of birth, unemployment and crime, and often live in bad housing in grim suburban ghettoes. Algerians in particular are regarded as

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surely and rude-manners they may have picked up from their former rulers but without the compensatory Gallic charm. The racism and ignorance surrounding all this might have had a chance of being mitigated or even dispersed in time by the government's declared policy of integration, had it not been for the upsurge of fundamentalism in the world. Race is not a deported problem for the French; religion has been and can be again. Jews and Protestants down the generations bear witness to that. Hardly surprising then that it is the threat, real or imaginary, of fundamentalism in their own country that has most frightened them. Most of French's four million. But the French the prospect of an Iranian-styole regime in Algeria raised the bogey of homegrown mullahs rallying the faithful against their infidel hosts. Mosques already share skyliness with cathedrals in many French cities. These often ostentatious building are funded mainly by the moderate and wealthy Arab states of the Gulf. But some do have backing from Algeria and the average French person is unlikely to distinguish between grades of Islam.

The leader of the extreme right wing National Front (FN) in France. Jean-Marie Le Pen, has long pointed to the proliferation of mosques as visible evidence of a cultural threat posed by immigrants. He has even painted a macabre picture of French children 50 years hence being a minority in schools and being forced to sit and beg at the gates of the mosques. The Algerian elections in region, which includes Nice, in the local elections in March. A power base of that importance would be invaluable in Le Pen's fight for better representation for his party in the National Assembly in the 1993 elections and make him a more credible candidate for the presidency in 1995. Other politicians have been tempted to play the immigration card.

In Jacques Chirac, leader of the RPR Gaullist opposition party, spoke of the "undesirable smells" created by Arab families; former President Valery Giscard d'Estaing wrote of the threatened "invasion" of immigrants frin East and South, and Edith Cresson, the present Prime Minister, advocated charter flights to repatriate those who entered France illegally. Since the Algerian vote, warning voices have come from inside the North African community too. Madame Linda Ben Yacoub, a deputy mayor of

Marseilles, which has an estimated population of 60,000 Algerian immigrants, half of them illegal, warned that a new wave of "boat people" would soon be disembarking. She saw the FIS as "fanatics, madmen of Allah". There would be "a bloody settling of accounts" once they were installed in power. Mrs Ben Yacoub, who says that her own family plans to leave Algeria spoke with borrow of the fate of women under Sharia, Islamic law; they will be she says "buried alive, condemned to do nothing except give birth". She is also sure that Mr Le Pen's chances in the regional elections have been boosted. "The rise of Le Pen's movement in France is comparable to that of the FIS in Algeria. The Algerians in Marseiller are not aware of the danger. They have been infiltrated by the FIS which has promised them miracles." According to other reports, this infiltration would seem to be not very successful, although Muslim leader in France expressed open pleasure at the success of "our brothers" in Algeria. The FIS campaign among Algerians in France who had the right to vote gained support from only 15 per cent of them. France is a lay republic that tolerates all religions. This raises a special problem when one religion sets itself above republican lore — as does fundamentalist Islam. Just over a month ago the head of the French immigration authority. Jean Claude Barreau, was forced to resign after writing a booklet in which he called on Islam to reform itself and adapt to the modern world. He called the religion "the most oppressive and closed that exists" and accused the fundamentalists of "awakening the demons of hatred and stupidity". It was, he wrote, a political religion, alien to laicity, that treated, women appallingly and would render racial integration in France unworkable. Barreau believes that his resignation was requested by the government under pressure from Arab embassies. His publisher received death threats. The rector of the Marseilles mosque expressed warm pleasure at his departure. Barreau remained unrepentant. Of the young, second-generation Algerians in France, he said: "Their problem is social, sure. But even though they hate the police and the bourgenisie they used to be patriots. Even the most disadvantaged loved France." But the fundamentalist message attacks that patriotism, creating a deeply serious problem, he declared.[11]

Good Senator Pressler, the enforcer of nuclear celibacy on poor Third World countries, warned the cockles of Indian hearts

by giving a clean chit of virginity to India. Before the warmth could turn into euphoria it was discovered that the chit carried a heavy price tag and Prime Minister Narasimha Rao politely refused to walk into the apparently tantalisting parlour. Rejection of the suggestion for a Camp David Pakistan confrontation was an appropriate corrective and a timely refusal to allow the US entry into the region as an overweening big brother. In his characteristic style of dealing with one subject at a time and severely refraining from out-of-turn pronouncement of opinion he restricted himself to the subject of immediate relevance to the government. Otherwise there is plenty in Pressler pronouncement to raise questions and to cause alarm. And public opinion in the country should better be cautioned about it. Take the question of the nuclear programme itself which is ostensibly the main concern of the Senator. He has said that the US Administration had concluded way back in 1980 that New Delhi had no intention to go in for the dirty bomb. Why, pray, was the Pressler Amendment kept hanging on India's head for all these years? Why is the clean chit issued simulatenously with the warning to Pakistan? The immediate impact of the statement is that the bomb lobby in both the countries has become more active and vociferous and the Bharatiya Janata Party in India have found a new cause to badger their respective governments. Tariq Chaudhary, one of the Jammat Stalwarts in Pakistan, has advocated that Islamabad must manufacture the bomb no matter whether India has it or not. His argument is that Pakistan can never compete with India if it confines itself only to conventional weapons. On the other hand BJP's chief ideologue and spokesman L.K. Advani has asserted in Washington that only India's own bomb can avert the threat to its security posed by the bomb across the border. The argument might be as weak and flawed as the reasoning of Advani's counterpart in Pakistan but it has the potential of powerful popular appeal. Considering the history of relations between the two neighbours and mutual perceptions of hostility the opinion in favour of the bomb can become a major item of political competition. If the aim of Senator Pressler is to check the race towards nuclearisation of the military his statements have produced just the opposite effect. That the US Administration turned a Nelson's eye to the Pakistani programme for a whole decade and pumped

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sophisticated weapons into that country despite repeated warnings by New Delhi is reason enough to surmise that the intentions are not altogether altruistic, that there is something more than meets the eye. Does the good Senator belong to or is he an unwitting pawn in the hands of that section of the US policy-makers who would like India and Pakistan to remain at loggerheads? Antagonism between Hindus and Muslims and subsequently between India and Pakistan, had served the imperialist interests of Great Britain from whose book the diplomacy Washington has learnt quite a few lessons. The cold war at the global level having ended a real possibility has arisen that the adversarial relations between India and Pakistan may change into good neighbourly ties. It cannot be ruled out that some people do not relish the prospect and would like to add new fuel to old fires.[12]

Such dark misgivings hit the mind especially as one notes. Senator Larry Pressler imparting to the bomb controversy a religio-communal colour. In his New Delhi Press conference he dwelt at length on the possibility of a Muslim fundamentalist block emerging armed with nuclear weapons which some of the Central Asian republics of the erstwhile Soviet Union possess. May be he was only trying to impress upon New Delhi to exert in favour of persuading those republics to hand over their nuclear arsenals to Yeltsin's Russia. But how does he think that the bomb in Moscow would be less dangerous than in Tashkent or Dushambe? One does not have to be a bomb enthusiast to find fault with Pressler. He would sound reasonable if he were advocating total nuclear disarmament and if he were also demanding dismantlement of the US nuclear arsenal in the same way as he is calling for the destruction or surrender of Pakistani or Central Asian nuclear arms. Gorbachev carried conviction because he expressed himself in favour of general and total disarmament and also because he started with demonstrable unilateral action in the direction. Mr Pressler is not backed by any such initiative of his Government.

That precisely is New Delhi's justification for not signing the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT). That also is the weakness of Pakistan's proposal for declaring South Asia a

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nuclear free zone which, incidentally, Mr Pressler has heartily commended. How does any region, or the world as a whole become less vulnerable if the non-believers of China and Russia and the Christians of France. Britain and the United States continue to possesson weapons while the rest of the world — Hindu, Muslim or Buddhist — adjure them?[13]

It is quite possible that Senator Pressler suffers from the US malady of volubility and overstatement but considering the kind of hot house atmosphere in which leading Third World nations are sought to be projected as less than considerate about humanity's fate one cannot but feel that behind his casualness there is careful planning. Ever since success in smothering Saddam's ambitions President Bush has been talking about creating a new world order — echoes of Kipling's "Whiteman's burden" which provided moral energy to the guilt-ridden imperialist conscience. There are striking similarities beaten how the imperialist reordered the world after the defeat of Germany and Turkey in World War I and the way Bush Administration is going about the task after the victory in Cold War. The Allies, particularly the British, had used the Zionist Jews as well as the Arabs to create deep chinks in the German-Turkish rear by exploiting their religious and racist ambitions apprehensions. After the war they sedulously want about mangling and destroying the very Arab nationalism which had been their instrument against the Ottoman Empire and the anti-imperialist movements which were getting encouragement from Germany and Turkey. The broad contours of that strategy were (i) Creation of a separate state. Israel to frontally engage the rising tide of Arab nationalism; (ii) Encouragement to Islamism (which had been defeated with the end of Turkish Khilafat) as the essence of Arab solidarity; (iii) Generating fear of Pan-Islamism and Wahabi domination on the one hand, and build anti-Muslim fundamentalist backlash in non-Muslim countries on the other. It would be naive to look for exactly the same scenario but there are unmistakable signs of something similar happening. As long as Soviet Russia and Communist China were perceived as viable resisters to Western imperialist designs fundamentalist Islam was encouraged Washington showed no inhibitions in supporting the Saudis, the fundamentalist Afghans or the islamist dictatorship

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of Zia-ul-Haq. The main adversary having been brought down warnings are being issued of a "Muslim confederation" with similar extremist chauvinist reaction in countries like India where there are non-Muslim majorities. Rather than answering to the needs and hopes of the designers of the neo-imperialist world would better give up old religious and racist prejudices. When the first and second worlds are coming together the Third World can survive only by discovering ways of mutual cooperation.[14]

Obscurantist forces are threatening to converts secular environment into fundamentalist one. The politically motivated disputes, created by the communal organisations is not only quarrel between religious groups, but also one between the forces of secularism and those interested in establishing theocratic governments. The national governments are acting in a wishy-washy manner over this issue.

It is the duty of all secular and humanitarian forces, especially to defeat fundamentalism and prevent the spread of the communal forces.

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1

Introduction : Islam and The New World Order

Predictably, the collapse of the Soviet Union has led to sweeping changes in global alignments as we move towards a new world order, though that may not necessarily be tailored to the US President George Bush's measurements. Of profound significance in this context was the remark of the prominent US Senator Larry Pressler regarding the "threat" arising from the "Islamic Bloc" which may eventually include the newly independent Muslim republics of the former Soviet Union. Pressler has put in words what many analysts and futurologists have often hinted at in the past, especially since the Iranian revolution of 1979. While the danger of a fundamentalist upsurge in West Asia has abated and US influence in the region actually increased in the aftermath of the January 1991 Gulf War, the signs of a future geo-political realignment on religious lines cannot be missed. It is against the natural order of things for the world to be unipolar for any length of time. For a few years after World War First it had similarly appeared that the victorious powers were unassailable. But soon they were shaken out of their complacency. Although the Allied power vanquished the Axis force in World War Second, the build-in ideological conflict within the Allied grouping ensured bi-polarity as soon as the war ended. Logically, therefore, the imbalance generated by the

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collapse of the countervailing force represented by the Soviet Union has to be rectified soon. It is sometimes argued that the real conflict in the post-technological revolution world will not centre around politics; that economic power holds the key to domination in the 21st century. This is true only up to a point. Politics may be less of a determinant of control today, and physical empire-building and outmoded concept, but political power is crucial even to economic success. America's ability to enforce its policy regarding intellectual property rights — which directly benefits US industry — is a case in point. Therefore bipolarity, as and when it becomes a reality, is certain to have a political, and hence ideological, component. The only ideology capable of challenging the politico-economic power of the modern West is *Islam*. Not only is it a cogent body of ideas and even statecraft, possession of oil gives Islamic unity a crucial economic propeller. Whether it is Libya or Iraq, Iran or Indonesia, oil is a common denominator. Besides, a majority of the Islamic nations are bound by a common hostility to the US, even though some like Saudi Arabia still remain Washington's allies. The hostility of these countries may be focused on the US, but this is mainly because America epitomises the "vulgar" Western civilisation. Indeed, the conflict between the Islamic states and the West is deep-rooted and stems from a historical conflict between the Islamic and Christian civilisations. Obviously, it will take years, possibly decades, for the world to be polarised into the Western and Islamic camps. But the movement towards this is probably irreversible. It may sound far-fetched now, but countries like India and China will face a serious dilemma during the next century when this new bi-polar world emerges. Both have very large Muslim populations which will have an understandable affinity towards the Islamic bloc. At the same time, as potential economic gianst and regional superpowers, their strategic interests will lie in great collaboration with the Western bloc. There has already been a perceptible shift in the US attitude towards Pakistan following the collapse of the Soviet Union. In fact, in the sub-continent today, if there is a "tilt" in US policy — to borrow the term used by Richard Nixon

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in the 1970s — it is towards India. Clearly, American policy-makers are thinking ahead. But our politicians and mandarins, notorious for failing to read the writing on the wall, are unlikely to be as farsighted. But we ignore the future at our peril. At least we should go beyong rhetoric while talking about the challenges of the 21st century.[1]

Islam, an Arabic word, means the state of submission to the one and only God (Allah), and Muslim refers to a person who has submitted to the will of Allah. Muslims share a faith in the teachings of the prophet Muhammad, who was born in 571 in Meca, Saudi Arabia. When he was about forty years old, he began preaching to the local people, who previously had worshiped several deities, saving that he had been given messages from God through the Archangel Cabriel. Muhammad's verbal expositions of God's revelations were recorded by the prophet's followers in 114 chapters (of greatly varying length), which together constituted the Quran (Koran). By the time of Muhammad's death in 632, Islam was prevalent in much of contemporary Saudi Arabia. Leaders of the Islamic community elected a successor to the prophet called the caliph. The first caliph died after only two years, and the next two were criticized for rendering unfair judgments and favoring the interests of the rich. Both were assassinated. The fourth elected caliph was Ali, a cousin of the prophet and husband of the prophet's daughter, Fatima. Ali, revered by many as a champion of the poor and exploited, was opposed by several powerful Muslims and was also assassinated in 661. A belief had developed among some Muslims, however, that Ali had originally been chosen as successor by Muhammad. According to this lime of reasoning, only descendants of Ali and Fatima were to rule the community of Islam. Believers in this concept came to be known as "Shiat Ali" (Partisans of Ali) or more simply "Shia." The Shia Muslims referred to Ali and certain male descendants of Ali and Fatima whom they recognized as having the right to rule on behalf of Allah as imams. The imams were thought by the Shia to be infalliable. Other Muslms rejected this notion and instead held the view that the faithful were to consider infallible only the

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Quran, the World of Allah and the most-central element of the "tradition," or "Sunna," of Islam. According to the "Sunnis," no person after Muhammad was infallible. Religious leaders could only attempt to interpret the Quran to the faithful in the particular context of each historical era. In the early 1990s, the large majority within Islam were Sunni and about one-sixth were Shia.[2] The Shia attached special significance to the martyrdom of Imam Hussein in 680. Hussein was the grandson of the prophet and, according to the Shia, the third imam (the first being Hussein's father, Ali, and the second, Hussein's brother Hassan). Following the death of Ali, the caliphate was assumed by Muawiya Abi Sufian, governor of Syria and antagonist of Ali. During the course of his nineteen-year reign, Muawiya attempted to alter the basis for ascendancy to the caliphate from election by the Islamic community to that of heredity (the dynastic principle). However, Muawiya's plan was for the line of descent to follow from him rather than from the prophet. Muawiya designated his son Yazid as the successor to the caliphate. Yazid demanded that Ali's son, Hussein, pledge his allegiance to him. When Hussein refused, Yazid's army surrounded and killed him and many of his seventy-two companions in the Karbala desert in Iraq. In subsequent years, Hussein's death while resisting Yazid's tyranny came to symbolize the major example of "jihad" (a struggle conducted on behalf of the Islamic community) and martyrdom for the Shia.[3] The concept of martyrdom thus became especially powerful among the Shia. Despite the inflammatory issue of what constituted the right to govern the Islamic community after the death of the prophet, the Sunnis and the Shia otherwise had very similar sets of beliefs based on the Quran and the Sharia, Islamic law derived from the Quran. However, several divisions developed among the Shia concerning how many Imams had actually followed Mohammad. The twelver Shias held that the last imam, the infant son of the eleventh Imam, vanished in 873. With the disappearance of the last imam there was no longer an infallible inter-preter of the Quran and Islamic law. This situation will only change when the twelfth imam, the "hidden imam," or

"Mahdi," returns to the faithful. Twelver Shia adherents believed that in the absence of the infallible imams, Islamic sholars (mujtahid) qualified to issue authoritative, though fallible, opinions in all matters relating to Islam were to govern the Islamic community.[4] Prior to the Sixteenth century, the people of Iran were mostly Sunni. The spread of Twelver Shism was occassioned by the Safavid conquest of Iran at the beginning of that century. The Safavids decided to foster a distinct religious culture in order to maintain the population's loyalty in the conflict against the powerful Sunni Ottoman Empire expanding from Turkey. Consequently, the Safavid rulers adopted Twelver Shism as Iran's state religion. They imported Shia religious experts on Islamic law ("ulama") from Southern Iraq, as well as from Syria and Lebanon, and provided them with wealth and status. In return the ulama accepted the Safavid dynasty and provided the new rulers with a Shia clerical infrastructure. By 1700, most Iranians were Shia.[5]

Arrival of Ayatolah Khomeini's grand design to spread revolutionary Islam in North Africa has sounded alarms among intelligence-agencies in Europe and the Middle East. Determined to take the battle of Islam to North Africa, thousands of Iranian Revolutionary Guards are reported to have signed up to join some hundreds of their comrades already in training camps set up by the Iranians last summer in Sudan. The Iranians have also targeted Algeria, where the fundamentalists' Islamic Salvation Front (ISF) has won the first round of a general election. A sum of $12 million donated by both Iran and rich Gulf-based Islamic businessmen has been deposited in the Faisal Islamic Bank in the Sudanese capital Khartoum to help the FIS. Egyptian and Tunisian intelligence alerted their European counterparts to monitor money transactions with Sudan: they fear the money may be used to find terrorists. In his lesson to the congregation on the Friday that preceded the first round of the Algerian election, Hassan al Turabi, leader of the Sudanese fundamentalists, predicted that Algeria would be the world's second Islamic republic and advised it to seek unity with Iran.

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In one of the biggest joint intelligence ventures undertaken in Cairo, Egyptian, Tunisian and some European intelligence servicesare monitoring the Iranian moves. In addition to the special fund for Algerian fundamentalists, Teheran is believed to have allocated $30 million for its new campaign. The concept of widening circles of the revolution was the brainchild of Lebanese Shia leader, Imam Moussa al-Sadar, who disappeared in Libya in 1978, and the late Ayatollah Khomeini during the latter's exile nearly two decades ago. Iran's Gulf neighbours and the Levant formed the first circle, which was infiltrated soon after Khomeini came to power in 1979. Saddam Hussein's declaration of war against Iran in 1980 confined their activities to small terrorist acts by Iranian backed Muslim groups. Syria gave the Revolutionary Guards access to Lebanon. Iran's former ambassador to Syria, All Akbar Mohteshimi — who now leads the radical factions in Teheran — created Hizbollah. They held the West and its allies to ransom by taking hostages, planting car bombs, hijacking aircraft and bombing the US Marines' headquarters.[6]

Now, the radicals in Teheran are looking to North Africa. The region included in the second circle of Islamic influence in Khomeini's grand design. Sudan was chosen as the gateway to the region. They found a hospitable base in the powerful Islamic Front, whose leader al-Turabi, guides all political moves of the regime. This suited Iran's president Hashemi Rafsanjani, who moved to fill a power vacuum left by Iraq, formerly a close ally of Sudan. It also served to keep his radical critics busy away from home, diverting armed Revolutionary Guards leaving Lebanon. A Middle Eastern intelligence source referred to a report prepared by the Iranian Foreign ministry and the Ministry of Islamic Guidance which satisfied Rafsanjani that their mission Sudan would not lead to confrontation with the West. According to the source, the reports said they had three targets; helping Sudan to shed its African pagan and Chirstian heritage by strengthening its Islamic character, persuading influential politicians in governments in the region to take more Islamic

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measures; and helping Islamic parties win elections. "If the imperialists of the West want elections contested by parties they created, let it be — but in our own way," said a representative of the Algerian Islamic Salvation Front in Teheran in October, 1991.

Sudan has become increasingly Islamic. Sharia (Islamic law was reinstated after a five-year suspension and sudanese women are now required to wear Iranian style dress in most public places. This prompted Iran to donate $20 million a year in arms and other supplies as well as a million tons of free oil after when Saudi oil supplies were cut off after Sudan backed Iraq last year. During a visit to Sudan in December 1991 Rafsanjani was greeted as "the anti-imperialist" and "the freedom fighter". Rafsanjani has been preceded by Akbar Torkan, the Iranian minister of defence. The Sudanese armed forces high command said the two sides had reviewed "developments of military ties, co-operation and exchange of expertise". Field guns, small arms and missiles were given to Khartoum to help its nine-year long military campaign against South Sudan's People's Liberation Army in the famine-ridden, non-Muslim South. The Iranians set up dozens of camps to form a Muslim popular force to fight the 'infidels in the south', training fundamentalists from the Gulf. North Africa, Nigeria, Mauritania and Sudan.[7]

The appeal of religious fundamentalism is in fact a consequence of the social malaise in the Arab world of the Gulf Just about 8 per cent of them contribute more than 50 per cent of the Arab world's aggregate gross national product. Only 12 per cent of them can be regarded as affluent while the rest live at or below subsistence levels. The benefits of the oil bonanza flow towards the West where all the wealth of the Gulf finds its way and where the petodollars are invested. This cruel hiatus between the privileged and the ordinary Arabas makes the rulers more prone to authoritarianism and the poor Arabas more susceptible victims of the preachings of fundamentalism.

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The tensions, political inter-regional and socio-economic are further exacerbated by the inflow of arms on a massive scale from outside West Asia including Israel has been the heaviest buyer or receipient of arms sales or arms aid in the world. As the Gulf War wound up fare that henceforth serious restraints would be imposed on the induction of Washington announced with great fan-arms into the region. Yet within days of that declaration of intent, the United State announced a package sale of $16 billion worth of arms to friendly states in the region. Clearly only a few states would be prevented from acquiring arms. While the rest would have continued access to American largesse. Thus a heavy agenda awaits any true resolution of the Gulf malaise. On top of the agenda has to be the question of a homeland for the Palestinians and the withdrawal of Israel from occupied Arab lands in return for the recognition of Israel and an international assurance of its security. As yet even the question of participation of the PLO, as the real representative of the Palestinians, has not yet found general agreement because of continued Israeli opposition. Having been forced to agree to an international peace conference. Tel Aviv wants the US to go through the motions of such a conference and then leave matters to bilateral negotiations between Israel and the various Arab states. The would be the surest way of stalling and furstrating the peace process, for without genuine US pressure on Israel and the mechanism of a peace conference, Israel would not allot the fundamental problems to be addressed and resolved to the satisfaction of all the parties concerned. That of course is not the end of the agenda in West Asia. The agenda shoud include the termination of foreign intervention in the region eschewing aggression against neighbours democratisation of Arab societies and an end to foreign arming of regional regimes. Israel as well as the others. The Arab people have also to realise that without the demoratisation of their societies without the diffusion of power and wealth, without more representative governments and without the evolution of elected civil and legal authorities neither their external challenges nor their internal problems would be met.[8]

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For Saudi Arabia, the Gulf War was a double-eged sword. The US-led allied drove away the Iraqi military menance, but they aggravated the Kingdom's Muslim zealots, triggering a backlash by the cane-wielding religious police, the mutawa, against what they see as a war-induced drift away from Islamic values. Liberal Saudis and foreigners report almost daily incidents in Dhahran, the oil center on the Gulf coast where many of the westerners in Saudi Arabia live, and in the capital Riyadh, involving the white-robed mutawain — mostly young hearded zealots. In some markets, especially in the big modern shopping centres there are more of them around than before and they are much more active, said a non-Saudi Arab woman in the Red Sea port of Jiddah. Since the war they seem to have become more organised than ever, she said. Like just about everyone in Saudi Arabia, nationals and foreigners, she insisted on anonymity for fear of reprisals by the mutawain or to avoid stirring diplomatic trouble. The mutawain are part of the department for the preservation of virtue and prevention of vice established in 1932 by Saudi Arabia's founder, King Abdel-Aziz. Every day, they make sure people stop for prayers five times a day, as prescribed in the Koran. They don't hesitate to beat those who don't. They jab women with their stick if they show naked arms and legs, which Islamic law dictates must be covered in public. They regularly raid videocassette shops to check they are not dealing in what they consider decadent movies. When they see a large number of cars parked near a foreigners home, they usually charge in searching for alcohol, which is banned in Saudi Arabia. A traveller from Dhahran reported that mutawain recently broke into a child's birthday party at a hotel attended by foreigners. They came in screaming that birthday parties are a western abomination and do not have a place in Saudi Arabia, he said.

US consulates have issued guidelines to Americans on how to handle religious fanatics. Your primary objective should be to end the encounter as quickly as possible, the instructions say. There is little to be gained in debating mutawain on the finer

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points of Islam. You will not change their beliefs, but you do run the risk of being temporarily detained at police headquarters. Several travellers from Riyadh related how a Saudi woman, a pediatrician, was stopped by mutawain as she was racing to her ailing brother's bedside in a chauffeur-driven car.

When she became agitated, they took her to their local headquarters and lashed her. She was accused of being in a secluded environment with a foreign male, her non-Saudi driver. Individual excesses may occur, but they might have been provoked by deviationary deeds, said Dr Ibrahim Ibn Mubarak al-Juwair, associate professor of sociology at the University of Imam Mohammed Ib Seoud in Riyadh, a conservation stronghold. As the excesses mounted, the authorities were prodded into moving to rein in the firebrands. Shopkeepers in Riyadh threatened to close down unless the zealots stopped harassing women customers. Soon after, unidentified men beat up mutawain at the Ash-shuala supermarked owned by prince Mishaal, a brother of King Fahd, witnesses said. On December 28, 1991 Saudi Arabia's leading Muslim theologian Sheikh Abdel-Aziz Ibn Baz urged fundamentalists to halt their campaign against the nation's Islamic scholars, political leaders and some members of the royal family. He said the strident criticism in mosque sermons and in widely distributed audio cassettes was totally against the teachings of Allah and prophet Mohammed. This is an aggression against the rights of those who have been doing their best to guide the people and correct their faith, he said in a statement distributed by the Saudi Press Agency and broadcast by state radio.

The fundamentalists oppose any liberalisation of the government, which already bars alcohol, requires that women be veiled in public, and makes prayer obligatory five times a day. Sheikh Ibn Baz is president of the department of religious scholarship and guidance, a government appointed position that oversees all religious affairs and accords him great influence among Saudi Arabia's people.

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He denounced those "who whisper secretary in their meetings and record their poison over cassettes distributed to the people" or those who make these accusations in public lectures of universities.

He called on such people to repent and desist from these activities and warned the zealots that they were helping secularists, westernisers and atheists.

His statement came as Algeria's Islamic fundamentalists won more seats than any other party in the North African country's first free general elections since independence from France in 1962. They are expected to win a majority in a run off election this month.

At the same time, Islamic fundamentalists have been increasingly active in Jordon. Egypt and Tunisia. The resurgence in Saudi Arabia was triggered in part, by the deployment of more than 500,000 US and Western troops, including women in the Kingdom after Kuwait's invasion.

Many religious leaders considered that influx of non-Muslims in the land where Islam was born, to be sacrilegious. They also fear that the presence of so many westerners would dilute the nation's deep-rooted conservation and open the way to change.

Because of the closed nature of Saudi society, it is difficult to assess whether Islamic fundamentalists and the Saudi establishment are moving toward a major confrontation.

The government has been seeking to avoid a clash. But the militants are clearly unhappy with King Fahd's recent pledge to establish a consultative council through which Saudis would have a minimal but unprecedented voice in state affairs, and produce civil legislation. The developments would tend to open up Saudi Society and undermine the fundamentalist's power.

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The issue of seeking Libyan cooperation in establishing responsibility for the bombing of US and French civilian aircraft now before the U.N. Security Council for a vote has extra-legal overtones which may have far reaching political implications. Experts of international law believe that some nations, in piloting the move under the rubric of 'international peace and security,' are, in effect, bypassing the legal process. The discussions on the draft resolution prepared by the U.S. Britain and France will be taken up on January 20. Though the draft resolution does not explicitly ask for extradition of the Libyan citizens, allegedly involved in the bombing of Pan Am and French Uta flights, it is widely believed that extradition could be implied. India is keenly watching the process for, if the resolution is through, it will clear the way for prime minister Narasimha Rao's visit to New York for the January 31, 1992 summit of the members of the Security Council which British prime minister John Major has convened to discuss the new challenges facing the world. So far, the indications are that India is on the side of international law and would like to see that the legal process is complied with. An affirmative vote in the Security Council implies that the international body will pressurise Libya to hand over its nationals involved in the bombing. However, if Libya rejects the plea, which is likely, the Security Council can be reconvened to move for sanctions as well as action against it. This is the worst fear of the Arab nations. The composition of the Security Council shows that the vote will be easily carried through, even if the NAM nations vote against it. Barring Morocco, the only Arab nation on the Council, three permanent members of the Security Council — the U.S., France and England are parties to the dispute. Russian will evidently go along with those in favor. China's stance is still not clear. Belgium, Austria, Hungary and Japan will vote with the West. If Venezuela also votes with it, the diktat via the international body would be complete.[9]

The issue, however, is should the Security Council be involved in legal matters of a bilateral nature? Is the question of extradition for trial of the two accused on magnitude that

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threatens international peace and security? Would not the International Court of Justice be the suitable body to arbitrate on the matter?

The entire question is of the utmost importance for India because, for the past several years, New Delhi has been demanding the trial of persons now residing in Pakistan who had masterminded the hijacking of India aircraft. Any decision taken by the Security Council would have wider ramifications. The moot point is: Will the nations favoring the draft resolution against Libya vote on the same lines when India demands the extradition of the terrorists from Pakistan who had been involved in hijacking of Indian aircraft? France, Britain and the US have charged that the Libyan government has not adequately responded to their demand for handing over the two men concerned for trial on their soil.[10]

A year after the Gulf War began, the Arab World remains a region polarised between the very poor and the very rich, where dictatorship is the norm and the breakup of the Soviet Union has spurred a dangerous new arms race. In the power vacuum left when Iraq was defeated. Iran has moved to reap the political benefits of its neutrality in the Gulf War, improving relation with the West and emerging as the most aggressive new aspirant to military supremacy. "There was a sense that momentous political and economic shifts were about to take place," said an Arab diplomat in Cairo, reflecting on the expectations in the region following the Gulf War. "But we've all been reminded once again that things change slowly. All our problems are still here. A few traces of the political reforms anticipated by Arab moderates can be found. Kuwait's emir returned to his liberated country to find an awakened desire for pluralism. He has promised elections for October 1992. In Saudi Arabia, King Fahd said he will be ready to present a proposal for a long-awaited consultative council, to open up decision-making beyond his circle of relatives, in two months. But in many other countries, the one-man regimes seem as entrenched as before.

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Syrian President Hafez Assad held a referendum on his rule in November, but Syrians had to vote in the open, under the watchful eyes of Government officials. Not surprisingly, more than 99 per cent voted "Yes" for another four-year term for Assad. A Joke making the rounds in Damascus was that Syrians had only two choices on the ballot: "yes" and "for eternity". In Iraq President Saddam Hussein is blithely celebrating what he claims was his victory in the "mother of all battle." Postwar rebellions by Iraqi Kurds and Shiite Muslims don't appear to have shaken his grip on power, even as he has discarded proposed political reform and replaced reformist-leaning members of his inner circle with trusted family members.[11]

"Democratisation isn't going well and in many places, hasn't even begun" wrote Jihad al-Khazen, editor-in-chief of the London-based al-Hayat newspaper. The most significant activity in the Middle East since the Gulf War appears to be a spurt to purchase weapons. Economic problems in countries like Syria and Iran combined with the dampening effects of the Gulf crisis, had slowed the regional arms race. But the Gulf War, with its display of western technological prowess over the Soviet-made Iraqi military, created an appetite for new weaponry. Syria and Iran reportedly are cooperating in a missile development programme, while purchasing ballastic missiles from China and North Korea and shopping for military hardware from the former Soviet republics. The United States has made a number of big sales to Persian Gulf emirates, despite President Bush's proposal last year for control of arms sales to the Middle East.

Iran, moving to fill a regional power vacuum, is also extending its political influence. Sudan, one of the poorest countries of the world, has been promised Iranian military aid. Worried authorities in Egypt and Tunisia, where Governments are trying to suppress fundamentalists, have said that militant extremist are being trained in Sudan by Iranian. While the oil-producing countries have weathered the disruptions of the Gulf crisis, poorer nations like Egypt and Syria have not received the largeses they

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expected from the rich Gulf states as their reward for joining the anti-Iraq coalition. Kuwait is financing a few development projects in Syria, including the modernisation of its telephone system. Egypt, which benefited from the write off of its $ 7 billion military debt to the United States, has been less lucky. Officials said Gulf investment has barely increased over the past year. Meanwhile, talks are stailed on an agreement drafted in Damascus in march to station Egyptian and Syrian troops in the Gulf as the core of a new defencive force. Behind the idea of an Arab force was the desire by cash-strapped Syria and Egypt for payments from the oil sheikdoms. But the Emirates of the Gulf have made clear they prefer to rely on the West than risk the potentially disruptive effects of having Arab soldiers on their soil. "The relationship between any country and one of the superpowers is clear," explained Nagi al-Ghatrifi, an adviser to Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Mousa. "But the relationship between (Arab) countries is more complicated and sensitive.[12]

The trend in the Arab would to return to Islamic law was strengthened with the overwhelling success of the Islamic Salvation Front (ISF) in the first round of voting for the Algerian parliamentary elections on December 27, 1991.

The staggering fundamentalists victory came in the first free multi-party elections. The ISF obtained 202 seats in the 430-member National Assembly. Just 28 seats short of the majority.

In 199 constituencies, where no candidate won the necessary majority, and the ISF was only a few votes short, there will be a second round of voting on January 17, 1992.

The National Liberation Front (NLF), which has rules Algeria as a one-party Marxist state for the past 30 years, since independence from France, is in the third place with 16 seats, behind the Socialist Froces Front of the minority Berber people, which has won 20 seats.

Losing parties have contested the results for about 50 seats, mostly charging fundamentalists with irregularities.

Only 58 per cent of Algeria's 13.3 million registered voters cast their votes in the elections. Many women abstained from voting as they are controlled by their male relatives.

President Chali Benjedid, who belongs to the NLF said on Sunday, that he was willing to stay in office for the remaining two years and would be prepared to share power.

The ISF leader Abdelkader Hachani, considered to be a moderate, said, its first priority in Government will be to call for presidential elections. His party is committed to introducing Islamic laws. However, the Front would not impose the one-party system and would allow all political tendencies freedom to express themselves. Iranian style people's courts would not be imposed and women would not be confined to their homes.

The NLF's monolpoly of power was shaken in October 1989, when souring prices and corruption triggered off riots in which hundreds were killed and the Capital Algiers was left in Shamles.

The destruction forced the country on the course of democracy. A new Constitution was drawn up in February 1989 to allow the formation of other parties.

The Islamic parties in West Asia and North Africa are of recent origin. In the first multi-party elections in Jordan in 1989, the Muslim Brotherhood emerged as the largest single party in parliament securing 22 of its 80 seats and its leader, Abdul Lati Arabiyat, was elected Speaker uncontested.

Kuwait is to fully implement the Islamic law, its Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Dhari Al-Othman said nine months after the Iraqis fled from the country.

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In the Turkish elections in October 20. The Islamic Fundamentalists Welfare party obtained 62 seats and it now supports the largest party, the True Path Party of Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel in opposing pro-Western policies President Turgut Ozal, whose Motherland Party was defeated.

Five of the six Muslim Republics of former Soviet Union have been moving closer to the Islamic countries, through Turkey.

Shilte Muslim radicals demanding Islamic law be installed in Nigeria's northern state of Katsina fought Police in a clash that left two people dead.

However, hospital sources on January 7, 1992 said four people were killed in the fighting that broke out on January 5, When hundreds of Shi'ites tried to take over the central mosque in Kataina, a city more than 1,120 kilometres northeast of Lagos, the Nigerian capital.

Police Commissioner Mohammed Ali-Jos said that the Shi'ites wanted to take over the mosque to highlight their demands for Islamic law in the that state.

Police barred the radicals from entering the worship place and opened fire only after they were attacked with machetes and stones.

One member of the sect, Malam Abubakar, was shot and killed. The second victim was a police corporal who was shot accidentally by a colleague.

Twenty-nine other people were seriously injured and hospitalized, and police arrested 263 Shi'ites.

The leader of Nigeria's minority Shilites, Mallam Ibrahim, has been jailed since April, 1991. He was found guilty of inciting riots in which 18 people were killed.

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The police chief said his men had recovered a huge sum of money from the sect's headquarters. The amount of money was not immediately available.

Shi'ites are a minority among Nigerian Muslims, who outnumber Christians in this nation of more than 100 million. Christian-Muslim tension have increased as young Africans flock to fundamentalist Islamic sects.

The most radical fundamentalists have said the Muslim-dominated north should secede from this sprawling nation if the military government does not allow Islamic law. There are Islamic law courts in the North, but they have power to deal only with civil cases involving Muslims who do not want to go to regular courts.

There have been some reports about the involvement of Turkey and Saudi Arabia trying to gain a foothold. The Saudis are active in Central Asia while Turkey is most interested in the Caucasus, especially in Azer-baijan. Turkey's proximity to Azerbaijan and Iran's challenge in the region has made it more interested than ever in Azerbaijan. Elements of pan-Turkism have emerged in a big way. Within the leadership of the Azerbaijani Popular Front, pan-Turkic feelings are running high. Besides, locally popular leaders like Geider Aliyev, pensioned off to Nakhichevan under Gorbachov, have been recently elected unopposed to the Nakhichevan Mujels and they may hobnob with the Turkish leadership in favor of pan-Turkism. There is a growing desire among certain Turkish politicians to gain a regional role for Turkey in the Soviet Muslim republics. Many nations of the West have viewed this favorably as a legitimate role for Turkey in the area. Amidst these endeavours by Turkey on the one hand and Pakistan, Iran and Saudi Arabia on the other, it is Iran's Khomeinism that is being sandwiched between the currents of pan-Turkism and Islamism. The Soviet southern underbelly, stretching from Turkey in the West to the Chinese borders in the South-East, has been divided into four distinct regions of active Islamic propaganda. Along the Turkish borders

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deep into the caucasus, it if pan-Turkism. Along the borders with Iran, it is Khomeinism. Supported by the disgruntled mujahidein and encouraged financially and morally by the Saudis and Pakistanis, more than 2,000 kilometres of the Soviet border with Afghanistan is witness to a momentous movement in the Islamic direction. Along the Chinese borders, it is the movement to unite the Chinese Uighurs with their Soviet counterparts in Central Asia. This movement has the explicit aim of re-establishing the erstwhile undivided Turkistan. There are also movements for a separable Tatarstan and Bashkirstan. People who share an ethnic, linguistic and religious heritage are now located in various countries. These peoples of a particular geographic region are busy asserting their national identifies. By embracing nearly 50 million Soviet Muslims through various forms of regional cooperation, they think their cause will be stronger. While pan-Turkism, pan-Iranism and pan-Islamism have segmented the region, under tremendous economic compulsions and chaos, the Soviet Muslim republics have made concerted efforts to unite under the banner of regional economic cooperation. Under the given conditions there seems to be no end to the tumult. Rather, it may inspire regional movements in neighbouring countries with a predominant Muslim population to travel pan-Islamic paths to an uncertain future.[13]

Authorities in China's remote largely Muslim province of Xinjiang have called for closer ethnic unity, apparently in response to the growth of nationalism and Islamic fundamentalism in the former Soviet Asian republics just across the border.

Peking on January 5, 1992 signed a communique establishing diplomatic relations with one of the new states Tajikistan.

It said the two parties had agreed on mutual respect for sovereignty and non-interference in each other's affairs.

But China's leaders are concerned that the new spirit of nationalism across the border in the former Soviet empire might spill over into Xinjiang, a vast province thousands of miles from Peking, the capital.

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Ruled as an "autonomous region" indifference to the presence of large number of non-Chinese people.

Xinjiang shares a border with three of the newsly-independent Central Asian states: Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

In a local televised address at the weekened, Keyum Bawudun, deputy chairman of Xinjiang, said: "Xinjiang, as the north-west gateway of the motherland, is very important in terms of its strategic position.

"It is necessary to strengthen education in national defence among all ethnic groups in the region, to enhance solidarity between the army and the people, and to increase interethnic unity."

He was speaking at a meeting to discuss ways of supporting the Chinese army and helping soldiers' families.

There have been sporadic out-bursts of Muslim unrest in Xinjiang since the late 19th century, when the territory was formally incorporated into the Chinese empire.

Large number of troops were sent to the region in April 1990 to crush what the authorities later called a "counter-revolutionary rebellion".

China has set up a Muslim-dominated trust and investment company to attract Arab funds to help finance the development of the country's minority regions. Paking-based China Nationalities International Trust & Investment Corp., which was capitalised at Rmb 100 million (US $ 18.5 million), is negotiating with Arab banks to open an Islamic bank in Shanghai.

While seeking to build new bridges with the United States and shedding her old reflexes, India has to make a painful reappraisal of the non-aligned movement or the Third World. Whatever be the relevance of that movement or South-South

cooperation in the economic field, militarily the Third World stands exposed as powerless before the irresistible, superior military technology of the United States after the horrendous decimation of Iraq's third biggest army in Asia. Politically, it has lost its clout after the end of the cold war and collapse of the Soviet Union. Economically, it is a conglomerate of incompetent and inefficient economies, barring a few, hopelessly dependent on aid, loan, investment, technology and capital goods of the industrialised West. Any assessment which India may make of the new role for the non-aligned movement or the Third World cannot escape these realities. Nor should India have any illusion that the United States needs her to check Muslim fundamentalism. After the Gulf War, such fundamentalism is no longer of any immediate concern to the United States. What happens in the distant future on the rise of Muslim Central Asian republics of the former Soviet Union can at present be only a matter of speculation. On the contrary, it is essential for India to strengthen her relations with all Muslim countries and to continue to espouse the cause of Palestinians vigorously. One great achievement of India's foreign policy was to frustrate the efforts of Pakistan to build a solid block of Muslim countries against India. Pakistan has again stepped up her efforts to enlist the support of Muslim countries against India on the question of Kashmir. What India needs to do is to counter the move of Pakistan by projection of her commitment to secularism in the cause of more than one hundred millions Muslims who are equal citizens of India and for whom India is and shall always be their home.[14]

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2

Nationalism

The heads of Arab states who gathered for an emergency meeting in Cairo on August 10, 1991 were nearly unanimous in their censure of Iraq's aggression and in their demand for the withdrawal of its troops from Kuwaiti territory. They resolved to raise an all-Arab force to give military assistance to Saudi Arabia in the face of the Iraqi threat. The resolution passed by the Cairo meeting was opposed only by the PLO and Libya, not counting Iraq itself. The customary difference surfaced when things came to a practical implementation of the resolution. Egypt, Morocco and Syria were the only countries to send their military units to Saudi Arabia, but they, too, chose to distance themselves form the American show of strength. The majority of the Arab countries accepted, with a varying degree of suspicion, the need for military measures being taken to enforce the UN Security Council's sanctions against Iraq and the prospect of the long-term US presence in the region. The most violent reaction to this turn of event came from the Islamic fundamentalists, who are going form strength to strength in the Arab World. A series of Arab countries were swept by a wave of anti-American demonstrations. In contrast to the official line, the popular mood was generally tilting in Hussein's favour. In the context, the Gulf conflict has a specific socio-psychological connotation. The Arab World today is a motley patch-word of countries ranging across the entire spectrum of economic and cultural development.

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Their political underpinnings are equally varied, form dictatorship and parliamentary states (including Kuwait, which rightly prides itself on its aggressive and sharptongued parliament), theocratic monarchies to secular republics. It has its own right and left forces, both politicians and political groups, and even states. Some of the sister countries are poor and others rich, fabulously rich like the principalities, whose unequalled prosperity has in recent years been increasing striking against the background of the deplorable financial and economic situation in the majority of other Arab countries in the stranglehold of foreign debts. Kuwait, for one, could easily afford to have no debts at all; moreover, it could regularly put away 10 per cent of its GNP in 'a future generations fund'. Physical work in the country has been done by imported Indians and Pakistanis, while the 300,000 strong Palestinian community constituted the educated middle class. Although the Gulf sheikhs liberally shared their incomes with the "Forntline states", that is, states confronting Israel face to face, their luxurious Mercedeses and gold plated washbasins stirred mixed feelings in the minds of Egyptian *fellaheens* or Algerian dock workers. This is, perhaps, one of the reasons behind the ordinary Arabs' reaction to the Gulf events, one which set them in the context of the showdown between the poor and the rich, and intensified religious and anti-American undercurrents. It is not unlikely that should the conflict drag on indefinitely, these factors could have an escalation effect on the minds of the Arab popular masses. The Gulf conflict owes its truly global notoriety to the fact that it has broken out in an enduring hotbed of tensions, a solar plexus of world politics. With more than a half of the world's oil hidden in its soil, the Persian Gulf region, the planet's oil Eldorado, is in the focus of political and economic interests of many states. The combined Iraqi and Kuwaiti oil export supplied 60 per cent of the energy needs of Western Europe and up to 40 per cent of Japan's. The rippling flow of oil in the pipelines criss-crossing the lifeless deserts of the Arabian Peninsula (looking heart-shaped in geographic maps) in the manner of arteries was an unmistakable indication. Of the energy-wise health of the world's industrial nations. It is not the first time that the Persian Gulf has found

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itself at the centre of power confrontation. The tensions brusting out in various points of the globe have converged her no more than one occasion in recent years. Since the rearly 1980s, when Carter Doctrine, subsequently endorsed by the Reagan administration, was unveiled, the US policy in the region has been guided by the possibility of the US military power being committed in contingency to avert the threat to US interest in the Gulf. The US Rapid Deployment Force was set up with this region in mind. The US navy's interference in the Gulf at the height of the war between Iraq and Iran was further proof of United States' attachment to power politics in approaching international problems. This attachment seems to have trapped the present US administration which has, without any visible signs of hesitation, sent a large body of its troops to Saudi Arabia. Time will show how discretely President Bush will manage this awesome power and whether the positive record accumulated over the recent years of reassessment of international relations will be enough to prevent the situation from growing worse.[1]

The joint Soviet-American statement adopted in Helsinki early last September breathes cautious optimism for the future. The Statement combines a firm determination to joinly oppose aggression with an explicit desire to rely on politics and diplomacy to halt the aggression.

"We favour a peaceful settlement of the crisis and will hold a common position in the face of Iraq's aggression", the Soviet and US Presidents have stated. "Still, we are fully determined to stop the aggression, and should the steps presently taken fail in bringing this about, we are ready to consider the possibility of additional steps being taken in keeping with the UN Charter. We must demonstrate in a most convincing way that aggression cannot, and will not benefit anyone."

The international community must pursue ways to create and maintain peace and stability in the Middle East. Sometimes

reaching a durable peace is more difficult than winning a war. Nevertheless, I believe this objective is within our reach. We have long considered the chronic instability in the Middle East as a threat to world peace. We hope that with the lessons drawn form the Gulf crisis, the existing problems and tension in the region will be addressed at fundamental level. We follow with great concern the internal situation in Iraq. We hope that stability in that country can be restored without further bloodshed, and that the various groups will soon be able to find expression in a more democratic structure. We attach great importance to Iraqi territorial integrity. Dismembering any country in the region will lead to incalculable turmoil. Great care should be taken to uphold long-term objectives, rather than reap short-term benefits. Resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict is critical for peace in the region. It would not only help solve other problems in the area, but also anti-Western sentiments among Arabs, who will sometimes claim double standards in the West as long as Palestinian hopes remain frustrated. Israel is entitled to peace with her neighbours, and that menas ending the state of war that exists between them. Mentalities on this issue must change, and the two sides must learn to coexist peacefully. Movement must come from all sides. We believe that the ground must be prepared before an international conference is called. The coalition partners may have a special role to play in this respect, because the cooperation and solidarity they have demonstrated have enhanced their credibility for dealing with post-war questions. The major coalition partner, the United States, could play a decisive part, since it has special relations with all sides. Turkey would also like to play a part in the efforts for bringing an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict, and we are ready to host an international conference in our country, if it is eventually decided. Comprehensive regional security and economic arrangements must be shaped. The efforts of the people of the region will need to be facilitated by outside nations. This can be done by contributing to multilateral arrangements that may be reached and also bilateral agreements-with the countries of the region. Turkey is willing and ready to contribute to such a

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process by playing an active and constructive role, especially in promoting trade relations, economic cooperation, and building infrastructure and development projects. It is our firm conviction that there is a strong need for expanded post-war economic Cooperation and inter-regional economic interdependence. An economic development fund or bank could be established to encourage cooperation for large-scale trans-national infrastructure projects in the area, like the water for peace pipeline I suggested several years ago. The fund would help the entire region, bringing a higher level of prosperity to all states. Until now, the region's water needs have not received enough attention. Water is such a critical resource. It may become even more precious than oil. I have invited regional leaders to assemble this coming November for a summit on trans-boundary waters in the Middle East.[2]

Untilit was snuffed out by the outbreak of the Gulf crisis in August, 1990, a belief in some cricles held that economic rather than military power would control the world of the future. This nation appeared not only in Japan but also in the United States, where it encouraged the talk about "the Japanese threat". I was never party to this thinking myself, though I did not reject it entirely. The people who held it were correct in assuming that the end of the cold war would mean a realignment of the world order. They were also correct in concluding that the enormous military forces of the United States and the Soviet Union, capped by their nuclear arsenals, would become less decisive and that other forms of power would grow in importance in other words, that global politics would move according to a new set of rules. But their suggestion that we were entering an age of economic power has clearly lost its credibility in the wake of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Why did the Gulf crisis occur at this particular juncture? Naturally, this is a difficult question, one that is likely to trouble future historians. In particular, why did iraq's President Saddam Hussein gamble on invading and annexing Kuwait just when it had become clear that the U.S. Soviet cold war was over? In retrospect this seems to have been

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the worst possible timing; the Soviets supported the U.S. call for sanctions, and Iraq found itself opposed by all but a handful of countries. Furthermore, though the market for oil is expected to tighten in the future, for now supply is running ahead of demand, being it impossible to use oil as a weapon. It is not correct to judge that Iraq went into action because the end of the cold war caused the forces holding it in check to cease operating. There may be an element of truth to this view, but it is not adequate as an explanation. To be sure, the relative weights of both the United States and the Soviet Union have declined. This is not a new development, however and if anything these superpowers' ability to hold other countries in check ought to have been even weaker when they were busy confronting each other. When Saddam Hussein decided to invade Iran 10 years ago, the combination of the relative decline of U.S. and Soviet power with the heightening of east-west tensions left Washington and Moscow unable to stop him. But now that their confrontation has wound down, the superpowers ought to be in a better position to deter such adventurism. Linking the Iraqi invasion this time with the end of the cold war thus makes little sense.[3]

I myself am inclined to view the attack on Kuwait as resulting from miscalculation by Saddam. Most likely, he did not expect the United States to adopt such a firm attitude at this juncture. To be sure, the Americans often fail to implement policies thoroughly, and they are prone to minor tactical errors. But at times like this they show their resolve. The Iraqi president also seems to have misread the Soviet response. He probably figured that Moscow was unlikely to stand behind Washington, even though the cold war had ended and U.S. Soviet relations had improved. After all, nobody would expect the two countries to agree on everything, and furthermore, the economically hard-pressed Soviet Union would benefit from higher prices on its oil exports. So it would not have been unreasonable for Saddam to have concluded that the Soviets, even if they did not support him, would at least not oppose him. Though we have no way of reading Saddam's mind, we can see

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how he is trying to justify his actions. In a nutshell, he is appealing to Arab nationalism. The concept of Arab nationalism is difficult to pin down. For one thing, the Arabas are not a single race or tribe. There are great difference in the ethnic composition of the various Arab countries. Furthermore, though all these countries share Arabic as a common language, not all their people speak it. Nonetheless, appeals to Arab unity and the Arab cause have been heard repeatedly, and they have had considerable political impact. Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser became the hero of the entire Arab world for more than a decade beginning in the mid-1950s because he was seen as the representative of this cause. At the risk of over-simplification, Arab nationalism can be defined as a shared consciousness, the main elements of which are memories of an illustrious past and the bitter experience of colonial domination by the Western powers. From the eighth through the thirteenth centuries, the Arab world flourished, creating an outstanding culture considerably more advanced than that of Europe, which was then in the Middle Ages. But after being defeated by the Mongols, the Arabs suddenly fell into decline. In the sixteenth century, the bulk of their erstwhile expire came under the rule of the Ottoman Turks, who continued to hold sway until the early twentieth century. The domain of autonomous Arab power restricted to the Arabian peninsula. The Arabas were set on the road to independence during World War I, when Britain and France made common cause with them in the successful struggle to end Ottoman rule. The famous "Lawrence of Arabia" was a symbolic figure in this fight. In a sense, however, the process merely replaced the Turkish overloads with West European ones. The British had begun extending their power over coastal areas of the Arabian peninsula like Oman at the end of the eighteenth century, and following World War. First they and the French took control of much of the Middle-East under League of Nations mandates. The independence movements in the region thus came to be directed against these European rulers. Oil complicated the situation. The countries of the West became increasingly dependent on this resource, which the

Middle-East possessed in abundance. The European powers gradually turned their mandates into independent countries, but at the same time they made arrangements to protect their own economic interests in the region. It is not surprising that many Arabas consider that they are still not fully independent. Another component of Arab nationalism is anti-israeli sentiment and antagonism toward the Western nations, particularly the United States, that have supported Israel. It is not my intention to get into the rights and wrongs of Israel's establishment, though I would not that the still-fresh memories of the slaughter of Jews by the Nazis, coming on top of centuries of cruel treatment, probably made the creation of the Jewish state inevitable. Still, for the Arabas in the area it was distressing and even threatening to have a country that had disappeared 2,000 years before suddenly reemerge in their midst. Since its founding Israel has demonstrated problematic behavior on many occasions, but the Western countries, and America in particular, have been lenient towards it. The most egregious example is probably its refusal to withdraw from certain territories it occupied during the Seven-Day War in 1967, some of which it has annexed. The United Nations called for an Israeli withdrawal from these territories in Security Council resolution 242, but it failed to deal firmly with Israel's noncomphance. This is quite different from the approach being taken toward Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Of course, the two cases are not exactly the same, and Israel has its own justifications, but there is no question that many Arabas are incensed. This Arab anger showed up clearly in the response to the wild pronouncement by Saddam Hussein in spring 1990 in which he boasted that Iraq had powerful chemical weapons and would burn up half of Israel's population if it came to war. His open talk of using chemical weapons, which are forbidden under international law, would have alienated people in most countries, but in the Arab World many people applauded him. Yet one more component of Arab nationalism is dissatisfication with domestic political setups, particularly monarchies. Fundamentally, the world of Islam does not recognize rule by kings, which means that the legitimacy of monarchies is

weak (the Saudi royal dynasty alone has won religious recognition). And oil revenues have created a huge gap between the ruling families controlling them and the general masses. The monarchs have no intention of distribution the wealth evenly and little though of using it to develop their economies. This state of affairs makes Saddam's suggestion that oil is joint Arab property sound attractive and lends force to the idea that people should overthrow the selfish monarchs and take power in their own hands. The Arab world is thus characterized by a number of issues on which the status quo is not widely accepted, either at home or abroad, and by anger at being in circumstances that cannot compare with the glory of the distant past. Saddam probably based his gamble on the assumption that he could use these sentiments to win support, and even now he is doubtless pinning his hopes on Arab nationalism. Specifically, he is probably hoping that movements opposing cooperation with America will arise in the Arab countries participating in the military coalition against Iraq, forcing them to withdraw their troops. That is the only possible explanation for his readiness to disregard the common-sense nation that he cannot possibly hope to win with the whole world arrayed against his country.[4]

The above circumstances do not, of course, justify what the Iraqi president has done. His action is a fragrant violation of the most basic rules of the international community. Making an unprovoked attack on an internationally recognized nations is bad enough, but to go so far as to annex such a nation is virtually unheard of. The only case in recent history was the Soviet Union's annexation of the three Baltic states after it and Germany divided up Poland at the start of World War II. It is no excuse to claim that Kuwait is an artificially created country whose establishment Iraq protested on the grounds that the territory in question was its own. Iraq subsequently came to an understanding on the matter and established diplomatic relations with Kuwait, which became a recognized member of the international community. Most of the countries of the middle-East were in fact artificially created, as indeed were many of the

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world's other existing countries. And the nations that are dissatisfied with their present borders are countless. There would be an end to the strife if every nation were to press its claims, for which reason the principle exists that nations shall not redraw their borders by military might. If this principle is no upheld, the world will fall into a state in which the strong gobble up the weak. Because this is understood, all but a few countries opposed Iraq's action, and the U.N. Security Council passed a set of resolutions demanding its immediate and unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait and backing up the demand with economic sanctions. It is worthnoting that the support for these unusually strong measures unprecedented in U.N. history was virtually unanimous. Cuba, whose anti-American stance is well known, has a seat on the Security Council, but it did not oppose the resolutions, not did Yemen, which generally sympathizes with Iraq. Though some countries may have had reservations, the prevailing view was that order must be upheld. The Iraqi leader's biggest miscalculation was probably on this point. As I noted earlier, he seems to have misread the Soviet response, but it also seems likely that he was not absolutely certain of his own reading. Surely, however, he must have been absolutely confident that most of the other Arab countries would not line up against him; leaving Iraq in almost complete diplomatic isolation. He failed to appreciate their commitment to order. There may be more truth than we might imagine in the conjecture that Saddam undertook this gamble because he saw it as his last chance to act before the end of the cold war caused the world order to become fixed in its present state. Sooner or later, the Gulf crisis will probably end with an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait, whether peaceful or accompanied by bloodshed. If the annexation is allowed to stand, it will mean the start of an age in which the law of the jungle prevails. Fear of this prospect should keep the countries involved from accepting Iraq's action. But even if Kuwait's sovereignty is restored, there will be no return to the preinvasion status quo in the Arab world or, for that matter, in the rest of world either. The crisis might still be resolved peacefully, but the scale of the military forces deployed

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and the extent of diplomatic activity brought to bear have been equivalent to those involved in a major war. The economic repercussions, both short-and long-term, are likely to be profound. Furthermore, since people's emotions have been aroused to a fever pitch, we may seen the outbreak of some unexpected new trouble. Our first concern should be to avoid blunders in the moves to rectify the situation. Any number of mistakes are possible, including military action by the United States at the wrong time, the involvement of Israel in the struggle, or a split among the countries participating in the sanctions against Iraq. The crisis could develop into an even graver situation through error or folly. The worst course for Japan to take would be to hesitate to take part in the U.N. approved effort out of inertia or resentment of American leadership, thereby impairing this country's cooperative relations with the United States, Western Europe, and the Arab countries opposing Iraq. This would put a major crack in the sanctions. Even if missteps are avoided and the illegal situation is rectified without further untoward incidents, the world will not return to its former state. We can certainly expect to see significant shifts at least in the Middle-East and the United States, which are the most deeply involved in the crisis and which even before the crisis had major problems making them susceptible to the forces of change. The process of creating a stable order in the Middle-East will be difficult and time-consuming given the strength of the Arab nationalist sentiment against the established order. For one thing, something must be done about Israel's unjustified occupation of some of the territory it took as a result of the 1967 war. But because the Jewish state fear for its national security, settling this matter will probably not be easy. As far as I can see, this fear for the very survival of the country is unnecessary and counterproductive, but because of the hardships the jews have suffered, Israel is unable to take the best course of action. The anti-monarchical sentiments that I noted above also have their grounds. Nothing is so dengerous as ill-justified affluence. Iraq's action has brought this problem into the limelight, and most countries recognize its existence. This awareness was evident, for exmaple, in an editorial that appeared in the New York Times at the end

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of August. In addition to calling for an immediate and unconditional Iraqi withdrawal, the strongly worded editorial demanded that Iraq get rid of its chemical weapons and put its chemical plants under international surveillance; with regard to Kuwait, however, it called not for the restoration of the emir but for the dispatch of an Arab force to maintain order and the action of an interim administration, followed by reconsideration of the form of government. The old political system, which in many respects resembled tribal rule and which recognized the right only of the Kuwaits, who constitute merely 30% of the country's 2 million people, cannot conceivably by maintained. Almost exactly the same goes for the United Arab Emirates. And though the situation in Saudi Arabia is somewhat different, the setup there must also be modernized. As history tell us, however the shift from monarchy to democracy involves many difficulties, and many years of confusion may pass before a democratic system achieves stability. This process has often led to dictatorship, as in Germany, where the fall of the monarchy was followed by a dozen or so years of experimenting with democracy, after which the Nazis tool over. In the Arab world, Iraq and libya are both examples of dictatorships in former monarchies. All in all, the political situation in the Middle-East will probably remain as settled for quite a while. This is liable to mean less stability in the supply of oil. Some security efforts will probably the needed to avoid excessive deterioration in the situation. That there will be a quick resumption of the flow of oil from Iraq and Kuwait, especially the former, seems unlikely. Furthermore, Iraq's action has nearly destroyed the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries. The lack of a stable suppliers' organization for a resource like oil is not good news for consumers.[5] The Gulf crisis will also have a major impact on the United States, which may become both stronger and weaker at the same time. That is, the imbalance between its military might and economic debility is likely to grow. On the one hand, as long as the Americans do not blunder—if they do, the world will turn into a completely different place—their country will assume a greater, probably definitive weight in the area of global security.

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As the French foreign policy expert Pierre Lellouch wrote in the September 24, 1990 issue of News-week, the crisis revealed "sobering truths about the real state of Europe in the post-cold-war world," including the fact the Europe still depends on the United States, not Europe, which reacted to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait; the United States which organized the world community's ban of Iraq and its condemnation by the United Nations.... On their own, the European would have done nothing except perhaps issue a few diplomatic words of condemnation." For Japan, the degree of dependence on the United States is even greater than for Europe. And the current crisis has demonstrated the existence of security problems even in the post-cold-war would. Military power, along with political power based on military might, is still important. The ideas that we are entering an age of economic power has been shown to be naive. Working in partnership with the Soviet Union, the United States is now fulfilling its global security role. This has become possible because, since the end of 1989, Washington has been respecting Moscow's interests rather than using pressure tactics. Many specialists around the world give George Bush high marks or his decision to take this approach. At his May-June 1990 summit meeting with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, he did not push on the issue of Germany's post-unification relationship with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, thereby making it easier for the Soviets to given ground. And though some have criticized his lack of strong support for Lithuanian independence, here as well his approach is probably correct form the prespective of the stability of the international order. As George Kennan has pointed out the Soviet Union is also a superpower, the only superpower other than the United States, and Washington's success in mobilizing the world against Iraq rests on its not having lost sight of this point. In this sense, the Gulf crisis has served as a reminder of the great political weight of the Soviet Union. The system of leadership in global politics actually seems to be taking the shape that the Americans dreamed of during World War II, namely, one of U.S. initiative based on cooperative ties with the Soviet Union. Addressing

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Congress on September 11, President Bush noted with pleasure that the United States and the Soviet Union were working together to build a new relationship and that they were united in their resolve to oppose Iraq's aggression. Saying that "a new partnership of nations has begun," he noted that "a hundred generations have searched for this elusive path to peace" and suggested that "we are now in sight of a United Nations that performs as envisioned by its founders." Nonetheless, for better or for worse, the world cannot return to the mid-1940s. The relative economic weights of both the United States and the Soviet Union have declined, and both economies are facing serious problems. Soviet economic stagnation is a widely known fact. America's economic woes are small by comparison, but the Americans themselves are not sufficiently aware of the seriousness of their problems. Also, in light of the fact that the United States plays a greater and wider-ranging role than the Soviet Union, the impact of its difficulties should probably be considered just about as serious as that of the Soviet Union's. The Gulf crisis is likely to do more damage to the U.S. economy. It will enlarge the federal budget deficit, perhaps even to an extent that will defy treatment by conventional means. The cost of sending hundreds of thousands of troops to the Arabian Peninsula will probably run into tens of billions of dollars, even if war does not occur. The United States is asking Japan and Germany, among others, to help foot the bill, but it will have to pay the biggest share of the cost itself. If the United States succeeds in settling the crisis for the time being, the confidence of the American people will receive a boost, but at the same time the country will probably face economic problems even more serious than before. This imbalance, is definitely not desirable for either the United States or the world. Moreover, the contrast between the leadership the U.S. government exhibits in the international political are and its miserable domestic performance will probably continue. This picture of the United States is just the opposite of that of Japan, which has performed splendidly at home, at least in the areas of economic policy and public finance, but whose record on international affairs and particularly on security matters has,

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to put it mildly, been dismal. Many foreigners would probably label this country's behavior hypocritical in the worst sense of the word. Yet Japan's basic stance cannot be expected to change. People have been talking for years about the emergence of a multipolar world. Insofar as military power is concerned, however, nothing of the sort has happened; the bipolar. U.S. Soviet structure still prevails. Given the immense lead that the two superpowers have in this field, it is quite impractical for any other countries to challenge them. Those who warn that Japan may turn to militarism fail to understand this. Furthermore, since the end of World War II military power has become less effective as an instrument of international policy. It would be folly for Japan to strain itself to remilitarize; it makes good sense for this country and other economic powers like it not to try to acquire great military powers. As the Gulf crisis shows, however, military power has not lost its essential function as a prop of the global order without which, of course, normal economic activity is impossible. Thus it is quite natural that the United States and the Soviet Union should have great weight in global politics, even though they have been mismanaging their economics. But there is a danger in allowing too much of a gap to emerge between these militarily strong, economically inefficient superpowers and the economically successful lesser powers like Japan. The former are apt to see the latter as selfish and interested in nothing but making money, while the latter look down on the former for using their fists to control the world. This atmosphere is not conducive to a healthy international order. We need to reexamine the nature of global politics, recognizing that the forms of international power have diversified. Here in Japan, we must realise that national security is not just a matter of economic power. People in this country often to out the opposite proposition that national security is not just a function of military power but their thinking seems generally to be based on the carefree presumption that somebody else will take care of military matters. Before we make statements like that, we need squarely to face the unpleasant realities of the world. We Japanese must also be ready when necessary to take actions

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that may not make sense on the basis of ordinary economic considerations. We have agreed to contribute $4 billion to the anti-Iraq effort, but if we want to play a major role we should be prepared to give $40 billion, earmarking substantial sums for decreasing dependence on oil and preserving the environment. Japan talks about using economic means to contribute to the world order. In practice, though, this is usually an excuse for not participating in military efforts, and the contributions we make end up being small since they are constricted by economic considerations. What is now required of this country is to undertake action that clearly goes far beyond economic logic- even if the action itself is minor in scope, as I believe would be preferable. Unfortunately, the real Japan is far from being able to take such action. As matters stand, this country will probably be unable to participate in restructuring and maintaining the world order, and as a result it will end up in a weak position. People in the future will probably speak of Japan as a country that once enjoyed a strange, transient prosperity.[6]

It is clear that the present crisis in the Gulf is not an independent phenomenon created by a sudden act of madness. It is the consequence of Saddam Hussein's blunder of invading Iran: it is nemesis catching up with him. His failure against Iran forced him to move against Kuwait because his regime will not recognise the ground realities and the consequences of its own folly — much less come to terms with them. Events subsequent to August 2, 1990 have shown that the move was a calculated one and had been prepared over a long time. The Iraqi President will have to pay a terribly heavy price for his wrong doings. Whatever that price may be, he will not get a reprieve from his creditors. So the miseries of Iraq have just begun.[7]

The present course of the war in the Gulf is emerging more and more clearly as its initial period, probably to be followed by the second, that is the decisive phase of the multinational forces' armed conflict with Iraq, finally to enter the third and final period of the war depending on the outcome of the second phase.

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Just before the Gulf War began and during the first days of combat operations it was generally considered that the first strike of the multinational forces would be stronger and far more effective, meaning the initial period of the war would be much shorter. We now see that these speculations were not translated into reality not because the combat power of the multinational forces engaged in the Gulf, the USA in the first place, was not up to the combat power of the enemy, but largely because of the vital differences in the combat power's structure between the belligerents. There is no doubt that the ratio of combat power in the air and on the sea is definitely in favor of the multinational forces, while the proportion of combat power on the ground, viewed through the ratio of landed forces, is still fairly even. It is precisely this fact which has forced strategists and the architects of action and processes in this war which are in many ways different from those so far waged in the Middle and Near East, to extend this initial period, even to a measure originally estimated as the optimal limit for the multinational forces. One should not forget that the objective of the USA and other members is for the war to be as short as possible, meaning also its initial period. Conversely Iraq would like to have the war last for a long time and see it spread to include the entire region. Summing up the results of the first stage in the Gulf War one can conclude that neither side has attained all its objectives originally declared when the war began. Iraq has not managed to draw Israel into the war and thus sow discord among the Arab coalition within the multinational forces, which would have meant creating a front from the Gulf to the Levant, with Jordan and Syria definitely on the side of Iraq and against Israel. This has dispersed yet another of Saddam Hussein's major illusions, namely that the Gulf War would promptly become a "Jihad", a Holy war, in which all the Islamic countries would side with Iraq. And so instead of Israel being drawn into the war, Turkey has come in on the side of the multinational forces, so that Iraq's position has deteriorated. Contrary to expectations, the Americans too were wrong in their calculations at the beginning of the war. Following claims that they had destroyed Iraq's Scud missile

launchers, the latter were exploding over the densely populated urban parts of Israel. And so "Patriot" anti-missile rockets had to be hastily deployed on Israeli territory. This was clear evidence that the USA's much vaunted and powerful electronic reconnaissance had many loopholes through which Iraqi missiles were slipping with comparative ease. Of course, the loopholes are being stopped up for the Americans are perfecting their antimissile system and intensifying air raids, while cruise missiles are shelling Iraqi bases—true and false—from the sea.[8]

The initial period of the war has brought with it other surprises as well. Strategically we have the transfer of numerous Iraqi planes to Iran. And so yesterdays bitter adversary in the eight years long war has become an ally practically overnight, although Iran adamantly denies this. In the tactical field the Iraqis have been surprised by the high precision of America's "Patriot" antimissile rockets while the Americans have been surprised by the tactical break-through of Iraqi troops from Kuwait into Saudi Arabia, into the advance zone of the multinational forces land troops. This was an abortive Iraqi attempt to inveigle the multinational forces into action and force a decisive land battle under conditions of their choosing. However, in the history of war no one had has ever managed to make up for strategic mistakes by tactical maneuvers, which applies this time to the Iraqis. As to the naturalisation of land forces before the main offensive, also part of the initial period in this war, the multinational forces have quite a lot of problems to contend with. In the first place the percentage of destroyed targets is debatable. According to the American official military doctrine the ground offensive should be preceded by air and artillery and missile attacks which should destroy about half the targets which include in the first place tanks, infantry combat vehicles, artillery and missile weapons. Considering the number of these targets deployed in the first strategic echelon along a 250 km long front on the border between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, including the town Kuwait - Jahra as well as other targets in the second strategic echelon long a line 90 km long in the Basra

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region in the northern sector of the Kuwaiti-Iraqi frontier, one cannot expect the offensive to start soon or to end quickly regardless of the results in neutralising targets in the rear. The reasons for this are not only the large number of targets but also their high resistance: fortified entrenchments, effective camouflage, reserve positions, obstructions, in fact everything undertaken during the five months since the occupation of Kuwait. In the case of resistant targets in modern defense, as certainly have been established in Kuwait by the Iraqis, stress is on armored targets which, if to be neutralised, necessitate a direct hit by bombs, rockets or missiles of high precision. In other words this means that classical arms, stillbeing used by both sides, without the application of mass destruction weapons, will have to be in operation for a considerable time from sea and air, the result being even so a relatively small number of targets hit. As to "space-effect" weapons such as AEROSOL and cassette bombs large calibre shells or rockets, one should remember that these are not effective against tanks which are the backbone of Iraq's defense.[9]

In this context it should be stressed that the general public is labouring under a serious deception as regards the effectiveness of planes versus tanks. This misconception has been skillfully fostered by Western propaganda ever since the outstanding successes which the Israeli airforce scored in 1967 against Egyptian armoured and mechanised units in Sinai. One should remember however that at that time Egyptian armoured and mechanised units were attacked from the air while in full retreat, something quite different from the present Iraqi dispersed defense a pattern of well entrenched "point-targets" defended by a large number of light automatic anti-aircraft guns proved to be highly effective in local wars up to heights of 5,000 meters. If aircraft using classical weapons are to be precise in their bomber raids, they have to come down to at least 2,000 meters. This of course constitutes a high risk to the crew, so that frequently they release their bombs at greater heights which naturally impairs precision. When the allies landed in Salerno, in Southern

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Italy during the last war in 1943, it was considered at first that their aircraft would prevent German troops from being brought up from the rear to form a stable front. The allied airforced bombed all the mountain passes in the Alps day and night yet this did not prevent the Germans from bringing up reenforcements. A whole German division was able to take part in the fighting for the bridgehead. Had it not been for the barrage of 105 mm guns shelling German tanks from the sea, the allied bridgehead at Salerno would admittedly have been liquidated, and thus affected the future course of events. This was a lesson which cost the Americans dearly so that later in 1944 when they landed in Normandy they showed much greater caution and less illusions of the omnipotence of their airforce in combating land forces, especially tanks and mechanised units.

The basic dilemma of the Americans, as the main vehicles of military activities against Iraq and co-ordinators of the multinational forces is whether to prolong the initial period of the war until half the ground targets have been destroyed or to launch an early offensive and neutralise these targets in the course of advance. The decisive factor will no doubt be estimates of the loss of human life incurred by either variant. Time is also a notable factor in military operations. In five weeks sand storms will begin in the theater of war, thus greatly impairing air operations and precision bombing. Then follows the period of scorching heat to which the Arab can adjust far more easily than the Americans, French and English fighting within the multinational forces. The time factor also raises another dilemma; launching the offensive before the sand storms or making an operative pause in the land operations with prolonged air and sea operations, hitting targets in the rear and within the second strategic echelon of Iraqi forces.

The Iraqis are still prepared to wait while the Americans have not yet managed to bring up land forces to their initial attack posts. Only when this has been accomplished will it become clear in what direction they will launch their main

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assault. The present activities of the multinational forces, in the first place of French "Jaguars", aimed at softening up the positions of the second strategic echelon of the Iraqis in the Basra region, indicate that the main strike might come from the sea in Kuwaiti Bay in the direction of Basra. This is substantiated by the heavy bombing of Basra, one of the most important operative targets in the current action zone. Should the main target be Basra, communications would be cut between this town and Kuwait, and part of the Iraqi forces from the first strategic echelon deployed along the coast and the Neutral Zone belt South of Kuwait City in the Ahmadi region would be cut off. The second operative strike, also in the direction of Basra would run from the western frontier belt between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Both directions are convergent, which puts the Iraqis at a disadvantage, their forces being threatened by encirclement, if the multinational forces advance quickly in both directions simultaneously.[10]

If the multinational forces first manage to neutralise 50 per cent of the Iraq's dispersed targets within the first and second strategic echelon and if, during the second period i.e. the ground offensive, they manage to advance quickly in the planned directions, there are realistic prospects that the first strategic echelon of Iraqi forces will be forced to withdraw to the positions of the second strategic echelon where the Iraqis might be able to stabilize the front and defent their national territory. However, if the strategists of ground operations of the multinational forces decide in favor of a step-by-step expulsion of the Iraqis from Kuwait by harassing the various portions of the first strategic echelon, the fighting might last much longer which would be to the advantage of Iraq. In this case one might expect minor land operations during which the main target would be the capital Kuwait, and fighting in the Ahmadi Zone, within a triangle denoting the southeast coast of Kuwait in the Gulf and a network of communication lines leading to Saudi Arabia. The second side of the triangular operative area is the border with the "Neutral Zone" about 120 km wide. The third side of the

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triangle runs from Kuwait city to the point where the "Neutral Zone", Kuwaiti and Saudi Arabian borders meet.

Bearing in mind all the attractions of the operative zone in the first place the natural wealth of Kuwait, the Americans might well decide in favor of the latter variant as taking possession of this part of Kuwait would thwart the strategic point of Iraqi occupation and involve the defense of its desert regions. It would not actually mean the Iraqis would be forced to pull out of Kuwait but they would have to shorten the front and form a defense line of the first strategic echelon from the Kiwaiti Bay to Jahira and towards the west to the Iraqi-Kuwaiti frontier. Apart from all these variants there remains to question of whether weapons for mass destruction, above chemical and biological, will be used. The Iraqis possess such weapons and therefore the multinational forces and Israel take their threats very seriously, and this may force Israel into the war. Possibly however the Iraqi threats will not be put into effect as they must realize that the enemy would retaliate in full measure if not even more so. The war in the Gulf is in its initial stage. The time when the second stage will begin remains uncertain, just as its modalities are uncertain, especially regarding the extent of land operations. There is no point in discussing the third stage before the second has begun. In any case neither side will be able to attain its objectives within a short time. Those who expected some kind of "Blitzkrieg failed to consider the realities of the combatants' strength so that the war's future course remains unclear although there is little doubt as to the outcome — the victory of the multinational forces. The only question is what price the multinational forces and the entire world will have to pay for victory.[11]

Within a week of the commencement of the assault against Iraq, the people of that country had absorbed the most punishing and the most concentrated aerial bombardment ever seen in military history. Official statements by strategists of the Western military cabal remained noncommittal about the results achieved

by the aerial campaign. The weather was cited as a factor that made the task of damage assessment very difficult. The eighth day of the war made it clear that this was patent dissimulation — a mere alibi to further step up the barbarous assault on a Third World nation. A brutal number of air sorties — perhaps 3,000 was conducted on that day. And even the minnows of the Western alliance, like Canada, eagerly joined the fray, while France shed its early inhibitions about attacking targets inside Iraq. The typical public reaction has been that Western fury, though perhaps disproportionate to Iraq's offence, has been justified; that in seeking to erase an autonomous nation-state off the map of the world, Iraq transgressed grievously against all the norms of peaceful coexistence that make the preservation of world order possible. This however, is an oversimplification, perhaps even a half-truth. Hostilities against Iraq did not commence with the country's invasion of Kuwait.[12]

G.H. Jansen, one of India's most perceptive observers of Arab affairs, has pointed out that the military offensive against Iraq had been preceded by a propaganda war, daiting from at least March 1990.[13]

What is the significance of this timing? Jansen reckons that the persistence of the Jewish-Zionist lobby in the US — which had always been terrified of Iraq's growing clout — only began to pay dividends last March. Till then, the West had been more inclined to look upon Iraq as an ally in the task of pushing back the tide of Islamic radicalism that threatened to inundate the Arab world. After March, Iraq came to be perceived as the bastion of Pan-Arabism, impelled by internal dynamics and ideology, into confrontation with the West, and contestation for the mineral wealth of West Asia. However, this remains an incomplete explanation. It fails to account for the sudden switch in the western mood last March, since jewish propaganda against Iraq has remained much the same for at least a decade. There must be some way of accounting for the fact that Western political councils, became more than usually receptive to Zionist

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propaganda within a relatively short span of time. Clearly, something happened around the beginning of 1990 to precipitate a sudden shift in Western perceptions of Iraq.[14]

As I see it, we are dealing with an equivalently new phenomenon in the international life. Regional conflicts begin to independently affect the global situation and highest goestrategic level relationships. A characteristic feature of such *a situation* is that its appearance, growth and transition into a "globalised" phase are not conditioned by situations or actions by West and East, by the Soviet Union and the United States. Today we see a nation like Iraq sustaining for a relatively long time the arms embargo by outside forces, this ability being due to its own quite substantial and autonomous military strategic potential which includes certain types of mass annihilation weapons and missile capability to deliver them. This conflict seems unique also in that its preferred resolution, as I see it, cannot be found in a compromise. A compromise, that is mutual concessions including some in favor of the aggressor, would mean Hussein's political gain and a loss to the USA and those of Arab regimes who are linking their destinies to the USA. I think we can realistically mark out our participation in the military action without a direct involvement in hostilities. For instance, we can be sharing military information or we can provide certain elements of our infrastructure: Transportation and the like, to back military effort of Iraq's opponents. In any case we must outline our priorities and our understanding of our place in the conflict in no uncertain terms.

It would seem that the creation of a reliable system or structure for the Gulf region security basically holds the answer to the question: What can be the ways to not only prevent new conflicts of the kind, but also change radically and for the better all the Gulf situation? It may be a system or structure not unlike the one now taking shape in Europe, and with the USSR and USA taking part in it one way or another. If would hardly be of benefit for the USSR and Americans to maintain a massive

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presence in explosive point as a way to their security. It is difficult to do so both economically and politically. Nevertheless, progress of modern military technology may provide possibilities for military presence to have a more considerate and non-defiant form. I do not mean crisis situation of the kind we are dealing with.[15]

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3

Neo-Colonialism

The Gulf war continues to dominate the world scene. At the time of writing there has been an increase in peace initiatives with the Soviet president taking the lead. One hopes that these initiatives would result in an end to the destruction and death that has rained down upon the people of Iraq and hurt the peoples of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Israel. Denunciation of the brutal assault launched and continued by the multinational force, commanded and Led by the USA, cannot be severe enough. The strategy of a powerful section or the fuling class in the USA is to destroy detente and intimidate the peoples and governments throughout the world, especially those of the developing countries. A favorable opprtunity came their way in the Gulf. It was provided by President Saddam Hussein. There is enough evidence to substantiate the conclusion that he invaded and occupied Kuwait on the assumption that the US would let him get away with it. This was the result of his conversation with the US ambassador on the very eve of his annexation of that country which be it remembered was not only a fultfledged member of the UN but an Arab and Muslim country which had aided Iraq in its 8-year long war with Iran and the PLO in its battle to establish an independent Palestinian state. The issue of democracy was scarcely relevant since President Saddam Hussein fits the bill perfectly as a dictatorial

oppressor of Communists, Kurds and other opponent of his regime. It bears repetition to mention that every effort made to give him a chance to honourably retreat was spurned by the Iraqi President. The recent published documents of the talks he had with the UN Secretary-General and of the latter's report to the Security Council, do show that he was prepared to be ambiguous but do not anywhere indicate a retraction of his statement that Kuwait was the nineteenth province of Iraq. It is only now that he has stated that withdrawal from Kuwait could take place provided certain conditions were fulfilled — which could be a matter of negotiation if the commitment to withdraw was firm and capable of being guaranteed.[1]

There is a lot of criticism of the Soviet role in the Gulf crisis even by CPI (M), CPI and All India Peace and Solidarity Organisation leader. Some of these leaders appear to be quite nostalgic for the days of US-Soviet confrontation. They would be satisfied with nothing other than a return to the missile-for-missile positions of 1956 (Suez crisis) and 1962 (Cuban crisis). One can only once again emphasise one's gratitude to Gorbachev and his new thinking that the world was not against pushed to the very edge of the precipice. The immense volume of mass protest and the sober reaction of influential sections of the ruling class and parties in the USA, UK, France, Italy, Spain, Germany and Japan, would just not have been possible had the Soviet leader not made the major contribution in ending the cold war. What about the Security Council resolution giving a deadline for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait failing which all effective means should be used to ensure that this took place? In the situation that had developed and given the weather conditions in that area, no other resolution could have been passed which would have indicated that the UN meant what it said. Those who ask as to why no such resolutions were passed in the case of Israeli occupation of Arab lands, the intervention in Lebanon and the aparthyeid regime in South Africa, forget that the socialist and nonaligned states fought to pass such resolutions using precisely the same arguments as those which led the

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Security Council to adopt its final resolution on Iraq. Because these arguments could not prevail in the past how are they invalid in the present instance? Indeed, their prevailing now would give them more strength when pressed in the future. This does not meand that the Soviet Union and China, and India and Cuba - could not have done more. They could have, for example, declared their readiness to be a part of a UN force acting under the UN command to enforce the Security Council resolution. Such a force would have been qualitatively different from the present multintional force led by the USA. It could have been far more effective against Iraq's continued occupation of Kuwait and minimized considerably the damage that is being done to Iraq. In the case of the Soviet Union, this could not be done because socalled conservatives and radicals were both opposed to such a move, though from opposed angles. The flexibility and daring that has characterised Soviet foreign policy in the recent period, was hamstrung by pulls and pressures in that country. It had nothing to do with "dependence" on the US or on attaching too much importance to relations with the "West" at the cost of the "Third World". In the case of India the relatively passive role is the result of the attachments to and illusions about the US and the Bush Administration both in the National Front and the Samajwadi Janata Dal governments. Why China chose to be as ineffective as it has been can only be explained by the failure of its leadership to work out a comprehensive foreign policy concept and strategy. The partial failure of these very important countries and the total failure of the nonaligned movements, can in no way cover up the unjust nature of the multinational offensive in the Gulf Area. As the Secretary-General of the UN has pointed out the war being waged there is not by and for the UN even though the implementation of its resolution in is involved. President Mikhail Gorbachev has indicated that what is being done by the US-led multinational forces exceeds the mandate of the UN and that negotiations with Iraq could have been carried on for longer than was done and that even now negotiations must continue. Rajiv Gandhi has emphasised that not the liberation of Kuwait but the crushing of Iraq is the prime

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objective of the USA so as to intimidate other countries, especially the developing ones. There can be no two opinions that neo-colonialism is very much alive in the world and that it attempts to dominate and dictate to developing and newly independent countries. It does so by using economic and technological pressures. It does so by the method of destabilisation. It does so by armed intervention as well.

Neo-colonialism cannot, however, be opposed by adventurist and annexationist actions such as those of President Saddam Hussein. Nor can it be opposed by Islamic or any other kind of fundamentalism as prevails in Iran, Iraq, Libya and some other countries. It cannot also be opposed by returning to the strategy of confrontation and tit-for-tat that was an important part of Soviet and Chinese strategy.

Neo-colonialism can be effectively opposed by a strategy of peace and cooperation with all, by propagating and working for a peaceful and non-violent world, by speeding up economic and technological development, by advancing the alternative of secular nationalism and democratic, human socialism. Neo-colonialism has to be fought but not made into a bogey that either paralyses or pushes to adventurism and sectarianism.[2]

From the Arab point of view, the Mufti's meeting with the Feuhrer was a case of history repeating itself as farce, having earlier played itself out as tragedy. The groundwork for the meeting had been prepared through a correspondence between the two, at which the German side had committed itself to recognising the 'independence and freedom' of the Arab people. Precisely such a compact had been concluded between an Arab political leader and Britain in 1915, when the first of the major imperial conflagrations of this century was raging. Victorious Britain in 1918 was in a position to honour its commitments, but chose not to. Defeated and divided Germany in 1945 was contrariwise, in no position to demonstrate whether it had equivalent tendecies to play fast and loose with wartime pledges.

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A further throwback to July 1920, and the nature of the 'linkage' in the received political consciousness of the Arab world would become clearer. Palestine that year echoed with militant slogans against the British mandate. Amman witnessed a mobilisation of Bedouin tribesmen intent on marching on Damascus and ejecting the French. And Iraq exploded in insurrection against the occupying army of British India.

For much of August 1920, all of Iraq with the exception of the major towns, was held by the rebels. The uprising was crushed only by October, and then the British had to hand out various concessions to buy the peace. But from the position go of strength that they had acquired through various dubious deals since 1915, Britain could afford to make concessions, without significantly compromising on its geopolitical interests in the area. After centuries under the Turkish Ottoman yoke, strivings of Arab nationalism were beginning to emerge by the early years of the century. Baghdad, Beirut, and Damascus were the main centres of Arab nationalist groupings. And as the focus of their aspirations, these groups turned to the Hashemite dynasty represented by Hussain, the Sharif of Mecca, and two of his sons, the Emirs Faisal and Abdullah. When the Turks entered World War First on the side of Germany, the British-French axis began seriously exploring means of under-mining their enemy from within, by playing upon Arab nationalist sentiments. The British Agent in Cairo, Lord Kitchener, had established contact with Sharif Hussain by October 1914, seeking to open a front against the Turks from within. The Sharif's counsels were divided. Abudllah favored the conclusion of an alliance with the British without any delay. But Faisal saw little point in exchanging Turkish domination for the British or the French. His contacts with the Arab nationalist bodies of Iraq and Syria (the Al-Ahad and the al-Fatah), had convinced him that there was little to choose between the Turks and the 'allies'. Firm Commitments to independence should be won, he argued, before the 'allies' were to be favored with the support of the Arab population.[3]

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A memorandum was drafted jointly by al-Ahad and al-Fatah, which Hussain forwarded to Kitchener's successor in Cairo. Henry McMahon. It required that as a pre-condition for Arab support, the British were to recognise the independence of Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Iraq, and the Arabian peninsula, except for Aden. Mcmahon's reply was evasive. He was prepared to 'Confirm' Britain's 'desire for the independence of the Arab countries', but could not go so far as to specify the boundaries, of the future Arab state. Such an exercise, he suggested, would be premature and a waste of time, when hostilities were underway on several fronts. But Sharif Hussein was insistent. This was not the usual 'Eastern potentate', who could be deflected with the flatteries and florid platitudes that the British were accustomed by policy to. The 'proposed frontiers and boundaries', he told McMahon in a letter written in September 1915, were the 'demands of our people,' who 'believed' that these were 'the minimum necessar to the establishment of the new order for which they are striving'. Politely rebuffing McMahon's flattery, Hussain reminded him that the aim was 'to ensure that the conditions which are essential to our future shall be secured on a foundation of reality, and not on highly-decorated phrases and titles'. In October 1915, McMahon finally relented, committing Britain to recognising Arab sovereignty over the entire area mentioned by Hussain. He only pleaded for exempting those areas that were not 'purely Arab', such as the districts of Mersin and Alexandretta, and portions of Syria lying to the west of the districts of Damascus, Homs, Hama, and Aleppo'. Another quite distinct arrangement was conceived of in respect of the two vilayets (i.e. provinces) of Baghdad and Basra, where Britain had an established position and certain special interests. McMahon also reaffirmed that these commitments would not prejudice treaties already concluded between Britain and 'certain Arab chiefs'. Though there remained areas of ambiguity, Sharif Hussein was greatly encouraged by this letter. He was willing to renounce the Arab claim to the predominantly Turkish districts of Mersin and Alexandretta (now Iskenderun), but insisted that the vilayets of Aleppo (now Haleb) and Beirut, and

'their Western maritime coasts' were 'purely Arab provinces, in which the Muslim is indistinguishable from the Christian'. He also rejected the suggestion that the British could maintain their sovereignty over the provinces of Baghdad and Basra, since these were intergral to the Arab people's appreciation of their civilisation. However, he said, the parts of Southern Iraq that had been occupied by British troops could remain so 'for a period of time to be determined by negotiation', and the 'agreements in force with certain chiefs in those parts would be respected'.[4]

Yet, the Western power cabal does display a deep unease at chances of restroing order to West Asia. After months of editorial warmongering, The Economist awoke to this disturbing prospect within a week of the actual war. "The war needs to be won, and surely will be", it asserted. The only worry is that it could release a host of uncontainable resentments.[5]

These anxieties, are to an extent, focused on the territorial ambitions of the Syrian Republic under President Hafez Assad, and they betray a deep-seated ambivalence towards the colonial legacy in the Arab world. Thus, The Economist, while commenting on the need to contain Syria, mentions that "Mr. Saddam Hussein's case for Greater Iraq is a good deal weaker than Hafez Assad's argument for Greater Syria—to which Lebanon, Jordan, Israel, and a bit of Turkey could arguably belong."[6]

The facts of history are that colonialism was responsible for the partitioning of both 'Greater' Syria and 'Greater' Iraq. From the viewpoint of the Arabas, it is of little consequence that the French were at least partly responsible for the partitioning of Syria, while the British were solely responsible for the partitioning of Iraq. Syria is the more in France's eye, which blinds the British to the beam in their own. Never slow in castigating the French for their colonial perfidy, the British have made a fine art of portraying their own manoeuvring as part of the natural order of things. The Economist's willingness to grant greater historical legitimacy to the territorial claims of Syria would be

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a curiosity, an interesting idiosyncrasy of Old Blighty, were not the overall message so uncompromisingly neo-colonialist.[7]

Ambivalence gives way to arrogance when the British (and their American legatees) seek to address their own colonial inheritance. This is best illustrated in The Economist's position on the question of the linkage between the issues of Palestine and Kuwait. Here is how the conscience of the London stockbroker views the matter! "Many Arabas accuse the West of double standards in the Middle-East. Iraq is told to obey Security Council Resolution 660 and leave Kuwait at the point of American guns. Israel stays unpunished in the West Bank, Gaza and the Golan Heights nearly 23 years after Resolution 242 called unit to get out. It sounds unfair to a visitor just arrived from Mars. A Martian who had read the resolutions would know better."[8]

And what is the reasoning behind this contemptuous dismissal of an entire people's perception of the manner in which world affairs have been conducted by the Western power cabal? The Economist is very clear on this point: "Iraq's invasion of Kuwait was simple theft....(whereas)....Israel's occupation arose from a pre-emptive war against negihbours who had massed on its borders and wanted it to disappear". The stockbrokers cleverness does not stop with this. It proceeds to make much of the fact that Resolution 242 of 1967 only to asks Israel to vacate 'territories occupied in the recent conflict', and not, deliberately, the territories.[9]

This latter piece of sophistry is easily dealt with. The French draft of Resolution 242 specifies that Israel should withdraw from deterritories occupied during the six-day war. This again indicated a greater willingness on the part of one former colonial power (France) to recognise the sins of another (Britain). Moreover, The Enconomist chooses to overlook the obvious fact the Israel has over all of the last tow decades, been in flagrant violation of the UN charter, which prohibits the settlement of civilian populations in areas occupied by force. This expression

of the stockbrokers' political sensibility also illumines another facet of the uneasy post-colonial conscience — the suggestion that all Israeli aggression can be condoned on the basis of the originals in of the Arab world, of seeking to obiiterate the Jewish state. This is an argument that the Western political conscience is highly receptive to, deeply burdened as it is by the guilt of association with the Nazi holocaust. The West seeks exculpation for its sins of and commission through the transference of this burden of guilt. This is another strategy of colonialism, which remains recognisable despite all its mutations. In the colourful rehetoric of Arab nationalism, Israel is a dagger that the West has plunged into the heart of the Arab world. To imagine that this description is inspired solely by the peculiar geographical contours of the state of Israel, would be a mistake. It reflects a very deep sense of historical grievance.[10]

The creation of the autonomous state of Kuwait is again an integral element of colonial politics. Kuwait was in the first instance, an enclave that Britain carved out at the head of the Persian Gulf, to pre-empt the growing German-Ottoman alliance of the late 19th century from encroaching on to the sea lanes to India. When empire ceased to be the overriding concern of British policy, oil took over as the raison deter of Kuwaiti nationhood.[11]

How many ears must one man have, asked one of the best known songs of the 1960s, before he can hear people cry? How many deaths willit take till he knows, it asked again, that too many people have died?

We may never have an accurate count of the too many people who have died in this war. Recent estimates of military casualties that have appeared in the media vary: The Saudi military commander told the Cable News Network that 100,000 Iraqi soldiers were killed, the National Broadcasting Corporation's Pentagon correspondent Fred Francis said the number of dead was 150,000 and the French journal Nouvel observature reported

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a French military intelligenece figure of 200,000 Iraqi soldiers killed. Speaking to Frontline on the extent of casualties. Massachusetts Institute of Technology professor and political commentatoractivist Noam Chomsky said: "With regard to military casualties, there has been a series of statements by the U.S. Command that bodies are being buried in mass graves or that the task of doing so has been handed over to Saudi and other forces. That is, incidentally, an explicit violation of the Geneva Conventions, and Middle East Watch has already gone on record condemning these actions. The result is that we have no idea how many military casualties there are." Estimates of civilian casualties are also murky, Professor Chomsky said. "The United States, of course, keeps no records. The Iraqi Government's communications were destroyed very quickly, which means that they have no information, or very little information, and if they did have any, they are not likely to reveal it. Furthermore, the whole situation is now clouded even further by the casualties in the curent fighting, and the United States will naturally attribute most casualties that the are discovered ultimately to the current fighting and not to the original bombing."

In an interview with Frontline, Dr. Jonathan Fine, Executive Director of Physicians for Human Rights, who was in Baghdad in the second week of January (he took the last flight out on Januray 14), also referred to the difficulties involved in making estimates of casualties. "But I think it is the obligation of all of us to try and find out no matter how long it takes," Fine said. "We are at a point in history where human consciousness has developed a concern not only about how wars are fought — in a sense the public interest is insatiable on how wars are fought, at least in this country — but with the human consequences, the physical and psychological consequences, of war. We need information about the numbers of dead and injured, whether they were combatants or non-combatants and how they fell, the type of injuries sustained, whether the firepower used against them was indiscriminate or not, whether the weapons themselves

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were inherently inhumane (a matter of controversy, since many people, of course, feel that all weapons are inhumane), whether the largest number of casualties were people who fell ill as a result of shortages of food and the destruction of the infrastructure, and whether epidemics ran through peopluations that would otherwise have remained unaffected."[12]

The Iraqi people are living through the early stages of an immense human catastrophe, the proximate causes of which are the embargo and the U.S. led air and land war, and which has doubtless been exacerbated by the current civil war. "The recent conflict," a new United Nations report says, "has wrought near-apocalyptic results upon the infrastructure of what had been until January 1991 a rather highly urbanised and mechanised society."

The U.N. report was released on March 21, following a mission to Iraq by U.N. Under-Secretary General Martti Ahtisaari, who prepared the report, and representatives of FAO. UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF and WHO. The mission visited Iraq from March 10 to March 17. In the report. Ahtisaari said: "I, together with my colleagues, am convinced that there needs to be a major mobilisation and movement of resources to deal with aspects of this deep crisis in the fields of agriculture and food, water, sanitation and health." It is clear that this catastrophe, which is still to deal its most devastating blows, can be diminished only lifting the embargo on Iraq—the report calls for an immendiate end to the U.S.—Sponsored embargo on food and other essential goods and by means of peace, large scale international aid and a programme of rapid civil reconstruction. The eyewitness reports of different groups of observers — in particular, of the recent United Nations team, of the WHO-UNICEF special mission that visited Iraq from February 16 to 21, of different delegations of International Physicians for the prevention of Nuclear War, and its affiliates (see Frontline, February 16-March 1 and March 16-29) and of the delegation of Physicians for Human Rights that was in Baghdad just before the January

15 "deadline" — provide information on the main features of the current crisis food and fuel are in short supply and the prices of essential commodities are rising steeply for subsistence, the daily ration of 750 to 1000 calories per capita (we have no information on whether this ration is, in fact, being provided) has to be supplemented with market purchases; as consequences there is a decline in food consumption. There are serious shortages of milk for infants and children. New burdens are being placed on Iraq's women. Key elements of the economic and social infrastructure have been destroyed. The system of electricity generation, the transport system, the water supply and purification system and the sewage system (particularly in Baghdad) are in ruins. There is an acute shortage of basic medicines, medical equipment and hospital facilities, and the country's medical administration system is a shambles. In the words of Ahtisaari's report. Iraq has, "for some time to come been relegated to a pre-industrial age." The Ahtisaari report indicates that supplied of sugar, rice, tea, vegetable oil and powered milk are critically low or exhausted and that the supply of flour is critically low. The report says that "this year's grain harvest in June is seriously compromised for a number of reasons, including failure of irrigation/drainage, lack of pesticides and fertilizers; lack of fuel and spare parts for the highly mechanised and fuel-dependent harvesting machines." The report says that with short supplies and a breakdown in the system of distribution, food prices have increased more than 1,000 per cent. Inflation of this order is accompanied by the destruction of sources of employment and income. (It has ben estimated that 90 per cent of industrial workers in Iraq have been forced into inactivity.)

The special mission of WHO-UNICEF reported that in mid-February, prices of essential commodities were prohibitively high. It also reported that the "ration of 750-1000 calories available at present is less than half the daily requirement of a five year old child, or less than one-third the requirement of a pregnant woman." (The population of Iraq is 18 million people. The number of children below the age of 5 is estimated to be fifth

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of the total population, and the number of pregnant women is an estimated 770,000). In Baghdad, the special mission found that citizens "spend much of their time in family support pre-occupations, searching for food, trying to find water, and improvising cooking and heating amidst an acute shortage of all kinds of fuel." The mission reported that "the general food situation has particularly severe consequences in the case of children," who were receiving a diet that was very different, in quality and quantity, from what they needed and were used to. Mothers did not know how to prepare diets from the rations and other foods available. The report also cites evidence of breast-feeding failures brought on by the stress and anxiety caused by bombing.[13]

In his interview with Frontline, Jonathan Fine emphasised that a part of the tragedy that is insufficiently acknowledged and researched is its impact on women and families. "You are going to have a large number of Iraqi families where the head of household is gone," he said. "In addition, you will have further significant numbers with people who are crippled, who may have lost a limb or had serious penetrating wounds of another kind — disbled, essentially. There will be a tremendous burden on women to take over; to earn a living, to provide for children who have been out of school (in many cases they are, obviously, still out of school), to find food that they can no longer afford to buy in the market, to fetch water, and so on. The burden of these must be very great, and the suffering immense." Although accurate data is scarce, Iraq has no evidence of malnutrition from the past, according to the WHO-UNICEF mission. That situation could soon change: "The increased evidence of diarrhoea, coupled with food shortages, will certainly result in outright malnutrition, specially among one-to-three-year-olds, in the near future." Ahtisaari's report says that "as a result of war, virtually all previous viable sources of fuel and power — apart from a limited number of mobile generators — and modern means of communications are now essentially defunct." It says that U.S.-led bombing paralysed oil and electricity production

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almost entirely; that transport has been badly hit by the lack of spare parts, tyres and fuel; and that there is a "virtual halt" in the production of construction materials. Iraqi authorities report that 83 bridges were destroyed.

In his interview with Frontline Noam Chomsky made the point that "when you attack the water and sewage system of major urban areas, it amounts to biological warfare." The WHO-UNICEF team conducted a detailed and conscientious case-study of water and sanitation in Baghdad, and it saw a disastrous situation. The descriptions indicate that Baghdad has a very intricate water supply system, with over 6,000 kilometres of pipes and 20,000 valves. More than 95 per cent of the city's water comes from the Tigris river, which was treated at seven plants that used electricity and chemicals from treatment. All significant electricity generation plants have been destroyed. The chemicals required for purification, chlorine and alum, can no longer be produced — the plants have been destroyed in the bombing — and cannot be imported. As a result, the water purification plants are near non-functional. In February, the chlorine levels in the water emerging from the purification plants were less than half the levels that are ordinarily required at the end-reaches of the water network. The pumping system was also badly damaged: from an average of 500 litres per capita a day in Baghdad, water supply had come down to between 0 and 15 litres by February. The WHO-UNICEF reported that sewage could not be lifted to treatment stations and that, as a result, sewage pipes were filling and backing up into houses. In addition, Fine of Physicians for Human Rights told Frontline, "There are multiple cracks in the water mains and the sewage mains, these are generally laid together and therefore now leak into each other. This can cause terrible epidemic disease." The single most urgent health threat, according to the WHO-UNICEF report, is that of water-borne epidemics. Freelance trucks are selling water taken directly from the Tigris, a river that has been described by Dr. Robert Reid of the WHO-UNICEF team as now "the most poisonous water source on earth." The mission

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reported that in fuel-scarce conditions, warnings to boil water went largely unheeded. "All the technical services of the Ministry of Health have been disrupted," says the WHO-UNICEF report, "but none more severely than epidemiological surveillance and the reporting of communicable diseases." No information has been available since September 1990. Fine told Frontline that "the public health laboratories — the medical intelligence system, if you will had broken down entirely. There was no reporting of illnesses from public health laboratories, and no diagnostic studies were going on "Diseases such as typhoid, meningitis, malaria, polimyelitis, hepatitis A and measles are endemic in Iraq, and the collapse of the water and sanitation system has raised the fear of outbreaks of these diseases in epidemic proportions. "It is a perfect situation for the outbreak of vast epidemics," he said. While the report of the recent UN Mission recommends, as mentioned, that the embrago on food and essential commodities to Iraq be lifted immediately, the United States is circulating a new draft resolution to members of the Security Council, one that seeks to impose tough new conditions of Iraq. The American draft requires, as a precondition to a ceasefires, that Iraq agree to an internationally-supervised destruction of its missile systems, and chemical, biological or nuclear weapons (it is generally recognised that Iraq does not have nuclear weapons). It requires that Iraq surrender its enriched nuclear reactor fuel to the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna. It requires that Iraq go back to its 1963 border agreement with Kuwait and empowers the Security Council to enforce the 1963 border agreement by "all necessary means" — ominous language that essentially gives prior sanction to U.S. military intervention. It requires that Iraq comply with these requirements in four months. Even if a ceasefire were announced on the basis of these conditions, the U.S. draft wants the U.N. to lift the sanction only on food shipment. In the sombre words of Ahtisaari, "it is unmistakable that the Iraqi people may soon face a further imminent catastrophe, which could include epidemics and famine, if massive life-supporting needs are not rapidly met." It is imperative that the catastrophe be turned back, and that the blockade against the people of Iraq be lifted.[14]

There has been bitter fighting between the forces of the Saddam Hussein regime and fighters against the regime in towns of the south and the southeast of Iraq. At one stage in early March, the number of towns in which such revolts were taking place was said to be 24 by official U.S. sources. In any case, by all accounts, the towns of Basra, Amarah, Nasiriya (al Nassariyah). Najaf (al Najaf) and Hills Hilla (al Hillah) were scenes of fierce fighting. The cities are in the valley of the Tigris and the Euphrates, the major areas of concentration of the Shia Muslims of Iraq. A key feature of these revolts was that they were, in their origin, spontaneous and unorganised it is also clear that Shia Muslims and soldiers and officers (the second two returning from a crushing defeat, with live memories of the massacre by U.S.-led forces) played an important role in the revolts. In Basra, the revolt was reported to have been triggered (literally) by returning tank officers and their crews. The revolt took the form of attacking buildings representing state power (police stations, prisons, offices of the ruling Baath party, civic bodies and municipal buildings, for instance), snatching firearms and turning them against state authority and the Saddam Hussein regime's forces. Although spontaneous protest evidently on important role, Shia groups, particularly Iran-backed (and Iran-based) Shia opposition to Saddam Hussein, stepped in to try and fill the leadership vacuum. These groups also began to influence the situation on the ground by mobilising their own contacts, personnel and mass base. Most prominent among the Shia groups in the current situation has been the Dawa Party (al Da'wah) al-Islamiyyah, or the Islamic Call, which is part of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SAIRI) and is led by Mohammed Baqir al-Hakim. In an interview with Frontline, Samir al-Khalil, the Iraqi writer and author of "Republic of Fear. The inside Story of Saddam's Iraq," said Mohammed Bazir al-Hakim "is active and is going to be an interesting figure because right now he is the only political leader who is out there in Basra, slipping in and out and dealing with people." Baqir al-Hakim is a bitter enemy of Saddam Hussein. In May 1983, the Baath regime issued an ultimatum to him to stop broadcasting from Teheran, and held 90 members

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of his family (whose ages ranged from nine to 76 years hostage in order to force him to do so. He did not, and six persons were shot on May 20 in the presence of other relatives; of the remaining 84, only five elders had been released by 1989. (Samir al-Khalil's) "The Republic of Fear" gives an account of the incident).

The tens of thousands of Iraqi Shias (Samir al-Khalil puts the number at about 200,000) who had been expelled by the Saddam Hussein regime and live in what Samir al-Khalil characterised as "appalling conditions" in Iran constitute a "recruiting ground" for Mohammed Baqir al-Hakim's group.[15]

Iran lost no time in critising Saddam Hussein sharply, and in telling him to give up power and yield to forces on the ground. President Hashemi Rafsanjani characterised Saddam Hussein as "someone no longer wanted by the world, the region or the Iraqi people." Iran's call has, of course, been widely interpreted as pushing a Shia agenda in Iraq and an effort to instal a Shia government. (The dependence of the Iran-based groups on the Iranian Government is no secret. In the early 1980s, SAIRI is reported to have declared its unequivocal subordination to Ayatollah Khomeini as the supreme commander of the Islamic nation; see committee Against Repression and for Democratic Rights in Iraq, "Saddam's Iraq: Revolution or Reaction?"). The regime of Saddam Hussein has attempted to suppress the revolt savagely. Confronted by the U.S.-led armed forces, its tail disappears between its legs. Confronted by a Iraqi opposition, it turns into a visious attack-dog. From the reports, the regime's attack on the rebels in the south and the southeast has included the use of tanks, helicopter gunships and heavy artillery. There is great suffering among the people of the south and the southeast and indeed of the whole of Iraq. Their homes, their streets, their schools, their cities, their very lives have been smashed by the U.S.-led intervention and now by Saddam Hussein's troops. As public health experts predicted, there do appear to be large numbers of internal refugees; another significant

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life-protecting stratagem appears to be migration from urban areas to desert communities.

The regime of the dictator appears to be confident about taking back the south. Reuters has reported that government troops are "in full control" of Karbala — the descriptions are full of the corpses and debris — and it is also reported that government troops are establishing control over Najaf. The human and material costs have been very great, but the loss of innocent life and a state of perpetual fear have never been deterrents to the Baathist regime.[16]

The situation in the northern part of Iraq, where the Kurdish organisations are leading the revolt against the regime, is a different story altogether. "Although they too have been smashed in the past," Samir al-Khalil said, "the Kurds were forever renewing themselves. They have structures of organisation that go back decades and which survive. Even among the Shia groups you do not have anything like the degree of organisation coordination, experience and knowledge of how to handle political matters that you have among the Kurds." The major Kurdish political organisation are working together at present. The two major parties are the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) led by Jalal Talabani (Talabani claims, to be the "less tribal" of the major Kurdish parties, although his political career is marked by opportunism towards the Baghdad regime — "filp-flopping all over the place," is how Samir al-Khalil put it) and the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP). The KDP's main figure was the late Mulla Mustafa Barzani: It is now led by his son Masud Barzani. Although there is a history of bloody factionalism between the groups, now they are working together, with common representatives, spokesmen and so on. In common with the revolt in the south, the rebellion in the north took advantage of the Saddam Hussein regime's defeat. The rebellion in the north, however, appears to have been less spontaneous and more organised than the rebellion of the south. A spokesman of the PUK, Ahmed Bamarni, said, "We knew Saddam Hussein

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would lose the war with the allies. And we had our plan for months to move against his regime." Many factors have contributed to what appear to be the early successes of the Kurdish groups in the north; they include the arming of the population by Saddam Hussein last year against a possible Turkish invasion from the north, and the large scale shifting of government troops from the north to quell the rebellion in the south. The Kurdish leadership outside the country is in contact with the Kurdish fighters in the north. There are channels of communication between them and they have even invited foreign journalists to the north to "see for themselves". (The Japan Broadcasting Corporation, which was the first in with television material, shot footage apparently on March 19, of Kurdish fighteers in Kirkuk). The Kurdish groups have claimed major successes. Early on, they claimed victories in areas around Dohuk (near the border with Turkey) and Raniya (near the border with Iran). By March 21, their spokesman claimed control of the northern oil-producing city of Kirkuk (as mentioned, there is television footage from international sources of their present success in Kirkuk) and claimed that the Kurdish forces controlled 90,000 square miles in the north, Kurdish leaders now say they plan to move on Mosul in the north, Iraq's third city. PUK spokesman Ahmed Bamârni claims that 90,000 Iraqi prisoners have been taken (12,000 are claimed to have been taken in the fighting for Kirkuk) and that the Kurdish groups have asked the International Red Cross for help in dealing with Iraqi prisoners. Bamarni, also says the groups plan to move a provisional government into the region.[17]

For all this, it is not clear how much territory can be said to be really under Kurdish control. Even if the Baathist forces have suffered defeat, cities as well as large territories can fall into the hands of rebel Kurds without their being assured of a position of stable long-term control, one from which they can exercise administrative and governmental authority. The hold of the Kūrdish rebels on tenuous unless it receives external support. (Their rule is also vulnerable to attacks by helicopter gunships of the Saddam Hussein regime). A major feature of the

Iraqi opposition is, of course, that it is in exile. The largest groups among the opposition are, as mentioned, the Kurdish and the Shia groups. On the left, there is the Iraqi Communist Party, once anally of the Baath, and latter one of its worst victims. There are other groups as well: among them are the Islamic Action Organisation led by Ayatollah Mohammed Taki al-Mudarrasi, and the centre of Iraqi Shias that is based in London and led by Mohammed Bahr al-Uloom (who has tended to stress the separate indentity of Iraqi Shias independent of Iranian Shism). A London-based group, which has been characterised as liberal-democratic, called the Umma or Nation Party is led by Saad Saleh Jabar, the son of a former Prime Minister, who publishes an anti-Baathist paper (which translates as The New Current) from London. In addition, there are splinter organisations that derive from some of the trends described above, groups of purged Baathists, human rights groups based abroad as well as influential individuals opposed to the regime. The capacity of the democratic opposition to influence current events and processes in Iraq in an immediate way and to establish organisational structures in Iraq is, of course, very limited — a major feature of the Baath regime has been its systematic decimation of the opposition. At the same time, the potential influence and popularity of the democratic opposition should not account be underestimated. If this potential were not significant, the Saddam Hussein regime and the United States would not be so fearful of letting its members take their legitimate place in Iraq's polity. The general conference of Iraqi: opposition forces that was held in Beruit from March 10 through 12, which was attended by representatives of the Kurdish groups, the Shia groups, the Left as well as smaller opposition groups, issued an interesting statement at its conclusion. (A partial translation of the Arabic text was made for Frontline). The general conference issued a call to the armed forces to join the ranks of the rebels and to cease to be an instrument of repression in the hands of the dictator. It also decided to call on those who had collaborated with the regime to search their conscience.[18]

The conference specified the immediate tasks that faced the people as being the overthrow of the Saddam Hussein regime and the liquidation of all the consequences that followed from his invasion of Kuwait, "amongst which is the foreign occupation of the parts of our land." (It is worthnoting that Iraq's major oppposition groups opposed the Saddam Hussein regime's invasion of Kuwait and oposed the U.S.—led coalition's war against Iraq). The conference called for the formation of a provisional government that would liquidate all vestiges of the dictatorship and which would eliminate political, national, religious and sectarian discrimination. It called for a solution of the Kurdish question on the basis of the March 11, 1970 accords (which guaranteed autonomy to the Kurdish region). The concluding statement of the conference called for the establishment of basic political liberties, including the right to organise, freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, freedom of religious belief and so on. It envisaged free elections and the establishment of a constituent assembly to prepare a constitution. The Saudis appear to be searching for an alternative ruler for Iraq Two persons whose names have been mentioned in this context and who have been in contact with the Saudi authorities are ex-Baathists. One Ibrahim al-Daud, is a former Baathist Minister of Defence (purged in July 1968) and the other, Hasan al-Naqib (purged in October 1970) is a former Deputy Chief of Army General Staff. What is the position of the United States vis-a-vis the present civil war in Iraq? 'I think that the United States would basically like to find a clone of Saddam Hussein. It would be politically very difficult to reinstate Saddam Hussein himself after the demonstration process. On the other hand, he is the kind of persons that the United States would like to have in power. "The United States so far has apparently refused to meet with the Iraqi democratic opposition and has never been willing to talk to them in the past. According to them, they have been rebuffed regularly in their efforts to meet with Washington as far back as February 1990. "The very scattered evidence from (Iraq) indicates that a great deal of fighting in the south is either Iranian inspired or may involved Iranian forces or Iraqi forces

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from Iran. The U.S. and Saudi Arabia do not want Iran-influenced Shia elements there. With regard to the Kurds in the north, the United States major ally, Turkey, would be very ambivalent, to say the least, about any significant Kurdish independence movement in the north. Turkey is trying to make some kind of deal with the Iraqi Kurds in the hope that they will agree to sell out the Turkish Kurds. That is not a very pretty picture, but that seems to be what is happening. "I do not know exactly how these manouevrings will work out, but I do think that the American policy is to reinstate a military leader or other powerful figures from the Sunni minority who will keep some degree of unity in the country. "It is a very mixed policy. They would like to make it clear that they reserve the right to shoot down anything they want to and do anything they want. On the other hand, they probably have no real objection to the Iraqi army trying to restore order by force."[19]

The "failure" of the Geneva meeting between James Baker and Tariq Aziz must not mean that chances of a peaceful settlement of the Persian Gulf crisis have collapsed and that there is now no alternative to war. The unsuccessful meeting has already activated other peace initiatives by leaders of the European Community, by the President of France and most importantly by the UN Secretary-General himself. India as a member of the UN Security Council can, and must, play a determined role to keep the dog of war out of the Gulf. This role is dictated not only by the fact that a war in the Gulf will devastate the global economy and hurtle many nations into the depths of a long, crippling recession. It is dictated by India's own interests. No other country of India's size and population faces as grave a crisis as India does from a war in a region from which we draw a large portion of our petroleum needs, and which can determine how oil prices will prevail. A war may raise oil prices as high as $ 65 a barrel. Our entire economic life will grind to a halt if we have to buy oil at such an absurd and impossible price. What can Indian diplomacy do in the lean days between now and January 15 when the UN "ultimatum" to Iraq is supposed to

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expire? We must be clear about three aspects of the present turn of the crisis. First, why is the Bush Administration so fixed on an early war and so reluctant to allow the sanctions time to bite Iraq into a more reasonable frame of mind? Secondly, does the latest UN resolution clearly sanction war if Iraq fails to withdraw from Kuwait by January 15? Thridly, what is the real mood of the international community with regard to giving the peaceful alternative a longer chance than the Bush Administration seems willing to allow? In the first four months of the Gulf crisis when I had the privilege of serving India as Foreign Minister, we adopted a policy position which still continues to enjoy a national consensus. Our policy had three dimensions. We gave full support to the UN Security Council sanctions against Iraq and implemented them at a great cost to our economy and development. Secondly, we made it clear that war would be no solution; that Kuwait, which must be freed from Iraqi occupation, would virtually cease to exist if there were a war over its future. Thirdly, we wanted the United Nations to take charge of the peaceful or military operations to engage President Saddam Hussein in working out an exit from Kuwait. I discussed the Gulf crisis with more than 20 Foreign Ministers and, barring a few, all of them preferred a peaceful settlement. I found the German Foreign Minister to be clearly and forcefully in favour of a non-military solution, and found the Chinese position to be almost entirely identical with India's. Mr. Baker himself was appreciative of the role that India was trying to play; and if his appreciation meant anything, it was an implicit American preference for a peaceful way out of the current crisis — for which the powers that contributed for years to the building up of the military resources of Iraq must share their portion of responsibility. The politics of the Gulf crisis is scantily reported in Indian Press. International media has reported that George Bush agreed to the Geneva meeting between his Secretary of State and Iraq's Foreign Minister primarily, because he had to satisfy the US Congress that he had given "peace the last chance" and to pre-empt an independent initiative by the European Community and separately, another initiative by

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France. The UN Secretary-General himself told George Bush that he would like to intervene on behalf of a peaceful settlement.[20]

It is clear that the "failure" of the Geneva meeting will not ally Congressional disquiet about the drift to ,war before the efficacy of the sanctions is fully exhausted. Most of the leaders are not succumbing helplessly to the inevitability of war. In the USSR, a certain demur about Washington's impatience is now visible, which the United States is bracing to overcome by putting off the June Summit between Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev. Bush's predicament is easily understood and deserves sympathy. The Gulf mobilisation of force to punish Iraq is costing $ 330 billion a year, according to Jane's Defence Weekly, which works out to a rate of over $ 800 million a day; and America's allies and friends have so far not actually contributed more than $ 10 billion. The US economy, already in a recession along with that of over a dozen countries of Western Europe, can hardly afford to go on bearing this huge cost for an indefinite period. The longer chance given to diplomacy, the greater the strain on the unity of the coalition, on the already souring relations between the Administration and Congress on this issue, and between the Administration and the American people. The latest public opinion polls show that close to one half of the US population would prefer a peaceful settlement, while over 70 per cent would not like the US to go to war if its allies failed to dish out a much greater portion of the financial costs than they seem to be willing to. With his characteristic American gift for hyperbole, Mr. Bush has described the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait as the "greatest crisis since World War-II". This kind of runaway rhetoric erodes the credibility of official American assertions that the war in the Gulf would be over in a week or even in a day and that the coalition casualties would not cross the limit of acceptable damages.[21]

There is speculation in the media that Israel may even drop nuclear weapons on Iraq. There are sober, objective and responsible estimates made on both sides of the Atlantic that the war may

last several weeks and cost the US thousands in dead and wounded. It will certainly blow up a great deal of the oil in Kuwait, Iraq and Saudi Arabia, if not also in other adjacent oil-rich countries. Iraq's chemical weapons will be freely used, taking an inordinately heavy toll of human lives and seriously worsening the global environmental and security situation. But, the Geneva meetings was a "failure" only because it was not a success. The crisis could not be resolved in one diplomatic go, especially when both sides came prepared to read fixed, unalterable scrips. However, you don't talk six hours unless you have issues to jointly explore.

Tariq Aziz suggested further meetings — including one or more visits by Mr. Baker to Baghdad to meet with President Saddam Hussein himself. Mr. Baker's rejection of the proposal out of hand need not be taken as the final American answer. A lot of pressure will be built upon President Bush from many directions for further talks with Iraq.

George Bush and his European friends have already made three specific concession to Mr. Saddam Hussein which the latter may not dismiss lightly. First, he has been given the assurance that there will be no attack on Iraq if he pulls his forces out of Kuwait. Secondly, it is now universally agreed that an international conference must be convened this year to settle all major issues in the Middle East including the questions of a Palestinian homeland, though there must not be an explicit linkage between the Iraqi pullout from Kuwait and this international conference. Thirdly, the coalition force will be withdrawn from, the Gulf when Iraq has withdrawn from Kuwait. If the United States refuses to take away its powerful military mobilisation in the Gulf region once the present crisis is settled, it will invite the wrath of Iran and almost the entire Arab people, if not of all their rulers. I would urge President Saddam Hussein to be pleased with these major concessions made by the US and its allies and now gracefully submit to the world demand that he vacate Kuwait. It should be possible for

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him to work out with Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and others a satisfactory settlement of his claim to a couple of border islands rich with petroleum and to a wider access to the Gulf waters. The Security Council must give President Saddam Hussein some more time, and it is here that Indian diplomacy must begin to work. In conjunction with several other members, India should ask for an urgent meeting, of the Security Council to consider the situation comprehensively and to make it clear that neither is January 15 no Rubicon, nor does the phrase "all necessary means" prescribe a war at this crucial stage of the crisis when diplomacy of peace can still work and achieve things that a war will not be able to. India will find China and Belgium particularly responsive to an attempt to reviews the entire situation. Belgium is one of the European countries that have refused to take part in the military operations, while China remained unpersuaded at its recent Foreign Minister-level meeting with the USSR at Urumchi that it should support military measures at the expiry of the January 15 deadline. At the Security Council, India should work with China, Belgium and other like-minded countries to: (1) give peaceful diplomacy a longer chance; (2) urge further talks between the United States and Iraq; (3) put the UN Secretary-General in charge of global diplomatic pressure on President Saddam Hussein, mellowed by clear-cut assurances that a political settlement of the entire Middle East issue will get top priority once the present crisis is resolved. India must also quickly activate G-15 and press for a face-to-face meeting of G-7 and G-15 to jointly assess the damage a war in the Gulf will inflict on the political economies of the developing nations. G-15 was created for a dialogue with G-7 and it is high time for a dialogue. At a third level, India should work with Iran, UAE Saudi Arabia and Jordan on one hand and Algeria, Yemen and the PLO on the other to evolve a regional solution to the crisis. Unfortunately, the Arab countries are too crippled by divisions in their ranks to work out a regional framework. India is outside the Gulf region, but not exactly an outsider. It has good friendly relations with most of the members of the Gulf and Arab communities who are

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now aware of India's importance as a member of the Security Council. A welcome positive development is the wish of the Iranian Government to work with India as well as Pakistan to bring the Gulf crisis to a peaceful solution. The unofficial delegation that recently came to India from Saudi Arabia also showed a desire that there should be cooperation between the two countries. Many members of the Saudi governing elite are deeply perturbed by the consequences for their kingdom of a war in the Gulf; they seem to realise that the present political order will be gravely threatened by either a victory or a defeat of the coalition forces in such a war. Finally, I would suggest that India take the initiative to convene a meeting of the leading Non-aligned Foreign Ministers at the UN to take stock of the Gulf crisis and determine what initiatives NAM can take even at this late hour. Diplomacy of peace by the lone Chairam of the NAM with visits to Baghdad and Riyadh, however well-meaning, could not be expected to leave any mark on the shifting sands of war or peace in the deserts of Arabia. NAM should now work with other collective bodies like the EEC, the Arab League, the Gulf Cooperation Council and even the Islamic Conference to mount truly effective pressure for peace on both Mr. Saddam Hussein and President Bush. Peace in the Gulf is now an essential condition for the survival of a large number of developing nations who do not produce oil or have to depend heavily on oil imports. India is one of these nations. But the Arabas are not outside the doomed group, even those who are rich in oil. A war means that they will lose their wealth and their international standing. The morning after will be a terrible world too awesome to contemplate.[22]

Iraq's occupation of Kuwait not only led to its international isolation and the destruction of its economic and military power. Baghdad has also been booted out of most Gulf regional groups. Since the August 2, 1990 at least four regional bodies have expelled Iraq, and they expected Baghdad to be dropped from all the remaining organization.

The latest expulsion was ordered by the United Arab Shipping Company (UASC), it was formally suspending Iraq's membership on grounds that it had attacked a member of the company.

"Iraq's membership in the UASC was practically frozen immediately after the invasion of Kuwait. But a formal decision was taken on February 27, 1991, said Abdul Rahman Al-Mahmoud, director of Administrative affairs at the UASC Dubai Branch. Iraq's shareholding in the company "will be liquidated soon."

Iraq owns a 19 per cent share of the UASC, which also groups Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qater and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The UASC was set up in Kuwait some 15 years ago with capital of 500 million Kuwaiti dinars (1.7 billion dollars) and operates 48 ships. But the company, the only joint Arab shipping venture, transferred its operations to Dubai after the Iraqi invasion badly damaged its headquarters in Kuwait. Mr. Mahmoud said no ships or money would be given to Iraq after the suspension of its membership.

"Fortunately, no vessel in the UASC has flown the Iraqi flag since the Iran-Iraq war for security reasons," he said.

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Islam and the Gulf Crisis

In contrast to the secular character of anti-war movements in the west, protests in Muslim-dominated countries of the Third World acquired a religious character in the context of the Gulf War. Perhaps, this is due to the lead taken by Islamic hardliners in mobilising the Muslim populace against the Gulf War. Protest movements in some of the Muslim countries were saturated with catchy religious slogans like "the great Satan US2, "the infidel west", "aggression on Islam" or "victory to Islam". Abdul Halim Arshat, the secretary-general of Malaysia's leading political party said that the aim of US is to kill the Muslims of Baghdad. The Muslim Council theologians of South African Muslims to help Iraq in its holy war against the US and its allies. A protest march taken out in Teheran condemned killings of Muslims and said Islam was at stake. In an anti-war rally called by the Islamic Salvation Front of Algeria, 60,000 people shouted victory to Islam and Muslims. In another anti-war rally organized by the same party, nearly 400,000 people demanded that, the Algerian government should train volunteers to fight alongside Iraq. But not all anti-war demonstrations in Muslim countries betrayed religious overtones; there are few exceptions as in the case of Cairo where students condemned both Iraq and the US-led coalition. Thus, a cursory look at the anti-war rallies taken out in Muslim countries gives the impression that most of them,

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if not all, were an exercise in anti-Americanism mixed with anti-war sentiments while religion was used for mobilisation.[1]

Iran has asked the Organisation of Islamic Countries to convene an emergency meeting to consider the Gulf crisis now moving towards criticality. The reply of the secretariat is awaited. Meanwhile Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Syria, the Arab coalition partners against Saddam Hussein have had a meeting at Riyadh. There was a meeting at foreign ministers' level among Pakistan, Iran and Turkey, the partners of the erstwhile CENTO. Iraq has also convened a meeting of Islamic Organisations in Baghdad next week to mobilise support for the 'Jehad' against the 'infidels'. Barring Jordan, Yemen, Sudan, Tunisia, PLO and Mauritania the rest of the Islamic countries, 39 in number, are not supporting Iraq. Even Colonel Qadafi of Libya who was earlier considered to be inclined towards Iraq has now declared himself in favor of Egypt and Syria. The isolation of Iraq in the Islamic world is not surprising since most of the ruling elites of Islamic countries are status quo oriented.

Saddam Hussein himself was not known for his Islamic fervour till recently when he has found it expedient to invoke religion against the US. Iraqi's linkage of solution to Kuwait problem with the Palestinian issue has not evoked much enthusiasm among the Islamic states as the support of the latter to the secular Palestinian cause (except for Egypt and Syria) has always been lukewarm.[2]

Jordan occupied the Palestinian area from 1948 to 1967 and never permitted its emergence into sovereignty. PLO was thrown out from Jordan, Syria and Lebanon and is now in distant Tunisia.

Iraq did not take part in any of the Arab Israel wars. Saddam Hussein's commitment for the Palestinian cause is of most recent origin. In the immediate aftermath of annexation of Kuwait there has been surge of popular support for Saddam

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Hussein from among the Palestinians. On the other hand Malaysia, an Islamic country, as a member of the Security Council voted in favor of all UN Resolutions against Iraq. Yemen, a supporter of Iraq finally chose to obstain when the resolution authorising all appropriate measures (meaning thereby the use of force) in case of Iraq's failure to withdraw from Kuwait was voted on. In Iraq's immediate negibourhood, Syria is the mortal enemy which sided with Iran during the eight-year Iran-Iraq war when most of the Arab states supported Iraq. Though Iran has recovered all its territories from Iraq and established its claim to the Thalweg boundary in Shatt-al Arab it has no love for Saddam Hussein. Invitation to Iranian Islamic bodies to take part in the forthcoming Baghdad conference is conspicuous by its absence.

Iranians hope that if Saddam Hussein's power is cut down they will become the dominating force in the Gulf. Iran has announced military exercise on the Iraqi border during the second half of March 1991.[3]

Saudis also have every reason to dread Iraq. Their own oil fields are not very much farther away from Kuwait.

Iraq has perhaps more than 50 per cent Shia population. In Syria, the Shia minority (the Ahlawis) are in power. If Iraq emerges unscathed the Saudis will have to consider this factor, especially with oil rich Eastern Saudi Arabia inhabited by Shia population, who have doctrinal differences with Wahabism of Saudi royal family. Egypt considers itself, perhaps legitimately as the centre of the Arab world. Egyptians have bitter memories of the treatment their workers were meted out both in Iraq and Saudi Arabia in spite of all talk of Islamic brotherhood. The Palestinians no doubt today champion Iraqi cause as a reciprocal gesture for Saddam Hussein's linkage of Kuwait and Palestinian issues. The large Palestinian population has left King Hussein also with no choice but to support Iraq. Yemen's support arises partly out of long standing tensions with Saudi Arabia. One

Islamic country which is playing both sides of the street is Pakistan. While it has despatched troops of Saudi Arabia, to be deployed not on Iraqi but Yemeni border, Gen. Aslam Beg has been commending Iraq's "strategic defiance" of the powers that be. Whatever be the outcome of the crisis, whether there is peace or war, Islamic world is not unified and majority of them do not support Iraq. Among Islamic countries too, factors like nationalism, ethnic identity, tribal loyalty, regime interests and sectarian rivalries supersede Islam as they do among Christians, Hindus and Buddhists.[4]

The Gulf War has created a pipquant situation for Muslims living in different parts of the world. The Muslims are one, from the banks of river Nile upto the deserts of Kashgar (in Central Asia), to defend the Harem (holy Kaaba), wrote poet philosopher Mohammad Iqbal. The couplet embodies the hazy dream of Muslim solidarity deeply nurtured in the consciousness of average Muslim mind over the centuries. It is an irony that history is witnessing 'infidels' being imported to defend the Harem in Saudi Arabia. It is not relevant as to who is how many kilometres away from where, and who a the pushes the button to launch a missile, or puts his finger on the gun first. The alignment, of politico-military forces in the Gulf War is fast changing the perceptions of the Muslims round the globe. It is bound to lead to a greater transformation of their psyche. The scenario presented by the Gulf War is not Muslim against non-Muslim, or Arab against a non-Arab. The US-led coalition forces pitched against Iraq comprise forces from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Syria, Morocco, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Niger—all Muslim countries. Turkey has endorsed the US stand and is ready to joint the war at any time. Iran has preferred to remain neutral. Libya is maintaining a mysterious silence. It must have been an amusing spectacle to witness Saudi and Qatarian forces fighting Iraqi soldiers in the Saudi town of Al Khafiji. The present war has brought forth not only the hollowness of the socalled pan-Islamism but also shattered the myth of 'pan-Arabism'. For long, the kings, monarchs and dictators of most Islamic countries

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have drawn an iron curtain holding their socio-political systems away from the gaze of the outside world. Nobody knows as to what has been happening there, except that Islam has reportedly been guiding these systems. Some of the more monarchs of these countries have appeared to be highly concerned about the welfare of their 'poor and ignorant' brotheren mostly from the Third World. They have been regularly supplying packages of Islamic teachings along with alms (Zakat) for the spiritual and economic emancipation of their miserable co-religionists. Most of these countries have been repeatedly harping on Islamic solidarity and Muslim brotherhood to give an impression of a monolithic Islamic Ummah community. It is yet another matter that they have not been able to see eye-to-eye with each other amongst themselves. The eight-year bloody war between Iraq and Iran is quite well known. And thousands of war prisoners remain to be repatriated yet. There have been unabated skirmishes between Iraq, Syria and Turkey. The other Islamic countries like Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qattar and United Arab Emirates have been complaining of the threats in the past, and these very threats have not been emanating from any non-Muslim country. It is amusing that although many of the Gulf countries have for long purchased sophisticated military hardware from the western countries they have failed to build any effective system to use it. The task has been left to other countries (more often to Pakistan) to export their muscle power to handle it.[5]

The bitterness, fury, rage and revolt in many parts of the Arab world and beyond at the massive defeat of Iraq has to be viewed against a certain cultural spectrum. The Muslim mind (if one may use that term of upper-middle and lower-middle class Muslims of the Arab world and beyond) bears many scars of history. One of them is the continual series of defeats inflicted by the West. Take this account of one of history's crucial battles, the battle of Poitiers between the Franks and Arabs (A. D. 732) which rolled back the tide of Muslim conquest from Europe: 'For seven days the troops of the Frankish prince and those on the Amir faced one another without giving battle. Then the Amir

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took the offensive but his cavalry could do nothing against the Franks, who, shoulder to shoulder, formed a square at the crucial moment of the battle. When darkness fell the two armies disengaged, and great was the surprise of the Franks when they discovered at dawn on the following day that the Muslims had abandoned their camp and all their luggage. Politiers was the farthest point reached by Muslims in their forays into Europe's (Cambridge History of Islam). Historical parallels should not be pushed too far. But the battle of Poitiers (Tours) has coloured the consciousness of millions of Westerners and Muslims. I remember my teacher in the Urdu school in Cuddapah telling me in the 30's. The Arabas lost for three reasons. First, in tactics they were inferior. Second, the Arabas idolise their leader. When he falls (as the Amir did), they disintegrate. Third, they are impulsive, quick to attack, quick to panic. He might have added a fourth reasons disunity. The Arabas and Berbers had fallen out. Pointiers and the 'Hundred Hours' (or 42 days) Gulf War have remarkable parallels. Bush, Powell and Schewarzkopf are the Charles Martels (the victor of Poitiers) of today. They enjoyed enormous superiority which Martel didn't. But a vital question arises: Was hi-tech superiority all that there was to the Gulf victory? Here is where the difference between Vietna, and the Gulf comes in. Vietnam was probably closer to Poitiers than the Gulf War. The first two could be said to be wars of 'Ideologies'. In the Gulf conflict, the ideological content was missing on Saddam's side till late in the day.

Of course, the bombing of Baghdad was barbarous. But if you enter the arena of moral judgement, you cannot exclude Saddam Hussein's conduct. At the moment, two things are important: The sheer scale of the allies' victory and secondly, its psychological impact. Talking about the scale of the victory, the hi-tech magic, the brilliant strategy and the even more brilliant tactics etc. were the main factors that contributed. But so much has already been said about all these that to say anything more will be superfluous. And yet in the East-West conflicts, *the Gulf war* will stand out for the near-astronomical differences between

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the 'cultures' of the adversaries. This is a point to which I shall revert later. The psychological impact of the allies' victory over Iraq is of shattering significance. It goes beyond mere cliches. To find a parallel one might have to go back to the Napolean's penetration of the 'Ottoman Shield' (a Muslim symbol) over Egypt and the occupation of that country in 1798. Like the Coalition, Napoleon landed in Egypt to freed it from Ottoman and Mameluke tyranny and implant the ideas of the French revolution. Though the French occupation was short (only upto 1801), it is now recognised as an episode of decisive importance, like the victory of the allies in the Gulf War. The defeat of Egypt's local rulers was complete. They were overwhelmed by firepower. Next, the French occupation opened up the whole of the Middle East to the European powers. This, as a result of the occupation, the idea of freedom (churriyar) struck roots—albeit gradually and not too deeply—in the native soil. Finally, Nepoleon like Bush and Schwarzkopf, established total psychologicai superiority over Arabas and Muslims. Artists are better in these matters than historians. Students of the post-Gulf War scenario would do well to watch the brilliant Egyptian director, Yusuf Chahine's Adieu, Bonaparte, made in the late 80's, with the Egyptian shock at the Napoleanic victory as its theme. Egypt had never been invaded by sea since Caesar's time. For centuries they had never confronted an alien culture. They had a brilliant ancient culture of their own. They looked down on the rest of the world (an attitude which persists). Chahine charts with remarkable empathy and precision the various responses of Egyptian society — resignation, passionate religious revival, fanatic nationalism and in the case of a few, a curiosity about the conqueror, a desire to learn, even to become intimate with him (there is a frustrated homosexual affair).[7]

Tragically all responses end in failure. And yet, though Bonaparte bids aideu, some things remain — rationality, science, a whiff of freedom. To this day the Egyptians (despite crippling failings) remain both the 'Liberal' and the 'Avant garde' Arab hope. Not everything about Bush's total victory is evil. And yet

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there is much evil too in the allied victory. First, the brutal nature of the victory. Logically, Bush will have an answer to every thing. It's Saddam who started it. Look what he did in Kuwait. In war, no exact line between enemy civilians and soldiers can be drawn. In World War-II, all protagonists ignored that line. 'Travelling beyond mandate?' How do you destroy a machine like Saddam's without going for Baghdad and Basra? Firing on retreating Iraqis? but they were travelling with armour (and incidentally with Kuwaiti loot). Destroying them would prevent another battle and weaken Saddam's internal despotism. These are solid points which cannot be brushed away. We are not drawing a line between 'cilians' and 'militants' in Kashmir, Punjab or Assam. Saddam is using the remaining tanks to crush popular uprisings in Basra, Naririyya and in Shia and Kurdish areas. And yet the scars of the 42-year war will not heal soon. Television has inflicted too deep a gash not only among Arabas or Muslims but also among people elsewhere in the Third World. Baghdad cannot be divorced from Grenada, Panama, Nicaragua or the US attitude towards GATT. It is not a question of the US fabricating a 'generous peace'. The internal logic of the US, British and French economic and political systems will push them towards dominating the Middle East. Political hegemony (not direct rule) will be established simultaneously with the looking of local capital into monopoly capital. Is there any hope? It lies in introspection as to why the Arabas have been beaten so badly from 1947 to 1991? Let us chart out a few reflections. Firstly, the problem of tribalism — from the great Ibn Khaldun down to Lawrence of Arabia? Except perhaps in Egypt, tribal and other ethnic divisions are tearing the Arabs apart. The failure of the bureaucracy (including the army) is another major characteristic of the Arab world. Schwarzkopf modestly told Time: 'Let me tell you where we succeeded. Superb equipment'. Also superb bureaucracy and something opposed to bureaucracy-innovation. Both are missing in every Arab body-politic. Instead we have despotism operating through the modern techniques of repressive intelligence and thought control. Another main aspect is the lack of democracy.

As on who has worked for seven years in the Middle East, I attribute the Arab defeat (in the comprehensive post-World War Second encounter with the West) to the lack of social and political democracy. This made the rulers complacent, the ruled complaint. If the masses are rising now in the name of 'Islam' it is because that word once stood for democracy, social justice, an accommodating attitude to 'foreigners'.[8]

Predictably, Iraq is on the verge of being pulversied. And all the "experts" who had predicted a delayed or prolonged conflict, are looking a trifle silly. In the next few weeks, we should also expect a great deal of breast-beating by so-called liberals, lamenting the impending fate of Iraq. For, given the extent of allied technological superiority, Iran can do no more than delay the inevitable denouement by a week or so. Then, Saddam Hussein's despotic delusions of grandeur would also be forgotten and much scorn poured on the quantum of force used by the allies to crush Iraq. From a civilisational perspective, however, what is happening was totally predictable. The prospects of Iraqi resistance were grossly exaggerated on the basis of its numerical superiority in land forces. However awesome the Gulf War may seem at present, history is bound to treat it with far lesser respect. The Gulf War may not be regarded as more than a punctuation mark in the long and bitter civilisational struggle between Christianity and Islam — the two principal faith systems of the modern world. The two faiths, from which have emerged two dynamic civilisations, have clashed incessantly over centuries. The growth of mercantilism, the acquisition of colonies (in the 17th and 18th centuries), the advent of the industrial revolution in the 19th century and the consequent rise of the working class had, however, resulted in the parameters of conflict changing across the globe. But even in World War I, a major aim of the Western powers was the liquidation of the Ottoman empire—a task accomplished without any great difficulty. The destruction of the Caliphate in the second decade of this century is illustrative of the reactions and trends that are certain to surface now, following Iraq's pulverisation. Then too,

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Muslims the world over — especially those far from the arena of conflict — got exercise and a wave of anti-Westernism swept across the Islamic world. Gandhiji put his to good use by merging his Hindu-dominated, anti-British movement with the Khilafat agitation. A contingent of Indian Muslims, in fact, sailed to Turkey in a misplaced zeal to defend the Caliphate. On reaching Turkey, however, they found the modernist reformer, Kemal Ataturk, had even banned the fez as it was a symbol of a decadent regime. Turkey, the revered centre of Islamic orthodoxy, Westernised itself at breakneck speed: The burqa was abolished at the social level while pluralist democracy on Western lines replaced a political system dominated by religious oligarchs. It appeared that Turkey would become the trend-setter for the Islamic world. But after just six decades, Turkey is the odd man out; the revivalist revolution in Iran represents the socio-political psyche of Islam more accurately today.[9]

To an extent, the West is itself responsible for its defeat in the Islamic world. Strategic and economic considerations made the British prop up patently obscurantist nomadic chieftains in the Arabian peninsula; it also helped the colonialists to keep the tribes and nations at loggerheads and carve out artificial principalities in order to retain control over sources of cheap oil.

The modernists in the Arab/Islamic world were viewed as dangerous enemies of Western civilisation and, in the post-World War-II paranoia, dubbed as lackeys of the "evil" Soviet empire. Thus Mossadegh, who nationalised a British petroleum company in 1953, had to be removed from the leadership of Iran and the autocratic Shah reinstated. Nasser became an implacable for once be nationalised the Suez Canal. Of course, the bitter Arab resistance to Israel significantly guided Western policy, but the double-standards were transparent nevertheless. The Saudi monarchy remained an ally of the West despite its opposition to Israel, Nasserite Egypt, on the other hand, had to be crushed or bought over Sadat proved an easy buy. The successful onslaught on political anti-Westernism — represented

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by Mossadegh, Nasser and even Gaddafi — paved the way for religious anti-Westernism. This rekindled the old civilisational conflict as it changed the parameters of the clash. At first sight, it may appear simplistic to revive parallels with the crusades of the Middle Ages, but it should be borne in mind that these provide a strong historical legacy. The irreconcilable conflict between Islamic and Judeo-Christian Civilisations is easier to explain in populist terms if it is couched in the phraseology of religion and value systems. That is precisely what Ayatollah Khomeini accomplished, thus setting in motion an escalated confrontation between the two civilisations. It may be inaccurate to see Saddam Hussein as the purveyor of Khomeini's legacy, but in a fundamental sense, he is. At least in the mythology of the future, Saddam will not go down as a modernist hero, in the way of Nasser. He will be regarded as a martyr for the cause of Islam.[10]

Acutely conscious of this likelihood and well endowed with a sense of history, Saddam invoked Allah mercilessly in the countdown to the war, even emblazoning Iraq's flag with the stirring cry of Allah-ho-Akbar, ostensibly to prevent Muslim soldiers of Saudi Arabia from pulling down the Iraqi flag if they chanced upon one fluttering. In retrospect, Western civilisation, led by the US, was indeed confronted with a Catch 22 situation: It could not allow Saddam Hussein to get away with his audacious conquest of Kuwait; nor can it now prevent his canonisation and consequent emergence as a new symbol of Arab-Islamic resurgence. In the event, the West has chosen to risk the latter as the lesser of two evils, probably hoping that this threat could be contained. But can it? The chances are that Saddam or no Saddam, the West versus Islam conflict is set to deepen. Paradoxically, that would entail destabilisation of the conservative and, in a sense diehard Islamic, Saudi regime for its proximity to the West. Similarly, other anachronistic emirates may be threatened by internal rebellion. There is really no contradiction in this. It is erroneous to believe that revivalist forces are necessarily obscurantist. In fact, revialism becomes

powerful only when it employs modern technology. Then use of the audio and video cassette by the forces of Hindutva in India is a case in point. Khomeini, too, had used technology to devastating effect. Over the next decade or so, therefore, the West should be prepared to countenance a phenomenal rise in Islamic militancy. Perhaps no more conventional wars will take place for no other Muslim leader is likely to emulate Saddam's foolhardy stubbornness. But at the level of popular consciousness, anti-Westernism, particularly anti-Americanism, is certain to intensify. The most obvious expression of this militancy would be terrorism. The West is now reasonably well equipped to deal with this challenge. But Western targets the world over will be under renewed, probably severe, threat from terrorism. If popular, resurgent Islamic uprisings succeed in destabilising or overthrowing conservative Middle-Eastern regimes, the instability of these countries or the hostility of successor regimes thereto the West, would make it difficult to contain militancy. To allude to a domestic parallel, Operation Desert Storm may become the West's Operation Bluestar. The immediate target will be smashed; the man who personified resistance, eliminated. But the forces that will be unleashed may lead to a catharsis of gigantic magnitude. One thing, however, is certain. In the long run, the forces of modernisation—represented quintessentially by the West which now includes the erstwhile socialist bloc are certain to triumph over the forces of revivalism. To that extent, religion as a political factor will lose the battle against scientific temper in the final analysis. But the next few decades, probably even centuries, will witness the apparent resurgence of religion. India, again, is a case in point.[11]

Islam and Christianity insisted only on a minimum doctrinal conformity, cultural and social diversity were left largely undisturbed. The nationalist movement, while emphasizing the unity and integration of India, also appealed to ethnic, linguistic, and regional sentiments for mobilizing support. In the process regional cultures received a new impetus for consolidation. What about unity? How has it been brought about? The

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geographical location of India, with the majestic Himalayas in the north and the seal around peninsular India gave it at least partial isolation. For long periods there was no more than a trickle of people form the north-west, the Burmese and Chinese routes, and the seas. During these periods there were population movements with the sub-continent which gave a semblance of unity to it. While even the largest of ancient empires did not cover the entire sub-continent, they extended the territories open to imperial administrative and legal influences.[12]

The Gulf War was an earth shaking event for the world at large and much more so for the Muslims. Perhaps for the Muslims it came as a traumatic experience for a number of reasons. First, it involved many Muslim nations. Second, it once again shattered the myth of 'Islamic Ummah' and its unity. Third, it was western imperialism riding roughshod over the Muslim nation. All this involved intense emotions. It was not, therefore, very difficult to understand the Muslim mind as far as the Gulf War was concerned. As far as Indian Muslims are concerned their minority complex played no mean role in the whole affair. First, let us deal with the concept of the so-called unity of Muslim Ummah. It is firmly believed by Muslims as well as non-Muslims that Muslims are a monolithic group the world over. The Muslim Ummah is united like a firm rock and react to the major events concerning the world of Islam as a unified group. However, it is more apparent than real. It is another thing that certain communal elements overdraw this picture of Muslim unity and read into Muslim reaction what does not exist. In history too, Muslims were never united, not only in political but even on religious matters too. Even the Sunni Islam is divided into several sects and sub-sects, each sect holding firmly to its own beliefs. There has not been a single religious dogma on which Muslims do not differ. Also, the Muslims faced near civil war situation within 30 years after the death of the Holy Prophet. Let alone anything else, the Muslims could not unite to face Western imperialism and its onslaught against them during the nineteenth century. It was Muslim divisiveness

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which gave easy entry to Western imperialists into the Islamic world. However, the imperials' onslaughts of the nineteenth century deeply disturbed the Muslim psyche. It was during that period that the west demonstrated its unchallenged superiority over Islamic countries. One Muslim country after the other came under western hegemony. It was quite a humiliating experience indeed. Not only the politicians but even the 'Ulemma never pardoned the west for its hegemony over Islam. Islam, right from its inception, was the religion of dominant rulers. They continued to rule over considerable parts of the globe for several centuries and never had, before the nineteenth century, the humiliating experience of being dominated by non-Muslim powers though for short interregnums they were defeated here and there. For any sympathetic understanding of the Muslim behaviour it is necessary to understand this. One cannot understand Muslim reaction to Salman Rushedie's novel. The Satanic Verses, without keeping this fact in mind. He saw in this novel not only an unpardonable insult to the Holy Prophet but a western and a Jewish conspiracy to humiliate or destroy Islam. Khomeini's fatwa to kill Rushedie could find such tremendous popularity precisely because it was a successful challenge to the hegemonistic west.[13]

Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait was not of course endorsed by all the Muslims in India, let alone throughout the world. The reaction differed from individual to individual and organisation to organisation and also from country to country. In fact, it would not be wrong to say that there were very few takers for the annexation. However, once America and other Western powers began to emerge as saviours of 'freedom' of Kuwait and champions of its 'liberation' things began to change in the minds of Muslims. Even then for a considerable time Muslims, especially in Indian remained divided on the issue. Many, until the invasion of Iraq by American led allied forces on January 17, 1991 continued to oppose Saddam Hussein for invading Kuwait. Many Muslim organisations in India are recipients of financial aid from Saudi Arabia as well as Kuwait.

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In the beginning such individuals and organisations vociferously opposed Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Some Urdu papers were also in the forefront of such opposition to the Iraqi annexation of Kuwait. It would be interesting to note that not a single important Muslims political or social organisation in India gave any statement either way and avoided the controversy. Thus it could be seen that the Indian Muslims were far from being united on Iraqi action against Kuwait. It was only one religious organisation of Barelvi Muslims which took a clear position in favor of Iraq. It not only approved of the Iraqi action in Kuwait but took out a morcha in Bombay in support of Iraq in October, 1990. There were religious reasons for the same. The Indian Muslims are largely divided into two groups, the Barelvis and the Deobandis, the Barelvis commanding the overwhelming majority. The Barelvi Muslims believe in visiting tombs and graves of holy saints and praying there whereas the Deobandis do not approve of this practice. The Saudi rulers and 'Ulema too are opposed to paying respecting to the tombs and graves and have strictly prohibited this practice in Saudi Arabia. Unfortunately for the Barelvis in Medina in Saudi Arabia lie buried the holy Prophet, and the closest members of his family. However, in view of the Saudi law, the Barelvi Muslims from India visiting Medina are not allowed to pray on the holy tomb of the Prophet and those of members of his family. These Muslims, therefore, are opposed to the Saudi rulers. Thus the Barelvi Muslims strongly came out against Saudi Arabia on the Gulf controversy too. But as pointed out above, general Muslim opinion in India, drastically changed in favour of Saddam Hussein after America made it clear that it would use force against Iraq for the 'liberation' of Kuwait. The driving line between the Muslims began to vanish soon thereafter. In fact this happened throughout the sub-continent. Pakistani and Bangla Deshi Muslims also extended their support to Saddam Hussein.

Now he was seen as the one who had the guts to stand up to American imperialism. Saddam, as if, did them proud. He was

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one who refused to submit before taghuti(evil) force. It would be interesting to note one thing here. The Muslims is the subcontinent hail those of their leaders who symbolise power and modernisation, rather than religious orthodoxy. Many readers would raise their eyebrows at this but nevertheless it is true. See the Pakistan movement before partition. It was led by Jinnah, a thoroughly westernized modern leader. The 'Ulema led by Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madani and Abul Kalam Azad opposed this creation of Pakistan but could not enthuse the Muslims. It was modernised Jinnah who carried the Muslims with him.[14]

A national convention of Muslims, organised by the Institute of Muslim Ummah Affairs, Aligrah, in New Delhi, on March 16, 1991 reacted with concern at the happenings in the Gulf and called for the immediate and total pull out of western forces from the region.

The convention, organised to discuss various national and international problems facing the Muslim Ummah (Community), appealed to the Muslims to actively practise the politics, of faith. It appealed to Muslims to formulate their own spiritual and revolutionary methodology of Islam.

The convention also authorised the Aligarh based Institute of Muslim Ummah Affairs (IMUA) to constitute a consultative body of Muslims to solve their problems. Also it authorised the chairman of the IMUA to form a committee to help Muslims formulate a strategy for the coming election.

In the broad Islamic swathe from Mauritania on the Atlantic coast of North Africa to Indonesia in South-East Asia, the Gulf war has proved a bonus for Islamic fundamentalists and Muslim left-wing groups. Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein's call for a jihad against "infidel aggressors" found support on the streets of many Muslim capitals. For Islamic fundamentalists in particular, it provided a potent rallying call. Despite negative perceptions in the West, Islamic fundamentalism is not synonymous with

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terrorism and extremism. Bomb blasts and street demonstrations make the headlines, but these are the visible manifestations of an often complex struggle by Muslims to renew a religion many of them believe is under threat. Not only are Western ideas and values seen as corrupting the Islamic faith, many Muslims perceive their own Governments — and even some of their own clerics — to be deviating from the true path of Islam. In an effort to explain this, analysts point out that the religion of Islam is all-embracing to its adherents. "It is more than a religion, it is a way of life, a civilisation for nearly one-fifth of the world's population," said a Western analyst who has travelled widely in Muslim countries. Yet in an imperfect world, the high standards that are demanded of Muslims sometimes prove difficult to maintain. In order to arrest the decline, the history of Islam has been punctuated periodically by attempts at renewal — a return to the fundamental tenets of the path. Ironically it is not the West so much as Islamic States themselves that may have most to fear from a rise in fundamentalism by the Gulf War. Presented not only as a restoration of true Islam, but also as a political alternative to capitalism and socialism, those in the vanguard of the fundamentalist movement are becoming increasingly vocal in their demands for change. The Muslim dilemma posed by the Gulf War was illustrated especially in Pakistan and Morocco. Both Government sent troops to join the Allied coalition against Iraq, yet on the streets of Islamabad and Rabat there was evidence of large-scale popular support for Mr. Saddam Hussein. London-based West Asian specialist Dilip Hiro, in his book, Islamic Fundamentalism, appears to put his finger on the crux of the problem when, he reclaims that most Islamic Governments "are not truly Islamic".

Most have inherited the systems and secular ideas of their departed Western colonisers ernments and have absorbed elements of Western culture. Echoing this argument, a retired Pakistani army general close to the late President Mohammed Zia-ul-Haq recently complained that "despite Zia's efforts, Pakistan is still not Islamic — it just pretends to be Islamic." Fundamentalists

set out to challenge the legitimacy of many Islamic Governments. The conflict in the Gulf has provided them with an opportunity to rally support for their cause. How the different States cope with the problem varies. Even before the Gulf War erupted, fundamentalists had made major political gains in elections in Jordan and Algeria.[15]

Jordan's King Hussein facing pressure not only from his own nationals but from a huge Palestinian population, too — sided with Iraq in the conflict, hoping that long-standing Western sympathisers would understand the dilemma in which he found himself. Despite pressure from the militant Islamic Salvation Front in his country. Algeria's President, Mr. Chadli Benjedid, remained neutral and tried to play the role of an Arab peace-broker. Support for the Front rose during the warm, however, and mass demonstrations at the end of February seemed a threat to the Government. There was no visible support for Mr. Saddam Hussein in Suadi Arabia, but the Saudi Government and royal family, "guardians" of Islam's two most holy shrines, face increasing fundamentalist pressure over domestic issues. These fundamentalists are based mainly in the Eastern Province, from where much of the Allied military action to liberate Kuwait was launched. They accused the Government to King Fahd of being a tool of the West which has long deviated from the true path of Islam. With the aid of a loyal military, King Fahd has been able to avert social disorder, but the recent arrests of several activists highlight the insecurity felt in the corridors of power in Riyadh. Neighbouring Bahrain, too, is nervous of militants within its population of less than half a million. Historical Iranian claims to the tiny island State were resurrected after the 1979 Islamic revolution led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. In the early 1980s the Baharini security forces detained several pro-Khomeini militants after arms caches were found buried of the Island. Egypt has long had a love-hate relationship with the fundamentalist movement known as the Moslem Brotherhood. At times it has been co-opted into the Government, at others prosecuted. The 1981 assassination of

President Anwar Sadat at the hands of fundamentalists was a sign of the conflict within Egypt and the strength of feeling on the extreme wing of the movement. Acutely aware of the dangers, the Government of President Hosni Mubarak recently arrested members of the fundamentalist Al-Jihad group. In Afghanistan, fundamentalism is one of the driving forces behind attempts to oust of the Soviet-backed regime of President Najibullah. Paradoxically, Western support for the Afghan Mujahideen has helped bolster groups which are anti-Westerns. Although Afghanistan's decade—long civil war has failed to produce a Mujahideen victory, the withdrawal of Soviet troops two years ago is depicted as a shining example of Islam's triumph over a superpower and Communism. "We have long believed in launching holy war to help our Muslim brothers in the Soviet Union," said Mr. Gulbudeen Hekmatyar, a Mujahideen leader who has helped train militants from various countries. In many eyes, Iran is considered the only truly Islamic fundamentalist state. Led by Khomeini, fundamentalists transformed social protest during the rule of Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi into a revolutionary Islamic movement that toppled the Shah in 1979. Their success is viewed as a potential threat by many Muslim Governments. What is clear is that there are significant difference between the fundamentalists struggles taking place in various parts of the world. Although Islam stresses the brotherhood of all Muslims, different national, ethnic, and tribal affiliations make a common approach difficult to envisage. Critically there are substantial differences between the majority Sunni sect and the minority Shia. Despite the hopes of the U.S. Secretary of State, Mr. James Baker, that the Gulf War would not leave "too many anti-American scars in the Arab world," there is widespread concern that mistrust will mark relations between the West and much of the Muslim world for years to come. Yet it is the Muslim world itself which is most likely to feel the upheaval of the upsurge in fundamentalism fuelled by the conflict in the Gulf.[16]

The Americans have committed just about the biggest mistake that any foreign airforce fighting Iraq could possibly

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commit. They have bombed in or near the most scared Shia shrines at Najaf and Karbala in central Iraq, it has been reported. It will be evident to any military commander that the choice of Najaf was particularly foolish because there is located the mosque of Ali, the son-in-law of the Prophet Mohammed and the fourth Caliph to rule the Arab Islamic empire, a man revered by both the ten per cent Shia minority and the 90 per cent Sunni majority. This action should unite the Shias, who are quick to anger over any assault on their faith or places of worship, and the more tolerant Sunnins. It will also increase public pressure on the so far 'netural' government of Hashemi Rafsanjani in Iran to enter the war on the side of Iraq, expanding its scope and turning it into a true Jihad (holy war). Just over half of Iraq's population in Shia, but more importantly, the two shrines are at heart of worldwide Shia observance. Ayatollah Khomeini stayed for eight years at Najaf during his exile from Iran because of the particularly holy character of the place.[17]

There is little excuse for the coalition forces to bomb these cities, either by mistake or while targeting military installations. At least, during the day the cities are easy to identify from the air because of the large golden domes of the mosques which loom over the low building set in flat, open country for miles around. Furthermore, these two cities are surrounded by a wide belt of cemeteries where the Shia faithful from all over the world are buried. That there was bombing and destruction and casualties in the residential area of Najaf cannot be denied because this areas has been filmed by the only foreign correspondent to remain in Iraq, Peter Arnett of CNN. Being a New Zealander with wide experience of war reporting, he always backs up his presentation with video film and has been painstakingly neutral. Nevertheless, in order to hide its naked aggression, angry accusations from the White House say that Arnett is gullible or worse.[18]

Is it wise for the US to be the "global policeman" who enforces rules on another civilisation, that is, Islam?

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Probably not. But the time to think about that was before Jan. 15, 1991. Now, the American role is a fact. The only question is what to do with our overwhelming military preponderance in the region. My concern is that the US may not be prepared to assume the necessary political responsibilities that flow from military victory — the creation of a whole new structure of security in the region, the promotion of redistribution of wealth among the Arabas, the advancement of the Arab-Israeli peace process. The region had been so saturated with weaponry over the past few years and the political, ethnic and religious antagonisms are so enormous that a great deal of time and commitment from America will be required to help resolve all these problems. Only if we assume these responsibilities can we fully redeem and make worthwhile the suffering caused by the war.[19]

Without a Soviet counterbalance that counts in the region, who will help mediate between the US and the regions of embittered Arabas and Muslims this war has produced?

There is no mediator. We Americans will have to assume the task ourselves and try to prove that US policy for the region goes beyond the big stick, that it has a constructive component as well. That is imperative now.[29]

Does the Bush Administration have that vision?

I hope it develops. The administration has been preoccupied so far with the conduct of the war.[21]

When the Gulf crisis erupted in August 1990 it was said that this was the first test of the "new world order." As the crisis moves towards its end, doesn't it look like that "new world order" is nothing more than another version of Pax-Americana, absent the Soviet rival?

I have argued for years that there is only one superpower in the world. That thesis now, I believe, has been fully validated.

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But the notion of a reborn Pax-American is insufficient. That is why I think the "new world order" has to be given a substantive definition. The word "order" is perhaps not the best word to use because, especially in the Middle East context, it implies freezing the status quo. But the world needs constructive change, not static order. America will now have to be involved more actively in creating a just and peaceful order than would otherwise have been the case.[22]

Saddam Hussein's well-known need for scapegoats was underlined again by his cabinet reshuffle last weakened. On this occasion he chose to punish the two ministers who had become Iraq's face to the outside world during the Gulf crisis: Tariq Aziz, the foreign minister who was sent around the world for six months on deliberately abortive peace missions, and Latif Jassem, the information minister who was the minder of all minders for the foreign press in Baghdad during the war. It now emerges that Jassem has vanished without trace since his dismissal, according to exiled Iraqi ex-government officials. As for Aziz, he is left in the meaningless post of deputy prime minister.

Yet Saddam Hussein's new cabinet bears more than the hallmark of punishment. The move was, according to former government colleagues, primarily an attempt to persuade his own people and the world that he is working with representatives of the very people seeking to overthrow him. That meant putting a few tame Shias and Kurds in key positions: thus he promoted Saddoun Hammadi, a Shia, to prime minister; and Taha Yassin Ramadan to the new post of vice-president. Though he does not acknowledge it, Ramadan is a native of Kurdistan, where the uprising against Saddam Hussein is most solid; his name was once Taha al-Jazrawi—meaning he came from Jazra in the north—until Saddam in the 1970s abolished the use of surnames in government to distract attention front the predominance of his native Tikriti clan. Ramadan took the name of his grandfather. Yet Saddam's original reshuffle plan originally harboured higher ambitions, according to exiled Iraqi sources. For the post of

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prime minister, he first set his sights on a man who was not only a Shia, but a former cabinet minister living in exile in London. Saddam deployed his half-brother—the Europenised Barzan Tikriti, Iraq's permanent envoy to the UN in Geneva—to chase and woo the former minister. The pursuit went on for 10 days, to no avail.[23]

Saddam Hussein settled for Hammadi as an obvious second-best. Not only could Hammadi, as a Shia, be seen as a tool to placate the Shia population in the south, another centre of the uprising; he is also known in the west as a former oil company director, turned oil minister. His appointment to Saddam's inner circle after the 1968 coup even fuelled speculation that the take-over had western backing. In the reshuffle, Saddam Hussein also kept about him those he trusts on tribal grounds: as information minister, he replaced Latif Jassem with Hamid Yusef Hammadi, one of his native clan from Tikrit; Tariq Aziz's successor as foreign minister is Ahmed Hussein at Samarei, like Saddam a Sunni, and whose brother was one of Saddam's ministers in the 1970s. To judge by the climate of the country, the reshuffle has convinced no one. Yet according to one of his exiled former advisers, the president genuinely thought it would: "You cannot overestimate this man's stupidity," he said. Meanwhile, a senior Iraqi opposition source predicted that Saddam's next move would be to ape an American-style separation of legislative, judicial and executive powers and to scapegoat out of existence his own crutch, the Revolutionary Command Council.[24]

There is not such thing as Arab-Islamic nationalism; for, that would be a contradiction in terms. Islamic fundamentalism is gasping for breath and would have died long ago but for its patronisation by US-British imperialism. Arab nationalism, on the other hand, has been growing from strength ever since it manifested itself in its struggles against the Ottoman empire. Its successive defeats at the hands of imperialism have only fuel the fires of Arab nationalism and spell the doom of many a client ruler in Arab lands. West Asia is, of course, no Vietna, but the

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Vietnam, but the US has created a situation where it will have to keep its forces in the Gulf if it is to save its coalition allies against the tide Arab nationalism which his bound to rise after this war. With such a restive West Asia in its neighbourhood, with history being made across the Oxus, with Latin America and Africa struggling for democratic rights, it would only be suicidal for India to jettison its principled foreign and economic policies for petty short-term gains that may end up only in making this nation of over 800 million people subservient to neo-imperialism.[25]

I think that the Gulf War is the first episode in a long war. The US will now dominate oilrich West Asia through the proxy of the Sheikhs and Israel to the utter anger of Muslim masses wherever they be. The frustration is likely to lead to a pan-Islamic resurgence. This is the first time in history when there is no balance of power in the world as a whole. Can a pan-Islamic upsurge restore the balance? This will depend on whether the Muslims discover an Islamic bomb. The answer to this question lies in the future of the Soviet Union. If and when its Central Asian republics join the upsurge and they happen to have in their territories one or two nuclear arsenals, the Muslims can get a bomb on a platter. It not, the onus of restoring a world balance of power would eventually fall on Germany, Japan or perhaps China. A unipolar world cannot last indefinitely. How should India manoeuvre as such a world contest or "maha-vishwa" unfolds?[26]

The bond of Ummat-ul-Muslimeen (Muslim brotherhood) had proven to be too slender to bind them together. The Ummah, particularly the multitude of ignorant and backward, have to learn particularly the multitude of ignorant and backward, have to learn the lesson that economic interest and consolidation of power transcend all other considerations and interests. The Gulf War brings forth much awaited scenario of divergent perceptions of the rulers and their populace in many Islamic countries. In most of these countries, the position taken by the

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rulers has received severe public condemnation of the people. The demonstrations in Pakistan, Morocco and some other Islamic countries in as evidence of this hiatus. The rulers, who have hitherto been confined to their respective islands appear to the quite jittery on this score. Some of them have started manufacturing some 'Muslim formula' (as in case of Pakistan) and others are busy researching to manufacture a justification of their position.

The Gulf War scenario has further confused the average Muslim mind of the sub-continent. The explosion of some old myths must have astounded as well as pained them. They are watching, what Maulana Mohammed Ali used to describe in the context of the Khilfat movement as 'supernational sangathan of Muslims in five continents' falling apart. The Muslims will have a fresh look on the developments and the world around them. Jamaluddin Afghani's thesis which held sway in the subcontinental Muslims at one point of time, cannot hold ground in view of the recent developments in the Gulf. Afghani, who advocated the unification of all Muslim people under one Islamic government over which the supreme caliph should be the undisputed leader as in the glorious days of Islam, should have lived to see the fate of his dream in the Gulf. Afghani's thesis did sow seeds of discord in the sub-continent, but it would not unify the Arab Muslims. Those, who view Muslim Ummah as a monolithic entity should be made aware about the fact that Mesopotamia, with its glorious past and long history of great civilisation was first torn apart into may pieces, and distributed among brother Arabas, and whatever remains of it is being devastated by missiles and bombs. Muslim Ummah has to respond to indigenous demands and global realities.[27]

In countries where political process have been thwarted by monarchical/tribal interests, such as Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Sheikhdoms, the pressure for change will also be hard of to resist. In Iraq itself, religious forces (or coalitions of ethnic-religious formations as indicated by the overtures to Iraqi Shias

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and the Kurds), will try to supplant the secular Arab Baath Socialist Party of Iraq hierarchy. It stand to reason that the Western countries, in view of their interests in the region, will try to avert the danger of a fundamentalist-cum-populist takeover of oil-rich kingdoms by facilitating, or tacitly accepting, a less unfavourable change and thus set up national barriers to a purely religious resurgence. The conflict in non-Arab states like Indonesia, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nigeria, will be at a different level. Although the non-fundamentalist forces will come under greater pressure, the significant interests of those who stand to lose in a fundamentalist dispensation may be able to survive the challenge, at least in the short run. In the long-run the national Islamic parties, especially where they may be able to gain power, will face nearly insuperable obstacles to consolidation. For one, these parties have been mobilising support on slogans born in reaction to adversity, which do not add up to a practical theory of state management. They have not utilised the time they have had to fully work out their theories and interpret them to meet the demands of running a modern state. The fundamentalists increase their difficulties by rejecting Islamic modernists thesis of reformation in favour of centuries-old models of state management that fall woefully short of present-day requirements. Above all, the fundamentalists have no role model to rely upon, no success story of a totally Islamic state to be accepted as an alternative to the rejected systems. The Islamisation of state structures in the new phase of Islamic resurgence will therefore not be the final culmination of the search for a durable polity but more of an experiment whose life span or eventual fate cannot be predicted with optimism.[28]

Saddam Hussein himself would disappear from the scene, most probably earning a place in the gallery of martyrs. Of greater import will be the direction Arab nationalism takes and it links with Islamic fundamentalism. The mixing of the two could have unpleasant consequences for India, but Islamic Arabism as such need not necessarily work against Indian interests. The growing political maturity of Iran is a positive

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factor, and Iran is likely to play an increasing role in the new security dispensation that could come into being in the region. Iran's power projections have not changed with the fall of the Shah and the coming of the Khomeini's revolution, and Tehran might find India's balancing role in a future regional power arrangement of value. The lesson to be learnt from the present crisis is that neither kneejerk reactions nor framing a policy on the basis of partisan or ulterior motives (like the interest in Muslim votes) can be in the true interests of the nation. On the contrary they could be the cause for irreparable harm to be nation's geo-political interests. Let no politician be in doubt about one thing — that issues like the Gulf conflict and its ramifications for India are matters that concern our very survival as an independent and self-sufficient power; matters that go beyond the purview of petty politicking.[29]

Political power is heavily dependent on People's perceptions. By many measures the United States is no more powerful after February 28, 1991, than it was before January 17, 1991. And no less weak. Judging from the immense US budget and international trade deficits a baking system teetering on the verge of collapse, and the rapid decline or even abandonment of such core industries as automobiles, steel, and consumer based electronics, the United States is in deep economic crisis hardly a recipe for sustaining global military superiority. But the end of the Vietnam syndrome will have a powerful effect on popular and elite perceptions of American capabilities throughout the world.

The United States may no longer be number one in terms of economic performance of technological know-how. However, the fact that it has been reaffirmed number one in military might—and that its leaders are quite unabashed in ordering the use of force—will weigh heavily perceptions and, therefore in the equations of international power politics. No matter that American troops in Iraq were, in effect, mercenaries, financed by Germany, Japan and Saudi Arabia. What is the substance of the Iraq syndrome, which has now replaced the Vietnam

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syndrome? Although American policy-makers are busily pondering how best to capitalise on their victory, some preliminary indications are available. Currently, the United States hopes that the divisions sown among and within Arab and Muslim nations by the war will endure. For the first time the Arab-Israeli axis of conflict, which dominated Western Asian politics for 40 years, has been overshadowed by intra-Arab conflicts.

More broadly, the Iraq syndrome signals the return of American political and military hegemony on a global scale. The United States had already enjoyed the exquisite pleasure of seeing Soviet economic and military strength crumble, along with the accompanying decline in the appeals of communism and socialism. The US had successfully subdued anti-imperialist movements in Latin America and Africa. Most of Asia too, including China, India, Pakistan and Vietnam, post no obstacle to US designs.

But two challenges remained which, thanks to the Iraq syndrome, the United States has been extraordinary successful in overcoming, at least for now. First, the US has reimposed dominance over the "First World" of industrialised capitalist nations, no mean feat when one recalls that it remains an economic hostage to Germany and Japan. Second, the United States has succeeded for the moment in checking another to a secular socialist platform, in the recent conflict he abruptly sought to broaden his support base by embracing fundamentalism. His defiance of the American-organised coalition has earned him widespread popularity with the Islamic masses throughout the world, but there is no disguising both his humiliating defeat and his long record of cruelty toward the Iranian armed forces, his critics within Iraq and, in recent months, Kuwaiti civilians. Thus, he provided the United States has with a golden opportunity to wage a holy war to discredit Islamic fundamentalism.[30]

Any attempt to return to the use of rhetoric and wearing the religious cloak to meet the challenges would not only invite

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ridicule, but would also result in humiliation. It is imperative for them to adjust themselves, socially and culturally, in the societies they live in. They need to make a common cause with the people of other faiths in their struggle to pattern their lot. They have to look inward rather than seek solutions outside. Any attempt to drain the inspiration from the ancient past is bound to push them far behind into oblivion, wherefrom they can hardly recover.[31]

A strong wave of Islamic resurgence should be accepted as a distinct possibility: It will be visible at both national and international levels. Its greater vigour will be due to the tussel for political supremacy that has been going on in all the Muslim countries for quite some time between Islamic *revivalists* and the others. From Indonesia to Morocco, the people of predominantly Muslim countries have been searching for political system that will simultaneously satisfy their material and spiritual aspirations. The conviction of the majority in these countries that whatever ills afflict them are due to their deviation from the path of Islam, specifically their pursuit of alien models of politico-economic management, has been sustained by the dynamics of a living religion which is believed to offer guidance in all matters spiritual and temporal. Egypt was too weak under the monarchy — so the argument runs — to take on Israel, but it did not become strong enough to do so even under President Gamal Abdul Nasser. The problems, weakness and failures of the Pakistani state have not been overcome during any of its varied experiments with systems of government. Hence, the lure of a truly Islamic state structure, an option made considerably more attractive by the virtual disappearance of a socialist alternative to the Western capitalist model, continues to appeal to large sections. Since in most Muslim countries the state apparatus has been in the hands of weak political formations who have been ever ready to exploit religion to cover up their weaknesses, the confrontation has been reduced to one between those who wish to incorporate Islam in part into their political system and those who stand for its enforcement in totality. The former have been continually on the retreat, thanks to their own failings,

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thereby strengthening the fundamentalists' grip over the latter. Thus, the orientation of the Islamic resurgence after the Gulf War will be fundamentalist, though with populist appeal. However, the fundamentalists are unlikely to score easy victories. The conflict between them and the rest, comprising small secular elements and larger groups that adhere to Western democratic concepts with a veneer (of varying thickness) of Islamic values, or those who think Islam needs to be reinterpreted to meet modern demand, will develop at different levels. It will be most fierce in the Arab states where the Gulf War and its likely consequences will be felt most deeply. Islamic revivalists have already recorded considerable gains in recent years in Algeria, Morocco, Libya, Egypt, Sudan and Jordan. They are now likely to make stronger bids to capture state power.[32]

The report that the Grand Ayatullah Al Khooi, the spiritual leader of Shia Muslims sought a meeting as claimed by Saddam Government was denied by representative of the Grand Ayatullah in India and far east, Hujjatial Islam Wal Moslameen Maulana Sayyed Mohammed Musawi who is also President of Supreme Council of Ulema and Khataba of India.

Maulana Musawi told a press conference in Bombay that the Grand Ayatulla and his family were kidnapped from his family were kidnapped from his house by the Republican Guards of Saddam Hussein using helicopters in the holy city of Najaf.

In the dawn of March 20, 1991 after killing all his followers who were surrounding the house of Grand Ayatullah guarding him, the Grand Ayatullah was pulled out of his residence alongwith all ladies, children and men who were with him. He had to pass over hundreds of bodies and was then put in helicopter and taken away to underground hide-out in Baghdad, Maulana, Musawi said.

He alleged that Saddam Hussein pressurised the Grand Ayatullah to issue an "order" to the people of Iraq to lay down

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their weapons and not to fight against Saddam. On the firm and strict refusal of the Grand Ayatullah Saddam threatened him to destroy the holy cities of Najaf, Karbala, Kazmain and Smarrah with scud missiles which would cause death to lakhs to civilians.

Maulana Musawai added that the Grand Ayatullah had a very tough argument with Saddam for hours together but Saddam could succeed in "getting anything out of him."

The film of their conversation was purposely cut and manipulated in such a way that the facts were totally distorted to show that the Grand Ayatullah was "unhappy with the mass uprising against the dictatorial regime of Saddam."

If the Grand Ayatullah was against the uprising and in favour of Saddam there would not have been any need for Saddam to kidnap him along with the women fold and small children of his family and take them away from Ayatullah Sayad Abul Qasim Al Khooi, world Shia Muslim religious leaders. Their house in Najaf to a hideout in Baghdad after killing hundreds of his followers, Maulana Musawi said.

The Grand Ayatullah had given written orders, Maulana Musawi said, of which he has copies directing people of Iraq to strive against injustice and inhuman behaviour of the Saddam's regime. The Grand Ayatullah had formed eight members committee in Iraq to look after the affairs of the people in the "liberated areas of Iraq".

Maulana Musawi claimed that as a representative of the Grand Ayatullah he was in constant touch with him and therefore he could deny these baseless charges made by the Saddam regime and repeat the clear stand of the Grand Ayatullah Khooi against the dictatorial regime.

Maulana Musawi made a reference to the BBC announcement that the Grand Ayatullah Al-Khooi had been released, under

tremendous international pressure, but he was not released in reality. He was brought from Baghdad back to Najaf and put under house arrest. His family, companions and assistants are still detained in unknown places. His health has seriously deteriorated as was clear from the video film which they showed on the London T.V.

Maulana Musawi appealed to the Indian Government on behalf of millions of Muslims and in the name of humanity to assist in getting the Grand Ayatullah out of Iraq to save his life and also to assist a team of medical men to go immediatley to Iraq to treat the 95 years old top most Islamic scholar in the world.

The Grand Ayatullah's followers in India would continue agitating against his house arrest and demand from the Indian Government adequate and urgent action.

Several thousand Shias in Bombay including purdah-clad women marched in a procession from Azad Maidan to Kala Ghoda on March 23, 1991 to condemn the bombing of the holy cities of Najaf and Karbala and condemn the atrocities perpetrated by the Saddam regime in Iraq against the world spiritual leader Grand Ayatullah Al-Khooi.

The procession converted into a mass rally at Kala Ghoda and was addressed by Maulana Syed Mohammed Musawi, Shia Spiritual leader in India and his disciple Javed Zaidi. A memorandum on the atrocities perpetrated in Iraq against the holy places was submitted to Chief Minister Sharad Pawar.

In June 1990, the Islamic Salvation Front (ISF), an Islamic fundamentalist political party, dominated Algier's first free elections, upsetting the National Liberation Front (NLF) which ruled Algeria since it achieved independence from France in 1962. In Jordan, 30, per cent of the national assembly associates with the Muslim Brethren, an Islamic fundamentalist

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organization. Fundamentalism is gaining strength throughout Islamic North Africa and the Middle East. It finds unity in hostility toward the West, particularly the U.S., the U.K. and France. Islamic fundamentalism is also spreading in Soviet Central Asia and the Caucasus. The Soviet Foreign Ministry issues a communique in May 1990 expressing apprehension over an Afghani guerilla leader's written appeal to distribute 10 thousand leaflets and hundreds of pistols in the USSR. The Soviet authorities seemed less worries about the weapons than about the spread of Islamic fundamentalism. The movement to rebuild the Islamic world is defined less by a masterminded course of action than by a set of social and ideological currents, principally anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism. Islamic political entities protest Soviet aggression in Afghanistan, Soviet opposition to the independence of Islamic states like Azerbaijan and Armenia, and the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaz Strip. The basic goal of the Islamic fundamentalist movement is to rebuild Islamic institutions, but convictions differ about how to achieve this aim. Researches divide the movement into sects concerned principally with lifestyle and those which urge political reform. The term "fundamentalism" usually refers to the latter.

Groups concerned with an Islamic lifestyle include Egypt's Shari'a Association, Indonesia's Muhammadiyya and Turkey's Nurcu. Fundamentalist groups include grass-roots movements like the Iranian Ayatullah Ruhollah Khomeini's and those that endorse terrorist acts like the assassination of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat in 1981.[33]

Fundamentalist passions have caused domestic upheaval in Middle Eastern nations, but the shocks of terrorism have been felt worldwide. Even so, the non-Islamic world can take a reasonable approach to Islamic fundamentalism. First, leaders of countries with large Muslim populations can communicate with the leaders of the Islamic world. The USSR has the world's fifth largest Muslim population, but while President Mikhail Gorbachev has met the Pope and is on good terms with the

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patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church, he has not once met with Islamic leaders. His stance directly opposes that of his rival Boris N. Yeltsin, president of the Russian republic, who has engaged in continuing discussion with Russian Islamic leaders and helped secure permission to make the Quran available in that region. When Prime Minister Thatcher visited the USSR in June 1990s, she stopped in Armenia, but not in rival Azerbaijan, fueling anti-Western sentiments there. If the leaders of religiously pluralistic countries wish to keep religious radicalism from taking root, they must treat all religious equally. They must not favor a particular faith. Japan has never colonized the Middle East or North Africa, the heart of the Islamic world, as Western nations have. Not does it have a history of conflict with the region. But Japan is rapidly becoming the Middle East's largest trading partner, and Muslims criticize Japan for introducing decadence in the form of luxury goods.

To this point, Islamic fundamentalist terrorists have not targeted Japanese nationals. However, it is likely that anti-Japanese sentiments will appear in Islamic countries as they have in Southeast Asia. The best protection is increasing cultural exchange between Japan and the Middle East at all levels. Japan and the West would gain support in the Middle East if corporations returned more of their profits to local communities. They could sponsor exchange students or establish scholarship programs. In October 1990, Japanese Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu became the first Western head of state to set foot in the Middle East since Iraq invaded Kuwait. During his visit, he stopped at a Jordanian camp for Muslim refugees fleeing Iraq. The refugees gave him a very friendly reception: Islam, which honors human relationships, valued personal contact. In the wake of the Cold War, heads of state should work to prevent the isolation of Muslims from the world community.[34]

Islam and various sectarian differences have powerful influence on the peoples and tend more to divide than integrate populations. This destabilising process goes beyond the region

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and affects the Soviet Central Asian republics, China, Pakistan, and India.[35]

One of the major mistakes Mahatma Gandhi committed was to support the Khilafat movement launched by some of the orthodox Muslim leaders of India in the early 1920s in connection with the abolition of caliphate in Turkey. The Turks were not bothered about the caliphate being ended nor were most of the other Muslims in the Islamic world. The Shia Muslims, in any case, did not acknowledge the Caliph. However, the orthodox Indian Muslim leadership saw an opportunity to mobilise the Indian Muslim sentiment on the issue. Unfortunately, Mahatma Gandhi vainly hoping that the support of the nationalist movement to the Khilafat agitation would bring the Muslims into the national mainstream, espoused it. The result, however, was not on the lines Gandhi expected. It fanned communalist sentiment and strengthened the Muslims League and sowed the seeds of partition. That experience is of relevance today since a number of people in this country are trying to portray Saddam Hussein as a great Islamic and Arab hero and identify the Islamic population all over the world with his misadventure. In the Islamic world, Indonesia, the largest Islamic country, is totally indifferent to Saddam Hussein's fate. Malaysia voted for use of force against him. The Islamic Republic of Iran fought a war imposed on them by Saddam Hussein and has no love for him. Saudi Arabia, Syria and Egypt are taking part in the war against him Turkey, the Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Qatar and Oman are offering facilities to the U.S.-led forces to wage a war, Col. Gaddafi, the Algerian and Moroccan leaderships do not support Saddam Hussein. Pakistan and Bangladesh have sent troops to Saudi Arabia for its defence against the threats allegedly posed by Saddam Hussein. It would appear as though those people who identifly Saddam Hussein with the Islamic world and as a Arab hero are attempting to be more Islamic than Muslims of West Asia, North Africa and South East Asia and more Arabic than the Arabs.[36]

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Saddam Hussein is no Gamal Abdul Nasser. The latter did not commit aggression against the neighbours twice. He never tried to involve Islam when it suited his convenience. Although for his genuinely progressive policies he was unpopular with reactionary Islamic rulers and many of them conspired with western powers to bring about his downfall he did not alienate the entire international community and enable the Americans to mount a massive offensive against him with the support of all Muslim countries around. Just as he is invoking Islam for his convenience, Saddam Hussein also found it expedient to obfuscate his aggression behind the Palestinian issue. Some people argue that Kuwait was a creation of British imperialists. So also was Iraq, a kingdom created by the British and handed over to King Faisal for the services rendered by the Hashemite family to the British during the First World War in the campaigns against the Ottoman empire. It is not the contention here that this is a just war or the Americans are right or the Sheikhs, Kings and authoritarian rulers in the Islamic world ranged against Saddam Hussein have greater legitimacy than he has. No doubt, in many Islamic countries there are popular demonstrations expressing the resentment of the populations against their ruling regimes or the international order so far dominated by the Westerners, and particularly the Americans. The curs of the issue is whether there is any justification to argue that Saddam Hussein's cause is supported by the Islamic population and his defeats will be considered as humiliation of Islam. How are his Islamic credentials better than those of King Fahd, President Azad or President Mubarak or President Ozal? If the latter are defeated would it be a greater humiliation of Islam? If Saddam Hussein prevails in this war would it be a defeat for Christianity? Was Vietnam's victory a defeat for Christianity? Communalism originates from a division of humanity into "We and They", into believers and infidels. Secularism attempts to counter this divisive approach by shunning religious beliefs from politics and confining them to the individual and his home. Unfortunately, a recent trend has been to internationalise communalism and the organisation of Islamic states is the most blatant example of such an attempt,

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Fanning communalism on the ground of not hurting the alleged sensibilities of those who consider themselves humiliated because of their failure to divide humanity into believers and unbelievers is crypto communalism masquerading as secularism. Saddam Hussein's defeat is that of an individual authoritarian ruler and let us not fall into the trap of his opportunistic attempt to indefinite will himself.[37]

There remains the question no one has an answer to. How far will the Arab masses construe the stinging defeat to of President Saddam Hussein as a collective humiliation to be avenged. In other words how far will the potent mix President Saddam concocted of a new pan-Arabism riding on Islam exert an influence in the region? Through his rhetoric and choosing to stand up to mighty America, however foolishly and immorally, President Saddam has released new forces. The question is : How potent will they be in the future, One non-Arab view is that Arabas do not love a loser. The other is that the Arabs' view of their continuing humiliation will exert pressures that can only lead to a new confrontation. The sagacity with which the US deals with West Asian problems, particularly the Arab-Israeli conflict, will, in part, provide the answer.[38]

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5

The Great Divide

The three-day summit of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) ended late on December 11, 1991 in Senegal with Arab states and the Palestinians failing to overcome their divisions following the Gulf War.

Arab diplomats said Palestine liberation organisation (PLO). Chairman Yasser Arafat and King Hussein of Jordan had tried to meet with ranking delegates from the Arab Gulf states but were rejected..

During the speeches at the summit, King Hussein and Arafat urged all OIC members to "overcome" the Gulf War. They stressed that not only Kuwait but also the Palestinians and Iraq had suffered.

Gulf Arab speakers, including Kuwaiti Emir Sheik Jaber al-Ahmad as-Sabah, blasted Iraq for the invasion of the Emirate and condemned Baghdad for failing to implement all United Nations resolutions passed after the end of the war.

African delegates and even Senegalese president Abdou Diouf openly complained that many Arab leaders did not attend the summit, including King Fahd of Saudi Arabia. Egyptian, President Hosny Mubarak and his Syrian counterpart Hafez Assad.

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Arafat tried at the summit to put himself in the limelight when he sought to have the term "Jihad" (holy war) to liberate the Israeli-occupied territories injected in the final declaration.

He walked out in a huff after the summit adopted the resolution, only to return shortly afterwards when Gabon President Omar Bongo asked him to attend its conclusion.

The final resolution backed "the Palestinian right to return to their homeland, their right to self-determination, including the right to establish an independent Palestinian state in their homeland".

It said the OIC member states would "support all efforts conducive to the liberation of Jerusalem and shall consider such liberation as a major Islamic cause".

The PLO wants to establish a state alongside Israel in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza strip with East Jerusalem as its capital.

"We support with satisfaction the peace process which is underway and which is aimed at establishing a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East on the basis of United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 and 338 and the formula land for peace," the declaration said.

In 1937 six wise Englishmen suggested that the most equitable solution to the Palestine problem should be based on the simple principle that king Solomon made famous : dividing up one small country inhabited by two rival peoples.

All sensible ideas since then for ending the Arab-Israeli conflict have been founded on the idea of partition.

Extremists on both sides have always opposed this. Jews have been offered and always rejected the status of subjects of an Arab Palestine: the idea of Zionism was that they become a

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free and sovereign people on their own land "like upto all the nations". Arabas have experienced minority status inside Israel and living in the limbo of military occupation.

The six Englishmen were the members of the Royal Commission, headed by Lord Peel, that was sent to investigate conditions in Mandatory Palestine following the outbreak of serious unrest in 1936.

By then, with Hitler entrenched in power in Germany, and Arab nationalism and Zionism both growing forces, the contours of the modern conflict already existed; so did the contours of a reasonable solution.

The Jews reluctantly accepted Lord Peel's proposal, but the Arabas were bitterly opposed. It was never implemented. Nor was another partition plan drawn up by the UN at the end of the Mandate, in 1947, calling for the creation of two independent states, Jewish and Arab.

The frontiers of Israel were determined first by war and only afterwards by negotiation. The Anglo-French-Israeli adventure at Suez in 1956 left Israel in control of Sonai and the Gaza strip, but these territories were evacuated by early 1957. Israel held the fruits of its 1967 victory for much longer. The aftermath of the 1973 war marked the point of maximum expansion. In 1979 a peace treaty was signed with Egypt and by 1981 all of Sinai had been evacuated. Since then, a decade ago, there has been no change.

Territories held by Israel since the war of 1967 are:[1]

The Golan Heights

Some 500 square miles of barren train overlooking Galilee in northern Israel. Used by Syrian artillery to bombard Israeli settlements since 1949. Israel captured the heights from Syria in 1967, lost them briefly in the 1973 war and then recaptured

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them, plus additional territory to the north-east, in fierce tank battles.

The newly reconquered area and a strip of land around Quaneitra was ceded back to Syria under a disengagement of forces agreement negotiated by Henry Kissinger in May 1974. The UN agreed to patrol a demilitarized buffer zone between the front lines. The population today is about 25,000 comprising some 10,000 Jewish settlers and 15,000 Syrina Druze.

Israel effectively annexed the Golan in 1981 when it passed legislation extending Israeli civilian law and administration to the area. A small minority of the Druze have accepted Israeli citizenship. The Golan contains a large number of army maps and training areas.

The West Bank

Comprises 2,270 square miles of territory west of the Jordan river. Under the UN partition plan of 1947 it was to have formed part off a new independent Arab state which never came into existence. It was seized by Jordan and together which East Jerusalem incorporated into the Hashemite Kingdom in 1950, although this annexation was recognized only by Britain and Pakistan.

Israel captured the West Bank from Jordan in 1967. Today it is home to 850,000 Palestinians and about 100,000 Jews who have settles there in some 130 settlements, ranging from small communities of a few score people to Ma'aleth Adumim, halfway between Jerusalem and Jericho, with a population of 15,000. Untial 1967 most of the area was a terraced landscape of olive groves and hilly pasture.

Nablus, in the north, is the biggest city. Refugee camps housing Palestinians who fled from the area that became Israel in 1948 or from the advancing Israelis again in 1967, have become the focus of violent unrest since the Palestinian uprising

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or intifada began in December 1987. Sixty per cent of all West Bank land and all water resources are effectively in Israeli hands. The industrial base is tiny and the workforce largely dependent on the Israeli economy.

East Jerusalem

The Eastern and older half of the holy city was controlled by Jordan between Israel's independence in 1948 and the 1967 war. It includes the walled Old City, with its shrines and places of worship sacred to Christianity, Judaism and Islam, under the UN partition plan of 1947, Jerusalem was to be an international city, controlled neither by the Jewish state nor the Arab state into which Mandatory Palestine was to be partitioned.

After the 1967 war the Arab side was quickly annexed to Israel and the municipal boundaries greatly expanded, northwards and southwards, into the West Bank. The population of East Jerusalem today is 50,000 Arabas and about 140,000 Jews, who live in the new suburbs that have been built since 1967. In 1980 a "Jerusalem law" was passed declaring the united city the capital of Israel. In terms of Israeli public opinion it is the least negotiable of all the territories at issue in the peace process.

Gaza Strip

About 135 square miles of land along the Mediterranean bordering on Israel and Egyptian Sinai. Under the UN plan of 1947 the strip was to have been part of the still born Arab state. A rural backwater with little more than sand dunes and orange groves, it was occupied by Egypt in 1948 and administered from Cairo until 1967, apart from an interlude of several months after it was captured by Israel in the 1956 war.

With a population close to 900,000 it is now one of the most densely-populated areas in the world. Two-thirds of the inhabitants are refugees or the descendants of refugees who fled from what became southern and central Israel in 1948.

Jabaliay, the largest of the Gaza refugee camps, was the birth place of the intifada in December 1987. Its residents live in a network of streets which have proved consistently difficult for the Israeli army to control. Many refugees commute daily to work in Israel proper. Some 2,500 Jewish settlers live in the area in 17 different locations. Gaza may be the most easily negotiable of the Arab lands occupied by Israel.

South Lebanon Security Zone

Israel does not admit to the formal occupation of what it calls the "Security zone" in southern Lebanon, a 380 square-line belt of land running up to eight miles north of the Israeli-Lebanese border and 75 miles across from the Mediterranean in the west to the foothills of Mount Hermon in the east. Israeli forces have moved freely in this area since a large-scale incursion into Lebanon in 1978—when Palestinian querrillas were still present in large numbers and have effectively controlled it since the invasion of 1982.

The zone was set up in 1985 as the bulk of Israeli forces pulled back to the international border and Lebanese Shi'ite Muslims replaced the Palestinians as Israel's enemy. The zone-home to 200,000 Shi'ites and Christians is formally administered by the South Lebanon Army, a 3,000 strong millitia force that is armed, financed and trained by Israel.

Less than a year after the end of the Palestine war the first formal Arab Israeli peace negotiations began in Lausanne, Switzerland. The Arabas showed great reluctance to accept Israel's very existence and Israel made clear that it would not return any territory gained during the war. It also refused at the outset to accept back any of the 750,000 Palestinians made refugees by the Palestine war, saying that these world create a fifth column in the young Jewish state. Israel was however, prepared to offer compensation for the loss of land and to allow some families to be reunited. Israel's argument was that Arab states should absorb the refugees—who had lost their homes

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because of an Arab attack — just as Israel was taking in Jewish refugees from Arab countries. The Arabas countered by saying that Israel had expelled the refugees. The truth, as modern research nas shown, lay somewhere in between. At Lausanne in 1949 the Arabas refused to meet the Israeli delegation publicly at all : the two sides stayed in their respective hotels and Palestine Conciliation Commission representatives shuttled between them. In private though, recently declassified official documents reveal, meetings were held with the Jordanians, Lebanese, Syrians and Egyptians, with a key role being played by Elias Sasson, a Damascus-born (and Arabic-speaking) Israeli diplomat. Sasson and his colleagues also saw Palestinian representatives, some of whom were wealthy "freelancers" seeking compensation for the loss of their property "Safe deposit boxes and orange groves" one Israeli diplomat said dismissively. Sasson was so impressed by the depth of Arab anger that he at one point proposed to the Israeli foreign minister, Moshe Sharett, a peace agreement that included substantial territorial concessions. For its part, Israel refused to talk to a united Arab delegation and would deal only with each of its enemies individually—a position which gelled into a long-standing principle of Israeli foreign policy and explains much of its reticence about this latest peace process.[2]

The talks dragged on form April to mid-September 1949, mostly bogged down over the agenda. The US increasingly came to see the Jewish state as stubborn and intransigent. In the end the Israelis agreed in principle to accept back 100,000 refugees—only, however, if this were part of a final peace, settlement. Finally, though the negotiations petered out in utter failure. The next conference came three wars later, in the marble splendour of the Palais des Nations in Geneva, in 1973, after the devastating surprise of the Egyptian-Syrian attack on Israel on the Yom Kippur fast. Compared with the preparations, the actual convening of the conference on December 21 that year was anti-climatic "a public relations drumroll for a mouse-sized marvel", was one succinct description. The Israeli and Arab

delegants met in the same room but the Arabias refused direct contact with the Israelis, would not shake hands or exchange pleasantries, refused to allow their tables to touch and vetoed a suggestion by Kurt Waldheim, the UN Secretary General, for a joint cocktail party. The foreign ministers of Egypt, Jordan and Israel exchanged polemics including accusations of torture and atrocities that were largely intended for their domestic audiences. Israeli elections, delayed by the war, were due to 10 days later so the negotiations quickly adjourned after the opening session. The meeting was followed by hard work by Henry Kissinger, who shuttled between Jerusalem, Cairo and Damascus to produce three agreements on disengagement of forces between Israel and Egypt and Israel and Syria in Sinai and on the Golan Heights. As this was happening, the Palestine Liberation Organisation was recognised by all Arab countries at the Rabat summit conference in 1974 as the "sole legitimate representative" of the Palestinians, ensuring a role for the PLO in regional diplomacy ever since.

The practical moves taken afterwards on one of the Middle, Eastern front lines laid the psychological groundwork for the greatest breakthrough yet made towards Arab-Israeli peace, partial and controversial thought it was. This came in September 1978 in negotiations between Egypt. Israel and the US at the presidential retreat of Camp David. Surrounded by woods teeming with deer and racoon and with diversions such as a heated swimming pool, tennis courts, a bowling alley and a trout stream, Anwar Sadat and Menachem Begin and their officials took 13 days to end almost 30 years of bitter hostility—though the two sides met only twice, with the Americans shuttling backwards and forwards between rustic cabins. Bilateral issues were relatively easy to deal with once it was agreed to follow President Carter's idea of separating the question of the Sinai peninsula from the general "framework" dealing with the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Evaluating Israeli settlements in Sinai was a big hurdle but this was eventually overcome by Begin agreeing to put it to a vote in Parliament without party discipline

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being imposed, (Yitzhak Shamir, the speaker of Arens, now Shamir's defence minister, voted against). The US sweetened the pill by agreeing to rebuild in Israel airfields moved out of Sinai, Mr. Begin also agreed to freeze settlements during negotiations for the Egyptian Israeli peace treaty. Behind a surprisingly effective news blackout there was a hothouse atmosphere, where surface informality masked deep tensions and moments of euphoria were followed by depression and crisis. Begin and Zbigniew Brzezinski, President Carter's National security Adviser, both former Poles, played passionately competitive chess. To his wife, the American president described the Israeli leader as a "psycho". Personalities played a key role : Moshe Dayan and Ezer Weizman, Israel's region and defence ministers, were instrumental in persuading the suspicious Begin to swallow some of the once unacceptable catchphrases of the tired diplomacy of the Arab-Israel conflict. Specially, Israel recognised the "legitimate rights of the Palestinian people". although it balked at the world "national". It agreed that the Palestinian problem would be resolved "in all its aspects". In addition, not later than three years after the creation of Palestinian autonomy" in the West Bank and Gaza, Israel would have to agree to start negotiations with Jordan, Egypt and the Palestinians "to determine the final status" of these areas. These negotiations were to be based on "all the provisions and principals of UN Security Council resolution 242", one clause of which calls for withdrawal from territories.

Camp David was a triumph, but a short-lived and short-sighted one. To the fury of the rest of the Arab world, Egypt and Israel signed their peace treaty in March 1979 and relations developed into a sort of cold peace. Jordan and the Palestinians never accepted the "framework agreement". From the perspective of those living under occupation, autonomy was described scornfully as a "the right to exterminate mosquitoes." Talks on self-rule went nowhere slowly as Begin tightened Israel's grip on the West Bank and Gaza. Yet the hot-house deal in Maryland still remains a working basic for the negotiations beginning in Madrid.[3]

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The United States President George Bush told the Congress on 6th March 1991 that his administration will work to create a 'new world order'. Let us look about it in the historical and present context in order to answer the following questions. What is this 'new world order', touted by mainly Bush? Is the 'new world order' just a mirage, an euphuisms for pax Americana or a real effort to reshape the world order, towards a more equitable, and a more co-operative? In the 1970s the group of 77 Third World countries called for an agreement on international cooperation for implementing a New International Economic Order (NIEO). Transfer of technology of favourable terms, guaranteeing better prices for the export commodities NIEO. The US fought hard to concede as little as possible. During the Reagan administration in 1980s American interests were pursued through IMF World Bank and GATT rather than US and UNCTAD, which was perceived as dominated by the Third World. The United States had already begun to reassert its military-political hegemony in unapologetic fashion during the Reagan years, with major military intervention in Latin America and Middle East and more discreet 'counter-in-surgery' elsewhere as in southern Africa. On the one hand relative strength of the imperialist countries has been changing since the last four decades, with Germany and Japan gaining over the US both industrially and financially. The arrangements of the Second World War period became clearly outdated and obsolete. On the other hand, the living conditions of the peoples in most part of the Third World have been deteriorating at least for the last 15 years.[4]

The two major recessions during the 1970s in the west, associated with the world-wide economic 'restructuring', have had catastrophic implications particularly for Africa and Latin American countries. As these countries were extensively dependent on western market and credits, the crisis in the west, depended the problems of mismanagement, corruption, political repression, civil wars and military rule. These problems were further exacerbated by the rise in foreign debt—placing

governments and peoples at the mercy of IMF World Banks structural adjustment programmes, which have worsened rather than improved the situation of the poor. Prior to 1989, there were two blocs, the imperialist bloc and the Soviet bloc. Besides it, there were countries of the Third World who were basically dominated by and dependent on the imperialist bloc but has been often in rebellion since the Second World War. From the beginning the US assigned to itself the task of keeping the Third World in its place, while the Soviet Union gave limited and cautious support. The bipolar world imposed a rigid superpower order on the possible conflicts, yet it contained the threat of disaster should deterrence fail. The inability of the Soviet Union to sustain the contest has brought a large change in the world order. The collapse of Soviet bloc appears to have made the projection of military power much less necessary. It is true that Soviet aid to the Third World liberation movement, more recently in Latin America, was very helpful to various movements fighting against the US domination. Soviet hegemony, as it existed from 1945 to 1989, is at end now. Soviet retreat removes them from foreign conflicts. It is desperately trying to prevent defections from the Union. But the US is not in retreat in military terms. However, with the collapse of Cold War, the ideological support of the permanent war economy is in question. The roots of the military industrial complex are too deep and powerful. I simply mean that people will increasingly support to cut military spending. Gulf war came at a time to rescue the military-industrial complex also known as military Keynesianism, which was seriously threatened by the collapse of the Cold War. The essence of the military Keynesianism is that the economy is structured along oligopolistic lines by means of huge government military spending. Although in the long run it erodes the effectiveness of the US economy and creates inflationary pressures but powerful state bureaucracy, Congressmen and big corporations defend it (Kalim Siddiqui, "World's Political and Economic Crisis in 1990", Third Concept, No. 43, September, 1990). Later, I will argue in detail that the Cold War be substituted by the rise of imperialist rivalries, as the world witnessed prior to the mid 1940s. The US clearly shows that it is not interested in peaceful

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economic competition. Moreover, the United Nations remains heavily circumscribed by the pressures exerted by the US. It looks very clear that US will continue to make of the United Nations simply as a cover for its own activities.[5]

In July 1990, Bush indirectly encouraged Iraq to resolve its border dispute with Kuwait and stated that US will not take side. As earlier too US fully backed Iraq's invasion against Iran. Indeed, Iraq received massive western diplomatic support, trade credits and military aid during its war with Iran. Misreading the signals, Saddam invaded the Kuwait. A peaceful negotiation to end the dispute by Arab League did not suit the US. Because this third world country was considered as weaker enemy, which can be crushed in little time with much demonstration of force and would be lesson for other third world. Thus, the danger of the war is build in the international system, dominated and formed by a handful of western countries. The Gulf War further ensured US influence in the region and its control over oil prices. Two-third of the global oil reserves are in the Middle East. A major part of the Middle East oil is under the control of the dictatorial regimes who are the direct clients and creations of the west. These Middle East tycoons perhaps represent little more than extended families closely linked with the west and they placed their huge oil incomes in Western Banks and businesses. Other motivation was to exercise the Vietnam Syndrome of defeatism, to establish US dominance despite economic retrogression; and to provide an escapism from tackling domestic problems of the economy, budget, balance of payments, crime, drugs, education and poverty. It has achieved its immediate aims: the US appears the only super power, the dollar has been gaining over the mark and yen (the US profited $ 15 billion as the cost of the Gulf War is being estimated now nearly $ 40 billion against US received from its allies of $ 55 billion), and Bush looks forward to the 1992 election with confidence.

Saddam did the most foolish thing by occupying Kuwait. There is an illuminating analogy here with the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982. At that time, apparently the US gave its

approval to invade Lebanon and bomb the civilians of Beruit. The main difference of course was the outcome of each of these violation: Israel received more than $ 3 billion in aid, while Iraq experienced the severe air bombardment and the destruction of all essential services. The question arises why the sanctions were possible in dealing with South Africa, but not with Iraq. It seems very clear why it was proper to pursue "quiet diplomacy" while South Africa caused more than $ 60 billion damage and 1.5 million deaths from 1980 to 1988 in the neighbouring states, excluding South Africa and Namibia, and the earlier decades. The answer is simple, as suggested by Mandela, who condemns the hypocrisy and prejudice of the highly selective response to the crimes of the "brown skinned" Iraqis. The US reacted the invasion of Kuwait by immediately sending huge military force in Saudi Arabia, but there was no similar reaction from the region's main importer of oil particularly from Germans and Japanese. But these countries, unlike the US who receives only 12 per cent of its total oil needs from the Middle East, Japan receives 60 per cent and the German 35 per cent of its oil needs. Yet neither the Germans nor Japanese expressed great concern about Iraqi invasion. The victory of US over the Gulf War far from confirming its ascendancy rather exposed severe limits. The US economy is heading for deep crisis, while Japanese economy continues to grow. Some US auto-makers have taken to overtly racist anti-Japanese propaganda. Sonny purchase of Columbia Pictures, and the way Japanese companies have been buying up parts of Manhattan have caused far more outrage in the US. In the Middle East, the New World Order contains nothing new. The US and its ally Israel has long rejected any serious diplomatic approach to region, conflict and security problems. The US goal has been to protect the ruling clans in the Gulf and Saudi Arabia, and even recently Assad has been invited to join the club. The Israeli military has ruled over 23 years in the occupied territories and even used racism towards the Palestinians. The state of Israel could not have been created without imperialist control of the Middle East, and throughout its existence Israel has chosen to ally itself closely with the

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major imperialist country. Israel has dictated its neighour and ignored the history of the region. In the Middle East people have always struggled against foreign domination and the military solution will not resolve the crisis forever in a growing anti-imperialist context. Long-term interest requires end to the imperialist domination and subjugation of the people of, the Middle East and Israel should become more closely identified with the broad historical movements of the region. For Palestinians, US is imposing a solution that Jordan is a Palestinians state and the occupied territories are to be ruled by the Israeli government, while Palestinians' leadership in prison camps. Palestinians were barred from participating in the participating in the economic development, as their land and water taken, they were permitted to supply manual labour to the Israeli economy as virtual slave labour, but this is changing with the continuous curfew in the area and with the incoming of the large number of immigrants from Soviet Union. Third World poses only one threat to the US and that is the struggle for economic and political independence, always intolerable. The US will support the most hated dictator in the third world as long as he suits the US policy and will overthrow a democratic leader, even if he is elected by the people, if he does not suit the US interest. The historical records clearly stands as witness to this fact. For example, United States rejected the World Court's call for reparations for its crimes in Nicaragua, while it has no shame to demand reparations from Iraq. Recently, Turkish military has been authorised to bomb the Kurdish population, in partial payment for their services in the Gulf War. The US economy—from high technology, to manufacturing, low skilled production—US based producers are losing out to Japan and Germany and to South-East Asian countries. At the same time, as part and parcel of this turned, the most powerful section of the US capital, based in finance and multinational corporations, are pursuing their interests on a world scale and rely less on US based manufacturing. For them the best opportunities of profitable investment no longer lie within the US. Commercial banks, real-estate companies, consumers, state and local governments

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all faced record high indebtedness. What made this indebtedness so frightening was that short lived boom of 1980-1982 was coming to an end and the economy was in a grip of deep recession. At this point Bush promised not raise taxes. This was only way to prevent a rising budget deficit from pushing interest rates through the ceiling. Bush's popularity was at lowest point since his election. Just before Iraq invaded Kuwait, the news about bank failures, declining consumers' sales and profits and distressed real-estate markets rose to new heights. No prospects seemed to be out. At this juncture, Iraq's invasion of Kuwait appeared a god send occasion to the US imperialists. It was thought that the US could organise a massive show of its military power and could distract the people's attention from the domestic problems. In fact, the US economy is in deep crisis and Bush has no idea how to deal with it, except to exhibit its military power. It looks he is turning the US into a mercenary state serving as a world mafia, selling protection to the rich and demanding proper payments for the services. The Gulf War indicates an example of the military and economy contradictions in the US world role as great protector of the capitalism. The US super military capability does not match with reality of economic power. According to government estimates in 1991 federal government deficits could exceed $ 300 billion. The country' share of the world GNP has fallen by a half since the 1950s. Germany and Japan, while having prosperous economy, do not aspire to such a military role. It appears, the economic powers with less defence will opt for economic competition as Germany and Japan, while economically weakening but military strong states such as US and Britain will opts for more military solutions and this will be the post-cold world order. Despite a widespread belief that the recession is over, the US government reported early this month that the economy unexpectedly lost 51,000 jobs in July, casting doubts on recovery. Janet Norwood, commissioner of labour statistics, told US Congress that the July unemployment was nearly 7 per cent. In the past, the government spending came to rescue the economy, but this time the huge US budget deficit and resulting fiscal squeeze are

keeping the government away. Furthermore, Japan and Germany distracted by the demand for capital in East Europe, Kuwait and elsewhere have been providing US less capital for its borrowing needs at higher interest rates. Suddenly their economies are suffering shrinkage sewerage enough to dash US high hopes for an export-led recovery. The financial system appears to be so weak that it reminds many economist is to the early 1930s. If one looks at the boarder picture of tottering debt structures and falling incomes, it suggest US may in fact be exposed to a danger that they thought has passed from history half a century ago—a depression. Of course, the world economy has changed in many ways since 1930s. It had more higher monopolies and the South-East Asians are increasingly emerging as a forceful new-comers. It commands concentrations of international liquidity available for instant damage control.[6]

The world is grossly unequal. Countless millions are starving, sick, homeless and illiterate and their position is often becoming worse. For example, In the Middle East militarism remains a costly dead end. The region has spent $ 800 billion on weapons since 1975. Yet still insecure, violent and unstable. In the region, economic disparities grow more extreme and foreign debts have risen ten fold since 1980s. The cost of the Gulf War brought further pauperization and per capita incomes ranging from $ 250 to $ 15000 per year. Hardly less benign are worsening food and water shortages. In the Third World the facts are shocking — Third World military expenditure has risen from $ 24 billion in 1960 to $ 159 billion in 1986 and to $ 200 billion in 1990.

The Third World countries spend more than $ 35 billion of their foreign exchange in 1988 to import arms. In fact, 75% of the world's total arm trade is presently directed towards the Third World. Despite that fact that 800 million people live in absolute poverty in the Third World. Some of the poorest countries in the world are spending more on their military than on their education and health (e.g., Pakistan, Philippines, Sudan, Zaire, Ethiopia,

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Uganda). It is estimated by Leger Sivard that in the Third World, there is one soldier per 140 inhabitants, while one doctor per 1950 people. Over 10 million people have been turned into refugees and by the civil wars, worst sufferers being women and children. There have been 125 wars on the soil of the Third World since 1945, costing more than 25 millions death. The west has supported the military dictators, supplied credits for military purchase, tested their latest military technology on the Third World. It is beyond doubt the Gulf War and its aftermath has boosted the appeal of anti-US of fundamentalist Islam. There is an intensifying struggle between two versions of political Islam: one is pro-imperialist and sponsored by Saudi Arabia, while the other is anti-imperialist and draws inspiration from Iran. The rivalry began in 1979 when a socially conservative, but politically radical Islamic movement took over power in Iran. Iran's new Islamic leaders were uncompromising in their opposition to the US, and their refection of monarchy as un-Islamic form of government. The pro-imperialist Saudi dynasty saw the Iran's revolutionary regime as a threat to their survival. Last decade witnessed violent encounter between these two fractions in several countries inhabited by Muslims. The quick American response to Gulf crisis, which was local crisis, had has added to the acceleration of the decline of secular and modern ideologies and increases popular disillusionment. The competition between these two Muslim groups are quite new. In earlier several decades ideologies were competing such as Islamic reformism, Muslim fundamentalism, secular nationalism and socialism. Among them socialist and fundamentalist had marginal social and political influence. Islamic reformist and secular nationalists dominated most of the Muslim world. In 1906, the grand Ayatollah and other major clergy supported the liberal constitution in Iran. Similarly, in Turkey, Iraq, Egypt, Tunisia, Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, and later in Bangladesh leaders envisaged the future of the new states to be secular and democratic. Reformist Islam and secularism had held popular support throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Most of these countries were later taken over by the military regimes and the continuing

socio-economic crisis waned the influence of Islamic reformism. Disillusionment was widely felt under the military regimes, while popular hopes for progress and distributive justice was brutally repressed. Secularism has been descredited by the Baath regime in Iraq, Bhutto regime in Pakistan and Shah dictatorial regime in Iran. As America becomes more entrenched in the Middle East, but fails to deliver an end to the Israeli occupation of Arabs lands. The situation of hopelessness will create more fertile ground for the growth of Islamic fundamentalism. All fundamentalist, Islamic, Christian, Jewish, Sikh, and Hindu—is a reaction to the enlightenment and modernity. Fundamentalist values are inherently opposed to science, reason and pluralism. Although fundamentalism is exploiting the frustration and grievances of the masses, but it will certainly fail to provide a viable solution of the contemporary problems for the vast majority of the people in the Third World. Under the guide of "new world order" the Third World will be controlled, especially those regimes that are responsive to popular pressures for the improvement of the living conditions of their people and to protect their resources, sometimes by military intervention. To assume the welfare of the tiny west as the welfare of the world is wrong and needs to be checked. For the US the IMF/World Bank is preferable to direct military intervention, but it is not always possible. The US call for "liberalization" when it is her interest, and for enhanced protection, when that is in her interest. At present the US expressed concerned over GATT negotiations not only on agriculture policies but also on guarantees for "intellectual property rights", removal of constraints on services and investment and so on. The effect of these measures would be to restrict the Third World countries, while the multinational corporations gain free access to their resources and monopolize new technology.[7]

Israel had declared emphatically that the peace negotiations should begin without prior conditions. However, the continuing establishment of settlements in the West Bank constitutes a tangible prior condition designed to foreclose negotiations on

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withdrawal from the occupied territories. Without such a withdrawal, peace is not attainable in the Middle East. The settlements are not a mere aspect of current Israeli policy. They are an organic part of the governing Likud Party policy that wants to dictate to history that the territories will stay Israeli. The United States could have called Israel to order in the 1970s, long before the mass establishment of settlements. The fateful moment was in 1977, when Menachem Begin took power as Israel's Prime Minister. His advocacy of de facto annexation of the occupied territories flew in the face of United Nations Resolution 242, which had been recognised internationally as the only possible basis for settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. That resolution served as the main pillar of American policy in this conflict, and it would not be an exaggeration to say that over the years resolution 242 had acquired the authority and prestige of an international norm. In the face of Begin's ascent to power, the Jimmy Carter White House became nervous. Aware of Begin's political positions, crisis of confrontation was in the offing....The US ambassador to Israel at the time, Samuel Lewis, recalls his role in defusing the confrontation in advance of Mr. Begin's first visit to the US during that period: "I got to know Begin earlier, and because I was able to go back to Washington during late June and help prepare for the visit, I succeeded in changing the approach of the administration from what would have been, I think, one of the more disastrous encounters in American diplomat history had it taken place according to the game plan members of the National Security Council had initially designed." This "game plan" presumably referred to preparations by Carter's aides to challenge Begin's position on annexation. During his Washington visit, Begin acquitted himself by declaring that "everything is negotiable." The Americans were relieved, apparently interpreting this as a sign of moderation. But Begin only meant that everything was "talkable" and nothing more. He returned home triumphantly because American diplomacy had won over American statesmanship. From then on, Israel's rejection of resolution 242 and its claim to the occupied territories were no longer

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outlandish. Before Mr. Begin's ascent, it had been an ideological position of only one party in the Israeli Knesset. Now it became the official position of the state of Israel. By refraining from challenging Begin, the American administration unwittingly granted his position political respectability. The Americans were deprived henceforth of the possibility of challenging the Likud policy on the ground of international norms and international legality. Preventing a "disastrous encounter" in 1977 only meant that it would be many times more disastrous in the future for all concerned. The American leaders at the time lacked the foresight to grasp this — either they felt perplexed or simply did not care. Begin's triumphant return from Washington had great importance for Israeli political life. It signalled to Israelis that they should not be too concerned with the external world's opposition to their policy. Even the US gave way and resigned itself to Israeli spurning of the American position. Thus, Israel felt it should not be tormented by misgivings about expansion and settlements in the occupied territories. The Likud's position passed the feasibility test, which helped it to become entrenched in Israeli public opinion. Resolution 242 is now practically discarded by Israel, as can be inferred from US Secretary of State James Baker's demand for Israeli reaffirmation of its acceptance of this resolution. The US has always interpreted 242 as calling for Israeli withdrawal on all fronts, and opposed implanting settlements in the occupied territories. However, such a position has been theoretical, abstract, obligating no action.[8]

The Madrid meeting the process lading up to it are a logical consequence of the establishment of a new balance of power in the world and in the Middle East. It is my hope that when the various delegations convene, they will take the first step toward a dialogue that will mean a durable peace, not a temporary or transitional one. Our first steps on the road to an enduring peace will, I believe, face far fewer obstacles than some would make us believe. The economic and security dimensions of peace are paramount. It is my conviction that the changes in the world

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economy have become Israel's main enemy. Israel can no longer survive in isolation, with a long supply line Europe or the United States. The future holds no promise for small countries building up self-sufficient economies. On the contrary, the trend is toward large, integrated regional economies such as the European Community or North American Free Trade Zone. This evidence should lead to the realisation that the best hope is to be found in an integrated regional economy that incorporates all small states in the region, including Israel and the future Palestinian state. Israel must acclimate itself to such a reality. Otherwise, it will remain in conflict with the proposed "new world order", which rests on the idea of friendly cooperation, not isolation. A regional security system is obviously a necessary condition for the emergence of such a regional economy. Our area must become demilitarised. Demilitarisation, as Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak has suggested, is one of the main roads to a Middle East peace. But for Israel to be part of this regional security system, it has to abide by the same rules and cannot remain a nuclear power in the middle of a demilitarised area. Otherwise, the dismantling of Iraq's military power will lead to a complete double standard.

The most feasible and constructive way to move toward these economic and security goals is through a confederation, based on the Swiss model, of "the whole of Palestine," including Israel and the territories occupied after the 1967 war, and Jordan, which respects the integrity of the national and cultural identities of all. (Switzerland is divided into 23 local "cantons" which have extensive sovereign powers.) Such an approach will facilitate a just solution to such crucial questions as sharing water resources, the status of Jerusalem and the refugee problem. I am convinced that a Swiss-style confederation can solve the issue of Jerusalem which is so dear to our hearts. In the type of confederation I propose, Jerusalem would have a status comparable to the Swiss city of Basel. It would be a canton unto itself and would be the capital of the confederation. Or, it could be the capital of the proposed two-state solution—a municipal

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city with two political capitals. If a confederation of this type is created, the refugee problem could be solved by the Palestinians themselves as individuals, instead of through another mass solution imposed by external powers. Each individual refugee could freely choose to return to their home within the new confederation or choose compensation to live elsewhere. These are the new possibilities created by recent global transformations.

Peace is a state of mind embodied in a state of physical security of the nations concerned. A peaceful state of mind creates a stability based on mutual respect and mutual understanding. It bears in its root the seeds of fairness that can restore stability by helping to resolve the problems of everyday life faced by the people in our conflicted region of the world. At this historic moment, we must have the wisdom to make an agreement that does not bear the seeds of future conflicts. It is my belief that an agreement based on a Swiss confederal model possesses that wisdom. [9]

As a result of seismic shifts in the global order of things and the diplomatic skills of the US secretary of State Mr. James Baker, the warring groups of West Asia could be brought together on a single platform to talk about the peace that has been eluding them for decades. However the memories of the fate of earlier peace conferences held in Lausanne. Switzerland in 1949, and in Geneva in 1973 still haunt the Arab and Israeli participants. Foreign policy specialists all over the world were not surprised by the fact that a substantial number of the participants found the Madrid conference dramatic and momentous. But the fact that the belligerents agreed to talk at all after decades of obduracy testifies that the participants tacitly acknowledged a common destiny. It is a momentous pronouncement of transforming change that raises hope for positive developments in the future. In face by joining the US-led coalition that dealt Iraq out of the Arab-Israeli military equation. Arab leaders signalled flexibility in their otherwise obdurate stand, in negotiating with Israel. The propitious

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circumstances of the end of the Cold War, the Allied victory in the Gulf War, and the involvement of Mr. George Bush and Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev in this round of peace conference also boosted the confidence of the Arabas. These events created the atmosphere in which both Israel and the Arabas see an opportunity of setting on a destined journey. Yet a scarcely concealed expectation of uncertain outcome, as the history of this region holds, floats over the entire process. The West Asian public opinion that has not been prepared for such reversals of old attitudes may prove to be detrimental to their leader's flexible approach. Palestinians presenting the Israeli soldiers with olife branches, demonstrate a favourable elimate. No doubt Palestinian peace efforts face stiff opposition also from the hardliners within Palestine camp itself, mainly the PLOs break-away factions—the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, led by George Harbash, and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, led by Naif Hawatmeh, but the people's mood favours the peace efforts. The Palestinian leaders at the peace conference have also presented their case in a way that demonstrates their pragmatism. For expecting positive outcome from this peace initiative, Arab leaders should come on a level with Arab public opinion by explaining the concessions that they have made to Israel, instead of continuing to lean on misleading, manipulating slogans about liberating Palestine. Some of these leaders seem to have realised this as Syria agreed to negotiate with Israel about their formal boundary. If Syria were now to follow the example of Egypt and the moderate Palestinians, Israel could be pressed more effectively to abandon its sterile equation of security with the Golan Heights.[10]

Syria has been demanding the possession of the Golan Heights, that was captured by Israel in the 1967 was and annexed in 1981. Thousands of Syrian Druze live there but the principal value of the Golan Heights is tactical, since they dominate the plain of Damascus and Galike. Israelis believe that if President Hafez Assas of Syria recognised Israel and demonstrated a willingness for normal diplomatic relations,

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Israel might consider returning the Golan heights. Lebanon in its negotiations with Israel, put forth its longstanding demand asking Israel to withdraw its troops and disband the South Lebanon Army, the Lebanese militia that Israel pays to help patrol the zone. Israel has held the zone since it invaded Lebanon in 1982, and formally designated the zone in 1985 to prevent Palestinian and Lebanese a guerrillas from using Lebanon as a base for attacks on Israel's northern settlements. Other issues involving Israel and Lebanon are the Lebanese and Palestinian prosperous held in Israeli prisons and the Israeli soldiers captured by Lebanon since 1982 invasion. In the direct negotiations between Israel and Jordan both parties have to ponder over finding a solution to the 24 year Israeli occupation of the West Bank of the Jordan river, territory that Israel seized from Jordan in the 1967 war.

The Palestinians would want to discuss the fate of East Jerusalem, caputred and annexed by Israel in 1967, and the possibility of Israel granting them limited autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip Palestinians want autonomy to lead an independent Palestinians want autonomy to lead an independent Palestinian State but its leaders at the Madrid conference have demonstrated that their approach would be accommodating. It seems these leaders have a tacit acknowledgement that their desparate economic plight cannot be alleviated until their political relationship with Israel changes. History, it seems, is giving them a good lesson, and they are following a reasonable path. But some of their Arab brothern are not particularly keen in seeing an independent Palestinian state between Israel and Jordan and believe that the rise of a radical Palestinian state in West Asia will be a threat to conservative regimes. Kind Hussain of Jordan believes such a state could become a threat to his government. Jordanian officials and moderate Israelis most often say the preferred solution is a confederation of some sort between Jordan and a Palestinian state. In the past also, Palestinians had been butchered by their Arab brothers and are not trusted even now. The Gulf War, however, seems to have

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chastened at least some of the Arab leaders, if not all of them, and they have come to believe that his is the last chance for restoring peace in this part of the world. Some of the leaders maintly President Hosni Mubarak, the head of the only Arab state to have diplomatic ties with Israel, and King Fahd of Saudi Arabia are aware of the regions suseptibility to fundamentalist forces, and called for a reconciliatory approach in the process of negtotiations.[11]

Law for the lawless is scriptural—self-righteous contentions of anti-quated rights combined with justification of criminal preparation by claims of self-defence. The Palestinians and Israelis between them have more lawyers than law and, even though all efforts will be to establish at the very least a legal regime for Israel-Palestine relations, in the end, it will be political poker, not settlement based on the legality of claims. The Madrid conference set the tone for some hard bargaining between the Arab states, Israel and the Palestinians. Harsh speeches reiterating historical rights, mutual recrimination and seemingly inflexible stands paradoxically signalled that negotiations would continue. Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir rejrected the concept of land for peace and negotiations on Jerusalem, even though a few days earlier, echoing foreign minister Abba Eban's 1967 pledge, he had declared that everything was on the negotiating table. The question remains what are the Israelis negotiating for if not territory—West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the Jewish settlements and the contentious question of Jerusalem ? Or are these more negotiating positions to extract maximum concessions in the long run ? Finally, is it merely a quarrel over the precedence of a peace treaty over withdrawal from occupied territories ? There are two possibilities that emerge from the Madrid spectacle. The first is that a satisfactory comprehensive settlement will be reached. Well, almost, because, given the conditions, there can be no comprehensive settlement in the Middle East. And there can be no peace without a comphrehensive settlement. A comprehensive settlement would entail not merely the foundation of the State of Palestine, an end to the state of war between Israel and the Arab states agreement

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on the boundary disputes and return of the exiled Palestinians. It would also men building up confidence in the sincerity of the opposing parties willingness to observe the guarantees that each offer. However, the propsects of a comprehensive settlement are remote. Normalisation of relations between Arab states and Israel has to transverse a long and exacting path of confidence building measures — steps that the states are reluctant to take because of decades of hostility that has generated deep-rooted suspicion and because of countervailing domestic pressures.[12]

The Palestinians are, per force, willing to scale down their demands, indeed bend over backwards, to accommodate the Israelis. Mr. Yasser Arafat has repeatedly stated that he is agreeable to all conceivable conditions to guarantee Israeli security. If Israel does agree to a toothless Palestine, the question of West Bank settlements remain. Mr. Shamir is not willing to trade suspension of Jewish settlements for an end to intifada even now. Does that imply that the Israelis are merely playing out an elaborate farce or dose it mean that the settlements are merely a form of continuous pressure to strengthen the Israel's hands in the bargaining and are, like in Sinai, liable to be dismantled once satisfactory terms are arrived at? Assuming that it is merely a bargaining chip, however improbable that might appear does Israel intend to relinquish all of West Bank? Obviously not. Ever since the 1967 war, Israel has consistently argued that Resolution 242 does not specify return of all the occupied territories and that the ambiguity in the wording was intended to accommodate alternations in the pre 1967 war boundries. Israel, at its most flexible, is amenable to the two-state formula only if the other state in Jordan.[13]

The Arab states had disengaged themselves not only because the costs of war were high but also because the refugee Palestinian component had proved as destabilising for the monarchs as for republican regimes. The Arab states were, however, pledged to no direct negotiations with Israel, no recognition of the Jewish state and no peace treaty with it under an Arab resolution passed in 1967. The Madrid conference, despite the subterfuges

devised by Mr. James Baker, negates the first, undermines the second and creates conditions for the third, independent of the fate of the Palestinians. Mr. Baker's two-track policy and 'constructive ambiguity' seeks peace for Israel without linkage between Arab-Israel disputes and the Palestinian question. Arab states have been freed of the necessity to give support to the Palestinian cause in the interests of domestic legitimacy by the 'renegade' role of the Palestinians during the Kuwait crisis. It also illustrated the threat of Palestinian fifty columnists in sheltering states. Moreover, President Saddam Hussein, by linking Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait with Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories, demonstrated the possibility of Arab states getting dragged into another war with Israel through the intemperate action of any future potentate with regional ambitions. It is possible to argue that the same factors provided the stimulus for a superpower-mediated settlement so that they could be rid of Palestinian refugees. Yet, the fact remains that Israel may be more serious about peace with the Arab states than about giving in to Palestine. The reason is that Mr. Sharmir's Likud is based on the philosophy of a Greater Israel, embodied in its vigorous settlement policy. The Likud, a coalition of right and extreme right political groups, derives its support from the oriental Jews, a segment vehemently opposed to giving up any land. What Shamir does want is peace with Syria, Lebanon and Jordan — if possible, independent of any accommodation for Palestinians that reduces the scope to expand Israel's horders. The Israeli demand to shift the conference venue to West Asia for the second phase was an attempt to hasten the process of explicit Arab recognition of Israel. The combination of fast dissolving Arab interest and support for Palestine and the increasing entrenchment of Jewish settlers in West Bank has forced Palestinians to negotiate. That they chose to ignore the Syrians and Jordanians and continue with the talks is a measure of their apprehensions about this being the last chance. And so the scenario develops — Israel's negotiating peace with Arab states while the Plaestinians get, at best, the crumbs. But peace for the Israelis will mean retreat from the

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Golan Heights. The Syrians will settle for nothing less. And the Israelis, while willing to withdraw from southern Lebanon, are in no mood to withdraw from the Golan Heights except in return for firm guarantees that the Syrians will note use, now or in future, the Heights to shoot down at the Israelis. Israel had captured the Golan Heights at an enormous cost. The vituperative exchanges in Madrid between Syria and Israel and the Israeli commemoration of the talks with a settlement in Golan Heights underscored the stakes that both sides put on the Golan Heights. However, the Syrians and the Israelis had earlier approached some form of agreement, especially after the October War and both are not averse to some kind of a cessation of hostile relations. The days of intra-Arab political one-upmanship, based on the championing of the Palestinian are Content with whatever crumbs of self-rule Israel throws to it, the Syrians are very likely to change their tune.[14]

Meanwhile, the Arab group at the United Nations on December 5, 1991 night came out against the United States "reported intention" to table a proposal for revocation of a 16-year-old General Assembly resolution dubbing Zionism a form of racism.

The resolution adopted on November 10,1975, was bitterly opposed by Israel which has lobbled since to get it annulled, but without results. In September, 1991 Unites States President George Bush, addressing the 166-nation assembly, threw his weight behind the Israeli effort.

The Arab group, which met at the UN headquarters in New York considered the reported intention of the US to submit a draft resolution to the Assembly with a view to revoking Resolution No. 3379 (xxx) of November 10, 1975.

In a statement afterwards, the group said, in implementation of resolutions adopted, in this respect by the League of Arab states, the Arab group opposes the raising of this issue.

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The Arab group rightly considers further, that revoking previous resolutions adopted by the serious Assembly is in principle, "a very serious matter."

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6

The Palestinian Arabs: Muslims and Christians

A very balanced analysis has been made of the longstanding contentious issue that has been baffling the minds for almost half a century of not only the parties to the dispute, viz. Israel, the Palestinians and a number of Arab states, but also the international community as a whole. There is no denying the fact that it has all along been the US commitment to safeguard the existence of Israel that has not only kept the latter's morale high all these turbulent years but has also resulted in its recalcitrance. In fact, Palestine was a territory under the Turkish Empire which was placed by the League of Nations under the administration of Great Britain. The Jewish population in Palestine then formed roughly eight per cent of the Arab population. However, the Hitler factor played a very prominent role in changing Palestine's history. Juding from the inconsistencies and a certain amount of evasiveness in the statement of James Baker, the chief spokesman of the USA — "the so-called honest broker" — I am in complete agreement with an apprehension that the chances for success of the talks are not rates high at this point of time. On the face to it, although Isreal and the Arabas have agreed to sit together for talks for the first time in the history of the West Asia conflict, both the parties still appear to be maintaining their respective tough

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lines. it is too early to make any predictions, but let us hope with optimism in spite of all the odds that stare us in the face at the moment.[1]

It is a measure of the intractability of the Arab-Israeli imbroglio that the various parties concerned met for the must first time in Madrid after 43 years of beleaguered belligerence. What is surprising is that Madrid parleys not only achieved some gains but a decision has been taken to resume talks in Washington, tentatively on November 22. It is a quirk of history that what was conceived in the wake of a terribly destructive World War as a peace settlement designed to create havens of security turned into a powder keg of bellicosity. The seeds lay in the Balfour Deceleration of 1917. But the UN flagged off in 1947 the chain of developments which marked the next few decades. The outset, the Arabas had the edge in population, resources and political bargaining power. That was soon to a change. The establishment of Israel coincided with a bount of fighting. The new-born state received the recoginition of the US and USSR. And in the military engagements with the Arabas, Israel inflicted a series of defeats. In 1949 general armistice arrangements between Israel, Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria came into effect. As a result, de facto Jewish control was achieved over half as much territory as allocated to Israel under the partition plan. Support from the US and the Soviet Union enabled Israel to normalise relations with the Arabas further. Tel-Aviv's subsequent efforts to seek peace with the Arab states through the offices of a UN Conciliation Commission got bogged down. They began secret and separate negotiations with Jordan which broke-off with the assassination of the king of Jordan in 1951. By this time the Soviets had turned hostile towards Israel. This was because in 1950, the US, Britain and France had issued a tripartite declaration calling for a balanced sale of arms to both sides and guaranteed armistice lines against forcible change. Israel's relations with the Arab world cooled off all the more when in 1953 it received international recognition, western protection and US economic aid. Massive immigration at this stage removed

one of its major weaknesses. The next few years witnessed the beefing up of Egypt under President Nasser. In 1955-56, Cairo obtained vast quantities of Soviet arms. In 1956, Nasser shook the world by nationalising the Suez Canal. In October that year, he formed a ring of Arab alliances around Israel. In the event, however, Israel's right of 'innocent passage' through the Gulf of Aquaba was recognised and the Gaza Strip was insulated from terrorism. In the 1960's Israel played the role for bystander though by 1967 it had acquired deterrent military strength. In 1966, there was a coup in Syria as an extremist leftist regime took over with Soviet backing. To divert attention from its unpopularity, it launched a campaign against the Jewish state. Terrorist attacks disturbed political relations. With Soviet mediation, a mutual defence treaty was signed between Egypt and Syria to deter Israel.[2]

Nasser had been waiting to time his offensive. Russian help was assured. And the US was preoccupied with its involvement in Vietnam. The Egyptian strongman moved his troops into Sinai warning Israel to keep its hands off Syria. He asked for the removal of UN troops stationed on his side of the border and at the entry of the Gulf of Aquaba since 1957, UN Secretary - General Thant readingly complied. In May, 1967, the Gulf of Aquaba was closed to Israeli shipping and to all strategic material carried to Israel on third party ships. In June, Tel-Aviv struck back. And it took the Israeli military genius, Moshe Dayan, one week to destroy the enemy. At the end of the Sinai, the West Bank including Jerusalem and the Golan Heights in Syria. Egypt's army and air force were virtually knocked out while Jordanian and Syrian forces were severely crippled. A new force had emerged on the scene — the Palestinian Liberation Organisation formed in 1964. It was an umbrella organisation for various groups seeking the creation of an Arab-Palestinian state. Initially it had found a base in Jordan. In 1969, the extremist al-Fatah assumed control and Yasser Arafat became chairman of the executive committee. In 1970, however, Jordan expelled the PLO which regrouped itself in Lebanon engaging in border inclusions. The UN tried to mediate in vain. Israel just

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would not abandon its 1967 gains. In 1973, another war broke out, Egyptian forces launched a major offensive across the Suez Canal. Syria struck in the north. A cease-fire followed. Syria continued hostilities with Soviet support through the first part of 1974. Syrian troops were driven from the Golan Heights and pushed back towards Damascus. A cease-fire with Syria came in its wake. Israel reached disengagement agreements with Egypt and Syria that year which was followed by a further withdrawal in Sinai in 1975.[3]

The scenario changes suddenly thereafter. President Anwar-el-Sadat and Prime Minister Menachem begin exchanged visits. Meeting with President Jimmy Carter at Camp David produced a new framework of relations. The agreement called for Israeli withdrawal from Sinai and 'autonomy' for the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. By April, 1982, Israeli withdrawal from Sinai was complete. But the Begin administration encouraged Israel settlement of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and showed no intention of pulling out of the area. By the early 1980's. Israel had established about 100 settlements of almost 30,000 Jews on the West Bank and Gaza into the midst of about 1.3 million Palestinian Arabas—Muslims and Christians. The PLO had meanwhile committed itself to international terrorism which it later jettisioned formally. A split occurred in 1973. The moderates were willing to accept a Palestinian state limited to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip while the extremists were hell-bent on the elimination of Israel. In 1974 international recognition came. At a conference in Rabat, Arab heads agreed that the PLO would be the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Israeli military offensive was now directed against the PLO. Lebanon turned into a war zone. But in the end the PLO withdrew and Arafat set up his headquarters in distant Tunis. The implacable hostility between the Arabas and the Jews continued for another decade. Global politics introduced new angles. With the rapproachement between the US and Russia, the determinants changed. There was the possibility of yet another conflagration early this year when Saddam Hussein of Iraq took the PLO under his wing. Tel-Aviv's admirable

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restraint prevented that happening. And the US succeeded in crushing Iraq. This was the background to the talks which opened on October 30, 1991 in Madrid. US President George Bush called for an agreement on limited Palestinian self-rule on the West Bank and Gaza within a year. Mikhali Gorbachev seconded the call. Diplomats from Israel, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation met. Arabas wanted the return of land won by Israel since 1948. Israel sought peace. Palestinians looked forward to the for the birth of a state of their own.[4]

Meanwhile, one of the Bush Administration's high priorities after the war was a regional peace structure for the Middle East, something that George Bush believed would be part of a New World Order. One person who was against the concept was former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, who described it as visionary Kissinger would rather go back to the "balance of power" theory, so assiduously practised by British leaders all the way down to Winston Churchill. Kissinger was for a Middle East in which the power of Iran, Syria and Iraq would be balanced. The only problem was that it was precisely such a balancing of powers that had brought on two world wars. A more realistic principle would be that of a concern of powers, such as the one that operated in the Gulf War, under American leadership, but within the framework of the UN Security Council. America's role in such a system would not be that of an international policemen, a superpower in a unipolar world. It is doubtful if any nation can aspire to that position now, in an inter-dependent world bristling with arms and awash in religious and ethnic passions. The new American role has to be that of a global broker who assigns roles to other nations and power in bearing the burdens of world order. At the same time, it assumes, as in the Gulf War, the tasks that only America can fulfil because only it has the powers and the resources. In other words, the world is entering an era of new global social contract that will place limits around unbridled power. In the meantime, what about Operation Desert Storm itself? Did it accomplish all that it had been meant to do, and at what cost ?

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The Gulf War was indeed a great victory for America, but it did not come about as a result of detailed and careful planning in the White House. It was the brave troops and smart Generals who brought Saddam Hussein to his knees. Inevitably, the lack of coherent planning is now coming home to roost in the aftermath of the victory in the Gulf, with Washington not quite sure of how it should proceed in the Middle East. In fact, uncertainly was a hallmark of the crisis from the beginning. President Bush at first was not very clear about the reason for sending ground forces to the Persian Gulf. He had taken the decision without really going to the people or consulting members of Congress. Many reasons were trotted out the tried, but ultimately, the president settled on describing the deployment as a means of preserving "our very way of life". He might well have added that the troops were sent into safeguard the flow of oil on which "our way of life" did indeed depend.[5]

Over a period of weeks after the invasion, a plethora of reasons was paraded, including national security, freedom of navigation, commitment to the peace and welfare of friends and allies, preservation of peace, and leadership of the free world. But some of the president's own cabinet officers were more out spoken. "Of course it is about petroleum," commented Commerce Secretary Robert Mossabacher. "Crass or not, it is oil that keeps everybody going". Calling Saddam Hussain another Hitler was all very well, but Saddam had been a despot even earlier when the US was tilting towards Iraq in the fight against Iran. America did not send trocps to the Gulf because Kuwait was a nice little country that was being swallowed up. The same thing had happened to Tibet, without anyone losing much sleep in Washington. To be quite candid, if Kuwait had been a poor third world nation without any oil, it is a foregone conclusion that not a single US soldier would have been deployed to defend it. Nor can it be legitimately said that American forces were sent to the Gulf to protect the Government of Saudi Arabia. After all, it is a feudal monarchy that dose not even pretent to have the veneer of democracy that Kuwait wears, Saudi Arabia bans all forms of religion except Islam, represses its women, and continues such

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barbaric acts as stoning adulterers or amputating the hands of thieves. As the American people got busy this summer celebrating victory throughout the country with impressive parades, floats and fly-pasts, they had not got around to asking a question that would be increasingly raised because of the administrations failure to anticipate what would happen after the war was won: Just what did the United States gain from the war? The administration has acknowledged that it did not anticipate the extent of the Kurdish response to President Bush's exhortations unging them to revolt against the Iraqi regime. Nor did it foresee the brutality that would accompany suppression of the revolt. When its hand-off policy raised a domestic and international storm, the US was forced to lumber through a dis-organised series of measures to feed, clothe and protect hundreds of thousands of Kurdish refugees an involvement that appeared to have no immediate end in sight.[6]

There were other failures of foresight. The administration never imagined that Saddam Hussein would still be in power so long after he was roundly defeated; it never expected the degree of devastation that would be visited upon Kuwait, and it never thought it would be so frustratingly difficult to return the Emirate to normalcy after freeing it from Iraqi occupations: Most importantly, the administration was hostage to a highly exaggerated idea of the degree of influence the United States would have in the region in the aftermath of the war. After four gruelling trips to many countries in the Middle East, Secretary of State James Baker came no closer to settling regional conflicts, US-Israeli relations appeared to be on a roller-coaster — even as Defence Secretary Dick Cheney and Israeli Generals met and came out smiling, Secretary Baker and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir kept trading thingly veiled barbs. President Bush had set a great deal of store over his much heralded plan for a New World Order, beginning with a settlement of regional problems in the Middle East. But even Mr. Bush subsequently appeared to have prudently placed his global plan on the back burner. And has the war improved the oil situation, which was

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the initial basis for America's involvement? The reliance of the West on Middle East oil continues unabated. And, with much of Kuwait's production lost in the raging fires that could go on for years, the long-range prospect for stable prices is not too certain. Besides, with the billions of dollars that the oil producers had to spend for the war and will have to spend for reconstruction — a day will surely come when pressure for higher prices will once again mark the deliberations at OPEC meetings. The US had a clear warning in the early 1970s when its access to oil at steady prices was challenged for the first time by supposedly friendly countries in the Gulf. There were many measures that America could have then adopted. It could have kept the price of oil have trough an oil import fee and gasoline taxes; Congress could have imposed conservation measures and created incentives for wise energy use; the government could have tried to diversify energy sources to solar, natural gas, coal and nuclear power. But all talk of tightening the energy belt tapered off after the first oil shock wore off. There are no current indications that the Gulf War has in a meaningful way, renewed interest in reducing Gulf oil dependency. It can be argued that the United States has gained a reputation for not tolerating naked aggression of the kind that Saddam Hussein attempted. But America could not have done what it did without the financial aid of its allies. And it is moot point whether it can repeat the performance, if necessary, or whether the allies will cough up again.[7]

Much is made of the claim that the Gulf War restored America's faith in itself the cured it of the "Vietnam syndrome". If it means that America is now more willing to undertake missions abroad at the dictates of national interest, that will certainly be a gain. But if getting rid of the syndrome leads to more Vietnams, the cure might well turn out to have been worse that the disease. How have the other players in the Gulf War drama fared ? Saudi Arabia was saved from the daunting prospect of becomings Iraq's 20th province, although that happy reprieve did not meet a Desert Storm; the cover provided by troop deployment under Desert Shielf was enough. Kuwait

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was liberated from under the Iraqi yoke, but at a heavy price. Most of its oil wells burn for months to come. Apart from the loss of revenue, the fires continue to spread a pall of black smoke over the Emirate, creating unprecedented health hazards. Also on the negative side is the fact that the eagerly awaited liberalisation and greater democracy are painfully slow in coming. Israel had definitely come out on the right side of the ledger. At practically no cost to itself, except the damage from a few Scud missile hits it has been one of its main enemies crushed and a potent threat to its existence removed. Iran has also gained. With its traditional enemy humbled and emasculated, Teheran is now seen as a comparatively major regional power, whose strength is sought to be enhanced by a new missile and nuclear weapons development programme. Apart from that, an immediate gain for Iraq is the acquisition of a hundred odd modern sophisticated Iraqi jet aircraft, which flew in seeking refuge, and have now been retained as part of War reparations due form Baghdad. Syria, an implacable foe of Iraq, has also gained from the latter's defeat and has, in the bargain, gained its own new province in Lebanon. Iraq, of course, has lost just about everything. An estimated 1,00,000 to 1,20,000 Iraqi troops dies in the war and Iraq's once fearsome military power is in ruins. it has lost a great part of essential infrastructure. Without adequate water supplies and sewage facilities, its population is threatened by disease. The Duke of Wellington, the victor at Waterloo, is supposed to have remarked that "nothing except a battle lost can be half so melancholy as a battle won". King Ashok realised that a very long time ago, following the Kalinga War. Perhaps the final balance sheet of the Gulf War can be drawn up only by the next generation.[8]

No Area of the world is of greater persistent concern than West Asia or the Arab region. The turmoil prevailing there for decades has reinforced a sense of the seeming intractability of regions main problems. The unfinished business of the recently concluded GulfWar, i.e. the Palestine question still looms large. The great powers by their support of the Balfour Declaration (1917), and the United Nations, through its resolution of 1947

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in favor of the partition of Palestine, created the Palestine problem. Israel was recreated in the map of West Asia after an absence of about 2000 years in 1948. Israelis those who live today in Israel are all emigrants whereas the Palestinians are there in Palestine for generations. Even the Israeli Prime Minister Mr. Yitzak Sahmir-who, it might be pointed out, was born in Poland and emigrated to Palestine only in 1935. The Palestinians are the natives of the Palestinian soil. There are more Jews in New York city than in the state of Israel. At the end of the first World War, Palestine was among the several former ottoman Arab territories which were made mandated territories by the league of Nations. The mandated for Palestine was formally allotted in 1922 to Great Britain by the League of Nations, without having ascertained the wishes of the Palestinian people, as required by the League convenant. During the twenty five years of Palestine Mandate, from 1922 to 1947 large scale Jewish immigration from abroad, mainly from Eastern Europe took place. The number swelled in the 1939's with the Nazi persecution of Jews. Over this period the Jewish population of Palestine, composed principally of immigrants, increased from less than 10% in 1917 to over 30% in 1947. Palestinian demands for independence and resistance to Jewish immigration led to an Arab rebellion in 1937. This was followed by continued Jewish terrorism and violence during the immediately after the Second World War. Great Britain, as the mandatory power, tried to implement various formulas to bring independence to Palestine.[9]

A partition scheme, a formula for provincial autonomy, a unifed independent Palestine were all considered and abandoned. In 1947, Great Britain in frustration turned the problem over to the United Nations. Meanwhile violence continued to spread in Palestine as Zionist terrorist groups stepped up their attacks and sabotage of Arab-Palestinian people and their property. It was at that state in the tragic history of Palestine the Arab Palestinians debilitated by thirty years of British suppression proved incapable of withstanding the assault of the violent Zionist community (trained, armed and supported by the European-American international onslaught of the day). The

first special session of the UN General Assembly was convened on 2nd April 1947 to consider the question of Palestine. On 1st May 1947 the United Nations setup a UN Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP). At the same time, the UN rejected an Arab resolution to end the mandate and declare independence for Palestine. In November 1947, by which date the situation had seriously deteriorated, the majority recommendation of UNSCOP was embodied in a resolution of the General Assembly 181 (ii) dated 20 November 1947. This Resolution recommended partition of Palestine into Jewish and Palestinian states. It is quite significant that, during this period of Arab-Palestinian struggle, our leaders particularly Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, could realise the injustice being done to Palestinian Arabas by creating a jewish state in their territory and forcefully raised their protest against it. Even the All India Congress Committee meeting in October 1937 protested against the reign of terror that was being established in Palestine by Zionist and British colonialists. The Arab States, the Arab League and the Arab Higher Committee rejected the decision to partition Palestine. The British had now started to withdraw their troops. The Jewish military and terrorist groups-Haganah, Irgun and stern Gang-now intensified their attacks on Arab Palestinians. Between 13 December 1947 and 10 February 1948, 161 Palestinians were killed and 320 injured. The death toll had risen to 2,307 since the partition resolution. In 1948, these Jewish terrorist groups blew up several trains killing 93 Palestinians and wounding many. They also attacked Arab-Palestinians villages, hotels, houses and offices. At the end of the first Arab-Israeli war of 1948, the new state of Israel controlled 77.4% of the country. The UN partition plan had allocated them 56.4%. The Israeli victory in this war brought Israel more land. But it did not bring peace. On the contrary, it laid the foundations for the long confrontation that has been continuing until the present day. All the peace initiatives undertaken so far have failed because they tried to dodge the real issues and to liquidate the real problem rather than settle it. The Camp David agreements of 1978-79, as far as Palestine

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was concerned, amount to little and the subsequent plans instantly rejected by Israel sought to weaken the Palestine problem. All the basic decisions relating to the procedures to be followed in seeking solution have been made at Camp David in the absence of Palestinian representatives and without regard for the known wishes of the Palestinians. Besides, the Camp David peace formula excluded the three basic rights of the Palestinian people which have been recognised and affirmed by the United Nations as the foundation of a just and lasting solution of the Palestine problem viz.— the right of the Palestinian people to self determination and independence in Palestine; its rights to designate its own national representative and to participate through the PLO—its sole representative in all efforts aimed at achieving a settlement of the problem. Moreover, the Palestinian issue has been deliberately made into an obstacle by the Israeli and the American Jewish lobby. The Israelis are still using it to buy time, further absorbing the Arab territories. Yasser Arafat, leader of the Palestine Liberation Organisation categorically recognised the existence of the state of Israel and accepted all UN resolutions pertaining to Palestine. Even, Mr. Arafat, declared that he is ready to "smoke the Peace Pipe" with the Israeli Prime Minister Mr. Yitzak Shamir, in the run up to the current landmark West Asia Peace Conference. But India should have nothing to do with Israel till there is a satisfactory solution to the Palestine problem. For all Practical purposed, India has got good political economic, cultural, diplomatic and historic ties with Arab Countries. We must not look at the problem from anyother's point of view either Arab or West. There is no morality observed here. India must think of its own perspectives. The only solution to the West Asian crisis lies in the establishment of a Palestinian state in West Bank and Gaza Strip with its Capital at Jerusalem. The establishment of the Palestinian state would be good for Israel from the political, economic and military point of view. This would cut Israel's excessive defence spending. Because Israel is spending 89 to 90% of its GNP on defence. Moreover, this would also reduce Israeli insecurity.[10]

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The importance of this has been both overlooked and down played. The present adamant Israeli Government tires to camouflage its refused to address the heart of the Arab-Israeli conflict i.e. the dispossession of the Arab-Palestinians, behind a smokescreen of moral revulsion at the thought of dealing with what it describes as a "terrorist" organisation, the PLO. And Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir — who was himself a leader of the notorious stern Gang, which assassinated UN and Government officials before the forcible establishment of the state of the Israel and participated in the 1948 massacre of Arab villagers in Deir Yassin had been a great terrorist as far as, terrorism is concerned. Now it is time the Americans, the Israelis, the Europeans and the Non-Aligned States, including India, fulfilled the promise make to the Palestinians in the 1947 UN partition resolution, which called for the creation of a Jewish State and a Arab-Palestinian State in Palestine. However, it is time for the Americans particularly President George Bush to act. At the present juncture of unipolar world scene the US is the only country that can bring peace to West Asia. Because, 90% of Israel's economy and defence is run, aided and developed by the US. If US does not give aid to Israel then Israel will not last for more than a week in the West Asian map. The Americans must pressurise Israel for accepting PLO representatives at the International Peace table in Madrid and find a solution to the west Asian crisis. West Asia will continue to be unstable politically, military and diplomatically until the Palestine problem is resolved at the earliest time possible. Several other peace initiatives have been put forward since the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982. There was the Arab Fez plan, the Reagon plan and the PLO—Jordanian peace initiative Shultz's peace initiative. All have been rejected outright by Israel. Besides, they made the same futile error of ignoring the plight of the real victims i.e. the Palestinians. Peace without justice to Palestinians is no peace.[11]

Middle East Watch, a US-based human rights organisation, has condemned the US and its allies for causing the deaths of

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"many hundreds" of civilians "needlessly" by violating the rules of war during the Gulf War that was started by U.S. and its allies.

It condemns Iraq too for a series of violations, including Iraqi missile attacks against Israeli and Saudi Arabian civilians, indiscriminate use of missiles, "terrorising the civilian population" by its Scud attacks illegal reprisals and human rights abuses.

The Pentagon and allied commanders repeatedly stressed that all feasible precautions were taken to avoid harm of civilians. In fact this was not so, the human rights abuses.

The Pentagon and allied commanders repeatedly stressed that all feasible precautions were taken to avoid harm to civilians. In fact this was not so, the human rights organisation said in its 402-page publication "weedless deaths in the Gulf" based on extensive studies and interviews in the war-ravaged areas.

Despite opportunity to conduct the allied boming campaign in strict compliance with the legal duty to take all feasible precautions to avoid civilian harm, the actual conduct of the war fell short of this obligation in several significant respects. All of these shortcomings appear to have involved deliberate decisions by allied commanders to take less than the maximum feasible precautions necessary to avoid harm to civilians.

The existence of the shortcomings in allied conduct reveals that the effort of US and allied commanders to portray the bombing campaign as a near-perfect attempt to avoid civilian harm was not entirely accurate and that in some instances, coalition forces appear to have violated the laws of war.

In several attacks in urban areas, allied planes dropped their bombs during the day, needlessly killing hundreds.

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Another shortcoming was the allies apparent use of unguided bombs when attacking urban areas, the human rights organisation said.

The largest loss of civilian life in a single incident occurred in the attack on the Ameriyya civil defence shelter on February 13, 1991 which killed between 200 and 300 civilians.

The United States failure to give a warning before proceedings with the disastrous attack on the Ameriyya shelter was a serious violation of the laws of war.

The shortage of food in Iraq resulting from the mandatory sanctions imposed by UN Security Council resolutions was exacerbated by allied bombardment of certain Iraqi food and agricultural facilities.

Several water treatment facilities in Basra were damaged, including the destruction beyond repair of the facility serving the densely populated Brathaiyya quarter of the city.

The allies virtually destroyed Iraq's electrical system, including four of the country's five hydroelectric facilities. Certainly the crippling of Iraq's electrical production impeded the military's ability to communicated and it undoubtedly also had an effect on war-related production but the cost to the civilian population of these attacks on the electrical system was severe the Middle East Watch added.

The Israeli parliament's resolution opposing negotiations on the return of the Golan Heights to Syria and calling instead for more settlements there is the latest reiteration of the Shamir government's hard line position on talks with the country's Arab antagonists. Coming soon, after the November 5, 1991 announcement of a new settlement in the area and even as the stalemate over the site of the bilateral negotiations continues, it has cast a cloud over the ongoing West Asian peace process. All

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the Arab nations and the US are firm that Israel will have to make some territorial concessions if lasting peace is to be achieved. However, it is unlikely that the talks will break down on this issue. The move could be just another shrewd tactical manoeuvre by the Israeli government to make the minimum possible concessions while extracting the maximum possible gains from the other side. Equally, the resolution could be aimed much at US domestic opinions, especially the strong pro-Israeli lobby, as at the government, a ploy to show that the Israeli government is under immense public pressure not to make concessions. The same strategy seems to underline the wrangle over the venue of the bilaterals talks. Israel is trying to put the Arabas in a fix. By agreeing to its demand for locating the talks in West Asia, they will, in effect, be according recognition to Israel—something they consider their alternate bargaining chip. If they refuse to go along and the talks break down, they can be blamed for being rigid. However, a number of factors militate against Israel carrying this posturing too far. Foremost among these is the realisation that it is losing its most-favored-nation status in the US. After the Gulf War, a more detached relationship began developing between them. This was brought home when President Bush postponed consideration of $ 10 billion loan guarantées for Jewish settlements in the occupied territories. Even while the road to Madrid was being laid, Washington refused to concede all Israeli demands. It persuaded the Palestinians to accept Israeli conditions on the composition of their term, but refused to give Israel the veto it wanted. The US has also made it clear that a solution would have to be found soon to the dispute over where to resume the talks. Israel needs the loan guarantees which are to be decided in January 1992. It cannot afford to lose its staunchestally. It also knows that it is now dealing with more moderate Palestinians who are ready to accept an interim arrangement of limited self-rule as a first step towards total independence, and that the hardliners are just waiting in the wings. The Israelis know that Hannan Ashrawi, Haieder Abdel-Shafi and even Yasser Arafat are to be preferred to rejectionists like George Habash, leader of the near-fanatical

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People's Front for the Liberation of Palestine. Golan holds strategic significance of Israel. It may be argued that this significance is limited in this age of ballistic missiles. But the entire West Asian imbroglio is complicated by a whole lot of irrational, emotional considerations. In the family of nations, Israel is much like an unwanted, neglected child-insecure, complex-ridden aggressive and driven by a fierce determination to make things work to its advantage. The ghetto mentality is still embedded deep in the Israeli psyche and is responsible for much of the government's posturing. Many of its fears-like all phobias -- are hard to set at rest. But as long as they exist, the West Asian peace train will not have a smooth ride.[12]

George Bush had laid out a time table for an Israeli Palestinian -settlements were to enjoy limited self-rule which meant more authority over their day-to-day lives. In the third year, however, negotiations were to start over a permanent settlement. The course of the talks predictably did not run smooth. On the second day, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir urged Arab neighbours to move talks to Israel and other West Asian countries. The Arabas and Palestinians rejected the idea, Jordan urged Israel to give up its "self-righteous" attitude and asked for a return of captured lands. Shamir brushed aside the concept of land for peace and restated Israel's claim to Jerusalem. On November 1, the conference was adjourned, for agreement could not be reached on where to hold face-to-face bilateral talks. Syria and Israel clashed over the issue of terrorism. Only the leader of the Palestinian delegation, Haider Abdul Sharif, took a soft line saying that they would accept a transitional period of self-rule provided it led to an independent state eventually. Shamir produced further bitterness accusing Syria and leaving the meeting. The Syrian Foreign Minister retaliated by saying that shamir had helped in the killing of Swedish peace-maker Count Bernadetee in 1948. Israel was also put in the dock for ignoring US resolutions. On November 3, 1991 the second state kicked off. Syria and Lebanon participated with reluctance. But Syria continued to be adamant about not reluctance. But Syria

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continued to be adamant about not shighting the talks to West Asia. For the first time, Israelis and Palestinians conducted direct negotiations, however barbed. The next day the main adversaries, Israel and Syria, had heated exchanges. Syrians refused to discuss anything but Israeli withdrawal from the Goldan Heights occupied in 1967. Israel skirted round the issue and diverted talks to other subjects like the venue for negotiations, an eventual peace treaty, direct communications, abstention from terrorist acts, confidence-building measures, regional cooperation and environmental matters. To the Syrians, the talks seemed negative. But not so for the Palestinians who had been bypassed at the Lausanne talks in 1948 and Camp David in 1979. The Madrid parelays gave them an opportunity for the first time to air grievances at an international forum. It was their intention to remove their image as a bloodthirsty lot from the minds of the Jewish lobby on Capitol Hill. Participation in the talks though as part of a delegation has got them some sort of Israeli recognition. One other thing. The Madrid meet should also kill the theory that the PLO old guard represented by Yasser Arafat was losing out to the insiders, the highly educated or well-to-do middle class. The new star, Hanan Ashrawi was in constant touch with Arafat during the proceedings.

Israeli is also pleased. It has full support for the Bush time -table for self-rule in the West Bank and Gaza. Three years, according to Tel-Aviv, are required to build up confidence and prepare the people. It is also happy that Jordan and Egypt are acquiescent. It is disposed to wave away Syrian truculence. The prospect of diplomatic relations with the Russian Federation has bucked it up as well. Jerusalem remains a striking point. But with the reduced striking power of the Arabas, Israel does not need to hang on the occupied territories for its security. And its recognition by the Arabas is in sight. The Arabas can also take heart from the fact that even Shamir has not ruled out the inclusion of the land for peace concept in the agenda for subsequent negotiations. And finally, the US dominates the entire show especially with the scene shifting to Washington.

The Soviet Union is happy to play second fiddle. And with the Soviet backing gone, how long can Damascus strike an aggressive posture.[13]

International legitimacy is totally incompatible with occupation of others, territories and for that reason Israeli occupation of the Arab territories must end. International legitimacy is inharmonious with the continuous violation of human rights and with the policy of oppression, expulsion and eviction followed systematically by Israel against the Palestinians. International legitimacy is not contrary to the right of self-determination of the Palestinians. It, in fact, sustains and supports this right and stands for its value and principles. That is why Palestinians must exercise their right to self-determination and not remain the only people who do not or is not allowed to exercise this right. In this context, it is important to note what the American President George Bush said on the welcoming H.M. the Moroccan King Hassan II in Washington in the beginning of this month. He said that the USA supports the legitimate political rights of the Palestinian people. Political rights, as every one knows, mean the right to live in a STATE. That means, the right to independence and self-determination. What the US President said was expressed by the UN General Assembly in its resolution No. ES-7/2 dated July 29, 1980 in a much clearer way during the discussion of the Palestinian problem. It stated the following :

(a) The right to self-determination without external interference and to national independence and sovereignty.

(b) The right to establish its own independent sovereign state.

Briefly, international legitimacy, from the Arab point of view is :[14]

1. The legitimacy which is based on the lofty principles of the UN charter and not on the interests of the powerful pressure group which influence the decision-making institutions in the United States.

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2. The legitimacy which gives the UN a central role in the peace process in resolving any differences over interpretations of the UN resolutions. Here it is useful to note that the UN Secretary General has clearly expressed his dissatisfaction at the very insignificant role of the UN in the forthcoming peace process which will being in Madrid, Spain, on 30th October, 1991.

3. The legitimacy which aims at a comprehensive, just and lasting solution of the conflict in the region and which avoids any partial or unilateral solutions.

4. The legitimacy which implements all resolutions of the Security Council and General Assembly of the United Nations as any selective policy of some resolutions of the Security Council only severe the interests of Israel. Moreover, any bypassing of the resolutions taken on this platform in which the countries of the South (have nots) have a greater and more positive role and voice, are considered unfit for implementation as the influence of the countries of the North (haves) is minimal there. That would mean reduction of the role of the third world countries, their humiliation and a declaration of the continuation of the hegemony of Super-powers over the UN. Or frankly speaking, the hegemony of one Superpower.

5. The legitimacy which means unambiguously the establishment of the State of Palestine, the recognition of the PLO as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinians, and the unconditional and complete withdrawal of Israel from the occupied Arab territories in the Golan and South Lebanon.

6. The legitimacy which does not use in the double standards vis-a-vis the international problems. This is the basis of the long insistence of the Arab on implementation of all UN resolutions pertaining to the Arab Israeli conflict.

If all that is realized, then we are with the new international order based on protecting and safeguarding the interests of all

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peoples. But not with the orders that compell us to relinquish our rights. We are also for a greater role for the UN which gives greater weight to the interests of the third World Countries, democratizes international relations, characterised by balance of interests, stability and peace. The great reality which must dawn upon Israel before it is too late, is that the balance of power shall not always remain in its favor; that it cannot obtain peace and land together; and the formula of exchange of land for peace is in the interests of the conflicting parties and in the interests of world peace. Israel has now a historical opportunity which it must not waste, by showing a real desire for peace, co-existence and non-denial of the existence of others and their rights. It is impossible to hide the sun with a sieve.[15]

It is very creditable of America and the Soviet Union to have brought together Israel and Arabas after a gap of 43 years. This is in itself is an achievement. With a little give and take on both sides, it may be possible for Jews and Arabas to live together in peace and friendship. The West Asia peace talks should be an eye-opener both for India and Pakistan in resolving major issues like Jammu and Kashmir and terrorism through peaceful negotiations with flexibility on both sides and sincerity and mutual trust as both countries want to live in peace and harmony. The peace talks should start immediately and at highest level and without any preconditions. There should be scope for give and take rather than maintaining rigid attitudes. If need be, good offices of the US could be utilised. But, we should solve our problems in an atmosphere of goodwill and without bickerings. The others lesson which India can draw is to have direct peace talks between Sikh brothers J & K militant brothers; ULFA, Naxalities and others so that grievance are solved with direct talks. We should respect the sentiments of all factions and analyses their viewpoints and try accommodate their aspirations within the framework of our constitution.

The third lesson that can be drawn from the West Asia peace talks is about communal amity between different communities as echoed in the National Integration Council meeting held on

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Nov. 2, 1991. Let us resolve the Mandir, Masjid and Mandal problems with direct talks at the highest level with the concerned parties and thrash out solutions instead of having meetings at different levels without any results. Pakistan should not interfere in the internal affairs of India. If problems are to be solved, restraint is to be maintained on the part of Pakistan to create goodwill.[16]

Arab and other Islamic opposition not withstanding, the United Nations General Assembly, acting on an American move, revoked on December 17,1991 its 16-year-old resolution equating zionism with racism.

"The era which produced Resolution 3379 has passed into history," United States delegate Lawrence Eagleburger pronounced as the 166-nation Assembly voted 111.25 with 12 abstentions, revoking the November 1975 resolution that "zionism is a form of racism".

India, which had backed the adoption of the 1975 resolution, supported the American move for its revocation, making clear, however, that it in no way reflected dilution of New Delhi's support for the Palestinian cause.

Indian envoy Ghimmaya Gharekhan said he backed the U.S. move "In the hope and expectation that an obstacle in the path to peace in West Asia has been removed and the way cleared for a more active role for the UN in the peace process".

A surprise was the switch of position by at least 20 members of the 45-nation Islamic Conference which had unanimously decided at its summit in Dakar, Senegal just last week to oppose the U.S. move.

Senegal simply absented itself, as did Bahrain, Egypt, Kuwait, Morocco, Niger, Oman, Senegal and Tunisia, Turkey, Maldives and Uganda abstained.

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Palestinian spokesman Shafik Al-Hout, speaking to journalists, denounced the UN General Assembly action as "outrageous" since it took no note of the continued Israeli intransigence.

Al-Hout who is a member of the executive committee of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, said he doubted the Assembly would have passed it two years ago.

Asked he agreed with the rationale that the action cleared the way for progress in peace talks. Mr. Al-Hout appeared incredulous. "I hope that I would be wrong and they would be right".

But he said Arab and Palestinian experience with Israel had been different : The more you give them (Israel) the more obstinate they become".

Lebanon, speaking for the Arab group, warned that the UN stood in danger of losing it "collective memory."

But at the same time Lebanese envoy khalil Makkawi said the group would relish its assumptions if the vote "can embolden" the US to seek Israel's compliance with outstanding Security Council Resolution 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978).

Israel, through a letter by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister David Lev thanked all governments, including Indian, that backed vocation of "the disgraceful resolution".

Among major Islamic nations which voted against the American move, were; Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Algeria, Bangladesh, Lebanon, Yamen, Libya, Brunei, Indonesia, Jordan, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Qatar, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and the United Arab Emirates.

Among non-Islamic countries, China absented itself, while Vietnam, Cuba, North Korea and Sri Lanka opposed the U.S. resolution. The soviet Union in favor.

The vote in the assembly came shortly after members defeated an Arab bid to have the American move treated as "serious" and thus requiring a twothirds vote for passage.

The Arab move, led by Yemen and Algeria, came after the U.S. sought a vote on its proposal, which, it said, was co-sponsored by 84 nations, more than half the Assembly membership. Uruguay and Poland opposed the Arab move. But to vote, it got 34-96 with 13 abstentions.

India abstained in that vote along with Myammar, Yogoslavia, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Ghana, Ethiopia and Namibia.

The November 1975 resolution — a key sponsor of which had been the Soviet Union — was adopted 72-35 with 32 abstaining. It has just one operative clause : "Determines that Zionism is a form of racism and racial discrimination."

The US sponsored resolution was equally terse. "The General Assembly decides to revoke the determination contained in its Resolution 3379 of 10 November, 1975," it said.

Co-sponsors of this 85 power draft included Britain and the Western group, Japan, Hungary, Poland, Ukrainie, Czechoslovakia, Mongolia, Brazil, Spain, Mexico, Romania, Venezuela and other Latin American countries.

The 1975 resolution was bitterly opposed by Israel, which had lobbied since to got it annulled. In September, U.S. President George Bush, addressing the National Assembly, threw his weight behind the Israeli effort.

In recent days, the Arab group at UN headquarters voiced its opposition to the American move.

In a statement, the group said, "In implementation of resolutions adopted, in this respect, by the League of Arab States, the Arab group opposes the raising of this issue.

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"The Arab group considers further, that revoking previous resolutions adopted by the Assembly is, in principle, a very serious matter," the statement said.

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The Arab Muslim After the Gulf War

Now that the Gulf War is over, Israel will have to take a hard look at its security doctrine and ask itself a number of key questions about its future security. The 39 missiles fired at Israel brought with them a sense of trauma compounded by humiliation over the fact that the country would have to absorb these strikes in its heartland without hitting back. This was the first time since the 1948 war of independence that Arabas had succeeded in striking at Israel's civilian homefront. The country's inhabitants, young and old, were forced to done gas masks; infants were placed in special incubator-like devices to protect them against chemical weapons. Many Israelis, especially those who had survived the Holocaust, were haunted by gruesome associations. And despite the American effort to demolish the missile launchers. The attacks did not stop, though they did abate somewhat. Even a superpower, it seems, did not find it easy to neutralise the missile threat quickly. Though the Scuds did not pose an existential threat to the country, the civilian population remained vulnerable. And all the while, because of political constraints, Israel had to make do with passive resistance instead of actively defending itself.[1]

Israelis cannot avoid asking what could have happened if the war had taken a different course. If Saddam Hussein had

directed his forces westward, toward Israel, rather than southward into Kuwait? If he had sent a few dozen division into western Iraq and deployed some of them along the Jordanian border? His agents could have fabricated incidents on the Israeli-Jordanian frontier to provoke the Israelis into retaliating against Jordan. He could have explained the movement of this forces into western Iraq by citing the need to aid Jordan. Miltant public opinion would have forced King Hussein to allow the stationing of Iraqi forces on Jordanian soil, as he had in 1967. Israel would have taken this move as the crossing of a "red line," but its ability to respond would have been limited. The army would have had to declare a massive call-up of reserves but would not have been able to keep them mobilized for long, as the Israeli economy would soon have been devastated. Thus the government would have had to face the question of whether to launch a pre-emptive strike; even had it refrained from doing so, Saddam Hussein would probably have found a way of provoking Israel into war. It is reasonable to assume, moreover, that such a war would have been joined by Syria, forcing Israel to deal with a broad eastern front on which it would have stationed most of their missile launchers in western Iraq, some close to the Jordanian border or even hidden within Jordan proper. Reducing the range to Israel would have enabled the Iraqis to increase the amount of explosives in their warheads, thus causing greater damage. It is highly doubtful whether in a scenario of this sort the U.N. Security council would have supported Israel, or that the United States would have mobilized an international military coalition to come to Israel's aid. The American airforce would not have flown sorties to protect Israel, and American satellites would not have supplied Jerusalem with advance warning of the missiles launched from Iraq. It is also questionable whether the Israeli airforce, proficient as it is, would have been able to neutralize fully the threat of the Iraqi ground-to-ground missiles while simultaneously having to deal with the air forces of Syria, Jordan and, of course, Iraq whose planes would not have fled to Iran. Thus Israel would soon have found itself caught up in a nightmare scenario. The missiles would have paralyzed civilian life and the economy. Israel's citizens throughout the country—

and especially along the coast, where most of the vital targets are located — would have been forced to live in air-raid shelters. An Israeli offensive would have entailed enormous losses — more than in any previous war — coupled with civilian casualties behind the front lines. Finally, a war of this kind would have culminated either in an Israeli victory—though not a total victory because of the size of the forces, the distances involved and a price so staggering that Israel would probably not be able to recover from it — or in a possibility that many may regard as extreme but cannot be discounted: an Israeli defeat. In such a war, Israel would presumably feel pressed to use the atomic weapons reportedly in its arsenal. These would extricate the country from defeat if they were used in time — meaning before the Arab armies entered its territory. They might be used later, in the final stages of the fighting, to punish the Arab states for violating Israeli territory. And of course there is the possibility that the United States would have bailed Israel out of the war in the last minutes. Most Israelis doubt that an international coalition headed by the United States would have arrived to save them as it did Kuwait. In any case, there would be little point in receiving such aid if it came as late as it did for Kuwait. And even if it did arrive promptly, Israel would be reduced to a psychological cripple from the standpoint of its morale. Without saying so outright, many Israelis, including senior army officers, known that Iraq's latest war could well have followed this harrowing scenario. Saddam Hussein's mistake was to turn on Kuwait first, evidently in a desire to stock his offers in preparation for the next war against Israel. These officers therefore speak of the way the war actually unfolded as almost a miracle for Israel. But many Israelis have already begun to ask: How long can this country rely on Miracles? The scenario noted here may be particularly grim, but it cannot be shrugged off when drawing the lessons of the Gulf War and assessing the dangers to Israel and the region, absent a comprehensive peace settlement in the Middle East. Until the outbreak of war, Washington did everything possible to keep Jerusalem at arm's length so that no one could possibly entertain the slightest suspicion that Israel had any

connection with the anti-Iraq coalition. President Bush and Secretary of State James A. Baker even avoided speaking to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzak Shamir on the phone. Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Arens almost forced himself on Defence Secretary Dick Cheney by going to the Pentagon uninvited, under the auspices of a Washington research institute. Jerusalem was less concerned by the meeting between President Bush and Syrian President Hafez al-Assad than the America's refusal to discuss, even secretly, the various military options available to Israel in the event that it were attacked by Iraq and had to respond immediately. The cooperation between the two countries' intelligence agencies was minimal at this stage, and there were no consultation on operational matters—to the point where doubts arose in Israel about the significance and seriousness of the strategic cooperation between the two countries. These doubts were further compounded by friction with the administration over Israel's lobbying efforts in Congress to block a huge arms deal with Saudi Arabia. Congress had allocated $ 700 million for arms and equipment to Israel, and in consultations with the administration it was decided that the armaments would include a battery of Patriot missiles (against aircraft, not the updated model for use against missiles). With the exception of the Patriots, however, none of this hardware reached Israel, even after the Gulf War broke out. But the man who ultimately determined Israel's position in the war was Saddam Hussein. From the moment the first Iraqi missiles fell on Israel's cities he created a strategic problem that Washington could not ignore. The possibility that Israel would intervene in the war and draw Jordan in its war became a real and present danger. There was a good chance that Saddam Hussein would succeed not only in widening the conflict but in transforming it into an Arab-Israeli war. For that reason, Washington had to quickly persuade Jersusalem to reverse its long-standing custom and refrain from responding to the strikes against its population centres. The United States was also forced to direct more of its combat resources than it had originally planned toward destroying the Iraqi missile launchers. From a military standpoint, it might

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have been preferable to leave action against those launchers until a later stage of the war. But because of possible strategic complications, field commanders were ordered to schedule thousands of sorties against the missiles. Planes flew over launching areas in western Iraq almost 24 hours a day. The extent of advance warning of launched missiles, detected by American satellites, was increased, enabling Israeli citizens to gain a number of precious minutes to take over. After the first missile barrages, six batteries of improved patriot missiles, together with American soldiers to operate them, were rushed to Israel. Jerusalem, had to disregard its traditional aversion to foreign soldiers fighting its wars: all Israel asked was the tools to defend itself on its own. (Late in the war a contingent of Dutch soldiers also landed in Israel, together with another battery of Patriot missiles). A standoff war conducted with missiles was enough to make Jerusalem revise this basic principle. Although cooperation between Israel and the United States improved in terms of sharing intelligence, it remained several limited in the operational sphere, even after Israel had come under attack by Iraqi missiles. From this standpoint Israel remained an outsider — though attention was paid to its advice on how to attack the missiles in western Iraq. Jerusalem was well prepared to reveal its operational plans to Washington — and to its astonishment some secret details were leaked to the media in the United States. But none of this changed Washington's determination to prevent Jeruslaem from responding to the missile attacks. The allied effort to knock out the missile launcher did reduce the number of attacks on Israel. But more to the point, Israel found itself unable to manifest its military might and was reduced to depending on the United States even in a sphere in which its forces might have found better operational solutions. The Israelis were struck by the fact that the Amrican effort against the Iraqi missile launchers was confined to air attacks, even after the ground war was in progress (except for a raid before the end of the war in which SA-2 ground-to-air missiles were destroyed). They thought it strange that the Americans were not using combat helicopters and commando units in their "search-and-

destroy" operations against the launchers. A more ambitious ground action, mounted by airborne troops moving in from Saudi Arabia, could also have created a buffer between Jordan and Iraq, thereby reducing the pressure on Jordan while ensuring that Israel would not have any reason to intervene in the war. Again and again the Israelis implied that if they took responsibility for destroying the missile launchers in western Iraq, they would do a better job. Without question Israeli pilots have more operational experience than their American counterparts. Many of them had undergone years of training in hitting missiles launchers and other small targets. It is also likely that the Israeli airforce would have ordered its pilots to attack from a lower altitude to increase the chances of better hits, even if that meant incurring higher casualties. An Israeli pilot would certainly be prepared to take greater risks, knowing that he was defending his own family wearing gas masks in a shelter. But unleashing the Israeli air force would certainly have drawn Jordanian planes into the war, especially as it would have been impossible or for Israel to mount a broad operation in western Iraq without entering Jordanian airspace. And if Jordan had challenged the Israeli planes, it might have lost its airforce in the process. Moreover, though it stands to reason that the Israeli airforce would have scored better results against the Iraqi launchers, its commanders admitted there was no guarantee that even after a massive aerial operation the Iraqis would not be able to send off more missiles from launchers that had escaped its strikes. Only a ground operation could completely neutralize the missile threat, but Washington was adamantly opposed to that idea. The effort to demolish the launchers raised serious question about intelligence reports regarding Iraq's missile systems and military capability as a whole. At the start of the war Iraq had some thirty mobile missile launchers. But the daily communiques issued in Riyadh by the spokesman of the Central Command created the impression that Iraqis had considerably more launchers. Repeated American statement that Iraq's military might should not be underestimated and that it would take a grueling war to drive the Iraqis out of Kuwait also raised eyebrows in the Israeli General Staff.[2]

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For years there had been serious disagreements between the Israelis, who repeatedly stressed the dangers posed by the Iraqi war machine, and American intelligence experts, who counselled Israel to take that threat somewhat less seriously. These debates generally took place whenever Israel offered its assessment of the military situation in the Middle East and presented the force ratio that it would require to deter us its enemies, or defend itself should deterrence fail. The United States suggested not only that Israel had over-estimated Iraq's potential but that if a war broke out Israel could readily defeat any military coalition that might join in league on its eastern front. Washington also argued that Jerusalem was exaggerating its reports of the Iraqi atomic threat. A few days before the invasion of Kuwait, Defence Minister Arens requested a meeting with Defense Secretary Cheney. Arenas was accompanied to Washington by Israel's chief of military intelligence, General Amnon Shahak, and they brought new information about Iraqi activities in Europe showing that Baghdad was making a special effort to step up its development of atomic weapons. The Israelis returned from that meeting with the uneasy feeling that the Americans had taken their warning too lightly. The American outlook changed radically once the United States itself had to face the Iraqi military machine. Suddenly contempt for the Iraqi army gave way to profound wariness. The new forecast was that it would take a substantial force — far larger and stronger than Israel's army — to defeat Iraq. Israel's conclusion from this volte-face was that it would be necessary to treat future American and other intelligence assessments of threats to its security with appropriate suspicion. That Israeli intelligence had a far better grasp of the Iraqi threat than its American counterpart does not exempt it from the need, in the aftermath of this war, to grapple with some tough questions about its status and performance. Since Israel has a militia-like army based on its reserves, intelligence is granted an especially favored status so that it can provide ample warning of any threat emerging from an Arab state. Obviously this role will take on even greater importance if Israel should relinquish the occupied territories as part of a

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political settlement. Although the Israelis proved to be right in their argument with American intelligence, they too were insufficiently informed about what was going on in Iraq, especially in comparison with their knowledge of events in Syria and Jordan. Israeli intelligence was not surprised here, as it had been in the 1973 Yom Kippur War. It knew that key information about Iraq was lacking. Distance, the difficulties of operating in a totalitarian state and the limited resources that the government had allocated to this task all affected the amount of information that could be assembled. Attention was focused primarily on the frontline confrontation states, but it suddenly emerged that Israel could face difficult challenge from more distant Arab lands. That some of these countries had equipped themselves with nonconventional weapons and simple means of delivery was enough to transform them into more of a peril to Israel than the frontline states. Instead of sending expeditionary forces against Israel, as it had done in earlier wars, a country like Iraq could now take part in an armed conflict from afar by means of its missiles. Since distance alone was a major obstacle to obtaining intelligence, one of Israel's conclusions will undoubtedly be to step up development of its own military satellite capability. Antoerh lesson of the war will surely be that a peace treaty with one Arab state bordering directly on Israel, such as Egypt, is not enough to balance out the grave threat from Arab states farther away, so that any potential settlement must embrace all the major states in the Middle East. Considerable property damage was sustained by residential areas in Israel's cities, but the actual number of casualties from the 39 missiles was low. It is wrong, however, to judge the effect of the attacks by this yardstick alone. The real criterion of assessing their impact is the role they would have played had Israel stood alone in battle. It took only a few missiles to inflict heavy damage on the country's economy; much of Israel's business activity came to a halt. Many resident were quick to flee the greater Tel Aviv area. Even the flow of immigration to Israel, which had risen to thousands of people per week just before the war, dwindled drastically. If the Americans failed to eliminate the missile

threat altogether, Israel would nonetheless have found it considerably more difficult to cope with this problem on its own. Its population would have had to retire into shelters for hours, perhaps even days at a stretch. The Israelis had long known that Iraq and had these missiles in its arsenal, as do other Arab states, such as Syria. But it is one thing to know that a peril exists and quite another to experience it firsthand. Before the war a number of Israeli generals argued that the missiles posed so limited a threat that the country should not waste money preparing to defend its against them. Their chief concern was that due to pressure from a terrorized public, the air force would be forced to reorder itself priorities. Instead of concentrating first on achieving air superiority (deemed absolutely essential to win a war), it would have to search out the missile launchers meaning Israel's population centres (a threat the military defined as negligible and certainly tolerable).

Given that they are armed wit conventional warheads, missiles of the type fired on Israel cannot decide a war. But in large quantities they can have a damaging cumulative effect. Even missiles designed more to sow terror than destroy vital targets can have a strategic impact if enough of them (say 100 or 200) rain down on population centres at unpredictable intervals. Certainly this is true if such strikes are combined with a ground assault. As soon as the Iraqi missiles began landing on Israel, it became obvious that the country's long-standing security doctrine—requiring that as soon as a war breaks out, the Israel Defence Force (IDF) must shift the fighting onto the enemy's territory—had become outdated. Because these attacks were perpetrated by a distant Arab state and by means not of ground forces but of missiles overflying another. Arab country, the Israeli army simply could not implement this doctrine. Its hands were tied even in terms of employing planes and missiles, for Washington was insisting that Jerusalem exercise complete restraint. Israel, moreover, understood that it was in its own best interest not to do anything that might prompt a premature ceasefire when the United

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States was, after all, demolishing the war machine of one of its most powerful enemies. This was, in fact, not the first time that Israel had been forced to abstain from taking an action dictated by pure military logic. On Otcober 6, 1973, when the armies of Egypt and Syria carried out their concerted attack, Prime Minister Gold Meir and Defence Minister Moshe Dayan chose to reject the chief of staff's advice to mount a pre-emptive air strike, lest Washington think that Israel had started the war. In looking toward the future, Israel cannot ignore the fact that more sophisticated missiles will be far more accurate and can be directed at strategic targets such as airfields and other vital facilities, while the less accurate and cheaper missiles can be used against population centres. Thus, those calling for a greater investment in antimissile defence will probably carry the day, especially as the Arabas will at some point be able to arm their missiles with nonconventional warheads. Israel will undoubtedly be sinking more money into the development of the Arrow antiballistic missile. But since the development of such sophisticated weapons systems is very costly, and the cost of purchasing them is similarly high, Israel's defence expenditures will soar as a result of the need to protect itself against ground-to-ground missiles. Even if Washington aids in funding the development of an antiballistic missile, Jerusalem will have to spend sizable amounts of its own both to develop the Arrow and to purchase other missiles. Nor will that be the end of the matter. One of the lessons of the Gulf War will undoubtedly be the necessity to invest more in civil defence and in building shelters to protect the population against chemical, biological and atomic warfare. The emphasis up to now has been to invest primarily in offensive means—the army's "teeth" —and relatively little in defensive ones. Israel will find itself hard pressed to do both. In fact it is doubtful whether the economy will be able to bear these costs, and even generous military aid from the United States will not suffice to cover Israel's future security needs. The missile attacks on Israel also revived the old debate about the importance of the occupied territories, particularly the West Bank, for Israel's defence. Palestinian leader Feisal al-Hussein

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was quick to declare that Israel's vulnerability to attack from afar is proof that the territories do not chance its security. The question is of course whether this claim is valid. It is worth-noting that the risks stemming from Israel's geographical position may well have been the prime factor dictating the country's security doctrine. Were it not for this particular determinant, for example, it would certainly be easier to reach a compromise in the Israeli-Arab conflict. Until 1967 Israel found itself in something of a geographical trap: the narrow coastal strip, whereover 75 per cent of its population resides (meaning most of its reserve soldiers) and where much of the state's strategic targets are found, was commanded by the nearby mountainous region, the West Bank. Almost all of the country's airfields, for example, were within range of artillery stationed over the border. As a result Israel's strategic planning was based upon two principles: first, to ensure that in the event of a war the fighting would quickly be transferred onto the enemy's territory; second, to resort to pre-emptive strikes, and even a pre-emptive war, should it become clear that the enemy was about to launch an attack. The outcome of the 1967 Six-Day War changed this situation, at least on the face of it. The appendage of the occupied territories gave Israel the sense that it had acquired both time—for sufficient warning against an air assulat — and a security zone that would help delay an Arab armored assault, especially in the event of a surprise attack. This strategic depth bolstered the belief that it would be possible to absorb a first strike, rather than rush into a pre-emptive war against an enemy massing for an assault. However, the missile firings during the Gulf War showed that Israel's existing strategic depth does not provide protection against all types of attack. The asymmetry between Israel and the Arab states, which enjoy ample strategic depth, carries over to missile warfare as well. The distance between Israel and western Iraq, for example, where the missiles were launched against greater Tel Aviv, is less than 600 kilometers, while the distance between Israel and Baghdad is about 1,000 kilometers. While Iraq can cover most of Israel's territory with its present arsenal of

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missiles Israel would not be able to cover even a small portion of Iraq if it had similar missiles at its disposal.[3]

Conventional forces provide the United States with unique capabilities across an expanding range of military requirements —from peacetime engagement, through deterrence, to the conduct of major war. In peacetime, conventional forces are the bedrock of America's military-to-military contacts with the forces of over 130 other nations. The United States provides military training, in one form or another, to 75 per cent of the world's armed forces. This training is crucial to the successful assimilation of new weapons and tactics by friendly forces. More important, U.S. Military training is a unique medium for encouraging the adoption of the values of professionalism, respect for human rights and support for democratic institutions. U.S. conventional forces provide an indispensable avenue of influence and a source of positive change in many nations where political and social tradition accord the military a prominent role in the government. Conventional forces, particularly the U.S. Army, actively support nation-building in countries throughout the world, assisting in the development of infrastructure that, in turn, helps alleviate some of the root causes of instability and violence. Conventional forces also make an important contribution to the national counter-narcotics strategy. As one element of a comprehensive approach, military units are helping law enforcement agencies detect and defeat drug trafficking. Mobile U.S. training teams advise the security forces of drug producing countries, and conventional forces provide equipment, maintenance support and training to U.S. government agencies that fight trafficking, both in the United States and abroad.

Conventional forces are also among the most effective tools for enhancing political stability in the international order. U.S. ground forces in Korea and elsewhere in East Asia have provided security, and thus encouraged ancient enemies—for example, Japan, Korea and China—do manage their difference without resorting to force. Without American willingness to sustain

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peacekeeping forces in the Sinai, the historic peace treaty between Israel and Egypt might never have materialized.[4]

Perhaps nowhere is the stabilizing role of U.S. conventional forces more evident than in Europe. NATO, the most successful and enduring alliance in recent memory, created and sustained an environment of military and political cooperation among nations whose histories gave them every reason to be as suspicious of one another as they were of the Soviets. The United States contributed to the unparalleled success of the alliance by providing leadership unencumbered by historical baggage of regional animosities or territorial ambitions. Closely related to their role in enhancing political stability, conventional forces are equally crucial to deterring aggression in places where the United States has a sizable military presence and in other regions where it has no forward-deployed forces. Each element of conventional forces contributes substantially to deterrence. Naval forces, including Marine Corps elements, can quickly project military power in order to demonstrate U.S. concern: air power, particularly when surged into a crisis area, can rapidly bolster the credibility of U.S. involvement and increase the ability to punish aggression. Historically there has been no stronger statement of national resolve than the deployment of the American soldier. The presence of U.S. Army units on the ground—combat elements that cannot sail or fly away overnight —leaves little doubt that the pull full power and prestige of the United States are committed. Finally, conventional forces have the responsibility to fight and win wars. They have the combat power necessary to determine the outcome of battle and to preserve American interests, should deterrence fail. The key to the successful employment of conventional combat power in war is to fight jointly—a lesson that stood in stark relief in Desert Storm. In only the rarest of circumstances can either sea, land or air power be effective by itself. Joint operations do not require that each element of conventional forces commit equal numbers of troops or equipment; there is no scientific formula for the proportions needed from each service. Rather, in joint operations

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each service contributes its unique capabilities to the mission at hand. That is the way U.S. forces fought in Iraq and Kuwait, and that is how they must fight in the future. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to assert that U.S. conventional forces will fight jointly, or they will not fight at all.

Despite the many purposes that America's conventional forces have successfully fulfilled in the past, there are substantial changes that can and should be made in force structure. These changes must take into account the emerging international environment and the concomitant requirements for force training, readiness and quality. In the future, U.S. forces will have fewer divisions, fewer aircraft carriers and fewer air wings, and thus they must be shaped with care and deliberation. The hollow rhetoric of the "roles and missions" debate should be cast aside, and the genuine contributions of each element of the conventional forces examined. As the size of U.S. conventional forces is reduced, the nation assumes greater risk in its ability to achieve its objectives, particularly if the international environment remains unstable and violent. The force structure now taking shape will be the smallest in nearly half a century. By 1995, for example, the army will have 535,000 soldiers in its active force —the smallest number since 1939. Historical comparisons illustrate the magnitude of these reductions. In 1950, after the precipitous drawdown following World-War-II, the army still had nearly 600,000 active-duty soldiers. In the wake of Vietnam, the active army was reduced to 800,000, and at the beginning of fiscal year 1991, only 764,000 soldiers and 18 divisions were active. Given the burgeoning military capabilities in the developing world and the uncertain future of the Soviet Union, reductions in conventional forces beyond those already contemplated may well deny the United States the ability to defend its interests against unexpected and simultaneous challenges. At the onset of Desert Storm, the army had deployed to Saudi Arabia 17 of its active armored brigades, leaving only four such brigades in the strategic reserve for other contingencies. A smaller force structure may render decisive action in a future contingency highly

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problematic. Should U.S. forces be required to fight, a smaller structure will increase the time required to reconstitute the forces in preparation for a later crisis. There will simply be no rapidly available reservoir of forces and equipment from which to draw. Yet another consequence of a much smaller force structure will be increased pressure for urgent decision-making. If the United States were to attempt to undertake an operation-like Desert Storm with the forces contemplated for the mid-1990's, the president might have to declare partial mobilization immediately and activate reserve components on a far greater scale. The rapidly mobilized reserves would not only be required to train, deploy and fight, but they would also have to maintain, the capability to satisfy other contingencies that might arise around the world. The reserve components would have to be mobilized early and on a massive scale in order to assume the strategic functions that the smaller active force could no longer cover. Such a massive call-up of reserve forces takes time, which arguably may not be available in a future crisis. Since the early 1960s, America's national security community has debated the relative merits of a "two-and-a-half" or "one-and-a-half" war strategy to determine force structure. But the direction in which the United States is now heading, if not carefully managed, may leave it with only a "half" war capability—a one-shot military, capable of a single, medium-sized operation before extensive time-consuming reconstitution. The risks inherent in such circumstances must be clearly understood and appreciated as America shapes its conventional forces for the 1990s and beyond.[5]

Although U.S. conventional forces will be substantially smaller in the years ahead, they must retain four qualities essential to national security. These qualities are versatility, deployability, lethality and expansibility.

Versatility

Conventional forces must be able to meet a wide array of challenges while drawing from a smaller reservoir of forces.

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Fewer forces and a broad range of challenges means that each individual unit must be prepared to face a wider spectrum of missions. Recent experience has illustrated the need for versatility. In a period of 18 months, American conventional forces met challenges spanning the entire range of military operations short of nuclear war. Conventional forces fought successfully in Panama in an operation that employed predominantly light infantry and special-operations forces, supported by a small number of armored and maritime units as well as a massive airlift. They supported disaster relief efforts in California after that, these contingency forces must be fully trained and readily to deploy and fight with virtually no warning time. Arms control agreements and a general lessening of East-West tensions have significantly increased warning time in Europe, but challenges requiring U.S. military actions in the developing world may continue to materialize with virtually no warning, as happened in the Iraqi attack on Kuwait. The absence of warning time, coupled with the mounting capabilities of the armies of developing countries, means that there may be no comfortable buffer during which soldiers, units and leaders can be trained for combat. Consequently, the idea of a "tiered" readiness system for active forces, in which some units are kept fully capable while others are maintained at lower levels of preparedness, does not stand up the future requirements the nation may well face. Under a tiered system, it is doubtful that fully trained forces would be available in sufficient number to deter or defeat an aggressor like Iraq. This would leave the president with two equally unattractive options: committing forces not adequately prepared for combat or delaying deployment until sufficient forces could be brought up to combat readiness while the crisis intensified or even passed the nation by. Beyond the ability to act immediately in a crisis, the United States must also have the unquestioned capability to reinforce forward-deployed units or contingency forces with other units from active and reserve components. Reinforcements provide the indispensable capacity to maintain forces in a crisis area, either for protracted deterrence or for sustained combat. Given the smaller size of the

overall force, it is clear reinforcing units, too, must be ready for rapid deployment with minimal additional training. Implicit in the requirement for versatility is an appropriate proportion of active to reserve forces—a proportion determined by national military strategy, demands of the international environment and the missions for which each component is best suited. As U.S. forces are reduced and reshaped, the proper mix of active and reserve forces will assume mounting significance, particularly in the army, with its heavy reliance on reserves. As the prospects for a major war with the Soviet Union diminish and as arms control agreements are implemented, an appropriate, number of active and reserve units will be deactivated. The total force will be restructured to provide the combat and support units needed to meet anticipated worldwide contingencies. Upgrading the readiness of reserve combat units will also be a priority, while recognizing that there are inherent limitations on how ready these unites can be due to training time. With a smaller total force and compressed warning times for contingencies outside the bounds of NATO, active and reserve units will have to be as versatile and ready as possible. As operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm demonstrated, reserve units with missions compatible to civilian occupations—such as supply and transportation—are of great and immediate value simply because, upon mobilization, their administrative and training requirements are relatively modest. Reserve land combat units —infantry, armor and field artillery—require substantially more training and preparations before they can be committed to combat. Combat units must perform complex tasks in synchronization with each other and with elements of air and maritime units. There are no equivalent civilian tasks that could reduce the need for actual training in order to meet rigorous battlefield requirements. This was very clear during the training of the reserve combat brigades activated for Operation Desert Storm, and this experience should be kept in mind as forces are reshaped. We should not accord capabilities or expectations to reserves that they, by their very nature, cannot achieve. At the same time, we cannot afford an active force

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structure with all the diverse capabilities needed to meet the range of contingencies the United States may confront. The U.S. force structure must be built on a realistic assessment of the strengths and limitations of each component so that each can make the most effective contribution to the total force. Versatility is thus fundamental to U.S. forces for this decade and beyond. In a shrinking force structure, individual units as well as the entire conventional forces must assume expanding responsibilities. These competing pressures can be reconciled only if all units and leaders are prepared to function effectively across a wide spectrum of conflict throughout the world.[6]

Deployability

The second major characteristic U.S. conventional forces must retain is the ability to project appropriate combat power rapidly wherever U.S. interests are threatened. Depending on the threat, the United States may need to deploy only a small devastating earthquake, and performed similar tasks in the Caribbean and the south-eastern United States after Hurricane Hugo. They evacuated Americans from Liberia and Somalia and provided support to the Aquino government in the Philippines during an attempted coup. Moreover, soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines continued to serve at the cutting edge of America's commitments in East Asia and Europe. They also fought forest fires in the American west and supported counter-narcotics operations along the U.S. southern border and in Latin America. Finally, the armed forces undertook a no-notice deployment to Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf, where they conducted a highly successful military campaign of a scale unmatched since World War-II. Most of the nations hostile to U.S. interests rely or ground forces as the principal instrument of their military power. Special attention must therefore be paid to the ability of U.S. armed forces to conduct divisive campaigns on land. For the United States to have a credible ability to defeat tank-heavy forces in the developing world, as well as to respond to an unanticipated deterioration of Soviet behavior, it must have a

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force mix a that includes substantial armored, light and special-operations forces, supported by close air support and an adequate airlift and sealift. Versatility also demands that the United States have the capacity to concentrate power rapidly in criticial areas. This requires it to retain a forward presense in Europe, Asia and other areas vital to U.S. interests. Although oriented toward threats in their particular theater, forward-deployed army forces must also be available to reinforce operation in other areas—as did about half of the forces in Europe for Desert Storm. With a smaller force structure, the United States can no longer afford to field forces whose utility is limited to Europe alone, or to any other single theater of operations, because of their design, equipment, training or political constraints. With a diminished presence in Europe and East Asia, the centerpiece of the U.S. post-Cold War strategy will be conventional forces based in the United States—powerful forces available for power projection in contingencies worldwide. These forces must be of sufficient number so that they can contend with an adversary of substantial capabilities. They must also reflect a mix of naval, air and land forces, including armored, light and special-operations units able to be tailored into a force package appropriate to the threat. Most importance, such as a carrier battlegroup or an AWACS detachment. Alternatively the threat may require the United States to mount a major joint operation—built around a contingency force of armored divisions—to contend with an adversary who possesses significant and powerful arsenal of tanks. Deployability contributes to both deterrence and defense, and assumes greater significance as U.S. armed forces are reduced in size and forward-deployed forces are scaled back. This is particularly true in the context of the Conventional Forces in Europe agreement, in which both alliance and Soviet force levels will be decreased and the warning time for an attack increased. The ability to return forces quickly to Europe will buttress the CFE agreement by providing a demonstrated capacity to respond effectively to treaty violations or a resurgent Soviet threat. Moreover, knowledge that the United States can project combat power quickly into a threatened

area will figure prominently in the strategic calculus of any potential adversary—in Europe or elsewhere—and will help discourage aggression. Although the deployment to the Arabian peninsula was largely successful, it exceeded American sealift capacity. The United States was forced to reply on a significant number of foreign ships. The ability to project substantial land forces remains inadequate to meet the needs of the entire range of contingencies the United States may face in coming years. The United States simply does not have enough airlift or sealift to carry the forces that may be required. But the solution does not lie in "lightening" U.S. forces by stripping their combat power to meet available lift assets; it would be folly to commit American units to battle without giving them the wherewithal to fight successfully. Deployability must instead be addressed in a comprehensive manner that looks at imaginative and affordable solutions to projecting large forces rapidly throughout the world. Deplorability is not simply an issue of ships and aeroplanes. The United States must not only expand strategic lift, it must also pursue initiatives to enhance its ability to act as necessary in a particular crisis. Conventional forces must be designed so that the Military access agreements should be examined to allow the United States to project forces in pre-crisis situations. Equipment design must stress mobility without sacrificing combat power. Finally the United States must consider ways to pre-position supplies and equipment and to enhance support infrastructure in high-rish regions. The final point is particularly important. Desert Storm demonstrated that the ability to project significant combat power was greatly enhanced by a decade of workdone to pre-position supplies and develop air bases and seaports in Saudi Arabia elsewhere in the region. In few areas around the work would the United States find this fortuitous combination to facilitate rapid deployment. In enhancing deployability the objective should be to have the capacity to project the major elements of a multi-division corps, with the capability for forcible entry, substantial armored forces and sufficient sustainment, anywhere in the world in one month.[7]

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Lethality

Decision-makers must never lose sight of the principle mission of the armed forces: to fight and win the wars of the nation. It is, therefore, not enough to simply project power; that power must be capable of prevailing when deployed. Lethality bosters deterrence, ensures defense and undergirds the ability to defeat any adversary. In order to be lethal, U.S. forces must first have an effective joint war-fighting doctrine that focuses its combat power and strengths on the battlefield. Second, America's weapons must continue to exploit their technological strengths and help compensate for the fact that smaller numbers of forces may require them to fight outnumbered. Better technology alone will never win a battle, but it does provide soldiers with an indispensable edge over potential adversaries. Third, tough, realistic training must be used to hone the war-fighting skills of soldiers, units and leaders to prepare them for the rigors of combat. Training must remain the top priority of each service. Fourth, America must continue to develop leaders of skill and imagination—leaders who understand how to fight and who inspire in their subordinates the confidence that they can win. Finally, lethality demands that U.S. ranks be filled with young Americans of spirit and ambition, with the character and abilities that will allow them to undertake and succeed in tasks both disparate and dangerous. Lethality is, of course, a relative term: what is lethal in one set of circumstances may be largely irrelevant in another. In many operations, light infantry, marines, air or naval forces wield sufficient power to achieve national objectives. In other contingencies, such forces may not possess enough firepower or appropriate capabilities to deter or defeat aggression. With this in kind, forces must be tailored into packages to respond to the particular challenge at hand, ensuring that the force has sufficient lethality to achieve its objectives.

Expansibility

Finally, convention forces must be able to grow rapidly in response to a massive outbreak of hostilities or a resurgence of

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Soviet military ambitions. The training has must be designed to absorb large number of new recruits and to prepare them for combat on short notice. More important, the United States must continue to train and develop leaders, officers and noncommissioned officers—who are prepared to assume expanded responsibilities at higher levels of command, almost overnight. Expansibility has particular relevance for the army—a force than in World War II was more than eight million strong will by 1997 have less than seven per cent of that number, while no one anticipates a global conflict in the near future, the army's structure must be designed both to accomplish a range of time-urgent missions without mobilization and to grow rapidly, with mobilization, to a size appropriate to any challenge. The structural key to expansibility or force generation—lies in the design of forces earmarked for immediate contingencies, early reinforcement, follow-on reinforcement and total mobilization. In the army of tomorrow, a contingency force will be maintained in the United States that consists of active component divisions—armored, air assault, airborne and light infantry—trained and ready to deploy anywhere in the world with no prior warning or additional preparation. Should the requirement extend beyond 60 days, these contingency forces will be supported by units that are designated for early reinforcement. These are the army's "round-out" divisions—units that have two active brigades and one from the National Guard or the Army Reserve. Follow-on reinforcing units will generate additional forces. These will be National Guard divisions activated, trained and deployed for protracted commitments. For requirements beyond the follow-on reinforcements, the army is examining the utility of "cadre" divisions — units that would have leaders assigned but would be fully manned only under conditions of national emergency. Finally, the army will be prepared to develop scores of additional divisions under conditions of full mobilization and general war. While aggregate force levels will be reduced throughout the decade partly in response to budgetary pressures, this build down must be carefully managed to ensure that the characteristics essential to national security are not sacrificed. For the army, the result will be a force of 535,000 soldiers in the active force and 550,000 in the reserves. The combat structure will be a 20-

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division total force, with a mix of armored, mechanized, light, airborne and air assault forces. It will be an army that, while maintaining a significant presence abroad, is principally based in the United States and oriented toward power projection throughout the world. It will be a lean army, heavily dependent on reserves and mobilization in order to execute large, protracted or simultaneous contingencies. And it will be an army of quality that has invested heavily in training, readiness and technology, prepared to fulfil the expectations of the nation.[8]

Perhaps the most persuasive demonstration of the importance of conventional forces is the American reaction to Iraq's seizure of Kuwait. Without attempting to reconstruct a comprehensive history of the crisis, it is apparent that the versality, deployability, lethality and expansibility of American conventional forces were the keys to the U.S. response to Saddam Hussein's aggression. President Bush outlined on August 8, 1990, four basic U.S. objectives in the crisis: unconditional Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait; restoration of the legitimate Kuwaiti government: safety for all American citizens: and stability throughout the region. To achieve these objectives the administration crafted a multidimensional military strategy with conventional forces as its foundation. The president initially faced three challenges in executing this strategy. First, he had to rapidly project a capable defensive force that would deter and, if necessary, defeat an Iraqi attack on Saudi Arabia. Second, he had to rally the international community to support economic and political sanctions against Iraq, and then make the sanctions work. And third, he had to maintain and increase the pressure on Saddam to withdraw from Kuwait.

With an Iraqi army flush from its victory in Kuwait, and poised to strike into the eastern province of Saudi Arabia in early August, the immediate requirement was to demonstrate that the united States was serious about its stand and committed to the defense of Saudi Arabia. To accomplish this, the United States dispatched strong naval forces to the region, began to

more air power to the peninsula and, most important, deployed the 82nd Airborne Division to Saudi Arabia, with the first unit arriving less than 30 hours after the initial alert. The president understood that rhetoric alone was insufficient to show the depth of the American commitment; he had to draw a line in the sand, and he did so with the bayonet of the American paratrooper. At the same time, the president had to build a credible defensive capability to deny Iraq the ability to seize and hold Saudi territory. Air and naval power and lightly armed airbone forces were insufficient for this purpose. Over the course of the next three months, the United States thus built a substantial armored force, using marine units and army divisions from around the world. With the arrival of the first heavy American tanks in the third week of August, it was increasing clear that Iraq could not succeed in an attack against Saudi Arabia. As the U.S. force continued to build, Saddam Hussein began to replace his offensively oriented tank divisions in Kuwait with infantry units best suited for defence. Conventional forces were equally important in assuring the efficacy of the sanctions. Indeed, the principal difference between the porous sanctions that had proved ineffective in past crises and the virtually airtight sanctions against Iraq was the enforcement by coalition naval power and the cooperation of nations sharing land borders with Iraq. Carrier battle-groups and surface ships of many nations took up positions in the region and provided a genuine capability to ensure that the sanctions were not violated. This, in turn, encouraged nations throughout the world to adhere to the mandate of the U.N. Security Council and to support Iraq's economic isolation. Finally, conventional forces were the instrument of choice once the United States and its coalition partners made the decision to eject an intransigent Iraq from Kuwait. In early November, the president ordered the deployment of an additional army corps of three armored divisions, three more carrier battle groups, another marine expeditionary force and more land-based air power to the region. When added to the Saudi and coalition units already on the peninsula, and to the further commitments of land combat power from the United

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Kingdom, France, Egypt, Syria and a number of other countries, this force gave the coalition the genuine capability to drive Iraq from Kuwait — a capability employed with great effect beginning January 16. Together the coalition was able to mount a coordinated air-land-sea campaign to evit Iraqi forces from Kuwait. Desert Storm began with operations designed to neutralize the most dangerous Iraqi offensive and defensive capabilities, to diminish Iraqi's ability to sustain its forces occupying Kuwait and to directly attack the combat capabilities of Iraq's land forces. Once these objectives were achieved, the final phase began. The last phase had two basic objectives: to drive Iraqi forces from Kuwait and to deny to Saddam Hussein the ability to reinforce the theater or to pose a threat to Kuwait in the future. This second objective required the defeat of the Republican Guard divisions based in southern Iraq — divisions that were indeed Saddam Hussein's strategic of gravity and the source of his regional power. The successful conduct of the final phase of Operation Desert Storm was a powerful demonstration of the effectiveness of conventional forces operating jointly to achieve objectives attainable in no other way. The plan envisioned a deliberate attack into Kuwait, to fix Iraqi forces in place, while two U.S. Army corps swept around to the west of Iraqi defense in an audacious turning movement designed to envelop and destroy the Republican Guard. Air support was a fundamental dimension of this plan, which pitted allied maneuverability against static Iraqi defenses, to terminate the war with as few U.S. and coalition casualties as possible. Seldom in organized has a plan been so flawlessly executed. On February 23, the day the land offensive began, the allied coalition faced more than 43 Iraqi divisions, thousands of tanks and several hundred thousand Iraqi soldiers in the Kuwaiti theater. This was Saddam Hussein's anchor in Kuwait, which remained fast even after Security Council resolutions, six months of intense diplomacy, almost airtight economic sanctions and six weeks of continuous precision bombing. But one hundred hours after the coalition opened the land phase, the Iraqi army lay shattered and burning, organized resistance had ceased, and Kuwait was once again an independent

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nation. At the most basic level, the coalition prevented Iraq from executing its style of war. It isolated Iraqi forces from their support base, weakened them by continuous bombardment, successfully disguised the time and place of the thrust of the coalition's attack and defeated the Republican Guard. Although much more remains to be done to translate military success into political stability, the United States and the international coalition clearly won a victory of almost unprecedented dimensions. And, in the final analysis, it was a victory that rested on the capability of U.S. conventional forces. The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the international counter-offensive that ultimately defeated that aggression thus underscore the future role of conventional forces. Saddam Hussein persuasively demonstrated that smaller nations in the developing world can indeed affect the international community in a profound way. He showed that such states have the capacity to conduct high-intensity conflict and to attack with little or no warning. Moreover, he demonstrated a troubling feature of international relations today: many regimes still operate from a frame of reference in which the force of arms remains a legitimate—and too often preferred—form of international discourse. If nothing else is learned from Desert Storm, it is that the sun has not set on violence and warfare, and that the conventional forces of this nation remain an indispensable element in the quiver of American power. As the United States confronts a truly revolutionary era, the nation must have the courage to see the world as it really is: a world abundant with opportunities, but also one beset by challenges; a world in which conflict remains a way of life for many nations; and a world in which the interests of the United States remain very much at rish. In this world, military strategy must be built on the continued primacy of conventional forces—supported by a sufficient nuclear arsenal—essential to the preservation of peace and to the shaping of a future in which freedom and democracy are allowed to prosper. The nation must shape its forces to meet the challenges of a new era. The American people and the world expect, and deserve, nothing less.[9]

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Israel has discovered that the addition of territory does not necessarily increase its deterrent capability. Yet this does not mean that territory no longer has importance for its defense. A missile attack on call-up centers and reserve-unit stores is precisely what can slow down the mobilization of reserves, making it all the more important to keep the enemy's armored columns well away from the vital facilities along Israel's coast. Unfortunately even this portrayal of the occupied territories as a useful buffer is not entirely satisfactory. It might be more convincing if the areas in question were unpopulated. But the West Bank and Gaza Strip are teeming with Palestinians who are in themselves a security problem (to say nothing of a moral and political problem) for Israel because they are so adamantly and actively opposed to living under Israeli rule.[10]

The conclusion to be drawn from these circumstances is a complex one. The importance of territory (in this case the West Bank) for Israel's defense cannot be dismissed, but territory does not always enhance security. Under certain conditions, like those existing in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the risks posed by additional territory are greater than the benefits they accord. The debate in Israel today is not just about military questions *per se* but about the future character of Israeli society in the absence of peace. And the answers to these questions must be found in a compromise with the Palestinians and the Arab states that spells out Israel's minimum security conditions for a peace settlement. Yet the greatest concern Israel has felt as a result of this war is related to its deterrent capability. Although its political leaders and senior military officers have repeatedly declared that the army's deterrent posture has not been prejudiced, the public harbors deep doubts about these assurances. The issue of deterrence has always been at the heart of Israel's military thinking and has often been the motive behind military operations, as well as the factor determining their scope and force. This doctrine holds that Israel must develop maximum deterrent capability and that if such capability is not effective on its own, the army can always be activated at full force. The aim is to firmly establish among the Arab leaders and military

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commanders the knowledge that there are some things Israel tolerate without reacting, and that its response will be all the more punishing if the Arabs cross certain "red lines." More than once Israel has mounted particularly bold retaliatory strikes to shock the Arab and discourage them from taking certain steps. The bolder these actions were, the stronger the feeling that deterrence would be fully effective. Occasionally Israel's forcefulness bespoke its vulnerability more than its strength. The weaker and more imperiled Israel felt, especially in the 1950s and 1960s, the more drastic its actions tended to be. As a rule the doctrine of deterrence worked. But once in eight years or so, the usual military actions did not suffice, and Israel found itself involved in a more extensive war. Following these clashes the country's deterrent posture was usually strong again, but with time it inevitably eroded. This mechanism worked especially well against the Arab armies but less successfully in regard to the Palestinians engaged in terror operations, because they had less to lose. Moreover, even when the effectiveness of Israel's deterrent posture was low or on the wane, the Arab states were careful never to strike at the country's population centres. That was clearly one of Israel's "red lines," and the Arabs knew that the case of an attack on its cities, Israel's response was likely to be the most drastic of all. The common belief that Israel has atomic weapons certainly played a prominent role in dissuading the Arab military from mounting a massive attack on its population centres. That is why Israeli were so astonished when the first Iraqi missiles landed on Haifa and Tel Aviv.

If, prior to the invasion of Kuwait, I had been asked to assess how Israel would respond to a missile attack on its cities, I would have replied without hesitation that the immediate reaction would be a vigorous one that would probably cause the deaths of countless citizens. Moreover that certainly would have been my answer after Israel's prime minister and minister of defense repeatedly issued stern warnings top Saddam Hussein not to pick a fight with Israel. The conventional wisdom was that Israel might even resort to non-conventional weapons if Iraq engaged in chemical warfare. Needless to say, things turned out

quite different. Israel realized that good operational plans and a readiness to act were not enough; the political circumstances must also be auspicious. In the case of the Gulf War they forced Israel to exercise restraint, limiting itself to civil defence when it was under attack. This was a policy that Israel had never pursued before, and even the Arabas were surprised by Jerusalem's conduct. Israel must now assume that a similar situation can recur. It has learned that, notwithstanding its desire to respond forcefully to an attack, it does not live in a vacuum, even if the aggressor is a despot like Saddam Hussein. The greater its dependence on the United States, the greater the limitations on its freedom of conduct. What the United States allowed itself in wartime—including the destruction of two atomic reactors and the dropping of thousands of cluster bombs on Iraq—is not applicable to a small country like Israel, even if the reasons for adopting such measures are more justified. Certainly in this case Israel had good reason to take the United States' firm advice not the more against the missile launchers in western Iraq. Jerusalem's decision was informed by the knowledge that Saddam Hussein wanted to extend the conflict and transform it into an Israel-Arab war by having Israel attack Jordan on its way to striking Iraq. There was also an understandable fear that Israeli military intervention would lead to a premature ceasefire precisely when the preferred Israeli interest was the destruction of the Iraqi was machine, which the United States and its allies were achieving far more effectively than Israel ever could. The general assumption in Israel was that at the start of the ground war Jerusalem would find an opportunity to land a blow of its own on Iraq. But by then the missile attacks had abated considerably, and there were few quality targets left in Iraq. The ground war, moreover, ended remarkably quickly.[11]

Has Israel's deterrent capability been damaged as a resu!t? The fact of the matter is that Saddam Hussein was not deterred even by the might of the United States. He erred in his assessment that Washington would resign itself to his invasion of Kuwait. Following pure military logic, he should have been apprehensive from the moment that such a large military force

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was mobilized against him. Israel was only a minor front in the war that awaited him and there is little reason to expect that Saddam Hussein would be disheartened by the might of the IDF when he was not fazed by the United States and its allies. The fact that Saddam did not use chemical weapons against Israel even when he was under great stress from the attacking forces shows that he understood there are some things Israel simply could not tolerate, even if Washington was opposed to any Israeli response. The fear in Israel that the army's deterrent capability has been diminished stems more from a sense of humiliation, over being subject to attack and not responsing, than from cold analysis of the situation. Saddam Hussein may not have been cowed by the United States, but the latter treated him to a thorough drubbing, whereas Israel was forced to remain passive while dozens of missiles were launched at its cities. Humiliation is one thing, however, and deterrence another. For Israel's enemies witnessed not only the missile attacks but also the immediate U.S. aid to Israel in the form of batteries of Patriot missiles, the services of its satellites warning of missile launchings and the heavy bombing of the Iraqi launching sites throughout the war. Following America's lead, both Germany and the Netherlands announced that they were sending Patriot missiles to Israel. Thus Israel's energies saw that it did not stand alone when faced with a grave military threat, and that, too, is an aspect of deterrence. Only time will tell whether Israel's deterrence has actually been affected by its restraint in the face of the missiles raining down on its population. The true answer to this question should be sought not in Israel, whose frame of mind as a nation under siege may have skewed its outlook on this point, but among its potential enemies and in the face of the Middle East after the Gulf War.

Will the allied military victory be translated into political gains, helping to end the Israeli-Arab conflict, or will this triumph also go down in history as just another episode on the battlefield? And in the event of failure, will Israel's enemies conclude that if the JDF was passive once it will remain passive again in the event that its population centres are hit? Israel

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must naturally take into account the possibility that a news Saddam may arise in the Middle East and will similarly fail to calculate the harm that may befall his people if he should instigate a war. If the effort to arive at broad-based political settlements in the middle east—which must include arms-control arrangement—should fail, it will no longer be possible to speak of conventional deterrence. For this will have been the last major war in the middle east to be fought with conventional weapons.[12]

The Israeli delegations's unilateral decision on December 18, 1991 to return home ends the present round of middle-east peace talks that began on December 11, 1991 in Washington, with the position of the parties unchanged from what it was at the first round in Madrid on October 30, it is a setback to the peace process, but it is a temporary one, for as president George Bush (who along with Mikhail Gorbachev had convened the Madrid conference) said, he did not expect peace to be negotiated "in a week, or a month, or even a year". It was obvious even at Madrid that it had to be a series of bilateral meetings between Israel and the three Arab teams: Syrians, Lebanese, and the Jordanians-Palestinians. The Israel delegation refuses to meet the Palestinians separately, lest it imply the recognition of the Palestinian identity. The basic Palestinian position that Israel should vacate territories occupied by it is immutable, but there are other related issues. The 1949 armistice line was recognised by most of the world, but not by the Arabas. And as a result of the Six-Day war in 1967, Israel's territorial possession expanded with its occupation of the Sinai peninsula and the Gaza Strip (in Egypt), the West Bank (in Jordan) and the Golan Heights (in Syria). The Security Council's Resolution (242) calling for peace based on Israeli withdrawal from "territories occupied in the recent conflict" (not the territories), and the right of every state in the area to "live in peace within secure and recognised boundaries" does not meet Palestinian aspirations. At the Washington talks the Syrians wanted the Golan Heights back and were not too concerned over other aspect of peace with Israel. Lebanon wants its southern region vacated, but this

would depend on Israel feeling secure enough to do so. The Platestine Liberation Organization has been rejecting resolution 242 because it does not address the question of Palestinian nationhood. The PLO wants Jerusalem to be the capital of the state, but Israel snatched east Jerusalem and its suburbs from Jordan in 1967. The United State does not want a independent Palestine state in the occupied territories, or permanent Israeli occupation or another vivisection of Jerusalem. The Washington talks collapsed because each side was merely reiterating its position, and the deadlock was over how to talk about Palestine or the occupied territories. The UN General Assembly vote on Wednesday rescinding its 1975 "Zionism is racism" resolution should soften Israel's position because its pride has been restored. The United States prevailed upon its allies, friends and netural countries to vote for the resolution, and Israel might respond to this gesture by settling for a less intransignet negotiating position.[13]

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8

Regional Radicalism and Peace Process

One of the ironies of the Middle East is that wars and cataclysm have often been the prelude to political progress. Fluidity often means oportunity. A moment of rapidly surging events is a time when one's instincts may call for caution, yet it is often the only time when one can shape the flow of those events. But this is not a moment for illusions either. Even the decisive defeat of Iraq will not criminate all sources of *regional radicalism.* Resentments will linger. America's moderate Arab friends, whatever their bravado, are bound to be profoundly shaken by the upheaval and wary of Islamic trends. Pressures for more democratic decision-making will mount, but will further shake moderate governments whose domestic enemies do not always promise either democracy or regional peace. Israelis too will be unnerved by the blows inflicted on them and reminded, if they needed reminding that most sources of danger in the region sooner or later locus on them.[1]

The premise of American policy is that these short-run effects will give way to a long-run effect that offers hope. The United States and its partners have been impressively successful. The moderate camp of those who stood with the United States should indeed find new courage, their sense of security enhanced.

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The American role in the Middle East is at its zenith; a thug who played the anti-American card was made into example. Soviet mischief was frustrated. The oild weapon against the West will pobably be cosiderably weakened. These are conditions that may make progress possible. Had there been a more ambiguous outcome to the conflict, the diplomatic prospects would have been more treacherous. The United States would then have had little influence over events, no matter how brilliant its ideas were. The most crucial determinant of peace prospects, in other words, is not the ingenuity of America's proposals but how decisively it won the war. This was the most important reason for scuttling the Soviet attempts to save Saddam toward the war's end. Even with success achieved, the United States will need answers to some crucial questions before plunging ahead with a new initiative: a new solution is needed to the complex problem of Palestinian representation. There must be concrete indications of *"new thinking"* from both Arabas and Israelis. There must be an agreed concept for the negotiation that the United States is trying to promote—an understanding on its scope and subject matter. Otherwise the administration risks falling flat. Simultaneously it must continue to seek a concept of regional security. Saudi-Egyptian partnership must be bolstered. But whatever role those in the region can play, they will want to know what role the United States is prepared to play. America will be the linchpin. Victory in war should reduce the need for a large-scale U.S military presence—but America must remain a military factor. It cannot walk away, leaving in jeopardy the regional security that its servicemen and women have paid so dearly to win. Others who have sacrified will claim a share in the diplomacy. The United States needs to give them a sense of participation, in the spirit of the multilateralism with which President Bush so skillfully built the coalition in the first place. But the United States, having made the disproportionate exertion and sacrifice, need not put the hard-won opening for peace at rish to diplomatic schemes it knows to be valueless. The United States will, as Sadat used to say, hold most of the cards. And it should at that way.[2]

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The America is up in arms trying to dictate to the world once again New World Order. Having finally off-loaded monkeys of the Vietnam War off their soldiers and in the unprecedented context of the collapse of the Soviet Union and its empire, the American leadership went on sustaining and strengthening their hegemony by subduing even the smallest of the therats to the American authority. But as it was in the case of by-gone British Imperialism, the real challenge to the United States is not emerging from the therats of economic competition from its allies e.g. Japan or Germany, but are coming from mishandling its affairs with the poor and developing countries of the Third World. Its latest venture of organising a Peace Conference in the Middle East followed by its attempts of certain conditionalities on the state of Israel, divesting Iraq of its capability to ever build a capacity for producing nuclear or chemical or other weapons of mass-destruction have met with an unimagined strong defiance. The PLO has refused to be party in any such conference unless certain conditions including homeland, put forward by it are fulfilled. Obviously, in the absence of an active cooperation from Israel, Iraq and PLO no peace can ever be visualized in the Middle East. Therefore, the latest drive by the United States at improving its relation with Iran, Syria, Egypt can hold no credence. The recently concluded Annual Review Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) held at Vienna have clearly highlighted that this forcefully divesting of Iraq of its nuclear capabilities will not achieve anything further than satisfying certain personal egoes. That the Safeguards Regime have proved to be totally ineffective is a forgone conclusion. Equally settled is the moribund duality of the polities with regard to the nuclear status of the midest states i.e. Israel and Iraq. Despite the destruction Iraq and the tremendous waste of men materials of both—the situation in the Middle East is slowly slipping back to square one. Egypt contnues to be the only country that recognise the existence of the state of Israel and Israel continues to remain adamant in keeping the annexed Arab territories, PLO continues to fight for their homeland. Numerous visits by the US Secretary of State Mr. Baker have

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proved fruitless. Thus the Americans cannot obviously eat their cakes and have them too. The Gulf War, in fact, have waken up the sleeping giant of the Middle East tensions. And if any lasting peace has to be brought to this region major genuine sacrifices are called for from all the parties concerned. Surely, with the American intentions for hegemony and their extant contractions in their foreign policies; with the surging Arab nationalism and the dwindling fate of monarchies who in turn are compelled to keep beating the bogey of anti-Israel slogans; with the Israel expansionist activities and with the PLO without a homeland no Peace Conference is going to have any use. Let us not forget that it was only the mis-handling of their victory by the victorious powers in the First World War that had brought to the World the scourge of the Second World War; handling one's victory thus is in no way any easier than is the fighting of a war. The backlash of Iraqi is already vivid in the rising domestic support for the Saddam Hussein regime. All this obviously calls for caution, commitment and sacrifice. No doubt every party today wants peace but the problem is that every wants peace in its own favour. Peace for all therefore is the first conditionality if any peace has to come to the warring Middle East.[3]

Us secretary of state James Baker said in Cairo, on October 14, 1991 many Middle East Peace Conference have been resolved, but the question of Palestinian representation and the future status of Jerusalem remains unsettled.

But both he and President Hosni Mubarak sounded optimistic that the conference would be convened under the joint auspices of the United States and the Soviet Union.

After a meeting with Mubarak lasting almost four hours. Baker "The question of Palestinian representation is still being discussed. I met with Palestinians from the (Israeli occupied) territories late last week and I will be meeting with them again the day after tomorrow," Baker said.

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Baker visited Israel on October 16, 1991 after visits to Jordian and Syria.

He said a lot of differences had been settled, but there were some that we may not be ultimately able to resolve with any degree of finality, but at some point we will have to consider the issues and sent invitations.

Meanwhile, Mubarak has given his support to the Bush administration proposals that Israel trade land for peace.

Mubarak, who briefed reporters jointly with Baker, belittled the remaining differences.

We hope that the conference may convene by the end of this month, Mubarak said, adding he could not characterise outstanding issues as big obstacles.

There are some small things that could solved, the President said, Baker's comment that Palestinian representation remained an issue was at variance with Egyptain foreign minister Ame Moussa's appraisal in an Israeli newspaper interview published today.

My assessment is the problem of Palestinian representation is over, Moussa told the newspaper *Yedioth Ahronoth*. He gave no details.

Baker's meeting with Mr. Mubarak coincided with the 10th anniversary of his presidency.

On October 14, 1981, Mubarak succeeded his assasinated predecessor. Anwar Sadat, who pioneered peace between Egypt and Israel in 1979.

This first stop for Baker on his regional swing is his easiest. Mubarak is an enthusiastic supporter of Washington's land-for-

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peace formula and advised all sides last week not to engage in a war of words that might torpedo a peace conference. Baker did not spell but the land-for-peace concept, which Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Shamir rejects.

Instead, he merely cited UN Security council resolutions 242 and 338 as the terms of reference for the peace conference.

Resolution 242 calls for Israel to withdraw from territories it occupied in the 1967 war in return for Arab recognition of its right to live in peace within secure borders.

Resolution 338 reaffirms 242 and calls for negotiations under the appropriate auspices.

Moussa said a few hours before Baker's arrival Cario that without land in exchange for peace we cannot have peace.

But Baker reiterated the US view that building Israeli settlement in the occupied lands is an obstacle to peace.

Mubarak said there was nothing to worry about regarding Syria's position in the peace process.

Syrian president Hafez Assad, who met Mubarak in Cairo on October 12, 1991, is eager and keen to attend the peace conference, the Egyptian leader said.

Mousa who attended the Baker-Mubarak meet, said the chances of the peace conference being convened was only 'fifty-fifty'.

Any meaningful discussion on the James Baker initiative would be incomplete without a proper evalution of the difference in the perceptions of the US and Israel. Otherwise it could have become a revival of Shamir's plan of 1989. Nor would Israel become the last and the least enthusiastic party to say 'yes'.

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Actually Shamir's positive response came only after US-Soviet joint statement which declared that both would co-sponsor a peace conference this month. The most fundamental difference lies in the objectives of the conference. Israel's withdrawal from the occupied territories in return for Arab recognition and their terminations of war against Israel or 'Land for Peace' had been the cornerstone of the US policy. Unlike the past the US has determined to pursue it more vigorously. While territorial compromise has been welcomed by the Labour and Centrist parties and groups in Israel, it remains anathema to Likud-led coalition. For Shamir 'Erez Israel' or Greater Israel is not utopian dream but a redeemable preposition. Only recently reference to the East Bank of the Jordan river were dropped from the party anthem.[4]

Likewise its interpretation of resolutions 242 and 338 varies. For it they do not demand Israel's withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza. More so by agreeing to withdraw from Sinai which accounted for about three-fourths of the occupied territories, it maintained that the withdrawal had been complete. Hence even while saying yes to Baker, it refused to commit any territorial compromise. It took refuse under 'Everything is negotiable scross the table' proviso. Shamir's attitude on the Golan Heights, annexed by Israel in 1981, gave an indication of his defiance. Reacting to reports on possible territorial compromise with Syria, he remarked; "They will meet and can say to us, 'We want the Golan Heights', and we will say, "We won't give them to you. That's negotiations."

But the US, more so the Bush administration, had never accepted the whole idea. Speaking to reporters in Damascus Baker declared: "...from the US viewpoint, resolution 242 and 338 must be applied to all fronts. This does not only apply to the West Bank and Gaza, but also to the Golan. We are prepared to declared once again the US policy as regards the non-recognition of the application of the laws on the Golan. "This was one of the reasons why the US was reluctant to concede to Israel's demand

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that 'various parties have different interpretations of these resolutions.' Unlike the Israeli Government, the US has no illusion regarding the role and importance of the PLO. Baker had no doubts about the political leanings and sympathies of his interlocutors from the occupied territories. As one of them had underlined they were "neither negotiators nor nor a negotiating delegation but representatives of PLO. We only relay to the PLO what is happening and it makes the decision." The US was aware that any rejection by the PLO would be a death knell to the conference. The PLO is definitely down but not out. Therefore in order to accommodate Israel, the US has been keen to avoid any formal role to the PLO. Unwilling to the termed a saboteur, the PLO is also cooperating with the Americans. Notwithstanding the initial and vociferous opposition from number of quarters the PNC took the pragmatic step of saying yes to Baker. Settlements in the occupied territories from the third major source of irritant. The US had always considered them to be illegal and an impediment to the peace process. The Reagon plan of 1982, for example, declared, "The US will not support the use of any additional land for the purpose of settlement" and demanded an immediate freeze on stttlement activities. Yet nothing serious was done. But things changed both in the US and Israel. The Bush administration more or less came to the conclusion that the US had to sue the resources and leverages at its disposal to stop these activities and began to adopt a tougher stand. When Israel requested a 400 million dollar loan guarantees from the administration. Baker made Israel to pledge not to divert the fund 'beyond the Greenline'. Not satisfied with this he went on demanding details of various construction activities in the occupied territories. Secondly the continued flow of Soviet immigrants to Israel accelerated the pace of set lements more so with Ariel Sharon at the helm of affairs. Lastly on the question of Jerusalem both the countries have different perceptions. The US accepts the Iseaeli position on the holy city, important to Judaism, Christianity and Islam, that it should remain united. At the East Jerusalem is an occupied territory and the status of Jerusalem cannot be changed

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unilaterally. Similary it refues to accept Jerusalem being the capital of Iseael [5].

Following from this aspect Isreal has insisted that Jerusalemites should excluded from the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. It would be difficult from any Palestinian, let alone the PLO to concede to this demand. Sandwiched between these two extremes, the US might workout a face. Saving formula like Jerusalem-born Palestinians, Jerusalemites with a home in the occupied territories or the like.

If one takes an overall picture on matters of procedures and composition. Baker's peace proposals satisfy basic Israeli demands. The US has so far resisted in commiting itself to the Palestinian interpretation of self determination viz., independent Palestinian state between Israel and Jordan. At the same time on the question of objectives and expectations of the meeting, differences to exist. Progress in the peace process would undoubtedly imply complete of partial Israeli withdrawal from all three fronts or at least a firm and unequivocal commitment to do so within a reasonable time frame. Yitzhak Shamir is well aware of the different perceptions of the US over these issues and its determination to bring home the point. His meaning and definition of peace and progress are unacceptable to Bush. In short, he is conscious of the inevitable need for a territorial compromise and negotiated borders. Seen in this context the loan guarantee controversy assumed importance. By refusing to comply with the Israeli demand and openly challenging the Capitol Hill, George Bush had conveyed his annoyance with Shamir's hardline attitude as well as his determination to put pressure on the most serious sensitive and vulnerable point-aid. The refusal as well as the Israel's inept handling of the whole question came as a boon to the administration. It had enhance the American position among the 'Arab States and the PLO as an 'honest broker' thereby increasing its leverage. Unlike during the Scud days, Shamir's hardline attitude does not enjoy the unanimous or overwhelming support of the Israelis and the public opinion

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is more favorable towards a 'land for peace' formula. Any ruler more so Shamir should be well aware of the golden maxim : " Of upi dpm't know when to bend, you break[6] ".

The West Asian drama is being played out at two levels. The United States is in the process of reordering its relations in the region after its victory in the Gulf War and the collapse of the Soviet Union. Both these developments have strengthened American hands vis-a-vis Israel. At the other level, the business of calling a peace conference to begin to end the Arab-Israeli confrontation is engaging US diplomacy. The two issues are interconnected because the new American clout in relation to the Israelis and the Arabas gives it a rather unique window of opportunity. One result has been a conscious US effort to correct somewhat its traditional till towards Israel by President George Bush successfully rebuffing the Jewish lobby in the US on the Israeli demand for loan guarantees of $10 billion. More than the amount involved, the symbolism of an American President saying no to Israel has not been lost on Jerusalem or the Arab world. In an astute counter-more, the Palestinians on their part have given a positive reaction to the US peace proposals. Many loose ends are still to be tied up and the question of Palestinian representation through a joint Palestinian Jordanian delegation will have to be fudged. The words of disapproval from Israel need not be interpreted as a final answer. The Israeli problem is that the nation is split down the middle on the question of making peace with Arabas. On the Palestinian question, the territories for peace proposal, which forms the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions, perhaps a majority of Israelis would favor it, depending upon the Israelis' own role in it are the cause of fear in Jerusalem. Having learnt to live with the gun and on the strength of the gun, Israelis find it psychologically difficult to adapt to the possibility of living in peace. What has changed in recent months is the Arab-Israeli-American equation. Israel remains an important strategic ally of the United States, but the terms of the relationship between the two countries are undergoing a subtle change. What

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Washington is telling Israel is that it can no longer enjoy a veto over perceived American interests in the region and that the US administration has now the gumption to take on the Jewish lobby. President Bush chose to go to the heart of the Israeli-Palestinian tangle by deferring the loan guarantees request for settling Soviet Jews. For the record, the US has always opposed the building of new settlements in the Occupied Territories, but turned a blind eye to them. The Israelis have continued to build new settlements and as if to snub the US, a new settlement has gone up almost every time the US Secretary of State. James Baker, has made a new trip to the region.[7]

Whatever the outcome of the planned peace conference, as and when it takes place, it is clear that it would imply a freeze on new settlements because the whole process would be reduced to absurdity if the Arabas and Israelis sat down to talk peace while Jerusalem continued to change the demography of the occupied lands. Israelis know this as well as anyone else and hence their hesitation, coupled with the desire to extract the maximum concessions. Once the question of Palestinian representation is resolved, the peace conference is to serve as a curtain-raiser to individual talks between the Arab states and the Palestinian-Jordanian delegation on the one hand and the Israelis on the other. Logically, the conference more have referral role in being able to assess the progress of the talks after a time although for Jerusalem, it is mere fig-leaf for the Arabas in order to be able to hold one-to-one talks. The American plan envisages a two-stage operation, a period of autonomy for the West Bank and Gaza Strip followed, after a specified period, by talks on the future of these areas. The emotive question of restoring East Jerusalem to the Palestinians is not being tackled immediately nor is the question of returning the Golan Heights to Syria, although both these issues are bound to be raised in future discussions. It is the American hope that once the peace process gets going and Arabas and Israelis can discuss their problems a table, the rough edges on either side will begin to wear out. The question of an independent state of Palestine

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is left for the future. It is, for instance, open to question whether many Arab states would want to see a separate independent state of Palestine; most would prefer to see it in a confederation with Jordan. It is, of course, clear to everyone that the peace conference is an American show, despite the somewhat symoblic co-sponsoring of the Soviet Union. It is equally clear that the question of American credibility in the region is one test, in view of the role played by it in the Gulf War. The Palestinians, for one, have for the present accepted the American argument that they have the most to gain from a peace conference; even from the tactical point of view, the decision of the Palestine National Council, the Palestine Liberation Organisation's parliament-in-exile, make sense. No one familiar with West Asia will have illusions about the difficulties involved in ending the Arab-Israeli confrontation. But the post-Cold War era has brought in its wake challenges as well as opportunities and the certainty that the process of building new equations is taking shape. Any recordering of relations has to be a two-track affair, from the American point of view. American efforts to begin the Arab-Israeli peace process is a necessary psychological prop to the future role the US is seeking to crave out for itself. The contours of such a role are still being mullied over but they consist of two elements; a new security set-up and the equations to be worked out among the major countries of the region: Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia and Iran.[8]

Extremists across the region are plotting to sabotage a proposed Arab-Israeli peace conference.

Baker spoke in Washington on October 11, 1991 as he began a meeting with our Palestinian activists from the Israeli-occupied territories to discuss Plaestinian representation to the peace conference—the last major issue to be resolved between the parties.

Baker who embarks on his eighth West Asia peace shuttle at the weekend said the time has come for Palestinians to

commit themselves to attend the conference because the United States ad the Soviet Union were anxious to convene the gathering within the next three weeks.

Baker and Palestinian resentatives from Israel's occupied territories met for nearly five hours here on Thursday but were unable to resolve differences over Plaestinian participation in a West Asian peace conference.

The four Palestinians—Zakaria al-Agha, Hanan Hashrawi, Faisal Usseini and Hashrawi. Faisal Usseini and Sari Nusseibeh —apparently had hoped to obtain more US guarantee before agreeing to participate in the conference.

"We came with some suggestions and we are waiting for answers," said Hussein after the meeting with Baker and his aides.

"It was a long meeting and serious one," he said.

He said the composition of the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to represent Palestinians in the occupied territories at the peace conference was one of the questions that remained unresolved.

"I can't say it was an easy discussion but what I can say is that things didn't get solved yet and that we are in contact and we hope that something will come of it. "Hussein said.

The US suspects that Israel is not serious about peace in West Asia and will do everything it can to sabotage the peace process.

Press Secretary Marlin Fitzwater said there was no justification for Israeli overflights over Iraq ostensibly to look for scuds, when the US was carrying out spy flights and sharing relevant intelligence information with Israelis. For these flights Israelis used American-built F-15&s.

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Extremely Jews backed by right wing Israeli officials, had moved into East Jordanian on Wednesday physically removing Arabas from their homes and occupying them.

Further speeches from Jerusalem indicate that the Shamir Government has no faith either in the US or in the UN and see no incentive to seek peace with Arabas any more. They would rather keep the occupied territories and settle Soviet Jews there.

The US is now keeping its fingers crossed to see whether Israeli gunboats will intercept a north Korean ship carrying or missile launchers to Syria.

James Baker has become the travelling salesman of Bush's West Asia policy and there is reason to believe that during his present visit, the eighth since the Gulf War, he will be able to persuade the Israelis to participate in the peace conference to be convened shortly by the two super-powers.

But assuming that Israel can be persuaded to attend such a conference, the problem which Baker will have to resolve, is what is planned to be achieved at the conference. It is not known what has been promised by Baker to the different parties but it is obvious that he will have to bring American commitments into the open before the conference: it might prove difficult to reconcile them and even if it is done the basic issue remains: what is to be the basis for a settlement. Till recently it was assumed that the basis of any such settlement would be land for peace. Israel would withdraw from the occupied territories and in return the Arab states would recognise Israel. That was the Labour Party's plan but through the Arabas assumed that the withdrawal will be from all the occupied territories, Israelis, including the leaders of the Labour Party never committed themselves to that; there was always talk of Israel's strategic interests. Likud, moreover, is totally opposed to the creation of a Palestinian state; it fears that once such a state comes into existence, it will, if not immediately then in the future, put

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forward a claim to parts of Israel. The Jewish state feels that as far as Palestinians are concerned, it will not secure peace by surrendering territory; a truncated, moth-eatern Palestine will only be acceptable to its inhabitants as a temporary measure; the most, therefore, that Tel Aviv is willing to concede is a limited, autonomy compatible with Israel's security interests. In any case, Israel insists that Jerusalem is its capital and it is determined to keep the city united under its control, it is unlikely that any Arab country will be willing to hand over Jerusalem to Israel and it is doubtful that an agreement which most Arabas and Muslims consider as unjust will last for long. There is apparently no way to reconcile the rival claims of Israel and the Arabas and even if James Baker plays the honest broker and persuades both parties to make concessions, it is difficult to see how a settlement which will be acceptable to both, can be arrived at. At the present juncture Israel hardly requires a settlement; the strategic situation has altered dramatically in its favour. With the Soviet withdrawal from West Asia, Syria and Iraq have lost their major supplier of weapons. The possibility of western countries supplying arms to them is extremely limited, and as far as Iraq is concerned almost nil. With the end of the Gulf War, Iraq has ceased to be a threat. It will be years before Iraq becomes a credible military power again. Syria by itself does not pose a serious threat to Israel's security; it can only acquire sophisticated weapons if Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are willing to finance it, and at the moment there is no reason to believe that they will do so. Syria has no alternative but to abandon its search for strategic parity.[9]

There is therefore no military threat of any kind to Israel and it will be difficult for any government in Tel Aviv to persuade the right wing to abandon the West Bank, Judea and Samaria, which is part of eretez Israel, to assure peace. The fact that the United States and its allies, including Arab ones, defeated and disarmed the only regional power which could have challenged it, made it unnecessary for Israel to seek a negotiated peace. The intifada no longer bothers it and it can

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live with an occasional guerilla incursion. The only advantage that a peace settlement can bring Israel is recongition by the Arab states and many Israelis will consider the price too high because that they will get is only a cold peace. Yitzhak Shamir is hardly in a position to pursue peace even if he wanted to, and he has so far given no indication that he is interested in a peace settlement except on his own terms; it is a peace he would like to impose on the Arabas. Recently he vowed that none of the territories occupied in the 1967 war. West Bank, East Jerusalem, Gaza and Golan Heights would be returned to the Arabas. Even if he wants, be cannot, because his government is dependent on the extreme right parties and they will under no condition accept a settlement based on withdrawal from the occupied territories. Even more important, if Shamir plans to make any concessions he will face a revolt within his party. Housing Minister Ariel Sharon. Kind Arik to his followers, is prepared to challenge Shamir. In a television interview, referring to the peace conference, he said "Israel has not presented any demands. It has in principle accepted pre-conditions. We have surrendered in principle all our positions..... this scare me". And he added "I will obviously run, based on the fact that I can carry out the correct policy to achieve peace — because I believe we can arrive at péace — carry out a correct defence policy to return security to the life of Jews in Israel and carry out a correct immigration policy." That should cause Shamir to halt in his tracks. It can be argued that Likud under Begin was equally opposed to settlement but finally signed the Camp David agreement. There is, however, a vital difference: the Camp David agreement greatly improved Israel's strategic position. It removed the threat of a two-front war, removed the strongest Arab power from the coalition hostile to Israel, and removed the threat of war for considerable time. And all that Israel had to do was to give back a small piece of territory. With the defeat of Iraq there is no kind of military threat to Israel and there is no reason for it to surrender territory to secure peace. On the other hand, it is now determined to consolidate its hold on the occupied territories. The whole purpose of the settlement policy is to alter the facts on the

ground. The increasing dense settlements in the West Bank will make it impossible for any future Israeli government to even consider withdrawal. Strangely enough it is the United States which is providing the money to finance the settlements; even when this is not done directly, aid enables Israel to divert other funds to the settlement.

What then lies behind the America cajoling and bullying of Israel? America is honouring its commitment to the Arabas, it is dragging Israel to the conference room but it cannot force Israel to disgorge its conquest. Israel will not give up Judea and Samaria but will Baker persuade Shamir to give up Golan Heights? And Hafiz Assad to accept a settlement which leaves the West Bank with Israel? That is to be seen, but at the moment it does not seem likely[10].

Finally the US secretary of state, after eight visits to West Asia in eight months has brought it off and the peace conference on West Asia is being covened in Hadrid, Spain. It will be attended by President Bush and Gobachev. Thereby they stake their reputation and prestige to ensure its success. That depends mostly on the pressure the US is able to bring to bear on Israel to be reasonable. For the first time since 1956 when President Eisen however took a tough line vis-a-vis Israel. President Bush and Secretary of State James Baker have signalled Israel that it cannot expect to have everything in its own way as they have been taking it for granted President Bush confronted successfully the US Jewish lobby on the issue of delaying the $ 10 billion loan guarantee and was able to take the US Congress along with him. Yet the US has given in to many of Israel's preposterous demands. The most outrageous one is that Israel will have a right to veto the membership of the combined Jordan-Palestinian delegation. Israel had stipulated that the delegation should not have any one who has links with the Palestinian. Liberation Organisation (PLO) which it organisation (PLO) which it regards as a terrorist organisation nor should there be a resident of east Jerusalem which Israel had occupied in 1967. The Palestinians

have, under US pressure, agreed to go along with this condition and so have the Arab states—Syria, Jordan and Egypt. The Palestinians would not have found themselves in this predicament if the PLO leader Yasser Arafat had not so blatantly made common cause with Saddam Hussein and alienated not only US but also the Arab states Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Emirates. The Syrian leader Hafez Assad is trying to formulate a common Arab strategy and has called for a preconference summit of the Arab states. Mr. Yasser Arafat is also visiting the Arab states to mobilise support for the Palestinian course. The Palestinian section of the Jordanian delegation proposes to declare itself as representative of all Palestinians and not only of Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Once again it proves that national identity related to territoriality supercedes that based on religion alone.[11]

The Palestinians have not been absorbed in various Arab Islamic countries in spite of all claims made for the 'zummah' (The community of believers). It further highlights that while there is some soildarity among the various Arab nations there is not much pan-Arab feeling in evidence. The Iraqi leader who tried to exploit these two factors to lend respectability to his own aggresion is nowhere in the picture. Ironically enough Iran against which the Arab countries financed the long eight year murderous war by Saddam Hussein is denouncing the proposed Madrid West-Asian peace conference and offering to support the Palestinians military, an offer not taken seriously by any one else. On October 30, the Arab nations and Israel will sit at the same conference table. The Americans are determine to make a success of this conference. The Soviet Union which broke off diplomatic relations with Israel in June, 1967 has re-established ambassadorial level contracts again. At this stage India has to re-examine its level of diplomatic relations with Israel. It does not look rational to continue the policy of not having an ambassador in Israel at this state. It is obvious that for the future Israel is going to be the dominant military power of the region. Israel's nuclear states has been recongnised

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except in formal terms. The Islamic countries Turkey and Egypt have ambassadors in Israel. India will never be able to play a role in west Asia unless this country develops contracts with both sides. The fear that Arab countries may retaliate against India in economic terms will have to be examined in the light of three considerations. Firstly they are now sitting down with Israel at the same conference table. Secondly the penalties they imposed against Egypt for establishing diplomatic relations with Israel have been withdrawn. Thirdly all Arab states are now so dependent on the US for their security it is doubtful they would antagonise the US by penalising a country for having full diplomatic contacts with Israel. Perhaps our establishing ambassadorial relations with Israel may have to be balanced with our increased interest in the security of the Gulf. This is one of the issues that could be discussed with the US military officials during their forthcoming visits in the Gulf countries.[12]

In the coming decades the United States confronts not only a revolution in international affairs but urgent calls to adapt its military strategy and forces. Some commentators go so far as to assert that the world is on the threshold of a new era in which military power will no longer be of central importance. Other recognize future challenges but argue that the United States can no longer shoulder the burden of military leadership in a time of enormous budget deficits at home and increasing economic competition abroad. Still others assert that America neither needs not can afford the range of forces it maintained during the Cold War. These perspectives, however, are dangerously shortsighted. While the risk of a major conflict with the Soviet Union has certainly ebbed to a 45-year low, Iraq's aggression against Kuwait clearly demonstrates that the international environment remains dangerous and is in many respects growing more complex. U.S. interests around the globe have inextricably entangled this nation in world affairs. If the United States is to protect these interests and ensure its security in the post-Cold War world, it must maintain military forces capable of meeting a full array of contingencies. Over the next decade the United

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States will continue to require capable, credible conventional forces as the central element of its national military strategy. In an era of decreasing resources devoted to defense, the critical issue is how to properly shape U.S. conventional forces. Adjustment need not imply a wholesale restructuring of forces or doctrines. As we have seen during Operation Desert Storm in the Persian Gulf, many elements of military strategy and force design that served the nation so well throughout the Cold War will remain relevant in the era that follows.[13]

Since the end of the Second World War, the United States has sought to find the appropriate proportions of nuclear and conventional forces. U.S. strategic thought in the early years of the nuclear age was dominated by the widespread view that the sole utility of military power lay in its ability to deter conflict. This school of thought was reinforced by the perception that the only significant military threat to the United States lay in the expansionist designs of the Soviet Union. Nuclear weapons were seen as an affordable way to counter the vast numerical superiority of Soviet ground forces—a superiority that the West could not hope to offset with conventional forces alone. But this view did not long survive. It soon became evident that nuclear weapons were of only marginal value in deterring conflict in areas outside a direct Soviet-U.S. confrontation. This reality was reinforced by U.S. participation in two land wars in Asia and by numerous other crises. To be sure, the American strategic nuclear arsenal was central to the deterrence of a direct Soviet attact on the United States and contributed substantially to deterring Soviet aggression against, or intimidation of, America's NATO allies. It is clear that nuclear weapons were essential in buttressing NATO and in supporting the longer period of unbroken peace on the European continent in ten centuries. But the deterrent value of nuclear weapons, even in Europe, was intimately tied to the presence and capability of powerful conventional forces. These forces not only demonstrated allied commitment to defend NATO territory. They would also deny the Soviets a fait accompli in the event of a massive short-

warning attack, present them with the very real prospect of conventional defeat and provide a credible first step in an escalatory sequence leading to a strategic nuclear exchange. Conventional forces grew even more central to deterrence in Europe throughout the 1980s, with the adoption of a maneuver-oriented combat doctrine that integrated air and land forces, the introduction of more powerful conventional weapons and the unprecedented increase in the quality of the U.S. armed forces. Nuclear weapons designed primarily to confront the Soviet Union were of little utility in helping the United States resolve crises outside the NATO area. Few believed that the United States would use nuclear weapons in response to non-Soviet aggression, and American actions proved them of a military role for these weapons. Rather, it was firmly rooted in the pervasive view that nuclear weapons, in any form, were politically unacceptable, except as an instrument of last resort. The United States instead relied on conventional forces to deter conflict and defend America's interests beyond its homeland and the confines of NATO. The development of a strategy of "flexible response" constituted explicit recognition of the diminished utility of nuclear weapons in countering conventional aggression and so-called low-intensity conflict, and ushered in a shift in emphasis from nuclear to conventional forces. The relative importance to strategic nuclear weapons has recently eroded further as a result of the declining Soviet threat and the prospects of real reductions in these forces through arms control. While the much heralded end of the Cold War has also reduced the need for conventional forces to deter a Soviet attack in Europe, it has not mitigated the challenges to U.S. interests from other quarters. It is precisely this growing non-Soviet threat that demands a new emphasis on U.S. conventional forces. As we reflect on the evolution of American strategic thought, several important lessons of the nuclear age seem apparent. First, strategic nuclear forces have been essential in, but limited to, deterring nuclear attack on the United States and certain vital overseas interests. They have done so through their potential to punish aggression by inflicting unacceptable losses in response. Second,

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conventional forces have also been crucial to deterring conflict between the superpowers, both by their potential or punish and by their promised ability to deny the enemy the objectives of its aggression. Third, beyond deterrence, conventional forces obviously have had far broader application than nuclear forces and are central to defending and advancing American interests in places where nuclear weapons lack utility. This pre-eminence of conventional forces has been most recently and persuasive demonstrated in the Gulf War. Despite Iraq's chemical weapons, its nascent nuclear potential and the threat its aggression posed to U.S. interests, it was America's conventional forces, not its nuclear arsenal, that defined President Bush's response to the crisis and ultimately decided its outcome. Operation Desert Storm is likely not an aberration. Changes in the international and domestic environment should create a more pronounced role for conventional forces in the future.[14]

The international security environment is undergoing significant and, in some areas, revolutionary change. Military power nonetheless remains a dominant feature of relations between states. It is instructive to remember that Saddam Hussein imposed his will on Kuwait and threatened to alter the international economic order with Iraqi divisions, not dollars. And it was with military power that the international community ultimately redressed Iraq's aggression in Operation Desert Strom. It should be apparent from this experience alone that it is premature for the United States to abandon strong military forces. The design of U.S forces, however, requires a clear assessment of the military challenges the nation will face. Perhaps the most difficult challenge to frame is that which will emerge from the Soviet Union. Despite better relations with the United States and unprecedented U.S. Soviet cooperation during the early stages of the crisis in the Gulf, future Soviet policy remains uncertain. The enduring strength of the Soviet military must remain an important factor in determining the size and shape of U.S. forces. The Soviet Union will retain far into the future the ability to threaten the American homeland. Although

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strategic arms reduction agreements may help establish lower levels of nuclear forces on both sides, the United States will still need to maintain a credible nuclear retaliatory capability—a requirement that demands modernization. Washington cannot, however, expect its nuclear forces to be of wider use in the future than they have been in the past. Beyond deterring a nuclear attack on the United States and on certain vital interests overseas, the U.S. strategic nuclear arsenal will not be central to defending or advancing American interests elsewhere in the world. Moreover, even if all promised unilateral reductions and arms control agreements are fully implemented. Moscow will retain the world's most potent land forces. Although a direct confrontation with the Soviet Union today seems improbable, it remains the most daunting challenge U.S. forces might face. A dramatic resurgence of an authoritarian Soviet regime, determined to stem the dissolution of the union, could create a more hostile and aggressive Kremlin. Evidence now suggests that such a development lies well within the realm of possibility. It would be follish in any event to disregard actual and potential Soviet miliary power as the United States contemplates its future force. The historic changes now underway in the Soviet Union and eastern Europe could lead to instability and conflict. There are certain reasons to hope that relaxation of East-West tensions will usher in a new ara of peace and general prosperity in Europe. But recent events in the Soviet Union and eastern Europe demonstrate the potential for violence as the collapsing Soviet empire struggles with cataclysmic change. Unrest may stem from unfulfilled expectations and nationalist animosities, heretofore held in check by communism and the East-West rivalry. Such unrest could ignite armed conflict within and among European nations and directly jeopardize U.S. or allied interests, or invite Soviet intervention. The threat posed by instability in Europe defies empirical evaluation. There are no quantitative indices—numbers of tanks or aircract against which one can measure U.S. requirements. Genuine dangers may nonetheless emerge from a Europe adrift in change. Accrodingly, Washington must build its post-contentment

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commitment to Europe with an eye to history and with the conviction that the United States can make a lasting contribution to stabilizing the continent. Challenges in the developing world are serious as well. The military power wielded by developing nations is no longer insignificant, as the Iraqi arsenal forcefully demonstrated. Rivalries among nations, religious and ideological hatreds, and ambitions for economic and political power remain. These source of instability are made more dangerous by the proliferation of sophisticated weapons—from modern armor to ballistic missiles—that can produce violence or unprecedented magnitude. Tank battles in the 1967 and 1973 Arab-Israeli wars, for example, resulted in levels of destruction rivaling those projected for a superpower conflict on the plains of Europe. These were hardly isolated cases; the Iran-Iraq war of the 1980s was characterised by tank engagements, intense artillery duels, ballistic missile exchanges and chemical attacks, and the toll in human life numbered more than one million. Allied forces in Saudi Arabia confronted an Iraq armed with hundreds of Scud missiles and more than 5,000 tanks, a formidable conventional force by any standard. Indeed, the final defeat of the Republican Guard required the coalition to amass and employ the largest tank formations since World War Second.

Now do the nations of the Middle East and Persian Gulf have a monopoly on strong military forces. A growing number of countries now have the ability to engage in sustained, mechanized land combat. The armies of Vietnam and North Korea, for example, are among the largest in the world. A dozen nations in the developing world have more than 1,000 tanks in their land forces. Ballistic and cruise missiles are spreading to many parts of the world. Chemical weapons are also entering the inventories of a growing list of nations, and the proliferation of nuclear capabilities continues to present and ominous threat. To be sure, aggregate number of weapons in the developing world do not in themselves reflect the degree of threat these nations pose. The danger in the proliferation of weapons lies not in the numbers themselves, but in the capabilities those weapons

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give regimes with whom the United States and its allies and friends have conflicting interests. A number of such regimes exist, and as much as some might wish to ignore these trends in the developing world, they command the attention of the United States. There is, finally, the ongoing problem of a low-intensity conflict in the developing world, manifest in insurgencies, international terrorism and illicit drug trafficking. Low-intensity conflicts generally cannot be resolved through the application of military power alone; they require the integrated application of political, economic and military measures to address the causes as well as the manifestations of unrest. The importance of properly trained, structured and equipped armed forces is nevertheless a critical element of a comprehensive strategy to address these types of conflicts. Low-intensity conflict will remain in the coming years a significant challenge for the U.S. military. The United States clearly need not, and indeed should not, insert itself in every regional squabble. But it does not have the luxury of treating warfare in the developing world with indifference. The archaic concept of "fortress America" simply retains no strategic relevance for the United States in the 1990s. Military strategists and political leaders must anticipate that U.S. forces will be called onto advance and protect American interests in regional conflicts ranging from insurgencies to full-scale conventional wars against powerful land armies. U.S. forces must be capable of meeting those challenges.[15]

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It remains to be seen whether the US will use its leverage with Israel to make it withdraw from Arab lands by enforcing the several UN resolutions Israel has ignored so far. Using the UN relsolutions against Iraq was relatively easy but now the US faces a potentially explosive situation if the conflict is not resolved soon. The anti-American wave which is sweeping at the mass level in the region may soon lead to the overthrow of many regimes if the US is seen as hypocritical and using double standards. Much depends now on the US, which has emerged as the foremost broker in the area.[16]

There are alternative procedures that might in the future be followed by the Security Council, ones that would offer the prospect of effective enforcement action without the disadvantages and problems associated with according responsibility to individual member states. One would be a variant of the procedure followed in Korea. National forces could be brought together in ad hoc fashion under a unified U.N. command, with the commander designated by whichever happened to be the major troop-contributing country. The problems that arose in the Korean case could conceivably be alleviated if the unified commander were required to consult with the Security Council, or with some form of military authority appointed by the council, on the mission of the military operation and the basic strategy to be followed in achieving it. The country supplying the major troop contingent can be expected to resist such a procedure as inhibiting unacceptably the freedom of action of the commander and subjecting its forces to perilous uncertainties. But if favorable relations among the permanent members of the Security Council persist, such a consultative, though not command, procedure might be feasible.[17] It would have the distinct advantage of maintaining a close U.N. identification with all action taken and of giving the Security Council some influence, if not control, over any military action. The other alternative is the procedure defined in Articles 42 and 43 of the U.N. Charter, according to which all members of the United Nations undertake "to make available to the Security Council on its call in accordance with a special agreement or agreements, armed forces, facilities and assistance". In the Korean War, the "uniting for peace" resolution of 1950 recommended that each member maintain within its armed forces earmarked units so trained that they could promptly be made available for service "as a United Nations unit or units." The hostile relations between the United States and the Soviet Union were long perceived as the major obstacle to implementing such provisions. If after the Gulf War the two countries remain in accord on using the United Nations, that obstacle may be lifted. The willingness of member states to commit themselves in advance to provide troops and facilities at the request of the

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Security Council for enforcement purposes has never been tested. It can be argued that such commitment is inherent in U.N. membership, a condition for which is acceptance of the obligations contained in the charter and ability and willingness to carry out those obligations. For such a commitment to be reliable, however, it must be embodied in agreements between the Security Council and those member states prepared to assume the obligations. Such commitments will not be undertaken lightly. The subject was discussed in detail in 1945 in the U.S. Senate when the U.N. Charter was under consideration. John Foster Dulles, a member of the U.S. delegation to the San Francisco conference at which the charter was signed, told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that an agreement with the United Nations on the provision of troops should be regarded as a treaty requiring approval of a two-thirds majority of the Senate. The recorded comments of the senators indicate wide agreement with that interpretation. It was also discussed whether the president would need to obtain the consent of Congress to provide troops, when called upon by the United Nations after completion of an agreement. No consensus emerged on the question, but one senator suggested at the time that the size of the force requested could be decisive. Two or three thousand troops for "police action" would not need congressional approval, whereas a battle force would. Soviet representatives have recently expressed a positive view of a U.N. agreement on the provision of troops for enforcement purposes, but they have emphasized that in no case could the troops be provided without the specific approval of the Soviet parliament. Once agreements on the provision of troops were complied with a fair portion of member states, the Security Council would have the capacity to call into being a multilateral force (land, sea and air) under a U.N. commander "to maintain or restore international peace and security." In military operations the commander would presumably have full tactical authority but would operate under the guidance of the Security Council or a body established by the council to serve this purpose. Subsequent understandings would be required on common, intelligence, logistics and other

more or less centralized functions. The Military Staff Committee could, as foreseen 46 years ago, "advise and assist the Security Council on all questions relating to military requirements." It could do this without acquiring any command authority, which would be inadvisable since it functions on the basis of consensus. In some ways a U.N. force of this type would be quite similar to a peace-keeping force, since it would have a U.N. commander. It would differ markedly, however, in mission, armament, composition and command. A U.N. force of this nature would not entail the problems and disadvantages that the other identified approaches could present. Indentification with the United Nations from initiation to end of any operation would be assured, and control could be clearly in the hands of the Security Council. The likelihood of sustained support among U.N. members for the action undertaken would be strong. Yet in this approach, too, likely problems can be identified. First of all, it is not clear how many states will be willing to conclude the agreements foreseen in the U.N. Charter or how long this will take. It can only be said that international circumstance, especially in the wake of the Gulf War, appear more favorable than at any time since 1945. It is also questionable whether a force as large and elaborately equipped as one needed to maintain peace in the Gulf, for example, could have been organized quickly on this basis. And very large operation is bound to depend heavily on a major contingent from one or more of the principal military powers; the larger and more sophisticated the contingent provided, the less likely the contributing country will be willing to place it under non-national command. Organization and deployment of a multilateral force by the Security Council would likely require more time than if action were delegated to one or more member states, especially if a large-scale operation were foreseen. To shorten the lead time, the secretary general might be given authority, not subject to the veto, to send an unarmed observer corps to any international border at any time. According to Article 99 of the U.N. Charter, the Secretary General "may bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international

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peace and security." To do so he needs to be informed. An authorization to send observers without specific consent of the parties raises difficulties, but it would allow the Security Council to be forewarned and to make quick preparations if an enforcement action were required. The very presence of observers can have a deterrent effect, possibly avoiding the need for subsequent enforcement. Then, too, there is a very basic question as to whether a military action can be successfully carried out under multilateral strategic command, or as successfully as under national comman. Administrative aspects of managing the use of force by the Security Council have received little attention. Save for peacekeeping and the peculiar conditions permitting the Korean operation, the prospects of using U.N. forces were nil during the Cold War. Nonetheless important multinational demensions characterized U.S. military plans during the Korean War, in the U.S. commitment to NATO and notably in the Gulf. The force of the NATO and Korea precedents must not be exaggerated. In both instances there was virtual consensus on the nature of the military threat, decades-long experience of close cooperation and, in Europe, a high degree of cultural and political homogeneity—far more that likely in most future U.N.-sanctioned operations. If the United States should have to expect a relativèly much smaller contribution of U.S. troops and financing than in the Gulf operations. By its treaty commitments and geographic deployment, however, the United States stood a great chance of being involved in any military operations in Europe and Korea. Any U.N. enforcement action would have to be authorized by the Security Council and would thus be subject to U.S. veto.This fact should reassure Congress. One question inherent in any big multilateral action concerns the level at which integration of command of multinational forces would occur. The distinction in U.S. military terminology between command and operational control (OPCON) is useful in this respect. Command applies to such matters as discipline, pay, morale and logistics; most of these (perhaps not logistics) would be carried out at the level of the national military contingents. OPCON is likely to be different. If U.S. troops were involved

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there would probably have to be, under an overall U.N. commander from some country, a U.S. "component commander" operating with substantial independence. OPCON can be decentralized by confining each member's forces to a specific sector, physically dividing up the ground, as has been done in most U.N. peacekeeping operations. Some other functions may be even harder to divide than OPCON. Intelligence gathering, for example, will be dominated by states with vast technological capacities for overhead and electronic surveillance. In the gulf operation other coalition members presumably accepted U.S. control of intelligence, but if there were substantial Soviet participation the Soviets would likely not accept it. Secure communications would be required among participating forces in the field, either through sharing politically very sensitive or cumbersome procedures for transmission and delivery. It is likely that some states will be unable or unwilling to provide adequate logistical support for their troops, and that those with the motivation and ability to do so will have to provide for others. Some U.N. "headquarters" personnel and facilities will be required for these functions, probably drawing on the experience and capabilities of the secretary general's staff. The problem of financing such military actions demands careful attention. The history of financing past peacekeeping efforts by voluntary contribution is, to say the least, not encouraging. The gulf operation was heavily dependent on the willingness and ability of the most deeply involved states—the United States, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to pay most of the immediate costs, and in turn their willingness depended upon their ability to control the means and ends of military operations. A future operation that less directly engaged the interests of such states would have to rely on broader support, probably through an assessment of all member governments. Reasonably complete and prompt payment of those assessments would have to be assured. Such problems may be equally severe for the peace-time maintenance of standing earmarked forces. Unless any additional costs incurred can be covered by the United Nations, Third World states may be unable to participate. Certain central (non-state-specific) services,

such as administration, intelligence, command and control, perhaps logistics and transport, must ne prepared and institutionalized in advance. Provision in the regular budget of the United Nation might coter such ongoing costs of multilateral readiness, with special assessments made to cover the cost of any enforcement actions undertaken.[18]

The credibility of U.N. action to repel aggression and restore international peace and security, as foreseen in the U.N. Charter, has been profoundly affected by the response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. The Security Council showed itself capable of taking decisive action. Its ability to impose comprehensive sanctions and see them enforced was clearly demonstrated, even though the ultimate effectiveness of the sanctions was not adequately tested. By authorizing the use of military force the council gained compliance with all of its relevant resolutions. The Security Council has shown that it has the capacity to initiate collective measures essential for the maintenance of peace in a New World Order. This development can enhance the United Nations' ability not just to restore the status quo as it existed prior to a breach of the peace, but also to change the parameters of the global order to something more favorable than existed under the prior status quo. In this it may even go beyond the vision of the U.N. founders. Furthermore knowledge that the United Nations has such a capability will also enhance its ability to deter breaches of the peace, and so make actual enforcement or later peace-keeping less necessary. Collective security may suppress incipient acts of aggression as well as defeat or punish those that do emerge. Nevertheless it should not be assumed that any U.N. role in enforcement during the 1990s will be automatic. It will require a deliberate political judgment that can only be made by members of the Security Council acting collectively, and will depend on some continuing commonality of interests among the five permanent members of the council—the United States and the Soviet Union in particular. The effectiveness of the United Nations in dealing with international security problems, whether by enforcement

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measures, peace-keeping or mediation, will always be sensitive to the nature of relations between these two superpowers. A United Nations whose credibility in dealing with aggression and threats to peace has been restored, however, can serve to moderate any revival of tension between them by lessening the need for, or likehood, of, unilateral intervention in regional crises. The manner in which the gulf military action was executed by the United States and its coalition partners will likely limit the willingness of council members to follow a similar procedure in the future—a procedure that leaves council members little control over the course of military operations and over the conclusion of hostilities. Neither the United States nor any other country will be ready to act under all circumstances to preserve or restore peace. Nor will other states always be ready to endorse unilateral actions. Some states may not wish to contribute to an operation, and the council may not always wish to depend disproportionately on a particular state's contribution. Some U.N. capacity to carry out these functions on a permanent basis will therefore be desirable. For this reason, as well as others previously mentioned, the Security Council should be able to mobilize a force to serve under U.N. command for enforcement purposes. That capacity may be virtually indispensable in an emergent world order. The chance to achieve it should not be missed.[19]

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Ethno-Religious Tensions and New World Order

Race, ethnicity, religion and colour are inexorably clawing their way back to the centres stage of international contention. The Islamic world is girding up for a conflict with the Christian world. Pakistan, for instance, now seeks an Islamic front to safeguard its interests. Turkey, which had for long nursed the hope of being considered European, is increasingly reconciling itself to the Christian identity of the European community. *Germany,* benignly restored, uses kid gloves when handling neo-Nazi attacks on immigrant labour. Austria, Switzerland and France hide the resurgence of racism behind the facade of anti-immigrant politics. Across the world, old animosities have come back with the new order, more virulent and deep-seated. It is as if the years after the Second World War were an aberration. Digression from the path charted out by history where, what had begun as a fight at the end of World War I between Christian Europe and a godless Red Russia had become lost in the complications of another world that had been born from the ashes of World War II. As if history had at last recovered from its absent minded playing-off of nations which were really on the same side and had recovered to fulfil Nostradamus' prediction of a last great stand-off between the East and the West. Does the New World Order, therefore, have

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to be rejected? Not necessarily. But it must be treated with caution. Developing nations had failed to come up with an alternative to the politics of the hi-polar world. They were, therefore, left with little choice but to take sides. The bi-polar world had however proved beneficial for the Third World as the power blocs competed to increase their spheres of influence in the developing countries. Along with a choice of prescriptions for development, there existed a choice of source of aid. Even presuming that the new order will focus attention on global concerns of poverty and ecological destruction, the developing countries have now competition from the former east block countries. The developed world has already indicated that the concerns of East Europe, Russia and the breakaway republics weigh more heavily. But the new order, despite all it portents, at least superficially, promises what has always been the basis of international organisation — a comity of nations with all resources and dangers perceived as common to each one. Perhaps the new order is nowhere bear attaining the ideal and seeks to realise interests of specific countries and groupings. But the very resource to moral grounds provides the opening for the Third World to force the West to adhere to international concerns instead of just using them for promoting specific concerns.[1]

President Bush's triumph in the Gulf War is in danger of becoming a footnote in contemporary history, not the turning point it should be. His preliminary postwar efforts to establish a durable security system in the Middle East lack a strategic focus. America's readiness to resume arms sales to Saudi Arabia and the gulf emirates and the tentativeness of the arms control proposals unveiled for that region last May are more suggestive of past failures than future promise. The initiative of Secretary of State James A. Baker to convene an Arab-Israeli peace conference seeks again to arrange direct talks between adversaries, not to advance a conceptual approach for transforming regional conflicts. The vision that forged an international coalition and achieved success on the battlefield is not evident on the diplomatic front. Opportunities to establish a stable regional order will not

last long. Victory has left the United States the preeminent military power in the Middle East, as it did at the end of the Second World War. This time, however, American power is not as self-contained or rooted in a hegemonic economic position; it must rely on the political and financial support of other countries. But neither is the United States constrained from proceeding along a new path, as it had been in 1945-48, because of its growing preoccupation with containing Soviet power, rebuilding Western Europe and deferring to the vestigial imperial pretensions of a depleted Britain and France. In the 1990s the United States may not be the dominant power it was in 1945, but relative to the other major actors in the international arena it alone is positioned, and perhaps only briefly, to shape the course of events in the Middle East for years, even decades, to come[2]. Just as the campaign to undo Saddam Hussein's aggression against Kuwait could not have been mounted or carried to a decisive conclusion by any power but the United States, so too does the establishment of a system of security in the Middle East depend on U.S. leaders seizing the moment to pioneer an arrangement that will end the vicious cycle of wars and ever-increasing expenditures on arms, to ensure security for all states in the region. Behind the rhetoric of Bush's call for "a new world order" lies the reality of an international system hurtling dangerously out of control. The old system and old ways are no longer adequate to the security needs of member states. Economic pressures, demographic upheavals, political instability exacerbated by ethnic and religious tensions, and budding conflicts over scarce resources are taking place in a world of profound environmental and societal disruptions. If these challenges are to be tackled with any success, a period of stability is essential. Pax Americana is not the answer: The United States has neither the power, the wealth nor the urge to impose an imperial order. At the present crossroads, ideas and institutions to encourage development, democratization and nation-building depend on first achieving a condition of security. What happened in the Gulf between August 2, 1990, and February 28, 1991, was the result of a unique confluence of circumstances. For once the concept of

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collective security as envisioned in the U.N. Charter worked. The U.S. response to Saddam Hussein's aggression was central, but the United States could not have done it alone; strong supporting assistance was needed. Five circumstances made for success in the Gulf crisis: U.S. leadership; U.S. Soviet cooperation; U.S.military capability; the role of the United Nations; and the willingness of nations to share the burden. President Bush's leadership was crucial. A full assessment of the influences that determined his response to Iraq's aggression will have to await publication of documents and memoirs. (For example, what role did then-Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher of Britain play in the American President's decisions? Early in the crisis she reportedly urged President Bush to react forcefully and demand nothing less than an immediate and complete Iraqi withdrawal, on the grounds that aggression must never be allowed to garner benefits). Nevertheless even at this date a few factors appears to have been important in shaping the president's choices. George Bush was a child of the 1930s and a veteran of World War II. His formative political attitudes were shaped by the conviction that appeasement does not pay and that aggression must not go unanswered. In his reaction to the invasion of Kuwait, the remembrance of Munich resonated. By inclination an activist but also very much the pragmatist. Bush was motivated by concrete political goals, uncluttered by extraneous or imagined foreign policy complications.[3]

His approach and the subsequent decision to use force was not the only possible response. Judging by the speeches and writings of key figures in the Carter administration, had the Democrats controlled the White House the response might have been quite different. There probably would not have been a massive military deployment in the Gulf or an internation mobilization to defeat Saddam Hussein on the battlefield. Instead the approach would have been based on protecting Saudi Arabia and deterring further Iraqi expansion; not liberating Kuwait. Sanctions would have been given more time, with protests confined to the United Nations and over-tures to seek concessions

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from Saddam Hussein linked to pressuring Israel to put the Palestinian issue on the bargaining table. In the final analysis force would have been avoided for domestic political reasons and for fear of triggering an anti-American backlash in the Muslim world.[4]

Invariably chose the worst possible move at each step in the mounting crisis.[5] The end of the Cold War and improved U.S.-Soviet relations made possible the American-led military campaign in the Gulf. Without Soviet cooperation in the United Nations, Bush's task would have been much more difficult, perhaps impossible. In helping, Moscow jeopardized a lucrative relationship with its richest Arab client. For the first time since the 1956 Suez Crisis the two super-powers did not back different clients in a Middle East conflict; and for the first time since the 1967 Six Day War the Soviet Union did nothing to shield a prized client from the consequences of its military folly. Not only did Moscow watch from the sidelines as the Iraqi military machine that it had largely created was destroyed, but it gave Washington the green light to proceed. For three months, though deploring the Iraqi aggression and agreeing to the imposition of sanctions, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev had refused to approve the use of force. His personal adviser, Yevgeny Primakov, an Arabist, had held lengthy discussions with Saddam Hussein on a number of occasions to find a face-saving, nonmilitary way out of the crisis, one that would have maintained the Soviet-Iraqi relationship and Moscow's substantial stake in the country. Surprising, therefore, was Gorbachev's decision at the end of November 1990 to support U.N. Security Council resolution 678 authorizing the use of force, if necessary, to "restore international peace and security in the area." Gorbachev's support meant that the date for the final showdown could be fixed. Primakov and the Arabists in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs lost to Shevardandze (who, ironically, broke with Gorbachev three weeks later over domestic issues). With the Soviet Union's unequivocal commitment to the liberation of Kuwait, the U.N. resolutions assumed much greater importance and facilitated Bush's task of convincing the

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U.S. public of the necessity to pursue the military option. A Soviet veto of U.N. resolution 678 would have deprived President Bush of the imprimature of U.N. legitimacy, complicated consensus-building at home and weakened the international coalition. It might have swayed votes in the Senate in January 1991 and forestalled a positive vote for the use of force without an explicit declaration of war. By going along Gorbachev enabled Bush to go ahead. That Moscow did not contribute military forces to the coalition was to be expected revulsion against eight years of war in Afghanist imposed severe restraints on Gorbachev. In late February 1991, when the coalition brought Iraq to the brink of defeat, Gorbachev tried to break an eight point plan to give Saddam a face-saving way out. But despite scattered reports to the contrary, there is no evidence that Moscow did much (if anything) for Saddam. Gorbachev did not assist Iraq at the expense of defying U.N. resolutions; Moscow did not divide the international coalition or break the embargo or send additional Soviet advisers. The Soviet Union's behaviour was sufficiently responsible and supportive for detente to have survived its toughest trial to date.[6]

The availability of combat-ready forces capable of confronting Iraq's battle-tested army made Bush's political determination credible. In retrospect, Saddam Hussein's timing was as poor as his judgment. He failed to appreciate that the end of the Cold War, the unification of Germany and the signing in November 1990 of an agreement to reduce conventional forces in Europe all signified a momentous change in Soviet policy, away from relying on military means to achieve political goals and toward fostering reconciliation with the West. For Bush this confluence of events was providential. It gave him access to the military power he needed. More than half of the 540,000 U.S. troops sent to the Gulf came from the central European front, where they had been primed to deter and if necessary fight invading Soviet forces. Together with British and French contingents they represented the cream of the army NATO had been honing for combat for years. They deployment, a magnificent logistical feat

in itself, demonstrated the strength of the U.S. sea and airlift capability.

It was Bush's good fortune to have such a military force readily available. A few years down the post-Cold War road, another Gulf-type operation will be nearly impossible, given the deep cuts that are being projected in U.S. and West European defense budgets. In 1990 the United States had not yet begun to draw down its 380,000 troops in Western Europe; by the mid-1990s this number will be reduced to about 100,000. Nor will combat air power, built with the Soviet Union in mind as the possible threat, be as formidable. The third factor was the role of the United Nations. After years of ineptitude marked Cold War divisions and unwillingness to condemn Third World aggressors, the United Nations reclaimed a major role in international relations. In legitimizing an international coalition that cut across established alliances, it helped bring about the defeat of Iraq. From the beginning the Security Council dominated the handling of the crisis, and its early moves quickly isolated Iraq diplomatically and economically. Most members of the General Assembly disapproved of Iraq's invasion, with its implicit threat to their own national existence, and allowed the great powers to work out a solution. Both the Arab League and the non-aligned movement were hopelessly divided and without resources to act. With each successive step, and the coalition's obvious intention to persevere, pivotal states reversed deeply established policy positions: Turkey abandoned its aversion to intervening in any Arab conflict that did not directly involve its own security; Syria dropped its anti-Western stance and joined with the "imperialists" to topple an Arab rival; Iran did nothing to interfere with U.S. engineered military operations, and it impounded the Iraqi military aircraft seeking a haven from the coalition's bombing; and Israel exercised uncharacteristic restraint, absorbing Iraqi Scud missile attacks and relying on U.S.-manned batteries of Patriot antiballistic missiles to protect its territory, thereby frustrating Saddam's attempt to transform the Gulf War into a new Arab-Israeli War. With widespread

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support in the United Nations, countries like Jordan, Yemen, Libya, Algeria and the Sudan who tilted toward Iraq dared not challenge the blockade. This support gave President Bush the mandate he needed to isolate doubters home and to push ahead with operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Once again it was the United States that shouldered the principal military responsibility; as in the case of Korea in 1950, it was this readiness to do so that assured a successful outcome for a U.N. operation to reverse an aggression. Security is costly. As the price tag for deploying more than 600,000 troops to the Gulf for an indeterminate period became an integral part of the debate in the United States over the relative merits of relying on sanctions or resorting to force, the president was compelled to solicit large financial contributions from wealthy countries: The Gulf states, or curse, and also Japan and Germany, the latter complying only after persistent U.S. prodding. In this instance, burden-sharing worked, but it was Washington's leverage, not the authority of the United Nations, that pried the funds loose from countries allied to the United States. This time their refusal to contribute would have occasioned serious strains in relations with the United States on whom they are still dependent militarily. Not so, though, in the future, when the United States, operating with a reduced military capability in a Eurasian environment inhabited by a less threatening Soviet Union, will find its ability to elicit military and financial assistance from allies for policing activities in Third World conflicts greatly diminished. If current plans for implementing U.N.-sponsored peacekeeping and arms control measure in the Gulf cannot be adequately financed, then any prospects for establishing a new security system in the region are doomed to fail. A combination of unforeseen circumstances, therefore, led to the defeat of Saddam Hussein. In the process they gave rise to a new strategic environment, which effectively utilized could begin an era of regional stability and security. But the contours of this new environment are liable to change, and once changed they will be difficult to reshape in so felicitous a configuration. It is as if an upheaval has shaken or destroyed previous political-military

positions and structures, and new ones have not yet been settled on. The material for rebuilding is at hand, but whether the architecture will be the old and familiar or new and original remains to be seen.

The most prominent feature of the new strategic environment is the re-emergence of the United States as the pre-eminent military power in the Middle East. For the first time since 1945 the United States has the apparent ability to prevent regional wars. However it can do so only if it is willing to be responsible for regulating the weak multipolar system that emerged after 1945, and in particular since the late 1960s when British pulled out of the Gulf and the Soviet Union entered as a major influence in the Arab world. Victory brings the opportunity for change, But unless U.S. influence is harnessed to a grand strategic purpose that transforms regional conceptions of security, it will evanesce, and the Gulf War will fade in memory as American power withdraws before leaving the rudiments of a new security system in place. U.S.-Soviet cooperation, rooted in mutual self-interest and convergent regional aims, could make possible a type of quasi-hegemonial order in which U.S. activities to prevent future wars were tied to general monitoring by the U.N. Security Council.

This new situation stems from Moscow's shift from imperial rivalry to incipient accommodation. It is an outgrowth of the end of the Cold War, and the Soviet Union's parlour domestic situation, urgent need for detente and disenchantment with what Moscow has reaped in the Arab world. For three decades Society weapons made war in the Middle East (and much of the Third World) possible. These gave client states military options against regional rivals and spawned a multipolarity that place conflict at its core. Regional actors acquired instant ifluence. They were able to exploit the U.S.-Soviet rivalry, accumulate powerful arsenals and trigger wars for reasons that had little to do with their security, for example, the Yemeni civil war (1962-67), the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, the Iran-Iraq War (1980-88) and

the 1990 Iraqi seizure of Kuwait. Moreover at various times Moscow's protection shielded Egypt, Syria, Libya and Iraq from the consequences of their mistakes and perpetuated regional conflicts. The second salient characteristic of the new strategic environment is the emerging congruence of American and Soviet aims in promoting regional stability, which is a necessary condition for a durable detente. By avoiding the polarizing commitments that fueled their imperial rivalry during the Cold War period, the two powers can do much to prevent a recurrence of the region's destabilizing cycle of wars. The prospects of their detente in the 1990s are far better than in the 1960s or 1970s, mainly because of Moscow's determination to end the Soviet Union's post-1917 isolation from Europe and European culture. Moscow knows that the key to making the Soviet Union a normal great power in Europe is to improve relations with the United States.

All this has profound implications for prospects of security in the Middle East, because even a limited American military presence, if deployed with Soviet agreement for specific purposes, could have far-reaching consequences. A third feature of the new environment is the shift in influence from the weak to the strong. Paradoxically the local actors were able to use the Cold War for their own ends, because their superpower patrons accorded them an importance far beyond their actual strategic-political value. As they were lavishly supplied with weapons, so were their rivals. This militarization bred an increased dependence, a realization that security and survival were based on having a reliable patron-protector. As long as the superpowers were absorbed with their own rivalry and content to foster regional polarization, they subsidized the regional ambitions of their clients; as long as they were driven by a quest for short-term advantages, they allowed themselves to be manipulated. Detente has diminished the importance of Middle East clients and highlighted their extreme vulnerability: No country in the region can defend itself against major attack. All need access to outside assistance more than ever in this age of high-tech

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weapons and the rapid obsolescence of expensive arsenals. Saudi Arabia and the Gulf emirates are the weakest and the most logical candidates for a testing a new security system. The Gulf crisis demonstrated that unaided they are prey to covetous neighbours. Like the leaders of any government the Saudis understandably want to retain maximum flexibility to pursue their interests, but their survival depends on protection by outside powers. In the past, Saudi realpolitic relied on a mix of survival insurance in the form of large-scale purchases of expensive weapons and the manipulation of great power rivalry and interest, as in the latter stages of the Iran-Iraq War when the Saudi-dominated Gulf Cooperation Council prompted Kuwait to maneuver the United States and the Soviet Union into relfagging Kuwaiti tankers. Iran was not permitted to emerge victorious over Iraq, lest the general balance of power in the area be upset. In 1990 the United States reacted as it did against Iraq partly for the same valid strategic reason—to prevent one regional power from controlling the oil in the Gulf. In the future who is going to manipulate whom and for what purposes? For the United States to subordinate strategic objectives to commercial concerns would be to accept the role of pawn to Saudi Arabia's king and to condone the kind of unbridled corruption and arrogance that brought on the full crisis. Moreover politics and business—as usual in the Gulf will encourage perpetuation of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Under such conditions the consequences will surely be a doleful and costly as they have been in the past. A new approach is needed, the principal aim of which should be to use the present short-lived opportunity to establish a different kind of security system. Only in an environment in which governments feel safe from aggression can the laudable dreams of justice, democratization and development have a chance of being realized; only can the oil-rich Gulf Arabas be induced to invest in the needy lands of the region. To expect any security system to do more than ensure security is to doom it to failure from the outset. No externally devised arrangement can—or should be expected to—by its limited nature end the manifold divisions and historically rooted ethnoreligious tesions between competing elites and groups[7] .

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The war in the Persian Gulf unleashed powerful and contradictory-forces in the Middle East. The fundamental premise of American policy was that defeating Saddam Hussein would discredit radicalism, strengthen moderates and enhance regional stability. On the other hand, the war, as long as it lasted, was bound to sow the seeds of future resentments and turbulence. There was a new sentiment in the Middle East that more democratic forms of government were needed; yet a new impetus was also given to Islamic forces in almost every country in the region. Will the United States be in a position, now that the war is over, to shape the trends in a period of enormous fluidity? Or will it be riding a tornado? There is pressure to redouble efforts to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. But will the conditions for a successful effort be propitious, or not ?[8]

During the first Gulf War—the eight-year struggle between Iraq and Iran—Iraq was driven by necessity into an alignment with the Arab moderates, America's friends. This move helped make possible Egypt's recently into the Arab fold; it also assured Syria's isolation, preventing Syria from capitalizing on the American debacle in Lebanon. Situated between radical Syria and Iran, Iraq seemed to have a durable reason for this more constructive orientation.

When that war ended in the summer of 1988, that regional state of affairs flew apart with remarkable speed. One crucial development was the surprising weakness of both Syria and Iran. At various times in the past, it had been Syria's President Hafez al-Assad and Iran's Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini who had their pictures on weekly news magazine covers as the most dangerous men in the world. Over time, however, Syria had been deflated by the cumulative effect of its economic weakness, its Lebanon quagmire, its humiliation by the Soviets (who rejected Syria's bid for strategic parity with Israel) and even the Palestinian uprising in the Israeli-occupied territories, which punctured Assad's claims to be a major player in the Palestinian game. Iran, after 1988, seemed preoccupied more with recovering

its internal equilibrium than with helping sustain the regional one Khomeini was dead, and the moderates so eagerly sought after by the White House in the mid-1980s finally seemed to have the upper hand. Yet their outreach to the West was stymied by their unwillingness or inability to end the hostage drama in Lebanon. The result, from Saddam's vantage point, was a defanged Iran unable to link up decisively with the outside world. Saddam must have looked around one day and realized he was free of the regional constraints that had compelled his previous course. His aggressive military buildup, plus Iraq's emergence as a powerhouse oil producer (second only to Saudi Arabia in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries), put him in a position to bid for regional dominance. In early 1990, therefore, the Iraqi leader made a strategic shift. He abandoned a foreign policy that had made him, for a decade, a strategic partner of America's closest friends in the Arab world and thus a plausible strategic interlocutor with the United States.

There was a telling moment in early 1990 when the Iraqis seemed to have second thoughts about the return of the Arab League to Cairo, a campaign they had been leading until then on Egypt's behalf. After Egyptian prodding the Iraqis relented, but clearly they were coming to view Egypt less as a needed ally than as a traditional and likely future rival. Saddam's posture toward the United States shifted even more dramatically. He was shocked by the collapse of the Soviet Union and the resultant preeminence of the United States as the key outside power in the Middle East. His response was not a new deference towards Washington, or even a continuation of the association that the war had engendered; it was rather an outburst of anti-Americanism that was the clearest possible signal of his strategic reversal. In a major (and revealing) speech to the Arab Cooperation Council Summit in Amman on February 24, 1990, Saddam portrayed the end of the Cold War as disaster for the Arabas: Soviet Jewish immigrants were flooding Israel; the Arabas would have to do without their traditional Soviet backing;

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American preeminence was strategic windfall for Israel. A new counterweight was needed to block American ambitions, he argued. Europe and Japan would emerge as a major powers in five years' time, but meanwhile the only hope for the Arabas was to pull together and counterbalance America themselves (presumably under Iraq leadership). Saddam singled out the oil weapon as crucial leverage, hailing the 1973 Arab oil embargo. Then in May he called for a new embargo against the United States to force a change in its Middle East policy. This was of a piece with what later produced his invasion of Kuwait—his fury at the overproduction of oil by Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, which held prices down and denied Iraq the revenue needed to sustain its economic and military surge. Saddam's anti-Americanism was not a passing whim. In his February 1990 speech he denounced the U.S. naval presence in the Gulf, even though it was far diminished from its wartime peak (and had been there largely to protect Iraq's own lifeline to the outside world). He focused blame on the United States for changes in Soviet policy harmful to the Arabas. Later he reacted bitterly to a Voice of America editorial broadcast that listed Iraq among countries not yet democratic. He chafed at the U.S.-British police operations that blocked his illegal acquisition of nuclear triggering devices and tubing for a "supergun". His threat in early April to use chemical weapons against Israel if attacked is well known, but he is also on record as saying in May that if his missiles could hit Washington, he would try that too, "as necessary." Sometimes paranoids can have real enemies, or real fears. But anti-Americaism is also weapon of convenience for radicals. The evidence seems stronger that, by his own choice and for his own reasons, Saddam Hussein made himself a strategic adversary of the United States. The "American threat" was a foil, or an excuse, for regional ambitions he now saw himself in a position to fulfil. The United States and its Arab Friends were undeniably slow to react to this transformation. They clung too long to the hope that it was not as decisive as it appeared and that some convergence of interest might remain. But the United States responded brilliantly and courageously to

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the August 2 invasion of Kuwait. It quickly grasped the strategic reality that now required it to step in as the counterweight to Iraq's assault on the regional balance. By a historic blunder, Saddam had brought about precisely the American entry into the region that he had portrayed as his worst nightmare. And the United States saw correctly that only the crushing defeat of Saddam would minimize the strategic threat he posed.[9]

The United States has now set itself the task of helping shape a new regional balance out of the debris of the second Gulf-War — hoping to prevent a third. Every country in the region has felt the effects, internally and externally, New alignments are forming. It is out of this fluidity that the United States might, or might not, be able to create a new order in the Middle East. In Saudi Arabia the shock of the invasion of Kuwait brought an unaccustomed clarity and decisiveness to Saudi policy. Yet the invitation to American forces exacerbated strains within the kingdom, including pressures from Islamic clerics who charged the royal family with betraying the land of Two Holy Mosques to the infidels. Simultaneously and contradictorily, it tempted a disaffected intelligentsia to press harder for liberal reforms. Saudi leaders pinned their hopes on an early decisive victory over Saddam Hussein to restore the Kingdom's security and make possible the early withdrawal of foreign troops; they feared any outcome, diplomatic or military, that left them with the Iraqi threat intact and a continuing dependence on foreign forces. They claimed not to fear the tumultuous consequences of a war, or else they feared it less than a prolongation of the crisis. Having committed themselves, they saw no alternate to victory. In the short run, the achievement of that victory has boosted Saudi self-confidence. Yet the crisis has also been a shock to the delicate internal balance of the Saudi system. It is in the longer run that the premise of American policy will be tested—namely, the conviction that the defeat of Saddam Hussein will sustain the courage of moderates. Before the war, Saudi leaders talked confidently of a "new thinking" in their policy that would emerge after victory. They

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promised a more assertive Saudi role, in partnership with Egypt, in promoting the peace process and taming the Syrians. They implied an end to the policy of paying protection money to radical forces, particularly the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). They said they were prepared for full peace and normalization of relations with Israel, if the Palestinian problem could be solved. They implied a warmer and more open relationship with the United States, though as noted, they hoped its military presence could return to something like its previous over-the-horizon discreetness. They promised bolder internal reform, facing down the clerics with the confidence that would come from vindication in their wining gamble against the Iraqi leader. With victory, the initial boost given to Saudi self-confidence may have these welcome and lasting effects. But it will also run up against the unresolved dilemmas of the kingdom's internal situation. Egypt's role is more clearly strengthened by the coalition's had more solid support in Egypt than elsewhere in the Arab world, given its traditional rivalry with and popular mistrust of Iraq. Egypt gained the forgiveness of its military debt to the United States, financial assistance and the promise of firmer postwar political backing from the Saudis, and the co-opting (at least temporarily) of the Syrians. Victory vindicated its pro-American and moderate stance and thrust it forward as a regional power. Syria has also benefited from the crisis, however, breaking out of its long isolation in the Arab world, seizing the moment to consolidate its brutal hold on Lebanon, winning a rapproachement with the United States and new subsidies from the Saudis and other Gulf countries as a reward for its commitment of forces to the anti-Saddam cause, Having assured its Gulf benefactors of its dedication to peaceful economic development. Syria has nonetheless applied its new windfall to forming and equipping a new armored division and shopping for new surface-to-surface missiles from China, North Korea and the Soviet Union. The Syrian regime is still weak in many respects. Caution has long been one of Assad's hallmarks. But he may yet have his eye on filling any vacuum that might appear in Arab politics after Saddam's defeat. The hope of Sudia Arabïa,

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the Gulf countries and Egypt that they can tame Syria in the new environment may be overly optimistic. Jordan's support for Saddam was a shock to its friends. Its standing in the United States and the Arab world may never fully recover. The deeper problem, however, is not jordan's foreign policy but the survival of the Hashemite monarchy. Jordan formally joined the international sanctions against Iraq, enough to inflict a devastating blow on its own economy, but the king's political and military support for Saddam clouded the prospects for future economic aid from his traditional benefactors. The Muslim Bortherhood, after its stunning success in the 1989 parliamentary elections, now has five representatives in the Jordanian cabinet. The king's moves looked like one Faustian bargain after another, appeasing radical forces that he feared, at the cost of martgaging his future. Hussein survived the war, at least. His hopes for political recovery in the region depend on whether his erstwhile partners are prepared to forgive and forget. The truth is that none of them want to see the Jordanian monarchy replaced by its more retrograde opponents. The PLO is even more discredited in the Gulf by its embrace of Saddam—while the king has gained ground among Palestinians for the same policy. The ironic result is that the Saudis, Egyptians, Americans, Israelis, Syrians and Palestinians are all likely to rediscover a stake in a role for Jordan in the region and even in the peace process. Israel, reeling from the financial burden of the flood of Soviet immigrants, was buffetted by continued American pressures on the Palestinian issue before the crisis. It was shunned by the United States through most of the crisis period before the war began, and it can count on American and international pressures to assault it again in the war's aftermath. Israel fears, indeed, that the "strategic cooperation" it has long enjoyed with the United States is about to be replaced by a new intimacy in America's relations with the Arabas for whom Americans have expended their blood and treasure. Israel also seems ill prepared for these pressures. The only creative proposals put forward on the Palestinian issue by Likud leaders in the previous dozen years originally came from others—autonomy had been Moshe Dayan's

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idea in 1978; elections had been Yitzhak Rabin's plan in 1989. Without the leavening influence of such coalition partners, the Likud-dominated cabinet that replaced the National Unity Government in early 1990 will need to struggle for the conceptual wherewithal to maneuver through the political minefield ahead, let alone open up new prospects for a Palestinian solution. Some officials in the Israeli government are attempting to formulate new ideas; others are digging in behind old positions; a hard-line extremist has joined the cabinet. There is always the temptations to try to stall the Americans for a year, the count on the 1992 U.S. presidential election season to relieve the pressures, seeking to outwait an administration that is still mistrusted. The Bush administration will still pay some price for its inartful handling of the Israeli connection—its failure to establish early on the relationship of confidence that is the precondition for American influence. The relationship has grown closer in the crucible of war, however, and Israel will be seen to have paid its dues by its restraint and solicitude for the president's coalition diplomacy. Whether this newfound mutual confidence will survive the bitterly contentious issues of the peace process remains to be seen.[10]

The New World Order envisioned by Presidents Bush and Gorbachev would be founded on the rule of law and on the principle of collective security. That principle necessarily entails the possibility of military enforcement measures by the United Nations. Twice in its history the Security Council has authorized such action. The first instance was in the Korean War in 1950; the second was in the Gulf in 1990. More occasions are likely to follow. The U.N. Charter gives the Security Council the authority "to maintain or restore international peace and security," and to enforce the will of the counsel on a state that has broken the peace. Use of military force by the council for these purposes was foreseen by the founders of the United Nations. Indeed it was seen almost half a century ago as an essential element in the world order that the United Nations was intended to establish. Should the need arise, countries would be protected from

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aggression by forces provided to the Security Council by member states, serving as a U.N. army at the council's will. Miliary forces, however, have not been available to the council on this basis and improvisation has therefore been required. The action taken by the Security Council in response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait amounted to just that — an improvisation to permit enforcement of the council's will without the specific means provided in the charter for that purpose.[11]

Miliary force has much more frequently been used by the United Nations for the purpose of peace-keeping, something not foreseen in the charter at all. This improvision was first devised in haste to facilitate an end to the 1956 hostilities in the Middle East. Since the beginning, which amply demonstrated the value of the technique, U.N. use of military and civilian, personnel provided by member states for peace-keeping has become a well-established practice now supported by all the major powers. The use of military force by the United Nations for both of these purposes—enforcement and peace-keeping — is surely essential to a world order in which international security is heavily dependent on the Security Council. The experience of the Gulf War and of the more distant past offers important lessons and raises trenchant questions as to how this can most effectively be done in the Gulf (as action moves from military victory to the maintenance of peace in the region) and where ever else peace may be endangered. Since the Suez crisis of 1956, the United Nations has developed a notable elasticity in using peace-keeping forces, to the point that it is now difficult to formulate a precise definitions—or the limits—of what peace-keeping functions may be. The original role of standing between hostile forces has been expanded to encompass, among other functions, the maintenance of security or stability within a given area (as in southern Lebanon), the monitoring of elections (Namibia, Haiti), the provision of humanitarian assistance (Cyprus) and disarmament of insurgents (Nicaragua). This flexibility greatly increases the value of peace-keeping forces as an instrument available to the Security Council in dealing with potential or

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existing conflicts. For example, the permanent members of the Security Council have recently developed a plan to bring peace to Cambodia that would use peace-keeping forces—both military and civilian—for broad purposes of pacification, stabilization and administration. Three limitations on the use peace-keeping have been consistently honored : (1) peace-keeping has been interpreted, as originally articulated by U.N. Secretary General Dag Ham-marskjold, as a provisional measure under the U.N. Charter, that is, as a measure undertaken without prejudice to the rights, claims or positions of the parties concerned: (2) peace-keeping operations have been undertaken only with the consent of all the parties concerned ;(3) peace-keeping forces may use arms only in self-defense. Again in accordance with the original decision by Hammarskjold, U.S. and Soviet troops have never been included in peace-keeping forces. In domestic conflicts the consent of all the parties is likely to remain a compelling requirement. It was clearly shown in non-U.N. peace-keeping undertakings, in Lebanon in 1983-84 and more recently in Liberia, that without the consent of the parties grave risks are involved and the results can be disastrous. This may not, however, be the case in interstate-conflicts. When peace-keeping forces are deployed between hostile forces after truce of cease-fire has been achieved, as essential purpose is to deter a renewal of hostilities. In this sense deterrence is already an accepted function of peace-keeping. Yet in interstate conflicts a situation could well arise in which peace-keeping forces are needed for deterrence purposes but the consent of one of the parties is not obtainable. This should not, a priori, preclude a Security Council decision to deploy them if the other characteristic limitations are maintained. The situation in the Gulf could present the council with precisely such a need, as a long-term settlement of hostilities is sought. Some sort of convincing deterrent force will be needed to prevent renewed threats against Kuwait and, conceivable, to monitor any demilitarized zones that may be established. For the near term, further military adventures are unlikely. But in long run, neither Iraqi motives and potential for revenge nor the ambitions of one or more of its neighbors can be

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ignored. Whatever misgivings some parties may have about the U.S.-led Gulf operation, they have excellent reasons to converge on some sort of substantial U.N. presence in the Gulf in the future. The emergence of the United Nations as an important institution for promoting international security can moderate any revival of Soviet-American tensions that might stem from disagreements regarding the Gulf or other regions. U.S. and Soviet forces could be usefully included in such an operation to ensure, through its size and composition, maximum credibility. But to be acceptable to the majority of U.N. members such a force must retain an indisputable U.N. identity and must not be dominated by one member state. In other border disputes—of which many exist—a comparable need for deterrence may arise preferably under circumstances that would permit deployment of peace-keeping forces before hostilities actually occur. Indeed, if at the request of Kuwait a peace-keeping force had been deployed on its border with Iraq in August 1990, the Gulf War might have been avoided. It is worth emphasizing that nothing in the charter prohibits the Security Council from deploying peace-keeping forces without the consent of all the parties, or from including troop contingents from the permanent members of the council in such forces where the need deterrence arises. (U.S. and Soviet military personnel already serve in U.N. military observer missions). Such action would still fall under the definition of a provisional measure to be taken by the council "to prevent an aggravation of the situation" before deciding on enforcement action as foreseen in Articles 41 and 42 of the U.N. Charter. The provision of troops by member states for such deterrence operations would remain voluntary, as in other peace-keeping missions, with financing determined on an ad hoc basis by the council, either through assessment of all members or through payment of the cost by the countries requesting the deployment, as could be the case in a situation like the Gulf where wealthy states are involved as parties. The command structure need be no different from other peace-keeping operations: A commander of the U.N. force is appointed by the Secretary General after the peace-keeping operations has been authorized by the Security Council for a defined

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mission. Troop contingents provided by member states serve under their national officers—a battalion commander, for example —who in turn receives order from the U.N. force commander. The U.N. force commander reports to the Secretary General from whom he receives operation guidance. The Secretary General reports to the Security Council and obtains its concurrence if any change in the mission of the peace-keeping force is contemplated. One can question whether it will be logistically feasible for the United Nations to mount, and maintain over a period of time, peace-keeping operations of sufficient size to provide a credible deterrent. It can only be said that where the need for peace-keeping has been evident, as in Namibia, the magnitude of required support has not inhibited action. A good number of countries might well oppose in principle the idea of deploying peace-keeping force without the consent of all the parties concerned, fearing that it would open the way to action contrary to their own national interests. Unlike the United States and the other four permanent members of the Security Council, they would not enjoy the protection of the veto. When a similar idea was put forward some years ago, in the course of confidential consultations in the Security Council on how its effectiveness might be enhanced, there was little response. The Gulf War has served, however, to heighten interest in effective deterrence using multilateral means not under the domination of one or several U.N. members. There is certainly now a broad recognition that adequate means for deterrence will be essential to a peaceful world order.[12]

The second broad purpose for the Security Councils use of military force falls largely under the heading of compellence, or coercion, rather than simply deterrence. In the context of the Security Council such action is best understood as enforcement action. Use of "air, sea or land forces" for enforcement is specifically foreseen in Chapter VII. Articles 39-46 of the U.N. Charter, in which all members undertake to make available to the Security Council "on its call and in accordance with a special agreement or agreements, armed forces, assistance and facilities, including rights of passage, necessary for the purpose of

maintaining international peace and security." Since no such special agreement have been concluded, no standing multilateral force has been available to the Security Council. Therefore the Security Council authorized the use of ad hoc forces to restore international peace in Korea and the Persian Gulf. When the North Korean attacks on South Korea were formally brought to the Security Council's attention, the council's resolution of July 7, 1950 — adopted in the temporary absence of the Soviet Union — called on member states to assist South Korea in resisting the North Korean aggression. It recommended "that all members providing military forces and other assistance pursuant to the aforesaid Security Council resolutions make such forces and other assistance available to a unified command under the United States." It requested further that the United States designate the commander of such forces. The same resolution authorized use of the U.N. flag. This in the case of Korea the Security Council requested one member state to lead a combined effort on behalf of the United Nations to resist aggression. Notwithstanding his designation as commander of U.N. forces in Korea, General Douglas MacArthur, the commander named by the United States, never reported directly to the Security Council. (Routine, unclassified status reports were provided by the United States). Neither the military Staff Committee—a body composed of military representatives of the five permanent members intended to advise the council on military matters nor the Council itself had any role in directing military operations of the unified command. The General Assembly did, however, establish a three-nation cease-fire committee that sought a formula to end the war, and the Secretary General suggested the procedure of direct talks between the military commanders that was ultimately followed and through which an armistice was achieved.

The advantages offered by this procedure were :

— Expeditious action to resist aggression. Only the United States had troops deployed in South Korea capable of taking quick military action.

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— The unambiguous command structure needed for large-scale field operations.

— A practical way to meet the responsibilities of the United Nations under the charter in the absence of a multilateral force under the Security Council for which the necessary agreements with member states had not been reached.

— Validation of the concept of collective security, since states acted jointly in response to Security Council (and subsequently General Assembly) decisions.

The disadvantages of this procedure (which became more evident in the course of time) were:

— The Untied Nations lacked control or influence over the course of military action or the precise purposes for which it was exercised (e.g., to repeal and punish aggression, to reunify the country).

— The military operation became indentified with the policy of the nation leading the effort rather than with the United Nations.

— Divisive forces within the United Nations were encouraged by the dominant role of one member state pursuing goals not universally shared.

Opportunities were afforded the aggressor to identify the struggle with one country, the United States, rather than with the international community as a whole.

All of these disadvantages were intensified in the Korean case by the bitter disagreements that prevailed at the time between the Soviet Union and the United States. Under conditions of harmony among the permanent members of the Security Council, these various disadvantages could have considerably less force.

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In the Gulf crisis the Security Council authorized, albeit in oblique language, the use of force for enforcement in another interstate conflict. After imposing a comprehensive embargo in order to bring about Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait and the restoration of its legitimate government, the council called upon "those member states cooperating with the government of Kuwait which are deploying maritime forces to the area to use such measures commensurate to the specific circumstances as may be necessary under the authority of the Security Council to ensure strict implementation" of the provision laid down in the resolution relating to economic sanctions. Then, in Resolution 678 of November 29, 1990, the Security Council authorized "member states cooperating with the government of Kuwait to use of necessary means to uphold the implement Security Council Resolution 660 and all subsequent relevant resolutions and to restore international peace and security in the area". All states were requested to provide appropriate support for "the action undertaken". This action, with specific reference to Chapter VII of the charter, constituted a new approach to implementation of the collective security concept. As in the earlier enforcement action in Korea, when there was no reference to chapter VII, a basis for the council to mobilize a U.N. force for military enforcement action did not exist. Therefore the council again turned to member states to act in its behalf through such measures as might be necessary. But this time no unified command was establishment, and the use of U.N. flag was not authorized. The Gulf action became possible because the permanent members of the Security Council cooperated on a matter of peace and security in the way originally foreseen when the United Nations was founded Representatives of the United States and the Soviet Union have repeatedly suggested that such action is an important elements in a New World Order; that is, a world in which nations will be secure because of the capacity of the United Nations to guarantee their security through collective measure. This fundamental goal of the United Nations is unquestionably brought closer through the sustained cooperation and a notably increased commonality of interests

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among the major powers, evident not only in the Gulf War but also in other conflicts such as Cambodia and Angola. Two questions nonetheless warrant careful examination; Is the approach that was taken to enforce the council's decisions with regard to the Iraq-Kuwait crisis necessarily a viable model for implementing collective security in the future? Is there a realistic alternative that would offer greater advantages? With regard to the first question, it is clear that the Security Council, in deciding an action to counter the Iraqi aggression, prescribed action for all member states. While it authorised individual states to take "the necessary action." It requested" all states to provide appropriate support for the actions undertaken." Thus all states were called on to assist in defending one state, Kuwait, from aggression. Action to be taken for this purpose would seem clearly to constitute "effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression" as foreseen in Article I of the charter. But the procedure adopted is not without its difficulties. The Security Council has no means of controlling when, how or in what degree the collective measures are applied. In the Gulf case, the states concerned were only requested "to keep the council regularly informed"; some measure taken might not have had majority support in the Security Council or the General Assembly. The State that is in command may have from the outset an interpretation of U.N. goals different from that of other Security Council members, or its aims may beome more expansive in the course of the operation. The latter happened to Korea with the U.S. decision to cross the 38th paralled and try to reunify the country by force. It would have been the case in the Gulf had the United States pursued military action beyond the Kuwaiti theater of operations. If the measures taken cease to have the endorsement of the majority of the Security Council, can they still be considered collective measures taken in the council's behalf ? This problem is inherent in a procedure in which action is taken on behalf of the council but without any council control over the nature, timing or extent of the action. The major danger is that the entire undertaking will be identified

with the country or countries actually involved in military action rather than with the United Nations. In any case, many U.N. members will not view the military action as an appropriate application of collective security if the action appears to conflict with the Security Council's goals. The gulf operation and the terms for ending military action against Iraq offer a case in point. None of the 12 Security Council resolution called for eliminating Iraq's war-making capability or deposing Saddam Hussein. But the former clearly became a goal of some coalition members, and the latter was widely suspected. President Bush and the coalition partners felt free to give own interpretation to the Security Council resolutions. Those members, including the Soviet Union, that interpreted the resolutions more narrowly may be reluctant next time to give such unconstrained authority to member states acting on the councils behalf. In any operations, if the Security Council has asserted no control over the military action authorized, will it be possible for it to assert control over the terms of peace? Such questions indicate the problems that can arise when a procedure such as that developed for the Gulf War is followed. Moreover the approach adopted in the Gulf case is not likely to be viable unless vital interests of one or more major military powers are at rish. For example, the United States might not be interested in deploying substantial forces, even if authorized to do so by the Security Council, to deter or repel an Egyptian attack on Libya.[13]

India is facing plethora of problems and there is siege within. But time has come for India to break away from shackles which bind us and to take due responsibility in shaping an emerging new world order.

India has to work along with other emerging powers to shape the new world order.

India has treated cautiously to undertake its share of responsibility in the new world order there should not be cries of national sovereignty having been compromised or any other

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motives attributed. We have to face the reality of emerging new patterns in the world and take bold steps.

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10

The New Islamic Mind and The Jews

Suddenly the Arab-Israeli conflict turns from an ostensibly insoluble thousand-year war into a latter-daypost-colonial dispute ripe for resolution. All the considerations of history, justice, and passion previously cited as insuperable barriers to compromise begin to be cut up into finite pieces capable of intelligent re-arrangement. Politicians of the region (some more than others) and diplomats (mainly American) are shrinking the problem to size. Could not all of this merciful magic have begun earlier? Yes, say those sensitive to the immense human and other costs of the Middle East's wars. But the stronger argument is that the process that began with the Ford and Carter diplomacy of the 1970s could not have picked up the requisite new momentum in the 1990s untill conditions made it not only wise and unavoidable but also profitable and safe. Arabas, especially Palestinians had to arrive at the view that they had no choice but to accept Israel politically and psychologically and that they could do so, survive, and profit. Egypt provided the crucial model; It lost a peacemaker, Anwar Sadat, to anti-Israel terrorism, but stayed essentially on course. Israelis had to realize that, with the United States militarily and politically dominant in the world and with Israel the region's dominant military power, they could start accepting the risks of peace. What risks? you ask. The Israelis insist they

won't surrender an inch of territory. But every one in the Middle East understands that the Golan Heights will go back to Syria, perhaps at first not to full and direct Syrian control but at least to formal Syrian sovereignty. What it will take are tight assurances of Israeli security and Syrian arrival at an adult definition of peace. In fact, there is no hurry for a Golan turnover. That's not just because Yitzhak Shamir hangs tough. It is because Hafez Assad shrinks from yielding the claim on power and Arab defence that flows from his chosen role as lead antagonists of Israel. Fortunately, he is no longer in a position as he was in Lebanon in the 1980s to spoil a regional initiative. Eventually, this shrewd tyrant may catch on that his policy is anachronistic and self-isolating and that by asserting it as he did at Madrid he loses Arab and international standing. Meanwhile, a nearly two-decade Syrian-Israeli truce holds steady, and Assad's bargaining position deteriorates nicely. On the West Bank Israel refuses to budge. The ruling Likud party's politics locks Shamir in, and after his personal triumph at Madrid the Labour opposition, which accepts territorial compromise, cannot lay a finger on him.[1]

But do not sell short the risk Shamir did take at Madrid. He moved Israel from formal embrace of a programme of Palestinian self-government to its active implementation, since now Israel has what it lacked before a moderate Palestinian partner desperate for real gains. Shamir has done what he said he would not do—set Israel on the slippery slope that leads to a destination he cannot control. It is obvious that, even with the most restricted autonomy, Palestinians will ask for more, and more, Israelis can deal with Palestinian disorder-terrorism, resistance, the intifada. But they cannot ignore Palestinian order of the sort exemplified by the Palestinians' smooth Madrid delegation and by the display of West Bank support for it. Let us figure that the autonomy negotiation will be painful but will more ahead. Progress cannot come without Israeli concessions on the place and rate of new settlements. This will be the crucial point where settlements correct from being a lever foreing initial palestinian

concessions to a card that Israel will find it to its advantage to play in return for further Arab concessions on ending the intifada, linking to Jordan, suspending the Arab boycott and extending regional cooperation. Mutual consent will begin to overtake the familiar deadly pattern of one-sided imposition. In these circumstances, if moderate Palestinians show they are the wave of the Palestinian future, Israelis will not be able to avoid taking a deep and more sympathetic second look at the legitimacy and normality of the Palestinian entity they are helping to create. For them the great lure is the marvelous second chance provided by the Soviet Jewish immigration to restore Israel to its founding purposes as a Jewish state but, this time, as one integrated with the life of its Arab neighbors.

Many media barons and political pundits had assumed with a degree of cynical certainty that the Middle East Peace Conference in Madrid would produce at best a stillborn offspring. It was almost a miracle when, under the ministrations of Secretary of State James Baker, political midwife extraordinary, a birth did take place. And howsoever small, the baby was alive and kicking. The most significant factor that made such a positive denouement possible was the astonishing maturity and sophistication that the Palestinians displayed throughout the exercise in Madrid. They were clearly there to try to achieve a breakthrough and not just to indulge in radical rhetoric. They were not playing to a general Arab world audience, but were more concerned with winning immediate relief for their 1.7 million people in the occupied territories by persuading Israel to ease up. In fact, the Palestinians appeared to pick up the negotiations where they had left off more than ten years ago during the Camp David peace progress, in which they had been represented by Egypt. (Egypt broke off the talks after Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982). The new pragmatism on the part of the Palestinian delegation was based on a number of realities on the ground. For instance, the Intifada, or uprising, that started in 1987, had run out of steam against determined Israeli opposition. Besides, the pace of Israeli settlements in the Occupied

Territories had accelerated, despite US opposition. Another important factor was the dramatic flood of Soviet Jewish immigration to Israel over the past year that shattered the long-held Palestinian assumption that time and demography were on their side. Far from outnumbering Israel's Jews, the Palestinian began to fear that they would be swamped by a new tidal wave of Jewish immigration that would create an irreversible presence in the Occupied Territories. There was also a psychological aspect. Iraq's ignominious defeat in the Persian Gulf was dashed Palestinian dreams on an Arab military equivalent of a knight in shining armour riding up on a white charger to smash Israel and deliver them from bondage.[2]

Thus, the Palestinians and their Jordanian allies welcomed the peace conference and the US commitment to trading land for peace as possibly the last chance to roll back the Israeli tide. The new generation of Palestinians, who handled themselves with such elan and eclat in Madrid, were a flexible lot, a far cry from the old PLO under Yasser Arafat, which supported every radical regime from Libya, to Syria, to Iraq to Yemen and vainly swore to drive the Israeli into the sea. The new generation is home-grown, aware that their goals can be achieved only through direct negotiations with Israel, which was in occupation of their land. The PLO figures of the past were members of the Palestinian diaspora, carrying a legacy of pet hatreds, hand-ups and frustrations. The Palestinian delegation that went to Madrid was authentically native and not compromised of refugees or revolutionaries. And that made the vital difference. The fly in the ointment in Madrid was Syria. To the surprise of many, Syrian President Hafez Assad, whose support to the coalition against Saddam Hussein had made him the fair-haired boy of America's Middle East diplomacy, reverted to his old rejectionist role as the spoiler of American plans for the region. In Madrid, Syria's envoys lost no opportunity to score propaganda points over Israel and to abuse its representatives, throwing a dark shadow over hopes for peace between the two arch enemies. US policy-makers were particularly disappointed because they had

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placed high hopes on Damascus being willing to negotiate an understanding with Israel over their respective interests in Lebanon. In a sense, Assad's apparent turnround was understandable in view of the internal tensions be faced, partly because he had supported the US against Iraq. His hard line will not lead to Israeli concessions, but it may strengthen him domestically and defuse fundamentalise Muslim opposition at home. Assad's Ba'ath (Arab socialist) regime is a secular government based on the president's minority Alawite sect. It has long been threatened by Islamic fundamentalists, who prefer not to forget the merciless crushing of their uprising in the Syrian city of Hama in 1982, in which about 10,000 persons were reportedly killed. Apart from that, over the past two years, Assad has appeared more vulnerable home because of the decline in Soviet backing and an economic crisis that has alienated his former strong support among Syria's middle classes and trading community. There is also a Lebanese angle to Syrian stance. The Iranian backed Hezbollah, or party of God, a Shi'ite Muslim group that is the strongest force in southern Lebanon, has long opposed Syrian subjugation of Lebanon. By taking a firm stand against cooperation with Israel in Madrid. Assad hoped to force new links with the Hezbollah. Besides, a hardline Syrian stance will also be popular with the Islamic resistance movement, Hamas, which rejects any negotiations winning young Palestinian support away from Yasser Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organization in the Occupied Territories. Assad has been a bitter enemy of the PLO chairman for more than 20 years, and has always sought to undermine him and his control of the Palestinian movement. At the same time, Syria is under heavy pressure from Saudi Arabia and Egypt, as well as from the United States, to moderate its stance. The Saudi persuasion is backed by new and badly-needed financial assistance which Assad would be loath to lose. On balance, therefore, Syria will probably opt to become more accommodating. Syria, incidentally, what not the only nation with a perceived need for posturing. In a more that appeared to disrupt the peace process, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir pledged at home, after

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the Madrid Conference, not to give up the Occupied Territories. In a parallel move, the Israeli Parliament passed a resolution declaring the future of the Golan Heights as not negotiable.[3]

It was significant, however, that the resolution was non-binding. And Mr. Shamir, who was repeatedly stated that Israel should not make territorial concessions, has nevertheless committed himself to discussing some from of self-rule for the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories. Even in the Israeli view, such autonomy is an interim sten before negotiations on a final disposition of the Occupied Territories. Meanwhile the lesson of recent events is the pan-Arab politics is no longer valid in terms of achieving a solution in the Middle East. It was Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, a man of exemplary political courage, that brought that truth home. He demonstrated that by abandoning the chimeric flag of pan-Arabism, Egypt stood to gain territory, international prestige, economic growth and the friendship and gratitude of the United States. The new wave Palestinians seem to have cottoned on the Sadat's positive postulation. These Palestinians represented their cause in Madrid with rare eloquence and sophistication. They handled the world media as if to the manner born. But with all that, they are realists. They know that they will not get an independent Palestine on a silver platter. They realise that gaining self-respect and a measure of autonomy will eventually bring an end to Israeli military occupation. In short, the Palestinians have come to appreciate the merits of positive patience. As one of them pointed out, the new Russian republics too will not initially control defence and foreign policy. And the birth of a new Palestine is a lot more complicated than the Soviet republics maturing and leaving the nest. That the new Palestinian mindset is not a mirage was amply proved at a meeting in Washington last week, sponsored by the centre for Policy Analysis on Palestine, an educational programme of the Jerusalem Fund. The first speaker was Sari Nusseibeh, a young Palestinian professor who had been a member of the Madrid delegation. His measured analysis of the post Madrid situation was meaningful

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and devoid of rhetoric. "The issues a contention now are land and water," he pointed out. "The Palestinians want an interim government based on Palestinian law—the Israelis are going to contend it should be under the Ministry of Defence, with laws derived from the Israeli military government and the Knesset (Israeli Parliament). "The Palestinians are going to argue that you can't have an interim government unless it has legal basis. One of our major concerns should be to influence Israeli public opinion". There was also an official PLO "voice" at the meeting which waxed eloquent about the resurrection of Palestine and the Victimisation of the Palestinians over the generations. The Pro-Palestine group made it obvious that it was bored or embarrassed. The audience, including the Palestinians, were more at ease when scholarly political scientist Muhammad Hallaj took over to spell out the ways in which the Palestinian movement had changed: It has accepted, among other things diplomacy as a means of achieving its goals, the land-for-peace formula, a phased approach to self-rule, and the ideal of a future confederation with Jordan. Perhaps the old dream of peace with justice for all peoples in the Middle East will yet come true. If it does not, it will not be for lack of trying by the Palestinians who, after all, have the least to lose and the most to gain.[4]

In the heated words exchanged when Israel sat down for the first time with its Arab neighbours to talk peace in Madrid Spain, the issues that divide them came into sharp focus.

Here are the issues :

Territory : Israel says whether it returns to the Arabas territory it captured in the 1967 war is not the issue, but rather whether the Arabas will recognise Israel's right to exist.

Jordan Syria and the Palestinians say peace is impossible without Israel withdrawal from territories it seized in the 1967 war, including East Jerusalem.

Lebanon also wants Israel to relinquish its selfdesignated security zone in southern Lebanon.

Jewish Settlements: Syria-Jordan and the Palestinians said Israel should stop building Jewish settlements in occupied Arab territory.

The Palestinians are willing to live side by side on the land with Israelis but say settlements must stop.

Palestinian Homeland: Jordan which has a large Palestinian population, said it would not be a substitute for a Palestinian state.

The Palestinians would accept limited self-rule in the territory current occupied by Israel but only as a transitional phase to statehood Israel has rejected anything more than limited self-rule and says Jordan should be the Palestinian homeland.

Jerusalem: Syria, Jordan and the Palestinians demand that Israel return East Jerusalem to Arab control with other occupied territory.

The Palestinians claim part of the holy city as the future capital of Palestinian state. The Israelis say it is their capital of Israel forever.

Bilateral Talks: There was disagreement over where the next phase of the peace conference. Separate meetings between Israel and each of the Arab states should be held.

Israel invited the Arab countries each to send a delegation to Israel and then to receive the Israelis in their countries.

The Arabas want the bilaterals to take place on neutral ground preferably Madrid.

The Syrians want US and Soviet observers present when Israel meets one by one with Arab delegations but the Israelis want to observers.

Israel wants the third phase of the conference multilateral talks on regional issues such as arms, control energy, environment and economy, to accompany the bilateral negotiations Syria wants to see progress in the bilateral talks first.

Verbal Duel: An Israeli official traded angry accusations with Arab reporters each blaming the other for the West Asian peace conflict.

The verbal duel which came n the sidelines of the West Asian peace conference reflected the depth of the disagreement between the Arabas and Israelis who cannot even agree on historical events.

"We cannot build on the future without going back to history". Said Benjamin Netanyahu Israel's Deputy Foreign Minister, during the new conference on October 31, 1991 which was limited to Arab reporters.

"We are told we attacked the Arabas in 1948. We were the ones attached. We are told we attacked in 1967. We were the ones who were attacked by the Syrians and Egyptians," said Mr. Netanyahu.

It was not the first attempt by the warning parties in West Asia to create an unofficial dialogue PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat met several years ago with Israeli journalists in Cairo in an atmosphere of accusations and counter-accusations similar on Thursday, impromptu conference.

The questions by Arab journalists were angry and Mr Netanyahu's answers escalated the bitterness.

Armed Struggle: A Radical Palestinian leader says he will ask to have his handl··e faction withdrawn from the PLO's

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decision-making body, in part because of PLO approved the West Asian peace talks.

In an interview George Habash said his popular front for the Liberation of Palestine, the PLO's second-largest faction would continue its armed struggle against Israel. He did not exclude attacks on Israeli settlements in the Occupied Territories.

Habash said he planned to propose to the leaders of his Syria-based faction that they withdraw from the PLO's 18-member executive committee, which handles day-to-day decisions of the Palestinian coalition.

"It will then be up to the (PLO) central committee to accept or refuse its decision" he told the conservative Le Figargo newspaper. He did not indicate whether he wanted his group out of the PLO entirely. Or just remove itself from the decision-making process.

The threat is one of the most serious signs of Palestinian discord following Arafat's acceptance of Palestinian participation in the Arab-Israeli talks in Madrid.

Clashes have broken out between Arafat's supporters and opponents this week in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip and Arafat last week had to offer a pay raise to his security force in Lebanon to keep it in line.

Encouraging: The Israeli Prime Minister described the speech by President George Bush as "very good measured and encouragist for Israel because Bush had underscored that the US would not enforce any kind of solution on any of the sides in the negotiations."

Israeli analysis pointed out that Bush and directly addressed the Israeli public in order to reassure it and had avoided to underscore the question of territories the main topic of the peace talks.

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Bush was very carefully in the use of the term "territorial concessions" and avoided the clear expression "territories for peace." A principle under which Israel could offer to withdraw from the occupied Arab territories in exchange for a permanent and strong peace with the Arabas.

This would leave the Israelis more maneuvering space at the upcoming bilateral negotiations with the Arabas and the Palestinians.

Palestinians in the occupied territories told reporters they were "deeply disappointed with Bush's speech.

One well-known activists who wished to remain anonymous in accordance with the PLO's decision said Bush, by avoiding to clearly underscore the principle of "territories for peace had made a concession to Israel.

The Palestinians are also disappointed by the fact that Bush did not underscore the necessity of Israel's withdrawal from the occupied territories that he did not mention the right of the Palestinians to self-determination and a sovereign state, did not stress the problem of Jerusalem, and warn Israel against continuing with its dangerous policy of building settlements in the Occupied Territories.

Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens has blamed Syria of "enabling the Hizbollah and some extremist Palestinian factions to carry out terrorist attacks against Israel from Lebanese territory.

Arens also alleged that three days ago on the West Bank members of the Palestinian faction PFLP opened fire from automatic rifles at a bus convoy carrying Jewish colonists, killing two and wounding six people.

In his statement on an Israeli Radio show devoted to the peace conference in Madrid. Arens said, "Syria completely

controls the Lebanese Government and the Lebanese army, which is the reason why the guerillas of the pro-Iranian Shi'ite Hizbollah are able to undertake actions against the Israeli army and territory from parts of the Lebanese Beka's River Valley which is controlled by Syrian troops.

"Israel must enter the peace process without illusions. It must remain aware that violence and attacks on Israel and its citizens are yet to come and this is the reason and why it must retaliate by employing military means," he said.

The first round of the meet between Arabas and Israel concluded without any dramatic results, nor was it expected. Yet it cannot be denied that the states are quite high for all the participants, including the co-sponsors to the proceedings of the Conference. The presence of the US president clearly under lines the importance of the Conference for America in making of the New World Order. Similarly, despite the provocative exchange between Shamir and Syrian foreign minister, there were no walk outs and it is expected that the bilateral talks would begin once the modalities and venue for it finalised Israel is insisting that the venue to inside West Asia—either in one as the Arab countries or on its own soil. Arabas have reservations because in their judgement that will tantamount to Israel their recognition of without any gain in return. In fact Arabas have shown their desire that the US presence is felt during the proceedings of the conference so that Israel remains under constant pressure. Israel is relatively better placed. The leverage of the Arab clout after the Gulf-War has declined steeply. The Palestinian leadership understands it well hence is seeking political solution. Shamir also realised that with the end of the cold war and legitimacy that the US has acquired in the Arab world particularly in the oil rich sheikdoms has scaled down its strategic significance (and given the economic conditions at home) it is concerned about US not being very keen to square its resources to underwrite the Israeli needs. By linking the proceedings of the conference with the clearance of 10 billion loan guarantees, the US has communicated the changing nuances of its policy towards the

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region. In other words the Madrid conference proceedings and outcome would be governed by the changing realities and their correlations.[5]

Given the history of forty three-years of acrimonious relations, it is difficult to hypothesize that the Madrid conference will be able to resolve the regional conflicts. Yet the pace and dimension of the changing global and regional relations suggest that the objective condition are maturing in favour of peace and stability. President Bush is right in pointing out in his key address that 'peace cannot be imposed from outside by the US or any one else, But it cannot be denied that peace in the region has been subverted from outside. In West Asia peace could not have been possible because the external pressure was not in its favor. Today the context has changed. Both America and the Soviet Union are keen to have peace and stability in the region. They wanted conflict in the region for their interest and today they need peace for their own reasons. Peace in the region gives them better dividend than war. Even at the level of generalisation it can be argued that a turbulent West Asia will be a breeding ground for fundamentalist forces which will not be in the interest of the West. On the contrary if the West Asian could be build by resolving the basic issue—the Palestinian question—the West will be able to retain if not enhance leverage in the region. The enormous efforts put by the Secretary of the State Mr. Baker clearly suggests that the US would like to strengthen the regional powers like—the Egypt, Saudi Arabia if possible Syria along with its traditional allow, Israel to counter the possible threat caused from Iran, Iraq and the fundamentalist forces. However the role of US need not be overplayed. The outcome of the Madrid conference will also depend upon the action of leaders of the region who despite their allegance to the USA have their own concerns and compulsions in negotiating peace. It is important to bear that at popular level, the Madrid conference has brought both relief expectation, as well as dejection and frustration. Demonstration against the conference in different parts of the Arab world particularly the opposition

from Iran is likely to impringe upon the proceedings. Lebanon has already experienced Israeli relation on Hajibulla. A further escalation of the event may jeopardise the prospect of the conference. It is repeated that Ayatollah Khomeini has declared "those taking part in the treason will suffer the wrath of the nation" and designated Madrid talks as "declaration of war of Islam". A general strike was observed in most of the West Bank and Gaza strip on the call given by Hamas and pro Syrian Palestinian Liberation Organisation faction which consider Madrid talk as betrayal of the Palestinian cause. Even if the uncertainty looms large over the next round of the talk, it would be worthnothing the impact of the Madrid process in regional ethos. Reports from the occupied territories that hundreds of men, women and children come out in the main street of Ramallah—a town on which Palestinian and Israeli soldiers have fought for four years—with Olive branch a sign of peace and many climbed upon the military jeeps to shake hands with the armed soldiers highlights the hunger for peace among the people. "Today I felt that by being here in Madrid we have put the foundation stone of the Palestinian State." This assessment and opinion of Sami Kalani, member of the Palestinian negotiation team does point towards the importance that the Palestinians have assigned to the conference. It is ironic that in terms of territorial concessions, these do not gain more than what was envisaged in the 1979 proposal when the Camp David agreement was signed between Egypt and Israel. Perhaps in terms of popular acceptability it would be relatively easier for the Arab leadership in general and the Palestinian in particular to accept the proposal after eleven years; more so when despite the sacrifices made in intifada, not much could be achieved. In Israel also, the social dynamics is moving in favour of peace. The vulnerability of the country was exposed during the Gulf War. Though the said attack did not cause much damage materially, at psychological level, the people fell insecure and would not be average to the idea of trading peace. The increasing popularity of the peace NOW movement in Israel represents the changing social realities in the country. Moreover economically highly

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dependent on the USA, the country remains susceptible to the US pressure. In the bilateral talks between Israel and Jordan. Lebanon, Syria and the Palestinians, land will be the principal issue on agenda. Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir in an interview with CBS NES before the conference began on Wednesday said in categorical terms, "It is our land. How could we trade with it? How could we give up this land? It is ridiculous. It is very small land. Where would we live? Where? On moon?" But at the same time he known that Bush administration is gradually pushing and pressing him to negotiate land for peace. America has not recognised the Israeli occupation of the land and as pointed out by one US official the US appreciate "Palestinian aspiration for control over their own lives, and that means giving them some land. But we cannot fully satisfy those aspirations since we will not back a Palestinian State. From the available accounts it seems perhaps Palestinian State is not on the agenda at the moment. Going by the shift in Palestinian position it is clear that Palestinian are prepared to negotiate for an interim settlement which they would likely to lend towards making of the Palestinian State.[6] Outlining the Palestinian aims, Sari Nusseibeh, wrote in New York Times "Palestinian's aim at Madrid should be intermediate and long-term. The ultimate goal, to be reached six years from the beginning of the talks is a Palestinian State with East Jerusalem as its capital. It must be part of a new integrated economic order in the region based on open borders and cooperation". It appears that the new strategy of the Palestinian is based on the assumption that in the changed global and regional context, the prospect of achieving their objectives lies by initiating the peace process, engaging Israel into negotiations and influencing "each stage of the peace process through their own acts. So it is suggested that intifada be suspended in return for a freeze on settlement and declaring moratorium all acts of violence. In the words of Hanan Ashrawi the spokes woman for the Palestinian "Forty-years of violence has brought us nothing. We must seek a political solution".

Among other components of peace in West Asia, the Madrid conference has to address to the future of Israel's socalled

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security zones in Southern Lebanon, return of Golan beight to Syria captured in 1967 war and annexed in 1981, and resolution of the issues related with 24 years. Israeli occupation of the West Bank of the river Jordan and the Gaza strip. On the bargain table, it appeals that Israel will be prepared to concede some of the issues despite taking a hardline posture. President Shamir is looking for an opportunity to negotiate peace in term of different bilated segments he can maximise his gains. Recognising the Israeli approach, Arabas have been offering to the approach have advocated the negotiation for peace in its comprehensive form. As rightly pointed out by Saeb Erekal, a Palestinian delegate to the conference, Arabas will have to maintain, "a strict unbreakable linkage between all the phases of the process".

The Gulf War has influenced the parameter of the West Asian political economy more in favor of peace: The ruling regimes have gain more from peace than conflicts. Jordan's king with its battered economy, cannot think of his future within a larger volume of financial assistance from the west and from the rich Gulf states. With an economy heavily indebted and dependent on external resources, not favourably disposed by the natural wealth except phosphate, Jordanian economy has been adversely affected by wars and conflicts between Arabs and Israel. It cannot bear the burden of the refugees. The food riots faced by the king forcing him to go to IMF and concede political reforms indicated that without economic recovery, the polity of the country is going to remain turbulent. Thus it is not surprising that the king has taken more reconciliatory approach. In his words, "this is the last opportunity, not in terms of just the reality on the ground but in terms of the hopes and despair". The compulsions of domestic political economy are of similar nature for Syria and Israel though their intensities may differ. Shamir is likely to be forced to go for election. His electorate are likely to know from him the cost benefit analysis of Israeli position in Madrid conference. Once it is demonstrated to them by the Arabas that the level of hostility is not the same and a graduated peace will make them more prosperous and independent state and save them from the embarrassment of rushing to Washington

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for their survival, it will not be very easy for Shamir or his party to take a hard line. Shamir, a pragmatic politician knows that for Likud to regain the ground, the message has to be in tune with the winds blowing across the world.[7]

The peace that is likely to result from the international ordering of relations, as the United States pieces together from the debris of the old order a thousand years of peace is no peace at all. This peace has not been dictated at the point of bayonets, but a more civilized substitute for it—arm-twisting mediation. It is as bereft of the application of moral, natural or even customary legal principles as of pontification. Trougubled regions are having visitations of peace. A peace so dubious that it looks transitional. Take Cambodia. Prince Nordon Sihanouk, riding piggyback in his years of exile on the Khmer Rouge, has returned with peace, the Khmer Rough a part of his baggage. The Vietnam-propped Hun Sen regime sings paceans of the returning Prince, embracing a peace resultant from the abject surrender of its patron—the Soviet Union. One of the chief protagonists of the peace that Cambodia is sought to be pushed into is Khieu Samphan, Popot's right hand man. The ultimate quality of peace must necessarily be an end to the death of innocents but what quality of peace is it which seeks to barter a temporary cessation of hostilities for the rehabilitation of genocidal tyrants? What the people of Cambodia feel about Khieu Samphan was all to evident from the reception he was accorded on his return. Or take West Asia. Till the other day, an international pariah censured as much for violation of human rights as it was shunned for its rejection of the more elemental right of a people to their land, Israel has not only been permitted to rob the Palestinians of all semblance of dignity but indeed was applauded for it.[8]

The considerations that will go into any settlement in the Middle East are not the justness or even the legality of claims on either side. Nor will the basis of peace be the redressal of obvious wrongs. Instead, it will be an arrangement that will try hard not

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to disturb the *status quo* of Israeli entrenchment. Apart from the regional rearrangement of relations is the greater peace that haunts the world—the bringing of the Soviet Union to its knees and its co-option in the ranks of democracy and free market economics, thus eliminating four decades and more of rivalry between ideology and Mammon. The Soviet facade of fighting the imperialism of capitalist notions lies exposed as the process of decolonisation rolls back what was, and always had been. Russia's expanded borders. The prescription for the Soviets, as much for its former satellites and colonies, is the pursuit of self-enrichment forsaking, for the time being delusions of grandeur. Ideology has been dealt with satisfactorily, discarded as a debilitating strait-jacket, inconsistent both with development and common welfare despite its pretensions of incorporating both. Can the peace of democracy and free market be absolute? The answer, of course, depends on one's perception of the Cold War. Was it merely a contention between two different world views, between authoritarianism and democracy, between imperialism and the aspirations of emerging nations, or even can international class struggle? Or was it a mutant of the balance of power system resulting for a time in a, by and large, bipolar world? In case it was one of the former, then the contradictions seem to have resolved themselves in favor of democracy and the free market. If it is the latter, will the mutant revert to its true type, as Morganthau would describe it, or evolve into a higher plane of international accommodation? The New World Order is certainly not a prescription for one world with the resources of the world the common heritage of makind. It does prescribe intervention in humanitarian distress—national sovereignty be damned. Let national sovereignty be damned when it is a question of human rights, of starving people and brutal regimes. But will the developed states agree to let the majority of the world community decide the quantum, flow and direction of aid dispenses on criteria previously accepted? The demand for compensation for past wrongs is not mere rhetoric. It is as much a marker of the history of intervention as a question about the application of standards. Will the peace

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based avowedly on humanitarian principles be a lasting peace? Certainly not. Because it is peace without institutionalisation of peace; because it is a peace of imposition where nations are no longer sovereign entities required to adhere to notions of law and justice but supplicants to other nations. Any peace must have its institutions—not merely new regimes, new borders or even new alliances. It must have accepted codes of international interaction which puts nations on an equal footing and then regulate, or seek to regulate their actions. Unfortunately, what is being offered as a vindication of American virtues smacks more of an ordered peace with the acquiescence of nations, peoples and entities who have no choice but to knowtow or starve or be wiped out. The mutant of the bipolar world threatens to revert to the earlier true type of a world divided by more primordial divisions.[9]

Israel has become relatively flexible in its approach. This was evident from Prime Minister Mr. Shami's speech at Madrid in which he said, "the issue is not territory but our existence, it will be regrettable if the talks focus primarily and exclusively on territory. It is the quickest way to an impasse". For the first time in his public career, Mr. Shamir seemed to leave open the possibility of territorial concessions, without which West Asian peace must remain a mirage. Such a response is of special significance at this stage of the peace initiatives, as it was Mr. Shamir who has opposed the peace agreement with Egypt voted against Israelis withdrawal from Lebanon fought against the return of the tiny Taba enclave to Egypt and consistently rejected any motion of territorial concession on the West Bank Gaza or Golan Heights. The change in approach offers sizeable opportunity to other participants to give peace a chance. The dwindling economics of some of the participants including Syria, Jordan and even Israel also give them food for thought. In Syria and Jordan, the poverty is on the rise and the signs of economic recovery is not in sight Israel is also facing economic recession and is hoping for American help. By following an approach aimed at restoring peace it can secure US aid for its

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ravaged economy and the Soviet immigrant Jews poor Arab countries also gain immensely if the peace is restored in this region and they seem to be realising this. The most important factor that could accomplish a great good in the entire peace process is the fact that the arch super rivals of yesteryears the United States and the former Soviet Union are now friends. In all these years, they did not want peace in this region. Now the wars and troubles in this region are deterimental to their interests. In fact as things stands today, the Soviet Union is no longer the protect of Syria or any of its former allies any more than it was the protector of Iraq. The US is the only credible outside power in the region, and after the Gulf War the entire regional military balance has undergone a substantial change. The peace in the region now serves the interests of the United Sate and it will do its best to get things going in that direction and would not have a sense of complacency by merely launching the proceedings. But the peace processes in such cases are long and complicated when the parties involved in this particular case are the ones who have treated each other as scarecrows and scapegoats. Even if that era is over, some complications still remain. For clearing the clouds of doubt and dealing with the complications involved a good beginning has been made and the prospects for a peaceful settlement between the parties involved have no doubt vastly improved.[10]

The peace conference Madrid, October 30, 1991 to find a solution to the longest conflict of the century is significant. The Americans have displayed, for the first time since the Suez crisis of 1956, enough firmness with Israel to compel it to attend this conference. Though the Israelis attached very unreasonable conditions on Palestinian representation at the conference, the US Secretary of State, James Baker, was able to persuade the Palestinians to accept those humiliating conditions and attend. The credit for persuading Syria to take part in the Madrid meeting goes entirely to James Baker. Eight rounds of shuttle diplomacy over eight months finally produced this result. Baker realises that at this stage the most important step is to break the

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taboo and compel the Israelis and the Arabas to sit at a conference table and initiate the peace process. At the moment, it is difficult to envisage how the conference will proceed to consider the two totally unrelated agenda with which the two sides to the conflict are to sit at the conference table. For the Arabas, the solution to the conflict lies in Israel vacating territories captured in the aggetting back to the borders demarcated in 1948 and allowing the Palestinians the right to self-determination. Israel, it was made clear by Prime Minister Yitzak Shamir in his speech to the European Parliament in Strasbourg on October 22 considers that the issue before the conference is to end the state of war between the Arab states and Israel. Jerusalem is not negotiable as it is the eternal capital of Israel in Mr. Shamir's view. Israel feels that it must have defensible borders for its survival and therefore does not propose to surrender all the territory occupied in 1967 and 1973. Israel will not accept self-determination for the Palestinians. Shamir also announced that he himself would lead the Israeli delegation at the Madrid meeting. He, evidently, does not consider his foreign minister, David Levy, tough enough for the job of representing Israel. The four Arab states, Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon have evolved a joint stand to be adopted at Madrid. Yasser Arafat took part in a two-day meeting on 23-24 October 1991 in Damascus to help evolve this united front strategy. Such Arab unity is not usual. Only a few months back, at the time of the Gulf crisis, Egypt and Syria were on one side and King Hussein of Jordan on the other. No doubt, the common front of Egypt and Syria in the victorious America led alliance against Saddam Hussein, contributed significantly to the convening of the conference. This conference is in reality not one between the Arabas and Israelis. At Camp David, in 1979, Egypt's Anwar Sadat was somewhat better placed to bargain with Israel. Egypt wanted the occupied Sinai back and Israel wanted peace on its borders with Egypt. It was possible for the two parties to make a deal with US mediation since Israel was not interested in continuing its occupation of the Sinai peninsula. On the present occasion, the Arabas want East Jerusalem, West Bank and the

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Golan Heights back. Israel has repeatedly declared its intention of incorporating these areas into 'Greater Israel'. Israel expects large scale immigration of Jews, has made clear his intention of displacing Palestinians from the West Bank and setting up settlements of immigrant jews from the erstwhile Soviet Union. Ariel Sharon, the hardline minister in charge of settlements of immigrant Jews from the Soviet Union. This requires vast sums of money and Israel asked the US to give a loan guarantee for ten billion dollars to help raise funds in US largely from the American Jewry. By holding up than loan guarantee, the American Jewry. By holding up that loan guarantee, the US has compelled Israel to sit at the conference table.[11]

War between nation states must be prevented. All countries in the region must be safeguarded against attack, conventional or unconventional (chemical, biological, nuclear). There must, however, be no confusion on this score: the absence of war is not synonymous with peace. The United States is capable of achieving the former, but not the latter. Its power lies in an ability todeter and punish attacks by one country against another, not to dampen or resolve ethnic or communal strife, whose roots are in premodern times. Of central importance to the goal of security is the realization that it was the clash of armies that disrupted regional stability and that on occasion brought the superpowers into near-confrontation and scuttled tentative efforts at detente. Only action states command armies capable of upsetting regional balances and unleashing widespread conflagrations. In this light, whatever the justice of *Palestinian or Kurdish claims to statehood* their grievances are not of strategic concern, if only because neither has the ability to wage war and overturn the existing multipolar system in the Middle East. It may be noted also that no Arab government, regardless of its proclaimed pro-Palestinian sentiment, has ever gone to war to advance the cause of Palestinian statehood; *nor will any ever* go to war on behalf of the Kurds. Second, U.S. efforts should focus on the Gulf. It is there that the United State went to war to repel aggression, and there that its power and influence can be

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brought to bear to pioneer a new approach. Twice in a decade Iraq threatened the survival of regimes in the region. Iraqi power can be limited and the independence of its neighbors assured. To establish a stable system, the cooperation of *Iran and Pakistan*, both of which have vital interests in what happens on the Arabian peninsula, will be required. Given this as the U.S. priority, Secretary Baker's initiative to promote an Israeli-Palestinian negotiation makes little strategic sense. Not even Syria President Hafez-al-Assad's apparent readiness to enter into direct talks with Israel changes the situation. Delays and diversions in organizing an international conference are inevitable, and they should not become the focus of the administration's Middle East policy. Compared to the Gulf, the Arab-Israeli sector is strategically a minor side-show in a period of U.S.-Soviet detente. In retrospect, Baker seems to have been motivated by several factors: A stronger concern for politics along the Potomac than calculations of Gulf security; his personal desire to reassert a primary foreign policy role after being sidelined during the Gulf crisis; the judgment that Israel's dependence on U.S. aid to resettle Soviet and Ethiopian Jews made the time ripe for resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict; the belief that movement on the Palestinian issue would make Arab governments more willing to support a U.S. security plan in the Gulf; a need to deflect attention away from the embarrassing Kurdish question; and a desire to redeem a promise President Bush had made to Confess. Whatever the reasoning the initiative has been distracting. Its thrust needs redirection. Third, the U.N. Security Council must not again be marginalized. The United States is pursuing bilateralism when it should instead be promoting increased responsibilities for the United Nations. Secretary of Defence Dick Cheney's travels to Gulf promote arms sales, but not "a new order", they convey an unwarranted deference to Saudi wishes and a return to business and politics as usual. A permanent inspectorate of peace-preserving forces should be constituted under the aegis of the U.N. Security Council. Operating on a five-to-ten-year term, it would ensure Iraqi compliance with U.N. resolutions, undertake on-site and ongoing verification of military deployments along the borders

of all the Gulf countries and introduce confidence-building measures like those being institutionalized in Europe. These U.N. peace-keeping units—initially stationed in Iraq and Kuwait and eventually in Saudi Arabia, Iran and Oman—would be equipped with the latest surveillance technology, under some leasing arrangement with the United States and the Soviet Union, and be viewed as international civil servants, responsible to the U.N. Security Council and its Military Staff Committee. The annual cost to the United States would be the equivalent or one B-2 bomber-about $ 500 million to $ 600 million and Japan, the European Community and each of the oil-rich Arab states in the Gulf would be assessed equal amounts. The U.N. contingents currently operating in Iraq would have their mandate broadened to include all the Gulf countries. Fourth, the tidal flow of arms to the region must be slowed, not just missiles, but tanks, artillery and high-performance air-craft. Despite the enormous difficulties that stand in its way progress on this issue is prerequisite for any new approach to gulf security. Arms sales are big business; competition for a share of the market is intense. If left unregulated it will worsen. From 1974 to 1989, the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council accounted for more than 75 percent or the estimated total of $ 220 billion to $250 billion oil-for-arms trade in the Middle East, with Iraq being the biggest single buyer. A moratorium on sales in unrealistic, but allocation of a share of a curtailed and controlled market to leading arms exporters might be worth exploring. Senator Josepy Biden's (D-Del) proposed cartel arrangement, dividing the sales of different types of weapons among leading exporting nations, merits a try. In addition to regulating the kinds and quantity of weapons introduced into the region and apportioning a fair share of the market among the major exporting nations, the cartel, operating under the aegis of the Security Council, would be responsible for monitoring shipments.[12]

U.S. and Soviet satellites could track suspect air transports and arrange for on-site inspection at various air fields. The U.S. navy, supported by auxillaries from other members of the

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Security Council, would bear the primary responsibility for ensuring that heavy weapons coming by sea through the Straits of Hormuz and the Bab el-Mandeb accorded with the quantities fixed by the cartel. Although other powers would participate in sea-going operations, only the United States has the capability for such an ongoing and extensive task. These inspection activities would be self-financing, the costs being borne by importers and exporters. Such measures would rely heavily on the power-projection capability that the United States currently possesses to develop a new way of ensuring security in a crucial part of the world. An integrated approach, which controls and monitors both the flow of arms and the deployment of armies, would prevent the military buildup of any regional actor from exceeding the legitimate needs of self-defense. It would reduce regional insecurity by developing confidence in the levels of weaponry available to potential enemies and in the ability of a U.N. mandated operation to ensure accountability from all parties. In time this might make local actors more amenable to lower levels of arms and encourage them to focus their resources on nation-building and development. None of this will be easy. It may well prove to be unworkable. Still, let it not be written of George Bush's attempt to establish a new system of security in the Gulf that it was found difficult and hence not tried. He will probably be the last American president to have served in the Second World War. He may also be the last one to have the opportunity and the means to show the way to a *New World Order*.[13]

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11

Nuclear Secrets

Five months before the occupation of Kuwait, on August 2, 1190, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein warned his Arab brethren that the collapse of the Soviet superpower left American power in the region unchecked. Is Iraq exemplify the leader-state where Saddam Hussein monopolize power and nature a cult of personality? Iraq is ideologically committed to Arab unity. Saddam Hussein is a secular pan-Arab liberator. Iraq is more than oil and geopolitics. Wars are destructive, but through the exercise of imagination they can also be creative. There is the need to launch bilateral talks between Israel and Arab. All the Third World nations and all the interested parties outside the Gulf region are looking to Saddam Hussein for leadership.

Even after the announcement of the contingent plans for operation "Determined Results' and stern demand of the Security Council to comply with the UN resolution 707 requiring Iraq to turn over all documentation and materials to the UN inspectors, the Iraqi administration continues to play its game of hide and seek. The latest Iraqi action of detaining the UN inspection team has led to a virtual ultimatum to release them. Iraq has no option but to comply. The only hypothesis that makes sense about the Iraq game is while they are aware that they cannot withhold information on their preparations to acquire nuclear weapons, they are attempting to remove and destroy, if possible, the involvement of third countries in their programme, partly to

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shield them and partly to resume the ties after the dust settles down. From the information available so far, it would appear the Iraqis were only six months away from starting industrial production of weapon-grade enriched uranium.

The Iraqis have been attempting both the centrifuge and calutron methods. For centrifuge operations they did require and got some assistance from foreign countries. The IAEA sources have not disclosed the name of the countries. It would be interesting to find out whether the countries that helped Iraq on the centrifuge methods included China or Pakistan. Full credit must be given to the Iraqis for having made a success of the calutron methods of enrichment of uranium after it had been discarded by the US even during the Manhattan project which made the first atom bomb in 1945. The Iraqi calutron story has a lesson for the sponsors of the non-Proliferation Treaty and the advocates of technology controls in the west. Following India's Pokhran nuclear test of 1974 in which plutonium obtained from an experimental reactor was used, the western industrialised nations formed the London Suppliers Club and banned all exports of plutonium separation technology. They assumed the developing nations could not go in for enrichment of uranium since the technology was too complicated Dr. A. R. Khan of Pakistan taught them a lesson by setting up centrifuge uranium enrichment technology in Kahuta.[1]

After this horse bolted from barn, the west closed it by banning export of uranium enrichment technology. Meanwhile, several western firms supplied Pakistan various component systems required for centrifuge enrichment of uranium. Now the Iraqis have demonstrated that they could use another method of uranium enrichment — the electromagnetic separation incorporated in the discarded calutrons. Once again the western nations will take steps to ban the export of related technologies. There are still some more methods of uranium enrichment available. The Israelis mentioned some time ago they had perfected the method of laser enrichment of uranium. There is

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no reason why some other developing nation may not also follow that example. The Non-Proliferation Treaty's Inspection procedure, the responsibility for which has been entrusted to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), envisaged check on activities related to civilian nuclear programmes. The assumption of industrial nations was that the developing countries must necessarily get their nuclear technology from the Industrialised world and if they can clamp safeguards on such transfer of technologies, they would be able to prevent proliferation of nuclear weapons in the developing world. The cases of Pakistan and Iraq highlight how erroneous these exemptions were. Pakistan in respect of centrifuge technology and Iraqis in respect of electromagnetic separation technology have proved that developing countries can develop nuclear weapons capability on their own, outside transactions which brought in the IAEA safeguards. The Non-Proliferation Treaty with its present provisions cannot copy with this situation. Nor can it reassure the non-nuclear weapon nations that accession to the NPT will assure their security with reference to weapons that can be developed by some of their neighbors outside the IAEA safeguards procedures. This is the most important lesson to be derived from the experience with Iraqi attempts to develop nuclear weapon capability.' An objective assessment of this factor would lead to a realistic revision of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. But there are today non-proliferation fundamentalists who are as dogmatic and obsecurantist as the religious fundamentalists. They are the major obstacles towards the world moving towards realistic non-proliferation goals.[2]

The Bush Administration is having trouble getting Gulf War allies to agree on steps to deal with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. After defence department briefings about plans to bomb what is left of Iraq's secret weapons sites, allies voices reservations, or even opposition.

President Hosni Mubarek of Egypt disliked the idea of renewed bombing.

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Saudi Arabia wants Patriot missile batteries replaced to protect its air bases should allied aircraft resume bombing Iraq, fearing possible Iraqi reprisals.

Turkey demanded detailed briefings on any military operations launched from its bases briefly halted US reconnaissance flight over Iraq in a disagreement over allied chain of command.

Israel has asked for 72 hours notice to prepare its defences against any Iraqi retaliation and asked that its hotline to the Pentagon be restored. It was dismantled in Spring 1991.

France has reserved making any decision about whether to join allied punitive actions aimed to Iraqi facilities.

The US began plans for possible military action against Iraqi. With the Pentagon announcing the despatch of 100 Patriot missiles and 1,300 men from Germany to Saudi Arabia, and another warning from President Bush to Saddam Hussein against miscalculation.

Bush has already indicated that if the Iraqi President continues to place obstacles in the way of the UN inspectors he would not hesitate to give escort of combat aircraft to the helicopters.

It is believed that the documents the UN inspectors have got hold off and which Saddam Hussein wants to prevent them from taking give details of Iraqi's nuclear programme, including the list of western companies which helped.

Officials in Washington said the US has been given full details for the Iraqi nuclear programme by a defector. Hence the US is in a position to advise the UN exactly what they should seek and where to find it. The details furnished by the defector show that Iraqi was much more advanced in its nuclear weapon

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effort than had been believed before. Iraqi is also believed to have hundreds of Scud missiles still.

Hence Saudi Arabia had wanted the Patriots in case the US was thinking of using Saudi airfields again for attacking Iraq.

Sixty warplanes have already been placed an alert by the US. The number may soon rise to 100.

Tension mounted in West Asia with Iraq detaining United Nations inspectors searching for Baghdad's weapons and nuclear weapons programme.

Reports said Patriots will be flown from bases in Germany. These missiles were used to intercept and destroy Iraqi Scud missiles. Some sources say Iraq may still have a substantial number of Scuds.

Iraqi detained the inspectors after they said they had found evidence of Baghdad's nuclear weapons programme and also sources from where material was obtained during inspection of documents.

The 15-member Security Council worked overtime to demand that Iraq immediately release 44 inspectors and allow them to take documents or copies of documents they want.

As they crisis deepened the United States warned Baghdad not to miscalculate as it did last time. This implies that coalition forces could again use force if the need arose.

Iraq meanwhile, has given a letter to the Security Council which diplomats said unequivocally accepts the demand of the United Nations inspectors that they be allowed to use their own helicopters without any hindrance for spot check and surveys.

Earlier, the United States had said that if necessary, its planes will escort the helicopters.

The inspectors want to use helicopters lent by Germany to the United Nations but Iraq had earlier refused to allow them, saying it violated its sovereignty.

Iraq had no Monday detained inspectors for several hours and refused to allow them to take documents which inspectors said could throw light on Baghdad's nuclear weapons programme. The documents were returned several hours later but inspectors said important documents previously identified were missing.

In the latest incident inspectors were surrounded by the security forces and told that they would be detained till they underwent personal search and surrendered all photographs, films and videotapes.

According to a report by the special commission charged with elimination of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. The documents found by the inspectors would be of `singular importance' to enable the commission, and International Atomic Energy Agency to reconstruct the Iraqi nuclear programme, in particular foreign and domestic sources.

The inspectors agreed to leave the records in Iraqi custody after recording and copying them. But Iraqi detained inspectors insisting on the several conditions to be fulfilled before they would be set free.

At the United Nations, several diplomats strongly attacked Iraq for detaining inspectors and advocated hardline approach.

British representative Sir David Hannay said Council President Jean-Bernard Merimee of France would be making another approach to the Iraqi Government at a high level.

The British envoy said a letter had now been received from Iraq "and appears to be unconditional acceptance for the UN inspection teams to fly their helicopters."

Dr. Hans Blix, director general of the International Atomic Agency. On September 17, 1991 demand that the agency be empowered to gather intelligence, conduct special inspections and searches in member-countries' territories and that these measures be directly backed by the UN Security Council as it did in the case of Iraq.

The director general's demand formed part of his report to the 35th annual general conference of IAEA which commenced in Vienna.

Reporting on the agency's role in Iraq, the director general said the agency was breaking new ground. "We are engaged in the task of removing, destroying or rendering harmless nuclear equipment and material that might be used for the development of weapons."

Dr. Blix noted that since the Chernobyl accident, IAEA had embarked on a large-scale expansion of nuclear safety and radiation-protection activities. Dr. Blix felt that the agency's future plan had to focus on long-term trends in nuclear energy and on meeting challenges posted by event as those in the Gulf, Chernobyl, and the new situation in central and eastern Europe.

Since such development do not announce themselves in advance, they do not afford discussion and advance planning by the policy making organs, he said.

The director general also said that IAEA was again faced with a cash crisis. It was not in a position to operate beyond October if members were unable to pay up their arrears. He also announced that Yemen, Estonia, Latvia and Lithiania had become new members of IAEA.

Dr. P. K. Lyengar, Chairman of the Indian Atomic Energy Commission, said it was unfortunate that unforeseen and unprecedented circumstances had led IAEA to carry out intrusive inspection activities.

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He was participating in the general debate on the director general's report. Dr. Iyenger said that in the normal circumstances such activities were beyond the statutory role of the agency. Although the intrusive actions were mandated by the UN, the tendency to globalise such actions needed to be avoided.

United States President George Bush has ruled out the possibility of massive troop movements against Iraq as a pressure tactic on Saddam Hussein to comply with United Nations resolutions, report agencies.

In an interview with US journalists in *Los Angeles*, the US President said "What we are talking about is accompanying helicopters with some air power".

Bush, however, said that he "was prepared to use military action to see that the (Saddam Hussein) does comply". He stated that "any military action against Iraq would not be done by the United State alone, but would invoice other Iraq has said it will obey the Security Council's cease-fire terms and allow UN helicopters to search for ballistic missiles and nuclear, chemical and biological weapons plants in Iraq".

Unofficials said the Iraqi proposal contained unacceptable conditions, but was a basis for further talks that could resolve the impasse between Baghdad and the Security Council.

Baghdad had insisted as recently as on September 12, 1991 that only Iraqi helicopters and cress could fly over Iraq. The Security Council and UN weapons inspectors insisted that the United Nations has to be able to fly its own craft for spot checks.

UN diplomats said a delegation from the UN weapons inspection commission possibly led by commission chairman Rolf Ekeus, would visit Baghdad to reiterate Security Council concerns about Iraqi cooperation.

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Iraqi Ambassador in the United Nations Abdul Amir Al-Anbari gave Iraq's assurances to the Security Council President Jean-Bernard Merimee the French Ambassador.

After meeting with Merimee, Al-Anbari said the helicopters donated by Germany, and with German pilots and support crew must be used in such a way as to safeguard and protect the national security of Iraq.

Al-Anbari said Iraqi experts and specialists should be abroad the inspection helicopters.

Merimee said the Iraqi statement is not totally negative. It is not totally satisfactory either. He said he had to advice other Security Council members before commenting further.

Iraqi sources at the United Nations said that Baghdad is demanding a UN investigation of reports that US army tanks equipped with plows buried hundreds of Iraqi soldiers alive in their bunkers during the Gulf War.

The sources said an Iraqi letter delivered to the Secretary-General Javier Perez De Cuellat, asked him to send investigators to Iraq to check the reports. It complained that such wartime action violated the Geneva convention and was a crime under international law.

Meanwhile, the outgoing President of the United Nations General Assembly, Prof. Guido De Marco, has urged the Assembly to make recommendations to members and the Security Council on the circumstances and mechanisms required in use of armed forces bearing in mind the principle of proportionality and humanitarian aspects.

Addressing the closing session, Marco told the General Assembly to avoid double standard approaches where circumstances, both present and future, may harm the credibility of the organisation.

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Referring to United Nations actions in the Gulf, he said wisdom and experience teach that sometimes it is necessary to "take up arms in defence of peace".

"Yet taking up arms is in one respect also a sign of failure — the failure to find alternative non-violent means of solving differences".

Referring to certain shortcomings in the world body, Marco pointed to the failure to launch an effective process for settlement in the Middle East saying the Middle East has dimensions which goes far beyond the immediate issue of the Arab-Israel conflict.

On the economic front he said there is an "equally serious" failure to launch a comprehensive and meaningful North-South dialogue.

"While some parts of the world and achieving political freedom, many parts of the world are seeing that whatever freedom they achieved through decolonisation process is being jeopardised by poverty, under development and fratricidal strife".

Marco, who has been an advocate of reforms to enable the General Assembly play a larger part in the decision-making process called for adaptation of existing structures and procedures to make them reflect the role of the Assembly on all global issues.

He called for a close look at the decision-making process saying that this is need to give both meaning and authority to the General Assembly's deliberations.

Another point he stressed was the need for an improved relationship between work of the Assembly and the other parts of the United Nations system, including the secretariat.

Iraqi authorities forcibly removed boxes of documents from a UN team hunting for evidence of nuclear weapons making on September 23, 1991 after detaining the team members.

The team leader David Kay said the team made a snap inspection at an undeclared site in central Baghdad and found a large amount of documentation on the Iraqi Nuclear programme.

"This documentation was in considerably depth with regard to the programme in general as well as with regard to the production of physical nuclear material and nuclear weapons development".

Kay said that from the documents found in the 10-storey office building it was clear that a large number of other papers had been hastily removed and the centre was in use until quite recently.

The dispute coincides with a major row between the UN and Baghdad over the use of helicopters by inspectors verifying the scrapping of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction under the terms of the Gulf war cease-fire.

At the United Nations in New York, the US President George Bush told the General Assembly that Iraq was rebuilding its weapons of mass destruction and said there would be no compromise with Baghdad over inspection of its facilities.

Kay said his 45-member team began its surprise inspection at 5.30 a.m. and first asked to leave the walled and guarded compound around the building about 3 p.m.

It was allowed to depart around 8 p.m. only after the boxes of documents had been forcibly seized by Iraqi officials despite strenuous and repeated protests.

"The volume of the material was considerable. Over three car loads was involved." Kay added.

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In Vienna, the International Atomic Energy Agency said the UN inspectors found two types of documents, some of which related to secret Iraqi Nuclear Weapons Development Project.

The first related broadly to the Iraqi nuclear programme in all of its aspects.

Iraq on September 26, 1991 asked the United Nations to send an emissary to Baghdad within 48 hours to resolve the fate of UN nuclear inspectors held their diplomats said in New York.

In a letter to the UN Security Council signed by its UN Ambassador Abdul Amir al-Anbari, Iraq asked that Rolf Ekeus, the head of a special commission charged with supervising the destruction of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, travel to Baghdad.

The purpose of the visit would be to remedy "the current situation so that the modalities for the use of the German helicopters may be considered".

Some 44 UN nuclear experts have been held in a bus in Baghdad since early Tuesday after they seized documents containing evidence of Iraq's secret nuclear arms programmes.

Iraq agreed to UN demand to allow UN inspection helicopters to roam freely in search of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, which were to be destroyed in line with the UN resolution that ended the Gulf War.

French Ambassador Jean-Bernard Merimee, the current president of the Security Council said the Iraqi request could resolve the scandal.

"It doesn't look negative," he said "It could lead to a solution."

According to an unofficial translation of the Iraqi letter circulating here, Baghdad insists that if Ekeus does not go to

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Baghdad, the Iraq authorities and the UN inspection team should "jointly draw up a record of all the documents and photographs seized before the team is authorised to remove anything what soever from the site".

The letter also Iraq "once again strongly protests at the inspection team's action, particularly those of the leader, David Kay.

Baghdad has accused Kay of being a US intelligence officer, a charge denied by Washington.

The letter also said that in Iraq's view the main source of the problem "is the fact that inspection missions are entrusted to such a large number of United State nationals".

The leader of a UN monitoring team which has been confined in Baghdad broke off a British television interview on saying a confrontation had developed with Iraqi.

The Iraq Stand-off over the seizure of Iraqi nuclear weapons related documents by an inspection team in Baghdad has apparently ended. According to the UN spokesman, Mr. David Kay, most of the 44 UN inspectors confined by Iraqi security guards to the parking lot of the Iraqi-Atomic Energy Commission building since September 27, 1991 returned to their hotel on Thursday evening. The tension caused by the Iraqi action was defused following the acceptance by the Security Council of Baghdad's proposal for the preparation of an inventory of all the documents seized or filmed by the inspectors. The Iraqi government had initially objected to the removal of many of these documents on the ground that they were just personal records and had nothing to do with uncovering a suspected nuclear weapons programme. Eventually the Iraqi authorities seem to have decided not to push too hard to prevent the documents from being taken away and to rest content with a joint preparation of these by the Iraqis and UN inspectors Baghdad is certainly entitled to maintain an agreed record of what is removed from

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its possession. This apart the Iraqi government apparently wanted to make the point that it would not meekly put up with heavy-handed UN intrusions into its offices and indiscriminate searches in the guise of unearthing information about weapons of mass destruction in accordance with Security Council resolutions. It will obviously be better for UN officials entrusted with this work to avoid provocative conduct as far as possible. The more important part of the whole episode is, of course, the fact that the Security Council is now in possession of vital information about Iraqi's nuclear weapons programme as has been claimed by a UN citicial. The head of the UN inspection team. David Kay, says that the documents in question contain information about the top personnel involved in the programme, uranium enrichment, financial data relating to procurement and names of foreign companies which supplied Iran with nuclear components. The next crucial action to gather more information is to undertake an inspection by helicopters. The really critical juncture will be when the Security Council decides to proceed on the basis of adequate knowledge about Iraqi facilities to make weapons of mass destruction to have them destroyed.[3]

The UN nuclear inspection team held in the last week of September 1991 in Baghdad secretly transmitted contents of the documents they obtained on Iraq's nuclear project while besieged by Iraqi troops.

In its latest eddition, the *Newsweek* magazine says the inspectors used portable communications gear to beam the seized information up to satellite while they were penned in by Iraqi troops in a Baghdad car park.

The signal was relayed to a secret base in Bahrain and then on to intelligence analysts in Washington.

The inspection team transmitted the information while David Kay, the American head of the team, used his satellite phone to give interviews to the international news media.

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The seized documents reveal that a nuclear of facilities that the Iraqi Defence Ministry had claimed were merely being used for research were in fact being used to build a sphere of highly enriched uranium the size of a tennis ball.

Kay said the documents opened up broad new areas of Iraq's secret nuclear weapons programme. Among the documents, the inspection team found contracts and letterheads from a wide array of western countries, including some European industrial giants and several US companies.

Meanwhile the United States will keep enough force to mount an operation abroad on the scale of the 'Desert Storm' Gulf War campaign even with cuts in nuclear arms, Defence Secretary Dick Cheney has said.

Speaking after President George Bush's announcement on nuclear arms cut, Cheney said Washington sought to keep enough forces deployed to resist aggression in any regional conflict when it was in the US interest to do so, such as in Korea but not currently in Yugoslavia.

I would say that the basic underlying assumptions by which we size out forces today is the need to prevail in a regional conflict like Desert Storm, he said in an interview on ABC television outlining his vision of future defence department operations.

More than half a million US troops fought in operation 'Desert Storm', a six-week drive evicting Iraq from Kuwait by February 28, 1991.

You have to preserve the kind of capability that you call upon when those unforeseen emergencies (like Iraq) arise, and they always do, Cheney.

Asked where Washington would be sufficiently concerned to mount a Desert Storm-sized operation, Cheney said: I think

we clearly care, for example, in Kores, where we have got major commitments and major interests and had to fight a major conflict in the past.

UN will define border between Iraq, Kuwait: Meanwhile a UN technical team arrived in Kuwait Sunday to prepare the task of the UN commission which will define the border between Iraq and Kuwait.

Once the border is defined, Iraq must agree to it in accordance with the cease-fire terms, a Western diplomat has said.

Iraq's stability vital for Gulf Maname Bahraini Prime Minister Sheikh Khalfa Bin Salman Al-Khalifa expressed satisfaction over the economic stability Bahrain is enjoying.

In an interview with the London-based 'Euromoney' magazine published on Monday, the Prime Minister said that the economic stability in Bahrain is the product of great efforts built on sound policies that accommodate all services, in addition to laws and regulations that protect business, banking and monetary establishments.

On Iraq, he said that he is looking forward to the day when this country will surmount its tragedy, and affirmed that Iraq's stability is vital to the entire Gulf region. 'Iraq is a sister Arab country which we hope will return soon to the Arab fold', Sheikh Khalifa said.

Adnan Dawood Salman Chairman of the Organisation of Solidarity with countries and former Minister said in New Delhi, on September 24, 1991 said the US wanted to destroy Iraq on one pretex or the other. He said Iraqi nuclear programme was for peaceful purposes and was not meant for producing nuclear weapons.

He accused Washington and its allies of creating hurdles in achieving scientific and technological advancement by developing

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nations. The US is already imposing restrictions on India and Pakistan in this regard, while it allows Israel all kinds of destructive and nuclear weapons.

There is acute shortage of life saving drugs in his country and urged the peace loving people of the world to help Iraq get essential drugs and medicines.

He also issued a statement, which stated that the Iraqi authorities did not prevent the inspection group from having the required documents. The statement further stated that the documents, which the inspection group requires, are available in the building and the group could take whatever it wanted.

The Iraqi delegation appealed to India urgent initiatives at the United Nations Security Council to lift the economic blockade against Iraq where hospitals had no anaesthesia facility and "millions placed death by next year".

Iraq needed 1.6 billion dollar during the next 12 months by war of sale of crude oil to import food to avert a famine. Salman said, He is now the chairman of the Organisation of Friendship, Peace and Solidarity of Iraq.

Accusing the United States of treating the Iraqi people in "a barbaric way" Salman said a cholera epidemic had broken out and 80 per cent of Iraqi children were suffering from severe malnutrition.

The delegation was assured by Human Resource Development Minister Arjun Singh, and Minister of State for External Affairs, Eduardo Faleiro, that India stood by the rights of the Iraqi people and would take initiatives to alleviate their sufferings.

A senior UN envoy said in Baghdad, on October 7, 1991 that Iraq, despite repeated denials, had any may still have a nuclear-weapon programme.

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Rolf Ekeus, in Iraq to urge compliance with UN weapons inspectors, also said ballistics experts hunting for Scud missiles and launchers had made "important findings" of undeclared material.

Ekeus, head of the UN special commission monitoring the declaration and scrapping of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction under the terms of the Gulf War cease-fire, told reporters, Baghdad continued to deny that it had a nuclear weapons programme.

"They are denying they are making any more than research. Our assessment is that it is a full-fledged programme that was carried out and that components of the programme are still going on," he said.

Ekeus is trying to persuade Baghdad to cooperate fully with UN teams, which are enforcing the terms of the cease-fire and which have been dogged by controversy since they started arriving in May, 1991.

His mission followed a four-day standoff in Baghdad car park between Iraqi officials and UN inspectors who refused to hand over documents seized on Iraqi's nuclear programme. Iraq says its nuclear research, which was open to the Vienna International Atomic Energy Agency for inspection, was for peaceful purposes.

Asked if he had succeeded in his mission, he said he had made progress, although there were still differences over Iraq's nuclear and ballistic programmes.

Meanwhile, more than 30,000 children have died in Iraq because of the UN trade embargo imposed in August 1990 after the invitation of Kuwait, "A message from the children of Iraq to the children of the world" quoted by INA, appealed to the UN to lift the sanctions.

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"The economic embargo has caused the death of more than 30,000 children and forced a large number of Iraqi women to have abortions," It said.

In August, 1991 Baghdad said 14,000 children had died because of shortages of medicine and food.

Relief workers have also warned that thousands of children could perish because of the international sanctions.

The leader of an inspection team has said he would recommend the United Nations keep a vigilant watch to make sure Iraq does not develop biological weapons.

David Huxsoll on October 6, 1991 said some vaccine-production sites in Iraq are capable of growing large numbers of organisms although the research appeared geared for peaceful purposes.

"We are going to recommend that those sites be monitored by the UN for future compliance", the American scientist said.

"Those programmes were certainly compatible with the development and research on biological weapons", said Huxsoll.

The Iraqi News Agency quoted Foreign Minister Ahmad Hussein as saying that Iraq demands that the inspection teams be fair in fulfilling their tasks and not become a tool for a state or group of states that have political designs against Iraq and its people.

Un missile inspector has said all of Iraq's superguns have been destroyed and UN teams will now concentrate on discovering a possible hidden stock of Scud missiles.

"They have no more superguns," said Douglas England, the UN expert who led the 20-member teams, "We've pretty much completed the destruction."

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There were five superguns, one with a 350-mm barrel that was assembled and stretched over 52 metres two others of the same size that were still in parts, and two 1,000-mm barrel guns whose components had not been completed England said.

Experts in his team destroyed the flanges at each end of the barrels to ensure the Iraqi's could not bolt them together. The Iraqis were left to continue the destruction of the guns themselves by cutting down the pieces through a time-consuming welding process the team arrived in Bahrain on Wednesday and will return to Iraq in three weeks to inspect the job.

Meanwhile, China on October 7, 1991 described as "unfounded" information found in documents seized by the UN in Iraq that suggested that China had taken part in Baghdad's nuclear programme. "China was never involved in any nuclear programme in Iraq" and every claim to the contrary in "unfounded", a communique of the Chinese foreign ministry said in Beijing.

Iraq was apparently aiming to produce a deadly hydrogen bomb as a part of its clandestine nuclear weapons programme, the United Nations inspectors have concluded after examination of documents seized during the latest inspection.

The "revelation" which could have far reaching and serious consequences came as a surprise and shock to diplomats who had been closely following the developments in Iraq. There seems to be no reason to disbelieve it, they said.

The documents all of which have not yet been translated from Arabic into English show Iraqi "ambition" to produce lithium six which has no other use except in a thermo-nuclear reaction. Dr. Hans Blix. Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, told newsmen after briefing the Security Council on the latest inspection of Iraq facilities.[4]

The documents he said, show that Iraq's ambition was to produce 100 kilograms of lithium six per year but inspectors are

not yet sure whether Baghdad actually produced any quantity of lithium six or upto what stage it had advanced.

Dr. Blix refused to speculate as to how many and how powerful hydrogen bombs could be produce with 100 kilograms of lithium six.

The revelation came from the documents brought by 45 inspectors led by Dr. David Kay, who were detained in a parking lot by the Iraqis for several days before they were allowed to move out along with the documents.

Dr. Kay described the Iraqi nuclear programme very sophisticated Dr. Blix said the documents show conclusively that Iraq was "very well advanced in a programme to develop an implosion type nuclear weapon and that links existed to a surface-to-surface missile project.

The Iraqi programme, he said was so advanced that the time needed to reach bomb making capacity seems to have been determined by the time required for enrichment activities rather than weapon design activities.

The inspection also found evidence of broadbased Iraqi international procurement efforts. "It is quite probable that some of the procurement that has taken place had occurred in violation of the laws of state from which the export originated" Dr. Blix said.

Blix and Kay agreed that the Iraqi scientists had deep knowledge about the nuclear weapons and said documents revealed the areas they specialised in.

Replying to a question at a briefing Blix said it would be necessary in future to keep an eye on the scientists and if several of them were working on a particular project.

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A report submitted to the Security Council said that contrary to the Iraq's claim of having only a peaceful nuclear programme, the team found documents showing that Iraq had been working on the revision of a nuclear weapons design and one liking on a surface-to-surface missile project, presumably intended delivery system for their nuclear weapon.

The document describe nuclear weapons development experiments involving neutron initiators, enriched uranium cores reflectors, high explosives lenses and electronic firing sets.

"One document points to Iraqi success in the matching of nuclear weapons components from natural uranium but it is not clear from the document whether Iraq had enough highly enriched uranium for an actual explosive device", it said.

The report says that the documents clearly show that nuclear design work was conducted at Al Atheer, a facility which Iraq claimed had no nuclear connections. Even previous inspection teams has concluded that the facility was most probably used for nuclear weapons component production, with explosives and device assembly.

At about is a building complex situated above 65 km from Baghdad and had escaped intensive bombing during the Gulf War, apparently because western intelligence was not aware of its function which the inspectors say, the documents now reveal.

The report says the inspection teams also found evidence of Iraqi work on sophisticated computer codes used in the development of nuclear weapons, including one and two demensional hydrodynamic and neutronic models which simulate the behavior of nuclear weapons as they are being fired. Some of these sophisticated codes were modified by Iraq before being used at Al Atheer and documents state that as of June 1990, the

basic design for nuclear explosives device had gone through five modifications.

The team also found document suggesting the parallel development of a missile delivery system from the ongoing nuclear weapons programme. In one of the documents, the Ministry of Defence instructed the Iraqi Atomic Energy Commission (IAEC) to postpone an experiment until after surface-to-surface missile testing.

Other documents, the reports says contain evidence that since 1981, Iraq intended to produce enriched uranium by methods other than electromagnetic isotope separation. Specifically, the documents showed that Iraq explored gaseous diffusion and centrifuge enrichment "as late as 1988 and as early as 1982".

Among the documents was an IAEC accredited study in the field of nuclear implosion physics which, the report says is another proof of nuclear weapons development intention.

The team also found many volumes of documents related to procurement for the nuclear weapon programme. The report says a number of cover names used by Baghdad have been identified and the number will grow when more records are translated.

On the basis of documents, the team believes that Iraq conducted substantial nuclear weapon related procurement from foreign sources but inspectors stressed that most items will probably prove to have been innocuous multi-use items for which export licences were not needed or which were despatched before imposition of the United Nations embargo.

Asked whether the names of the companies from which Iraq received material would be revealed. Blix said that the commission will inform the Government where law had been violated.

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The team found evidence that Iraqi authorities devised cover explanation for purchases to avoid attracting attention abroad. "In this connection a countrywide survey of the type and amount of equipment required for civilian needs was recommended the idea being that indigenously produced items should be used in the civil sector while high quality imported items bearing same general description would be used for the clandestine nuclear weapons programme.

Their clamour for peace notwithstanding, nations are hundreds of millions of dollars behind in paying for it.

Member countries owed $ 440 million, for UN peace-keeping operations, as of July 31, 1991.

The largest outstanding amount was on account of the UN interim force in Lebanon $ 256.66 million-followed by $ 132.5 million on account of such operations in western Sahara, $ 31.4 million for operations in Iraq and Kuwait.

Some members even owed the UN Iran-Iraq military observer group whose mandate ended six months ago.

In contrast the UN transitional assistance group for Namibia, which fulfilled its mission more than a year ago, ran a surplus, and members were asked to request reimbursement or apply the credits against future assessments.

Other trouble spots for which members owe include Angola and Central America.

Now that the UN inspection have certified the nuclear capability of Iraq, the role of the West in supplying the necessary material and equipment is being unfolded. Most of it was already known. Britain is one country which does not want the names of the Western companies to be revealed in the United Nations report. The Western countries which played a significant

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part in helping Baghdad acquire the capability in nuclear, biological and chemical weaponry include the United States, Germany, France and Britain. As recently as on January 24, 1991 a New York company supplied three power supply units that are believed to have helped Baghdad's uranium enrichment programme. The company had shipped four units in 1988 and five in 1989 under licence approved by the US Department of Commerce. Italy's bank, Banca National del Lavoro, partly funded Iraq's programme to bold a nuclear capable missile known as the Condor two.[5]

During its inspection in Iraq, the UN team found 39 small ampoules of plutonium supplies by a British firm. The ampoules included 33 containing plutonium 238 and six with plutonium 239, the type normally used in nuclear weapons.

When the reports first appeared about the British company's supply, the British Department of Trade and Industry dismissed it as irrelevant . The plea taken by the department was that the supply licensed by it was for very small quantity and for medical purpose. Now the company, which supplied ampoules, offers a somewhat different explanation: These ampoules are used for checking or calibrating radiation monitoring equipment which could be used in industry for environmental monitoring as well as the nuclear industry. The product cannot be used for the manufacture of nuclear weapons.

A nuclear expert of the United Nations has clarified that the small amount of plutonium could be used only for scientific and laboratory experiments to study its chemical behavior to enable Iraqi scientist to separate it from spent fuel rods. He has also confirmed that it was not sufficient to build a nuclear weapon.

The British firms also played a role in helping Iraq develop the long-range Scud missiles. Between 1988 and last year, two British engineering firms supplied machines which were used by Iraq to extend the outer castings of missile to hold more fuel.

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The machines were wroth £400,000 and were exported under a licence issued by the British Department of Trade and Industry ostensibly for a trade fair and a military exhibition in Baghdad. The machines were subsequently moved to military installations. One of the British companies, which is based in Birmingham, was surprised that its metal plating plants were used in Iraq's missile project.

British officials acting on information form the United States seized a shipment of special capacitors destined for Iraq of the kind needed to trigger a Nagasaki-type atom bomb. The Swiss authorities too intercepted a consignment of machine tools and special steel for Baghdad, clearly destined for the centrifuges which form a crucial stage in the enrichment of uranium.

Significantly, Iraqis turned to British firms in 1988 after the Soviet Union refused to supply longer-range version of the Scud B. The British Department of Trade and Industry culpably ignored the export of superguns to Iraq. The BBC's panorama programme producers had a film on it but it was not shown.

The maximum number of companies which supplied material and equipment to Iraq were German. Nearly 110 German companies were investigated by the authorities for illegal exports to Iraq. One German company helped Baghdad with the development of biological weapons and the other guided Iraqis to adapt the Soviet Scud missiles. As many as 110 cases of illegal supplies to Iraq were reported by German security services. Eleven cases resulted in prosecution. Germany's key role in building Iraq's chemical warfare capability "has done massive damage to our reputation," the coordinator of the German intelligence services admitted.

German Economics Minister Jurgen Mollemann said that the Government was most seriously concerned that some individual German businessmen and technicians had been

involved with Iraq's armaments programme. Even chancellor Helmut Kohl admitted that German technicians illegally helped to increase that range of Scud missiles. As a penance for the German role. Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem during the Gulf War and faced angry Israeli protestors and offered aid worth £85 million to repair the damage caused by Scud missiles.

Austrian technicians also worked for Baghdad's Scud missiles. Though Germany and Israel accused the French for helping Baghdad upgrade its Scud missiles, the French denied the allegation. Some Western countries like the French stand to gain both ways. When French Jaguar war planes destroyed a chase of Exocet missiles in Kuwait during the Gulf War, it was good news for the Paris weapon industry. First they had sold the Exocet to Kuwait. The Iraqis captured them during their occupation of Kuwait. Next, they had sold the As- 30 laser guided missiles to the French Air Force which, they are selling a replacements stock to Kuwait. Like other Western countries, the French sold weapons worth billions of dollars to Iraq. France also supplied two nuclear reactors to Baghdad during the period Mr. Jacques Chirac was the Premier in the mid-seventies. The reactor destroyed by Israel in 1981 was French.

The Gulf War caused concern about the almost uninhibited supply of arms from France to the volatile region when the French soldiers, as part of the multinational force against Iraq, came under attack from Milan anti-tank, Roland anti-air and Exocet missiles and confronted Mirage fighters prompting Francois Leotard, honorary president of the Republican party, to call for greater parliamentary scrutiny for such exports.[6]

The way the UN has been going about it, it is difficult to appreciate what exactly it is up to in Iraq. By contrast, the US intentions are not all that unclear. President Bush has all along had only one objective in that country—to get rid of President Saddam Hussein by any means. It is under standable, therefore,

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for the US to heap humiliation on that country, even starve it, to engineer a revolt against rulers and set up a "democratic" regime like those, say in Kuwait or Saudi Arabia. It is, however, inexplicable, and distressing , that the UN too should appear to be working for the same objective. The latest Security Council move to extend indefinitely the stay of its inspection team in Iraq and vest it with wide powers to monitor, verify and inspect sites there to ensure compliance of its resolutions prohibiting Iraq from producing or acquiring nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and long-range missiles, only strengthens this impression. The resolution demanding that Iraq unconditionally cooperate with the special commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency is no different, particularly in view of the role played by the inspection team chief David Kay who has been more loyal to the US than to the UN, or the IAEA. The proven fact that he was communicating directly with US officials raises serous doubts whether his team is working for the UN or as a US intelligence agency. This is enough to justify the Iraqi apprehensions that the move will tighten the seizure of its political, industrial and economic activities. IAEA Director General Hans Blix has made things no better by making allegations about Iraq's nuclear plans. The UN inspectors may have found evidence of an Iraqi nuclear weapons programme, but to project it disproportionately by talking of Iraqi "ambition" to produce 100 kg of lithium-6 per year, hence the hydrogen bomb, could be intended just to give Mr. Saddam Hussein a bad name and let the US do the rest[7].

As a successor to the League of Nations, the UN should have been wary of humiliating the vanquished and more circumspect about its role in Iraq. Even after the US has won the cold war, the big powers and other world leaders do not have to be led by it by the nose into a course that could jeopardise future global security. Saddam Hussein has already displayed rare staying power and resilience. He is also in the process of mending his country's fences with Iran, and tomorrow is always another day. It is time the UN distanced itself from US objectives and moved

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towards rehabilitating Iraq by relaxing the economic sanctions and other punitive measures against it.

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12

Terrorism, Violence and War

All over the world the US and UK have tightened their security measures in respect of their property, personnel of their property, personnel and particularly civilian airliners against the anticipated threats from terrorist attacks by those sympathetic to the Iraqi cause. Even before the allied forces started their bombing the Iraqi leadership had declared that every Muslim believer would act as a missile against western interests. Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein also said that till now the Islamic forces had been defeated by .the West since the former restricted the field of battle and this time the war will be waged all over the world. A week ago the Revolutionary Council of Iraq proclaimed that all those who die in the "Fadayeen" action against western interests will be declared martyrs in the 'mother of battles.' Already there have been bomb explosions in Paris, Athens, Adana in Turkey, Beruit, the Phillippines and Lima in Peru though none of them caused any worthwhile damage. One should not rule out the possibility of more damaging acts in the future. The international community will have to ponder over the post-war situation and the possible emergence of yet another major international terrorist organisation. It is now quite clear that in this war the western nations are setting about destroying Iraqi's military power deliberately. The war has generated enormous amount of racial hatred and a sense of humiliation

in Iraqis. After the war it should be anticipated that orgnisations devoted to terrorists attacks on the west may emerge in Iraq. Till now, though the Iraqis have been charged with supporting organisations like Abu Nidhal's group, Iraqi organisations themselves have not been cited to any significant extent as being responsible for terrorist action in the outside world. Scholars have maintained that terrorism is often the way of war-making by the weak against the strong. There is also the view that as inter-state conventional wars became increasingly difficult to wage, notwithstanding the most intense war we are witnessing or perhaps of that, in future conflicts between nations will express themselves through terrorism.[1]

Unless the US and the western European countries are able to deliver on their promise to convene an international peace conference on Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian issue the increasing frustration among the Palestinians may also result in stepped up terrorism. Yet another not worthy aspect is the division in the Islamic world itself in which Syria, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the various emirates on the Gulf are ranged against Iraq and its sympathisers. Already, there has been terrorist activity against the regime of Emir of Kuwait by his opponents. Turkey too has been subject to terrorist attention in the past. Therefore it is reasonable to expect increased terrorist activities against these regimes as well. Some among these regimes are not above using state-sponsored terrorism as counter attack. Consequently there are distinct possibilities of West Asia becoming a hive of terrorist activities directed against each other as well as on western targets. One need not rule out the possibility of even Israeli Mossad and Shinbeit helping them as they have done so in the past. In the post war scenario, the Gulf countries will be more concerned about terrorist threats and therefore one should expect that while there may be attempts to keep the Western forces out of sight and beyond the horizon there will be increased demands for western security and anti-terrorist specialists. The problem of increases in terrorism will not be a concern only to the western countries and Arab regimes targetted

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by the terrorists because the whole world is the arena for the terrorists looking for vulnerable targets of their hated adversaries. Over a period of time different terrorist group also start to collaborate in terms of exchange of arms and training and even information.

Terrorism to sustain itself either demands upon subventions from certain governments or raises resources through narcotics trafficking and on occasions through crimes like bank robberies or holding persons to ransom.[2]

As the January 15, 1991 deadline for an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait nears, Western intelligence agencies fear President Saddam Hussein will launch a series of terrorist attacks in Europe if his forces are attacked in the Gulf. Security chiefs, who have been on full alert since the Gulf crisis broke at the beginning of August, 1991 are keeping special watch for signs of Iraqi-sponsored terrorists teams.

In Baghdad, Saddam Hussein has assembled leaders of the most formidable Arab groups, all experienced in murder, bombing and hijacking. Abul Abbas, leader of the Palestine Liberation Front, now based in Baghdad, has warned the West that if war were to break out, nowhere in the world would be safe for members of the anti-Iraq coalition. George Habash, veteran leader of the Popular Front for the Liberations of Palestine, notorious for 20 years as a hijack organisation, has also opened an office in Baghdad. He too said he was planning raids on Western countries in case of war. The Abu Nidal Organisation, one of the most ruthless of the terrorist groups, moved to Baghdad from Libya after the invasion of Kuwait. Its chief, Sabri al-Banna, is known to have networks in position in Europe. Any of these groups is capable of carrying out operations in Europe.[3]

In Washington, there are fears that Saddam might react to an initial onslaught by launching a missile attack against

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Israel. American defence chiefs have been working hard behind the scenes to dissuade the Israeli military from any offensive action against Iraq. The politicians, headed by Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, are showing more caution than the generals, arguing that Israel must stay out of the firing line to prevent Saddam uniting the now-divided Arab world against the traditional foe.

President George Bush's increasingly tough talk coincides with renewed doubts over the readiness to fight of some sections of the US military. Pentagon sources say that several units based in Germany have not yet moved to Saudi Arabia to join Operation Desert Shield. Their commanding officers, it is claimed, are using delaying tactics because they prefer the creature comforts of Germany to the rigours of the desert.[4]

Iraqi radio has issued a call from the "Combat centre" urging revolutionary cells to strike at the interests of countries attacking iraq.

In what appeared to be instructions for pro-Iraqi terrorists operating in member nations of the US-led coalition against Iraq. The radio on February 5, 1991, implored the cells to fight them in their dens.

"Brother strugglers, wherever you are, strike the interests of the countries of aggression and pounce on the traitors in their dens. Do not spare any interest of any of the countries of aggression who are allied against the Arab and Islamic nation," the ratio said.

"God is great. May the eyes of the traitors and cowards remain sleepless," the radio message continued.

"Call from Maymun to everybody: all revolutionary cells, and all qualitative action cells. Since the beginning of the aggression against Iraq, you have been brothers in arms in the mother of battles. You have the same duty."

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"God willing, the Arab and Islamic nation will attain victory under the leadership of your lofty and proud Iraq, which is led by a faithful leader who has devoted himself and his leadership to ending the anomalous Arab era and leading our nation towards the Arab future and the heights of glory, pride, and faith" it said.

Almost daily there is some bomb going off somewhere in a country ranged against Iraq in the Gulf War. The latest instance of three mortar round being fired at 10 Downing Street (office of British Prime Minister) and Whitehall in London should revive an objective debate whether this and some other incidents constitute "terrorism". Reports received here indicate that preliminary findings about the London attacks bear the signature of the IRA. In other incidents, a direct Iraqi hand is suspected. Assuming for argument sake this is true or even conceding that the IRA and the Iraqis are partners in crime, would this constitute terrorism on the part of a country at war and whose own command and control, means of communication (Civil and military), refineries and the like have been attacked ? The subject is best left to experienced specialists who of course know that the world has not yet agreed on a common definition of what is terrorism and who is a terrorist. In peace time the generally agreed basis is that an attack on innocent, defenceless civilians is terrorism. However, war time activity imparts an entirely different dimension. For example, on the first night of Operation Desert Storm the hi-tech precision munitions were used to strike several targets, including the Baghdad TV tower and refineries. There is no electricity in large parts of the Iraqi capital because they were bombed. Lt. Gen. Thomas Kelly of the U.S. informed the press that this had diminished the enemy capacity to operate heavy machines for repair or making spare parts. CNNTV showed a remarkable clip of one bomb being sent right down the vent shaft of the Iraqi Defence Minister. Subsequently, linear targets such as bridges have been bombed, including the most prominent and busy road bridge in down-town Baghdad. On the first night itself Mr. Saddam Hussein's palace was destroyed.

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Earlier this week, two pipe bombs were found before they were times to go off at two storage tanks at the world's largest naval base at Norfolk, Virginia, USA. No-body in authority has yet identified this attempted sabotage with Iraq. The Western media has used the term terrorism to define such attempts. Leaving aside some stray explosions at street corners of or outside, which may well be the work of freelance activist. Would an Iraqi-sponsored sabotage of a tank containing one million gallons of Methyl Alcohol for an enemy naval base be a tit-for-tat strike at a military target?

Would an Iraqi or Iraq-IRA hit at the British Defence Ministry of John Major's official residence be an act of terrorism or an Iraqi strike at an enemy command and control centre ? Is there a parallel with activities of the French resistance ? Probably not because the parallel of that would be Kuwait resistance against Iraq's occupation forces. But that was pre-war. Now we are in a war supposedly sanctioned by the UN. It is futile to canvass views of partisan government functionaries on such a debatable moral issue. Some effort was made at a press centre to explore reactions from journalists from Canada, Germany, New Zealand, Britain, USA, India, and an American service officer in civies. Sometimes one has to play the devil's advocate to pose questions. One Indian Journalist with a Gulf-based paper branded any such activity as terrorism. "If the Iraqis sabotaged a target in the direct was zone I would agree that it is legitimate war activity but not in London on the Defence Ministry," said one Indian, while another disagreed. A Canadian newsman said "my first thought would be the same—activity confined to the war zone—but on rethinking it is Mr. Bush who chose to have the war here so Iraq can attack targets in countries with which it is at war." Almost all queried agreed that a black and white answer was not possible and most people's perceptions would be conditioned by which side of the divide they stood on. The U.S. officer was to the point, "I understand what you are saying and this might surprise you but I think if you were a Britisher you would call it (attacks in

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London) terrorism but this is a war isn't it". The war zone definition does not appear very convincing. For instance, if a U.S. ship on the high seas carrying ammunition is spotted by Iraq, it would appear to be a fair target. The U.S. has been hitting convoys on the Iraq-Jordan road on suspicion that they are ferrying material directly or indirectly aiding the Iraqi war effort. During war certain installations are sacred. Hospitals and hospital ships are marked with a large Red Cross (or Red Crescent). Now the U.S. has alleged that Mr. Saddam Hussein's military equipment is being hidden in civilian areas. At this time a discussion may appear academic but things usually come to the boil later when it comes to a war crimes trial. History has shown that all spoils belong to the victor. One can defoliate all of Vietnam's jungles and not pay a dime in reparations to the victims but can pay compensation to your own troops who have suffered from health complications. Over to the experts.

In the circumstances, a 43-day encounter does not reflect poorly on the Iraqi army and the Iraqi people. The very fact that they had the guts to stand up to this awesome armada, to engage it in combat, shows both courage and character. Of course, some people will say it also shows a tendency towards suicide, but from where I stand, which is shoulder to shoulder with all people striving to live with minimal dignity and some semblance of free will, the Iraqi 'rout' might turn out to be inspirational. Are you a Communist? Do you support Saddam Hussein's annexation of Kuwait ? Is he not a despicable despot whose downfall must be a matter of celebration ? These are some of the questions posed currently to "Saddam lovers". Actually, I am pro-west and the United States. I admire Israel and with it a happy life within secure borders. The entry of Iraqi troops into Kuwait was indefensible. Saddam is not my favourite president, neither do I endorse the regime he ruthlessly regulates. But how does that justify the savagery and the barbaism inflicted by an allegedly civilised, elightened and just world power against a nation whose only crime was that it had become strong and assertive in its articulation of long-held Arab grievances ? The aggression

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merely provided George Bush with an excuse to fix Saddam Hussein (there is mounting evidence that the US actually invited the Iraqi President to embark on his adventurism). He would have been fixed, Kuwait or no Kuwait. In the short-term all US objectives appear to have fallen in place neatly. Except one, Saddam Hussein has not yet been eliminated although one can be sure that the CIA is busy working to "change the state of his health". Now that the possibility of US Marines jumping into a Baghdad bunker and shooting the "man man" is remote, the job has been left, in George Bush's words, to the people of Iraq who have been receiving constant reminders that Saddam is the person solely responsible for their ruin and misery. I am not sure if the approached citizens with oblige the White House because all the nuances coming out of Baghdad suggest that for the time being the Iraqi people and the Iraqi army will swallow all present insults and quietly rally around Saddam Hussein. Meanwhile, OPEC is restored to US manipulation, Israel is supreme in West Asia, the great free societies for Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Oman, UAE are safe, Yasser Arafat and the PLO have been marginalised, and George Bush guaranteed a second term. In the medium-term however, things look less rosy. All the conflicts plaguing the region will simmer, waiting to boil over. Terrorism worldwide is bound to increase and intensify and the Palestinians will have no option but to resort to arms. The Arab coalition partners are bound to fall out; already students are shouting on the streets of Cairo while exiled Kuwaiti groups have begun pressing the Alsabah dynasty for democratic reforms. The new security arrangements promised by George Bush will involved some sort of US presence and leave Israel the paramount power in the region. In short, the denouement ensures permanent instability in West Asia.[5]

Unknown assailant in a car hurled a bomb on March 29,1991 that explored in front of the Kuwaiti embassy in Amman, but it caused no damage, the emirate's ambassador said. The attacker fled after the bomb exploded at the front door of the embassy, Kuwait's ambassador to Jordan Suleiman al-

Fassam, said Employees who had witnessed the attack told him what had happened.

The five permanent UN Security Council members are demanding that Iraq renounce terrorism and expel terrorist groups. The demands come in the latest draft of the council's resolution for a permanent truce in the Gulf War.

Council members are still trying to resolve differences over which missiles Iraqi authorities would be ordered to destroy.

The Soviet Union would let Iraq keep missiles that did not have the range to reach Israel, about 425 kilometers away.

The United States which in the past favored the destruction of all Iraqi missiles, indicated it was leaning towards the Soviet position.

On March 28,1991 the ambassadors of the United States, Soviet Union, Britain, France and China—the five permanent members of the Security Council—refined the language of their proposed resolution. US Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering said it would function as a permanent truce once approved by Iraq..

Iraq and the US-led coalition agreed to a temporary ceasefire shortly after coalition forces pushed Iraqi soldiers out of Kuwait in late February.

Diplomats said the five council members gave their draft of the proposed resolution to the other 10 ambassadors yesterday, but left a blank space in the text before the word missile.

On March 29, 1991 the Security Council's permanent members were in agreement on a paragraph of the resolution that would require Iraq's government to make a public break with terrorists.

The paragraph requires Iraq to inform the council that it will not commit or support any act of international terrorism or

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allow any organisation directed toward commission of such acts to operate within its territory.

It also requires Baghdad to condemn unequivocally and renounce all acts, methods and practices of terrorism.

A wide cast of terrorists made Baghdad their headquarters untill the Persian Gulf War. They have included the mastermind of the 1985 Achille Lauro hijacking; the inventor of the suitcase bomb; a suspect in the 1988 bombing of Pan Am flight 103 over Scotland, and Carios, the notorious jackal.

In January, 1991 Iraq's official Baghdad radio threatened terrorist strikes against the US and its allies. So far no major Gulf-related terror attacks have occurred.

The U.N. Security Council members agree on virtually all other provisions of the draft, which would make Iraq liable for war damages and allow UN-supervised destruction of its chemical, biological and nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles.

Unless arms are replenished from outside, there will be no talk of jihad for a long time now. Arab terrorism is likely to lesson as it was largely financed by Iraq. The indefensible pro-Saddam stand of many Indian intellectuals seems more a product of Vietnam and of Nehruvian pseudo non-alignment. No serious study of the post-cold war situation is involved.[6]

Violence will continue to dominate West Asia. The United States has become even more deeply involved in the regional conflicts, peace is merely a mirage it is pursuing. Genuine peace in West Asia is only possible if two conditions are fulfilled: a settlement which provides a satisfactory solution to the Palestinian problem and governments in Arab countries which are responsive to public opinion. The United States, unfortunately, is not in a position to bring about the conditions necessary for such a change. On the contrary, its policies are bound to make violence endemic in the region.[7]

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13

Islam and Peace

Never ever Has the international legitimacy deprived a people of their national rights and national legitimacy as in the case of the Palestinians. It is a painful story but is a hard fact of history. There is not harm in repeating the case of the Palestinians in order to recount facts, without condemning anybody, even the influential world powers which led lend legitimacy in the form of a political entity to scattered. People from all parts of the world, at the expense of the actual and original right of a peace-loving people, who had to bear the brunt of the Mandatory rule at the end of the First World War, and the implementation of the Balfour Declaration for 1917, the then British Foreign Minister, who promised the Jews a homeland under undetermined geographically and having no clear features and outlines. As soon as the Second-World War ended, the world moved into a era of organised international community, embodied in the United Nations (UN). The UN was meant to establish peace and to prevent recurrence of any new war. But, alas; Resolution No. 181 for partition of Palestine into two states which was passed on November 19, 1947, sowed the seeds of regional conflict and wars because it was unjust and unjustifiable. According to it, a Palestinian State and a Jewish one with well-defined geographical boundaries for both should exist together and side by side. This resolution gave a special status to Jerusalem and took

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note of the importance of the sacred City for all religious which were professed by the original inhabitants of Palestine as it took note of the spiritual sentiments of the followers of these religions in all parts of the world. The resolution stipulated that Jerusalem shall not be under either Palestinian State or the Jewish State. Its actual text was :

"For the City of Jerusalem, a Corpus Sepratum' — special Status — is to be made under a special international arrangement. UN would take up its administration and shall appoint a Trusteeship Council for assuming administrative authority on behalf of the UN." At this point, it is important to mention that the decision to divide Palestine into two states, stated clearly that any attempt to alter or change this arrangement by force, shall be considered a hostile act and threat to peace. The text says[1]:

"The Security Council determines as a threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression, in accordance with Article 39 of the Charter, any attempt to alter by force the settlement envisaged by this resolution."

As is known to all, this resolution which gave birth to the Jewish State, was not respected by this very State. Everybody knows that states come into being and develop as a result of social, cultural and political processes and not through international intervention as happened in the case of the State of Israel. Simple human perceptions show us that you cannot sow a seed from the North of the world and expect it to grow and fructify in the South.

It was first time in history that a theocratic state came into being through an international resolution and not natural birth. However, it was clear, that the stipulated State of Palestine in the same resolution, was not intended for Muslims only but was a State for Muslims, Christians and non-Zionist Jews, who opposed, and some of them oppose till today, the creation of

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the State Israel. Thus creation of two states was proclaimed — one a closed theocratic state and other secular democratic one. Unfortunately, religious fanaticism and the closed theocratic state won and the Democratic Secular State did not see the light of the day. Because justice does not always win. For it to win, it requires struggle and blood and that is what the Palestinians are doing since 1965 till today through their — Intifada — uprising. This background, in my view, is necessary to know the exact place of the international legitimacy in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Had international legitimacy fought tooth and nail to implement all its resolutions or did it leave them to the mercy of powerful winds to throw them into the dustbins of history during the conflict between the Eastern and the Western blocks werein cold war, international polarization, alliances and military bases had won over the desire for cooperation for the good of international legitimacy, international peace and security and realisation of justice for all. On the other side, reference to the past, which is still present and will determine the basic shape of the future of the region, is very important in order to understand the insistence of the Palestinians and the Arabas for dealing with their problem in its complete political dimension, i.e. implementing all resolutions of the UN without any exception and without watering them down beginning from the decision of the partition of Palestine in 1974 till the latest UN General Assembly resolutions which affirm the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to their homeland and their right to self-determination, and call upon Israel, once again, to unconditionally withdraw from all the occupied Arab territories. Israel first, as its is well-known, denied even the existence of the Palestinian People and now it is trying to ignore the political rights of the 5 million Palestinians whose literacy rate is higher than the literacy rate of the Israelis. It is nothing new to reiterate that the Arabas and with them Palestinians, have accepted the existence of a non-expansionist, non-occupying, peaceful neighbor that abides by the international legitimacy. It is noteworthy that in the year 1982, during the Fez Summith in Morocco, the Arabas accepted the inseparable international

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legitimacy, and in Algiers, at the 20th Session of National Palestinian Council which was held in September 1991, the Palestinians agreed in one of its resolutions that :

"The PLO welcomed the current peaceful efforts and endeavours including the call by President Bush and Gorbachev for convincing a Peace Conference to solve the conflict in the Middle East, to realise the following basis: First, the Peace Conference should be based on international legality and its resolutions including UN Security Council Resolutions 242 & 338 and the commitment to enforce them ensuring the total Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories including Holy Jerusalem and on the realisation of the Principle of Land for peace and national and political rights of the Palestinians people." [2]

From the above-mentioned, it becomes clear that international legitimacy, according to the Palestinian and Arab viewpoint, is total and cannot be fragmented. It shall not only rest on Resolutions Nos. 242 and 338 which Israel wants to be taken into consideration only for reaping, through them, the fruits of its aggression of 1967 on three Arab countries and for alleged security reasons, in this era, which has proved that the policy of expansionism or annexation is no longer the preferred guarantee for security; but would also rest on the implementation of Resolution No. 181 for the Partition of Palestine into two states which is still incomplete because the Palestinian State has not yet been created. The time of its creation has now come if stability, peace and justice, is desired in this important and sensitive region of the world. It would be based of Resolution No. 194 of the UN General Assembly passed in 1948, 43 long years ago, which stipulates the right of the Palestinians in returning to their homeland.

Regarding the political and legal status of Jerusalem, the Security Council Resolution No. 465, passed on March, 1, 1980, affirms the nullity and non–legitimacy of Israeli measures in

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Jerusalem and the occupied Arab Third Concept. October - November 1991 territories and more than that orders Israel to end its policy of setting up Jerusalem settlements and demands all countries not to provide Israel by any financial assistance which would enable it to carry out its policy of settlement. Paras 5, 6 and 7 of this resolution have the following text :

5. Determines that all measures taken by Israel to change the physical character, demographic composition, institutional structure, or status of the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, or any part thereof, have no legal validity and that Israel's policy and practices of settling parts of its population and new immigrants in those territories constitute a flagrant violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention relating to the protection of civilian persons in time of war and also constitutes a serious obstruction to achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

6. Strongly deplores the continuation and persistence of Israel in pursuing those policies and practices and calls upon the Government and people of Israel to rescind those measures, to dismantle the existing settlements and in particular, to cease, on an urgent basis, the establishment, construction and planning of settlements in the Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem.

7. Calls upon all states not to provide Israel with any assistance to be used specially in connection with settlements in the occupied territories.

Resolutions on Arab rights are innumerable because they are numerous and of their non-implementation and non-honouring by Israel, the Arab public opinion no longer attaches the proper importance and appreciation to them. On the contrary, the Arab public opinion holds the UN responsible directly for the creation of Israel and indirectly for all the harms and damages inflicted on the Arabas which have hindered their progress and

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growth and their political and democratic development. For that reason, when the Arab citizen started hearing a new tough political language for implementing fully the international legitimacy during the course of the Gulf crisis, he asked : Where was the international legitimacy during all those four and a half decades? Why some of the Great Powers did not care about it, and for the dangers inherent in turning a blind eye to it? Why Israel enjoyed mocking at it without punishment?

Needless to say that in order that international resolutions regain their credibility, USA, and mainly USA, is required urgently not to extend any financial help, whatsoever, to Israel because such assistance which amounts to 4 billion US dollars annually, helps Israel — directly or indirectly — in building settlements in the Occupied Territories. It is well-known that a state like Israel which has a financial deficit of 3 billions US dollars, shall not be able to build settlements without foreign assistance. USA is required to abide by Security Council Resolution No. 465 on which it voted for in 1980. This resolution asks other countries not to extend any financial help to Israel for settlement purposes. In the view of international legitimacy this resolution is an excellent weapon in the hands of the American Administration in the face of Israeli pressures to obtain a loan amounting to 10 billion dollars. This would be the first practical step towards implementing international legitimacy and to stop the settlements which are taking place at the expense of the occupied Arab territories in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Golan Heights.[3]

From the way American, Israel and the Arab countries behaved during the negotiations leading to the agreement to convene the Middle East Peace Conference, it became clear that Israel is for America what Juliet was for Romeo and the Arab countries are for Washington what a victim is for a conspirator. Why, otherwise, America — which only a few months ago had mobilised more than a million men and women in the scorching deserts of Arabia to uphold the lofty principles of international

conduct and safeguard the sanctity of the UN Resolutions and surrender before the stubborn attitude of Tel Aviv. An why, otherwise, the Arabian countries could be made to believe the American smooth talk. Addressing on March 6, 1991 the joint session of the US Congress, convened in the wake of the iraqi defeat in the 41 - day Gulf War, President George Bush said that the American commitment for peace "does not end with the liberation of Kuwait and the time has come to put end to the Arab-Israeli conflict". He suggested that a comprehensive peace "must be grounded in the UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338." [4]

Resolution 242 was adopted by the UN Security Council on November 22, 1967. It accepted the principle of the inadmissiblity of the acquisition of territory by war and called upon the Israeli armed forces to withdraw from the Occupied Territories. Resolution 338 adopted on October 22, 1973, asked for the implementation of Resolution 242 and suggested that negotiations should start between the concerned parties under appropriate auspices aimed at establishing a just and durable peace in the Middle East. President Bush presented the doctrine of 'Land for Peace' and told Israel to stop house building activity in the Occupied Territories. He advised Tel Aviv to siege the opportunity to normalise relations with its neighbors and vacate the occupied territories of the Ghaza Strip, the Western Bank and the Golan Heights. Nothing, however, he said about East Jerusalem, which also was occupied by Israel in 1967. Under the auspices of the Middle East Peace Initiative, America, proposed a two track solution — normalisation of relations between Israel and the neighboring countries and between Israel and the Palestinians. Israel greeted the March 6 address of President Bush by announcing that it would double the number of the Jewish settlements in the West Bank by 1988 and operation for settling the Jews coming from the Soviet Union continued unabled unbated in the Golan Heights. Neither the American stick of delaying the guarantees for a $10 billion housing loan nor the Arab carrot of lifting economic sanctions could compel

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Tel Aviv to stop its housing activity. Israel seeks peace with its Arab neighbors on the basis of negotiations between States and its own proposal of May 14, 1989. The 1989 proposal envisaged free and democratic elections among Palestinians living in the West Bank and the Ghaza Strip to elect representatives with whom Israel would discuss a transitional period of self-rule to last five years. In the last two years, negotiations would start on a permanent solution. Israel will be responsible for foreign affairs and security and Jewish settlements would remain in place in the Occupied Territories, Arab residents of East Jewish, however, would be excluded from the proposal. Israel annexed East Jerusalem in 1967. The annexation is not recognised by the USA. Moreover, Tel Aviv does not agree with the establishment of a Palestinian State between the Mediterranean and Jordan river and says that if the Palestinians want a State, the Arabas should decide where, among themselves, it should be established. To persuade Jerusalem to accept its proposal, Washington agreed for a regional conference co-chaired by America and the Soviet Union in place of an earlier suggested international conference under the auspices of the UN, whom Israel considers hostile. Though, as a compromise gesture for Syria, a 'mute' UN observer would remain present in the conference. And while President Bush announced that America would pilot the reversal of Resolution 3379, passed by the UN General Assembly on November 10, 1975, equating Zionism with Racism, Moscow said it would re-establish full diplomatic relations with Israel on the eve of the peace conference. The relations have since been restored. Israel, however, was not impressed by all these gestures. Mr. James Baker, famous of his negotiating skills, even after visiting Jerusalem eight times could not convince Istaeli leaders to either give up the occupied territories or at least stop the building activity there. Instead, he himself ended up conceding the Israeli demands on the form of the Palestinian delegation. Israel said it would not talk to the Palestinians belonging to the Palestinian. Liberation Organisation and those living in East Jerusalem. It would talk to the Palestinians of the occupied territories only, provided they are the part of a joint Jordanian

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-Palestinian delegation and, throughout the crucial talks, remain 'mute' while all the talking is done by the Jordanians. It was revealing to see how everyone involved in the convening of the peace talks was ready to concede Israel concession after concession. Equally painful was the way the regional countries agreed for talks with Israel on its own terms. It should be reminded that even the much applauded Bush doctrine of 'Land for Peace' fell short of aspirations of the Palestinians and the world Muslims. The plan called upon Israel to vacate territories it occupied in 1967 and establish a Palestinian homeland in the Ghaza Strip and the West Bank. It does not say anything about the land Israel forcefully occupied before 1967. Also, the Ghaza Strip and the West Bank are far away from each other and the territory of hostile Israel intervenes between them. Nothing was said about the Palestinians dispersed throughout the world and those living in proper Israel, especially Jerusalem. Besides, the plan left the question of the status of Jerusalem, where exists the first Qibla of Islam, unanswered. The plan was a sure Prescription for the Palestinians to cease to exists as a nation and the formalisation of the foresaking of the Muslim claim over the holy city forever. Now that Israel has rejected even a plan which was so unsatisfactory from the point of view of the Palestinians and the Muslims, no body knows what hopes do the regional countries still entertain of getting any concession from Israel for honourable solution of the Palestinian problem that they have agreed to participate in the proposed talks. [5]

Many people around the world are, however, not amused. Bodies of four Israeli women stabbed to death in the occupied territories were waiting on March 11 of for James Baker when he arrived in Jerusalem on his first visit for talks with Israeli leaders. "This is a message to Baker", announced a placard laying near the corpses of the unfortunate women. The Islamic resistance movements spearheading Intifada in the occupied territories gave many calls of general strikes in the first week of October. Many Israeli security men were also attacked. A petition signed by 49 of the 30 deputies of the Jordanian

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Parliament has demanded resignation of the government of Prime Minister Tahor Al Masri. Three ministers have resigned in protest against policies adopted by the government of Jordan regarding the peace talks. Even Mr. Arafat is increasingly coming under attack from his fellow partymen for the attitude he adopted towards Israel. And a three day international conference to ponder over ways to strengthen Intifada in the Palestinian territories occupied by Israel was inaugurated in Tehran on October 19, 1991 by the president of Iran, Mr. Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, who called the proposed conference a `blunder'. The Iranian spiritual leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, termed it a treacherous act and said it is a crime to participate in the proposed talks. While the supporters of the conference are hailing it as a historic opportunity to solve the Palestinian issue, its opponents are calling it a betrayal of the Palestinian cause and Islam. But one thing is sure that if anyone entertains any hopes of the solution of the Palestinian issue, he is grossly mistaken. The only result will be that Israel would be recognised by the regional countries and its claim over Jerusalem would be formalised. The Palestinians and the Muslims will simply not gain anything from the bargain.[5]

No miracles were expected at Madrid and none took place. Except that the West Asia peace conference, where warring nations sat face-to-face together after 43 years of hate and hostility, in itself was a miracle of sorts. This was brought about by many factors. The obvious ones are the end of cold war and the new alignment of forces which emerged out of the Gulf War. In the absence of two hostile blocs, the maneuverability of most countries has got drastically reduced. With the withdrawal of the Soviet Union from the superpower race, it has become difficult for some of the Arab nations to strike rigid postures. Earlier, Israel as the US surrogate, has the role of countering Soviet influence in West Asia. In the new situation the dimensions of this role have changed. The Gulf War's contribution to the Madrid conference has also to be acknowledged. Even in his defeat and humiliation Saddam's Hussain succeeded in fo-

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cussing the world attention on the double standards of the US policies in West Asia. Although the Iraqi leader's primary reason to link the solution of the Palestinian issue with his withdrawal from Kuwait was meant to elicit Arab nations' support and use it as a bargaining counter, there was widespread popular support to his stand among the West Asian countries, even though their governments chose to align with the US for various reasons. Even after the US victory, it would have been difficult for it to ignore the ground-swell of public opinion in the region. Washington was therefore committed if not formally, at least tactily to find a solution to the West Asian crisis. Hence, its relentless pressure on Israel to come to the conference table. Otherwise also, the US has to consolidate its influence to continue to control the oil reserves of the region. It cannot do this, unless it is able to convince the Arab nations that it is not wholly impervious to their aspirations. In the Post-Gulf War situation it has become possible for the US to change its strategy. In the cold war era, it used other means to achieve its objectives. Notice how it poured in weapons and money into Israel to enable it to bring Egypt, which had emerged as the main challenger to its influence, to its knees. Now, in the changed world situation and after reducting another 'audicious' country Iraq into rubble, and having established its awesome technological military power, Washington is in a position to pursue its objectives by other methods. It is in this framework that the Madrid West Asia peace conference became possible. But there are other factors too which brought the Arab nations, Palestinians and Israelis to the conference table. One is the situation inside the Jewish state itself. Shamir and his right wing party's intransigence is becoming counterproductive. There is upsurge among the Israelis against being in a state of perpetual war. They have lived too long in a virtual siege situation. They want to settle down to nation building. Hence, the massive demonstrations in the country, on the eye of Madrid conference, in favor of peace for land. They would like to surrender the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights in exchange for security of the country's borders and peace. Along with the US

pressure Shamir had to take into account this reality. Yet another factor has been the revolt inside the Israeli-occupied territories. The 'intifada' has focussed world attention on Israeli atrocities in these areas. The people there, it has become evident, are virtually living in concentration camps. The oppressive conditions themselves have resulted in the peoples growing defiance of the Israeli control. The leaders of these areas are even more determined to fight for self-determination even if it implies a protracted struggle. At the same time they are realistic enough to know that they cannot achieve their objective at one go. Hence their willingness even to consider 'limited autonomy' to start with. All these factors have combined to bring about the peace conference. And, it is no mean achievement. Apparently, the cycle of peaceful negotiations has replaced the cycle of conflict. Madrid has given birth to hope of peace in West Asia. But it is still too frail to make optimistic forecasts.

Israel has already achieved several gains in the run-up to the conference. Israeli demand for face-to-face direct talks with Arabas has become a reality. The Syrians who strove for military parity with Israel by agreeing for direct talks have conceded their failure on this front. Because Israel has been armed to the teeth by the US, Israel truly speaking is the party which can virtually dictate terms. Secondly, Moscow which had insisted on prior Israeli withdrawal from Arab lands for resumption of diplomatic ties, has climbed down and renewed ties merely for Israeli participation at conference. Third, Israel (which emerged mainly due to UN efforts like the 1947 partition resolution 181) has managed to accord low status to UN merely as an observer, whereas UN Resolutions 242 and 338 are the basis for talks at Madrid. Fourth, Israel which attended the 1973 conference with great reluctance had been consistent in its opposition to reconvening it. Israel was opposed to participation by EEC and China as it fears combined pressure on it to implement Un resolutions. Hence the conference is narrower in scope and called regional. Fifth, Israel has stuck to its guns on

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the issue of settlements in occupied lands. Not only it has rejected Arab demands for a freeze on settlement activity during peace talks, many new settlements are to be established in a prevocative defiance. Moreover, it continues to annex East Jerusalem and Golan Heights with no premise to return. To cap it all, Israel sticks to its narrow interpretation of Un Resolution 242 making clear its desire for land than peace. Even though Israel has scored several gains as seen earlier, but the Arabas are going to Madrid mainly due to US assurances. US interpretation of UN 242 is different from Israel and has never accepted Israeli annexation of East Jerusalem and Golan Heights. The US has viewed Israeli settlements in occupied Arab lands as obstacles for peace. Both Syria and the Palestinians have gone to Madrid on assurances made by the US. During the Gulf crisis rumours were widespread that in return for Syria's participation in the anit-Iraq coalition, the US has assured Assad of Golan Heights'.

All the parties look to the US for success at the conference and for the first time all are willing to listen to the US. In other words, the US has leverage with all the parties including Moscow. Apart from the main parties the US interests in the area are linked to success at Madrid in view of the Gulf crisis especially the massive destruction inflicted in Iraq in which Key Arab countries participated. The credibility of such Arab states is at stake if no headway is made at the conference. When talking about success or failure and at least modest progress at the conference one should look at the past, US role in the peace process. Soon after the 1973 October was Egypt and Israel at their first face-to-face talks at KM 101 has agreed in record time to most of the points which formed the basis of first disengagement agreement between the two countries signed at Geneva in January 1974. Kissinger was horrified at the rapid success and pulled up the Israelis for having agreed with Egypt saying that nothing would be left for him to mediate. Moreover he urged the Israelis not to give up territory fast enough to raise Arab expectations. This was refined by Carter at Camp David when

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instead of being a honest broker. US collided with Israel and Sadat found himself in a helpless situation. Cyrus Vance when caned to produce by Egypt a US peace plan in the face of deadlock over Egyptian and Israeli positions, flatly said that Kissinger had given a written assurance to Israel that US will coordinate its peace strategy with Tel Aviv. So with minor changes the US wanted Sadat to accept all Israeli peace proposals whether on Sinai or on West Bank Gaza for autonomy to the Palestinians. Despite the controversy over $ 10 million loans between US and Israel, the ties remain unchanged and even after the crisis the strategic importance of Israel remains high. Washington's Arab allies are weak and unstable and are simply too weak to safeguard US interests. On this score alone Israel is considered a vital strategic asset more than ever. Many expect the US to continue its pro-Israeli policy. Already there are signs that US is going to tilt in favor of Israel at the peace talks. The 17 point, letter of assurance to Israel is clear pointer in this direction. Point one says the peace process should lead to peace treaties with Arab states and establishment of diplomatic relations. All other points are familiar Israeli conditions. Having armed Israel heavily and allowed to have overwhelming superiority over all Arab states, the US through an agreement signed with Israel in June 1991 to preposition US arms on its territory has formally and officially turned the Jewish state into an American military outpost of great importance in the area. The US has agreed to guarantee Israel-Syrian border in Golan Heights. The Arabas are watching whether the US will be an honest mediator this time (unlike Camp David) or will join with Israel to further consolidate and legitimize Israel's status among its Arab neighbors. Bush has already made clear that it wants to be a catalyst of or facilitator and has no desire to impose a solution on the parties. What the Arabas are looking forward is exactly the opposite. Just as it took the lead against Iraq, they want the US to fix deadlines and impose a settlement on Israel based on UN resolutions. The Arabas cannot understand US opposition to a Palestinian state as they feel the Palestinians even though feel encouraged by US assurances and positions

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but they are clearly banking on international community for implementation of UN resolutions, and an end to Israeli repression and recognition of Palestinian rights. By excluding the PLO, the US and Israel, Palestinians fear, may be aiming at excluding the main issues of an Israeli withdrawal and recognition of Palestinian national rights. It is unfortunate that none of the Arab States has even raised the question about the role of PLO in the peace process. In fact PLO has conceded more than Israel. But the PLO will still pull the strings from the corridor of peace conference which will be a notable event. The Soviet Union by assuming ties with Israel and sending Boris Pankin to the area want to maintain a high profile presence. Eventhough they will be there presence as joint co-chairman with the Americans but like in 1973 instead of acting as participants they will be relegated to the role of spectators. As one of their delegates raid bitterly in 1973. "We want to Geneva to act as witnesses to a marriage what we in fact witnessed was not a marriage but an affaire". This time due to their preoccupation with domestic affairs and collapse of their superpower position, it is likely to be much less than in 1973. Since Bush and Gorbachev had agreed during the Gulf crisis that Arab-Israeli conflict will be tackled on a priority basis after Kuwaiti liberation, and to give the illusion of universality, Moscow has been accommodated. The US will be the main broker. Shamir has decided to lead a 14 member hardline delegation ignoring David Levy who was to have led the delegation earlier. The Israeli foreign ministry has been sidelined. The delegation includes people who are opposed to withdrawing from any occupied Arab India. For Shamir this is a golden opportunity and he doesn't want to lose such a chance for international propaganda. Whereas Syria wants a settlement on Golan Heights as a part of a wider Arab-Israeli settlement, Israel wants to discuss only as a bilateral issue. In fact Syria has said it will not attend the face-to-face talks with Israel on other issues like arms control, water and environment issues until it withdraws from Golan Heights. These talks are to eventually lead to normal ties between Arabas and Israel. Syria's Farouk al-Sharas has already said that Israel does not appear to be serious about peace and remains intransigent[8].

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If there is no progress soon on the peace from the present Arab leaders will be discredited and possibly overthrown. The problems are formidable and stakes high. The US has much to gain and also much to loose if the talks fail or make progress. US role in bringing peace and justice to the peoples in the area will be a pointer to the socalled new international order[9].

Two conclusions flow from the historic West Asia peace conference in Madrid. It was a singular achievement of American diplomacy to get Israel and all its immediate Arab neighbors to face and listen to one another at one table some 40 years. At the same time, the slanging match between Israel and Syria and the hiccups over the next phase — bilateral talks between Israel and the Arabas — are indications of the long road to peace. It took the US Secretary of State, James Baker, eight trips to the region to set up the Madrid conference. The conference itself revealed that the participants were very conscious of the American diplomatic capital invested in it. They were appealing both to their domestic constituencies and world public opinion to make their points. In other words, as each party sought to make its pitch, it was very conscious of the fact that it should not be accused of breaking the conference. The three elements of the individual presentations, as Baker pointed out in an impressive concluding speech concerned peace, land and security, But he was, in a sense, begging the question because the essential point is how you arrive at correct mix. For the Palestinians and Arabas, it is primarily a question of Israel vacating Palestinian and Arab land conquered in the 1967 war. For the Israelis, any surrender of land is connected to security and peace. In any case, the Israelis have not accepted the contention that they should give up any of the conquered territory for peace although they have said that everything is on the table for discussion. But surely they sought to put the cart before the horse by initially insisting that bilateral talks with the Arab countries and Palestinians should take place in the region, in effect forcing the Arabas to recognise Israel by going there or inviting Israelis to an Arab country before a compromise package is in place. These are early days yet for the peace process. Although the Ameri-

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cans might have been surprised by the intensity of name-calling between the Israelis and the Syrians, Baker publicly chose to take in his stride by dismissing it as "maximalist" positions understandable at this stage of the peace-making game. At the same time, Baker warned the participants that they are not the co-sponsors (the Soviet Union's role is largely supportive), had to make peace although Washington would continue to pursue its diplomacy privately and in public[10].

The broad scenario for a peace settlement is already sketched out. It is to give Palestinians on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip autonomy even as discussions must be held in a fixed time frame to decide the future of the territories such a future dispensation, in all probability, would involve a federation or confederation of the Palestinian entity with Jordan. Also a matter for future negotiation will be the question of border adjustment on the pre-1967 boundaries. The main hurdle is how to reach the point of real discussions and negotiations. Suspicions between the Israels and Arabas are so deep, underlined by the turbulence and blood-letting of more than four decades, that there is at this stage little give and take. It is, in a sense, an acknowledgement of American clout and power that the participants have got as far as they have. For the present, the participants are zealously guarding their known negotiating positions. The fact of American diplomatic dominance in the world precludes precipitate action, but the parties involved are loath to give up their trump cards : territories, as far as the Israelis are concerned, and full diplomatic recognition of and dealings with Israel for the Arabas. But the three-day Madrid conference has thrown up interesting patterns. The Palestinians, for one, have been striking a moderate pose, despite the fact that the chief Palestinian delegate made all the traditional points is his speech. As was to be expected, the Syrians have been striking the most strident postures, with the Israelis giving as good as they got, and the Syrian Foreign Minister reverting to attack Israel, this time in rediscovering the terrorist antecedents of the Israeli Prime Minister Yitzak Shamir. It

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suited the latter to declare that nothing in the conference surprised him. Indeed the Arab-Israeli diplomatic confrontation is taking place on two levels: posturing to safeguard their interests and to seek to influence American public opinion about their efforts for peace. It was, therefore, logical that Shamir, who made a point of leaving Madrid after making his rebuttal on Friday morning, the last day of the conference should stress his efforts for peace while insisting on holding bilateral talks in the region after an initial round in Madrid. It is also part of the Israeli tactics to suggest that the Arabas have still not recognised Israel's existence and that at least some of the Arab countries seek its annihilation. In other words, the Israelis are saying that there are no takers for the peace Jerusalem is offering. That it is a flawed peace, subject to negotiation is not being stressed in Jerusalem. Given this scenario, where dose the region go from here ? The answer lies with Washington, rather than with the Arab and Israeli protagonists. Baker has given his country the role of a catalyst and although the continues to protest that neither the US nor the Soviet Union seeks to impose a solution, the contours of a final compromise will very much be an American plan. Baker's stress on his disappointment over the lack of confidence building measures by the participants was a pointer to an essential prerequisite for a forward movement in the peace process. It is clear to the meanest intelligence that once the peace process gets going in the second stage, Israel cannot continue to build new settlements on the Occupied Territories because it would make nonsense of a search for peace. At the same time, Israel wants an Arab concession before quietly forswearing new settlements. The Americans have grasped one central point to underpin the peace process. President George Bush's inaugural address to the conference suggesting the necessity of "territorial compromise" for peace raised Arab hackles, but Baker in his concluding address and otherwise stressed the santity of United Nations Resolution 242 and the American understanding that it stands for land for peace. Without the basis, there can be no Arab incentive for making peace with Israel. In fact, President Bush

went further to detail the peace framework. He said : "Negotiations will be conducted in phases, beginning with talks on interim self-government arrangements. We aim to reach agreement within one year. And once agreed, interim self-government arrangements will last for five years; beginning the third year, negotiations will commence on permanent status." Baker is right in saying that despite the many hurdles that lie ahead, the Madrid conference represents a new benchmark in efforts for a West Asian peace. Both he and the Americans generally have not underrated the nature of the difficulties that would be encountered. And it is obviously in the interest of the Bush administration that the main hurdles in the long obstacle race are crossed before the start of the American presidential election season, vulnerable to the influence of the Jewish lobby in the US[11].

The Palestinians have emerged from the Madrid talks with flying colours given the enormous constraints under which they had to function. The deliberations, telecast to the whole world, gave an opportunity to the Palestinians to establish their credentials as rational and sober negotiators on whom a grave historical injustice had been done. The distorted image projected in the Western media, particularly in the United States, that they were nothing but a bunch of terrorists, has been rectified to a significant extent. They did not lose their cool as other Arabas did under Israeli premier Shamir's gross distortion of history. They have continued their negotiations with the Israelis under phase-II in a businesslike manner, earning, thereby, praise from the Americans. More than any other party, the Palestinians appear to realise that their success in the negotiations depend on not alienating the US and convincing Washington that they are prepared to accept moderate solutions. The Palestinian moderation brings into sharp relief the Israeli intransigence[13].

What is mot significant in Madrid is the recognition accorded to the Palestinians as an equal party to the dispute by

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being allowed to make their statement independent of the Jordanians. It is not the recognition of Israel by the Arab states but that of the status of the Palestinians by Israel and the US which is the most important outcome of the conference. It has also proved that even outside the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, which has been kept away from Madrid on Israel's demand, there is an abundance of statesmanship and diplomatic skills available.

The phase two of the conference with direct bilateral contracts between Israel and the Palestinian and other Arab states is a further tribute to the diplomatic skills of US secretary of state James Baker. The US clout was also evident in compelling the Israelis to scale down their shelling in Southern Lebanon. The US too came out of Madrid with its prestige and credibility enhanced. Further success depends on the continued Washington pressure on Israel.

Though there was much publicity surrounding the common strategy adopted by the Arabas at the Damascus summit, the Palestinians wisely did not allow themselves to be led by others, particularly Syria. The Palestinians have every reason to be wary to the Arab states who have repeatedly let them down in the past. So long as the Palestinians stay in the negotiations, the Israelis will find it difficult to get out of it. There are some signs of a better understanding between the Palestinians and the US. Sustaining it will be the key to the success of the peace process.

The peace conference was an American show all the way. America brokered the conference, America decided the venue, America chose the participants. America determined the agenda. Formally the Soviet Union was the cohort, but in effect as the Soviet themselves acknowledged they barely knew the details as all the arrangements were made by the Americans. The Americans can take the credit for bringing the warring parties together and for whatever progress is made, but will also have to take the blame for the failures. Necessarily many a lacunae

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could not but be visibly noticed. Not all the countries of the region were participating. Iraq was not there as it was treated as a defeated country (that it would sow the dragon's teeth for the future is another matter). Iraq was not invited, although it is uncertain if it would have attended even if invited, but in any case problems of the Gulf can hardly be resolved on a permanent basis without Tehran's involvement. Equally significantly, Saudi Arabia kept its distance as it still did not want any contact with Israel. Europe was totally marginalized. Although historically Britain and France were the primary external factors operating in the region, their absence was conspicuous. The French are already smarting under the not-too-veiled snub to their pride and professed dynamism of policy in this region. The most unfortunate is the manner in which the United Nations has been ignored. The UN was not even symbolically present at the conference. The Gulf War was fought in the name of the United Nations. For imposing sanctions against Iraq. Washington secured the world body's approval. For the use of force and the recourse to war, the UN was asked to sanctify the action that was to be taken. But for peace making the UN was brushed aside. It is an unfortunate precedent that would serve the world community ill in any future conflicts. The United States compelled Israeli participation but, at the same time, its internal constraints made it possible for Israel to defy the conference and to try to set its own agenda. President George Bush was in a stronger position vis-a-vis the Israeli lobby in the US as a result of the Gulf War but only upto a point. The administration did prevent Tel Aviv from securing a huge loan through approval of the US Congress which would have led to the financing of more and larger Jewish settlements immediately in the occupied areas. But, with American presidential elections coming nearer, Mr. Bush could not or did not choose to carry the fight further and force Tel Aviv to make any substantial concessions on either the territorial issues or the issue of a homeland for the Palestinians which alone could bring about a just peace for all[13].

The Israeli game plan has been to suffer the conference somehow for three days and then insist on one-to-one talks in

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the Israeli capital followed by venues at other Arab Capitals. This way Israel automatically secures recognition from each of the Arab parties, whether it is Syria or Jordan without having to give away much in return. Although it had been agreed to beforehand that the Arabas and the Israelis would talk directly after the first phase of the conference, this did not imply prior recognition. For the Arabas recognition of Israel was to follow a settlement not to precede it. Although the issue of the venue could be sorted out, the basic divide has to be filled if peace is to break out in West Asia. The most intractable issues relate to the Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank, allowing it to become a Palestinian state and homeland and its withdrawal from other occupied Arab lands principally the Golan Heights that belonged to Syria. The Palestinians have made concessions all along the line and are even prepared to accept the West Bank as part of Palestinian-Jordanian Federation so as to secure Israel's withdrawal without its feeling paranoid about its security. On both issues Israel has yet to demonstrate any willingness to compromise. As in the past the Arab rhetoric war far in the excess of its capabilities or its willingness to match its action with its words. Many radical speeches were made at the conference but there was more forth than substance in them. As a consequence of the Gulf War the Arabas are even more divided than ever before. The Arabas are not in a position to make Israel budget. The summer of Arab discontent will turn into the winter of discontent. They have to depend on mobilising world opinion, American opinion and Israeli public opinion. The last incidentally, is not be scorned, for there is a substantial segment of opinion within Israel, as evidenced by large-scale demonstrations in Tel Aviv, that realises the ultimate futility of a continuing conflict and would like to come to terms with the Palestinians and other Arab states by trading land for peace.

Western opinion has been divided on the issues. While earlier the west was alienated by Arab terrorism, increasingly it has begun to accept the need for the satisfaction of logitimate Arab and Palestinian concerns. But two approached dominate its thinking. One approach, or trend of thinking, agrees that the

gut issues of rights of the Palestinians and the question of occupied lands have to be urgently addressed to the other approach advocated by many in the west, particularly in the United States, is a "step-by-step" approach that would put on the Palestinian issue on the backburner and concentrate on other issues for the time being that affect and involve Israel and the Arab States as well as Iran. Only after these confidence building measures are implemented that over time the centakerous problems of the Palestinians and the occupied lands are addressed to and tackled. Various "baskets" of issues have been offered for establishing a climate of confidence. One basket would be the undertaking of such measures as making available design of early-warning systems, reciprocal military inspections, and the creation of limited armament zones. Anterh basket would be the human rights basket relating to fundamental freedoms and political rights. This would legitimize meetings of non-governmental groups in these various states, including Israel. Which could set an example for the West Asian governments. A third basket would relate to economic development and cooperation that would cover all issues relating to trade, the development and sharing of water resources, labour migration, and agricultural, industrial and scientific cooperation. Yet another basket would be the environmental basket etc. It should be obvious that this approach is unworkable in the context of the West Asian situation. The US administration adopted a middle approach, but unfortunately a rather weak approach. The US President in his address to the participants in the peace conference spoke vaguely about a limited right of self-rule for the Palestinians during a five-year interregnum. It was such a weak reference to the main issue that Israel just ignored it. President Bush did not stress the land for peace theme which he otherwise accepts as the right course for Israel and failed to mention the question of withdrawal of Israel from occupied territories. Prime Minister Shamir of Israel thus felt released from the hook and desdainfully went away from the conference even before it had ended. Thus the problem in all its complexity remains at square two, if not square one. A very long, hard and

arduous road lies ahead before a just peace can be ensured in West Asia Countries like India must strive to see that not only justice is done in the region which would ensure security for Israel but also a homeland for the Palestinians and the return of the principal occupied lands to their erstwhile owners. They must also strive to bring the United Nations at the centre stage so that henceforth all peace settlements remain within the purview of the world body. That alone would give countries of the world their rightful say in the affairs of the world[14].

A lesson that President George Bush learned from Operation Desert Storm was that the pursuit of foreign policy was easier and far more glamorous than the contentious nitty-gritty of day-to-day domestic politics. The smashing victory in the Gulf War led to the firm establishment of America as the primary arbiter of global affairs. It also led to resurgence of national confidence, and the highest approval rating of any president in the history of the United States. The Gulf operation was followed by the climatic development in the Soviet Union, which further augmented the standing of President Bush and the United States. George Bush also received Kudos for the dogged perseverance of his Secretary of State James Baker which culminated in the un-precedented Middle East peace talks, with Israelis and Arabas sitting across the table for face-to-face negotiations. There was, however, a problem: busy as he was fixing things around the world, Mr. Bush had failed to pay attention to the decline at home. Banks were collapsing all over the place, prestigious retail chains were closing their doors, big business was posting billions in losses, unemployment was going up, the deficit was getting worse, education was in the doldrums. It was a strange paradox a shining performance abroad, a dismal record at home. With the President's towering popularity ratings, not many Democrats were at first eager or willing to contest against him in the elections in 1992. But with the domestic situation getting worse, they found a stick with which to belavour Bush. The public response was encouraging and suddenly there was a spate of hopeful Democratic presiden-

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tial aspirant. And all of them have been using the stick to such effect that the White House had begun to flinch. Ten days ago, Bush hit back at his Democratic tormentors. At a 1,000-dollar-a-plate, 800-guest fund raiser in Houston, Texas, marking the first official event of his re-election campaign, the President pulled no punches. "America's destiny has always been to lead, and if I have anything to do with it, lead we will," he declared. "I am not going to let liberal Democratic carping keep me from leading. Thank God I did not have to listen to these carpers telling me how to run the Persian Gulf War". Bush conveniently ignored the fact that the Democratic criticism was not against America's leadership, role, but against the president's lack of leadership at home. And the polls supported that perception. A recent Washington Post-ABC news poll indicated that 70 per cent of the people agreed that President Bush "spends too much time on foreign policy and not enough on problems in this country". Even as Bush attempted to put on a brave front on the domestic issue, his own political advisers worried about the fall-out from the sluggish economic recovery. Republicans in Congress, aware of their vulnerability on the economy, clashed among themselves and with the president. Democrats, sensing a potentially potent issue, stopped up their efforts to exploit it[15].

Before leaving Washington for the Houston fund-raiser, Bush had met Congressional Republican leaders in what one participant described as a "virtual political brawl". The session was dominated by talk of the economy and how it was working against the Republican party's electoral prospects. In fact, the economic slump appears to be driving a wedge between the White House and Congressional Republicans. Even as the president's advisers are preaching caution. House Republicans are pleading for him to enter the political debate over how to spur economic growth. Senator Phil Gramm, Chairman of the Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee, told Mr. Bush during a white house meeting on October 31 that former Attorney General Richard Thornburgh had only a 50-50 chance of defeating incumbent Democrat Harris Wofford for the Penn-

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sylvania Senate seat. The special election to the seat became necessary when Republican Senator John Heinz died in a plane crash. Initially, Thornburgh held 3 to 1 lead in the polls and was considered a shoo-in to recapture the seat. But anxiety over the economy had boosted Mr. Wofford's populist, outsider Campaign until he had drawn level. In the event, Wofford trounced Thornburgh, inflicting a major defeat on the Bush administration, and delivering what Wofford said was a message from "the forgotten in this country". Two other members of the Republican leadership, Wisconsin Senator Bob Kasten and Minnesota Representative Vin Weber, actually went ahead to introduce the most generous tax cut plan that Capital Hill had witnessed this year. In addition to massive business tax cuts, it would provide a thousand-dollar tax credit for every child under six and a 300-dollar credit for children 6 to 18 years old. The tax credits alone would cost the treasury 100 billion dollars over five years. As a legislative document, the plan is a non-starter. But as a political statement of what Republicans stand for, it has great appeal, especially for legislators like Mr. Kasten who face tough elections next year. "America's unemployed simply cannot wait another six months before congress passes a growth package, "Mr. Kasten commented, no doubt hoping that his words in Washington would reach to voters at home. Participants in the White House meeting gave the impression that it marked the first time that Mr. Bush was hearing some cold, hard political reasons for the need to beef up the economy. But the president's problem is a congress controlled by the Democrats. He is obviously afraid that he had more to lose than gain if he goes all out for a tax cut that the Democrats refuse to support. His frustration surfaced in Houston. Lashing out at Democratic thinking as out of date, Bush lamented : "The congress has been around there too darn long controlled by the same party." Still smarting from conservative Republican defections during last year's budget summit, Bush also made it clear that he wanted to be absolutely certain that his partymen would stick with him if he had to trade a cut in capital gains taxes—the centerpiece of his economic revival strategy—for a surtax on

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millionaires. Democrats have made the surtax a non-negotiable condition for lowering capital gains taxes on the sale of stock, bonds and real estate. The president's caution reflects the influence of Treasury Secretory Nicholas Brady and Budget Director Richard Darman. Neither wants to reopen the capital gains debate, which in the past gave the president the image of a guardian of the rich and a scrooge to the poor. Until recently, most Republicans were in agreement with the president's economic priorities. But with the slump beginning to cast its shadow over their electoral prospects, many are beginning to be apprehensive of running alongside a "recession president". Many Republican leaders have also complained that Bush is spending too much time overseas. A few days ago, he was in Madrid to open the Middle East peace conference. He was then scheduled to go to Rome for a NATO Summit and to the Hague to meed European Community officials. An adviser put it succinctly: "None of us saw much advantage at all to him in Madrid because while he was over there, another raft of bad economic numbers came out, and that is what the voters care about. Now he is going to NATO, and if you can find 10 people in America who care about that, I would be surprised". Later this month, Bush was slated to spend nearly two weeks on a trip to Japan, South Korea, Singapore and Australia. Abruptly, on Tuesday, in a move that surprised even Republican Party officials, the president cancelled the trip in order to stay in Washington and get a domestic legislative package through Congress[16].

Some partymen complained that Mr. Bush seemed to be panicking in the face of Democratic criticism. "It makes it look like the Democrats have us on the run," an official said. "We look like we are running around like chickens with our heads cut off," bemoaned another. Even the foreign initiatives are beginning to lose some of their lusture. The way the Middle East talks are going, even James Baker admits that it will be a long haul, liable to last for months, if not years, with the possibility of a deadlock of breakdown at any juncture. Pumping in America billions into

the erstwhile Soviet Union would be domestically imprudent and the US has been at loggerheads with the European allies about sharing the Soviet burden. Japan has begun to make it evident that it has been pushed about as far it is willing to bear with regard to tariffs and quotas. The greatest failure has been with Beijing, which Secretary Baker will visit to tackle "some very real problems". The problems include human rights violations, the trade surplus in favor of China, and spread of nuclear and missile technology by China to Pakistan and Middle East nations. Congress is already up in arms about Bush being soft on China and the total failure of his quite diplomacy. The pressure will now mount for tougher sanctions against Chinese trade practices and arms sales. The domestic-foreign divide might well narrow for Bush, not because he gathers more adherents to this agenda at home, but only because foreign problems also begin to worsen and proliferate. All in all, Republican fortunes in the next year's elections are definitely beginning to lose their sheen.

As far as the Palestinians are concerned (Jordan is a silent partner), they want a separate state. But, realistically, they have agreed to discuss a plan for interim self-government in the occupied territories and have also agreed that they would be willing for a confederation with Jordan as the final answer. A big obstacle is the Jewish settlements in these territories. Without a freeze on such settlements further talks would be meaningless. With Syria, the occupied Golan Heights which Israel conquered in 1967 is the main issue. Whether Syria would accept a compromise is to be seen. Lebanon wants the "security zone" to be restored to it. If Israel is given guarantees in this regard, it may concede the demand. The issues are big and complicated and have been frozen for many years. To unfreeze them requires a change of attitudes. The post-Gulf War scenario has given the US the opportunity to try to bring peace to the region. Will all parties to the dispute beholden to it, it might yet achieve what so far was deemed to be virtually impossible-Jews and Arabas living together in peace and friendship[18].

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Quest For Just Peace

There are hardly any 'just' wars in the terms, defined by St. Augustine for the Christians, jehad for the Muslims or Dharma Yuddha in the Bhagwat Gita. As for a just peace, it is even more difficult to obtain. Wars are not hockey or soccer matches at the end of which both sides shake hands, nor are there prizes for the loser, unlike the second or runner-up prize in sports. It has become necessary to highlight this because once again the same kind of consued thinking that egged on Iraq's celebrated leader-President Saddam Hussein and fed his ego to persist in moving towards disaster is now evident in all the pleas for 'just peace'.

When a person in a society transgresses the laws of a society, justice required that he should be punished.

In this case since Iraq committed the aggression, that country deserves to be punished if it is justice we are thinking about. Of course the people of Iraq who suffer at this stage have nothing to do with the aggression committed. But they have been tolerating Saddam Hussein as their leader in spite of the disaster he brought upon them. If he is overthrown then the people of Iraq can ask for 'just' peace and are entitled to it. Today, with Saddam Hussein still in power what needs to be advocated is magnanimity and generosity on the part of the victors towards the vanquished—which is what the people who

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urge for 'just' peace have in mind but are unable to articulate precisely because of confusion. However Iraqi people have to face the hard reality of the situation . They were defeated in a war which was the result of their leader's invasion of Kuwait. Only after coming to terms with this fact, they may claim to be treated with generosity and magnanimity. Once they and Saddam Hussein accept the fact of defeat then it is incumbent on the victors to be generous. Today Saddam Hussien, Tariq Aziz and the rest of the Revolutionary Command Council are bent upon heaping further sufferings on the Iraqi people. They refuse to accept defeat and boast about their victory. The Iraqi foreign minister still talks provocatively of Allied aggression in his latest letter to the security council accepting the conditions imposed by it to have a framework for ceasefire.[1]

This is not a question of semantics between 'just' peace and magnanimity of victors nor is it a question of humiliating Iraq by forcing it to accept the defeat. It is necessary to study the lessons of history and learn from them. In Germany after 1918 a myth was fostered that the nation was not defeated but stabbed in the back and betrayed. This led Hitler rearming Germany for the next war. In 1949, India accepted a ceasefire with Pakistan when we were in a position to push them out of Kashmir. That led to a myth that the ceasefire was accepted by them, when they were at the point of victory. That was one of the factors leading up to the Indo-Pakistan war in 1965. The stalemate in 1965 war was converted into a great victory by the Pakistanis which made the 1971 war inevitable. The result of that war was plain enough for all to see. And consequently as a victorious leader, Indira Gandhi could afford to be generous to the vanquished Pakistan. Even there she committed the costly mistake of releasing the territory first and holding on to the prisoners of war longer when she should have done the reverse.[2]

This analysis is not intended either to favor the Allied coalition nor to be harsh on Iraq. It reflects the inexorable logic of war in international relations. No decisive war ever reverts

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the situation to the status quo and this war was nothing but decisive. The nations of the world, including India should concentrate on how to influence the new situation in favor of stability and their own interests. While any direct effort by the Allies to remove Mr. Saddam Hussein will set a bad precedent, pressure on Iraq to bring about such a change by the people of Iraq themselves fall within legitimate interaction among nations after a major war.

The run-up to the deadline set by the UN Security Council has predictably been full of increasing tension, confrontation and brinkmanship by Iraq and the US. The rhetoric of hardening postures has tended to cloud some of the fundamental issues which should have been kept in focus all along. Although it seems to have been assumed otherwise is most quarters, the UN Security Council resolution (No. 678) does not mean that war would be automatic after January 15, 1991. All it did was to give time to Iraq to implement the UN resolutions by that date, after which "all necessary means" —meaning force—could be employed in pursuit of their implementation. It did mean that use of force —the war option—would not be exercise on behalf of the UN before this date. At the time of writing this (January 13) it is clear that war need not be and—in all probability—would not be inevitable on or soon after January 15, 1991.

The basic problem with wars—as Saddam Hussein knows through experience, and George Bush should know—is not the initiation of one. The problem with all wars has been with their termination. It must be recalled that the Second World War became "total", finally resulting in the first ever use of atomic weapons and transformed into the Cold War essentially out of the war termination aims (especially of unconditional surrender) set by the Allies. Therefore, if the war option is resorted to by the UN and its coalition partners, the UN Security Council (where India sits as a member now) must be clear in their minds how and on what terms this war would be terminated. The Security Council cannot abdicate its responsibility in the matter and

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allow the dynamics of the war to dictate the nature of peace to follow. Termination of the war would largely depend on the war aims and the course that the war actually takes.

As for the war aims, the UN Security Council authorisation implies only the vacation of Iraqi aggression in Kuwait and restoring the latter's sovereignty. The US aims may extend beyond this; and Israel (and the UK) apparently seek even more drastic objectives which would lead to substantive destruction of Iraq as a nation state. Thus two scenarios could emerge: military action to push Iraq out of Kuwait; and an all-out attack on Iraq (and Kuwait). Seen in this context the dichotomies and paradoxes in the position of US coalition partners, especially the Arab-Muslim ones, stand out. More important, the first scenario cannot contain the war to Kuwait only. In case of war, it is obvious that the US would lead with a massive does of offensive air power aimed at paralysing Iraqi air and missile power. With upwards of 1,500 combat aircraft available, something like 2,500 sorties could be launched against radar sets, ballistic and other missiles, airfields and command and control infrastructure in the first 24 hours. While Iraq has a potent capability, it is reasonable to assume that the US would achieve near total air superiority in 3-5 days after which a ground offensive could be launched. However, during this period Iraq would be able to hit back with rapidly reducing capabilities. This in itself raises the incentives for pre-emption by Iraq in the final moment before the UN deadline expires and while its full capabilities are with it. In either case, it is reasonably certain that Iraq would use its ballistic missiles (used with telling effect against Teheran in 1988), with a variety of warheads—conventional, fuel-air-explosive, and chemical, up the escalatory leader. It would justify use of chemical weapons in self-defence under the 1925 Geneva Convention. It has asserted more than once that Israel will be a target. In addition, airfields in northern Saudi Arabia and Riyadh (or even Bahrain) would appear as potential targets. It is also logical to expect that a significant component of Iraqi missile force would be deployed inside Kuwait city, where they

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would offer difficult targets to hit even by massive US qualitative and quantitative superiority and sophistication. What would be Israli, Saudi and US responses ? These are likely to be conventional, and chemical; and if Iraq has been able to cause significant impact, nuclear threat and possible use cannot be ruled out. The US has nuclear weapons in the region. Nuclear retaliation by Israel may come much earlier than expected. George Bush has to be reasonably certain of retaining control of this situation. Has the Security Council authorising use of "all necessary means" given an implicit sanction for use of nuclear threat and/ or weapons against on Asian non-nuclear NPT party state? It would be useful for India to get this clarified today. A massive air offensive and surface operations to capture Kuwait will mean extensive destruction of Kuwait. This will become an imperative if significant ballistic missile force has been deployed in the city by Iraq. The country essentially consists of the city and the oil-fields. The oilfields are likely to be blasted by the Iraqis themselves. Thus the city-state would have to be destroyed so that it can be liberated; such is the logic of this war.

It also must be recalled that it is the less affluent Kuwaiti population that stayed back.[4]

There is no guarantee that Iraq would accept a ceasefire even if its forces lose Kuwait. Having gained control of Kuwait, the US coalition would lack the legitimacy to extend or prolong the conflict further. So while the UN aims would be met, will this be adequate for the US? It is therefore likely that the second scenario, which could also bypass Kuwait city in the ground offensive is more likely to emerge. Against massive air power with little which to stop it after the first few days, the Iraqi army would be at a gross disadvantage. At what point would it collapse is difficult to judge. If Saddam Hussein continues to survive even with a modicum of control, the US coalition may well have to march all the way up to Baghdad. The war, if it does not get terminated with a nuclear strike, therefore, is likely to last around four (plus-minus-one) weeks. It may well lead to the

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destruction of the Iraqi nation state as indeed the US has been threatening. Under the circumstances there may be unforeseen opportunities and actions by other countries. Turkey and Syria, already part of the US coalition (besides Saudi Arabia) may march into Iraq as 'allied' occupation forces. Iran is already on a month-long military exercise on Iraqi borders. There is thus a distinct possibility that as the fog of war starts dissipating, we may yet see the re-enactment of Germany-1945 and the end of World War-II, with modifications of course. How does the UN, having authorised all means, proposed to deal with the situation? And the US ?

Will a war start immediately after the January 15 deadline? Militarily, it would not be prudent for the US to start the war immediately when the Iraqi military machine would be at its full alert and peak efficiency after the seven-week grace period. From now on the Iraqi miiitary system, facing an overwhelming threat, maintaining a 24-hour alert will start to lose its efficiency. Consumption of spares, breakdown in equipment and ultimately, human efficiency, nerves and morale would start taking its toll really on the Iraqi military and the effects of the UN sanctions would now begin to tell. With a sustained high threat war posture, it would be militarily advantageous for the US to delay the war initiation as long as possible — at least to the first week of March 1991 if Ramzan (which starts on March 16) is to be taken into account. The problem for George Bush would be whether he can hold on politically to the coalition (already badly frayed) and domestic support (with a marginal Congressional endorsement for war). Early exercise of the war option would only signify the weakness of the US coalition . These, and many more, issues of war and peace stare at us today. But above all, the fundamental issue of post-Cold War peace and security has to be addressed. No durable framework of peace and security in West Asia can be constructed which does not (i) restore Kuwait sovereignty, (ii) address at last the Palestinian problem, their agony, and restore their rights, and (iii) at the same time address Israeli security. The issue is how to structure the

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framework in the post-Cold War world. The war option at this stage may achieve the first, but is unlikely to address the other two. A peaceful settlement of the first — and this is for Saddam Hussein to think through — even without direct linkage with the Palestinian problem would increase the pressure and prospect for its resolution. After a successful war, the US and Israel may not perceive adequate compulsion to settle the Palestinian question.[5]

It is all quiet now in the Gulf area. The war is over. The US President Bush has silenced his guns. He could not help bowing before the pressure on him from all quarters, including from his closest ally, Britain. On February 26, 1991, the British Premier John Major had declared that since Iraq had pulled out its forces from Kuwait and had accepted all the conditions laid down in UN resolutions as was demanded by the US-led allied forces, there was no reason left for them to continue this war, the flesher after the Second World War. The war must therefore end. This completely demoralised Bush. Earlier, UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar had expressed his anger and in very clear terms declared the continuation of war as totally illegal and against the U.N. mandate.

Confronted with these onslaughts on his conduct, Bush had no excuse left but to order cease-fire. This came on February 27. This has happened exactly after 100 compensation to Kuwait for the loss and damage Saddam's action has caused to Kuwait. Iraq must also release all prisoners of war and return the remains of all those who had fallen in the war. It also must inform the allied commend of all the mines laid on land and in sea to avoid further traps and injury to allied soldiers. Iraq will also cease its operations forthwith and not fire any more Scuds on Israel or Saudi Arabia. A meeting of the U.N. Security Council has also been called to formalise the cessation of hostilities.

Earlier, till late February 26, 1991 the war clouds had continued to hover over the entire Iraqi territory. The US forces

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had given no respite to their guns. World public opinion was mounting its pressure on Bush who, till then was bent upon to continue war — with the single objective to eliminate Saddam Hussein and destroy Iraq. Obviously some-thing had happened which turned the tables and Bush had to climb down. Was it the threat from the Soviet Union ? Whatever be the reasons for this happy volte face by Bush, the world has heaved a sigh of relief. We hope this sense of responsibility will continue to bring about lasting peace and an early reconstruction of the war-ravaged Iraq and Kuwait. For the present it is a matter of great relief and joy. [6]

It is important for us in India to realise that the peace process has received a serious setback. The more reactionary sections of the ruling class of the US and some other imperialist countries would now be tempted to revert to the ways and days of the cold war. Attempts at dictation, blackmail and threats are likely to be stepped up. Efforts would be made to play up the disinformation regarding the crisis of Perestroika in the Soviet Union. But these attempts not only must but can be defeated. It is, therefore, essential not to let a mood of demoralisation, or frustrated rage take the upper hand. We have to persist in the course of struggle to bring the new thinking even more effectively into play in the sphere of international relations. This requires, above all, the cooperation of the Soviet Union and India. While there has to be multi-faceted efforts. The non-aligned movement has to be activated. Other peaceloving states and forces have to be contacted. Nevertheless, the most important role has to be played by the cosignatories of the New Delhi Declaration of 1986. Therefore, it is more than just a silver-lining in the gathering black clouds that Gorbachev and Rajiv Gandhi have consulted together and been seen to be acting together at a most critical juncture. This must be persisted in and developed. It is important also to stress that such cooperation cannot be for and on the course of confrontation. There cannot be a return to the days of the cold war. On the contrary, every effort must be made precisely to prevent such an eventuality. Even with the renewed

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and intensified offensive of the US-led multinational forces, the peace initiative has also to be stepped up. There should be no flattering on this crucial issue.[7]

The end of the war in the Gulf must signal the beginning of a massive, collective effort to build the peace. The war could have been left to the coalition powers to be brought to an end, with victory or with a cease-fire leading to peace. Saddam Hussein himself intervened when his defeat was in sight. By announcing a unilateral pullout from Kuwait, he made a last desperate attempt to turn defeat to victory, and to avoid unconditional surrender. Peace, however, is too complicate and too challenging a task to be left to the coalition alone. Mr. Bush will need the active participation of many nations outside the coalition to stitch together a peace-and-security system in the Persian Gulf and the Middle East. The war tested America's military timber, which was never in doubt. Peace will test America's timber of statesmanship, about which the world has reason to be uncertain. The shot of Gorbachev's peace plan and the darts of several other less forceful peace initiative did not persuade the United States to call off the war. Saddam Hussein, however, had made up his mind to quit Kuwait even as Moscow and Teheran were weaving their joint peace plan together. Confronted with Washington's summary rejection of the Soviet-Iran initiative, which had won the support of a fairly large number of important countries, including China, Japan, Italy, Spain, Germany and India, Saddam Hussein ordered his troops out of Kuwait, springing yet another surprise on the world. The coming days will reveal how much of his crack National Guards, his heavy war machine, and his own political future he has been able to salvage from the war he had invited on his country and Kuwait by his invasion of the small oil-rich neighbor and his quick annexation of it as Iraq's 19th province.[8]

In the months to come, Americans will have to be reassured that just as Vietnam was by no means the defeat that the Right would have them believe, Kuwait was not as great a victory as it would like to have them imagine. The terrain was different

and the motivation of the enemy was vastly more to. The U.S. President, Bush will also have to work overtime to persuade the hawks in his administration and the media that America's long-term interest lies in a stable peace that permits uninterrupted trade and economic development, and not in a 'Pax Americana', forced upon restive and seething nations by means of a new generation of security arrangements and the denial of arms and technology to supposedly un-friendly nations. He will need to remind his people that change is the very essence of life and that the shape and even the contours of the world cannot be kept immutable for ever. America's and the World's interest is limited to seeing, as far as possible, that the change is orderly, and if that is not possible, so contained as not to disrupt trade, development and global peace. That is, as far as one can tell, the new world order that President Bush keeps referring to. He needs now to be wary of those whose minds are still conditioned by the cold war and who would like to hijack his concepts to serve their ends.[9]

Now that the Gulf War is behind us, it is time to pick up the threads of peace and learn the necessary lessons from the mistakes made in propping up and feeding the military muscle. While the defeat of President Saddam was a foregone conclusion, the war has left no one victorious either, with the ravages wrought on Iraq and the huge loss of lives that country has suffered. The US should not, therefore, take credit for what is essentially a pyrene victory. The war also exposed the double standards and inhumanity of the allies and the utter inability of the United Nations to avoid war and bring about a truce. The Non-Aligned Movement, which was already dying a slow death, once against failed to have any takers for its diplomatic initiatives.

The one beneficial offshoot of this war was the renewed focus that Palestine issue has received.

The Gandhian concept of peace and non-violence has never been more relevant than now.[10]

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Now that the debilitating conflict in West Asia is out of the way, it is time to look at ways of bringing about lasting peace and stability in that region. And the one way to go about that talks is to find an early and permanent solution to the Palestinian problem — an issue that is at the core of most of the conflicts in West Asia. In many ways, the visit of James Baker to the capitals of West Asia could well be the beginning of a new process which is not going to be all that smooth. The Bush administration appears to be keen on pursuing a two pronged strategy vis-a-vis the Palestinian problem; an attempt to promote state-to-state talks between the Arab nations and Israel: and to goad the Israelis into starting a dialogue with the Palestinians. In embarking upon this idea, Washington has made it known that it is not too eager for an international conference on Palestine — something that several in the anti-Iraq coalition including France and the Soviet Union were calling for. Of course Israel would have nothing to do with such a meeting, a stance it has been maintaining for a very long time. In wanting to close the gap between the Arab world and Israel, Washington is looking to Syria and Saudi Arabia to take the lead in the hope that the willingness to engage the Shamir regime in direct talks would finally pave the way for the normalisation of relations with the Jewish state. Beyond any immediate movement at the political level, the United States may also be keen on the Arab countries lifting their economic boycott of Israel. But despite the change circumstances most of the Arab nations will want definite proof of flexibility on the part of the Shamir regime where for the most part the right wing elements are vehemently opposed either to talking directly with the Palestinians or having any truck with the land for peace deal. In fact George Bush's speech before the congress and his statement that the time had come to deal with the Arab-Israeli dispute were not received too enthusiastically by the Shamir regime.[11] The departure in the United States' West Asian policy will not have any substance unless it is able to do some plain talking to its key ally in that region. Lasting peace and stability in West Asia cannot come about if the Shamir regime is under the illusion that it can mend fences with Arab nations without addressing

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the Palestinian issue. Nor can Israel smart under the fact that since. Yasser Arafat and the Palestine Liberation Organisation were on the wrong side of the Kuwait crisis, it could afford to take things easy. One way of stalling the U.S. initiative would be for. Shamir to put forth the renewal of his 1989 'initiative'. Among other things that plan called for talks between Arab nations and Israel, elections in the West Bank and the Gaza with the elected Palestinians negotiating with Israel on "self-rule" in the occupied areas and eventually about a final settlement. In fact even very recently, hardline Ministers in the Likud-led coalition have announced that Israel's response to the Palestinian issue would have to be based on the 1989 model, with the hawks wasting no time to repeat over and over again that Palestinians, and not the PLO, should be involved in the peace process. This is not the time on the part of nations in West Asia or some in the West to be talking about the 'lost credibility' of the PLO or its leader. Nor is it the time to be looking for alternative leaders in the West Bank and the Gaza who could be involved in the dialogue, for all indications are that the Palestinians in the occupied territories are of the view that the PLO is the sole representative of the Palestinian people.

Can there be peace in West Asia? Or is the end of the fighting merely a suspension of hostilities to be resumed at a more opportune moment? West Asia has been an armed camp, it has been the scene of continuous fighting since 1947; not only have the Israelis and Arabas been at war with each other, but sporadic violence, whether Israeli incursions into Lebanon, the Black September which pitted the Palestinians against the supporters of the monarch in Jordan or the civil war in Yemen with Saudi Arabia and Egypt supporting different factions not to speak of the war factions in Lebanon, has made violence, an every day reality which the people have to cope with.

The prolonged Iran-Iraq war and the horrendous bombing which the major towns in Iraq were subjected to during the Gulf War are clear indications that the people of West Asia have become injured to violence. Arab society now accepts violence as

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a part of life and only an optimist, willing to view the world through rose-tinted spectacles, will predict that the prospects of peace are bright.[12]

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