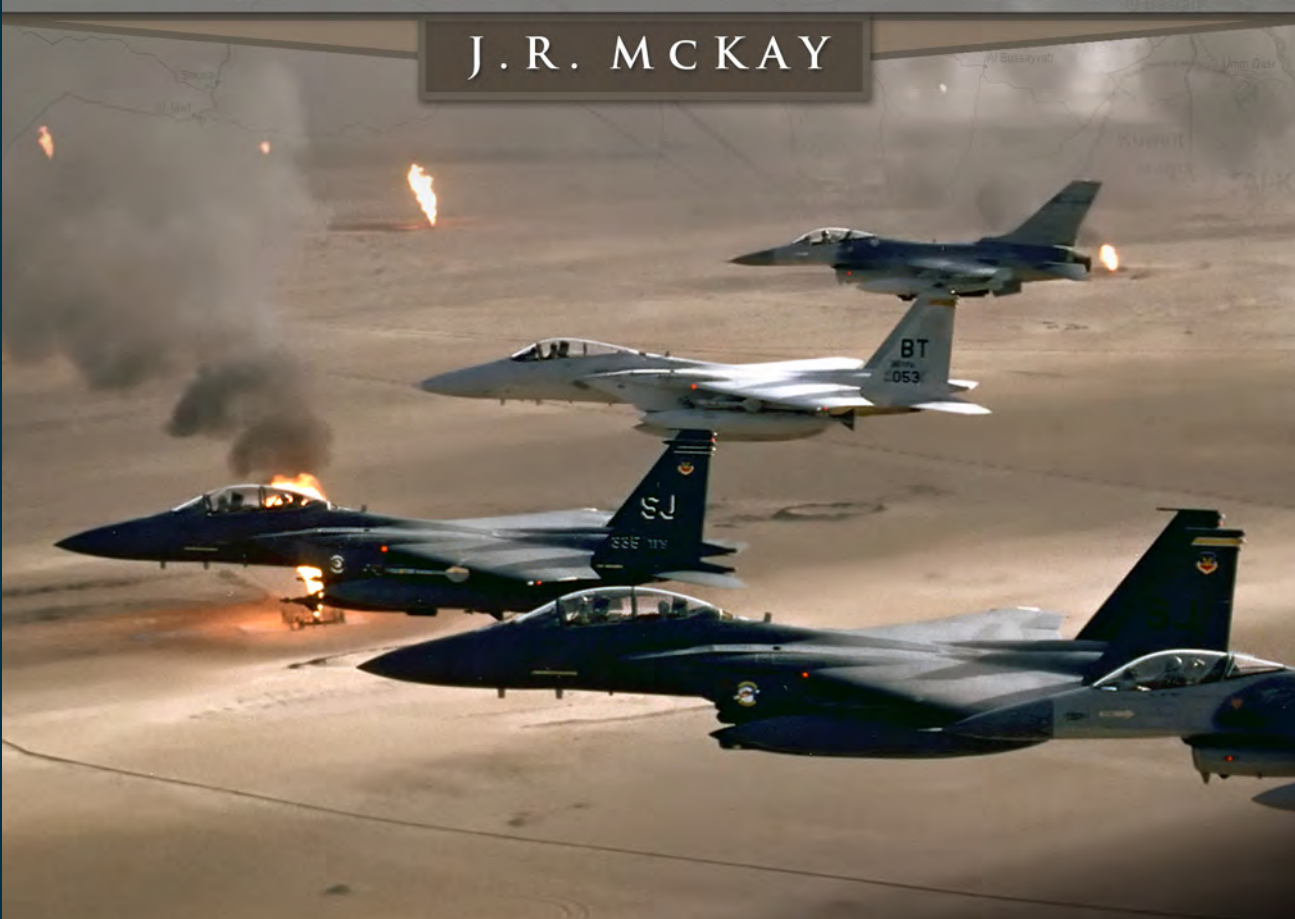




SHIFTING SANDS: AIR COERCION AND IRAQ, 1991–2003

J. R. MCKAY



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Synopsis

This monograph describes the 12-year “duel” between the American-led coalition and Saddam Hussein’s Iraq that lasted from 1991 to 2003. This duel consisted of a series of attempts to coerce the Iraqi government into compliance with the wishes of the international community, as represented by the United Nations Security Council. The monograph seeks to explain why the attempts to coerce Iraq ultimately did not achieve the desired effect of obtaining Iraqi compliance. In addition, it will explain how some of the programmes associated with the cease-fire terms made significant progress but were unrealized. The main lesson to be drawn from this experience is the need for the military and diplomatic instruments of power to remain aligned to ensure that any attempt at long- or short-term coercion is successful.

Chapter 1: Introduction

In the fall of 1990, a coalition (composed primarily of the United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK) and France) formed in reaction to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. It was an interesting time in international affairs; with the cold war's end came a renewed desire to ensure that collective security succeeded. The international community was simply not willing to allow the absorption of tiny Kuwait by its larger and more powerful neighbour. To allow this would be an invitation for further conflict. While a war was not necessarily the desired outcome in the fall of 1990, the international community, as represented by the member states of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), did not rule it out. War eventually came and the coalition defeated Iraq in one of history's most lopsided contests.

Yet, despite the military results, the coalition adhered to the mandate of ejecting Iraq from Kuwait and did not seek to cause regime change in Iraq at that time. This left the Ba'athist government of Iraq, led by Saddam Hussein, intact, albeit significantly bloodied. Even with a much reduced military capacity, Iraq retained the capability to cause problems for its neighbours and/or the Persian Gulf region as a whole. It was, therefore, necessary to ensure regional stability through the containment of Iraq.

Containment—the prevention of any expansion by Iraq—could only have one of two outcomes. The first outcome, where the maintenance of a framework of containment is sufficient to cause a permanent change of behaviour or even capitulation, would be considered a success. The second outcome, where the maintenance of a framework of containment is only sufficient to obtain a temporary and grudging compliance, could only be called a failure.

After Kuwait's liberation in February 1991, the coalition's members sought to contain Iraq, and the international community provided a framework to achieve that goal while working towards resolving the issues that led to the Iraq–Kuwait dispute. The Iraqi government contested the enforcement of the framework, thus forcing the coalition to attempt to coerce Iraq to acquiesce to international will. The Iraqi government would then comply with the international community's wishes for a period, only to back away from accepted behaviour later. This lasted from April 1991 to March 2003, when the American-led coalition invaded Iraq for the expressed purpose of regime change. This pattern of coercion, compliance and confrontation repeated itself for 12 years. Over the long run, containment through coercion failed to achieve the desired result of stability, and the George W. Bush administration opted to invade Iraq.

Despite the popular aphorism that success has many parents but failure is an orphan, this is not true in the case of the coalition and Iraq. During that 12-year period, the coalition became increasingly militarily adept yet politically inept at the coercion of Iraq. In military terms, the coalition could employ force more effectively and rapidly despite the existence of significant political constraints. The coalition's knowledge and understanding of Iraq grew exponentially from 1991 onward, and this made the identification and selection of suitable target sets for coercion easier. At the same time, the political foundation for any military action weakened for several reasons. The American government, the *de facto* leader of the coalition, became less able to maintain a consensus within the coalition and the international community about the means employed to contain Iraq and even what the end result of containment would look like. The Iraqi government wrapped itself in the cloth of victimhood, claiming that economic sanctions were destroying Iraq. This weakened the coalition's use of humanitarian justifications for its actions, and eventually the coalition's dealings with Iraq reeked of *realpolitik* regardless of the rationales offered by Washington or the next most significant coalition member, the UK. The timing of some actions was questionable, and this served to erode the coalition's credibility even further in the eyes of the international community. It also seemed that the Clinton

administration's view of the role of force in foreign relations was incompatible with successful coercion. In addition to all this, the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on targets in the US on 11 September 2001 (henceforth 9/11) led to a situation where the administration of George W. Bush feared the possibility that a known state supporter of certain terror organizations might have an arsenal of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). This fear set in motion the end of the policy of containment and, ultimately, the end of the Ba'athist regime in Iraq.

This book focuses on coercion and its application by the coalition as well as by some friendly states (namely Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Turkey) to address the problem posed by Iraq from 1991 to 2003. In so doing, it will tell the story of the coalition's interactions during this period; in effect, how coercion ultimately failed to support the containment of Iraq.

Coercion is not a solely military phenomenon, and as such, it requires the examination of evidence from both political and military perspectives. The cases contained in this book involve a series of related operations that supported Iraq's containment, including DESERT STORM, PROVIDE COMFORT, SOUTHERN WATCH, VIGILANT WARRIOR, DESERT STRIKE and DESERT FOX.¹

These case studies permit the examination of coercion with the same core issues and cast of characters. This is fortuitous because significant variations would confound the conclusions. However, the substantive political and military requirements evolved over time, and preceding cases influenced subsequent ones. This highlighted the importance of the political context where the decline in the coalition's coherence (as well as an aversion to casualties) undermined the credibility of the coalition's threats and ultimately weakened the coalition's attempts at coercion.

Coercion is a politico-military and psychological action or set of actions. It is essentially a grand duel of wills. Coercion is defined as the employment of threats and/or force in order to obtain particular forms of behaviour from an adversary.² It is important to note that it can be threat and/or force based.

The political risk—measured in terms of alliance cohesion, economic benefit and primarily, casualties—associated with protracted military operations leads democratic governments to often choose coercion using air power. If there are fewer participants in an act of aerial coercion (as opposed to the large number required for success in primarily land-based operations), then the risk of casualties (at least to the coercer) should be lower. Yet the scale of casualties alone does not dictate risk. War is an unpredictable and uncontrollable event, and the lives of thousands, if not millions, may change irrevocably as a result. Steven Cimbala of Pennsylvania State University, Delaware County, argued that coercion “may require a willingness on the part of policymakers to take immediate and dramatic action now, in order to quicken the decision in the enemy's capital to avoid further punishment and denial later.”³ Democratic politicians are risk-averse and will be cautious within the limits of their views about the use of force. When confronted with a choice between the sheer cost of war—in blood, treasure and votes—and the use of force in a small, controllable way, especially when vital national interests are not necessarily threatened, many democratic politicians will opt for the small and controllable use of force.

1. There were two PROVIDE COMFORT operations. PROVIDE COMFORT I commenced on 6 April 1991 and ended on 24 July 1991. PROVIDE COMFORT II commenced 24 July 1991 and ended on 31 December 1996.

2. Lawrence Freedman, “Strategic Coercion,” in *Strategic Coercion: Concepts and Cases*, ed. L. Freedman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 15.

3. S. Cimbala, *Coercive Military Strategy* (College Station: Texas A&M Press, 1998), 84–85.

The issue of casualties lies at the crux of some of the post-cold war debates on air power and cruise missiles.⁴ On the one hand, one school of thought, exemplified by Edward Luttwak, maintains that Western military strategies must take into account the seemingly increasing degree of casualty aversion.⁵ This is a prescription for the preparation of the battlefield by air and unmanned power prior to the commencement of land operations. Such actions allow for a quick victory in the event of a land campaign. Coercion is, therefore, an alternative to a larger war. On the other hand, another school of thought, including the views of Eliot Cohen, maintains that air power is a tremendous asset in peace and war when applied in the proper context.⁶ This means that the government employing air power must set the diplomatic and political scenes to maximize the benefits of putting aviators in harm's way. The difference between the two schools relates to different visions of the role of force in American foreign relations. Luttwak's argument relies on the assumption that war is risky, costly and unnecessary if it is avoidable through a smaller military effort. Cohen's argument is that force is a difficult but useful means of statecraft that should only be employed in particular conditions. Both of these reflect particular political positions in the US.

Any of the armed services can conduct coercion; in the 19th century, for example, it was gunboat diplomacy. Political conditions in the late 20th century favoured the use of air power. Land forces, in sufficient strength, can inflict a greater degree of pain. However, the use of land power is far more politically risky in terms of casualties, and this significantly reduces its utility.⁷ Furthermore, the large-scale use of land power approaches the realm of control. The adversary's choice remains the determining factor. Small-scale uses of land forces cannot impose the national will but can certainly affect the adversary's decision making.

An exception to this rule might be threat-based coercion involving land forces. Such cases would involve the threat of imposing the national will without actually doing so, such as with a build-up of offensive forces close to a border. This type of threat-based coercion is as risky as it is politically delicate as it tends toward escalation and war. Coercion involving air power is more likely in cases where the use of ground forces is not politically possible (i.e., due to the perception of destruction associated with war on land or the lack of access) and where the risk of escalation is to be minimized.⁸ Cruise missiles and air power are swift means of applying force in a controllable manner. Not only is the application of land power apt to be bloody and messy, but also it is often slow. In order to achieve the strength to make a credible threat, land forces must be prepared for combat. Such preparation and deployments do not come without significant efforts and costs. However, the risk of casualties (both friendly and enemy) tends to communicate to the adversary a greater commitment to the achievement of one's goals and, therefore, reinforces one's credibility.

Air power, using both manned and unmanned assets, acts both as an enabler as well as a coercer in operations short of war. The term "enabler" refers to the ability to create a situation with military forces

4. For the purposes of this work, air power is defined as the combination of the effects and actions of crewed aerial platforms and unmanned power is defined as the combination of the effects of unmanned aerial platforms and cruise missiles. While the distinction is not customary, it is necessary to draw distinctions between the use of crewed aircraft and stand-off missile systems fired either from a seaborne or airborne platform. The nature of the platform may indicate to the target of coercion the degree to which the coercer is willing to risk the lives of aircrew in pursuit of the objective, thus signalling greater or lesser commitment.

5. See E. Luttwak, "A Post-Heroic Military Policy," *Foreign Affairs* 75, no. 4 (July–August 1996): 33–44; and E. Luttwak, "From Vietnam to Desert Fox: Civil-Military Relations in Modern Democracies," *Survival* 41, no. 1 (Spring 1999): 99–112.

6. E. Cohen, "The Mystique of Air Power," *Foreign Affairs* 73, no. 1 (January–February 1994): 109–24.

7. Luttwak, "A Post-Heroic Military Policy," 36.

8. P. Sabin, "Modern Air Power Theory – Some Neglected Issues," *Air Clues* 48, no. 9 (September 1994): 328–29. "Self-restraint" is a nebulous concept without examples. Sabin noted that during the 1991 Gulf War, the coalition wished to prevent the use of Iraq's suspected nuclear, biological and chemical arsenals or the harming of any foreign nationals held hostage in Iraq.

that is conducive to future operations (including attempts at coercion).⁹ It is essentially a trading of immediate action for greater flexibility in the future. It does not contribute directly to the achievement of political objectives.

Doctrinally, cruise missiles have particular purposes that complement those of air power. They are delivered either by air assets (typically based over-the-horizon) or from sea-based platforms. The Tomahawk Land-Attack Missile (T-LAM) fired from warships has several purposes. Yet the doctrine for the conventionally armed version is to target airfields out of the reach of carrier-based air power or too heavily defended for attack by manned air assets (i.e., a target such as Baghdad).¹⁰ T-LAMs are used to attack air defence assets or crater enemy runways in order to assist in imposing the national will on the enemy.

There is a crude arithmetic at work with regard to air power and cruise missiles. In terms of hard points and weight, there are limitations to the amount of ordnance that a single aircraft can deliver, but this is usually heavier than a single cruise missile. However, using aircraft rather than missiles means that several flight crews face danger. The throw weight (between 700 and 3,000 pounds [318 and 1,360 kilograms (kg)] depending on the system and version) of the existing types of unmanned systems is less than a single aircraft. Given that most targets require several aim points and that air power, using precision guided munitions (PGM), now matches the technical capability for accuracy and can deliver more ordnance to a target, cruise missiles may be a more expensive means of delivering a smaller amount of ordnance. Still, cruise missiles are as versatile as air power in that they can also enable or coerce. Their use is a form of technological advantage intended to prevent aircrew losses during the pursuit of political objectives.

Structure

The structure of this work relies on a series of case studies involving the same actors over 12 years. The sequence is as follows:

- a. **Chapter 2: Coercion.** This chapter first examines the logic and the definition of coercion. It also discusses targeting and offers a postulation of how Saddam Hussein valued particular targets. This is followed by identifying and explaining the criteria for successful coercion and a discussion of means and credibility.
- b. **Chapter 3: A Tale of Three Administrations.** This chapter examines the approaches taken by the Senior Bush administration, the Clinton administration and the first George W. Bush administration to the problem of Iraq. It also provides a broad overview of relations within the coalition and the UNSC and how they affected coalition decision making.
- c. **Chapter 4: Operation DESERT STORM.** The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait led to the formation of the coalition as well as the political and military efforts to liberate Kuwait. It established the overall context for the antithetical relationship between Iraq and the coalition. The operations to liberate Kuwait represent a case where air power enabled the liberation of Kuwait through the preparation of the battlefield for the ground attack.

9. Enabling can be divided into subsets such as “shaping the environment” or “supporting other military operations,” as identified in A. Mason, “Air Power: Rethinking The Conceptual Framework” (University of Birmingham), 9–12, <http://www.bham.ac.uk/cssd/content/articles2.htm> (accessed June 6, 2011, site discontinued).

10. S. Froggett, “Tomahawk in the Desert,” *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 118, no. 1 (January 1992): 72.

- d. **Chapter 5: Political Framework to Support Triumph.** This chapter examines the political framework for the cessation of hostilities in the spring of 1991 and the progress of its prescriptions, such as the demarcation of the Iraq–Kuwait boundary and the disarmament of Iraq. Also, it examines the effect of the framework upon the coalition’s ability to maintain an international consensus on the problem of Iraq.
- e. **Chapter 6: Operations PROVIDE COMFORT / PROVIDE COMFORT II.** Safe havens and no-fly zones (NFZs) were the means to address the situation in post-war Iraq, while maintaining international political consensus. This set a precedent for the use of humanitarianism as justification for the presence of military forces, thus enabling future attempts at coercion.
- f. **Chapter 7: Operation SOUTHERN WATCH, 1992–1996.** Like PROVIDE COMFORT II, this operation justified in both the political and legal sense, to the region and to the international community, a force presence through an NFZ. One of the by-products of this force presence was that it enabled future attempts at coercion. After September 1996, this NFZ became a coercive instrument. This strategy, however, led to an open-ended commitment to the containment of Iraq.
- g. **Chapter 8: January 1993.** The crisis of January 1993 saw the coalition coerce Iraq successfully. This success led to the coalition’s perception that the application of force was necessary in obtaining Iraqi compliance despite the concerns of a number of states about the appropriateness or legality of the use of force.
- h. **Chapter 9: Operation VIGILANT WARRIOR.** The coalition deployed land forces in response to the Iraqi deployment of forces to southern Iraq. This led to the conclusion that the coalition had deterred an Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, and as a result of this, it had generated the conditions that secured Iraq’s recognition of Kuwait and the integrity of its borders.
- i. **Chapter 10: Operation DESERT STRIKE.** The Iraqi intervention in the conflict between the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) created a situation that was intolerable to the US. In response, they struck air defence assets in southern Iraq in order to extend the southern NFZ to the 33rd parallel, effectively transforming the southern NFZ into a coercive instrument. This extension increased the coercive value of that zone. Iraq’s intervention was ultimately detrimental to the coalition, as it led to the cessation of humanitarian operations in northern Iraq. The French government removed its forces from Operation PROVIDE COMFORT II as a result.
- j. **Chapter 11: Operation DESERT FOX.** A four-day bombing campaign was conducted as a result of Iraq’s lack of cooperation. The operation was a demonstration of the coalition’s military prowess but, in the absence of widespread international political support, was counterproductive, in that the coalition suffered a defeat in the “war of perceptions.” Iraqi resistance continued as a direct result of the campaign and the support that it enjoyed as a result of the coalition’s use of force.
- k. **Chapter 12: From the Air Defence War to the Invasion of Iraq.** This chapter summarizes how the coalition approached the problem of containing Iraq after the programmes that supported containment began to wither away.
- l. **Chapter 13: Conclusion.** Three questions will be answered. Was air power an effective tool in the coercion of Iraq? Was the coercion of Iraq successful at fulfilling the coalition’s goals? What lessons can be drawn about coercion for the future? The combination of the three answers will explain why the coalition was militarily adept but politically inept at the coercion of Iraq.

Chapter 2: Coercion

In the 1990s, coercion re-emerged as one of the major approaches to international crises for a number of reasons that have already been discussed. Academic works proliferated, but despite the best intentions of the scholars involved, the number of different books and articles on the topic made it harder to comprehend, as multiple definitions existed for the same terms and systems of classification.¹ In order to avoid similar pitfalls, one has to define the terminology and theoretical framework for coercion in light of the other works on the subject first, and then proceed to describe the mechanism of coercion as it was applied to Iraq by the coalition between 1991 and 2003.

Definition

Coercion in relations between states is a politico-military and psychological action or series of actions. It is essentially a grand duel of wills between two states, one of which wants the other to behave in a manner different from what it otherwise would. Coercion can be defined, albeit loosely, as the employment of threats and/or the use of force in order to obtain particular forms of behaviour from an adversary.² This is the point at which consensus on the concept ends. Even if one accepts the aforementioned definition, this does not mean one will accept the system of classification and theories of how it actually works.

The lack of consensus stems from the coexistence of different systems of classification. Some systems base the classification on different types of coercion and others try to situate it within the use of different levels of force. Certain individuals, such as Group Captain Andrew Lambert of the Royal Air Force (RAF), try to classify the concept on whether it is primarily based on threats or force. He argued that coercion was primarily threat based and the intent was to persuade; whereas, the use of force was used to deny the opponent the ability to succeed.³ Michael Clarke avoided this taxonomy, using instead a division of the use of force along functional lines. Force could be used for denial (to constrain or destroy) or for coercion (to threaten, hurt or punish).⁴ The intent of the use of force was what mattered to Clarke as opposed to a distinction between the two. The most commonly used system, however, tried to classify the phenomenon as either attempting to get an adversary not to do something they otherwise might do (deterrence) or to do something they otherwise might not do (“compellence”).

Deterrence is a subset of coercion, where threats are intended to prevent any attempt by the adversary to change the status quo.⁵ To prevent further unwanted acts, the coercer must demonstrate the will and capability to reverse an adversary’s action or, having failed to achieve compliance, to inflict a measured amount of punishment. This creates some taxonomical difficulties, as the study of deterrence requires a complete understanding of the adversary’s intent. It is possible to apply a strategy of deterrence and still not have a deterrence situation. The two are very different, albeit related, things, as Richard Ned Lebow noted:

1. For a succinct description and tour de force of the literature, see P. Bratton, “When Is Coercion Successful? And Why Can’t We Agree on It?” *Naval War College Review* 58, no. 3 (Summer 2005): 99–120.

2. L. Freedman, “Strategic Coercion,” 15–20.

3. A. Lambert, “Air Power and Coercion,” in *Perspectives on Air Power: Air Power in Its Wider Context*, ed. S. Peach (Bracknell: UK Joint Services Command and Staff College, 1999), 268 and 270–72.

4. Michael Clarke, “Air Power, Force, and Coercion,” in *The Dynamics of Air Power*, eds. A. Lambert and A. Williamson (Bracknell: RAF Staff College, 1996), 68–69.

5. L. Freedman, “Strategic Coercion,” 25.

[I]t is important to distinguish between the theory of deterrence and the strategy of deterrence. The former pertains to the logical postulates of deterrence and the assumptions on which they are based. ... Deterrence strategy is concerned with applying the theory of deterrence ...⁶

Furthermore, as Patrick Morgan has noted:

While it is possible to describe the application of a deterrence strategy, the existence of a deterrence situation cannot be proven without conclusive evidence that the adversary sought to alter the status quo.⁷

Compellence is a subset of coercion where threats and/or uses of force are aimed at convincing the adversary to alter the status quo.⁸ This is normally done through an ultimatum, and the timelines are much shorter than with deterrence. Robert Pape has argued that coercion is fundamentally distinct from deterrence, as the latter seeks to maintain the status quo. Pape posits that coercion (i.e., compellence) is, therefore, harder to achieve.⁹ This may stem from the fact that all of Pape's cases come from wars. Deterrence, revealing its cold war origins, is largely devoted in peacetime to preventing adversaries from undertaking acts of war that might lead to nuclear Armageddon. Compellence also differs in that its users may be willing to escalate to outbid their adversary.

What makes coercion different from war? Both coercion and war include threats and/or the use of force in order to alter an adversary's decision calculus. The critical distinction between coercion and war is that the former is an application or threat of force for distinct political purposes based on altering the adversary's choice in accordance with the coercer's will. The latter is an application of force in order to impose the coercer's will, thereby denying the adversary any choice in the matter.¹⁰ Choice (or the lack thereof) is the determinant of coercion or control. Imposing control is inevitably a form of war.

This begs the question of whether coercion can occur in war. Pape believes that it can as actions may cause an adversary to alter its behaviour. Freedman argues that choice is crucial for strategic coercion; this leaves the potential for coercion to occur in war, but by definition, it would not be strategic. This also allows for methodological distinctions, as the coding of cases becomes much easier.

Coercion is about forcing an adversary to make a choice between compliance or paying a cost through threats and/or uses of force. Threat-based coercion uses threats to induce a perceived cost for non-compliance. Force-based coercion uses violence to impose a real cost. The coercer must communicate clearly to the adversary that the outcome of events is wholly dependent on the adversary's choice. This is reminiscent of Thomas Schelling's analogy of the game of chicken being played by two drivers in sports cars.¹¹ Costs must be seen as inevitable if the adversary fails to comply with the coercer's demand. In summary, the costs of resistance should be seen to be greater than the costs of compliance by the target.

Coercion is not solely politico-military. It has a significant psychological element, as it involves the alteration of the adversary's decision calculus through threats (and possible use) of force. Coercion can

6. R. Lebow, "Deterrence: A Political and Psychological Critique," in *Perspectives on Deterrence*, ed. P. Stern and others (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 25.

7. P. Morgan, *Deterrence: A Conceptual Analysis* (London: SAGE, 1978), 33.

8. G. Schaub, "Compellence: Resuscitating the Concept," in *Strategic Coercion* (see Ch 1, note 2), 42.

9. R. Pape, *Bombing to Win: Air Power and Coercion in War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 4, 6, 12. It may be that Pape's conclusion that coercion was harder to achieve was influenced by his decision to base his case studies solely on wars.

10. L. Freedman, "Strategic Coercion," 25. See also G. Craig and A. George, *Force and Statecraft: Diplomatic Problems of Our Time* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 189; and T. Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), 2–6.

11. Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, 116–25.

also occur in war, but the alteration of the adversary's choice is often secondary to the achievement of military objectives.¹² As a psychological concept, coercion relies on the creation of specific perceptions in the adversary's mind; that is, there is a significant cost to be paid for failing to comply with the coercer's demands, and there are benefits to compliance, such as the absence of pain.¹³ It is often a process of bargaining "in which each party is guided mainly by his expectations of what the other will accept."¹⁴ It is therefore, regardless of physical and psychological separation, an exercise in human interaction.

The interaction between the parties can be through symbolic actions, overt communications or a combination of both. Symbolic actions are just that: they are actions intended to convey a particular impression or to indicate that a specific situation exists. For example, one might wish to signal readiness for nuclear release by overtly opening missile silos and/or fueling rockets. Overt communications refer to those direct or public transmissions of information from one party to another, such as press conferences, diplomatic communiqués, telegrams and so on. Overtness is crucial as communication with an individual or a group of individuals is difficult to achieve under ideal conditions.¹⁵ Clear communications lie at the foundation of coercion. This implies that a degree of transparency of word and deed is vital to success. Unintended ambiguity in communications may lead to disaster. By the same token, it is necessary to ensure time exists for the other party to receive and process the information.¹⁶

Cultural differences create obstacles to clear communication, since culture is an all-pervasive part of communication, and physical and psychological distances decrease the means for clarifying statements and increase the influence of cultural filters. The practice of traditional commerce in the West and the Middle East helps form a person's beliefs about negotiation. Traditional Western commerce is largely based on fixed prices and simple negotiation between buyer and seller: the buyer pays the full price and receives the goods or does not pay and does not receive the goods. The focus of any commercial interaction is the achievement of a deal, and each deal is treated as a discrete event. In the Middle East, traditional commerce is an opportunity for social interaction. This means that no price is firmly fixed, and every commercial interaction is a protracted round of haggling. The focus of any deal is the development and/or maintenance of relationships, and deals are not necessarily treated as discrete events. One author, Said Aburish, observed that Saddam Hussein employed bargaining strategies reminiscent of a Middle Eastern *Souq* (or market).¹⁷ A concession by the Iraqi government may have indicated a willingness to start negotiating instead of a genuine or final offer.

Models

As a psychological concept, coercion is difficult to depict or quantify. This poses a challenge for those studying coercion. There have been three different approaches to this problem. John Warden offered one approach, Robert Pape a second, and Michael Clarke a third. Warden believed that if the aim was to influence the enemy leadership, then coercion had to be somewhat personalized—the

12. See Cimbala, 4; Freedman, "Strategic Coercion," 15; D. Gates, "Air Power and the Theory and Practice of Coercion," *Defense Analysis* 13, no. 3 (December 1997): 242; P. Jakobsen, "The Strategy of Coercive Diplomacy: Refining Existing Theory to Post-Cold War Realities," in *Strategic Coercion* (see Ch 1, note 2), 65; A. Lambert, "Coercion and Air Power," *Air Clues* 50, no. 12 (December 1996): 446; Pape, *Bombing To Win*, 4, 12 and 15; and Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, 3.

13. Lambert, "Coercion and Air Power," 449. See also Karl Mueller, "The Essence of Coercive Air Power: A Primer for Military Strategists," *Air and Space Power Journal – Chronicles Online Journal*, <http://www.airpower.maxwell.af.mil/airchronicles/cc/mueller.html> (accessed January 29, 2013), 5.

14. T. Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), 21.

15. Gates, 246.

16. Craig and George, 202.

17. See S. Aburish, *Saddam Hussein: The Politics of Revenge* (London: Bloomsbury, 2000), 199 and 318.

leadership itself had to be targeted to achieve success. He argued that “a state realizes its political objectives when the enemy command structure (i.e., the enemy leader or leaders) is forced by direct or indirect action to make concessions.”¹⁸ The corollary of this belief was that direct attacks on C3I targets (i.e., command, control, communications and intelligence) would lead to the achievement of political objectives.¹⁹ However, Warden did not suggest that C3I targets were to be attacked in isolation. He conceptualized the enemy as a system composed of five concentric rings; from the centre moving outward they are leadership, production, transport networks, population and fielded military forces.²⁰ The fifth ring, fielded military forces, included all air defences, including those that defended the enemy’s own territory.²¹ While the focus was arguably to influence the enemy leaders, the key to this theory was to attack all five rings as simultaneously as possible.²² Warden believed that a successful offensive campaign against all five rings could be conducted solely by conventional air forces.

Pape employed a mathematical approach to describing how coercion works in *Bombing to Win*. Using cases where air power was used to conduct strategic bombing in wars, he conceptualized the adversary’s choice in an equation: $R=B*p(B)-C*p(C)$, where R is the degree of resistance, B is the benefits, p(B) the probability of obtaining the benefits, C the costs, and p(C) the probability of the costs. Success occurs when $R<0$.²³ From this, he postulated that there were four basic strategies:

a. Punishment:

- i eliminate the will to fight by the targeting of civilians; and
- ii the increase of C by the coercer;

b. Risk:

- i weakened form of punishment, where it starts small and escalates; and
- ii the increase of p(C) by the coercer;

c. Denial:

- i attacks intended to deny the enemy the ability to enact their strategy; and
- ii the reduction or elimination of p(B) by the coercer; and

d. Decapitation:

- i eliminate the will to fight by targeting the enemy leadership; and
- ii the increase of C and reduction or elimination of p(B).²⁴

With this model, there are three ways of determining failure of the coercion. If the coercer stops before the “coercee” offers concessions, then the attempt has failed. If the coercer continues without concessions, then the attempt has failed. Failure also occurs if the total defeat of the “coercee”

18. J. Warden, “Employing Air Power in the Twenty-First Century,” in *The Future of Air Power in the Aftermath of the Gulf War*, ed., R. Shultz and R. Pfaltzgraff. (Maxwell AFB: Air University Press, 1992), 63. In Pape, *Bombing to Win*, 57, and 79–86, this is referred to as “decapitation.”

19. E. Mann, *Thunder and Lightning: Desert Storm and the Airpower Debates* (Maxwell AFB: AUP Press, 1995), 91.

20. Warden, 64–67.

21. *Ibid.*, 74.

22. *Ibid.*, 79. Warden argued that historically, there was a trend where forces sought to destroy the fielded forces in the “5th (outermost) ring” and work their way inwards.

23. Pape, *Bombing To Win*, 16–19. This assumes a degree of rationality on the part of the adversary.

24. *Ibid.*, 18–19; and B. Watts, “Ignoring Reality: Problems of Theory and Evidence in Security Studies,” *Security Studies* 7, no. 2 (Winter 1997/1998): 130. Karl Mueller has a more complex model on page 9.

becomes necessary.²⁵ The last determinant offers a practical limit for force-based coercion. This involves all uses of violence intended to alter the adversary's decision calculus short of war.

The utility of this construct is limited. It is a useful means of conveying coercion as the coercer's manipulation of abstract variables. It is less helpful in dealing with particular human factors. Adversaries, regardless of political structure, will naturally seek to maintain their own domestic credibility. Credibility may be based on strength, power, wisdom or courage, but it is more difficult to change an adversary's decision calculus if it will undermine the source of the adversary's credibility. There are some elements of cost that cannot be easily quantified; this creates ambiguity and reduces the verisimilitude of the theory.

Despite the inherent ambiguity in his model, Pape drew some strong conclusions. He argued that a strategy of denial (where air power was employed at the theatre level in tandem with land operations) was the most likely to succeed.²⁶ His advocacy of theatre air power implies that he believed that air power could not serve as an instrument of coercion in isolation.²⁷ In short, air power should not be considered decisive. Yet this argument may be flawed. His cases were based on wartime experience where land forces were also employed in a war-fighting capacity. This selection of cases was misplaced. Not all the cases used to generate his theory involved coercion, as denial involving the large-scale use of land forces is control.

Such strong conclusions attracted criticism of Pape's methodology. Some critics noted that this argument about denial deduces outcomes based on process. However, the determinants of success or failure were induced based on what actions were taken. Pape's model assumed all actions are the product of deliberate decisions and plans, and it engages in *reductio ad absurdum*. Yet, rationality is always bounded in human motivations and cognition.²⁸ One then has to assess how the adversary would perceive costs and benefits to develop a sense of the adversary's motivations and strength of will. It is equally important to avoid attributing all actions to images of the adversary's motivations and beliefs about the level of willpower. Daniel Byman and Mathew Waxman, two RAND analysts, have committed themselves to this approach and have supported it through the exercise of identifying centres of gravity without also relating the centres to target sets.²⁹ Rationality and motivations are not mutually exclusive causes that can explain all actions.

Clarke offered a set of subjective and pragmatic criteria that can be used to clarify coercion without using mathematical models. His list of criteria includes the following:

- a. What did the coercer want the coercee to do?
- b. What behaviour will lead to the removal of the threat?
- c. What does the coercee's decision calculus look like?
- d. How (and by whom) are decisions made so that they match the policy direction and extent desired?
- e. Has the threat and desired behaviour been communicated clearly?³⁰

25. Pape, *Bombing To Win*, 15.

26. *Ibid.*, 10; and R. Pape, "Coercion and Military Strategy: Why Denial Works and Punishment Doesn't," *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 15, no. 4 (September 1992): 423–75.

27. See Pape, *Bombing To Win*, 316.

28. J. Kimminau, *The Psychology of Coercion: Merging Airpower and Prospect Theory* (Maxwell AFB: School of Advanced Airpower Studies, 1998), 11 and 26.

29. For a description, see K. Von Clausewitz, *On War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1943), 465–66.

30. M. Clarke, 70–71 and 73.

Unlike the other models, this reflects an understanding that coercion is an exercise in communication designed to alter the adversary's decision calculus. Attacks by themselves are not the communication, but the combination of statements, threats and attacks contributes to the communication. What is communicated to the adversary is, therefore, most important. Attempts at deception are unhelpful in coercion, as they engender a lack of trust in any future communications. There is a trade-off between surprise and credibility. Unlike Pape's model, the criteria are far from being reductionist and seek to explain coercion as an exercise in communication by word and deed.

Process

It is possible to synthesize elements of the aforementioned theories to describe both threat-based and force-based coercion. The initial step in any coercive process is the communication of the desired behaviour and the penalty, as well as a deadline, for failing to comply. In most cases, this is based on the coercer issuing a threat to the target: "Comply with United Nations (UN) resolutions by next week or else!" This is the point at which communications (whether they are implicit in the form of symbolic actions, are explicit in the form of communications or are a combination of both) must be as clear as possible. It is crucial for the target state to understand the behaviour desired and that a penalty will follow. It is not necessary to clarify the nature of the penalty, but it is necessary to ensure that the penalty is credible in the eyes of the target.

First, the adversary is presented with three choices when threatened or attacked. They can make the desired concessions, begin to negotiate by offering other concessions or resist in the hope that the coercer will give up.³¹ Second, both types of coercion may be employed in any case, and given the natural desire to obtain maximum payoff for minimal cost, most cases of coercion begin as threat based. If the coercer obtains the desired concessions with a threat, they achieve success, but if they fail to obtain the desired concessions, they withdraw or escalate to the use of force. This process can go through a number of iterations until the demands are imposed directly (control). In the final escalation, objectives may still be achieved, so it is not a complete failure. It offers a practical framework for examining the cases of coercion in the thesis.

Targeting

In order to coerce an adversary with air power or cruise missiles, one must select targets to threaten and/or strike. This means that one has to assess the relative value of any given target or set of targets to the adversary. This is not an easy task, as the destruction of "enemy forces, key lines of communication, and key command and control facilities has a clear impact on enemy warfighting capabilities. Attacking targets that *may* have an impact on enemy behaviour creates far more uncertainties."³² The key to assessing coercion, as with any use of force, lies with the assessment of the effect of any threat or attack on the enemy.³³ However, it is possible to become fixated on the battle damage assessments (BDAs), and argue that quantity (physical damage) translates directly into quality (political results). General Anthony Zinni, United States Marine Corps (USMC), a former Commander-in-Chief (CINC) of US Central Command (CENTCOM), argued that:

there's a qualitative estimate to BDAs as well as a quantitative estimate. ...

It's difficult to make a purely quantitative analysis and use a basis such as numbers of targets destroyed in determining success. It has to be measured against the [political] intent and the commander's intent as to what he attempted to achieve.³⁴

31. Pape, *Bombing To Win*, 15.

32. A. Cordesman, *The Lessons of Desert Fox: A Preliminary Analysis* (Washington, DC: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University, 1999), 103. Italics appear in the original.

33. M. Clarke, 70–71 and 73; and Cordesman, *Lessons of Desert Fox*, 11.

34. A. Zinni, cited in Cordesman, *Lessons of Desert Fox*, 75–76.

Qualitative estimates to the conduct of BDA are essentially assessments of how the adversary feels pain.

There is an underlying question to the selection of targets. Who is responsible for target selection when one state wishes to coerce another? Since the Vietnam War there has been a general acceptance within the US that there is a division of responsibility between the political leadership, the strategic military leadership and the theatre-level military leadership when the conduct of affairs in theatre is not micromanaged from Washington. Should the political leadership exercise greater influence over the selection of targets or simply state the effects desired along with the limits on military options, or become more involved in the process? As shown in Table 1, a pamphlet of the United States Air Force (USAF) on targeting states that the doctrinal process for the target selection was multilayered.

Level of Objectives	Responsibility
National (overall desired outcome)	National command authority
Theatre (courses of action)	CINC
Component (plans for the employment of forces)	Component commanders

Table 1. Targeting responsibilities³⁵

In this framework, the CINC and their component commanders would seek to develop plans that serve the desired outcome. Such options could not be planned without limits (i.e., what was militarily and politically possible). The Law of Armed Conflict, with the central tenet of military necessity, is a constraint on the range of actions. Military necessity requires that all targets lead to the accomplishment of a military objective.³⁶ This places certain target sets, such as civilian populations, out of bounds. This implies that the coercion of an adversary must, therefore, rely on military targets and those that are involved in the production or distribution of goods for military use.

Some mention must be made of how the Iraqi government and its leadership might make decisions. As Michael Clarke noted, success in coercion is reliant on “accurate assessments of relationships between target sets and decision makers.”³⁷ Two decision-making models are most important.

The first is expected utility theory, which holds that the targets of coercion will make decisions based on rational assessments of the costs and benefits of resistance against the costs and benefits of compliance.³⁸ For the practitioners, this suggests that if one could merely increase the cost of resistance to the point that it would exceed the cost of compliance, success would follow. This, however, suffers from *reductio ad absurdum*; it is easy to understand but does not always reflect reality.

The second model—prospect theory—is based on the argument that when situations involve risk actual decision making differs somewhat. Prospect theory holds that the assessment of value of various options (i.e., to comply or to resist) is based on a perceptual reference point that serves to delineate perceived losses from perceived gains.³⁹ The theory holds that decisions are two-stage affairs—people

35. United States, Department of Defense, *USAF Intelligence Targeting Guide*, Air Force Pamphlet 14-210 (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of the Air Force, 1998), 32.

36. *Ibid.*, 12 and 40.

37. M. Clarke, 83–84.

38. G. Schaub, “Deterrence, Compellence, and Prospect Theory,” *Political Psychology* 25, no. 3 (2004): 388–89. See also Bratton, 104.

39. Christopher K. Butler, “Prospect Theory and Coercive Bargaining,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 51, no. 2 (April 2007): 227–50; and D. Kahneman and A. Tversky, “Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision Under Risk,” *Econometrica* 47, no. 2 (March 1979): 263–91.

first edit the range of options available to them to simplify the second process of evaluation.⁴⁰ For the practitioner, this suggests that one needs to establish at least a reasonable facsimile of the reference point (or multiples thereof) and then manipulate the costs in light of the credible options and reference point(s). This, as a depiction of reality, has greater fidelity, but it is also more difficult to understand.

This begs the question of how the Iraqi government viewed target sets. Given that Iraq was a dictatorship under the rule of Saddam Hussein, it is assumed that he was the decision maker. Yet only a handful of articles exist that discuss Saddam Hussein's decision calculus. There is a definite consensus on Saddam Hussein's motives for action—he was a man clearly obsessed with power and survival. He even seemed to equate remaining in power with his personal survival. This is hardly surprising given his Darwinian worldview and the historical precedent of the fate of deposed Iraqi leaders.⁴¹ Yet, Saddam Hussein was not an irrational madman despite the politically convenient images presented in the media. He was pragmatic and would reverse his course of action when necessary.⁴² This suggests that he was not a passive adversary, and it would be naive to assume that any adversary could not engage in counter-coercion or seek to mitigate effects of coalition actions. Target selection must take this into account.

How did Saddam Hussein assign significance⁴³ to target sets? The ability for mitigation has been taken into account in developing this evaluation of target sets. Saddam Hussein, himself, was considered the most significant target, but this was beyond the remit of the coalition due to US law and international custom in the formal sense. The next most valued target set was the Iraqi intelligence and security apparatus, which included government buildings. This set included the intelligence and security services, government facilities and police services (anything that assisted Saddam Hussein in ruling Iraq), and greater significance was assigned it due to redundancy of effect.⁴⁴ The Republican Guard Forces Command (RGFC) provided the conventional military might for the regime to remain in power and was, therefore, assigned the next highest value. Suspected WMDs (including the production facilities) were the next target set. The British government assessed that Saddam Hussein “believes that respect for Iraq rests on its possession of [nuclear, biological and chemical] weapons and the missiles capable of delivering them.”⁴⁵ Given Saddam Hussein's efforts to maintain this arsenal, one would assume that this target set had greater significance, and the coalition, with notable exceptions, did not attack other target sets (i.e., the RGFC as well as intelligence and security apparatus) with the same frequency. The destruction of the electrical and telecommunications systems would offer evidence to the Iraqi elite that the regime was weak and an opportunity existed for its removal.

40. Kahneman and Tversky, 274.

41. A. Baram, “Saddam Hussein: A Political Profile,” *Jerusalem Quarterly*, no. 17 (Fall 1980): 121; D. Byman and M. Waxman, *Confronting Iraq: U.S. Policy and the Use of Force Since the Gulf War* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2000); N. Cigar, “Iraq's Strategic Mindset and the Gulf War: Blueprint for Defeat,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 15, no. 1 (March 1992): 1–12; E. Karsh and I. Rautsi, *Saddam Hussein: A Political Biography* (New York: The Free Press, 1991), 40 and 268; and R. Matlak, “Inside Saddam's Grip,” *National Security Studies Quarterly* (Spring 1999): 4.

42. Baram, “Saddam Hussein,” 134–35; Karsh and Rautsi, 267–68; and J. Post, “The Defining Moment of Saddam's Life,” in *The Political Psychology of the Gulf War: Leaders, Publics and the Process of Conflict*, ed., S. Renshon (London: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1993), 49.

43. “Importance is a rough classification of the value to enemy military operations derived from all types of equipment, supplies, installations, and personnel used by enemy forces. Significance is the measure of concern for an activity or resource of the value which would be assigned because of its normal performance (its importance).” See *USAF Intelligence Targeting Guide*, 48.

44. Matlak, 5.

45. United Kingdom, *Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction: The Assessment of the British Government* (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 2002), 18.

The remaining target sets were not as significant to Saddam Hussein, and attacks against them were even potentially helpful for his purposes. Oil facilities were a means to achieve prosperity, but if they were attacked it would contradict the coalition's desire to avoid humanitarian distress. Strikes against the Iraqi Air Force (IQAF), air defences or Army could have generated an atmosphere of crisis and justified a greater national unity while also keeping the military occupied.⁴⁶ The values of the transport networks and economic infrastructure were low. The approach to the mitigation of sanctions by the Iraqi government indicated a willingness to allow the common Iraqi people to suffer, especially since they were not members of the elite and, therefore, posed no threat to the regime, and the resultant suffering produced sympathy for Iraq within the international community. The population was the least valued of Iraq's target sets; yet, it was also irrelevant as the coalition could not engage in widespread violent attacks on the population due to the political costs associated with such acts. Paradoxically, the result of sanctions (after the Iraqi government tried to mitigate their effects by insulating the Iraqi elite) was that the population of Iraq became the target.

The Iraqi government appeared to be aware that its defeat was inevitable in any military confrontation with the coalition. Resisting the coalition's efforts, nonetheless, offered the Iraqi government two benefits: first, an outside enemy would contribute to internal cohesion; second, the international community might begin to view Iraq as the victim if the coalition used force. The Iraqi government, therefore, sought to test its limits and provoke coalition reprisals while also seeking to minimize the actual damage to Iraq and Iraqi interests. This offers a potential explanation for Iraq's attempts to defend its airspace. To attack coalition aircraft invited the destruction of elements of Iraq's air defence system, but it trained Iraq's air defence forces as well as kept them occupied. More importantly, it reduced future damage during the coalition's attempts at coercion. Coalition efforts against Iraqi air defences could not be applied against more valuable target sets. By engaging air defences during the attempts at coercion and the routine enforcement of the NFZs, the coalition reinforced the Iraqi government's perception that the coalition was casualty averse. This offered the Iraqi government some hope and suggested that their approach was at least workable.

The Iraqi government had a number of mitigation strategies. These strategies were based on two assumptions. One, the US appeared to be sensitive to casualties. Two, the coalition was based on a consensus about the need to contain Iraq. This consensus appeared to be at its strongest when the Iraqi government was at its most bellicose and weakest when the US, the coalition's core, acted unilaterally. The Iraqi government, therefore, applied three fundamental strategies, which were based on civilian suffering, fracturing the coalition and generating American and allied casualties.⁴⁷ Byman and Waxman asserted that each of these strategies had complementary effects. The US often found itself caught in increasingly problematic feedback cycles: adversary responses that caused rifts in the coalition could prompt the US to alter its approach to repair the rupture, in turn emboldening Iraq to direct further efforts at coalition splitting. Iraqi propaganda efforts to exploit collateral damage (both real and fabricated) resulting from US attacks could prompt the US to restrict its own future efforts, both undermining the potency of its follow-on threats and encouraging further exploitation of suffering.⁴⁸

Each of these strategies merits some amplification, as the description is based only on the ends. Little has been said about the means used to achieve these effects. The civilian-suffering strategy was aimed at generating popular sympathy for the plight of the Iraqi people and was designed by Iraq to impose political costs on the coalition for its use of force. This was more an attempt to benefit from

46. Byman and Waxman, *Confronting Iraq*, 81.

47. D. Byman and M. Waxman, "Defeating US Coercion," *Survival* 41, no. 2 (Summer 1999): 110–16.

48. *Ibid.*, 117.

coalition action than it was an attempt to mitigate the effects. It was hoped that international sympathy for ordinary Iraqis might translate into increased willpower to resist or offers of outside support for Iraq. In order to apply this strategy, the Iraqi government had several options. It could camouflage military targets by placing them in close proximity to civilian/civil infrastructure targets. This would also blur the targets, making them more difficult to identify or accurately strike. The Iraqi government could also fail to offer resistance to air strikes, accept the damage and then focus the international media on the suffering inflicted upon the Iraqi people. It could also shift the effects from Iraqi elites onto the less influential members of Iraqi society. This gambit had been applied in response to economic sanctions.

The Iraqi government could also seek to fracture the coalition. This involved engaging in theatrical cooperation or in seeking to make deals with one or more interested governments that could lead to offers of external support. The goal of the former was to remove the justification for coalition action by appearing to cooperate without actually complying with the demand. The latter held two possibilities: the first was to weaken the consensus for the need for force or even the need to deal with the problem of Iraq, and the second was to cause one or more of the local allies hosting coalition forces to restrict military operations against Iraq.

The Iraqi government was also aware of the coalition's reluctance to incur casualties. To impose such costs appeared to offer a means (or at least the hope) of inducing an American withdrawal from the region. There were three options. The Iraqi government could try to impose losses in the skies over Iraq, engage in asymmetric attacks on military infrastructure in neighbouring states supporting coalition activities or engage in symbolic resistance so that the suppression of air defences became more important than attacking more significant targets.

Criteria

An assessment of the coercion of Iraq requires a set of criteria to enable us to determine what events were acts of coercion, how they functioned and what was crucial to success. Many of these criteria overlap and are mutually supporting. The criteria appear in order of importance:

- a. choice;
- b. communication;
- c. credibility of threats and actions;
- d. erosion of willpower;
- e. isolation;
- f. adversary's perception of (coercer's) capability;
- g. value of target sets; and
- h. sufficient degree of pain.

The criteria will be described in terms of the requirements for success.

Choice. This exercise is necessary in order to clarify between occurrences of coercion and acts of control. Threats are always coercion in that the adversary has a choice, but coercion involving the use of force is more complex. One can postulate the existence of threat-based and force-based coercion. If the aim of any use of force is to impose national will, then it is not coercion.

Communication. At the very foundation of coercion,⁴⁹ without communication, the initial use of force loses all value as a coherent message. The intent of actions and desired behaviour must be clearly communicated, and there should be redundancy in the modes of communication.⁵⁰ Systems of communication in crisis tend to break down, and participants may wilfully reject communications from the adversary, believing that they are false or that they contradict their own perceptions of the situation. Similarly, the sender of a message may also be selective in what is stated in order to satisfy a domestic audience or a military requirement for deception. However for clarity of communication to occur, it is necessary that both parties believe that the other's messages are meaningful and true. Clear communications allow for the creation of credible threats.

Credibility of Threats and Actions. The ideal situation is achieved when the adversary feels that a threat is real and will be carried out if compliance does not occur. Credibility is based on the adversary sensing inevitability in the costs of intransigence.⁵¹ In other words, the adversary should not feel any doubt that the actions threatened by the coercer will occur as promised. If the threat is credible, the adversary will be certain that the action described will be undertaken and should begin to seek ways to prevent the threat from coming to fruition, including compliance. The credibility of threats and actions represents the psychological aspect of coercion—the creation of a particular perception within the adversary's mind.

Erosion of Willpower. The adversary will be inclined to resist. For coercion to succeed, this will to resist must be eroded. An adversary has three options: withstand the pain, seek to mitigate the effects or comply with the demands. So long as the adversary can mitigate the effects or believes that the pain can be withstood, the will to resist remains. It is easier for an adversary to withstand pain if the duration of the pain is believed to be short. To erode willpower, the pain must lead the adversary to believe that inevitably the situation will worsen.⁵² The erosion of willpower must also counter an adversary's attempts to mitigate effects. Such mitigations can offer a glimmer of hope that can keep an adversary from compliance.

Isolation. Isolation and the erosion of willpower are inherently related. Isolation refers to the political and diplomatic isolation of the adversary and occurs when no other state can offer an external means to mitigate the ongoing coercion.⁵³ The coercer must devote efforts to ensuring that there is an international consensus on the necessity for action against the adversary and that the benefits of forceful action outweigh other courses of action. This causes the theatrical aspect of coercion to be important. The “war of perceptions” is a term that described the international drama staged by the coalition and Iraq.⁵⁴ It referred to the requirement to maintain support from within one's own political institutions as well as within the international community in order to maintain the credibility and importance of one's cause as opposed to that of the adversary's.⁵⁵ In order to win this war of perceptions, the American government, as the de facto leader of the coalition, had to convince its own electorate, its coalition partners, its Western and Arab allies as well as the broader international community that its cause was just and its means were appropriate. The Iraqi government, naturally, sought to eradicate any consensus on the utility and appropriateness of Iraq's isolation. As the justifications for action were provided by the aforementioned resolutions, international consensus was the foundation for the containment of

49. See M. Clarke, 73; and Mueller, 4.

50. L. Freedman, “Strategic Coercion,” 24–25.

51. See Bratton, 101; J. Harvey, “Deterrence: Essential, Complex and Uncertain,” *Air Clues* 50, no. 11 (November 1996): 404; and Mueller, 4.

52. Lambert, “Air Power and Coercion,” 292.

53. It has been argued that the perception of isolation is crucial to obtaining compliance. See Lambert, “Coercion and Air Power,” 449.

54. The phrase appeared in Cordesman, *Lessons of Desert Fox*, 3.

55. *Ibid.*

Iraq and, as such, became the coalition's centre of gravity. Should this consensus on the need to contain Iraq have been ruptured, the coalition would have essentially lost the justification and its very ability to act. While military operations were being conducted, both the coalition and Iraq battled, albeit in a theatrical sense, for the moral high ground in the realm of world opinion.

Adversary's Perception of Capability. An adversary must understand that the coercer has the capability to do what has been threatened. Capability refers to the military capacity to employ particular courses of action and is closely related to the political willingness to allow those courses to be employed. As a result, for the purposes of the adversary's perceptions, capability cannot be separated from intent. The coercer must ensure that the adversary can perceive the presence (and to a limited extent the composition) of the coercer's forces, but not necessarily the movements or dispositions of those forces. This creates a trade-off between ambiguity for the purpose of surprise and certainty for the credibility of one's threats.

Value of Target Sets. Targets of value (based on the adversary's point of view) must be attacked or threatened in order to change the adversary's decision calculus. There is, of course, the caution that the destruction of target sets in isolation will not necessarily lead to the achievement of the political objective.⁵⁶ The evaluation of target sets should take into effect the adversary's mitigation strategies and any political benefits that attacks might confer onto the adversary.

Sufficient Degree of Pain. Threats or attacks are apt to be an irrelevant form of coercion unless they come with a sufficient degree of destruction. A coercer must make the adversary feel some form of either potential or real pain. This means that the target sets under attack must cause or threaten some form of loss, whether it be political (a loss of power, authority or control), fiscal (a loss of revenues) or military (a loss of military capability). This requires a good understanding of the nature of the adversary beyond military terms.⁵⁷ This understanding should extend into the political and economic natures of the adversary's power base within the adversary's polities. Furthermore, the adversary must be capable of perceiving some form of pain in terms of the frequency, the scale of, or the completeness of destruction of targets or a target set. This reinforces the credibility and capability of future attempts at coercion.

Air power (in an enabling role) was the primary means used by the coalition after the Gulf War to deal with Iraq. It was not until 1993 that the coalition tried to coerce Iraq, and this was an anomaly. After DESERT STRIKE in September 1996, the coalition shifted to a more coercive posture, but by then, the consensus over the need to contain (and coerce) Iraq had started evaporating.

56. Mueller, 6.

57. M. Clarke, 72.

Chapter 3: A Tale of Three Administrations

The American government (whether during the senior Bush administration, the Clinton administration or the junior Bush administration) was the coalition's key member and leader. This was natural, as the United States was the last superpower standing at the end of the cold war. This meant that it had the misfortune of presiding over a "new world disorder" in which Iraq was but one of several crises. Al-Qaeda's attack on 11 September 2001 brought this into sharp relief. Because of American leadership, the nature of the three administrations had a significant influence over the means used against Iraq and the ends pursued by the coalition.

The Senior Bush Administration

With the Soviet threat waning at the end of the cold war, it seemed that a new era was at hand. The administration of President George Herbert Walker Bush (henceforth G. H. W. Bush), 1989–93, believed that collective security would replace superpower competition as the basis of international relations. It could not justify significant defence expenditures without a threat and opted to try to limit its commitments. This provided the impetus for the G. H. W. Bush administration's Base Force defence policy programme.¹ This called for a reduction from a military of 2 million to 1.64 million by the 1997 fiscal year (FY) and a 20 per cent reduction in military spending by FY 1995. This was only a stopgap measure until the Soviet threat evaporated completely.² Yet it indicated, at least in the minds of the American public and politicians, that there was a peace dividend linked to the end of the cold war.

The G. H. W. Bush administration would only make defence commitments if they were accompanied with resources. It sought to prioritize and limit its responsibility to vital commitments.³ Its behaviour with regard to emerging crises like the collapse of the former Yugoslavia and the chaos that engulfed Somalia demonstrated this. The administration believed that events surrounding the former Soviet Union were more important and sought to avoid becoming involved militarily in the Balkans.⁴ This administration understood implicitly that the US, as the would-be victor in the cold war, was left with the responsibility of managing the transition between two different types of international systems. It had to make sure that the shift from a bipolar to a loosely unipolar system occurred as smoothly as possible.

The Insurance Policy

The G. H. W. Bush administration's philosophy about the use of force reflected a belief that military force was the national insurance policy and should be used only as a last resort. The Bush administration was unwilling to make a commitment without a reasonable assurance of success consistent with the Powell Doctrine. This meant that the US needed to ensure it had the capacity and will to undertake action (i.e., domestic support, the exhaustion of diplomatic approaches and the clarity of objectives) as well as a favourable international situation before committing forces to operations.⁵ Therefore, it was reticent to deploy forces or use force in pursuit of policy objectives unless it was absolutely necessary. Such attitudes were shaped by the American experience in Vietnam between 1965 and 1973.

1. J. Carafano, "Myth of the Silver Bullet: Contrasting Air Force-Army Perspectives on 'Smart Weapons' after the 1973 Arab-Israeli War and the 1991 Gulf War," *National Security Studies Quarterly* (Winter 1998): 7–8; and A. Cordesman, *U.S. Forces in the Middle East: Resources and Capabilities* (Boulder: Westview, 1997), 5–31.

2. E. Cohen, "Defending America in the Twenty-First Century," *Foreign Affairs* 79, no. 6 (November–December 2000): 42; and Cordesman, *U.S. Forces*, 18–19.

3. J. Clarke, "Rhetoric Before Reality," *Foreign Affairs* 74, no. 5 (September–October 1995): 5–6.

4. D. Halberstam, *War in a Time of Peace: Bush, Clinton and the Generals* (London: Scribner, 2001), 139–42.

5. C. Powell, *My American Journey* (New York: Ballantine, 1996), 292–93.

America and the Gulf, Post-March 1991

Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on 2 August 1990 was the first challenge to a system of collective security. Many of the world's leaders had a philosophical attachment to collective security due to the experience of the Second World War (WWII). Such attachments were inspired by the Munich Conference of 1938, when then British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain negotiated a form of peace with the German government led by Adolf Hitler, which was thought to bring "peace in our time" but ultimately failed to do so. President Bush stated that: "I think the most pre-eminent [thing] would have been the fact that he [Saddam Hussein] aggressed against a neighbour, bullied a neighbour, a member of the United Nations, and took it over without paying a price."⁶ A philosophical attachment to collective security also meant that not only would the invasion have to be reversed, but also the potential for future Iraqi aggression would have to be reduced. The Iraqi military machine would have to be dismantled. Brent Scowcroft, then the national security advisor, noted that it was necessary to "reduce the threat Saddam posed to his neighbours. The trick here was to damage his offensive capability without weakening Iraq to the point that a vacuum was created, and thereby destroying the balance between Iraq and Iran, further destabilizing the region for years."⁷

Indeed, the Iraqi government's record since Saddam Hussein's ascent to power in 1979 was far from exemplary. Within a year, Iraq was at war with Iran, and two years after the end of that war, attempted to annex Kuwait. From the American perspective, dealing with Iraq involved two other issues: while it was necessary to maintain some form of counterweight to Iran, it was equally necessary to ensure that the Kurdish problem did not resurface.⁸ What the G. H. W. Bush administration feared most after the victory in 1991 was the Lebanonization of Iraq, where Iraq might be partitioned by a series of warlords acting as clients of other states. On the one hand, there was a definite benefit to maintaining a united Iraq, and on the other, the cost of military containment could become significant over time. In either instance, a permanent US military presence could damage American credibility with regional allies.⁹

While successive administrations appeared to believe that Saddam Hussein himself was the source of difficulty, they were also aware that his removal would be politically troubling, costly and even dangerous. The G. H. W. Bush administration's policy was to maintain stability in the Persian Gulf region by reducing Iraqi military power and the Iranian potential for interference. This represented an attempt to maintain an optimal balance between the benefit of a united Iraq and the political and military costs of keeping that united Iraq from expanding into its neighbours.

The unintended consequence of this policy was the imposition of practical limits on American objectives, such as the reduction of Iraqi military power. Saddam Hussein's removal was certainly welcome, but the Bush administration was not prepared to risk short-term instability (generated by a weakened Iraq) in exchange for the possibility of long-term stability. President Bush, himself, wanted a clean end to the war; however, he was forced to seek an end in strict accordance with the UN mandates. Whatever his private beliefs might have been, his public position was best illustrated by his statement that he wanted "a Battleship Missouri surrender, where you pull into—the Missouri pulled in Tokyo harbour and imperialism ended right there with the laying of a sword on a desk, and the whole world saw it. I think that—I think the ending, in my view, was clean in terms of accomplishing our mission—end the aggression."¹⁰

6. "A Gulf War Exclusive: President Bush Talking with David Frost," transcript of interviews from 12 December 1995 and 9 March 1991, aired 16 January 1996, 24 (hereafter cited as Frost and Bush). Copy in author's possession.

7. G. Bush and B. Scowcroft, *A World Transformed* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998), 383.

8. Powell, 490; and J. Baker, *The Politics of Diplomacy: Revolution, War and Peace 1989–1992*, with T. DeFrank (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1995), 39.

9. Baker, 435–36.

10. Frost and Bush, 37.

The Missouri example was most compelling to President Bush, as it was a case where the enemy was not only defeated, but also admitted defeat in a public manner, thus significantly reducing the possibility of further resistance. President Bush hoped that the defeat of Iraq in 1991 would lead to a transfer of government reminiscent of the change of government in Japan under American occupation after WWII. This, he hoped, would obviate the need to become involved in Iraq's internal politics. However, this hope was not borne out by events.

There was no collapse of Saddam Hussein's regime due to internal pressures after Iraq's defeat. Saddam Hussein would likely have viewed a Missouri-style surrender as an invitation for his potential successors to stage a coup. Given Iraq's political history since 1959, such fears were not unfounded. Nor did the G. H. W. Bush administration find it possible to stand back from events such as the Kurdish crisis of 1991 and become, *faute de mieux*, involved in the internal politics of Iraq. The Bush administration in its closing period found itself hamstrung by its particular containment policy. Arguably, this was because it had misjudged the climate in Baghdad in the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf War, and the US was forced to restrict military operations to those mandated by the UN. The latter had particular importance in relation to the Arab members of the coalition and more generally to Muslim states. There was insufficient diplomatic room for overly intrusive military operations and, in particular, the land-based operations that would have been required to topple Iraq's regime. Thus, in the closing stages of his presidency, President Bush became mired down with the mistaken expectation of the Iraqi populace rising up to oust Saddam Hussein.

The Clinton Administration

The Clinton administration (1993–2001) first achieved power by focusing on the domestic economy. The 1992 campaign slogan "It's the Economy, Stupid" made this point clear and resonated with American voters. Foreign policy was simply not a significant concern. This lack of a foreign policy agenda led naturally to issue management.¹¹ Such approaches, however, ran the risk of lacking coherence. The early Clinton administration's thought on foreign policy was guided by a belief that the policy of containment (focused on the Soviets) was outdated. Anthony Lake, President Clinton's first national security advisor, offered an alternative: "The successor to a doctrine of containment must be a strategy of enlargement—enlargement of the world's free community of market democracies."¹² This would-be vision seemed to lack a military dimension, but "Democratic Enlargement" was the closest thing to a guiding philosophy to underpin US foreign policy.¹³ This would-be philosophy was founded on democratic peace theory, which holds that democracies are far less likely to go to war with one another.¹⁴ Spreading democracy, according to this logic, would reduce the chances that wars would occur and, by extension, the human and economic costs associated with war.

Like the preceding administration, the Clinton administration wished to be capable of providing a peace dividend but understood that it needed to maintain its comparative military advantage. It, therefore, sought to reduce defence expenditures quickly while simultaneously purchasing new equipment. This meant that force levels and activities had to be rationalized. The Clinton administration's defence policy programme, the Bottom-Up Review, was much like the Base Force, but with a smaller budget.¹⁵ It would, therefore, seem plausible that the Clinton administration would seek to reduce, as opposed to increase, commitments.

11. Halberstam, 193 and 241–42.

12. A. Lake, "From Containment to Enlargement," Speech to Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, 21 September 1993, 2–4. Copy in author's possession.

13. R. Haass, "What to Do with American Primacy," *Foreign Affairs* 77, no. 6 (November–December 1998): 45.

14. For more on democratic peace theory, see Erik Gartzke, "Kant We all Just Get Along? Opportunity, Willingness, and the Origins of the Democratic Peace," *American Journal of Political Science* 42, no. 1 (January 1998): 1–29.

15. Cohen, "Defending," 42–43; and Cordesman, *U.S. Forces*, 21–22.

However, a reduction of commitments was simply not possible. Whether the body politic accepted them or not, there were conflicts in the 1990s that demanded American attention. As the remaining superpower, the US was trapped: it had to lead and simultaneously avoid accusations of imperialism. This contributed in no small measure to the Clinton administration's penchant for multilateral approaches to foreign policy problems where the costs and burden could be shared amongst the allies. Such approaches had a legitimizing effect. Multilateralism offered the solution to the problem of exercising leadership and influence in international affairs (largely through the use of military forces) without increasing the drain on the defence budget.¹⁶ Unlike its predecessor, the Clinton administration sought to stretch resources to meet a larger requirement. Yet, the guiding philosophy led them to address issues as they arose, which shaped a view of force differing from their predecessors'.

The Bank Account

The Clinton administration's philosophy on the use of force was founded on the belief that economic issues were more important, and globalization dominated Clinton's foreign policy. The role of the Department of Defense (DoD) was seen as one of assisting in the policing of the international community.¹⁷ Those members of the international community that threatened the prospects of globalization, such as Saddam Hussein's Iraq, therefore, had to be dealt with. Consequently, force was a commodity one expended to deal with recalcitrant states. One drew on the commodity with little concern for the conditions associated with its use. The Clinton administration had to deal with an all-encompassing problem. It had to address the "perennial dilemma of showing a reasonable return on its costly military investments."¹⁸ Such investments included the lives of American service personnel, and many Americans would not countenance the expenditure of these lives in unwarranted conflicts.

Since Vietnam, this fear of casualties has been acute in the US. There is a belief shared among many American politicians that the American public is sensitive to casualties and demands the withdrawal of US forces once casualties are taken. However, some have suggested that the historical evidence supports the argument that the American public is generally willing to take casualties and tends to engage in a constant cost-benefit analysis of defence commitments with the risk of casualties.¹⁹ With the end of the cold war, American acceptance of costs and the desire for benefits with regard to defence commitments changed. The costs of defence commitments decreased, but in the eyes of the American public, the benefits decreased even further. Events in other areas, such as the incident at Mogadishu in 1993, which led to the passage of Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 25, illustrated why the Clinton administration had become sensitive to casualties whatever the public level of tolerance.²⁰ Casualties provided an impetus for notions that maximized the utility of even a minor use of force. Anthony Lake provided an example of the administration's view of the use of force in 1996: "Credible threats can be as effective as force itself Selective but substantial use of force is sometimes more appropriate than its massive use Exit strategies must accompany actions."²¹

16. M. Clark, "The Future of Clinton's Foreign and Defense Policy: Multilateral Security," *Comparative Strategy* 13, no. 2 (April–June 1994): 181–95.

17. A. Bacevich, "Policing Utopia," *The National Interest*, no. 56 (Summer 1999): 8–11. "Globalization" refers to the increased commercial and cultural links of all states.

18. *Ibid.*, 6–7.

19. M. Conversino, "Sawdust Superpower: Perception of U.S. Casualty Tolerance," *Strategic Review* XXV, no. 1 (Winter 1997): 15–23; E. Larson, *Casualties and Consensus: The Historical Role of Casualties in Domestic Military Operations* (Santa Monica: RAND, 1996), 12; and J. Record, "Force-Protection Fetishism," *Aerospace Journal* 14, no. 2 (Summer 2000): 4–12.

20. D. Tucker, "Fighting Barbarians," *Parameters* XXIX, no. 1 (Spring 1998), 69–79. A bungled raid on a warlord's fortress led to the deaths of 18 members of the 75th Infantry (Ranger) Regiment. For more about Presidential Decision Directive (PDD-25), see Boutros Boutros-Ghali, *Unvanquished: A U.S.-U.N. Saga* (New York: Random House, 1999), 134–36.

21. Anthony Lake, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, Remarks at George Washington University, 6 March 1996, White House Press Release, 7 March 1996.

By offering the promise of political effect with fewer casualties, air power and cruise missiles became the American military's comparative advantage. With PGMs, air power and cruise missiles, war could be clean, precise and easy. Air power and cruise missiles could act as foreign policy tools as opposed to a means of fighting war. Foreign policy tools are often considered alternatives to diplomacy and are used for intervention in conflicts that do not threaten vital interests, where larger scale uses of force, such as larger joint campaigns, are simply not possible.²² Coercion became the preferred option for the Clinton administration; it offered the possibility that difficult political goals could be achieved without having to resort to war.

America and the Gulf, 1993–2001

The Clinton administration's public posture toward Iraq became more hostile and intrusive as time went on, and the administration began to demand that Iraq comply with all relevant UN resolutions instead of specific terms or certain objectives. This was, of course, linked to statements such as those of Dee Dee Myers, a White House spokesperson: "It is inconceivable that Saddam Hussein could remain in power if he complied with all UN resolutions."²³ The goalposts had been moved. This idea was part of the policy labelled Dual Containment. Dr. Martin Indyk, a member of the National Security Council (NSC), first revealed this policy at a symposium:

The Clinton administration's policy of "dual containment" of Iraq and Iran derives in the first instance from an assessment that the current Iraqi and Iranian regimes are both hostile to American interests in the region. Accordingly, we do not accept the argument that we should continue the old balance of power game, building up one to balance the other. We reject that approach not only because its bankruptcy was demonstrated in Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. We reject it because of a clear-headed assessment of the antagonism that both regimes harbour towards the United States and its allies in the region. And we reject it because we don't need to rely on one to balance the other.²⁴

Dual Containment also called for the indictment of Saddam Hussein for war crimes.²⁵ It, thus, personalized the overall aims of the new policy. Its overt aim was the downfall of Saddam Hussein with the underlying message that this would cause Iraq's realignment towards a more pro-Western and pro-American stance. This was far more intrusive than the senior Bush administration's policy towards Iraq where the ouster of Saddam Hussein would have been welcomed, and perhaps tacitly encouraged by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), but the removal was not linked to an overt policy aim.²⁶ Stability was required to maintain economic prosperity and to support coalition efforts elsewhere, such as the Middle East peace process, which represented an attempt to resolve the complex issues surrounding Israel and the Palestinians. Iraq could act as a spoiler across the Middle East if not held in check.

Since its inception in 1993, Dual Containment had not led to the achievement of American policy objectives. Saddam Hussein's government failed to comply with the resolutions on numerous occasions and, therefore, defied the will of the international community. By the end of 1998, the Clinton administration, in response to domestic political pressure, began to appear to increase the

22. Warden, 60.

23. S. Myers, cited in M. Walker, "US to Stand Firm on Iraqi Sanctions," *Guardian*, March 30, 1993.

24. M. Indyk, "The Clinton Administration's Approach to the Middle East," in *Challenges to US Interests in the Middle East: Obstacles and Opportunities*, ed. Yehudah Mirsky, Matt Ahrens, and Jennifer Sultan (Washington, DC: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 1993), 4. Dr. Indyk was the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs.

25. *Ibid.*, 6.

26. For details on the US intelligence community's efforts to destabilize the regime or offer support to Iraqi dissidents, see J. Hoagland, "How the CIA's Secret War on Saddam Collapsed," *Washington Post*, June 26, 1997; N. Partrick, "Iraqi Opposition: Repackaging an Old Option," *Royal United Services Institute Journal* 18, no. 12 (December 1998): 91–93; and T. Weiner, "Saddam Hard To Topple," *International Herald Tribune*, November 17, 1998.

degree of pressure on Iraq. On 31 October 1998, President Clinton signed Public Law 105-338, the *Iraq Liberation Act (ILA)*, into law. The *ILA* provided fiscal assistance to broadcasting agencies and up to US\$97 million worth of assistance of approved Iraqi democratic opposition organizations.²⁷ This programme was intended to support a change of government in Iraq and later proved to be a political problem. It was not a military policy per se, but it did send the message that the US was committed to a change of regime.²⁸ President Clinton noted in a 1999 report to Congress that: “As long as Saddam Hussein remains in power, he represents a threat to the well-being of his people, the peace of the region and the security of the world. We will continue to contain the threat he poses, but over the long term, the best way to address the threat he poses is through a new government in Baghdad.”²⁹ Baghdad was, of course, neither insensitive nor unresponsive to this approach. It interpreted the move, obviously and understandably, as an attack on its domestic affairs. An attack on its leader was an attack on its standing as a nation state not far short of a declaration of war, or at least the postulation of a war aim.

The Junior Bush Administration

On the 2000 campaign trail, President George W. Bush (2001–09) offered that the United States, as the sole remaining superpower, ought to be humble in its interactions with other countries. This, however, did not last long. The junior Bush administration’s approach to such matters was to be humble until the shock of the terrorist attacks on 9/11. Since that time many have forgotten the early days of this administration.

The political and military reaction to 9/11 was unprecedented in its scale and speed. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), for the first time in its history, invoked Article 5. The US quickly assembled a political and military coalition against the al-Qaeda terror network and its Taliban hosts in Afghanistan. Analysts began to describe the Afghan model for the conduct of war by proxy where American air assets and special forces personnel could augment local combatants to deal with one’s adversaries.³⁰ American fortunes seemed to be at a new high despite the mobilization of forces for internal security duties associated with the reaction to 9/11.

This, however, was not to last long. The junior Bush administration began to reveal a new foreign policy approach. This new policy platform went over poorly with the international community, as it suggested a newfound American unilateralism and a desire to use force in direct pursuit of policy goals. It began with the President’s 2002 State of the Union Address wherein he identified Iraq, Iran and North Korea as the Axis of Evil.³¹

States like these, and their terrorist allies, constitute an axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world. By seeking weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger. They could provide these arms to terrorists, giving them the means to match their hatred. They could attack our allies or attempt to blackmail the United States. In any of these cases, the price of indifference would be catastrophic.³²

27. US, *Iraq Liberation Act of 1998*, United States Public Law 105-338, 105th Congress, 2nd session, Congressional Record 144 (October 31, 1998), <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c105:H.R.4655.ENR> (accessed June 7, 2011, site discontinued).

28. The *ILA* was publicly criticized by General Anthony Zinni, USMC, the CINC CENTCOM at the time. He believed that the Iraqi opposition groups were not a viable opposition and that the scheme would lead to the destabilization of Iraq. See A. Cordesman, *The Air Defense War Since Desert Fox: A Short History* (Washington, DC: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 1999), 19–20 and 36–37.

29. President Clinton, cited in Cordesman, *Air Defense War*, 32.

30. For example, see Stephen Biddle, “Afghanistan and the Future of Warfare,” *Foreign Affairs* 82, no. 2 (March–April 2003): 31–46.

31. US, *The 2002 National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: White House, September 2002), http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/nss/nss_sep2002.pdf (accessed January 29, 2013). See also Norman Podhoretz, “In Praise of the Bush Doctrine,” *Commentary* 114, no. 2 (September 2002): 21–23.

32. US, 2002 State of the Union Address (January 29, 2002), 3, http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=2002_presidential_documents&docid=pd04fe02_txt-11 (accessed January 29, 2013).

This drew a link between terrorist organizations and the potential for WMD-armed state sponsors to provide them with WMDs. This line of argument culminated in the publication of the 2002 *National Security Strategy* (*NSS*).

The 2002 *NSS* was a radical departure from previous practice. While other states sympathized with the President's identification of tyrants and terrorists as the prime enemies of the United States, many were concerned about the prescribed solution. The *NSS* stated that the US reserved the right to engage in pre-emptive wars if it perceived a threat. It seemed that Washington was prepared to go it alone in the face of threats and with little to no diplomatic preparation.³³ This was the stuff of nightmares for a number of Western states—the unrestrained use of American power for strictly American goals with little concern for the effects on others.

Spreading Democracy

The neo-conservative philosophy espoused by a number of key figures within the junior Bush administration shaped its view regarding the use of force. While the Clinton administration had sought democratic engagement in order to spread market democracy, it relied on diplomatic and economic ways to do so. The junior Bush administration believed that force could spread democracy directly; the citizens of authoritarian states would welcome the overthrow of their rulers and embrace democracy if only given the chance to do so. One can see the relationship between the use of force and the perceived prospects for a democratic Iraq. Add to this the doctrine of pre-emption, the perpetual commitment to maintaining the NFZs and the belief that an Iraqi arsenal of WMDs existed and could be shared with terror groups, and one sees how the US drifted toward war.

The maintenance of two NFZs required significant expenditures of political capital and commitments of military resources. These costs began to mount as the US led the global war on terrorism; in addition, those states hosting coalition aircraft enforcing the NFZs could always demand political concessions for the use of their airfields and airspace.

The belief in an existing Iraqi arsenal of WMDs persisted throughout all three administrations, but that of George W. Bush felt the greatest degree of threat. This was not due to any significant difference in knowledge of the state of Iraq's arsenal but, rather, to a perception that Iraq might share the remnants of its WMDs left intact or undiscovered by UN inspectors with terror groups. Apart from an enmity of the West, most radical Islamic groups shared little with Saddam Hussein, since they opposed Ba'athist ideals and the secularism of Saddam's rule, but this mattered little. In addition, many underestimated the UN's effectiveness at finding and eliminating the Iraqi arsenal of WMDs. The US was at war, and nightmares of Iraqi sponsorship of terror groups led them to perceive a threat.

The Coalition

The coalition was not dissolved after Iraq was ejected from Kuwait. Events during and after the war made it patently obvious that Iraq had lost a war, but its ambitions had not been defeated. The Secretary of State during the G. H. W. Bush administration, James Baker, remarked that:

33. US, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: White House, 2002), 15. See also John Lewis Gaddis, "A Grand Strategy of Transformation," *Foreign Policy*, no. 133 (October–November 2002): 50–54; M. Glennon, "Why the Security Council Failed," *Foreign Affairs* 82, no. 3 (May–June 2003): 16–35; Robert Jervis, "Understanding the Bush Doctrine," *Political Science Quarterly* 118, no. 3 (Fall 2003): 365–88; Joshua Muravchik, "The Bush Manifesto," *Commentary* 114, no. 5 (November 2002): 24; and Jeffrey Record, "The Bush Doctrine and the War with Iraq," *Parameters* 33, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 4–22.

We needed the coalition as much in the postwar period as we had before the war ... [D]uring the war, we had learned that Saddam Hussein's program to develop weapons of mass destruction was more substantial and better concealed than we had believed at the outset. We were determined to use our victory ... to put the Iraqi regime under the intense glare of the most intrusive weapons-inspection regime ever developed, to root out every last bit of that program. We were also determined to maintain substantial economic and political sanctions against Iraq to restrict its aggressive tendencies ... To put Saddam Hussein in that cage, so to speak, we needed implementation of existing UN resolutions (and an additional UN resolution enacted), and we needed all our coalition partners to [do] this.³⁴

The coalition needed to remain in order to keep Iraq in a proverbial cage until it was clear that the Iraqi threat was gone. Containment, as a policy, was not necessarily as outmoded as was believed, but it required that the costs and burdens of doing so were shared among the interested parties.

Britain

The British government wholeheartedly supported the containment of Iraq. British and American foreign policies and goals were often similar and tended to work in harmony.³⁵ The phenomenon was due to the special relationship that has existed between the two states since WWII. This was based on a great deal of defence and security cooperation (including intelligence) from 1941 on.³⁶ During the cold war, the British relationship with the US was dominated by two beliefs: one, Britain could not pursue major diplomatic—and especially war—objectives without the US, and two, the US, while very capable, needed guidance to avoid unnecessary difficulties.³⁷ In addition, it served as a cloak for Britain's otherwise declining role on the world diplomatic stage. By virtue of the special relationship with the US, Britain had at least an attenuating role and set herself apart from her European Union partners whose diplomatic focus and power was far less certain.³⁸ Despite the partnership, the British government remained mute about the issue of regime change. In the later years of the Labour government led by Tony Blair, Britain tried to use the special relationship to build a proverbial bridge between the increasingly sceptical states of the European Union and the junior Bush administration.³⁹ This was no small feat, and the British government felt itself being pulled in two different policy directions.

France

French enthusiasm for the containment of Iraq waxed and waned depending on the government's diplomatic and legal interpretations of the situation at hand. The government's structure also generated inconsistent policies. While the Parti Socialiste held both the presidency and the cabinet (1981–86 and 1988–93), French policy was to support the coalition, while seeking a more prominent role for France. During the Gulf War, their support for the war effort was based primarily on the belief that to have acted

34. Baker, 441.

35. The closest issue to an exception has been American interest in Northern Ireland, but this has not proved to be very divisive given the relative progress made in the peace process. For details, see A. Guelke, "The United States, Irish Americans and the Northern Ireland Peace Process," *International Affairs* 72, no. 3 (July 1996): 521–36; and R. MacGinty, "American Influences on the Northern Ireland Peace Process," *Journal of Conflict Studies*, XVII, no. 2 (Fall 1997): 31–50.

36. P. Cradock, *In Defence of British Interests: Foreign Policy under Thatcher and Major* (London: John Murray, 1997), 41, 51–53 and 55; and R. Seitz, "Britain and America: Towards Strategic Coincidence," *The World Today* 49, no. 5 (May 1993): 86–87. For commentary on the nature of intelligence liaison, see J. Richelson and D. Ball, *The Ties That Bind* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1985), 5, 6, and 135; and B. Westerfield, "America and the World of Intelligence Liaison," *Intelligence and National Security* 11, no. 3 (September 1996): 528–29.

37. L. Freedman, "Alliance and the British Way in Warfare," *Review of International Studies* 21, no. 2 (April 1995): 146–49 and 152.

38. C. Coker, "Britain and the New World Order: The Special Relationship in the 1990s," *International Affairs* 68, no. 3 (July 1992): 416.

39. J. Dumbrell, "The US-UK 'Special Relationship' in a World Twice Transformed," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 17, no. 3 (October 2004): 441.

otherwise would have meant that France would have been left as a spectator.⁴⁰ This trend would have been magnified if the post-cold war world were to become a Pax Americana.⁴¹ From 1991 onward, the aim of French foreign policy was to improve France's image and standing in the world, thus accruing other benefits.⁴² This lasted until the elections of 1993, when the Parti Socialiste, while still retaining the presidency, lost the power of cabinet formation to the centre-right coalition comprising the Union Démocratique Française and the Rassemblement Pour La République due to public discontent with the weakness of France's economy. This meant that foreign policy was another area in which François Mitterrand, the socialist president, had to engage in compromise.⁴³ The French government then consistently sought to seek a leadership role in the moderation of Iraq's behaviour.⁴⁴ To claim that the change of cabinet accounted entirely for the change in foreign policy would be misleading. In early 1993, French state oil firms and the Iraqi government entered into negotiations over exploration rights for Iraqi oil fields in the event of a future lifting of sanctions.⁴⁵ French arms sales during the 1980s left the Iraqi government with a 28-billion debt in French Francs (FF) and very little ability to pay.⁴⁶ These were powerful incentives for the French government to advocate a lifting of sanctions. While the containment of Iraq was more or less acceptable to successive iterations of the French government depending on the situation, a forced change of regime was certainly out of the question.

The French withdrawal from the coalition in the late 1990s had two unintended consequences. One, it offered hope to the Iraqi government that the consensus over the ends and ways associated with Iraq's containment was eroding. Two, it also weakened the coalition's credibility overall within the international community.

To portray France as an enemy of American interests in Iraq would be somewhat misleading. The French government was one of those states troubled by the idea of an American "hyperpower" acting unilaterally to impose democracy by force of arms without warning. From 1999 onward, the French government wanted to prevent the possibility of unilateral actions. When the Security Council voted on Security Council Resolution (SCR) 1284⁴⁷ in 1999, the French government abstained, as its policy at the time was to seek more evidence that the Iraqi government still had a hidden arsenal. If evidence existed that Iraq still maintained an illicit arsenal, it would lead to another resolution that would explicitly authorize the use of force.⁴⁸ This perspective, of course, led the French government to oppose the American attempts to obtain a political consensus on the need to deal with Iraq in late 2002 and early 2003.

40. I. Grunberg, "Still a Reluctant Ally?: France's Participation in the Gulf War Coalition," in *Friends in Need: Burden Sharing in the Persian Gulf War*, ed. A. Bennett, J. Leggold and D. Unger (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), 118–20; J. Holworth, "French Policy in the Conflict," in *International Perspectives on the Gulf Conflict, 1990–91*, ed. Alex Danchev and Dan Keohane (London: Macmillan, 1994); and David S. Yost, "France and the Gulf War of 1990–1991: Politico-Military Lessons Learned," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 16, no. 3 (September 1993): 343 and 352.

41. For an example of such concerns, see W. Drozdziak, "New U.S. Mood: Arrogance," *International Herald Tribune*, June 13, 1991.

42. P. De La Gorce, "Pourquoi la France est sur tous les fronts," *Jeune Afrique*, 14–20 May 1992.

43. P. Guillot, "France, Peacekeeping, and Humanitarian Intervention," *International Peacekeeping* 1, no. 1 (Spring 1994): 30–43.

44. For an example, see "Conférence de Presse du Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, M. Alain Juppé," January 13, 1994, French Foreign Ministry Press Release.

45. See R. Swann, "In on the Ground Floor," *Middle East International*, April 15, 1994; and "Point de Presse du février 1994: Déclarations du Porte Parole," February 7, 1994, French Foreign Ministry Press Release.

46. J. Alia and C. Clerc, *La Guerre de Mitterrand: La Dernière Grande Illusion* (Paris: Olivier Orban, 1991), 14; and L. Freedman and E. Karsh, *The Gulf Conflict 1990–1991* (London: Faber & Faber, 1993), 114–15.

47. UN, Security Council Resolution 1284, S/RES/1284 (December 17, 1999).

48. Charles Cogan, "The Iraq Crisis and France: Heaven-Sent Opportunity or Problem from Hell," *French Politics, Culture & Society* 22, no. 3 (Fall 2004): 125; D. Styan, "Jacques Chirac's noni: France, Iraq and the United Nations, 1991–2003," *Modern & Contemporary France* 12, no. 3 (2004): 379–80; and I. Wall, "The French-American War over Iraq," *Brown Journal of International Affairs* X, no. 2 (Winter 2004): 123–33.

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council States

While Saudi Arabia and the other members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)—Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Qatar and Oman—believed that the situation between Iraq and Kuwait had to be solved, they were less enthusiastic about the actual solution. The temporary basing of forces (after 1991) and even prepositioning of equipment were not easy schemes to enact. Some states, such as Saudi Arabia, due to fears of domestic opposition, were hesitant to allow foreign military basing on their soil.⁴⁹ Acceptance of the basing of materiel and even personnel came eventually, but with a cost. For example, in 1996, Islamic militants bombed Khobar Towers, a housing complex then serving as a barracks for coalition troops. This attack left 19 dead and over 400 wounded.⁵⁰ Those responsible for such acts could also turn on their own governments; ultimately, this would be detrimental to the coalition. This hesitance forced the US to minimize its military presence in the Gulf.

There were five reasons for the Arab reluctance to allow Western forces or equipment to be stationed in the region. First, during the 1990s, oil revenues and per capita incomes fell significantly, thus creating a degree of discomfort for the governments of the Gulf States.⁵¹ Second, Gulf State governments had been concerned that the US's commitment to their security had been weak in the past and that the US had not been all that committed to solving the problem of Iraq.⁵² Third, while many Arab governments loathed Saddam Hussein, they were hesitant to allow him to be ousted by a foreign power. For example, in 1999, the Defence Minister of the UAE, Sheik Mohammad bin Rashid al-Maktoum, believed “that any political change in Iraq imposed from outside could lead to the division of (the country) and internal civil war.”⁵³ An Iraqi civil war, it was feared, might encourage the Iranian government to intervene. Fourth, it had been a common error for many politicians and scholars to underestimate the depth of pan-Arab sentiments. There was a great deal of sympathy within the Arab world for the plight of the Iraqi people while they were subjected to the sanctions.⁵⁴ Fifth, Arab populations resented the presence of foreign troops to assist in what had been perceived by many Arabs as an intra-Arab conflict.⁵⁵ Indeed, there were attempts to find Arab solutions to the problem in the summer of 1990, but these did not have the desired effect. The aforementioned reasons were also combined with a sense of pan-Arab nationalism that perceived the West as committing acts of aggression against Arab brethren.

To a great extent, the close relationship between the US and Israel had led to a degree of mistrust. Many Arabs perceived a discrepancy between the vigorous enforcement of SCR 687 against Iraq and the relative lack of action on SCR 242 (pertaining to Israel). SCR 242, passed on 22 November 1967, requested that Israel withdraw from the occupied territories. In comparison to SCRs 678 and 687, which were vigorously enforced, it had not been enforced to the same degree if at all. This contributed to the belief in Western hypocrisy. On 8 October 1990, the incident at Temple Mount in Jerusalem,

49. Cordesman, *U.S. Forces*, 80.

50. US, DoD, Office of the Historian, Joint Task Force-South West Asia, *JTF-SWA Briefing Package* (Eskan: JTF-SWA HQ, 1997), 3, 12 and 41.

51. A. Cordesman, *After Desert Fox: Our Policy for the Gulf and Iraq* (Washington, DC: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 1999), 3 and 16.

52. For an example of the former, during the Carter administration, a flight of F-15s were sent to reinforce the Saudi armed forces against Iran. During mid-flight, President Carter informed King Fahd that the F-15s deployed without ammunition. See L. Freedman, “Military Power and Political Influence,” *International Affairs* 74, no. 4 (October 1998): 779.

53. Mohammad, cited in Cordesman, *Air Defense War*, 23.

54. *Ibid.*, 12.

55. M. Azzam, “The Gulf Crisis: Perceptions in the Muslim World,” *International Affairs* 67, no. 3 (July 1991): 474; and F. Halliday, “The Gulf War and Its Aftermath: First Reflections,” *International Affairs* 67, no. 2 (April 1991): 231. Saudi Arabia has been very sensitive to this problem. See A. Cordesman, *Saudi Arabia, the US, and the Structure of Gulf Alliances* (Washington, DC: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 1999), 41–42.

where there were Palestinian casualties, reinforced this.⁵⁶ The double standard between Iraq and Israel extended into the realm of nuclear strategy. Nuclear weapons were perceived as a necessity in the Arab world, as it was well understood that Israel maintained a significant arsenal. Most Arab countries saw this Israeli arsenal as a security threat that required an Arab nuclear deterrent.⁵⁷ Tensions increased in the Middle East during the late 1990s. In the Arab world, the Israeli government's actions are perceived as inflammatory and threatening, and many Arabs came to believe that a strong Iraq was a "necessary counterweight to an increasingly hostile Israel."⁵⁸ These factors served to erode American credibility in the Middle East and Arab support for the coalition's goals. Yet, the necessity of basing forces on their soil created an opportunity for the Arab allies to exercise leverage by constraining coalition operations.

While there was a lot of sympathy for the United States within the Arab world because of 9/11, many Arabs also sympathized with al-Qaeda and its perspective of the West. Add to this the kinship felt for the plight of fellow Arabs under the combined effects of sanctions and Saddam Hussein's rule, as well as the fear that an Iraq without Saddam Hussein might encourage Iranian interference, and one can see the coalescence between popular support and political necessity. It helps explain the position taken at the Arab Summit of 2002, when the Arab states rejected the idea of an attack on Iraq.⁵⁹ While the dictator was less than desirable and sanctions were odious, the possibility of a fractured state with a large Shiite population on Iran's border was far more troubling.

Turkey

Turkey had a similar relationship with the coalition. During DESERT STORM, the Turkish government's permission to allow air operations against Iraq to be staged from its territory was granted despite Turkey's strong economic links to Iraq and a concern that the Iraqi government might support the Partiya Karkari Kurdistan (PKK), a Kurdish resistance organization. While cooperation with the allies was beneficial for the Turkish government in maintaining good relations with the US and Europe, it did reduce the internal popularity of the government of the day. The nature of Turkish politics also presented a problem.

Since the founding of the Turkish republic, the military has acted as the guardian of the constitution. This, combined with the legacy of Kemal Atatürk's vision of a unified Turkish nation state, meant that there was a powerful incentive to forcefully assimilate minority populations. The Kurds were no exception.⁶⁰ "Mountain Turks" was the label the Turkish government gave their Kurdish minority. The attempts at assimilation, however, have met with both violent and non-violent resistance. For all these reasons, the Turkish government became less cooperative with the coalition over time, eventually beginning to bargain for political concessions. Due to its weak economy, the Turkish government sought to obtain either economic relief or a lifting of sanctions against Iraq. If neither of these could be achieved, then it wanted a free hand to maintain order in southeastern Turkey.⁶¹ If this was not possible, then the Turks, like the Arab allies, could constrain coalition operations.

56. See Azzam, 483; and Bush and Scowcroft, 378–79.

57. B. Ebert, "The Gulf War and its Aftermath: An Assessment of Evolving Arab Responses," *Middle East Policy* 1, no. 4 (1992): 78, 89, and 91. The prestige associated with ownership of nuclear weapons was also a factor.

58. R. Butler, *The Greatest Threat: Weapons of Mass Destruction and the Crisis of Global Security* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2000), xix; and M. Kazemzadeh, "Thinking the Unthinkable: Solving the Problem of Saddam Hussein for Good," *Middle East Policy* 6, no. 1 (June 1998): 74.

59. G. Bahgat, "The United States, Iraq and Weapons of Mass Destruction," *Defense & Security Analysis* 19, no. 1 (2003): 11.

60. F. Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey* (London: Routledge, 1993), 61 and 213; and D. McDowall, *The Kurds: A Nation Divided* (London: Minority Rights, 1992), 36 and 47–48.

61. H. Sicherman, "The Strange Death of Dual Containment," *Orbis* 41, no. 2 (Spring 1997): 235–36.

Objectives

Since March 1991, the American-led coalition had both short- and long-term objectives. The primary concern was the maintenance of regional stability that would be achieved through the containment of Iraq. There were also more specific and contentious objectives. The first specific objective was the obvious and crucial requirement to deny Iraq the capacity to mount further military adventures against Kuwait or other neighbouring countries, which would then represent a threat to the supply of oil and the health of the global economy. Second was the requirement to deny the government of Iraq any WMDs or associated delivery systems, thus limiting Iraq's ability to threaten or harm its neighbours. There was also a need to deny the Iraqi government the capacity to conduct war on its minority populations living on the fringes of Iraq, thus reducing the incentive of Iraq's neighbours to intervene. This in turn would also limit the chance that the Iraqi state would fragment. Underlying all these objectives were the hopes that the creation and maintenance of tension within Iraq itself would result in Saddam Hussein being eventually deposed and that a benign and ultimately pro-Western government would succeed him. Replacing the Iraqi government was, within both the coalition and the international community, the most contentious objective because it stretched the mandate provided by SCR 687 and subsequent resolutions, and it challenged the general consensus on the inviolability of state sovereignty.

The aforementioned objectives generated the need to militarily contain Iraq for the short term and, in turn, contributed to the establishment of NFZs. While originally intended to deny segments of Iraqi airspace to the Iraqi government in order to provide security for the Iraqi Kurds, they also provided a means of monitoring military activity within Iraq's northern and southern regions and evolved into a means of coercing Iraq. Over time, both the span of control over Iraqi airspace and the ability to reach targets within Iraq increased. Also, a shaping of the forces deployed in the region evolved to increase the safety of aircrews. This enabled the achievement, albeit indirectly, of the coalition's specific political objectives. The stated intermediate political objectives of the NFZs, however, were vague at best, despite their humanitarian (i.e., the protection of the Kurds) justifications. The NFZs represented an open-ended commitment to the containment of Iraq and, due to the need for regional airbases, a potential political problem. As time progressed, the NFZs increasingly encouraged external mitigation, and so the chances grew of Iraq becoming less isolated despite its belligerence towards the UN.

The United Nations Security Council

The Council's structure and procedure were significant. The presidency rotated between the 15 member states in alphabetical order. The Council president and his government, therefore, enjoyed a great deal of influence over the agenda.⁶² This meant that the UNSC's devotion to Iraqi issues corresponded closely to the desires of the Council president's government.⁶³ The structure of the Council was a powerful influence, as its most powerful members, the Permanent Five (P-5), held the power to veto proposals put before the Council. Three of the P-5 formed the core of the coalition and were able to influence the Council's decisions in no small measure until late 1996 when the French departure from the coalition reduced that to two. The Council's resolutions tended to represent their somewhat modified aspirations. Any modifications were the results of the various members asserting particular demands in exchange for political support. Such demands had a range of origins, from a philosophical opposition to American foreign adventures to sheer self-interest.

62. As noted in R. Butler, 55.

63. In R. Butler, it was observed that with the demise of the USSR, there was a 60-day window of Anglo-American presidency, where the UK's tenure as president was followed directly by the US, thus giving the coalition 60 days to virtually control the UNSC agenda.

Despite their numbers, the non-permanent members of the Council have never been very influential. However, apart from notable exceptions, the majority of the members had been relatively supportive of the American and coalition efforts to deal with Iraq in the early 1990s. The exceptions included cases where Council votes differed due to self-interest (i.e., opposition to the concept of UN demarcation of disputed boundaries), or to ideological opposition to the US, or to predisposition to a moderate approach due to cultural ties (i.e., other countries with Islamic populations).⁶⁴ Yet, support for the coalition declined over time for reasons that will be explored later.

The government of the People's Republic of China (PRC) had displayed a relative disinterest in the Iraqi problem. On most occasions, it merely stated that Iraq should comply with UNSC resolutions.⁶⁵ However, the Chinese government has been very concerned about the issue of national sovereignty.⁶⁶ It maintained a very literal interpretation of the authority granted by the UNSC and consistently argued that any military operation not explicitly authorized by the UNSC, such as NFZs, was illegal.⁶⁷ Natural self-interest would dictate the avoidance of precedents that constrained their ability to act within Tibet, while maintaining acceptably cordial relations with certain members of the coalition for other purposes, such as trade or the orderly transfer of territory.

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and its successor, the Russian Federation, were also interested in what occurred between the coalition and Iraq. In 1991, there was a loose *modus vivendi* between the US and USSR (and Russia in 1992). Non-interference was the norm so long as Soviet or Russian interests were not threatened. After the USSR's collapse, early Russian foreign policy was dominated by the desire to become integrated with the West, and this was a powerful incentive to support Western policies.⁶⁸ Since the mid-1990s, the Russian Federation developed a more assertive foreign policy that reflected a great deal of concern over the actions of the West.⁶⁹ A number of trends affected Russian policy with regard to Iraq. The Russian government, as the successor to the USSR, became the creditor for Iraq's US\$5 billion debt.⁷⁰ Tied to this was the possibility that Russian oil firms would be given contracts after the lifting of sanctions, and technical talks had been ongoing in 1994.⁷¹ In addition to this, it was later claimed that the Iraqi government had bribed key Russian officials into supporting a lift of sanctions.⁷² Other issues plagued Western relations with Russia, and these included the Russian sympathy for the Serbian cause in the Balkans,

64. For example, see the contributions of the Permanent Representatives of Cuba and Ecuador in "Provisional Verbatim Record of the Two Thousand, Nine Hundred and Eighty-First Meeting of the United Nations Security Council," S/PV.2981, in M. Weller ed., *Iraq and Kuwait: The Hostilities and the Aftermath* (Cambridge: Grotius, 1993), 107–09 and 118; and "Statement from the Pakistani Mission to the UN, 21 January 1993," in Weller ed., *Iraq and Kuwait*, 751.

65. For an example, see *Arms Control Reporter 1992*, (Cambridge, MA: The Institute of Defense and Disarmament Studies, 1992), 453.B.132.9 to 453.B.132.10.

66. Boutros-Ghali, 25.

67. Cordesman, *Air Defense War*, 33.

68. A. Kozhemiakin, "Democratization and Foreign Policy Change: Case of the Russian Federation," *Review of International Studies* 23, no. 1 (January 1997): 63.

69. The motives, process and politics involved with the development of Russian foreign policy in the wake of the cold war is beyond the scope of this study. For one example of details, see R. Hollis, ed., *The Soviets, Their Successors and the Middle East: Turning Point* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993).

70. W. Herr, "Operation 'Vigilant Warrior': Conventional Deterrence Theory, Doctrine and Practice" (thesis, School of Advanced Airpower Studies, Air University, 1996), 9, citing R. Corliss, "Saddam Again," *Time*, October 17, 1994.

71. "Clinton's Iraq Policy Tangles with Other Goals in Middle East and Trade," *International Herald Tribune*, February 11, 1998; "Impatient Russia Keen to Repair Iraqi Oilfields," *Guardian*, August 4, 1994; and A. Lieven and M. Binyon, "Russia Forges New Economic Ties with Iraq," *Times*, October 19, 1994.

72. Richard Butler, the Executive Chairman of the United Nations Special Commission from 1997 to 1999, claimed that the Russian Foreign Minister, Yevgeny Primakov, was on the Iraqi payroll, R. Butler, 106.

the Middle East peace process, NATO expansion and Russia's attempts to police its "near abroad."⁷³ Boris Yeltsin's moderate government was under pressure from hard-line nationalists such as Vladimir Zhirinovskiy and Vladimir Putin, who often argued that Russia was being treated with disdain by the West and needed to demand the treatment it deserved. Also, one of Putin's favourite causes was Iraq.⁷⁴ In order to lessen the pressure from its internal critics, the Yeltsin government adopted an increasingly bellicose foreign policy.

A series of UNSC decisions authorized the use of force against Iraq. UNSC decisions represent the codification of fundamentally political decisions in law. Since the Council could legitimize the coalition's actions, it was necessary for the coalition to maintain a consensus within the UNSC. The coalition's actions remained legal and acceptable insofar as they remained popular with the international community. This meant that prior to the use of force, the US and coalition needed to prepare the international community to prevent interference and offers of external mitigation extended to Iraq. Multilateral approaches were the best means of doing so.

Since 1991, the American and British governments consistently argued that they were acting to enforce the will of the international community, as represented by the UNSC. Their arguments rested on the notion that Iraq's actions demonstrated a material breach of the terms of the ceasefire contained in SCR 687. After the Gulf War ended, the lack of a direct threat to regional stability by Iraq contributed to the decline of consensus on that country and, therefore, the will of the international community. It was increasingly difficult for the coalition to convince other states that Iraq's actions were a material breach; therefore, it was harder for the American and British governments to maintain international support for their cause and for their actions concerning Iraq. This was another powerful incentive to ensure that the coalition adopted an easy and rapid means of projecting power for coercive purposes and to seize any political window of opportunity. Ironically, the early and relative success of containment was self-defeating, as it reduced the political consensus on its necessity.

73. For examples, see R. Beeston, "Russia Warns US against Lifting Bosnia Arms Ban," *Times*, June 15, 1994; J. Krauze, "Les malentendus persistents entre Washington et Moscou," *Le Monde*, March 16, 1994; A. McElvoy, "Yeltsin Challenges NATO with Vision of Strong Russia," *Times*, February 25, 1994; J. Meek, "Russia Courts World Stage," *Guardian*, November 11, 1994; and S. Shihab, "La Russie dénonce des 'forces' hostiles en Occident," *Le Monde*, September 27, 1994.

74. L. Boulton, "Yeltsin Pledges Tough Foreign Policy to Please Nationalists," *Financial Times*, January 4, 1994; R. Freedman, "Russian Foreign Policy Toward the Middle East: The Yeltsin Legacy and the Putin Challenge," *Middle East Journal* 55, no. 1 (Winter 2001): 58–90; Kozhemiakin, 65–68; N. Malcolm and A. Pravda, "Democratization and Russian Foreign Policy," *International Affairs* 72, no. 3 (July 1996): 538 and 550–51; and J. Slater, "Zhirinovskiy, Iraq and the Muslims," *Middle East International*, January 7, 1994.

Chapter 4: Operation DESERT STORM

The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on 2 August 1990 led to an international crisis and eventually the 1991 Gulf War. Despite diplomatic efforts, war between the coalition and Iraq was always likely because of the conflict between the coalition's aims and Iraq's strategy. The Gulf War was a case of control as opposed to coercion, but it is necessary to discuss it as it set the tone for the subsequent interactions between the post-war coalition and Iraq.

The Invasion of Kuwait

Since the late 1930s, successive Iraqi governments have believed that Kuwait is the breakaway "19th province" of Iraq.¹ Iraq's geopolitical situation exacerbated this situation. The Iraqi government consistently drew invidious comparisons between its coastlines and those of Iran and Saudi Arabia, and the economic advantages associated with maritime sovereignty. Iraq has only 19 kilometres (km) of coastline compared to Kuwait's 250 or Iran's 1,833.² Basra, due to the narrow channel in the Shatt al-Arab and the proximity to Iran, has not been a satisfactory deep-water port. During the 1980s, the Iraqi government deliberately sought to develop the town of Umm Qasr, which included an Iraqi navy base, in order to have an Iraqi deep-water port out of Iran's reach.³ The problem was that "the controlling position of Warbah and Bubiyan [islands] became more important to Iraq; and at the same time, the precise location of the boundary became a matter of great importance."⁴ These all served to motivate Iraq's aggressive intentions towards Kuwait.

Eight years of war against Iran effectively drained the Iraqi treasury. The mainstay of Iraq's economy at that time was oil. After the Iran–Iraq War, when Iraq needed to refill its coffers, other oil-producing countries increased crude oil production, flooding the world markets. The increased supply led to a decrease in the price of oil, thus aggravating Iraq's financial situation. To make matters worse, during the Iran–Iraq War, the Iraqi government, rather than a guns-or-butter economic strategy, had maintained a costly guns-and-butter strategy.⁵ Not conditioned to austerity, the Iraqi people's expectations naturally rose after Iran's defeat. An empty treasury could not fulfil these expectations, and Iraq defaulted on some of its loans to maintain domestic prosperity.⁶ The government tried in vain to rejuvenate the economy through public projects. Due to clashes between demobilized Iraqi soldiers and expatriate workers from other Arab states who had kept Iraq's war economy going, unrest throughout the country rose.⁷ In response, the government chose, as a means of keeping order, to maintain a large army.⁸

1. For details, see H. Brown, "The Iraq–Kuwait Boundary Dispute: Historical Background and the UN Decisions of 1992 and 1993," *International Boundaries Research Unit Boundary and Security Bulletin*, no. 3 (October 1994): 69; J. Carver, "The Gulf Crisis," *International Boundaries Research Unit Boundary and Security Bulletin*, no. 1 (January 1991): 6; and D. Finnie, *Shifting Lines in the Sand: Kuwait's Elusive Frontier with Iraq* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992).

2. S. Amin, *Political and Strategic Issues in the Persian–Arabian Gulf* (Glasgow: Royston, 1984), 4–5; and Finnie, 171.

3. R. Schofield, "Borders and Territoriality in the Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula during the Twentieth Century," in *Territorial Foundations of the Gulf States*, ed., R. Schofield (London: University College London, 1994), 4–5. The Shatt is the outlet of both the Tigris and Euphrates rivers to the Gulf.

4. M. Mendelson and S. Hutton, "Iraq's Claim to Sovereignty over Kuwait," in *Territorial Foundations* (see Ch 4, note 3), 125.

5. A. Alnasrawi, *The Economy of Iraq: Oil, Wars, Destruction of Development and Prospects, 1950–2010* (London: Greenwood, 1994), 80–81. "Guns or Butter" is a phrase that illustrates the wartime economic dilemma of spending on arms or on domestic issues.

6. E. Sciolino, *The Outlaw State* (Toronto: John Wiley & Sons, 1991), 188.

7. D. Hiro, *Desert Shield to Desert Storm* (London: HarperCollins, 1992), 62.

8. A. Cordesman, *The Iranian and Iraqi Military Balance: Key Trends* (Washington, DC: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 1998), 42 and 45.

Morale within the Iraqi armed forces was already faltering, and this posed a threat to the regime's survival. Throughout Saddam Hussein's reign, the Iraqi armed forces and intelligence apparatus underwrote the regime's continued dominance. Politicization and prosperity were the two tools used by Saddam Hussein's regime to ensure that the armed forces remained loyal.⁹ Without economic benefits to maintain their loyalty to the regime, Iraq's military became a potential threat. Shortly after the Iran–Iraq War, a coup attempt from within some of the supposedly more loyal of Saddam Hussein's supporters gave the Iraqi government reason for concern.¹⁰ A solution was required, and from the government's perspective, it needed to come quickly and easily.

Oil provided the seemingly simplest solution. The Iraqi government claimed that Kuwait was producing too much oil in the summer of 1990 and demanded that its production decrease drastically. This would cause the price of oil to rise, thus increasing Iraqi revenue.¹¹ The Kuwaiti government refused, and Iraq's economy deteriorated further.¹² It was at this point that the Iraqi government started considering an invasion of Kuwait. At first, it had only wanted to seize Warbah and Bubiyan islands as a means of coercing Kuwait into compliance with Iraqi demands. After Iraq's intelligence estimates in late July suggested Kuwait was weak and that the US could do little to prevent the invasion, it decided to invade all of Kuwait.¹³ With Kuwait's resources, Iraq's oil production quota would rise from 3.1 millions of barrels per day (MBD) to 4.6 MBD and, as a result, Iraq's debt would be paid off by 1995,¹⁴ shoring up the regime for years to come.

In short, to remain in power, Saddam Hussein believed it was necessary to invade Kuwait. On 2 August 1990, two Iraqi armoured divisions and a mechanized division poured into Kuwait as an Iraqi special forces division conducted a heliborne assault on key points in Kuwait City.¹⁵ Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990 posed a massive threat to international political and economic stability by threatening the availability and price of oil. While not the only American motivation to react to Iraq's actions, the issue of oil was a major concern. General Colin Powell, US Army, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), recalled an NSC meeting:

Bill Webster, the CIA Director, gave us a bleak status report. "The Iraqis," he said, "are within eight tenths of a mile of the Saudi border. If Saddam stays where he is, he'll own twenty percent of the world's oil reserves. And a few miles away he can seize another twenty percent. He'll have easy access to the sea from Kuwaiti ports. Jordan and Yemen will probably tilt toward him, and he'll be in a position to extort the others. We can expect the Arab states to start cutting deals. Iran will be at Iraq's feet. Israel will be threatened."¹⁶

By seizing Kuwait, Iraq could also manipulate the price of oil. With such economic muscle, the possibility of Iraq establishing a regional hegemony was all too real. However, economics and realpolitik were not the only motives for responding to Iraq's undisguised aggression. If there had been no response to the invasion of Kuwait, it would have set a dangerous precedent in international relations.

9. Alnasrawi, 111–12; and M. Musallam, *The Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait* (London: British Academic Press, 1996), 83–88.

10. S. Ritter, *Endgame: Solving the Iraq Problem—Once and for All* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999), 96–97.

11. Halliday, 233; and D. Yergin, *The Prize* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992), 771–72.

12. Cordesman noted that Iraq's per capita income dropped by over 50 per cent in 1990–1991, *Iranian and Iraqi Military Balance*, 41. For a detailed description of Iraq's economic decline, see E. Karsh, "Why Did Saddam Hussein Invade Kuwait," in *The Gulf Crisis: Politico-Military Implications*, CDS Paper No. 2 (London: CDS, 1990), 36–43.

13. This was revealed by Saad al-Bazzaz, Saddam Hussein's former counsellor, in R. Kéfi, "Comment Saddam s'est piégé lui-même," *Jeune Afrique*, no. 1889 (March 1997): 19–25.

14. Alnasrawi, 118.

15. A. Bin, R. Hill, and A. Jones, *Desert Storm: A Forgotten War* (London: Praeger, 1998), 24.

16. Powell, 463.

In August 1990, the Bush administration made a series of decisions that shaped the political context of the Gulf Crisis. It sought to create a broad coalition against Iraq. James Baker noted: “The strategy was to lead a global political alliance aimed at isolating Iraq. Through the use of economic sanctions, we hoped to make Saddam pay such a high price for his aggression that in time he would be forced to release his Western hostages and withdraw from Kuwait.”¹⁷ The development of a strong international coalition was fundamental to American diplomacy and action. The help of other allies, such as the UK and France, was necessary for both political and military purposes. In addition, without the support of the other Arab states in the Gulf, such as Saudi Arabia, any military effort to deal with Iraq would be futile at best. Other major powers, like the USSR and PRC, at the very least, needed to be co-opted to prevent them from interfering with any action against Iraq. At the same time, the Bush administration sought to develop a military response to Iraq’s actions, to which the UN’s authorization was beneficial.

The British government supported an invasion from the outset for a number of reasons. The British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, could draw an analogy to the Falklands War in 1982, which had significantly boosted Tory popularity in the UK. Another victory would certainly have a positive effect on sagging polls.¹⁸ The British government’s historical ties to the Gulf States also made it sensitive to their concerns.¹⁹ Mrs. Thatcher was convinced that Iraq was the aggressor, and she believed inaction would only lead to further danger.²⁰ For instance, Saddam Hussein could engage in economic blackmail.²¹ The Thatcher government was also aware of the costs of withholding support. Without British support in the Gulf, the US government might have perceived Britain as a mere consumer of security rather than as a partner in action.²² Mrs. Thatcher seized the opportunity to remind the Bush administration that Britain, and not Germany, was its best ally.²³

There were some difficulties with the control over the initial British Army contribution, the 7th Armoured Brigade. Originally placed under the tactical control of the I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF), it became part of the 1st (UK) Armoured Division under the operational control of the US Army’s VII Corps. A number of reasons contributed to this decision. These included the belief that a division would allow the British to engage in independent manoeuvre, that British credibility would be greater if the contribution was larger and that the USMC forces were going to conduct a massive and casualty-prone frontal attack against prepared defences.²⁴ The British also contributed other capabilities to the coalition that others could not. For example, the RAF had the JP-233 bomb designed to damage enemy airfields.²⁵ The Royal Navy (RN) showed itself to be more adept at dealing with the threat of naval mines than its American counterpart did.²⁶

17. Baker, 277–78.

18. J. Bulloch and H. Morris, *Saddam’s War: The Origins of the Kuwait Conflict and the International Response* (London: Faber & Faber, 1991), 23.

19. D. Keohane, “British Policy in the Conflict,” in *International Perspectives* (see Ch 3, note 40), 160–61.

20. Mrs. Thatcher was unequivocal in stating this in a meeting with President Bush in Aspen, Colorado, on August 4, 1990. See Bush and Scowcroft, 319–20.

21. Cradock, 173. This was a reference to oil.

22. Keohane, 157–58; and J. Leppgold, “Britain in Desert Storm: Most Enthusiastic Junior Partner,” in *Friends in Need: Burden Sharing in the Persian Gulf War*, eds., A. Bennett, J. Leppgold, and D. Unger (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), 74–75.

23. L. Freedman, “Alliance and the British Way,” 153–54.

24. P. De La Billière, “The Gulf Conflict: Planning and Execution,” *Royal United Services Institute Journal* 136, no. 4 (Winter 1991): 10; and L. Freedman, “Alliance and the British Way,” 155–56.

25. Freedman and Karsh, 304–5; and Sir Patrick Hine, “Introduction - The Gulf Conflict: A Command Overview,” in *Command in War: Gulf Operations*, Whitehall Paper No. 14 (London: Royal United Services Institute, 1992), 2.

26. As demonstrated by the incidents involving the USS *Tripoli* and the USS *Princeton*. See C. Craig, “The Maritime Campaign,” in *Command in War* (see Ch 4, note 25), 29–30; and US, DoD, *Conduct of the Persian Gulf War*, vol. I (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1992), 277–84, http://es.rice.edu/projects/Poli378/Gulf/gwtxt_ch6.html (accessed January 29, 2013).

The invasion of Kuwait posed serious difficulties for the French government. Iraqi oil accounted for 31 per cent of France's oil supply and 15 per cent of France's energy supply in 1990. France was also home to Europe's largest Arab population. On 2 August 1990, Iraq apparently owed France approximately 28 billion FF, 5 billion of which was to be repaid before the end of the year.²⁷ Such commercial ties to Iraq and other Middle Eastern states were powerful incentives to seek a diplomatic solution to the crisis.²⁸ The invasion and subsequent freezing of Iraqi assets severely affected French industry, such as the aerospace corporation Dassault, which meant the alienation of one of the major supporters of Iraq in France.²⁹ President Mitterrand had to maintain the public perception that his government exhausted all diplomatic efforts prior to the use of force.³⁰ Once it was clear that diplomatic efforts could not liberate Kuwait, he committed French forces to fighting as part of the coalition.³¹ Yet there were still problems. The French Defence Minister, Jean Chevènement, was the head of the Franco–Iraqi friendship society and opposed the conflict. He confined French air assets to the support of French land forces, and when the French forces moved from Saudi to American control, the French air assets were limited to targets in Kuwait. It was not until Chevènement's resignation after the air campaign began in January 1991 that French forces received permission to conduct offensive operations in Iraqi territory.³²

Any operation to liberate Kuwait required the support of the Gulf States. As Saudi Arabia was and remains the "senior" Gulf State, its cooperation was crucial. The Saudi preference was to see an Arab and/or a diplomatic solution. Both the Saudi and Egyptian governments tried to convene an Arab summit in order to reach a solution, but this failed due to widespread acceptance of the belief that no diplomatic solution would satisfy all of the interested parties,³³ and so the Saudi government threw its full support behind the coalition.³⁴ Without Saudi permission for a military presence, DESERT STORM would not have been possible.³⁵ This is an important point to note; some of the other Iraqi neighbours (i.e., Iran or Syria) were unsuitable hosts for the coalition for political reasons.

Security Council Resolution 660 and Beyond

The UNSC acted immediately after the invasion. On 2 August 1990, it passed SCR 660, which condemned the invasion and demanded that Iraq withdraw from Kuwait.³⁶ When this had no effect, four days later, the Council imposed economic sanctions on Iraq with SCR 661.³⁷ Subsequent resolutions (SCRs 665 and 670) increased the pressure on Iraq by tightening the enforcement of sanctions, establishing maritime intercept operations and declaring Iraq's legal liability for damage inflicted upon Kuwait as a result of its occupation.³⁸ These resolutions passed relatively easily through the Security Council; resolutions allowing for the use of force were more controversial, and particular Council members harboured significant concerns.

27. Twenty-eight billion French Francs is roughly equivalent to £2 billion or US\$3 billion. See Alia and Clerc, 14; and Freedman and Karsh, 114–15.

28. P. Favier and M. Martin-Roland, *La Décennie Mitterrand*, vol. 3, *Les Défis* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1996), 510; and Holworth, 176.

29. A. Darwish and G. Alexander, *Unholy Babylon* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 142–43; and Freedman and Karsh, 37.

30. Jakobsen, 65.

31. Bulloch and Morris, 17–18.

32. For details on the French military's performance and lessons learned during DESERT SHIELD / DESERT STORM, see Yost, 339–74.

33. Bin, Hill, and Jones, 27.

34. Freedman and Karsh, 95.

35. J. Record, *Hollow Victory* (London: Brassey's, 1993), 130.

36. UN, S/RES/660 (1990), August 2, 1990 in United Nations, *The United Nations in the Iraq–Kuwait Conflict, 1990–1996* (New York: United Nations Department of Public Information, 1993), 166–67.

37. UN, S/RES/661 (1990), August 6, 1990 in *United Nations and the Iraq–Kuwait Conflict*, 168–69.

38. UN, S/RES/665 (1990), August 25, 1990 in *United Nations and the Iraq–Kuwait Conflict*, 172; UN, S/RES/670 (1990), September 25, 1990, 174–75; and UN, S/RES/674 (1990), October 29, 1990 in *United Nations and the Iraq–Kuwait Conflict*, 176–77.

The Soviet government was willing to support the use of force to liberate Kuwait so long as the US was not able to reshape the Middle East as it saw fit as a result. The Soviet reaction, should it not have been sufficiently supportive, would have alienated it from the West, thus jeopardizing perestroika;³⁹ also, the nakedness of Iraq's aggression made any refusal to allow force hard to justify.⁴⁰ Mikhail Gorbachev, then the Soviet leader, proposed that any resolution allowing force contain an ultimatum (with a time frame of mid-January 1991) so that the Iraqi government could avoid war through a peaceful withdrawal.⁴¹ The Security Council wrote SCR 678 with the Soviet idea of an ultimatum in mind. Passed on 29 November 1990, the resolution was quite direct in that the Security Council (SC):

1. Demands that Iraq comply fully with resolution 660 (1990) and all subsequent relevant resolutions, and decides, while maintaining all its decisions, to allow Iraq one final opportunity, as a pause of goodwill, to do so;
2. Authorizes Member States co-operating with the Government of Kuwait, unless Iraq on or before 15 January 1991 fully implements, as set forth in paragraph 1 above, the above-mentioned resolutions, to use all necessary means to uphold and implement resolution 660 (1990) and to restore international peace and security in the area.⁴²

The language in the second paragraph was the result of a compromise between James Baker and the Soviet foreign minister, Eduard Shevardnadze.⁴³ This constrained the coalition's range of actions, as "the focus was on ensuring that means were related directly to ends so the US was not given carte blanche to pursue wider objectives."⁴⁴ The coalition could not bring about a change of regime by force without causing the collapse of the coalition's very foundation—the international consensus which led to SCRs 660 and 678. This limited the coalition's selection of objectives to the liberation of Kuwait and the destruction of Iraq's offensive military capability (consisting of its conventional mechanized forces and its arsenal of Scud missiles and other WMDs).

Sanctions, Coercion or War?

During the early days of DESERT SHIELD, with the military deployment to bolster Saudi defences against a potential Iraqi invasion, the Bush administration considered the merits of allowing sanctions to work or of using force. Sanctions were part of a gradual approach enshrined in the Charter of the UN. If UNSC authorization was required for action, then it was necessary to adhere to UN procedural guidelines.⁴⁵ Yet sanctions were slow and possibly futile. In late August 1990, President Bush came to believe the use of force was inevitable to liberate Kuwait, but at that time, this was not a politically feasible idea for public consumption.⁴⁶ Brent Scowcroft, Bush's national security advisor, also noted that most of the American objectives appeared within earlier UNSC resolutions (i.e., the liberation of Kuwait). There were some distinctly American objectives that survived the bargaining process within the Security

39. According to the *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, 11th ed., 2004, "perestroika" is defined as: "(in the former Soviet Union) the policy or practice of reforming the economic system, practised in the 1980s under Mikhail Gorbachev."

40. V. Nosenko, "Soviet Policy in the Conflict," in *International Perspectives* (see Ch 3, note 40), 140.

41. Bush and Scowcroft, 408–9.

42. UN, S/RES/678 (1990), November 29, 1990 in *United Nations and the Iraq-Kuwait Conflict*, 178.

43. Powell, 489.

44. L. Freedman, "The Theory of Limited War," in *International Perspectives* (see Ch 3, note 40), 210.

45. The Charter seems to call for a gradual escalation, running from a call by the UNSC for a solution, to an Article 39 determination of the situation, and subsequent authorization of actions under Articles 40 and 41, <http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/index.shtml> (accessed January 29, 2013).

46. Bush and Scowcroft, 353.

Council, such as the need “to reduce the Iraqi military as much as possible . . .”⁴⁷ Kuwait’s liberation was not contingent on the neutralization of an Iraqi offensive military capability. However, to provide for the future stability of the Persian Gulf, Iraq’s military had to be significantly reduced.⁴⁸ This was one of the first steps toward the post-war containment of Iraq.

This goal of reducing Iraq’s military was incompatible with the exercise of coercion, but for political reasons, the Bush administration maintained an approach that did not commit it to the use of force when neither domestic (in the form of a vote in the American Congress) nor international (in the form of a UNSC resolution) consent existed. This changed by November 1990 when it became evident that offensive operations would be necessary for the liberation of Kuwait. President Bush made it clear that the coalition was preparing for the use of force on 8 November 1990. In a news conference, he announced that the US Army’s VII Corps, one of its two corps stationed in Germany, and a number of Reserve and National Guard formations would be sent to Saudi Arabia in order to “ensure that the coalition has an adequate offensive military option.”⁴⁹ These deployments would take until mid-January 1991 to be completed.⁵⁰ The Soviet proposal for an ultimatum (proposed for inclusion in SCR 678) was compatible with American military requirements. It seemed unlikely that Iraq would invade Saudi Arabia once DESERT SHIELD began, and an American acceptance of the Soviet proposal would allow it to continue with both the diplomatic and military preparations for war.

In early January 1991, it appeared that a diplomatic solution might actually be feasible. The Iraqi government indicated that it wished to meet with members of the American government. The Bush administration was hesitant to allow this to occur, yet it also believed that the international community wanted to ensure all diplomatic efforts were exhausted before the use of force. James Baker went to Baghdad to meet with the Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister, Tariq Aziz. The meeting appeared to be nothing but an Iraqi ploy to delay the date of the ultimatum.⁵¹ War became inevitable.

Iraq’s government appeared to assume that the coalition’s members could not sustain casualties for political reasons, and they built “Fortress Kuwait” in order to make Kuwait’s liberation as costly as possible. Iraq’s military strategy was to defend its gains and to cause the attrition of coalition forces to the point where the coalition would opt to negotiate with the Iraqi government.⁵² The Iraqis did not appear to think that a left flanking manoeuvre would occur, as the main supply routes (MSRs) ran along the coast and the terrain inland was supposedly impassable. The Iraqi forces concentrated their defences against the MSRs, the bend in the Kuwaiti–Saudi border and the Iraqi pipeline to Saudi Arabia.⁵³ The vital ground for the defence of Fortress Kuwait was Kuwait City and Basra. The defensive plan consisted of three layers. First, the frontline infantry would cause the attrition of coalition mechanized/armoured spearheads and canalize them into kill zones. Second, the Iraqi Army’s mechanized forces would provide the operational reserve. Last, the Republican Guard would

47. *Ibid.*, 383.

48. R. A. Mason, “The Air War in the Gulf,” *Survival* XXXIII, no. 3 (May/June 1991): 213; and B. O’Neill and I. Kass, “The Persian Gulf War: A Political-Military Assessment,” *Comparative Strategy* 11, no. 2 (April–June 1992): 223–24. For details on the size and equipment of the Iraqi armed forces, see *Conduct of the Persian Gulf War*, vol. I, 11–15 and 97.

49. President Bush, cited in Powell, 476.

50. F. Schubert and T. Kraus, ed., *The Whirlwind War: The U.S. Army in Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM* (Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army Centre for Military History, 1995), 108.

51. Bush and Scowcroft, 441–43.

52. See Cigar, 1–12; and J. Pardew, “The Iraqi Army’s Defeat in Kuwait,” *Parameters* XXI, no. 4 (Winter 1991–92): 18. This was a crude analogy developed from limited examinations of the American experiences in Vietnam and Lebanon.

53. P. Tsouras and E. Wright, “The Ground War,” in *Military Lessons of the Gulf War*, ed. B. Watson and others (London: Greenhill, 1993), 90–91.

provide the strategic reserve and protect the approaches to Basra.⁵⁴ This strategy allowed the coalition to choose to deny the Iraqis battle until political and military preparations were complete.

The coalition was aware of the size of the Iraqi military and the danger this posed. In order to ensure victory and a minimum of casualties, the coalition's military leadership wanted to offset Iraq's numerical advantage. They believed that the coalition was outnumbered by a three-to-two ratio, but given the nature of the forces—where the combat service support forces provided a necessary yet significant portion of the numerical strength—a two-to-one ratio actually existed.⁵⁵ The Iraqi army had 36 divisions in the Kuwaiti Theatre of Operations (KTO), and the RGFC had 8 divisions in southern Iraq. Both the army and RGFC were relatively well equipped in terms of artillery, tanks and armoured fighting vehicles (AFVs).⁵⁶ The IQAF was equally large and modern.⁵⁷ Combined with Iraq's integrated air defence system (IADS), the IQAF could do a fair deal of damage to any air force conducting operations against Iraq.

At the outset of the crisis in August 1990, General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, US Army, the CINC CENTCOM, noted the potential for the renewal of the Iraqi advance and anticipated the need to present military options (including offensive operations) to President Bush. Lieutenant General Charles Horner, USAF, the CENTCOM air commander, was in Saudi Arabia overseeing the deployment of forces and could not plan any early air option. As a result, on 8 August 1990, the CINC requested that the Air Staff in Washington assist him in the preparation of such options, and that work soon began.⁵⁸ This request led to the American Air Staff's preparation of INSTANT THUNDER, a concept for an offensive air campaign against Iraq.

Colonel John Warden, USAF, a member of the Air Staff, was the primary planner of INSTANT THUNDER, and he used the plan as a vehicle to test his theory of coercion. INSTANT THUNDER met with mixed reactions. As a planning option, it was approved in principle by CINC CENTCOM and the Chairman of the JCS.⁵⁹ Later that month, a number of the Air Staff planners deployed to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, to present the plan to General Horner. Naturally, he was not pleased with a plan imposed from Washington. He rejected the plan outright but adopted certain aspects, such as direct attacks on leadership and C3I facilities.⁶⁰

The coalition opted for a sequential application of air and land power. The need to reduce friendly casualties dictated that the air assets prepare the battlefield in advance of the ground forces. It made little sense to have the coalition fight through Iraq's defences in a massive frontal assault. Even with the preparatory air and missile strikes, this option afforded the Iraqis the opportunity to counter-attack coalition forces at their weakest (after having breached the defences) with their operational and strategic reserves. Amphibious assaults were equally unsuitable due to the length of time (13–15 days) required for mine clearance and a naval preparatory bombardment, yet they were kept as a means of deception.⁶¹ Given the mobility of the coalition land forces, bypassing the majority of Iraqi defences offered the best option. With such an approach, coalition forces could strike deep into the Iraqi rear, fixing and destroying the operational and strategic reserves while cutting the lines of communication

54. Pape, *Bombing to Win*, 245–46; and Pardew, 20–23.

55. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, "Central Command Briefing," *Military Review* LXXI, no. 9 (September 1991): 96–97.

56. *Ibid.*, 100. It was estimated that Iraq had a maximum of 4,550 tanks, 2,880 APCs and 3,257 artillery pieces.

57. For details, see C. Hughes, *Achieving and Ensuring Air Dominance* (Maxwell AFB: AUP Press, 1998), 49; and Mason, "The Air War," 212.

58. R. Reynolds, *Heart of the Storm: The Genesis of the Air Campaign against Iraq* (Maxwell AFB: AUP Press, 1995), 23–27.

59. J. Winnefeld, P. Niblack, and D. Johnson, *A League of Airmen: U.S. Air Power in the Gulf War* (Santa Monica: RAND, 1994), 104.

60. Reynolds, 91–92, and 120–24.

61. *Conduct of the Persian Gulf War*, vol. I, 299.

to the Iraqi forces defending along the Kuwaiti-Saudi border. Such an attack would isolate Iraqi forces and make Kuwait's liberation much cheaper in terms of blood and treasure. This application of air and unmanned power to prepare the battlefield, followed by land forces, was the only option that would liberate Kuwait while weakening Iraq's military machine.

The plan for the liberation of Kuwait was a combination of several different land and air options. It would see a sequential application of air and land assets in a four-phased operation:

- a. **Phase I.** The strategic air and unmanned campaign to destroy Iraq's C3I networks (days 1–14);
- b. **Phase II.** The suppression of enemy air defences (SEAD) (days 12–15);
- c. **Phase III.** The preparation of the battlefield through air power (days 15–27); and
- d. **Phase IV.** The air-land battle to liberate Kuwait (days 19–32).⁶²

The air campaign (Phases I through III) was intended to prepare the way for the liberation of Kuwait by starting with a strategic focus and ending with the conduct of the air-land battle (a combination of interdiction and ground attack for the coalition's air forces). Pre-war staff work on the air campaign was devoted to planning the first 72 hours, and the remainder occurred in reaction to the changing situation.⁶³ The air campaign's objectives became a series of assessments of target sets and desired effects.

Air power's reach meant that the coalition could apply force against targets in Iraq as well as Kuwait. The coalition could apply the maximum possible amount of force in order to achieve its objectives. It would do this through attacks on systems in order to generate particular effects as opposed to a series of target sets.⁶⁴

The target set focusing on political leadership included electrical and telecommunications grids. Since the air campaign retained some of INSTANT THUNDER's concepts, direct attacks against Iraq's government were included in order to ensure that the fielded forces were isolated from the strategic decision makers and vice versa. If Iraq's forces could be isolated from their political leaders, paralysis would occur. The coalition would not have to attack directly into Fortress Kuwait and suffer significant casualties.⁶⁵ Iraq's military machine could be fixed in place and unable to withdraw without catastrophic losses once operations had begun. However, the majority of these targets were located in and around Baghdad and, therefore, were well protected by the IADS. This would place a greater emphasis on the suppression of Iraqi air defences. The target set associated with WMDs was not particularly well defined or understood in 1990–91. Events since then have thrown the depth of Iraq's efforts into sharper relief. During the war, the primary concern was to reduce Iraq's ability to deliver WMDs as opposed to their production. This concern grew as Iraq began the "Scud War" by launching conventionally armed Scud missiles at targets in Saudi Arabia and Israel.

62. *Ibid.*, 94 and 121; and R. Lewis, "JFACC [Joint Forces Air Component Command] Problems Associated with Battlefield Preparation in DESERT STORM," *Airpower Journal* VIII, no. 1 (Spring 1994): 4. "Air-land battle" refers to the American operational-level doctrine for the planning, coordination and conduct of air and land campaigns designed for use against the Warsaw Pact in Europe.

63. Winnefeld, Niblack, and Johnson, 72.

64. D. Deptula, "Parallel Warfare: What Is It? Where Did It Come From? Why Is It Important?" in *The Eagle in the Desert: Looking Back on U.S. Involvement in the Persian Gulf War*, ed. W. Head and E. Tilford (London: Praeger, 1996), 143.

65. *Ibid.*, 130.

The IADS was a centrally controlled system of radar, anti-aircraft artillery (AAA) and radar- or optically-guided surface-to-air missiles (SAMs). The latter could hit aircraft up to altitudes of 40,000 feet [12,192 metres], and some of the former would reach up to 15,000 feet [4,572 metres].⁶⁶ The combination of SAMs and AAA would force aircraft to fly at high altitude where they risked interception by the IQAF. SAMs were most lethal at medium altitudes, and AAA made low-level flying very dangerous. Central control made the tracking of targets all too easy.⁶⁷ Gaining and maintaining air supremacy was crucial to success, and as was later reported to Congress: “The Iraqi strategic IADS was one of the more important immediate target sets; before Coalition air power could exercise its full aerial bombardment potential, the effectiveness of the IQAF and ground-based air defences had to be reduced to negligible proportions.”⁶⁸ Without achieving command of the air, the IQAF could strike back, and the IADS might impose serious casualties, possibly forcing an end to hostilities.

The nature of Fortress Kuwait seemed tailor-made as a series of target sets. The terrain allowed for the easy definition of static Iraqi positions defending the Kuwaiti border, and it was soon clear that Iraq was using its best forces (the RGFC) as a strategic reserve. The coalition could therefore target the lines of communication to interdict the flow of supplies to both the RGFC and the front lines while also engaging in the attrition of Iraqi ground forces within the KTO. Such actions would mitigate the effects of Iraqi forces being willing and able to defend Fortress Kuwait.

Due to the confluence of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, southeastern Iraq can be isolated from the rest of the country through the destruction of the routes across the rivers and marshes. This limited the choice of Iraqi lines of communications and made them more vulnerable. Any route that connected into the KTO became a target with a view to isolating Iraqi ground forces, thereby reducing their will and ability to fight.

Other possible target sets included Iraq’s industries, oil and the civilian population. There was a natural tension between the need to reduce collateral damage and to ensure the generation of the desired effects. General Horner noted that they did not plan to destroy the industrial and economic targets permanently.⁶⁹ This was evidence that the coalition sought merely to liberate Kuwait and wreck Iraq’s military machine without destroying its economic fabric. Yet, there were unintended consequences of attacking targets in Iraq beyond collateral damage. The effects of the air campaign led to political complications that affected the post-war situation significantly.

Action

Phase I: C3I Networks

The air and unmanned campaign started with the emphasis on strategic and operational targets and, as the projected date for land operations came closer, became more focused on preparing the battlefield. CINC CENTCOM could start operations any time of his choosing after the expiry of the 15 January 1991 deadline; however, due to weather, the air campaign began the following day.⁷⁰ The first phase of the campaign to liberate Kuwait began with a combination of air and unmanned power attacks during the early hours of 17 January 1991. Phase I represented an attempt to isolate Iraq’s fielded forces and population from their political and military leadership. Coalition efforts focused on

66. *Conduct of the Persian Gulf War*, vol. I, 202.

67. E. Mann, *Thunder and Lightning*, 118–19.

68. *Conduct of the Persian Gulf War*, vol. I, 128.

69. Tom Clancy, *Every Man a Tiger: The Gulf War Air Campaign*, with C. Horner (New York: Putnam, 1999), 274.

70. Clancy, 333.

Iraq's electrical grid, telecommunications facilities, infrastructure, leadership as well as known nuclear, biological and chemical facilities.⁷¹ The coalition also sought to destroy the IADS communications nodes.

The strategic part of the campaign was not entirely successful. Within a week, the Iraqi electrical grid lay in ruins.⁷² Yet, while there was evidence that Iraq's C3I networks had been degraded, the Iraqi government and military were not blind.⁷³ The coalition's poor intelligence, not its air power, limited the degree of success. Identifiable target sets, such as the electrical grid and numerous oil facilities, were rendered inoperable.⁷⁴ However, the Scuds and WMD assets did not suffer the same degree of damage. Some attributed this to the decision to shift the emphasis away from the strategic campaign.⁷⁵ This is misleading, as it assumes that with greater emphasis, those strategic target sets would have seen greater damage. Post-war assessments, reinforced with data from the UN's weapons inspectors, revealed that Iraq's arsenal of WMDs was much larger than had been known at the time.⁷⁶ This suggests that greater effort would not have produced greater damage, as the coalition did not have a complete picture of the nature of those two target sets. The strategic phase of the campaign was moderately successful, but would have been more so if the coalition's intelligence picture was better. It failed to create paralysis in Iraq's offensive capabilities and, thereby, contributed to the post-war humanitarian crisis.

Phase II: Suppression of Enemy Air Defences

Phase II was achieved very quickly. General Horner claimed that the coalition achieved air superiority on the first day, and that by 20 January 1991, the IQAF had become "virtually non-existent."⁷⁷ Ten days into the campaign, General Horner declared the existence of "air supremacy."⁷⁸ The report to Congress noted: "Within hours of the start of combat operations, the IADS had been fragmented and individual air defence sectors forced into autonomous operations. Most hardened SOC [Sector Operation Centres] and IOC [Interceptor Operation Centres] were destroyed or neutralized within the first few days, markedly reducing the Iraqis' ability to co-ordinate and conduct air defence."⁷⁹ The systematic defence suppression allowed the coalition freedom of action in the middle altitudes, thus allowing the coalition's aircraft to attack from the optimal range of altitudes for weapons effectiveness.⁸⁰ The decision to attack from medium altitude was due to the threat posed by AAA and low-level SAMs. General Horner recalled that the medium-altitude SAM threat declined due to the conduct of sorties by unmanned air vehicles (UAVs) in conjunction with high-speed anti-radiation missile (HARM) armed F4-G Wild Weasel aircraft. The drones would force the Iraqi missile crews to fire, and the F4-Gs would retaliate. This tactic led to the successful degradation of Iraq's will and capability to use SAMs.⁸¹ This came at a cost. "While higher altitude deliveries clearly reduced aircraft casualties, they also caused target locating and identification problems for guided and unguided munitions and exposed unguided bombs to uncontrollable factors such as wind. Medium- and high-altitude tactics also increased the exposure of aircraft to clouds, haze, smoke and high humidity, thereby impeding

71. *Conduct of the Persian Gulf War*, vol. I, 26–27.

72. *Ibid.*; and US, DoD, *The United States Navy in DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM* (Washington, DC: Department of the Navy, 1991), 36–45.

73. D. Press, "The Myth of Air Power in the Persian Gulf War and the Future of Warfare," *International Security* 26, no. 2 (Fall 2001): 28–29.

74. US, DoD, *Operation DESERT STORM: Evaluation of the Air Campaign*, GAO/NSIAD-97-134 (Washington, DC: General Accounting Office, 1997), 30–31.

75. R. Lewis, 12.

76. *Conduct of the Persian Gulf War*, vol. I (Internet version), 44; and US, DoD, *Operation DESERT STORM*, 18.

77. C. Horner, "The Air Campaign," *Military Review* LXXI, no. 9 (September 1991): 24–25.

78. *Conduct of the Persian Gulf War*, vol. I, 166–67.

79. *Ibid.*, 168.

80. E. Luttwak, "Air Power in US Military Strategy," in *The Future of Air Power in the Aftermath of the Gulf War*, ed. R. Shultz and R. Pfaltzgraff (Maxwell AFB: AUP Press, 1992), 27–28.

81. This idea came from Brigadier General Larry "Puba" Henry, USAF, and became known as "Puba's Party." See Clancy, 350–52.

IR [Infra Red] and electro-optical (EO) sensors and laser designators for LGBs [Laser Guided Bombs].⁸² The suppression of Iraqi air defences dealt with the IADS as opposed to the low-level air defences within the Iraqi Army and RGFC. This was so effective that the evidence demonstrates that AAA and low-level SAMs, largely deployed with Iraqi land forces in Kuwait and southern Iraq, caused the majority of casualties among aircrews.⁸³

Cruise missiles, whether air- or sea-launched, struck at targets in Baghdad as well as at Iraq's electrical grid, leadership targets and the better-defended portions of the IADS.⁸⁴ F-117 Stealth aircraft also attacked targets in Baghdad. Again, UAVs acted as decoys to attract fire from Iraqi air defences, and coalition aircraft would then retaliate. This tactic was successful at suppressing Iraq's air defences and allowed for the expansion of air operations. The rest of the target sets were for manned aircraft.

The Iraqi military only made two attempts to diverge from its passive strategy. The first was the use of Scud missiles against targets in Israel and Saudi Arabia. The Iraqi military launched a series of Scuds at Tel Aviv on 18 January 1991 and continued to launch them sporadically at targets in Israel and Saudi Arabia. General Powell observed: "The Scud, a lousy military weapon, thus was proving, for the Iraqis, a useful political weapon, since the Israelis began planning to take over Scud hunting themselves."⁸⁵ Scud attacks against Israeli territory might have pushed Israel into an armed reaction, and perhaps, one not limited to dealing with the Scud sites. Such actions might have damaged the coalition-controlled warfare. To restore the sovereignty of Kuwait was acceptable to the Arab States within the coalition, but fighting jointly with Israel was another matter. The US government deployed Patriot antiballistic missiles to Israel for this reason, and there was a great deal of American diplomatic effort encouraging restraint by the Israeli government.⁸⁶

Shortly after the Scud attacks on Israel, Mikhail Gorbachev informed President Bush that the Soviet Ambassador in Baghdad was going to meet with Saddam Hussein to reach a diplomatic solution. The Soviet government believed that the Bush administration had gone beyond the remit of SCR 678 by attacking population centres in Iraq.⁸⁷ President Bush asked Gorbachev to abandon this approach, given that Iraq's attacks on Israel were making Saddam Hussein a hero in some parts of the Arab world.⁸⁸ The Soviet government seemed to believe that SCR 678 did not permit a strategic air campaign. By the time the Soviet government raised its concerns, the strategic phase of the campaign had already ended.

Phase III: Preparing the Battlefield

This phase of the campaign started in early February. The intent was to ensure the interdiction and attrition of Iraqi forces within the KTO.⁸⁹ This interdiction and attrition was the major activity for the coalition's air assets, as 71 per cent of the planned sorties and 75 per cent of the actual sorties

82. US, DoD, *Operation DESERT STORM*, 21.

83. *Ibid.*, 94–95.

84. Deptula, "Parallel Warfare," 150; and "Weapons of War," *All Hands*, Official Website of the USN, no. 892 (1991): 38 (hereafter cited as *All Hands*), <http://www.navy.mil/allhands.asp> (accessed January 29, 2013).

85. Powell, 511.

86. See M. Navias, *Saddam's Scud War and Ballistic Missile Proliferation*, CDS Paper No. 6 (London: CDS, 1991), 20–21 and 28–35; and H. Norman Schwarzkopf, *It Doesn't Take a Hero* (New York: Bantam, 1992), 433 and 482–89.

87. Bush and Scowcroft, 459–61.

88. *Ibid.*, 182.

89. This was contentious and the source of a debate. See R. Swain, "Lucky War": *Third Army in Desert Storm* (Fort Leavenworth: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1997), 139–225.

were devoted to such activities.⁹⁰ By the second week (24–30 January), the coalition began to shift its focus to interdicting the Iraqi lines of communication and supply to forces in the KTO, while beginning to prepare the battlefield.⁹¹ Such attacks limited the movements of the Iraqi operational and strategic reserves, caused desertions through constant air attack and engaged in the attrition of Iraqi heavy equipment.⁹² The preparation of the battlefield was so effective that by the start date of ground operations, the RGFC was down to 66 per cent strength, the Iraqi forces facing deployed elements of the US Army were down to 33 per cent and those facing the US Marines were down to 59 per cent strength.⁹³ Such attrition made the coalition's breaching of Iraqi defences easier and allowed the coalition to advance much faster than had been anticipated.

In mid-February, the Soviet government tried for another diplomatic solution. This created a significant problem. Competition with the Soviet Union to determine the outcome was not the coalition's goal, but the Bush administration was genuinely concerned that Saddam Hussein could embark in further military adventures if Iraqi forces withdrew without having suffered significant losses.⁹⁴ This made the Bush administration nervous, and they sought to advance the timetable for the launch of the ground offensive. The CINC stated that the 24th of February was the earliest this could occur without risking additional casualties.⁹⁵ The coalition needed Soviet political support for its legitimacy but also wanted to take steps toward a stable future in the region. Reluctantly, the Bush administration agreed to the Soviet proposal for another diplomatic effort, and added the deadline of 12:00 p.m. ([Greenwich Mean Time] GMT +0500), 23 February 1991, for an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait in the hopes that Iraqi forces would remain.⁹⁶ The Iraqi government, at that point, was making what appeared to be positive statements about withdrawal without any commitment to fulfilling that act.

There were indications that the Iraqi government knew that its defeat was inevitable. First, in late January 1991, as Iraqi Scud missiles began to land on targets in Saudi Arabia and Israel, Iraqi aircraft began to land in Iran.⁹⁷ There was also Iraq's second divergence from its passive strategy. Iraq attempted to provoke the coalition into starting a ground war by seizing the Saudi town of Khafji on 29 January 1991.⁹⁸ A mixed USMC, Saudi and Qatari force, however, quickly ejected the Iraqi forces. CINC CENTCOM later wrote that he first realized that Iraqi forces were no longer capable of contending with the pressure from the air on 15 February 1991.⁹⁹ Others, such as General Khalid of Saudi Arabia, noted that the movement of Iraqi aircraft to Iran in late January and early February indicated that the Iraqis were being beaten and, therefore, sought to deny battle.¹⁰⁰ General Schwarzkopf also recalled that the day before ground operations began, the Iraqis allegedly destroyed the desalination plant in Kuwait City, which he took as an indication that they intended to withdraw.¹⁰¹ Iraq announced its withdrawal from Kuwait on 25 February 1991, just as coalition forces struck deep into Kuwait and Iraq.

90. Winnefeld, Niblack, and Johnson, 306.

91. *Conduct of the Persian Gulf War*, vol. I, 178. Press, 27 and 30, observed that Iraqi mechanized forces could still move and were supplied, but the front lines were not, and he concluded that the idea of battlefield preparation by air failed. This is not fair, as any army will naturally apply a set of priorities to supply in order to ensure that the most valuable forces remain supplied. Interdiction did force the denial of supplies to the front lines.

92. Pape, *Bombing to Win*, 246–47 and 249.

93. R. Lewis, 7–8.

94. Bush and Scowcroft, 473.

95. Schwarzkopf, *It Doesn't Take a Hero*, 511.

96. Powell, 502–03.

97. Schwarzkopf, *It Doesn't Take a Hero*, 488–89.

98. For a detailed account, see Prince Khalid Bin Sultan, *Desert Warrior: A Personal View of the Gulf War by the Joint Forces Commander* (London: HarperCollins, 1996), 361–90. Causes for the invasion are explored in 362–64.

99. Schwarzkopf, *It Doesn't Take a Hero*, 508.

100. Khalid, 357. For numbers and dates, see Winnefeld, Niblack, and Johnson, 315.

101. Schwarzkopf, *It Doesn't Take a Hero*, 524–25.

Phase IV: Air-Land Battle

On 16 February 1991, I MEF and the Arab forces started to breach Iraq's defences in Kuwait. Meanwhile, the French Daguet Division led the US Army's XVIII Corps' attack in the west, and later that day, the US Army's VII Corps, including the 1st (UK) Armoured Division, breached the Iraqi defences.¹⁰² The focus of the aerial effort was to provide close air support to the advance, while maintaining the interdiction of the KTO and strategic attacks against Iraq.¹⁰³ Over the next two days, XVIII Corps had driven deep into Iraq and started to box the Iraqis in. VII Corps began to fight its way east, while the Arab forces and I MEF made steady progress in Kuwait.¹⁰⁴ By 27 February, the Arab forces liberated Kuwait City, and the coalition controlled southern Iraq up to the Euphrates River valley.¹⁰⁵ Offensive operations ended on 28 February on President Bush's orders.

The decision to end the war has been controversial, as the coalition did not complete the destruction of the RGFC. The eight divisions of the RGFC, serving as the strategic reserve, had not been completely committed to battle. By 27 February 1991, when the Iraqi government ordered their withdrawal, the RGFC had already lost the equivalent of five divisions.¹⁰⁶ The decision to cease offensive operations left the rump of the Guard free to defend the regime against future threats. General Schwarzkopf recalled that the Iraqis had lost forty divisions in the war, and the feeling was that the conduct of further offensive operations against Iraq could lead to a situation where casualties would be excessive and unnecessary or, worse yet, construed as a war crime.¹⁰⁷ The Iraqi government retained a means of defending itself against both its internal and external enemies.

Results

Military

The Iraqi government may have learned some lessons from DESERT STORM. First, it was unlikely that they would ever allow the coalition easy access to airheads and seaports again if they could help it. General Horner recalled that "we struggled desperately to build up our forces knowing that at any time the Iraqi Army could easily push across Saudi Arabia's border and capture not only the majority of the world's oil supply but also the air bases and ports necessary for deploying our forces. Fortunately, Saddam stayed put in Kuwait, and the rest, as they say, is history. But he and other potential aggressors learned a valuable lesson: Don't give America six months."¹⁰⁸ Similarly, the Iraqi government may have learned to attack Kuwait only if the international community was too preoccupied with other events to respond quickly or would be unlikely to agree on how to respond. Lastly, the lopsided results of the war may have actually increased the significance of WMDs as a target set. Given that the Iraqi military could not match the coalition (and particularly the American military) in conventional terms, it might wish to even the odds in future conflicts through the use of these types of weapons.

The coalition learned different lessons. The experience of the Gulf War created an artificial expectation that wars were winnable without a significant human cost. Colonel David Deptula, one of the Gulf War air planners, observed that the coalition "accomplished its stated military objectives quickly and with relatively few losses of life on both sides. In that regard, the Gulf War put a mark on

102. Schwarzkopf, "Central Command Briefing," 98–99. For a more detailed account, see *Conduct of the Persian Gulf War*, vol. I, 358–407.

103. *Conduct of the Persian Gulf War*, vol. I, 191–97.

104. Schwarzkopf, "Central Command Briefing," 99–100.

105. *Ibid.*, 100.

106. A. Cordesman, *Iraq in Crisis: A History from Desert Fox to June 1999* (Washington, DC: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 1999), 233–38.

107. Schwarzkopf, "Central Command Briefing," 1–2.

108. Charles A. Horner, "What We Should Have Learned in Desert Storm, But Didn't," *Air Force Times* 79, no. 12 (December 1996): 52, <http://www.airforce-magazine.com/MagazineArchive/Pages/1996/December%201996/1296horner.aspx> (accessed January 29, 2013).

the wall—an indelible mark—in terms of casualty tolerance”¹⁰⁹ In total, there were only 79 killed, 213 wounded, 35 missing and 9 taken prisoner.¹¹⁰ Given the size of the coalition forces, where over 500,000 people conducted offensive operations, this was remarkable. Casualties among coalition air forces were far lower than any prior estimate.

The paucity of casualties among all services was due to the technological sophistication, training and leadership of the coalition’s forces in the 1991 Gulf War and the relative lack of the same conditions in the Iraqi armed forces. Yet, there was less excitement about the training or leadership than there was about the technology employed in the Gulf. Colonel Deptula remarked: “The air campaign gave us a view of the leverage that stealth, precision, rapid and secure information transfer, ready access to accurate positional information, and other cutting-edge technological systems can provide.”¹¹¹ Precision guided munitions were the coalition’s key technological advantage. They allowed fewer aircraft to have a greater effect through increased accuracy, thereby reducing the probability of aircrew losses. The PGMs can be either air-delivered or part of an unmanned system like the T-LAM. Brigadier General Buster Glosson, USAF, one of the architects of the Gulf War air campaign, observed:

PGMs reduce the human costs of war. No one who has ever sent airmen into combat relishes the idea of their loitering over hostile territory dodging surface-to-air missiles or enemy airplanes in order to deliver their bombloads. Each Schweinfurt raid placed 3,000 airmen in harm’s way. Today, we can do the same job with just two airmen.¹¹²

As illustrated in Table 2, the perceived effectiveness of PGMs reinforced the belief that war could be cheap and risk-free.

Estimate	Loss Rate per Combat Sortie (%)
Optimal	0.5
Pessimistic	4
Severely Pessimistic	10
Reality	0.0132

Table 2. Gulf war estimates of aircrew losses¹¹³

The Gulf War showcased the advantages of advanced technology; sophisticated equipment could achieve more with a reduction in the likelihood of casualties. The DoD report to Congress on the Gulf War stated that “high-technology systems vastly increased the effectiveness of our forces. This was demonstrated dramatically by the new possibilities of what has been called the ‘military-technical revolution in warfare’”¹¹⁴ A consensus has since developed over the term “The Revolution in Military Affairs” (RMA).¹¹⁵ The RMA has been well summarized by Anthony Cordesman, who noted that:

109. Deptula, “Parallel Warfare,” 129.

110. “Desert Shield/Storm Chronology,” *All Hands*, no. 892 (Special Issue): 70.

111. Deptula, “Parallel Warfare,” 149.

112. B. Glosson, “Impact of Precision Weapons on Air Combat Operations,” *Airpower Journal* 7, no. 2 (Summer 1993): 6–7. The Schweinfurt raids were a series of daylight bombing raids conducted by over 1,000 bombers against the German town of Schweinfurt during WWII. The raids are a popular analogy within the USAF for explaining the concept of “mass.”

113. R. Hallion, *Storm over Iraq: Air Power and the Gulf War* (London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 195–96.

114. *Conduct of the Persian Gulf War*, vol. I, xii. It continued, tying the “military-technical revolution” to air power on xii–xvii.

115. “RMA” has become the term of choice in the English-speaking world, superseding terms such as “hyperwar” and “military-technical revolution.”

US planners postulate a future in which extremely advanced precision guided weapons and smart area munitions interact with greatly improved targeting capability; battle management; command, control, communications and computers; intelligence; strategic reconnaissance (C4I/SR); and battle damage assessment capabilities. They seek to create a world in which US forces can target almost instantly; kill with extreme lethality all over the battlefield during night and day; survive through stealth, maneuver, and superior ranges of engagement; and shift tactics and focus of maneuver to dominate the enemy's decision-making cycle with high speed on the basis of nearly perfect real-time battlefield awareness and battle damage assessment.¹¹⁶

One of the hallmarks of the RMA is the marriage of advanced and digitized C3I systems to PGMs. The intent of meshing these two systems is to ensure knowledge of how weapons, ideally employed from a safe distance, affect an adversary without having to be physically present. This is hardly revolutionary. Technical capacity now matches political requirements, and military actions have little risk of casualties. This is an extremely seductive form of strategic logic. Why would a government escalate to a ground war, an inherently costly and dangerous activity, when a threat or limited action will suffice?

The US government realized that to conduct operations in the Persian Gulf, it had a residual distance-time problem that required specific solutions. Instead of the costly practice of basing forces in probable theatres of operations, military power would project from Continental United States (CONUS) when so required. Political conditions would not permit a large Western land force in the Gulf after the 1991 war to support the containment of Iraq. Following the Gulf War, the American military realized that future potential adversaries were unlikely to allow time for force deployments.¹¹⁷ General Joseph Hoar, USMC, a former CINC CENTCOM, stated that CENTCOM's regional military strategy relied on strategic lift and forward presence in order to be successful.¹¹⁸ There are two means of strategic lift: air and sea. Each means of strategic lift has advantages and disadvantages. Strategic airlift is fast, but it cannot handle volume. Sealift is too slow for quick deployment to meet a crisis, but can transport both vast numbers of personnel and large tonnages of materiel.¹¹⁹ Troops are easily transportable by air, but their vehicles and the volume of supplies require sealift. This deployment conundrum, a problem of fast response needed and only slow supply available, is far from ideal in the projection of power.

To make strategic airlift a more viable solution, CENTCOM planners adopted a solution conceived originally for a war in northern Europe against the Warsaw Pact. This was the prepositioning of equipment for use by troops flown into theatre from CONUS. After the Gulf War, the American government wanted to position on land sufficient equipment to support eight to ten tactical air wings (approximately 500–650 aircraft) and two army divisions (approximately 40,000 troops) for 14 days. In addition, a series of maritime pre-positioning ships containing equipment and supplies then tied up at Diego Garcia.¹²⁰ It was stated by an unnamed DoD spokesperson late in the 1994 crisis that:

116. Cordesman, *Lessons of Desert Fox*, 2.

117. Almost all the witnesses in US stressed the requirement for a stronger capability for strategic lift. See "Implementation of Lessons Learned from the Persian Gulf Conflict," Congressional Information Service S201-12 (18 April 1994), 14, 21, 24, and 27

118. Hoar identified these in a presentation in "DoD Authorization for Appropriations for FY '94 and the Future Year's Defense Programme Part 1," Congressional Information Service S201-1 (1994), 139–40. "Strategic lift" refers to the movement of personnel and materiel from the home country to an overseas theatre of operations, in this case, from CONUS to the Persian Gulf.

119. Lieutenant General John Tillelli, Deputy Chief-of-Staff for Operations and Plans, US Army, in Congressional Information Service S201-12, 18 April 1994, 21 and 24; and Edward Warner, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy and Resources, in Congressional Information Service S201-12, 14. The major reason for this was the fact that the vast majority of personnel and equipment had deployed by sea, and it was thought future attempts would be conducted more swiftly. To use sealift under such conditions would be tantamount to committing to amphibious assaults as opposed to defensive operations on land.

120. Cordesman, *U.S. Forces in the Middle East*, 79–80; US, DoD, Department of Defense News Briefing, October 27, 1994, 4; and J. Roos, "The Power of Prepo," *Armed Forces Journal International* (June 1995): 15.

It's been the national policy going back to the Bush administration to pre-position three brigades of equipment in the area ... [W]e had about half a brigade force in Kuwait. Kuwait has agreed to allow us to put in a full brigade's worth of equipment, and they're building a new storage area for it south of Kuwait City ... Qatar is allowing us to station a brigade's worth of equipment there. We're still in negotiations with other countries in the area to come up with a site for a third brigade's worth of equipment.¹²¹

With pre-positioning of equipment, CENTCOM found the ideal solution, as it allowed forces to be quickly deployed and easily sustained. It enabled threat-based coercion involving land forces. However, even the scheme of pre-positioning left CENTCOM and the coalition with having to react to Iraq's actions.

Forward presence fell to the US Navy (USN) and/or USAF, but neither service could fulfill the role completely. The perpetual presence of a carrier group in the northern end of the Gulf also proved to be nearly impossible given its associated costs and the wide range of defence commitments. To maintain an aircraft carrier on station in the Gulf meant that a second would be en route, a third would be returning and a fourth would be in preparation. This does not include considerations for maintenance. It soon becomes obvious that with the range of potential commitments, it is impossible and foolish to maintain a carrier permanently on station. While carriers are not the only element of sea power, without aircraft, the only options for projecting power ashore are T-LAMs, naval gunfire and marines. In the case of the Gulf War, then, air power was much easier to deploy and sustain and was the ideal solution for the problem of staging future military operations. It could be present on airfields in friendly states (so long as bases existed and local states remained friendly), and other warships could launch missiles from either the Gulf or the Red Sea to deal with Iraq even when it was not possible to maintain an aircraft carrier on station in the Gulf. The USAF even began to advocate a concept along those lines known as an air expeditionary force (AEF).¹²²

Political

The Bush administration, as the core element of the coalition, was well aware that there were limits to its scope of action. International consensus and SCR 678 allowed for the use of force for the liberation of Kuwait only after all diplomatic efforts and an ultimatum failed. Despite the maintenance of an additional objective (the destruction of the Iraqi military machine), the Bush administration was aware that its position was based on an international consensus and left room for diplomatic efforts as a result. To do otherwise undermined the justification for the whole effort to liberate Kuwait. The US had to go along with last-minute attempts at diplomacy for political purposes even if it meant risking the fulfilment of a distinctly American objective.

Was the air campaign evidence of failed attempts at coercion or an attempt at control? If it was the former, then the threat of force failed to coerce Iraq, and so did the first three phases of the air campaign. The threat of an escalating cost was implicit in the somewhat ambiguous language of SCR 678, and many governments hoped that the Iraqi government would concede to the threat. Both the coalition's political and military leadership later admitted that the intended effects of the air campaign were not coercive.¹²³ The air campaign was to prepare the battlefield for the coalition land forces as well as to directly attack Iraqi infrastructure. The Iraqi strategy was to fight and impose casualties.

121. US, DoD, *Department of Defense News Briefing*, 4. This led to a report that the deal was completed on 28 October. See "More Armour in Middle East," *Financial Times*, October 28, 1994.

122. An AEF consisted of a package of aircraft (12 air superiority, 12 strike and 6 SEAD) which could be deployed to bolster the forces available to a regional CINC, thus filling the gap between one carrier group's departure and the other's arrival on station. See W. Looney, "The Air Expeditionary Force," *Airpower Journal* X, no. 4 (Winter 1996): 6–7.

123. Bush and Scowcroft, 463; and Clancy, 466–67.

The coalition's war aims also called for the reduction of Iraq's military power. The coalition sought to impose its will (i.e., the reduction of the Iraqi military machine) on Iraq to secure the future stability of the region. The air campaign was not strategic in the traditional sense, as the US government understood that air power could not achieve the desired result of the reduction of Iraqi military power in isolation, but it was of invaluable assistance. The Bush administration was insistent on achieving the liberation of Kuwait through a ground campaign. This would allow for the significant reduction of Iraq's military and would, therefore, contribute to the future stability of the Persian Gulf. American objectives left little room for coercion.

Did the military campaign fulfil the coalition's objectives? The coalition reduced Iraq's war machine to its component parts. The liberation of Iraq was not a viable objective as it did not fall within the rubric of SCR 678, and there was little desire to occupy Iraq. Many governments believed that this might lead to the destabilization of Iraq, which would lead to Iranian-inspired Shiite fundamentalism.¹²⁴ It was still necessary to keep Iraq intact to maintain the bulwark against Iran. This left the coalition with a significant problem: how to deal with Iraq with Saddam Hussein in power after the Gulf War. While the argument that the Gulf War remained unfinished may be correct, in that the regime in Iraq, personified as Saddam Hussein, failed to cooperate in its own disarmament, the critics, for their part, deliberately overlooked the central fact that the coalition's military operations were limited to political objectives. The solution was to develop and maintain a means to contain Iraq until a political solution arose.

124. Baker, 435 and 439; "Interview du ministre d'État, ministre des Affaires étrangères," M. Roland Dumas, à l'Europe 1, "La Politique Étrangère de la France: Textes et Documents (March–April 1991), 10; and Powell, 490 and 527.

Chapter 5: Political Framework to Support Triumph

The ceasefire terms for the Gulf War (issued on 3 April 1991 as SCR 687) cannot be analysed, nor can their implications be understood properly, without a brief excursion into the internal policies of Iraq, especially those towards the Shia and the Kurds. It is impossible to consider the aftermath of hostilities without examining the concurrent tensions rising over time within the coalition. The sequence of analysis is, therefore, as follows: the internal politics of Iraq; Resolution 687 and the coalition; the measures to define and maintain the (new) territorial boundaries of Kuwait; Iraqi Disarmament; reparations, sanctions and other economic issues; and Resolution 688.

The Internal Politics of Iraq

Hostilities, save perhaps where there is a situation of unconditional surrender, seldom, if ever, result in neat solutions, and after 1 April 1991, the situation was anything but neat. Saddam Hussein remained in place. Although overwhelmingly defeated militarily, he still retained sufficient manpower and, more dangerously, an arsenal of WMDs of unknown size and capability. Iraq remained a palpable threat to the security of the region, even after its defeat in the 1991 Gulf War, for four reasons.

First, due to the limitations imposed on the range of actions by the international community, there was no change of regime in Iraq. This meant that the Ba'athist regime was still intact and sought to remain so. Given that regime survival often led to external military adventures, the coalition and the international community worried about the possible continuation of that pattern of behaviour.

Second, while the Iraqi Army and Republican Guards were shadows of their former selves, they were still rather large shadows. Post-war assessments revealed that over two-thirds of Iraq's tanks, 50 per cent of its armoured personnel carriers (APCs), and 90 per cent of its artillery pieces in the KTO had been destroyed.¹ This was a far cry from the massive army of August 1990, but it still dwarfed the Kuwaiti and Saudi military establishments.

Third, the air war did not eliminate Iraq's ability to employ air power. Anthony Cordesman remarked that: "According to most estimates, Iraq retains at least 50 to 66 per cent of its pre-war anti-aircraft weapons strength."² Iraq had never attempted to defend the entirety of its airspace; instead, it defended only key locations and assets. Despite sanctions, Iraq was able to rebuild significant portions of its IADS, thus bringing it back into a semblance of an operational state.³ The air force, because of its passivity during the war, remained relatively intact in terms of equipment, as it still had between 330 and 370 combat aircraft and significant stocks of munitions.⁴

Last but not least, a threat to stability came from Iraq's WMDs. The Iraqi government demonstrated that it was capable of using its arsenal as a terror weapon against a nuclear-armed opponent. The Scuds launched during the 1991 Gulf War were thought to have conventional warheads, but under certain circumstances, the launches could have led to a more severe response.⁵ The coalition realized that its efforts were insufficient to forcibly divest Iraq of WMDs. President Bush observed:

1. Cordesman, *Iranian and Iraqi Military Balance*, 46. This was based on data from E. Cohen, ed., *Gulf War Air Power Survey, Volume 2. Operations and Effects and Effectiveness*. (Washington, DC: GPO, 1993), <http://www.stormingmedia.us/24/2479/A247972.html> (accessed January 29, 2013).

2. A. Cordesman, *Iran and Iraq: The Threat from the Northern Gulf* (Boulder: Westview, 1994), 197.

3. *Ibid.*, 216.

4. *Ibid.*, 214–15.

5. J. Record, "Defeating Desert Storm (and Why Saddam Didn't)," *Comparative Strategy* 12, no. 2 (April–June 1993), 134–35.

I think he proved to have more—I think recent history shows that he was further advanced in the nuclear field than we thought he was. I think we accurately assessed where he stood in terms of chemical. And I just am not knowledgeable on whether we were right on target or not on the biological. We knew that he'd used chemical weapons.⁶

The region would continue to be unstable so long as Saddam Hussein could menace other states with WMDs, so containment of Iraq after 1991 was seen as essential.

Iraq's military, although significantly reduced in size and capability after Operation DESERT STORM, could still pose a threat to Iraq's neighbours, particularly the oil producing states of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. To make matters worse, the Iraqi government's record of behaviour when faced with crises was far from encouraging. Saddam Hussein had demonstrated a pattern of behaviour where he sought to fend off domestic crises (and potential challenges to his rule) with military adventures in neighbouring countries. Given that Iraq was one of the world's more significant producers of oil, and might be able to manipulate the price of that commodity through control or threats to the supply of oil from the Persian Gulf, it had the capability to affect the global economy with any military adventures into Iran or the Mashreq. Yet, containment could not lead to any situation that weakened the integrity of Iraq's territory or its ability to defend itself from challenges.

Iraq did not appear to be a naturally cohesive state, as its population contained large identifiable minorities, and socio-economic status in Iraq was tied to one's ethnicity. As Saddam Hussein was a Sunni, Sunni Muslims naturally made up a disproportionate share of the Iraqi elite. The figures vary, but Iraq's population is approximately 75–80 per cent Arab, 15–20 per cent Kurd and 5 per cent Turkoman, Assyrian and others. In terms of religion, 60–65 per cent are Shiite Muslim, 32–37 per cent are Sunni Muslim and 3 per cent are Christian and others.⁷ The coalition was concerned that the Iranian government might exploit the situation by exerting influence over the Iraqi Shia.

The Iraqi government's behaviour toward particular religious and ethnic groups—that is, the Shia of southern Iraq and the Kurds of northern Iraq—merely reinforced such concerns. Iraqi depredations seemed to create a fertile environment for intrigue. The Shia were not a united group in 1990 or 1991. During the Iran–Iraq War, the vast majority of the rank and file Iraqi soldiers who fought to prevent the expansion of Iranian-style Shiite fundamentalism were Shiites. The March 1991 uprisings that followed the Gulf War in southern Iraq were inspired by the marginalization and suffering of the Iraqi people caused by the government's bellicosity as opposed to Iranian-inspired fundamentalism.⁸ While some Iraqis supported certain resistance movements from Iran, such as the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution, this support was more opportunistic than deliberate. Saddam Hussein's reaction was predictable: the Iraqi government brutally restored control over the area. Certain elements, such as the Marsh Arabs, suffered even more as Shiite resistance movements sought refuge in their traditional homelands, the vast marshes at the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.⁹ This, naturally, aroused greater interest within the UN, the coalition and the Iranian government. President Bush feared the fragmentation of Iraq, noting that:

6. Frost and Bush, 24.

7. A. Cordesman, *The Iraqi Threat after DESERT FOX* (Washington, DC: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 1999), 9.

8. Cordesman, *Iraq in Crisis*, 100–1.

9. For example, see UN, "Report on the Situation of Human Rights in Iraq Prepared by the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the Situation of Human Rights in Iraq (extract)," E/CN.4/1992/31 (February 18, 1992), 394–409.

we had a rather unanimous feeling that we did not want to see a partitioned Iraq, that we saw nothing to be gained by disturbing the balance in that part of the world by having Iraq chopped up into, say, three pieces, or having been left so they would be totally victimized by an aggressive Iran. We had a big global view of all of that, and the view was that Iraq ought not to be partitioned.¹⁰

The US, UK and France could draw parallels to post-1982 Lebanon. If Iraq fragmented, it would lead only to further complications and instability.

The Kurds of northern Iraq—like their brethren in Turkey, Iran and Syria—have suffered significantly at the hands of their government. The Kurds, an Indo-European people, have traditionally lived in the chain of hills and mountains that spreads from northeastern Syria through northern Iraq and southeastern Turkey into northwestern Iran. They are not particularly welcome in any of the four countries, and each country has had difficulties to varying degrees with its Kurdish communities.¹¹ To varying extents, the four governments played a macabre game where governments would deal harshly with their own Kurdish resistance movements while supporting Kurdish resistance movements of their neighbours. For example, the Iraqi government had provided support for the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran (KDP-I) while oppressing its own KDP. The Iranian government returned the favour by arming the PUK.

The Kurdish issue, because of its multinational dimension, became a significant factor in the coalition's dealings with Turkey. During the 1990s, the Turkish government conducted counter-insurgency operations in southeastern Turkey and sought to destroy PKK bases in northern Iraq.¹² The staging of Operations PROVIDE COMFORT and PROVIDE COMFORT II from Turkish soil made both the PUK and KDP sensitive to Turkish concerns and demands, thus guaranteeing their support against the PKK.¹³ Furthermore, Iraqi Kurdistan contained vital pipelines that led from Kirkuk, Iraq, to Turkish oil terminals on the eastern Mediterranean at Yumurtalik. Given the damage to Iraq's facilities on the Persian Gulf resulting from its two wars, the importance of Kirkuk, the northern hub for the Iraqi oil industry, ballooned. In the eyes of the Iraqi government, control of northern Iraq became synonymous with survival. The Iraqi government naturally sought to re-establish control over the north. The Kurds, therefore, became important to the coalition. This meant that the coalition had to become sensitive to Turkey's security concerns or face the consequences.

The Iraqi government, naturally, wished to remain in power after the war. An admission of defeat through the acceptance of the UN's conditions (as contained in SCR 687) would weaken its power and ultimately contribute to its demise. Iraq's military defeat did not lead to an open admission of failure from Saddam Hussein's government, and to remain in power, it had to be seen to resist. This, of course, validated the coalition's requirement to contain Iraq, as the Iraqi government sought to avoid complying with the UN's conditions as much as possible. Simultaneously, the Iraqi government sought to erode international support for the coalition and its activities. This effort succeeded partially because of declining support for forceful action due to Iraq's economic enticements for the lifting of sanctions as well as a genuine humanitarian concern for the fate of the Iraqi people. At the same time, the Iraqi government tried to provoke the coalition into action through deployments of land forces and the

10. Frost and Bush, 34–35.

11. For a brief history of the Kurds, see D. McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds* (London: Zed, 1993).

12. See: T. Arbuckle, "Stalemate in the Mountains," *Jane's International Defence Review* 30, no.1 (January 1997): 48–50; N. Mouna, "Le Kurdistan irakien demeure le théâtre des rivalités locales et régionales," *Le Monde*, October 14, 1997; and R. Scott, "Ankara's PKK Hunt Leaves Regional Conflict Cycle Intact," *Jane's Intelligence Review* 9, no. 8 (August 1997): 355–58.

13. For a detailed discussion, see B. Holt, "Military Intervention in the Kurdish Crisis (March–July 1991)" (PhD thesis, King's College London, 1998).

sporadic use of air defence assets against coalition aircraft. The coalition's response was to increase the coverage of the NFZs, to reinforce Kuwait directly with ground troops and/or to strike at Iraq for coercive purposes. The Iraqi government then appeared to concede and ceased its provocations for a time. This process, however, led many governments to reach the conclusion that the US-led coalition was overly aggressive or all too prepared to use force.

Resolution 687 and the Coalition

The coalition sought to maintain the broad international consensus over the fate of Iraq while resolving the various issues pertaining to the Gulf War. An international consensus was still needed over both the ends being sought and ways to achieve those goals. In terms of the former, the coalition and the international community needed to ensure that there was a consensus over the need to keep Iraq contained. They also needed to maintain a consensus over how this could be achieved and the potential costs of containment. Both of these meant that the coalition had to maintain its close relationship with the UN. In effect, this consensus became the coalition's centre of gravity.

Throughout March 1991, the American government tried to formulate the plan for the termination of hostilities between the coalition and Iraq, while trying to satisfy all governments concerned with the issue. During consultations about the plan for conflict termination, Russia and the PRC both "expressed strong doubts that the UN had the right to single out a country and demand its demilitarisation."¹⁴ Yet neither opposed the draft. During the debates before the vote, other UNSC members expressed their concerns. India, Ecuador and Yemen were all involved in border disputes of their own and, therefore were very wary of establishing any precedent that might eventually be used against them.¹⁵ This demonstrated the concern of a number of states over the effects of UNSC decisions on the principle of territorial sovereignty.

The Iraqi government argued with the UN and the international community while SCR 687 was being developed as a draft. Its arguments were simple: the US had overstepped its authority in demanding Iraqi disarmament, and the US had committed gross violations of international law.¹⁶ Both arguments seemed to be attempts to exploit perceived divisions within the Council, such as the Soviet or Chinese hesitance to order demilitarization. The regime of Saddam Hussein equated survival with the prevention of Iraq's disarmament.

SCR 687 was passed as a Chapter VII resolution with minimal resistance despite the concerns it raised. Only Cuba voted against it, while Ecuador and Yemen abstained.¹⁷ Its terms were: Iraqi recognition of the 1963 border with Kuwait and its demarcation, establishment of a demilitarized zone (DMZ) and the deployment of a peacekeeping mission along the DMZ, disarmament of Iraq's WMDs by a UN commission of experts, return of all Kuwaiti property by Iraq, liability of Iraq for consequences of the war and the creation of a compensation commission, continuation of sanctions (minus health supplies), repatriation of prisoners of war, and repudiation of support for terrorism.¹⁸

One should consider SCR 687 as an example of one resolution intended to address multiple concerns. This is not a criticism, but rather an observation on the sophisticated nature of the document. It launched a multitude of programmes. Some were intended to resolve grievances stated by the Iraqi

14. Citation from J. Rosen and M. Tran, "Iraqi Helicopters Free to Hit Rebels," *Guardian*, March 27, 1991.

15. S/PV.2981 in Weller ed., *Iraq and Kuwait*, 107–9 and 118.

16. C. Gray, "After the Ceasefire: Iraq, the Security Council and the Use of Force," *British Yearbook of International Law 1994* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 140–41.

17. S/PV.2981 in Weller ed., *Iraq and Kuwait*, 82.

18. UN, "Security Council Resolution 687," S/RES/687 (April 3, 1991), 193–98.

and Kuwaiti governments, and these included the United Nations Iraq–Kuwait Border Demarcation Commission (UNIKBDC) to address the border dispute, the United Nations Iraq–Kuwait Observer Mission (UNIKOM) to monitor the border and/or prevent incursions and reparations. Others, such as the United Nations Special Commission on the Disarmament of Iraq (UNSCOM), which would eliminate Iraq’s WMD capability, were preventative. A third set contained the mechanism to encourage Iraq to normalize its behaviour while also financing the other activities, which included the regime of economic sanctions.

The three coalition members referred repeatedly to the objective of normalizing Iraq’s behaviour. During the debate, Thomas Pickering, the American Permanent Representative to the UN, remarked that SCR 687 “endeavours to get at the core problems which led us into the Gulf crisis, and it shows us what must be done to lead us out.”¹⁹ It was intended to provide a diplomatic solution to the Iraq–Kuwait problem. James Baker later admitted that:

We were determined to use our victory ... to put the Iraqi regime under the intense glare of the most intrusive weapons-inspection regime ever developed, to root out every last bit of that program. We were also determined to maintain substantial economic and political sanctions against Iraq to restrict its aggressive tendencies To put Saddam Hussein in that cage, so to speak, we needed implementation of existing UN resolutions (and an additional UN resolution enacted), and we needed all our coalition partners to [do] this.²⁰

Alan Munro, then the British Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, noted that while most of the coalition governments supported the measures of SCR 687 in principle, there were certain concerns. The Arab states were uneasy about reparations; the British government worried about the arsenal of WMDs and the future of Kuwaiti sovereignty; and the French government wanted to collect its debts from Iraq.²¹ To the coalition as a whole, SCR 687 was intended to prevent future crises by diminishing Iraq’s ability to threaten Kuwait. If Saddam Hussein could not be deposed, then he would have to be contained.

Yet, SCR 687 was inherently dangerous. It seemed to be based on a tenuous assumption that the coalition and the UNSC were two entirely separate entities. Such an assumption was necessary to maintain legitimacy of action. The UNSC, despite its membership, ideally represented the international community, as opposed to the interests of three of its most influential members. Yet the US, the UK and France were members of the Council and exerted their influence over the measures contained in SCR 687 and subsequent resolutions on the Iraq–Kuwait situation. That they were able to do so relied on Russian and Chinese acquiescence and the relative lack of opposition from the other UNSC members.

Once the coalition came to be perceived as the proverbial judge (determining threats to international peace and security and authorizing the use of force) and executioner (using force), opposition began to mount. The Franco–American dispute in 2001–02 over the limits of resolutions should be seen in this light. The French government interpreted UNSC authorizations for the use of force as limited in time and space; whereas, the American government interpreted SCR 687 as being limited only by Iraq’s behaviour. The French desire for a limited interpretation was influenced by the idea that there was a need to separate the proverbial judge and executioner for the sake of credibility.

19. S/PV.2981 in Weller ed., *Iraq and Kuwait*, 113–14.

20. Baker, 441.

21. A. Munro, *An Arabian Affair: Politics and Diplomacy behind the Gulf War* (London: Brassey’s, 1996), 340.

Measures to Define and Maintain the (New) Territorial Boundaries of Kuwait

Section A of SCR 687 stated the Council's demand that Iraq and Kuwait adhere to the 1963 border agreement. The UN claimed that it sought to demarcate a theoretically existing boundary to convince certain governments that it was not setting a precedent by intruding into what were normally bilateral disputes. The Council also decided "to guarantee the inviolability of the above-mentioned international boundary ...".²² This was an unusual precedent, as the UN does not normally guarantee the borders of any state. The UN Secretariat arranged for the creation of UNIKBDC. The commission was composed of one representative from Iraq, one from Kuwait and three independent members appointed by the UN Secretary-General.²³ The Iraqi government argued that the 1963 agreement establishing the Iraqi–Kuwait border had no legal basis and, furthermore, that its representative would be outnumbered on the commission.²⁴ The Iraqi government continued to complain about the commission and, by mid-1992, stopped participating altogether, claiming "that the Commission's work was political, that the Governments of the United States and United Kingdom in particular were seeking to deprive Iraq of its rights and justify the ongoing presence in the region of military bases ...".²⁵ Despite Iraq's lack of cooperation, UNIKBDC demarcated the land boundary by the summer of 1992 and the offshore boundary by the spring of 1993. The Commission's findings were approved in SCR 833 on 27 May 1993.²⁶

Regardless of Iraq's complaints about the demarcation of the offshore boundary, it was noted that Iraq gained more territory as a result of the demarcation. As shown in Figure 1, Iraq gained the entirety of the Khawr az Zubayr, and the Khawr Abdullah was divided along its thalweg.²⁷

The transfer of territory came with problems, as it meant that:

Iraq is now required to abandon all infrastructure south of the notional de jure boundary. The implications for Iraq have been most serious in the Rumaila and Umm Qasr regions of the border, though Iraqis farming near the northern Kuwaiti strategic agricultural settlement of Abdaly will also ultimately be required to vacate their land. Kuwait has already made provisions to compensate Iraqis at Abdaly and within the southern extension of Umm Qasr for their impending removal from Kuwaiti territory.²⁸

22. S/RES/687, 195.

23. UN, "Report of the Secretary-General on Establishing an Iraq–Kuwait Boundary Demarcation Commission," S/22558 (May 2, 1991), 235–46.

24. UN, "Enclosure: Letter dated 23 April 1991 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the Secretary-General," S/22558, 237–38.

25. *United Nations and the Iraq–Kuwait Conflict*, 50.

26. UN, "Security Council Resolution Concerning the Iraq–Kuwait Boundary Demarcation Commission," S/RES/833 (May 27, 1993), 567. For the final report, see "Final Report on the Demarcation of the International Boundary between the Republic of Iraq and the State of Kuwait by the United Nations Iraq–Kuwait Boundary Demarcation Commission," S/25811 (May 21, 1993), <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/Iraq%20S25811.pdf> (accessed January 29, 2013) and addendum, S/25811/Add.1 (May 24, 1993), 540–61.

27. H. Brown.

28. R. Schofield, "The United Nations' Settlement of the Iraq–Kuwait Border, 1991–1993," *International Boundaries Research Unit Boundary and Security Bulletin* 1, no. 2 (July 1993): 78.

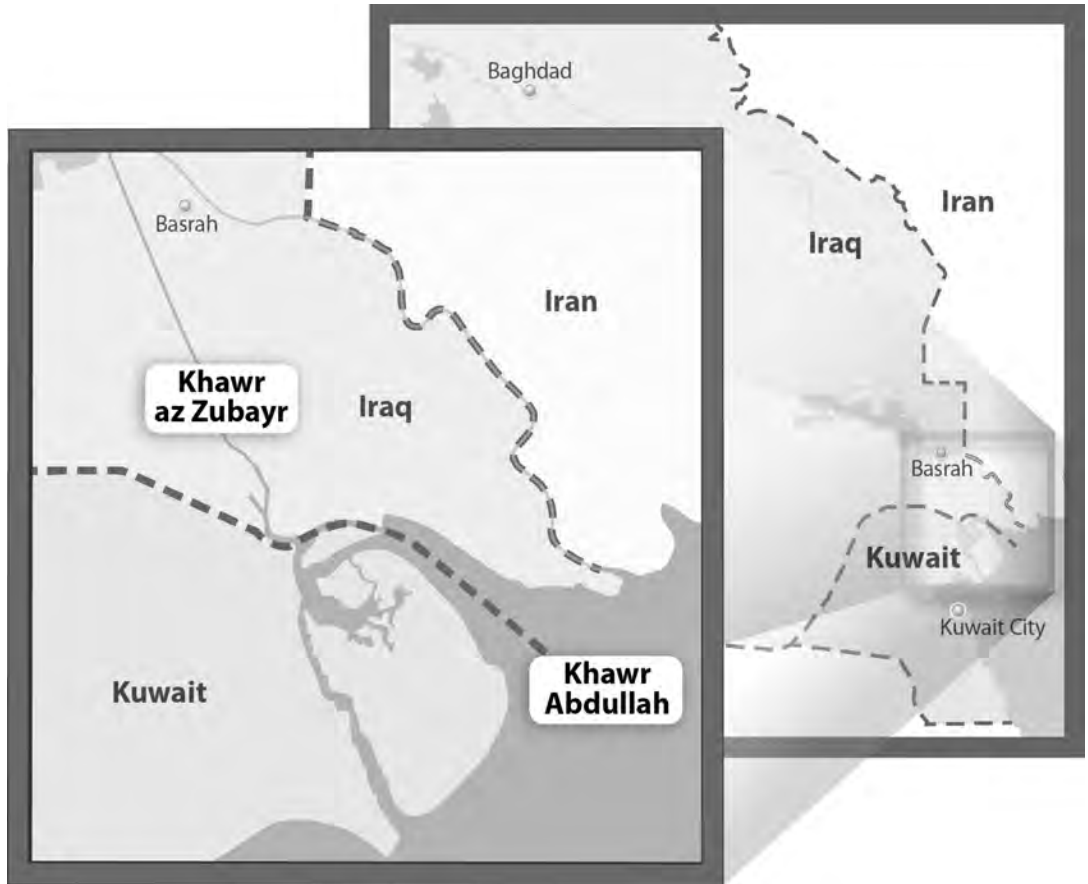


Figure 1. Demarkation of the Iraqi–Kuwait off-shore boundary

Iraq's failure to recognize Kuwait or the UNIKBDC boundary was more troubling. It was only after the deployment of coalition forces in October 1994 as part of Operation VIGILANT WARRIOR, and mediation by representatives of the Russian government, that the Iraqi government recognized Kuwait.²⁹ This brought closure to the issue of the boundary dispute. SCR 687 established a DMZ along the Iraq–Kuwait border that was 10 km deep on the Iraqi side but only 5 km on the Kuwaiti side. Security of the DMZ became the responsibility of a peacekeeping mission, the UNIKOM. The deployment of UNIKOM allowed the coalition to withdraw by disentangling Iraqi and coalition forces while also guaranteeing the security and integrity of the Iraq–Kuwait border. After August 1992, when Operation SOUTHERN WATCH began, the presence of coalition aircraft in Iraqi skies south of the 32nd parallel made the mission somewhat redundant. Despite this, it was noted that: “The primary benefit of UNIKOM is psychological, demonstrating to Kuwait the UN’s continued commitment to its security and ensuring that any attack by Iraq will inflict casualties on troops from many countries.”³⁰ UNIKOM’s major purpose was to honour the UNSC guarantee of the Iraq–Kuwait border.

29. UN, “Letter dated 13 November 1994 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq transmitting the declaration of the National Assembly (10 November 1994) and decree of the Revolutionary Command Council No. 200 (10 November 1994) affirming Iraq’s recognition of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Kuwait and of its international boundaries as endorsed by the Security Council in its resolution 833 (1993),” S/1994/1288 (November 14, 1994), 696–98.

30. “Survey of Peacekeeping Operations in the Middle East and Europe,” Congressional Information Service H382-7 (1994), 8.

Even with the presence of coalition aircraft overhead, UNIKOM faced difficulties maintaining order within the DMZ. After the January 1993 crisis, the UNSC decided to increase the size and capability of UNIKOM. Initially composed of observers, an engineering unit, a logistics unit, a hospital and observation helicopters, as a result of SCR 806, UNIKOM was to be augmented by three battalions of mechanized infantry.³¹ However, this was not to be the case, as the international community became more committed to a series of peacekeeping missions in 1992–93. International public opinion shifted its focus to the famine in Somalia and the impending war within the Yugoslav federation. The major commitments were the United Nations Somalia Operation (UNOSOM I), its successor the Unified Task Force (UNITAF) and the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in the former Yugoslavia. In October of 1993, the government of Bangladesh came forward to offer a single and unequipped infantry battalion, which the Kuwaiti government promptly equipped.³² The reinforcement of UNIKOM became nothing more than a symbolic gesture. The American government, in subsequent crises, sought to defend Kuwait with its own ground forces instead. This was part of the strategy of prepositioning materiel in the Gulf so that CONUS-based units could quickly reinforce the Joint Task Force – Southwest Asia (JTF-SWA) in order to respond to threats.

These two programmes were based on the logic of classical peacekeeping. By creating equilibrium in terms of security, the international community created the conditions so that a grievance could be resolved. UNIKOM contributed to the security of Kuwait and prevented both parties from making unintended provocations that led to escalation. UNIKBDC's contribution was to reduce the range of issues that could become a source of future conflict.

Iraqi Disarmament

Section C of SCR 687 pertained to Iraq's disarmament. The UNSC ordered the supervised destruction of any Iraqi WMDs or delivery systems by UNSCOM.³³ Rolf Ekeus, a Swedish diplomat, originally led the commission comprised of 21 experts on WMDs. UNSCOM's mission was to be conducted in three phases:

- a. **Phase 1.** Gathering and assessing information;
- b. **Phase 2.** Disposing of weapons and facilities; and
- c. **Phase 3.** Monitoring and verifying compliance.³⁴

The UN Secretariat noted that the first phase “is of crucial importance for the success of the entire operation. It requires input from both the Iraqi government and the Special Commission.”³⁵ It was intended that the Iraqi government would declare its arsenal and UNSCOM would then assess the declaration, help dispose of the weaponry and continue to monitor the situation to prevent rearmament.

The international community found that the Iraqi government was not as cooperative as had been hoped. A former spokesman for UNSCOM, Tim Trevan, noted that: “Iraq's situation was analogous to a state signing a disarmament treaty. The natural assumption in such an agreement is that the state involved intends to abide by the terms.”³⁶ Yet the Iraqi government had powerful motives not

31. UN, “Security Council Resolution Concerning UNIKOM,” S/RES/806 (February 5, 1993), 525–26.

32. UN, “Letter dated 15 October 1993 from the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council concerning the composition of UNIKOM,” S/26621 (October 24, 1993), 596.

33. S/RES/687, 195–96.

34. UN, “Report on the plan for the implementation of relevant parts of section C of Security Council resolution 687 (1991) on the conditions for a formal ceasefire in the Persian Gulf region,” S/22614 (May 17, 1991), 2–3.

35. *Ibid.*, 2.

36. T. Trevan, “UNSCOM Faces Entirely New Verification Challenges in Iraq,” *Arms Control Today* 23, no. 4 (April 1993), 11.

to cooperate and not to declare the contents and extent of its arsenal, thus making UNSCOM's job extremely difficult.³⁷ In effect, UNSCOM had to calculate what Iraq still had by comparing the Iraqi declarations with assessments of the arsenal based on calculations of what was supplied to Iraq. Due to the plan for UNSCOM's activities, false and incomplete declarations were an effective means for the Iraqi government to hinder progress, and as a result, "the Commission has been obliged to undertake a degree of forensic work which was never intended to be the case. This was derived, virtually exclusively, from Iraq's inadequate disclosures, unilateral destruction and concealment activities."³⁸ One of the key requirements for the assessment of information was the definition of elements under scrutiny in order to ensure that there were no loopholes.³⁹ The lack of Iraqi cooperation meant that it was vital for the UNSC to enforce its resolutions.

The second phase called for UNSCOM to take a supervisory role while the Iraqis carried out the actual disposal of the materiel. This came with the proviso that UNSCOM would retain the right to inspect and verify all disposals.⁴⁰ This provided another avenue for the Iraqi government to hinder UNSCOM. The third phase dealt with ensuring Iraqi compliance through monitoring and verification.

Throughout its existence, UNSCOM had been reliant on the support of the UNSC and the coalition. Despite the development of sympathies for Iraq within key UNSC members in the mid-1990s, more resolutions (see Table 3) were passed in support of UNSCOM in the latter part of the decade. This was largely due to the overt nature of Iraq's resistance during that time. Prior to that, Iraq responded more quickly to the combination of condemnation by the UNSC and overt threats made by the coalition.

The financing of UNSCOM's activities posed difficulties, and despite its importance, the UN's funding problems meant that the programme's existence was initially threatened.⁴¹ The solution to UNSCOM's financial woes imposed a cost. The P-5, with the exception of the PRC, came up with a proposal: Iraq would pay for its own disarmament. Mohammed Al Anbari, the Permanent Representative of Iraq, argued that while Iraq would willingly cooperate with the UN, it would not accede to those terms.⁴² This was decisively rejected, as SCR 699, the resolution that contained the proposal, was passed unanimously on 17 June 1991.⁴³

Iraq's and UNSCOM's perceptions of sovereignty differed significantly. SCR 687 granted UNSCOM the right to inspect any site or location in Iraq, and it was originally assumed that Iraqi declarations would serve as a guide, thereby reducing the degree of intrusiveness. However, these declarations were quickly assessed as either incomplete or as fabrications.⁴⁴ UNSCOM sought to respect legitimate concerns about Iraqi sovereignty and national security, but the Iraqi and UNSCOM

37. UN, "Letter dated 27 January 1999 From the Permanent Representatives of the Netherlands and Slovenia to the United Nations Addressed to the President of the Security Council," S/1999/94, 3, 5–6, 13 and 82–83.

38. *Ibid.*, 8.

39. The Director-General of the IAEA, "Note transmitting letter addressed to the Secretary-General under paragraph 13 of the Security Council resolution 687 (1991)," S/22615 (May 17, 1991), 254; S/RES/687, 195.

40. S/22614, 251.

41. Examples of the chronic lack of funds appear in P. Almond, "UN to Miss Deadline for Guards in Iraq," *Daily Telegraph*, June 19, 1991; H. Pick, "UN Aid 'Short Changed,'" *Guardian*, May 4, 1991; and E. Vulliamy, "UN Relief Budget is 'Wholly Inadequate,'" *Guardian*, April 30, 1991.

42. UN, "Provisional Verbatim Record of the Two Thousand, Nine Hundred and Ninety-Fourth Meeting of the United Nations Security Council," S/PV.2994 (June 17, 1991) 3; and UN, "Security Council Resolution 699," S/RES/699 (June 17, 1991), 1.

43. S/PV.2994, 11.

44. S/1999/94, 171–78.

definitions of “legitimate” varied.⁴⁵ Iraqi declarations would be as vague as possible so the Iraqi government could appear to be cooperative without actually providing sufficient or accurate information. For example, they agreed to the concept of a monitoring system but not to the system itself.⁴⁶

Date	SCR	Crisis	Details
3 April 1991	687	Termination of Gulf War	Sanctions would be lifted after Iraq eliminated its WMDs
17 June 1991	699		Plans and financial details for UNSCOM
15 August 1991	707	Incidents in June–July at Abu Gharaib and Al Fallujah	Demand for halt to all nuclear activities
11 October 1991	715		UNSC approval of monitoring plan
27 March 1996	1051		Import/export mechanism
21 June 1997	1115	Access denied to certain facilities	No review of sanctions until unconditional access granted
23 October 1997	1134	Access denied; US members of UNSCOM expelled	No review of sanctions until unconditional access granted
12 November 1997	1137	Access denied; US members of UNSCOM expelled	Travel ban imposed on Iraqi officials
2 March 1998	1154	DESERT THUNDER; Access to Presidential sites	UNSC ratification of Kofi Annan’s memorandum of understanding (MoU) of 23 February 1998
9 September 1998	1194	Iraqi refusal to cooperate with UNSCOM after 5 August 1998	No review of sanctions until cooperation restored
5 November 1998	1205	Iraqi refusal to cooperate with UNSCOM after 31 October 1998 led to Operation DESERT FOX	No review of sanctions until cooperation restored

Table 3. UNSC resolutions on UNSCOM

The Iraqi government frequently used sovereignty as the excuse for denying access to sites or documents.⁴⁷ UNSCOM members believed “if Baghdad built up a set of declarations and correspondence in which it consistently and strongly criticized the resolution and plans without ever

45. R. Butler, 88–89, 111–16, 121, 124 and 151–52; and T. Trevan, *Saddam’s Secrets: The Hunt for Iraq’s Hidden Weapons* (London: HarperCollins, 1999), 187–88.

46. See *United Nations and the Iraq–Kuwait Conflict*, 82.

47. One example of this was the standoff in September 1991 over access to government facilities in Baghdad. See UN, “Statement to the press by the President of the Security Council concerning the activities of an UNSCOM inspection team in Baghdad,” UN Press Release SC/5307-IK/61 (September 24, 1991), 319.

explicitly accepting them, it could well argue, after the lifting of the oil embargo and the sanctions, that it had never accepted the terms of monitoring as enumerated in the plans.⁴⁸ This was an attempt to politicize UNSCOM's work. Over time, those governments somewhat sympathetic to Iraq, such as the French and the Russian, began to view UNSCOM as an American tool to advance its own goals, as opposed to an international and impartial body committed to the disarmament of Iraq.⁴⁹ In addition to this, the UN Secretariat under Kofi Annan began to advance its goals from 1998 on. The Secretariat at that time believed that the main aim was to resolve the conflict and that the disarmament of Iraq was a secondary and somewhat unrelated concern.⁵⁰ This naturally encouraged Iraq to hinder UNSCOM's activities in order to break the link between the coalition and UNSCOM, which in turn normally led to the coalition threatening the use of or actually using force.⁵¹

To a limited extent, the belief that UNSCOM was an American tool was correct. There were significant links between American government agencies and UNSCOM.⁵² The Deputy Director of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) stated that: "If anything has been learned from Iraq, it is the irreplaceable value of intelligence information from a variety of sources."⁵³ UNSCOM and a number of intelligence agencies routinely shared information for mutual benefit.⁵⁴ The information provided by Iraqi defectors shared to UNSCOM was the most useful and incisive. In one example, the defection of Lieutenant-General Hussein Kamal Hassan led to the provision of a great deal of information to UNSCOM, both by the Iraqi government and the general.⁵⁵ Another form of support was imagery gathered by overflights of Iraqi territory by American U-2 spy planes with UN markings.⁵⁶ These links seemed tailor-made for Iraqi propaganda, and they sought to repeatedly discredit UNSCOM in this way.⁵⁷ However, despite the intelligence sharing and their influential position on the Security Council, the American government remained cautious in its dealings with UNSCOM. Richard Butler, Rolf Ekeus' successor as Executive Chairman, noted that while American diplomats frequently made suggestions, they never sought to alter any of his decisions even if the decisions differed from American suggestions.⁵⁸ Nonetheless, the coalition benefited from UNSCOM's work as they were able to improve their definition of Iraqi WMD assets and facilities for targeting purposes.

UNSCOM divided its activities into subject areas in order to maximize its ability to deal with the Herculean task of finding and destroying the Iraqi arsenal of WMDs. These divisions were nuclear, biological, chemical and missile systems. UNSCOM went through several stages during its operations. Its phased plan did not dictate that the entirety of Phase 1 (information gathering) had to be complete before Phase 2 (disposal) could begin. From 1991 until 1993, UNSCOM's primary focus was on the Iraqi nuclear and ballistic missile programmes. In mid-1992, UNSCOM activated its Chemical Destruction Group and began to dismantle Iraq's chemical arsenal. In late 1994, the third

48. T. Trevan, "Ongoing Monitoring and Verification in Iraq," *Arms Control Today* 24, no. 5 (May 1994): 13.

49. Ritter, 194–95.

50. R. Butler, 129–30.

51. For example, see Ritter's description of the Russian scheme for the delaying of Operation DESERT FOX on 177–78.

52. E. Lacey, "The UNSCOM Experience: Implications for U.S. Arms Control Policy," *Arms Control Today* 26, no. 8 (August 1996): 10.

53. M. Zifferero, "The IAEA: Neutralising Iraq's Nuclear Weapons Potential," *Arms Control Today* 23, no. 4 (April 1993): 10.

54. R. Butler, 66; and Trevan, *Saddam's Secrets*, 119–20.

55. As claimed by Hans Blix, the Director of the IAEA, in "Nuclear Proliferation: Learning from the Iraqi Experience," Congressional Information Service S381-20 (1991), 29–31. See UN, "Eighth report of the Secretary-General on the status of the implementation of the plan for the ongoing monitoring and verification of Iraq's compliance with relevant parts of Section C of Security Council resolution 687 (1991)," S/1995/864 (October 11, 1995), 771–92.

56. *Ibid.*, 87–88.

57. Ritter, 135–37; and *Arms Control Reporter* 1991, 453.B.116.16.

58. R. Butler, 179–80.

phase began. This was a difficult task to implement as Iraqi cooperation was limited. From that point onwards, UNSCOM's activity was focused on completing Phase 1 by verifying all the discrepancies in UNSCOM's accounting. The progress of each subject area will be discussed in turn.

Nuclear

Nuclear weapons were UNSCOM's first priority. From the outset, the Iraqi government sought to maintain as much as they could of their nuclear programme. In April 1991, the Iraqi government offered its first disclosure of information, but this was quite limited in scope. Iraq then began to try to impede or delay inspections by denying access to key facilities. The first two incidents came in June and July of 1991, when Iraqi guards delayed an inspection at the Abu Gharaib facility, while the inspection team saw unknown materiel being removed from the compound. Around the same time, a similar incident occurred at Al Fallujah.⁵⁹ This tactic continued into September 1991, but it failed to prevent the IAEA from uncovering the cache of documents about the nuclear weapons project known as Petrochemical Project 3.⁶⁰ This allowed UNSCOM and the IAEA to move more quickly, and by November of 1991, they began to transfer Iraq's nuclear material to other countries for safekeeping and destruction. This was completed by November of 1992, and they began to move into the monitoring and verification phase. After Lieutenant-General Hussein Kamel, the former head of the Ministry of Military Industrialization, defected to Jordan in August of 1995, the Iraqi government turned over a cache of documents previously hidden on a chicken farm.⁶¹ The Iraqi government claimed it discovered the documents and that any programmes aimed at developing WMDs had been a result of the General's orders as opposed to government direction. Since then, the major concern had been whether the Iraqi government had access to nuclear material with which to embark on the quest for nuclear weapons.⁶²

Biological

The possibility of an Iraqi biological arsenal troubled the coalition. Until March of 1995, the Iraqi government denied the existence of any research into biological weapons, and even then, it claimed that this was purely for defence against biological agents.⁶³ In the summer of 1995, they admitted to research in offensive weapons and provided supporting documents with the "chicken farm" disclosure. The Iraqi government provided another declaration in the summer of 1996, about which Rolf Ekeus remarked: "According to Iraqi statements, all of the bulk agent and filled munitions were unilaterally destroyed in the summer of 1991. While Iraq has provided some evidence that substantiates parts of this assertion, the commission continues to investigate the fate of all of Iraq's BW [biological weapons/warfare] capabilities."⁶⁴ Another disclosure followed in 1997, and by the summer of 1998, it had been assessed as not independently verifiable and, therefore, flawed.⁶⁵ This situation persisted into 1999. There had been major discrepancies in the accounting of growth-media and the amount of biological agents declared by Iraq.⁶⁶

59. *Arms Control Reporter* 1991, 453.B.116.3 to 453.B.116.4.

60. UN, "Note by the Secretary-General," S/1997/779 (October 8, 1997), 17. This project was the Iraqi government's way of concealing Iraq's nuclear weapons programme from the IAEA in the later 1980s.

61. UN, "Note by the Secretary-General," S/1996/848 (October 11, 1996), 12.

62. Cordesman, *Iraqi Threat*, 43.

63. UN, "Eighth report of the Secretary-General on the status of the implementation of the plan for the ongoing monitoring and verification of Iraq's compliance with relevant parts of Section C of Security Council resolution 687 (1991)," S/1995/864, 781–86.

64. R. Ekeus, "Beware Iraq's Biowar Legacy," *Jane's International Defense Review* 29, no. 6: 104.

65. UN, "Note by the Secretary-General," S/1998/920 (October 6, 1998), 10.

66. For details, see Cordesman, *Iraqi Threat*, 40.

Chemical

Iraq's early disclosures of its chemical arsenal were also weak. Its first disclosure on chemical weapons came in 1992, and other governments, such as that of Germany, provided information about what had been supplied from their companies. This supply information showed Iraq's earlier declarations to be false. Despite the lack of information, UNSCOM sought to destroy what they had already found while searching for more. Between June 1992 and April 1994, UNSCOM's Chemical Destruction Group destroyed 481,044 litres of chemical weapons and 1,040,836 kg of precursor chemicals.⁶⁷ After that point, UNSCOM's duties focused on monitoring, verifying and investigating problem areas. For example, the "chicken farm" documents revealed that Iraq had the nerve gas VX in its arsenal, and this had not been previously detected by UNSCOM.⁶⁸ In addition to this discrepancy, UNSCOM was concerned about a number of others associated with aerial and artillery munitions.

Missiles

UNSCOM's task in terms of missiles was largely one of accounting, as it needed to reconcile the number of missiles, launchers and related items that it knew had been imported against its discoveries and Iraqi declarations. Despite some concern of the potential that Iraq had successfully maintained a residual Scud force, UNSCOM was confident that it had accounted for 817 of 819 missiles.⁶⁹ However, both UNSCOM and the coalition remained concerned that Iraq was still attempting to clandestinely maintain a long-range (over 150 km) ballistic missile capability, through illicit procurement or the modification of existing systems.⁷⁰ In terms of missiles, UNSCOM's task by the late 1990s had become one of monitoring, verifying and investigating incidents. Examples included the seizure of missile parts en route to Iraq by Jordanian customs inspectors in late 1995 and the discovery of missile gyroscopes at the bottom of the Tigris River during dredging in 1996.

Amorim Report and UNMOVIC

UNSCOM's work stopped in October of 1998 due to the Iraqi government's cessation of cooperation. After a standoff in November 1998, Iraq consented to cooperate, but UNSCOM remained unsatisfied with the degree of cooperation, which led to Operation DESERT FOX. At the time of DESERT FOX, the situation was as shown in Table 4.

The major concerns at that time were the potential for significant residual biological or chemical arsenals.

Throughout 1999, UNSCOM was unable to perform its duties, and its mandate was under review by the UNSC. As a result, Iraq slipped out from under the scrutiny of the international community. That UNSCOM had achieved much of the disarmament of Iraq is less relevant than the belief that the lack of scrutiny would see an attempt to rebuild the arsenal as quickly as possible. The Security Council's members came to believe that UNSCOM could no longer carry out its mandate, but the work remained incomplete. Furthermore, they came to feel that the overall approach taken to the problem of Iraq might be part of the problem; instead of using sanctions as a means of economic coercion, it was time to use them to negotiate with Iraq.⁷¹ As a result, the Council asked the Brazilian diplomat Celso Amorim to chair three separate panels to review the ways to obtain Iraqi compliance with the Security Council's resolutions as they pertained to disarmament, humanitarian issues as well as the repatriation

67. UN, "Seventh Report of the Executive Report of UNSCOM," 656–57.

68. UN, "UNSCOM and Iraqi Chemical Weapons," 5–6.

69. D. Isby, "The Residual Iraqi Scud Force," *Jane's Intelligence Review* 7, no. 3 (March 1995): 115–17.

70. Cordesman, *Iraqi Threat*, 36–37.

71. E. Rose, "From a Punitive to a Bargaining Model of Sanctions: Lessons from Iraq," *International Studies Quarterly* 49 (2005): 459–79.

of Kuwaiti prisoners of war and property.⁷² The three panel reports came out in spring 1999, and for the purposes of this discussion, only the findings of the disarmament panel are relevant.

Arsenal	Discrepancy
Nuclear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • none, although it was still suspected that some dual-use technology and concealed programmes existed
Biological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • full, final and complete disclosure required • degree of weaponizing uncertain
Chemical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ~ 550 artillery shells (chemical weapons [CW]), ~500 R-400 aerial bombs (CW) required proof of destruction • declarations on VX questionable • production equipment declarations need verification
Missiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • up to 65 warheads (BW and conventional) missing • ~500 tonnes of propellant missing • destruction of major components questionable

Table 4. UNSCOM's assessment of the situation at the time of DESERT FOX⁷³

In the main, the Amorim panel concurred with UNSCOM's earlier findings. See Table 5 for a summary of their findings. The panel assessed that the key issue of Iraqi disarmament was one of accounting.⁷⁴ The Iraqi government's records gave lie to the concerns of its ability to rearm itself in the absence of inspections. Some mechanism was required, but it had to be sufficiently palatable to the Iraqi government to ensure its cooperation.

Arsenal	Discrepancy
Nuclear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • concerns over the lack of documentation about the nature and external support to the programme
Biological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • full, final and complete disclosure required
Chemical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • concerns over the expenditures on chemical weapons in the 1980s, the alleged loss of 550 mustard gas shells, accounting for 50 R-400 bombs, accounting of the programme to develop and weaponize VX and the accounting for production equipment
Missiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accounted for 817 of 819 missiles, all launchers for Al Hussein missiles, 9 of 10 trailers, destruction of 56 fixed launched sites, 73 to 75 of the chemical/biological warheads and 80 of the 103 warheads • concerns over the evidence to support claims of destruction of 50 conventional warheads, propellants, 7 missiles and missile parts

Table 5. Amorim report's assessment of the situation in spring 1999⁷⁵

72. UN, "Note by the President of the Security Council," S/1999/100 (January 30, 1999), 1–2.

73. *Ibid.*, 36–42; and S/1999/94, 7–234.

74. *Ibid.*, 2–6.

75. UN, "Letter dated 27 March 1999, from the Chairman of the Panels established pursuant to the Note by the President of the Security Council of 30 January 1999 (S/1999/100) addressed to the President of the Security Council," S/1999/356 (March 30, 1999), 3–7.

The Security Council reviewed the Amorim panel's recommendations over the summer and fall of 1999. It passed SCR 1284 in December, ironically almost one year to the day after Operation DESERT FOX, despite the abstentions of Russia, France, the PRC and Malaysia. This resolution established the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) that replaced UNSCOM and assumed its responsibilities.⁷⁶ Iraq, however, failed to accept the resolution.

UNMOVIC set about taking over the tasks associated with ensuring Iraqi disarmament as quickly as it could. It set about planning and staffing the new organization from the ashes of its predecessor. Hans Blix, the former head of the IAEA, became UNMOVIC's executive chairman.⁷⁷ He presided over a burgeoning organization and started trying to fill the senior staff and headquarters positions.⁷⁸ Staffing was one of the areas where UNMOVIC would differ from UNSCOM. The vast majority of its employees would be UN civil servants for the sake of impartiality.⁷⁹ The net effect of this decision was that UNMOVIC would consume intelligence product provided by the member states but would not share or confirm it. The member states were also less than forthcoming with potential UNMOVIC staff and/or training.⁸⁰ In some ways, preparing the organization was the only thing UNMOVIC could do, as the lack of Iraqi acceptance of SCR 1284 proved to be a source of significant delay.

Within 18 months, UNMOVIC began to consider other ways to carry out its functions. This included purchasing commercial overhead imagery and open-source analysis.⁸¹ Cynics might describe this as looking at Google Earth and scouring the newspapers and academic journals for anything pertaining to Iraq. This, however, is a less than charitable description. UNMOVIC was desperate to show some form of progress beyond the ability to administer itself, as the organization was subject to criticism from both those who wanted a more stringent regime of disarmament and those who wanted to see the sanctions on Iraq lifted.

Yet, it appeared that something resembling progress came about the following year. The Iraqi government began to show a desire to accept SCR 1284 in the spring of 2002.⁸² The timing was hardly coincidental; the US-led coalition's invasion of Afghanistan and the bellicose statements by the Bush administration inspired the change of heart. Talks between UNMOVIC and the Iraqi government continued over the summer concerning the contents of the Amorim report and the resolution, but there was no meaningful progress.⁸³ This would not be possible without additional pressure.

The Security Council wanted to give the Iraqi government another chance prior to the implementation of a more permanent military solution to the matter. SCR 1441 declared Iraq to

76. UN, "Resolution 1284 (1999)," S/RES/1284 (1999), 1–8.

77. UN, "First quarterly report of the Executive Chairman of the United Nations Monitoring, Verifications and Inspection Commission under paragraph 12 of Security Council resolution 1284 (1999)," Annex to "Note by the Secretary-General," S/2000/156 (June 1, 2000), 2.

78. UN, "Second quarterly report of the Executive Chairman of the United Nations Monitoring, Verifications and Inspection Commission under paragraph 12 of Security Council resolution 1284 (1999)," Annex to "Note by the Secretary-General," S/2000/835 (August 28, 2000), 3.

79. UN, "Organizational plan for the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission prepared by the Executive Chairman," S/2000/292 (April 6, 2000), 4.

80. UN, "Fourth quarterly report of the Executive Chairman of the United Nations Monitoring, Verifications and Inspection Commission under paragraph 12 of Security Council resolution 1284 (1999)," Annex to "Note by the Secretary-General," S/2001/177 (February 27, 2001), 2.

81. UN, "Sixth quarterly report of the Executive Chairman of the United Nations Monitoring, Verifications and Inspection Commission under paragraph 12 of Security Council resolution 1284 (1999)," Annex to "Note by the Secretary-General," S/2001/833 (August 30, 2001), 2–3; and UN, "Seventh quarterly report of the Executive Chairman of the United Nations Monitoring, Verifications and Inspection Commission under paragraph 12 of Security Council resolution 1284 (1999)," Annex to "Note by the Secretary-General," S/2001/1126 (November 29, 2001), 3.

82. UN, "Ninth quarterly report of the Executive Chairman of the United Nations Monitoring, Verifications and Inspection Commission under paragraph 12 of Security Council resolution 1284 (1999)," Annex to "Note by the Secretary-General," S/2002/606 (May 31, 2002), 2.

83. UN, "Tenth quarterly report of the Executive Chairman of the United Nations Monitoring, Verifications and Inspection Commission under paragraph 12 of Security Council resolution 1284 (1999)," Annex to "Note by the Secretary-General," S/2002/981 (September 3, 2002), 2–4.

be in breach but allowed a “final opportunity to comply with its disarmament obligations.”⁸⁴ This essentially forced UNMOVIC on Iraq. Not surprisingly, the government of Iraq complied within days, and UNMOVIC began to deploy personnel to carry out tasks that had been dormant for at least four years.⁸⁵ Despite all the good intentions to resolve the matter in a manner that respected Iraq’s sovereignty, even UNMOVIC was less than enthusiastic about the Iraqi government’s accounting. With the exception of some new information with regard to missiles, the Iraqi government’s accounting was still found wanting in December 2002.⁸⁶ Pleas for additional time fell on deaf ears, and the coalition sought to act regardless of international opinion.

Reparations, Sanctions and Other Economic Issues

Economic issues associated with the Iraq–Kuwait situation led to a clash of purposes within the international community. SCR 687 was intended to ensure that the disarmament occurred as a result of the non-violent means of sanctions. The resolution stated that “upon the approval by the Security Council of the program called for in paragraph 19 above and upon Council agreement that Iraq has completed all actions contemplated in paragraphs 8 to 13 above, the prohibitions against the import of commodities and products originating in Iraq and the prohibitions against financial transactions related thereto contained in resolution 661 (1990) shall have no further force or effect.”⁸⁷

In the strict interpretation, Iraq had to eliminate its WMDs, pay war reparations and comply with all previous resolutions in order to get the sanctions lifted.⁸⁸ There was a final catch-all clause, where the UNSC could “take such further steps as may be required for the implementation of the present resolution and to secure peace and security in the area.”⁸⁹ The purpose of the sanctions was to ensure that Iraq complied with the resolution in the absence of force. The Iraqi government had a dilemma: poverty with WMDs or prosperity without them. This was the proverbial stick for the reduction of the Iraqi threat to regional stability. UNSCOM, therefore, became an exercise in containment as well as disarmament.⁹⁰

Financial arrangements became a contest between justice, stability and humanitarianism. This meant a compromise was required, where compensation paid by Iraq had to be balanced against Iraq’s ability to continue to pay its debts. Requests for reparations could be made for losses pertaining to the invasion and occupation of Kuwait, for which Iraq would be held liable. A fund and a commission to administer that fund were created, and the Secretary-General was ordered to formulate a plan within 30 days.⁹¹ SCR 699 was to provide this compromise, as it stated that all concerned were to take “into account the requirements of the people of Iraq, Iraq’s payment capacity as assessed in conjunction with the international financial institutions taking into consideration external debt service, and the needs of the Iraqi economy.”⁹² The various parties could not agree on the optimal balance between compensation, debt and humanitarian needs. The US, Kuwait and other Gulf states wanted to dedicate

84. UN, “Resolution 1441 (2002),” S/RES/1441 (November 8, 2002), 3–8.

85. UN, “Eleventh quarterly report of the Executive Chairman of the United Nations Monitoring, Verifications and Inspection Commission under paragraph 12 of Security Council resolution 1284 (1999),” Annex to “Note by the Secretary-General,” S/2002/1303 (November 27, 2002).

86. UN, “Twelfth quarterly report of the Executive Chairman of the United Nations Monitoring, Verifications and Inspection Commission under paragraph 12 of Security Council resolution 1284 (1999),” Annex to “Note by the Secretary-General,” S/2003/232 (February 28, 2003), 3.

87. S/1999/94, 194 and 197.

88. The previous resolutions were SCRs 660, 661, 662, 664, 665, 667, 674, 677, 678 and 686. This really meant that Iraq had to release all foreign nationals, cease trying to change the demographic nature of Kuwait as well as return all prisoners of war and captured equipment.

89. S/RES/687, 198. This was a continuation of the original authorization for the use of force in SCR 678.

90. Ritter, 192–93.

91. *Ibid.*, 196–97.

92. *Ibid.*

40 to 50 per cent of Iraq's revenue to compensation in order to counter the UN's initial proposal to allow Iraq to sell US\$2.65 billion worth of oil in order to fund relief efforts. After some wrangling, a solution was reached; Iraq was permitted to sell US\$1.6 billion's worth of oil over six months, and 30 per cent of that revenue was to go to compensation. A far more palatable figure to the P-5 was US\$1.6 billion.⁹³ As information about the dire conditions within Iraq became available, the financial burden imposed on Iraq appeared increasingly harsh to the international community.

The three aspects of the financial arrangement—justice, stability and humanitarianism—provide a means for examining the problem of sanctions.

Justice

This aspect was dominated by two beliefs. One, sanctions would lead to a solution to the Iraq–Kuwait problem by encouraging, albeit negatively, Iraq to comply with the wishes of the international community. This belief matched the customary use of sanctions as a demonstrative means of behavioural modification. Such a belief was consistent with the notion enshrined in the UN Charter that sanctions represented an alternative to war. Although, in Chapter VII, the Charter explicitly separates the use of force from the “complete or partial interruption of economic relations and of rail, sea, air, postal, telegraphic, radio, and other means of communication, and the severance of diplomatic relations.”⁹⁴ Two, justice could only be served if the situation in Kuwait had been returned to the status quo antebellum, meaning that all property and prisoners had to be returned or reconciled. There was, however, an undertone to reparations. If Iraq had to make them, then the effects of sanctions would be exacerbated, thus leading to a further delay to Iraq's rearmament.

Stability

There were two views of stability in terms of the financial arrangements. The maintenance of sanctions after the liberation of Kuwait would guarantee the containment of Iraq in the absence of Iraqi cooperation. Sanctions, then, were employed as a means of behavioural modification with the connotation of containment. The Iraqi government could emerge from this regime of containment if it chose to disarm itself, thereby contributing to regional stability. Yet, sanctions are never completely impermeable. However, they became the central instrument of containment once it was clear that the Iraqi government would not cooperate despite its defeat in 1991.

Sanctions, however, were a double-edged sword. There was a deleterious effect on the Iraqi population, as sanctions “generally worsened the internal human rights situation, adding impoverishment, illness, and rising crime to the abuses already suffered by the population.”⁹⁵ It is no surprise that Iraq sought to mitigate the effects of sanctions on the Iraqi elite and the government. Legal measures were put in place defining profiteering as an economic crime, and a system of rationing was established. One analyst remarked that Iraq “used rationing and other command mechanisms to moderate suffering and to institute a secondary embargo against Kurdish and Shia [sic] groups in the population. Saddam protected his essential supporters in the security and intelligence services by preferential economic treatment.”⁹⁶ However, as stated, the Iraqi government also established internal blockades; for example, against Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq in October 1991, denying them any

93. S. Graham-Brown, *Sanctioning Saddam: The Politics of Intervention in Iraq* (London: Zed, 1999), 74–75 and 99–100.

94. See Article 41 of the Charter at: United Nations, “Charter of the United Nations,” United Nations, <http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter7.shtml> (accessed January 29, 2013).

95. Graham-Brown, 125. See also A. Baram, “The Effects of Iraqi Sanctions: Statistical Pitfalls and Responsibility,” *Middle East Journal* 54, no. 2 (Spring 2000): 194–223.

96. P. Taylor, “Clausewitz on Economic Sanctions: The Case of Iraq,” *Strategic Review* XXIII, no. 3 (Summer 1995): 50.

aid from the rest of Iraq.⁹⁷ This occurred at the same time as Iraqi diplomats and politicians pleaded to the international community to lift the blockade on Iraq itself.

The combined effects of sanctions and the mitigation strategies were a source of instability. While this might have contributed to an overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime, it could have also led to the Lebanonization of Iraq. If the combined effects were sufficient to break Iraq into smaller polities, some of which would be ethnically based (i.e., a Kurdistan), then the effects on the region would be severe, as neighbouring states sought either to make clients of such polities or to absorb them altogether. This would have rendered the coalition's efforts in 1990 and 1991 futile.

Humanitarianism

This was a complicating factor. The UN and the coalition had to justify the bluntness of sanctions (and the plight of the Iraqi people) to the international community. The need for justification grew over time as the effects on the Iraqi people came to light. Sanctions were an inherently blunt tool. Unfortunately, the body of law on sanctions and their effects on innocent parties is unclear.⁹⁸ By the end of the decade, many states and organizations realized that sanctions came with a human cost. Many within the international community, especially other Arab states and to a lesser extent France, expressed dismay at the plight of the Iraqi people.⁹⁹ Critics of American policy who argued that this was a by-product of the American intent to punish Iraq used Iraq's economic weakness as evidence.¹⁰⁰ This led to the perception among some governments and organizations that the sanctions were punitive, and this translated into sympathy for Iraq.

Humanitarian concerns were not addressed in SCR 687 despite the UNSC's awareness of a potential problem. National sovereignty limited the scope of the mandate, and humanitarian issues were not considered a UNSC responsibility.¹⁰¹ The UNSC sent a fact-finding team led by Martti Ahtisaari, a Finnish diplomat seconded to the UN, to Iraq in early March to assess the necessity for the provision of the relief. Ahtisaari finished his report by stating:

I, together with all my colleagues, am convinced that there needs to be a major mobilisation and movement of resources with aspects of this deep crisis in the fields of agriculture and food, water, sanitation and health. Yet the situation raises, in acute form, other questions. For it will be difficult, if not impossible, to remedy these immediate humanitarian needs without dealing with the underlying need for energy, on an equally urgent basis. The need for energy means, initially, emergency oil imports and the rapid patching up of a limited refining and electricity production capacity, with essential supplies from other countries. Otherwise, food that is imported cannot be preserved and distributed; water cannot be purified; sewage cannot be pumped away and cleansed; crops cannot be irrigated; medicaments cannot be conveyed where they are required; needs cannot even be effectively assessed. It is unmistakable that the Iraqi people may soon face a further imminent catastrophe, which could include epidemic and famine, if massive life-supporting needs are not rapidly met. The long summer, with its often 45 or even 50 degree temperatures (113–122 degrees Fahrenheit), is only weeks away. Time is short.¹⁰²

97. E/CN.4/1992/31, 401 and 404–5.

98. Graham-Brown, 91.

99. For example, see E. Rouleau, "America's Unyielding Policy towards Iraq," *Foreign Affairs* 74, no. 1 (January–February 1995): 59–72. For details, see Graham-Brown, 315–19.

100. For example, see G. Simons, *The Scourging of Iraq* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1996).

101. They fell under the purview of the UN General Assembly and other parts of the UN bureaucracy.

102. UN, "Report on humanitarian needs in Iraq in the immediate post-crisis environment by a mission to the area led by the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management (extract) (10–17 March 1991)," 188.

This report caused the sanctions committee to allow foodstuffs to enter Iraq as of 22 March 1991.¹⁰³ A complete lifting of sanctions would leave the UNSC without a means of containing Iraq.

Selective sanctions were not easy to apply because of the dual-use problem. Given that the fabrication and maintenance of WMDs requires a significant amount of material that could equally be used for industrial and medicinal purposes, to allow such goods to enter Iraq risked undermining disarmament efforts. Humanitarian and political concerns were, therefore, juxtaposed, and the international community opted initially to maintain sanctions as a means of containment.

Striking a balance between maintaining the stick of sanctions and the need to preserve Iraq's economic health for humanitarian and realpolitik reasons was far from easy. As early as 1995, as UNSCOM and the IAEA made some progress, the Security Council began to consider means of allowing peaceful items related to nuclear technology into Iraq.¹⁰⁴ The Sanctions Committee, the UN body that reviewed all applications for the import into or export of goods from Iraq, also defined some types of goods as essential humanitarian items (such as medicines, foods and other humanitarian necessities) and exempted them from import-export applications.¹⁰⁵ Such measures, however, failed to mollify critics of Iraq's sanctions.

The maintenance of sanctions after the 1991 Gulf War contributed to the development of a new perception of sanctions. Some, most notably among opponents of the coalition's policy, perceived sanctions as a form of warfare as opposed to an alternative to war.¹⁰⁶ That this expanded the definition of war to include non-violent means was irrelevant. This was a political problem, as it highlighted the plight of the average Iraqi as a victim of the coalition's efforts against the Iraqi government and exposed the coalition's political weakness in that containment cost lives.

The UN, aware of the bluntness of the sanctions, sought to provide relief for Iraq's population. The requirement for international consensus meant that the coalition would be sensitive to this issue. The intended target of sanctions was the leadership of Iraq and not the population. The solution was to generate funds for Iraq as well as for the UN by exporting fixed amounts of Iraq's main commodity—oil. In SCR 706, the UNSC authorized the sale of US\$1.6 billion of oil every six months. The revenue would be transferred into an escrow account, where one-third went to compensation, one-third to funding UNSCOM and the last third would go towards aid for Iraq.¹⁰⁷ This was an attempt to balance the competing demands on the finances as well as provide the Iraqi government with an incentive to cooperate.

The modalities for the oil sales and the distribution of aid were approved in SCR 712. Oil sales were to be supervised by the UN, and the oil would be transferred via the Kirkuk–Yumurtaalik pipeline. The UN would supervise the distribution of aid by the Iraqi government.¹⁰⁸ This would provide a mechanism for ensuring that funds intended for aid were not diverted to arms. Iraq consistently refused to abide by the agreement. In 1995, the UN tried to make the deal more enticing by raising the oil sales to US\$1 billion every 90 days. Tied to this was the transfer of responsibility to the UN

103. UN, "Decision of the Security Council Sanctions Committee regarding humanitarian assistance to Iraq," 188–89.

104. UN, "Letter dated 26 August 1996 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established by Resolution 661 (1990) Concerning the Situation Between Iraq and Kuwait Addressed to the President of the Security Council," S/1996/700 (August 26, 1996), 9.

105. S/1996/700, 11.

106. For a critical perspective, see Simons. For a less critical examination, see Taylor, 49–58.

107. UN, "Security Council resolution authorizing the import of oil products originating from Iraq for a six-month period in order to finance United Nations operations mandated by Security Council resolution 687 (1991)," S/RES/706 (August 15, 1991), 285–86.

108. UN, "Security Council resolution confirming the \$1.6 billion ceiling for Iraqi oil sales and authorizing the release of funds to meet Iraq's essential civilian needs," S/RES/712 (September 19, 1991), 308–9.

for the distribution of aid in northern Iraq.¹⁰⁹ The Iraqi government rejected this plan as an abrogation of Iraqi sovereignty.¹¹⁰ Talks continued throughout 1995 and 1996, but the main obstacle was the distribution of aid in northern Iraq.¹¹¹ The Iraqi government accepted the deal in May of 1996 after it was allowed to control the distribution of aid.¹¹² The American government became concerned that the Iraqi government would only provide aid to its supporters.¹¹³ Due to the Iraqi incursion into Iraqi Kurdistan in August 1996, the deal was shelved until a new agreement was reached between the UN and the Iraqi government that November.¹¹⁴ On 10 December 1996, as Iraqis rejoiced, oil began flowing through the Kirkuk–Yumurtalik pipeline.¹¹⁵

The deal was not a panacea. First, the pipeline passed through northern Iraq and right through the Kurdish Civil War between the KDP and the PUK.¹¹⁶ A drop in the price of oil reduced the revenue available to Iraq in late 1997, and the UN Secretariat used the deal as a bargaining chip in February 1998 to avoid a prolonged conflict.¹¹⁷ The US also began to use the deal as a bargaining chip in 1999 in the wake of DESERT FOX. As opposition to sanctions mounted, the American government proposed additional benefits under the deal, such as automatic approval of food or medicine purchases and a review of contracts to support Iraq's oil industry, as a counter to French proposals to replace UNSCOM.¹¹⁸ The situation remained largely the same as prior to DESERT FOX, when sanctions and the oil-for-food deal were maintained.

By early 1999, it seemed that the coalition had lost international support over sanctions and humanitarian issues. Other P-5 states, such as Russia and the PRC, began to question the value of sanctions in 1993 and 1994. There was even less support for maintaining sanctions after DESERT FOX. On 12 January 1999, the P-5 members met to discuss means of completing UNSCOM's tasks. The French government offered a solution that would ease sanctions and inspections, and the American government reiterated that "any change in the sanctions regime that says that Iraq has met its disarmament requirements is unacceptable."¹¹⁹ At that time, the Russian government sought to dissolve UNSCOM and allow other organizations to complete the task. Within months, the US and UK were faced with opposition from the other three P-5 states. The French, Chinese and Russian governments intended to lift sanctions once a new inspection regime began to show results.¹²⁰ This represented a change within the international community; the punitive approach had failed to obtain the desired level of compliance over the long term. Economic sticks therefore had to be complemented with some carrots.¹²¹ Yet without the stick of sanctions, Iraq would be free to generate and spend revenue as its government saw fit.

109. UN, "Security Council Resolution Concerning Sales of Iraqi Petroleum and Petroleum Products," S/RES/986 (April 14, 1995), 754–56.

110. UN, "Letter dated 1 June 1995 from the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council concerning resolution 986," S/1995/495 (June 19, 1995), 757.

111. M. Littlejohns, "UN, Iraq Nearer to Oil Export Deal," *Financial Times*, March 19, 1996; and "3rd Round of UN-Iraq Talks Is Set," *International Herald Tribune*, March 19, 1996.

112. B. Crossette, "Accord Reached by Iraq and U.N. for Oil Exports," *New York Times*, May 21, 1996.

113. US, Department of State, Daily Press Briefing, July 1, 1996; and Department of State Daily Press Briefing, July 2, 1996.

114. B. Crossette, "Iraq and U.N. Make Deal on Oil Sales for Aid," *New York Times*, November 26, 1996.

115. J. Bone, "UN Authorizes 'Oil for Food' Deal," *Times*, December 10, 1996.

116. See: "Rival Kurds Threaten Iraqi Oil Deal as Relief Arrives for Desperate People," *Guardian*, April 28, 1997.

117. UN, "Security Council Authorizes Sales of Iraq Oil to Offset Shortfall in Revenues Resulting from Delay in Oil Sales, Drop in Oil Prices," UN Press Release (SC/6492), March 25, 1998.

118. Cordesman, *Iraq in Crisis*, 76–77.

119. Citation from speech by Ambassador Peter Burleigh, Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations, cited in Cordesman, *Iraq in Crisis*, 73–75.

120. Cordesman, *Iraq in Crisis*, 163.

121. For a succinct description of this change, see Rose.

Resolution 688

The UN and coalition had created a complex web of programmes in order to achieve their goals. Most of the goals were shared between the two bodies, but the coalition's major contributions had been military operations. Still, the necessity to work together in support of shared objectives led to the perception within the international community that there was a lack of separation between the coalition and the UN.

While the sanctions had been a major contributor to Iraqi gains in the war of perceptions, UNSCOM had been the programme that led to the use of force most frequently. As the means for the attainment of regional stability, UNSCOM had been perceived as the most important and had received the greatest degree of political and military support.

Yet it was a humanitarian concern that allowed the coalition to maintain a military presence in the Gulf region after the Gulf War. This manifested itself in SCR 688, which blurred the traditional views of humanitarian issues and state security. This resolution was also important because it afforded the coalition a political opportunity to intervene, at least in some fashion, into Iraq's domestic affairs. At the same time, it limited the coalition by recognizing that Iraq had legitimate concerns about its own sovereignty.

SCR 688 was a reaction to the effects of Iraq's counter-insurgency in March–April 1991 against the Kurds. The opinions of the various UNSC members about the refugee crisis created by the counter-insurgency significantly influenced the debate over the draft resolution. This debate revealed a new view of international crises: the movement of refugees across international borders could threaten international peace and security.¹²² The UNSC was concerned about how events in Iraq impacted on Iran and Turkey. The Turkish representative pointed out that “in their attempt to put down the various insurgencies in that country the Iraqi armed forces have attacked cities and other localities with helicopters, tanks and artillery. This indiscriminate use of firepower has caused the inhabitants of the localities under attack to flee for their safety. Whole cities stand deserted as a consequence of these actions.”¹²³ As a result, he argued, the movement of refugees was a greater threat to peace and security than the counter-insurgency.

This led to a situation where the debate juxtaposed the concerns over the fate of Iraq's minorities and those over the fate of Iraq's sovereignty. The Romanian representative observed that this was a problem that pertained to the contents of Paragraph 7 of Article 2 of the UN Charter.¹²⁴ This paragraph reads:

Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorise the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter; but this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII.¹²⁵

In essence, the UNSC would have to ensure that the matter posed a threat so grievous to international security as to merit its attention. The Turkish and Iranian governments argued that the effects of the Iraqi government's efforts to reassert control destabilized their states and that Iraqi sovereignty should be less of a concern as a result. While a crude numerical argument, it was consistent with the philosophical basis of the Charter of the United Nations regarding collective security.

122. I. Johnstone, *Aftermath of the Gulf War: An Assessment of UN Action* (London: Lynne Rienner, 1994), 19–23.

123. UN, “Provisional Verbatim Record of the Two Thousand, Nine Hundred and Eighty Second Meeting of the United Nations Security Council,” S/PV.2982 (April 5, 1991), 4–5.

124. S/PV.2982, 23.

125. Paragraph 7, Article 2 of “The Charter of the United Nations,” in *Basic Documents of the United Nations*, ed., L. Sohn, (London: Stevens and Sons Limited, 1956), 3.

Not every member of the UNSC shared this perception. Some were concerned that this was a cynical attempt at interference. The Yemeni representative argued that the draft “attempts to politicize the humanitarian issue.”¹²⁶ The vote showed that the majority of the Council did not share this perception. Cuba, Yemen and Zimbabwe voted against the draft, and India and the PRC abstained, so the draft became Resolution 688.¹²⁷ However, this does not necessarily imply that the remainder of the UNSC supported the idea of authorizing a forceful humanitarian intervention.

SCR 688 was inherently weak. In order to see the resolution passed by the Council, or at the very least, not vetoed by any of the P-5, it had to be sufficiently acceptable to each. The first two paragraphs identified the nature of the problem that led to the resolution:

The Security Council,

1. Condemns the repression of the Iraqi civilian population in many parts of Iraq, including most recently in Kurdish populated areas, the consequences of which threaten international peace and security in the region;
2. Demands that Iraq, as a contribution to remove the threat to international peace and security in the region, immediately end this repression.¹²⁸

The resolution was not identified as falling under Chapter VI or VII, and therefore, no actions were required. As such, it did not override Article 2(7), which meant the UN could not intervene without the permission of the Iraqi government. Yet, at the same time, the resolution identified the cause of the crisis and demanded that Iraq cease and desist. This led to the belief that SCR 688 was a hallmark of the New World Order. This belief was most prevalent in France, where people hailed this as a victory for the humanitarian cause. It was seen as the emergence of a new international norm.¹²⁹ Yet, all Resolution 688 demanded was that the UN be given access to Iraq for humanitarian purposes, and it made an appeal for all member states to assist.¹³⁰ Russia or, more likely, the PRC, would have vetoed any draft that proposed more intrusive actions. The nature of the situation led to a desire to solve the problem on Iraqi territory, so as to minimize the collateral damage to its neighbours.

In the eyes of the coalition governments, SCR 688 provided the legal justification for subsequent operations in northern Iraq. There were some problems with this claim. As the resolution failed to invoke either Chapter VI or VII of the Charter, the basis for the operation was legally flawed.¹³¹ Also, SCR 688 lacked a means of enforcement;¹³² it merely asked that Iraq cease acting in a repressive manner.

The major objections to SCR 688 were based on the belief that the resolution placed dangerous limits on the concept of state sovereignty. The resolution did contain the demand for Iraq to “allow immediate access by international humanitarian organizations to all those in need of assistance in all

126. S/PV.2982, 27.

127. *Ibid.*, 52.

128. Paragraphs 1–2, Security Council Resolution 688, S/RES/688 (April 5, 1991), 1.

129. See “Interview Accordée Par M. Roland Dumas, Ministre d’État, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères À RTL,” 6 April 1991, French Foreign Ministry Press Release; “Le Droit D’Ingérence Pour Raison Humanitaire,” *Défense Nationale* (June 1991), 157–58; P. Defarges, “Assistance Politique, ingérence humanitaire,” *Défense Nationale* (February 1993), 65–72; and M. Weller, “New York Resolution Opens Way for Use of Force,” *Times*, April 10, 1991.

130. Paragraphs 3–6, S/RES/688, 1–2.

131. David Scheffer from the Carnegie Endowment for Peace made this observation in “The Middle East,” Congressional Information Service S381-41 (1991), 163.

132. Holt, 184.

parts of Iraq and make available all necessary facilities for their operations.”¹³³ This was an implicit recognition of Iraqi sovereignty whereby aid organizations had to be granted permission by the Iraqi government to enter Iraq for the purposes of relief.

Yet, it seemed that the coalition’s military forces were not required to ask permission to enter Iraqi territory. The international community tolerated this as a matter of fact as the coalition’s military operations were consistent with SCR 688. This resolution provided a political justification for operations such as PROVIDE COMFORT II and SOUTHERN WATCH, which enabled operations intended for the coercion of Iraq such as VIGILANT WARRIOR and DESERT FOX. The same aircraft and naval vessels present in the region acting consistently with SCR 688 were also called upon to coerce Iraq into compliance with SCR 687, particularly those provisions pertaining to UNSCOM. SCR 688 allowed the coalition to justify its presence, but coalition actions were justified by an extrapolation of SCR 687. This created another contradiction in the coalition’s justifications for action and contributed to the eventual loss of international consensus.

133. *United Nations and the Iraq-Kuwait Conflict*, 199.

Chapter 6: Operations PROVIDE COMFORT / PROVIDE COMFORT II

The Iraqi counter-insurgency operations in both northern and southern Iraq in late March 1991 created a refugee crisis in which the coalition, by early April, could not avoid becoming involved. It launched Operation PROVIDE COMFORT in order to allow for the relief and repatriation of the Iraqi Kurds from southeastern Turkey to northern Iraq. Air power was employed to provide security in support of the repatriation efforts. Operation PROVIDE COMFORT II followed the repatriation, and air power was used to provide security for the Iraqi Kurds. This, however, was limited due to a number of political considerations that constrained the coalition's range of actions. See Table 6 for the chronology of events that led up to Operation PROVIDE COMFORT II.

Date	Event
Early March 1991	Rebellions against the Iraqi government occurred in southern Iraq, and the Kurds rebelled against the Iraqi government soon after.
Mid-March 1991	The Iraqi government began counter-insurgency operations and restored its control over southern Iraq.
Late March 1991	The Iraqi government commenced counter-insurgency in northern Iraq, causing the Kurds to flee into southeastern Turkey and northwestern Iran.
3 April 1991	The UNSC passed SCR 687.
5 April 1991	The UNSC passed SCR 688.
7 April 1991	Coalition forces began the air delivery of relief supplies.
11 April 1991	The Bush administration announced the imposition of an NFZ north of the 36 th parallel.
18 April 1991	The UN and Iraq signed an MoU on humanitarian operations in Iraq.
20 April 1991	Coalition ground forces moved into northern Iraq.
16 May 1991	The Iraqi government agreed to the deployment of UN security guards in northern Iraq.
15 July 1991	The coalition withdrew its ground forces from northern Iraq. Operation PROVIDE COMFORT II began.

Table 6. Chronology of events leading to Operation PROVIDE COMFORT II

The Iraqi counter-insurgency and subsequent refugee crisis in Turkey seemed to threaten regional stability. Public awareness of the crisis within the West also led to pressure encouraging action. There were also rumours and allegations that Iraqi government forces had been using illicit means in the conduct of their counter-insurgency. In addition, a human bow wave of refugees deluged some of Iraq's neighbours and the coalition's allies.

In March 1991, as the remnants of the defeated Iraqi army moved wearily back into Iraq, it brought with it a tremendous sense of dissatisfaction. This soon turned to violence against the central government. The Shiites of southern Iraq readily joined in to rebel against the government that had brought them nothing but war and misery for over a decade. The Kurds in northern Iraq also took up arms against the Iraqi government. Saddam Hussein's regime appeared to be teetering on the brink.

He, however, was not prepared to give up without a fight. Those RGFC and army units remaining loyal to the government brutally imposed order on and reassumed control of southern Iraq. Their victory over the rebels in southern Iraq in mid-March 1991 led to refugees streaming into the coalition-held zone in southern Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia as well as into Iran.¹ After having dealt with the southern rebellion, the RGFC moved north to deal with the Kurds. By late March, the Kurdish rebels were preparing to defend key cities such as Kirkuk.² Despite the defensive attempts, the rebellion in northern Iraq was crushed by early April 1991, and countless Kurdish refugees fled to Turkey and Iran.³

The Iraqi government, contrary to the terms of earlier negotiations with the coalition, employed helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft in order to restore order. Under the 2 March 1991 agreement signed at Safwan, Iraq, between the military leaders of the coalition and the Iraqis, the latter were forbidden to fly fixed-wing aircraft.⁴ The Iraqis, during the meeting, asked the CINC for permission to fly helicopters in order to assist government officials in administering the post-war reconstruction efforts, as the air campaign had damaged Iraq's transport networks.⁵ This seemed to be an innocuous and legitimate request. Soon after, allegations surfaced that helicopters were used to employ chemical weapons or acid against insurgents.⁶ There was sufficient evidence for the coalition that the Iraqis had been using helicopters as weapons platforms, thus presenting a slim advantage to the government's forces. General Schwarzkopf commented that "to judge from intelligence reports we received at Central Command, grounding the Iraqi helicopter gunships would have little impact. The tanks and artillery of the twenty-four Iraqi divisions that never entered the Iraqi war zone were having a far more devastating effect on the insurgents."⁷

Nonetheless, without the use of helicopters, the Iraqi military had less of an advantage over the insurgents and the misuse of helicopters could be monitored and curtailed as necessary. Yet these were not the only Iraqi air assets used to counter the insurgencies. Two IQAF Su-22 ground-attack aircraft were also shot down by American warplanes in late March.⁸ This showed that even after the 1991 Gulf War, the IQAF was willing to risk its limited number of airframes to support the government.

The consequences of Iraq's counter-insurgency went beyond the mere prospect of Saddam Hussein remaining in power. Both Turkey and Iran ended up with large numbers of refugees in their territories.⁹ It should be noted that refugees were also entering Saudi Arabia, but the coalition's presence and the Saudi government's reaction prevented a political crisis. The same could not be said of all of Iraq's neighbours. The Turkish Permanent Representative to the UN, M. Aksin, wrote on 2 April that:

1. For examples, see K. Fletcher, "Thousands Flee as Saddam Tightens Grip on the South," *Daily Telegraph*, March 28, 1991; E. Schmitt, "Displaced Iraqi Streaming Into Allied-Held Zone," *New York Times*, March 22, 1991; and P. Tyler, "U.S. Says Hussein Is Near a Victory over Shiite Rebels," *New York Times*, March 26, 1991.

2. M. Woolcott, "Kurd Guerrillas Brace to Defend Key Oil City," *Guardian*, March 28, 1991.

3. J. Flint, "Kurds Flee in 100-mile Caravan," *Observer*, March 31, 1991.

4. P. de la Billière, *Storm Command: A Personal Account of the Gulf War* (London: HarperCollins, 1995), 318.

5. Schwarzkopf, *It Doesn't Take A Hero*, 488.

6. For examples, see: R. Fisk, J. Lichfield, and R. Whitaker, "Saddam's Guard Steadily Smothering Rebellion," *Independent*, March 13, 1991; and P. Tyler, "U.S. Warns Iraqis against Using Gas to End Rebellion," *New York Times*, March 9, 1991.

7. Schwarzkopf, *It Doesn't Take A Hero*, 488.

8. US, DoD, *The United States Navy in DESERT SHIELD / DESERT STORM*, A-51 to A-52.

9. In S/PV.2982, 6, the Turkish representative stated there were between 200,000 and 300,000 on the border, 100,000 had crossed and up to 600,000 more were converging on the border as of 2 April. On page 12, the Iranian representative stated that they had 180,000 refugees.

owing to the action taken by the Iraqi army against the local population in Northern Iraq, approximately 220,000 Iraqi citizens, many of them women and children, are currently massed along the Turkish border. ...

I request a meeting of the Security Council be convened immediately to consider this alarming situation and to adopt the necessary measures to put an end to this inhuman repression being carried out on a massive scale.”¹⁰

Turkey, unlike Iran, was a member of NATO and the coalition, and in a certain sense, the eastern flank of the West, so its concerns had greater credibility and greater urgency.

The coalition launched Operation PROVIDE COMFORT by mid-April 1991. PROVIDE COMFORT saw practical (as opposed to political) considerations dominate its conduct. The overall aim for this operation was to reverse the consequences of the crisis by restoring order in northern Iraq and returning the Iraqi Kurds to their homes there. PROVIDE COMFORT was about repatriation; whereas, PROVIDE COMFORT II was about prevention. PROVIDE COMFORT II was subject to greater political limitations, and its aim was to prevent the possibility of similar crises. It was intended to deter any future Iraqi incursions and to enable operations against Iraqi forces in northern Iraq if deterrence failed.

There were a number of different constraints acting on the coalition, such as the international media, the activism of certain political figures in France, the legacy of the Vietnam experience, the need to withdraw forces from the region and the British desire to be more active in terms of Europe. There was also the need to guard against the possibility of Iranian resurgence, limit the effects of the crisis and ensure that the response to the crisis did not affect the international consensus on Iraq. The coalition military faced what were then new challenges. The geography of the region and the timing of the crisis essentially shaped the coalition's response to the crisis and, ultimately, the attempts to prevent future occurrences.

In terms of the coalition members themselves, certain factors had more to do with encouraging action than dictating what shape the action would take. For example, the images and reports of the suffering of the Kurds in their makeshift camps on mountainsides in Turkey provided a forum for commentary and calls for intervention.¹¹ Nicknamed the “CNN Effect,”¹² it showed that the Western public could be sensitized to particular issues. While the cries for action increased, the Bush administration's response to the crisis was to seek to avoid involvement due to fears that intervention would lead the US into a never-ending commitment; as stated by President Bush in mid-April, “the United States is not going to intervene militarily in Iraq's internal affairs and risk being drawn into a Vietnam-style quagmire.”¹³ In France, the Parti Socialiste sought a greater international profile for France, and Danielle Mitterrand, the President's wife, and other government officials, like

10. “Letter from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council” (April 2, 1991), S/22435 in Weller ed., *Iraq and Kuwait*, 604.

11. Examples include John Hockenberry, a columnist for National Public Radio, “Feeling Like the Helicopter on the Roof of the Saigon Embassy,” *International Herald Tribune*, April 8, 1991; and William Safire, a columnist for the *New York Times*, “As Kurds Die, A Sense of Revulsion Spreads,” *International Herald Tribune*, April 5, 1991.

12. The term originated in an interview during the Gulf War and was documented in T. Allen, F. Berry, and N. Polmar, *CNN: War in the Gulf* (Atlanta: Turner Publishing, 1991), cited in F. Stech, “Winning CNN Wars,” *Parameters* XXIV, no. 3 (Autumn 1994): 39 and 52.

13. “Remarks on Assistance for Iraqi Refugees and a News Conference,” April 16, 1991, in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George H. W. Bush* (hereafter cited as *Bush Papers*).

Bernard Kouchner, had a deep interest in Kurdish affairs.¹⁴ As a result, the French government was more outspoken about the crisis in early April than its coalition partners.¹⁵

Another political concern, which applied more to the US than to most of the coalition, was the need to guard against a potential Iranian resurgence. This perception was based on the assumption that the strength of the Iraqi state rested on the degree of its centralized authority; that is, if Iraq splintered, it would be less able to act as a balance against Iranian power. James Baker recalled that the Administration was concerned that a power vacuum might be created by an occupation of Iraq, and this vacuum could provide an opportunity for Iran.¹⁶ A splintering of Iraq would, therefore, destabilize the region, thus rendering the efforts in the Gulf War pointless.

Related to this fear of a fragmented Iraq was the perception that the crisis could cause Turkey, a key Western ally in the region, to become less stable. Turkey was not only NATO's eastern flank; it also represented a desirable compromise between Islam and a secular, Western-inspired democracy. The Turkish government was concerned that the refugees would penetrate further into Turkey, thus providing the PKK with support and fresh recruits. The PKK was a Kurdish Marxist movement that advocated separation from Turkey.¹⁷ Turkish concerns about the PKK were not without foundation. Between 1983 and 1988, Turkey conducted incursions in northern Iraq to deal with Kurdish insurgents.¹⁸ The Turkish government sealed off the frontier in late March 1991 to prevent a wider PKK insurgency in southeastern Turkey.¹⁹ It was necessary for the coalition to act to prevent a related crisis from affecting the international consensus on Iraq.

The idea of providing havens for the Iraqi Kurds seemed to offer Britain an opportunity to display a greater commitment to European institutions. At the European Community's Luxembourg Summit on 8 April 1991, British Prime Minister John Major, frustrated by the lack of American action on the issues, saw an opportunity for action.²⁰ He offered a proposal for the Kurdish refugees to the European Community (EC). The proposal included the establishment of UN enclaves for the Kurds in northern Iraq with £104 million (C\$166.5 million) of EC aid, the sanctions against Iraq and the UN development of a registry of arms sales.²¹ Naturally, there were American reservations about this proposal, based on the American fear of an entanglement. However, a series of meetings between the British and other governments within the P-5 seemed to alleviate American reservations.²² James Baker visited southeastern Turkey in April 1991 and brought back first-hand evidence of the situation, which had a significant impact on the Bush administration's acceptance of the necessity for action.²³

14. See "Tragic Failure after Victory," *International Herald Tribune*, April 16, 1991. Bernard Kouchner was the French Secretary of State for Humanitarian Policy.

15. For examples, see UN, "Provisional Verbatim Record of the Two Thousand, Nine Hundred and Eighty-First Meeting of the United Nations Security Council," S/PV. 2981 (April 5, 1991); and "Irak - Kurdes Déclaration de M. Roland Dumas, Ministre d'État, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères À RMC," April 2, 1991, French Foreign Ministry Press Release.

16. Baker, 435 and 439.

17. A. Finkel, "Turks Say Support Can Only Last Short While," *Times*, April 12, 1991; and B. Harden, "Turks Urged to Widen Relief Effort," *International Herald Tribune*, April 12, 1991. See also G. Rudd, *Humanitarian Intervention: Assisting the Iraqi Kurds in Operation PROVIDE COMFORT, 1991* (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2004), 22–29.

18. R. Olson, "The Kurdish Question in the Aftermath of the Gulf War: Geopolitical and Geostategic Changes in the Middle East," *Third World Quarterly* 13, no. 3 (1992): 478 and 489–90.

19. J. Brown, "Turkish Troops to Stem Flood of Kurdish Refugees," *Financial Times*, April 4, 1991; and S/PV.2982, 56, the Austrian Permanent Representative was the only one to ask publicly that the Turks reopen their frontier with Iraq.

20. J. Major, *John Major: The Autobiography* (London: HarperCollins, 1999), 242–43.

21. D. Gardner and J. Brown, "UK Urges Kurdish Enclave: Major Does Not Rule Out Force to Protect Refugee Haven in Iraq," *Financial Times*, April 9, 1991.

22. R. Mauthner, L. Barber, and D. Marsh, "Major Presses His Case for Kurdish Safe Haven," *Financial Times*, April 11, 1991; and P. Webster and M. Fletcher, "Bush Agrees in Principle with Kurd Havens Plan," *Times*, April 11, 1991.

23. R. Cornwell, "Baker to Visit Kurds in Turkey," *Independent*, April 8, 1991; and D. Hoffman, "Baker Tours Kurds' Camp and Urges Aid," *International Herald Tribune*, April 9, 1991.

The UNSC debated SCR 688 in light of the existing situation in southeastern Turkey. The coalition was well aware that other governments had strong reservations about SCR 688 and wanted to respect state sovereignty. The UN, however, was unwilling to erode Iraqi sovereignty. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, then the Secretary-General of the UN, recalled that on two occasions in April 1991, President Bush asked for the UN to assume responsibility for the security of northern Iraq as part of SCR 688. The President wanted to see an arrangement for stability that would allow the withdrawal of coalition forces from northern Iraq.²⁴ To be clear, this was a desire for long-term stability that would not require a prolonged American military presence in the region.

The ramifications of SCR 688's weakness (in that it failed to explicitly authorize operations) were highlighted by the necessity to obtain Iraqi consent for relief operations. While the UN dealt with the effects of Iraq's counter-insurgency on other states, it maintained at least a nominal respect for Iraq's sovereignty and believed that Iraq's permission was necessary for actions in Iraqi territory. In mid-April, the UN sent an envoy, Eric Suy, to Iraq to obtain consent for its presence for humanitarian purposes. By 18 April 1991, the Iraqi government and the UN had signed an MoU on the provision of humanitarian aid.²⁵ The timing of the Iraqi signature of the MoU suggests that it was an attempt to prevent any action by the coalition.

The nature of the crisis, and the lack of familiarity with humanitarian crises at the time, meant that practical considerations dominated the conduct of the operation. These considerations included those geographical factors which impacted on sustainment, such as the weather and climate; the degree of intelligence available to commanders in the preparation and conduct of operations; and the familiarity within the coalition's military forces with humanitarian relief efforts.

Geographical factors governed the tempo of operations. The mountainous terrain was a major impediment that required the movement of large amounts of personnel and materiel. The major challenge of PROVIDE COMFORT was the establishment of "a workable logistical system for an enormous relief effort while operating in an inhospitable environment."²⁶ The nature of the terrain also increased the importance and utility of air assets. These assets were valuable not only for the transport of aid and personnel but also to gather information and provide a degree of protection for forces on the ground.²⁷

The complexity of the situation created a greater demand for intelligence both in terms of scope and quantity. This was related to the fluid nature of the situation, which forced a number of changes to the plan while staying within the limits of the political direction. General John Galvin, US Army, the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) recalled that:

I went back again and requested another change of objective to get the Kurds out of the mountains, which we achieved by putting them into some camps on the flat land where we could provide improved medical care, sanitation and food. But as the Kurds came out of the mountains, it became evident that they might possibly be returned to their homes; in fact, some had already been easing through the Iraqi lines. So, once again, I had to ask for a change of objective to use the camps as way-stations, letting the Kurds pass on through them.²⁸

24. J. Pérez de Cuéllar, *Pilgrimage for Peace: A Secretary-General's Memoir* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), 275–78.

25. UN, "Letter from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the Secretary-General transmitting the Memorandum of Understanding dated 18 April 1991 between Iraq and the United Nations concerning humanitarian assistance," S/22513 (April 22, 1991), 209–11.

26. W. Farmen and E. Lessel, "Forward Presence in Turkey: Case Study," *Parameters* XXII, no. 3 (Autumn 1992): 24.

27. J. Jones, "Operation PROVIDE COMFORT: Humanitarian and Security Assistance in Northern Iraq," *Marine Corps Gazette* (November 1991): 100 and 104.

28. J. Galvin, "Building on Success: Allied Command Europe Looks to the Future," *Royal United Services Institute Journal* 137, no. 4 (August 1992): 3.

The senior British commander during PROVIDE COMFORT, Major-General Robin Ross, Royal Marines, noted that while the intelligence was good when it pertained to the locations and disposition of Iraqi forces, it was poor with regard to the workings and nature of Kurdish communities.²⁹ The coalition learned that such understanding of the Kurds was equally valuable for tactical and strategic applications.

One of the major military concerns was the provision of immediate relief to the Iraqi Kurds in refugee camps in the mountains of southeastern Turkey. Over time, this changed into the distribution of aid in northern Iraq as the refugees left the mountains. Major-General Ross noted:

In the early days before troops had deployed into Northern Iraq, the only method of getting vital shelter, food and water into the mountains was by parachute drop from C130 aircraft. Not only were these drops frequently inaccurate because of the marginal flying conditions, but the type of food was in some cases completely unsuited to the staple Kurdish diet. It was only when the first United States Army Special Forces teams reached the mountain encampments that real needs could be more accurately assessed, and the pre-packed loads of relief supplies adjusted accordingly, and even then the right type and quantity of food was not available.³⁰

Accurate information on the situation made aid more effective, but starvation was but one of a number of concerns. Medical assistance was required for many cases of dehydration, starvation and related diseases as well as a number of trauma cases due to mines or stray ordnance.³¹ This also illustrated the nature of the crisis, as the situation required different types of information and responses than conventional warfighting.

There were very few options for both iterations of PROVIDE COMFORT, but there was a fundamental distinction between the two. The first, stemming from the need to do something, left a wider range of options than the second, which was subject to greater political constraints.

The options for the first operation were to drop aid from the air, to stage an incursion in order to return the Iraqi Kurds to their homes or both. As time went on, it was clear that airdrops alone could not prevent a wider crisis due to the diminishing supply of water in the mountains. The Turkish government was extremely concerned that the Iraqi Kurds might become the PKK's willing allies, and this added greater impetus to the repatriation option. The coalition was not overly concerned about Iraqi sovereignty. Given the military situation, it was unlikely that Iraq could resist, and there was little political opposition to the idea of an incursion. Repatriation was dependent on an incursion, as it would be inhumane to send the Iraqi Kurds home in the face of Iraqi opposition.

There were more options available for the second operation, but a number of political constraints eliminated many of them. A prolonged occupation of northern Iraq by coalition forces was out of the question, as it risked destabilizing the region. Without Iraqi permission or a Chapter VII mandate, the presence of foreign forces—be they part of a peacekeeping mission, civilian police or guards—could not occur legally. This really left one last option, which was to maintain an aerial presence over northern Iraq in order to detect and deter future Iraqi government attacks on its population.

The coalition's approach for PROVIDE COMFORT, to a certain extent, dictated its choices for PROVIDE COMFORT II. In short, the initial decision to maintain an aerial presence did not meet with much opposition, and as such, this set a form of precedent for future crises. The presence of air assets over northern Iraq enabled future operations against Iraq.

29. R. Ross, "Some Early Lessons from Operation HAVEN," *Royal United Services Institute Journal* 136, no. 4 (Winter 1991): 22–23.

30. *Ibid.*, 23.

31. *Ibid.*, 24.

The first step for the coalition was to create an air umbrella over northern Iraq. On 11 April 1991, President Bush declared that the Iraqi territory north of the 36th parallel was an NFZ. It was also known as the northern no-fly zone (NNFZ), and any Iraqi air asset flying in that area would be shot down.³² The NFZ had two roles: the first was deterrence through presence; the second was to provide security for the Iraqi Kurds (and, by default, Turkey) through early warning, and a capability to react to any large scale conventional operations by the Iraqi armed forces. Repatriation operations began on 16 April 1991. President Bush announced that day:

Consistent with United Nations Security Council Resolution 688 and working closely with the United Nations and other international relief organizations and our European partners, I have directed the U.S. military to begin immediately to establish several encampments in northern Iraq where relief supplies for these refugees will be made available in large quantities and distributed in an orderly way. ...

... [I]t is an interim measure designed to meet an immediate, penetrating humanitarian need. Our long-term objective remains the same: for Iraqi Kurds and, indeed, for all Iraqi refugees, wherever they are, to return home and to live in peace, free from repression, free to live their lives.³³

Preparation for operations had begun well before the announcement. The US Army's 10th Special Forces Group deployed to the region in late March in order to identify drop zones, suitable sites for camps and possible security concerns.³⁴ From the NFZ declaration onwards, the coalition and the UN pressured the Turkish government to host the operation. Repatriation could not begin without Turkish permission. The focal staging points were the air base (AB) at Incirlik and the facilities at Diyarbakir and Silopi.³⁵ Incirlik AB is located 250 nautical miles [463 km] west of the Turkish–Iraqi border, and the distances involved created a requirement for a refuelling capability for the purpose of NFZ maintenance.³⁶ While aircraft could certainly move to and from Iraqi airspace, they could not remain over it for any significant length of time. In order to make a credible attempt to show presence, aircraft had to be capable of loitering in the NNFZ.

The political guidance for PROVIDE COMFORT, as agreed by the coalition members on 12 April 1991, was based largely on the provision of aid. There were six imperatives:

- a. assist the survival of the displaced Kurdish civilians;
- b. provide protection and shelter to the Kurds;
- c. establish a safe haven inside Iraq;
- d. assimilate the Kurds back into their home areas;

32. L. Barber and others, "US Orders Kurd Safety Zone: Saddam Told To Keep Air and Ground Forces Out of Northern Iraq," *Financial Times*, April 11, 1991; and D. White, "Air Power Enough To Restrain Iraqi Army," *Financial Times*, April 12, 1991. For the purposes of clarity, this NFZ will be referred to as the northern no-fly zone (NNFZ).

33. "Remarks on Assistance for Iraqi Refugees and a News Conference," April 16, 1991, *Bush Papers*, 1.

34. Galvin, "Building on Success," 3; and Jones, 99–100.

35. J. D'Agostino, "Incirlik AB is Hub for Expanding Kurdish Relief Efforts," *Air Force Times*, April 29, 1991. On the issue of force contributions, see J. Abizaid, "Lessons for Peacekeepers," *Military Review* LXXII, no. 3 (March 1993): 11–20; J. Cassidy and M. Driscoll, "New Hope for Kurds as US Troops Fly In," *Sunday Times*, April 14, 1991; and C. Haberman, "U.S. Expands Refugee Aid on 2 Borders," *International Herald Tribune*, April 13, 1991.

36. W. O'Malley, *Evaluating Possible Airfield Deployment Options* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2001), 93; and D'Agostino. Seven KC-135 Stratotankers were sent to Incirlik during PROVIDE COMFORT.

- e. transfer relief operations to civilian agencies; and
- f. withdraw coalition military forces.³⁷

From this came the need to provide relief and security for the Kurds while they were in Turkey or in transit. However, it was also necessary to detect and deter future Iraqi operations against the Kurds or the operation would have been futile. Once the Kurds had been cared for and returned to their homes, it was necessary for the coalition to ensure that the conditions that caused their flight would not reappear.

On 15 April 1991, the Combined Task Force PROVIDE COMFORT (CTF-PC) was formed and placed under the command of Lieutenant-General Shalikashvili.³⁸ The operation order for CTF-PC, issued by US European Command (EUCOM), gave it nine missions:

- a. identify site locations for temporary shelter out of the mountains;
- b. erect temporary living facilities;
- c. relocate Iraqi (Kurd) displaced civilians to locations supportable by them;
- d. prepare to receive United Kingdom, French, and Turkish forces;
- e. establish a security zone in northern Iraq;
- f. prepare to operate unilaterally, maintain and secure facilities;
- g. provide combat air patrol (CAP) as necessary;
- h. identify additional forces as required; and
- i. transfer administration and support functions to civilian organizations.³⁹

PROVIDE COMFORT was to be conducted in three phases:

- a. **Phase 1.** Distribute aid;
- b. **Phase 2.** Establish havens and move refugees to northern Iraq; and
- c. **Phase 3.** Turnover responsibility to the UN and withdraw by 15 July 1991.⁴⁰

The third phase would occur once the non-permanent camps could be overseen by the UN and the non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The American position on the use of force in northern Iraq changed with the announcement of the operation. The British government indicated that force would be used if necessary, but its priority

37. John Cushman, "Command and Control of Joint Force Operations," Briefing to Advanced Military Studies Programme Students, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 6 December 1991, cited in D. Goff, "Building Coalitions for Humanitarian Operations: Operation Provide Comfort" (US Army War College Studies Program Paper, US Army War College, 1992), 9.

38. "Remarks on Assistance for Iraqi Refugees and a News Conference," April 16, 1991, *Bush Papers*, 1.

39. John M. Shalikashvili, "Statement of Lieutenant General John M. Shalikashvili before the House Armed Services Committee," September 4, 1991, 13, cited in Goff, 14.

40. Goff, 14–15.

was humanitarian aid.⁴¹ The American government followed suit and declared on 15 April that force would be used if the aid operations met with Iraqi interference.⁴² This was intended as a deterrent, as protracted offensive operations against a determined defender would certainly lead to the much feared quagmire that the American government sought to avoid. Fortunately for the coalition, there was very little Iraqi resistance. One commander recalled: “Once deployed, we found ourselves in a dynamic ‘war of manoeuvre’ where no shots were exchanged. Later, operations settled down into a static ‘war of checkpoints’ ...”⁴³ This war of checkpoints allowed for the repatriation of the Iraqi Kurds and, ultimately, the withdrawal of coalition forces from northern Iraq.

The initial stage of the operations, the dynamic war of manoeuvre, saw the coalition seize control of northern Iraq in a month. On 19 April, the coalition forces, numbering roughly 15,000, were either deploying to Turkey or poised on the Turkish–Iraqi border, ready to strike. Meanwhile, General Shalikashvili went to meet with the local Iraqi military commander in the town of Zakho. One of his subordinate commanders stated: “At that meeting, Iraqi representatives were informed that coalition forces intended to enter Iraq on 20 April, and the mission was to be humanitarian; there was no intent to engage Iraqi forces; Iraqi forces were to offer no resistance; and a Military Coordination Committee [MCC] would be formed for the purpose of maintaining direct communication with both Kurdish and Iraqi forces.”⁴⁴

A day later, the American 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (special operations capable) moved into the Zakho region in order to seize control of the approaches, and five days later, it had control of all the approaches and the town.⁴⁵ After Zakho, British and French forces moved east to capture the town of Batufa, the airfield at Sirsenk and the town of Al Amadiyah.⁴⁶ By 10 May, coalition forces controlled 160 square kilometres.⁴⁷ The operation had proceeded relatively smoothly, with only minor incidents where fire was exchanged.

The repatriation of refugees did not occur simply by the creation of a more secure area in northern Iraq. The distribution of food and other humanitarian supplies was used as an enticement for the Iraqi Kurds to return to their homes in northern Iraq.⁴⁸ Aid was brought overland from Silopi to Zakho, and then it was distributed to the villages under CTF-PC control. After the airfield at Sirsenk was occupied, Zakho became the western distribution node and Sirsenk the eastern.⁴⁹ The enticements began to work, and by mid-May, approximately 200,000 refugees were on the move from the camps in Turkey to their homes in northern Iraq. The movement of refugees peaked on 25 May.⁵⁰ All of this occurred under the air umbrella created by the NFZ.

The distribution of aid also meant that the CTF-PC had to work with relatively unfamiliar partners. There were a number of NGOs that assisted in the delivery and distribution of aid. Relief distribution was to become entirely their responsibility by the end of PROVIDE COMFORT.

41. G. Jones and P. Wilson, “Major Refuses to Rule Out Use of Troops in Iraq,” *Daily Telegraph*, April 15, 1991; and N. Wapshott, “PM Back-pedals on Safe Haven,” *Observer*, April 14, 1991.

42. P. Horvitz, “U.S. Defines Limits of Its New Iraq Role,” *International Herald Tribune*, April 15, 1991.

43. Abizaid, 11.

44. Jones, 100; and Rudd, 115.

45. Jones, 100–1.

46. *Ibid.*, 101–2.

47. *Ibid.*, 104.

48. D. Elmo, “Food Distribution for Operation PROVIDE COMFORT,” *Military Review* LXXIII, no. 9 (September 1993): 80; and Rudd, 173–75.

49. Elmo, 80.

50. Jones, 107.

This meant that the NGOs had to adopt certain positions in order to fulfil this role. They sought to avoid associations with the CTF-PC to maintain the appearance of neutrality. Such associations could jeopardize the future distribution of aid.⁵¹ The NGO approach to their lack of physical security was to rely on impartiality, but the Iraqi Kurds had no such option.

By late May, the majority of northern Iraq was under coalition control. The key to the success of the operation was the city of Dohuk. Many of the refugees that remained in Turkey and in temporary camps in northern Iraq came from Dohuk.⁵² The coalition, therefore, had little choice but to try to obtain control of the city, the seizure of which could have been costly if the Iraqi forces actively resisted, but the CTF-PC reached a deal, as:

Ongoing negotiations between the Iraqis and the Military Co-ordination Committee resulted in an agreement that would allow humanitarian and logistical forces to enter the city along with United Nations forces and non-government organisations. Combat forces were to advance no further beyond their present positions. In return, Iraq agreed to withdraw all armed forces and police from Dahuk and take up new positions 15 kilometres to the south of the city.⁵³

Throughout PROVIDE COMFORT, the combined task force (CTF) land elements operated under the watchful eye of the air forces enforcing the NFZ. The provision of security from the air enabled the successful incursion by coalition land forces into northern Iraq. The aerial presence helped maintain a high operational tempo. In addition, while the operation was being conducted, both the political and military leaders within the coalition were planning and preparing for the next phase.

This planning and preparation focused on the issue of providing some form of security presence for the Iraqi Kurds. While there was the need to continue to exclude the Iraqi secret police to avoid further repression, the need to maintain law and order was equally important. From a political standpoint, the need to exclude the Iraqi security apparatus was paramount, but in northern Iraq, the Kurds needed police to maintain order. The constraints placed by certain members of the UNSC and Iraq prevented the coalition from being able to install a peacekeeping mission or police presence in northern Iraq. This left three options: to abandon the Iraqi Kurds, to arrive at some form of understanding with the Iraqi government or to continue to monitor the situation in northern Iraq.

The UN had reached an understanding with the Iraqi government, who complained that they had dealt in good faith but still ended up with an incursion by the forces of the coalition.⁵⁴ This suggested that their negotiations with the UN were less than sincere and represented an attempt to dislocate the coalition. Eric Suy was equally annoyed at the lack of consultation by the coalition before executing the operation.⁵⁵ The difficulty was that the UN was trying to establish a nation-wide humanitarian relief programme, and the coalition was only working to help with the problem in northern Iraq.

The British government led the search for a solution to the legal problem. In order to put a peacekeeping mission in northern Iraq, it would have required a further resolution and Iraqi consent. There was a lack of will for such a mission, and the consensus was that consent would not be forthcoming from Iraq.⁵⁶ The British government came up with an alternative proposal: if peacekeepers were not

51. Ross, 24.

52. J. Wolfe, "This Place Is ... Very Dangerous," *Air Force Times*, May 27, 1991.

53. Jones, 106.

54. A. Cowell, "Iraq Assails U.S. Troop Plan, Citing Own UN Deal on Kurds," *International Herald Tribune*, April 18, 1991.

55. R. Norton-Taylor, J. Howard, and P. Webster, "British Units Standing By," *Guardian*, April 18, 1991.

56. J. Brown, "UN Talks on Armed Guards," *Financial Times*, May 15, 1991.

acceptable, would the presence of civilian police under UN auspices, such as in Cyprus, be acceptable? The P-5 members were not necessarily opposed to the idea, but the British government was unwilling to pursue an SC resolution if the Iraqis refused to cooperate.⁵⁷ The UN sent its Executive Delegate, Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, to obtain Iraqi permission for the presence of police to no avail.⁵⁸ This posed a significant problem for the achievement of the aim of preventing future crises.

There was a compromise between the UN and the Iraqi government that allowed for a security presence, namely, UN security guards (UNSGs). On 20 May, the Iraqi government consented to the presence of up to 500 UNSGs for policing the Kurdish havens.⁵⁹ There were fears that these guards would not be able to provide enough security for the Kurds. This was not unrealistic, as the financing for the guards came from funds dedicated to humanitarian relief in Iraq.⁶⁰ The first guards were deployed to Dohuk in order to provide an outside presence to reassure the Kurds.⁶¹ This increased the importance of the air umbrella, as UNSGs were hardly a credible deterrent.

After having secured northern Iraq for the Kurds, the allies began to consider their withdrawal. The Americans wanted to withdraw in accordance with their schedule, which led to further difficulties within the coalition. The British government supposedly wanted to seek an autonomy agreement between the Kurds and the central Iraqi government.⁶² This was a form of “mission creep,” but the Bush administration remained adamant about the withdrawal:

At the 90-day mark, it was clear that coalition objectives were achieved. Kurdish refugees were out of the mountains and either back in their villages of origin, on their way there, or in camps built by coalition forces. ...

On 8 June, JTF-A [Joint Task Force – Alpha] was deactivated and BGen [Brigadier General] Potter’s troops began their retrograde out of Turkey. On 12 June, the Civil Affairs Command was also deactivated.

The remaining days of coalition presence in northern Iraq were devoted to continuing to stabilise the region and reassuring Kurdish leaders that although coalition forces would soon be leaving, this act would not signify a change in the resolve of the allied force to support the Kurdish people.⁶³

The British Secretary of State for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Douglas Hurd, later denied that there was a disagreement within the coalition and stated the British conditions for withdrawal. These were: a UN security presence to replace the coalition forces, the Kurdish–Iraqi negotiations on autonomy to be complete, sanctions to be maintained until Iraq ceased its repression and Iraq to be warned of the consequences of misbehaviour.⁶⁴

57. A. Philps, “UN Envoy Sets on Mission for Baghdad,” *Daily Telegraph*, April 12, 1991. Part of the reason for this was the fear of a Chinese veto and the potential for subsequent accusations of a double standard with regard to Israel.

58. P. Riddell, “Iraq Rejects UN Police Force to Protect Kurds,” *Financial Times*, May 10, 1991.

59. M. Houk, “UN Sends Security Guards to Kurdish Town,” *Independent*, May 20, 1991. The agreement also provided for guards to be deployed in southern Iraq. See K. Evans and C. Stephen, “UN to Extend Protection to Shi’ite Areas,” *Guardian*, May 24, 1991.

60. Pérez de Cuéllar, 280.

61. M. Littlejohns, “Iraq Agrees UN Presence to Reassure Kurds,” *Financial Times*, May 24, 1991; and E. Lucas and L. Doyle, “Baghdad Agrees to UN Security Guards in Iraq,” *Independent*, May 24, 1991.

62. E. Mortimer and L. Barber, “Allied Tensions Rise over Withdrawal from Iraq,” *Financial Times*, June 15, 1991; and C. Stephen, “Allies Plan to Start Kurdistan Pull-out in Mid-June,” *Guardian*, May 30, 1991.

63. Jones, 107.

64. R. Mauthner, “Hurd Warns Iraq to Respect Kurdish Safe Haven,” *Financial Times*, June 20, 1991.

Public and political pressure mounted on the British government to maintain a presence until the Kurds were secure.⁶⁵ Neither France nor Britain wanted to leave the Kurds insecure, and they were unsure how this would be possible after withdrawal.⁶⁶ They, rather realistically, did not place much faith in the ability of the UNSGs to provide security. Due to a lack of funds, only 50 guards had been deployed by late June.⁶⁷ This was not sufficient to maintain law and order, let alone provide security.

Regardless of the presence of the UNSG contingent, in order to avoid future Kurdish crises, the situation required monitoring. The solution to this problem was to indefinitely maintain the NFZ and form a rapid reaction force based in Turkey. This became the nucleus of PROVIDE COMFORT II. The force was primarily composed of American military units, with some French and British contributions.⁶⁸ The Pentagon spokesman, Pete Williams, stated that the force's "purpose was ... [t]o ensure continued success of the humanitarian aid to the Kurdish and other Iraqi refugees. In pursuit of that, the CTF will also make sure that steps are taken so that Iraq complies with the appropriate UN Security Council resolutions that address this issue of humanitarian aid to the Kurds."⁶⁹

These steps were maintaining the NFZ by coalition aircraft, excluding units of the Iraqi military and police and monitoring the situation by the MCC in Zakho.⁷⁰ Coalition land forces started their withdrawal in late June, and it was completed by the desired date.⁷¹ The NFZ's dual function of deterrence and early warning underwrote this scheme and made it possible.

PROVIDE COMFORT II created an opportunity for the Turkish government to use a form of leverage on its allies to obtain concessions.⁷² The presence of Allied troops was subject to Turkish approval, and the mission could be terminated if Turkey removed its consent.⁷³ This did not need to be limited to the mission as a whole, as the use of Turkish airfields meant Ankara could withdraw its consent for their use for operations with which they were uncomfortable. At a press conference given by President Bush and Turkish president Turgut Özal, each offered his view of the new force. George Bush insisted that "the rapid deployment force is to guard against a repeat of the horribly brutal events in the north. And we are not anticipating that that force will be used. We are thinking that Saddam Hussein, having learned his lesson once, will hopefully not embark on the kind of carnage that resulted in our having to do what we did in the past with Turkish co-operation."⁷⁴

President Özal described the force's purpose differently, adding that "the force ... will be used to protect the Turkish borders to come to such a big inflow of refugees, which has been in the month of April. And such occurrence should never happen again."⁷⁵ In order to maintain stability, the coalition had to ensure that some of the Turkish concerns were assuaged.

65. For an example, see UK, *Hansard Parliamentary Debates*, 6th Series, vol. 192 (1991), cols. 485–504 ("Kurdish People").

66. "Communiqué du ministre des Affaires Étrangère," *La Politique Étrangère de la France: Textes et Documents* (May–June 1991), 117; and R. Mauthner and L. Barber, "Agreement on Ways to Protect Kurds Elusive," *Financial Times*, June 22, 1991.

67. P. Almond, "UN to Miss Deadline."

68. The British provided eight Jaguar aircraft and two tankers as well as an infantry company. The French provided eight Mirage F1s, a tanker and an infantry company. For details, see J. Bird, "PROVIDE COMFORT Extended as Iraqi Force Grows," *Air Force Times* (July 1992); and T. Ripley, "Operation PROVIDE COMFORT II: Western Force Protects Kurds," *International Defense Review* 24, no. 9 (September 1991): 1055.

69. Ripley, 1056.

70. Jones, 107.

71. French statements on the issue were virtually identical. See "Retrait du nord de l'Irak – Communiqué de la Présidence de la République," *La Politique Étrangère de la France: Textes et Documents* (July–August 1991), 17; and H. Pope and P. Cockburn, "Allied Pull-out Leaves Fragile Peace," *Independent*, July 15, 1991.

72. For details, see Holt.

73. Ripley, 1056; and J. Rugman, "Turkey Seeks Veto over Allied Force," *Guardian*, July 19, 1991.

74. "The President's News Conference with Turkish President Turgut Özal in Ankara, Turkey," July 20, 1991, *Bush Papers*, 4.

75. *Ibid.*

Eventually, PROVIDE COMFORT II shifted to a mainly aerial presence. By August 1991, the British government announced that they and the other contributors would conduct a phased withdrawal of the ground elements. They believed that there was sufficient pressure on the Iraqi government to prevent further operations being conducted against the Iraqi Kurds.⁷⁶ The coalition placed significant faith in the ability of the MCC to maintain an accurate assessment of the situation and air assets to ensure the security of the Iraqi Kurds. By the end of September, the ground forces withdrew in accordance with the original concept of operations.⁷⁷ With the exception of the MCC in Zakho, air assets conducted the operation. Their presence offered a solution to the problem of detecting and deterring future attempts to wage military campaigns against the Kurds and definitely prevented the Iraqis from using aircraft to support such campaigns. The presence of coalition aircraft over northern Iraq increased the probability that Iraqi actions would be costly.

PROVIDE COMFORT II was successful in providing security for the Kurds. The Iraqi government did not attempt any military operations against the Kurds until 1996, and even then, those operations were brief and relatively small in scope. The NFZ provided a means for the coalition to monitor the situation and to allow for a modicum of security when other options were less helpful. The Iraqi government invoked an internal blockade against Kurdistan through a series of military checkpoints on 23 October 1991. This blockade also involved “the wholesale withdrawal of civil services from Kurdish areas.”⁷⁸ While the blockade was tragic, the absence of the Iraqi civil service, in a fashion, provided a greater impetus for the Iraqi Kurds to seek a greater degree of autonomy. By the spring of 1992, the Kurds elected a national assembly, and the KDP and PUK formed a coalition regional government.⁷⁹ The Iraqi government continued to seek to exclude the Kurds, and they in turn sought to make the best of their isolation. The presence of coalition aircraft not only enabled a forward presence in the region but also allowed the Iraqi Kurds to attempt self-government without Iraqi interference.

Over time, political constraints on means led to the adoption of a solution involving the use of air power. It proved to be a viable solution in terms of costs and associated risks. Relations with Turkey motivated the coalition to act, and they shaped the nature of the various operations. There was a desire within the coalition to ensure the continued security of the Iraqi Kurds. This desire, when combined with the perceived opposition within the Iraqi government and the UNSC to a peacekeeping mission or police presence, created the perception that further action was required. The NFZ was maintained to address this need for security. This was tied to a wider lesson. A greater range of action was acceptable to the UNSC and the wider international community if a humanitarian end was being served. The justification provided for an aerial presence, albeit technically illegal, that provided the coalition with certain benefits—the coalition could see into Iraq and observe the movement of large-scale military forces. The presence over the skies of northern Iraq not only represented a means of detecting further incursions but also an attempt at the implicit deterrence thereof. The NNFZ was an enabler for future military operations by virtue of its ability to detect and react quickly to Iraqi actions in northern Iraq. This taught the coalition a valuable lesson and set a precedent for future problems by creating an ongoing obligation to police Iraq from the skies. Without political change, this was the only available way of making the Kurds feel safe, but a significant crisis had been ended.

76. C. Stephen, “Allied Force in Turkey to Leave Soon,” *Guardian*, August 7, 1991.

77. “Troops Defending Kurds Pull Out,” *Guardian*, September 24, 1991.

78. UN, “Report on the Situation of Human Rights in Iraq Prepared by the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the Situation of Human Rights in Iraq (extract),” E/CN.4/1192/31 (February 18, 1992), 404–5.

79. A. Cockburn and P. Cockburn, *Out of the Ashes: The Resurrection of Saddam Hussein* (London: HarperCollins, 1999), 175.

Chapter 7: Operation SOUTHERN WATCH, 1992–1996

Operation SOUTHERN WATCH (OSW) was an application of the lesson learned in PROVIDE COMFORT II about what measures could be taken to contain Iraq—humanitarian concerns provided a justification for the presence of coalition forces over the skies of southern Iraq. The declared purposes of OSW were to deny the Iraqi government the use of national airspace south of the 32nd parallel and to monitor the situation in southern Iraq with regard to Iraqi military operations against the Shiite and Marsh Arabs in the light of SCR 688. The net effect of SOUTHERN WATCH was the enabling of future attempts at the coercion of Iraq by creating a form of forward presence. The coalition, by virtue of this forward presence, could react to Iraqi transgressions quickly or coerce the Iraqi government if necessary. Yet, there was little evidence that the Iraqi government would end its counter-insurgency operations in southern Iraq. This meant the coalition had taken on an open-ended commitment to humanitarian concerns in southern Iraq that permitted a policy of containment.

Southern Watch as an Enabling Operation

Iraq's Counterinsurgency

The Iraqi government dealt ruthlessly with all armed resistance in southern Iraq after the spring of 1991. Unlike in northern Iraq, nothing was done to address this issue as the Saudi response to the refugee crisis was faster and less politically sensitive.¹ The international community eventually became concerned about the human and environmental costs of Iraq's counter-insurgency in the south. The coalition simultaneously came to believe that it needed a force presence in the region to monitor the situation.

The UN's Concern

The UN became increasingly concerned that the Iraqi government's actions in the Marshes were excessively violent and showed little regard for human rights. In early 1992, the UN's Special Rapporteur of the Commission for Human Rights, Max van der Stoel, a Belgian diplomat, reported that:

Recent and continuing measures instituted by the Iraqi military forces against the population of the marshes (including Marsh Arabs, internally displaced persons and refugees, and army deserters) are said to include the tightening of control over food destined for the area, the confiscation of boats, and the evacuation of all areas within three kilometres of the marshlands. Further reports indicate that military attacks have been launched against the Marsh Arabs between 4 December 1991 and 18 January 1992, resulting in hundreds of deaths.²

In March 1992, the UNSC cautioned Iraq.³ Despite such warnings, the Iraqi government continued its operations in the Marshes through that spring and summer. From 30 June 1992, the Iraqi government blocked relief operations in southern Iraq. On 5 August 1992, the Belgian government, in a letter to the UNSC, argued that the counter-insurgency forcing relocations of the local population and the existence of an internal embargo on these regions were linked.⁴ This soon led to a discussion within the UNSC to which Max van der Stoel was invited as a private citizen as opposed to a representative of any given government.

1. R. Scales, *Certain Victory* (London: Brassey's, 1993), 326–34.

2. UN, "Report on the Situation of Human Rights in Iraq Prepared by the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the Situation of Human Rights in Iraq (extract)," E/CN.4/1992/31, 408.

3. See UN, "Statement by the President of the Security Council concerning general and specific obligations of Iraq under various Security Council resolutions relating to the situation between Iraq and Kuwait," S/23699 (March 11, 1992); and UN, "Statement by the President of the Security Council concerning Iraq's compliance with the relevant Council resolutions," S/23709 (March 12, 1992), 421–25.

4. UN, "Letter dated 3 August 1992 from the Charge d'Affaires A.I. of the Permanent Mission of Belgium to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council," S/24386 (August 5, 1992), 5–7.

This discussion proved to be controversial. The representatives of India, Ecuador, Zimbabwe and the PRC objected on the basis that this was a fundamentally humanitarian as opposed to a security concern; therefore, it was not in the purview of the Security Council but the General Assembly.⁵ The vast majority of the UNSC's members supported the notion of preventing further abuses of human rights. The four aforementioned representatives were concerned that the inclusion of human rights issues on the agenda would set a dangerous precedent that could eventually be used against their governments, such as with the PRC's treatment of Tibetans. This concern over sovereignty was driven by self-interest. Van der Stoep stated that the situation in southern Iraq was replete with human rights violations and called Iraq's actions a threat to the UN's relief operations in the area. Even the Iraqi representative acknowledged the existence of a deliberate blockade on the Marshes, arguing that such operations were necessary to get rid of saboteurs and criminals using the Marshes as a haven.⁶ These operations coincided with a government-sponsored drainage of the Marshes called the Third River Project.

The Third River Project

In spring 1992, with the Third River Project⁷, a deliberate draining of fresh water in parts of the Marshes, justified as necessary for the creation of a navigable canal, Iraqi forces sought to deny Shiite rebels a refuge. The potential environmental consequences were considerable, including the creation of salt marshes and the destruction of arable land.⁸ Iraqi government spokesmen, blaming the situation on Turkish and Syrian damming, claimed that it was necessary for them to drain the salt-water marshes for irrigation in support of agriculture in southern Iraq.⁹ Neither of these arguments seemed credible given the visible connection between the project and Iraqi military operations. Marsh drainage exposed Shiite rebels to attack and prompted a renewed stream of refugees into Iran.¹⁰ The international community came to believe this was a ruse for counter-insurgency operations. The timing of this realization came at the same time as other crises pertaining to Iraq erupted.

Iraqi Provocations

A series of crises in 1992 led the coalition to conclude that Iraq responded more favourably to ultimatums when confronted with the possibility of the imminent use of force. This was the first step towards coercion in support of containment. The Security Council met with representatives of the Iraqi government in mid-March 1992 to make its concerns about Iraq's arsenal of WMDs clear to the Iraqi government. Later that month, the coalition reinforced the point by issuing an ultimatum: if Iraq failed to provide the relevant information and assist in the destruction of certain WMD-related facilities, the coalition would strike a week later.¹¹ This was the threat, and it explained the behaviour desired, the timeline for compliance and the penalty. The arrival of the United States Ship (USS) *America* carrier group in the Gulf reinforced the warning.¹² This action served to reinforce the threat by implying that the US naval aircraft were ready to strike. The Iraqi government quickly provided the information and assistance.¹³ It had taken almost two months for the coalition to reach the stage where they were

5. UN, "Provisional Verbatim Record of the Three Thousand, One Hundred and Fifth Meeting of the United Nations Security Council," S/PV.3105 (August 11, 1992), 6–9 and 11–12.

6. S/24386, 3–7; and S/PV.3105, 23–29, 31 and 32–33.

7. A map of the area can be viewed at http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east_and_asia/iraq_marshes_1994.jpg (accessed January 29, 2013)

8. C. Murphy and N. Boustany, "Iraqis Seek to Drain a Haven for Foes," *International Herald Tribune*, July 3, 1992.

9. See N. Beschoner, *Water and Instability in the Middle East*, Adelphi Paper 273 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1992), 27–44.

10. J. Bruce, "Campaign against Shi'ites Hardens," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 6 June 1992; and B. Stapleton, "Arabs Flee Iraq's Deadly Marshes," *Sunday Independent*, July 19, 1992.

11. P. Lewis, "UN Gives Baghdad March 26 Deadline," *International Herald Tribune*, March 19, 1992.

12. "U.S. Sends Aircraft Carrier to Gulf in 'Signal,'" *International Herald Tribune*, March 14, 1992.

13. "Third Report of the Executive Chairman of UNSCOM," S/24108 (16 June 1992), 442–43.

politically and militarily prepared to use force. This was too long to deal quickly with challenges from Iraq, but it showed that threat-based coercion of Iraq could work.

Another crisis, one involving UNSCOM, occurred in early July 1992. An American-led team was denied access to the Iraqi Agriculture Ministry in order to search for WMD-related documentation.¹⁴ Shortly after this incident, the coalition reached an agreement in principle about airstrikes, but its members still disagreed over the issue of a fixed timetable for an ultimatum.¹⁵ This reduced the credibility of the coalition's threat-based coercion in the eyes of the Iraqi government. Without a credible threat, any attempt at coercion may be perceived as a mere bluff. The American government then exerted diplomatic efforts to obtain local support in preparation for the use of force. James Baker visited Saudi Arabia to ensure King Fahd's support. The crew of American warships in the Mediterranean had their port leaves cancelled, and the amphibious group based on the USS *Tarawa* steamed into the Gulf.¹⁶ This constituted an escalating threat as it gave the impression that the coalition was prepared to conduct a raid into or invasion of Iraqi territory. The implicit threat—combined with the UN's offer of a compromise, where the UN inspection team would be made up of nationals of neutral European states—led to Iraqi acquiescence in late July.¹⁷ Nonetheless, the American naval presence continued to grow with the arrival of the USS *John F. Kennedy* carrier group, which added to those already on station in the eastern Mediterranean (the USS *Saratoga* and USS *Independence*). Also, a number of Patriot batteries were deployed to Kuwait.¹⁸ These actions had two functions: on the one hand, they were a means of reassuring American allies in the Gulf; on the other, they served as a reminder to the Iraqi government that a failure to comply would be addressed. Once the new inspection team began its activities without interference on 29 July, the *Kennedy* received orders to leave the Gulf.¹⁹ The presence of military forces made the threat effective, but the US could not maintain such a protracted naval effort forever, and they needed to make an act of good faith in light of the Iraqi government's concessions.

Another crisis developed in early August. The Iraqi government announced that all of its ministries were out of bounds for UNSCOM's inspection teams, but once again backed down.²⁰ Iraq's lack of cooperation was a major source of frustration for the chairman of UNSCOM, but it was not the only one. Rolf Ekeus publicly expressed his dissatisfaction with the Security Council and their lack of speed or effectiveness in dealing with crises in late July.²¹ This suggested that the American government needed to deal with Iraqi provocations in a timelier manner. One of the key lessons from 1992 was that threat-based coercion was effective at obtaining Iraqi compliance under certain conditions. What the coalition learned was that the Security Council would not respond quickly enough during crises to ensure credible threats. Consequently, the coalition had to be prepared to act independently.

Throughout the summer of 1992, Iraq was a significant irritant to the coalition. The Bush administration's pronouncements during this time reflected a great deal of irritation and frustration

14. "Coups and Cussedness: Saddam Hussein Holds Out in Iraq," *Economist*, July 11, 1992; and J. Kagian, "New Confrontation," *Middle East International*, July 10, 1992.

15. P. Almond, "Allies List their Targets," *Daily Telegraph*, July 23, 1992; and M. Walker, "Allies Ready for New Air War in Gulf," *Guardian*, July 24, 1992.

16. J. Dettmer and J. Bone, "Bush Calls Council of War over Iraqi Strike," *Times*, July 25, 1992.

17. *Arms Control Reporter* 1992, 453.B.132.19 to 20.

18. "US Bolsters Gulf Power to Warn Iraq: Exercises in Kuwait Planned," *Financial Times*, July 28, 1992; and "U.S. Sends Missiles to Kuwait to Bolster Military Strength," *Wall Street Journal*, July 28, 1992.

19. P. Lewis, "UN Arms Inspectors Enter Disputed Site in Baghdad," *International Herald Tribune*, July 29, 1992.

20. UN, "Fourth report of the Executive Chairman of UNSCOM," S/24984 (17 December 1992), 495.

21. *Arms Control Reporter* 1992, 453.B.132.20; and M. Littlejohns, "UN Council under Fire over Iraq," *Financial Times*, August 5, 1992.

about Iraq's adversarial relationship with UNSCOM.²² This called into question George Bush's ability to deal with foreign policy (his major strength as president). American voters perceived Iraq's lack of cooperation as a policy failure. This perception also existed in government circles. Searching for a solution, the US government considered the pursuit of another UNSC resolution to stabilize the situation in Iraq.²³ The stability of Iraq was one of the major motives for the US to remain involved in the region.²⁴ By attacking the Shia and others, the Iraqi government created difficult situations for its neighbours, who had to deal with refugee crises, and who potentially could act to address the problem at its source. However, Iraq's reckless violence also presented the coalition the opportunity to establish a sorely needed military presence in the name of benign humanitarianism in order to support the containment of Iraq and to maintain regional stability.

The coalition's other members shared the American and international concern about the Iraqi government's actions with regard to the Shia and UNSCOM. The French government, having been enthusiastic about SCR 688, wanted to do something similar for the Shia and Marsh Arabs as had been done for the Kurds. Having been a major proponent and advocate of SCR 688, it is hardly surprising that French government statements reflected the desire to extend the reach of that resolution.²⁵ Subsequent statements revealed that it was also considering the conduct of an operation similar to PROVIDE COMFORT II.²⁶ This was a literal application of the *droit d'ingérence*—the belief in the right to interfere if a humanitarian issue is at stake—to the situation in southern Iraq.

The British government was more cautious in its approach to the situation. Its statements emphasized the need to monitor Iraq and to keep Iraq's government from acting inappropriately. For example, Prime Minister Major publicly stated:

What we have said to the Iraqi authorities is that we are now perfectly clear that they have engaged in systematic repression in the south of Iraq, but that is not acceptable and that it has got to stop. What we propose to do, therefore, is to monitor the whole area from the air, and whilst we are doing that, to ensure the security both of the Shias and of our aircraft, we will instruct the Iraqis not to fly in that area.²⁷

Douglas Hurd provided a further example of the British position by stating: "We believe in the integrity of Iraq. Iraq is one country, but within that country its rulers have obligations towards their subjects, which are laid down in Security Council Resolution 688."²⁸ It is important to note that the coalition focused on Iraq's treatment of its citizens and not Iraq's sovereignty, thus attempting to avoid the contentious legal issue while also denying the Iraqi government a credible argument against its treatment at the hands of the coalition.

22. See J. Dettmer, "Bush Wants New UN Sanction for Military Action over Shias," *Times*, July 30, 1992; G. Graham, "US on Collision Course with Iraq: Congressional Leaders Give Bush Their Backing," *Financial Times*, July 29, 1992; and M. Walker, "Bush Presses UN to 'Force Iraq Issue,'" *Guardian*, July 29, 1992.

23. C. Murphy, "U.S. and Allies Act to Press Baghdad on Shiites," *International Herald Tribune*, August 12, 1992.

24. Congressional Information Service S201-1 (1994), 317–18.

25. See "Interview de M. Roland Dumas, Ministre d'État, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères Par l'Hebdomadaire Tunisien 'Réalités,'" French Foreign Ministry Press Release, August 13, 1992.

26. See "Propos à la Presse de M. Roland Dumas, Ministre d'État, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, à la suite de son audition devant la commission des Affaires Étrangères de l'Assemblée Nationale," French Foreign Ministry Press Release, August 18, 1992.

27. "Transcript of interview given by the UK Prime Minister, Mr. John Major, in London, on Tuesday, 18 August 1992," in S/PV.2981, 723.

28. "Douglas Hurd, Secretary of State, UK, interview with 'Today' programme, 19 August 1992," in Weller ed., *Iraq and Kuwait*, 723.

The governments of the Gulf States expressed concerns about any military operation in southern Iraq. Kuwait was the only state to offer unequivocal support for military operations.²⁹ Yet both the Kuwaiti and Saudi governments feared the possibility of rendering the area vulnerable to Iranian fundamentalism.³⁰ While the coalition could contain Iraq, it did not want to encourage any possible Iranian intervention. The Saudi government agreed to provide support in terms of basing and financing.³¹ A number of other Arab states, including the Gulf States, remained opposed to a renewed Western military presence.³² This was due to the continuing fear of the domestic ramifications from the potentially offending presence of Westerners. This affected the British contribution the most, as its government maintained close relations with the Gulf States. The British government sought to delay the operation because it feared a negative reaction as a result of basing forces in the Gulf.³³

The political constraints on a coalition force presence shaped the nature of the force. Combined with the concerns about a potential occupation of Iraqi territory, Iraq's desire to maintain its sovereignty and the precedent set by PROVIDE COMFORT II, the concerns of the Gulf States drove the coalition to choose air power. Given that the prolonged or indefinite maintenance of a carrier station in the Gulf required more carriers than existed in the American arsenal, any option had to be land-based.

The coalition began to put a plan in motion while the Iraqi government sought to counter this move. President Bush implied that action was needed due to the Iraqi foreign minister's refusal to allow human rights monitors in Iraq.³⁴ On 20 August 1992, the Iraqi government announced that it would allow the coalition to inspect the Marsh region.³⁵ This was a partial concession or an attempt to "wrong foot" the coalition, as the Iraqi government refused to permit the re-entry of UN personnel.³⁶ This was the same gambit they employed in vain against Operation PROVIDE COMFORT in the spring of 1991.

The Joint Task Force – South West Asia

The coalition launched OSW on 26 August 1992. The purpose of the operation was stated clearly: "[T]he coalition has concluded that it must itself monitor Iraqi compliance with [United Nations Security Council Resolution] UNSCR 688 in the south . . ." ³⁷ President Bush claimed its purpose was to support SCR 688 by creating the southern no-fly zone (SNFZ), thus denying the Iraqis the use of the airspace below the 32nd parallel:

[T]he United States and its coalition partners have today informed the Iraqi government that 24 hours from now coalition aircraft, including those of the United States, will begin flying surveillance missions in southern Iraq, south of the 32 degrees North latitude, to monitor the situation there. This will provide coverage of the areas where a majority of the most significant recent violations of Resolution 688 have taken place.

... It will remain in effect until the coalition determines that it is no longer required.³⁸

29. "Arab Reluctance Delays 'No Fly' Zone," *International Herald Tribune*, August 25, 1992.

30. K. Evans, "Gulf Leaders Back Allies but Fear Break-up of Iraq," *Guardian*, August 21, 1992.

31. Interview General Joseph Hoar, USMC, copy in author's possession.

32. M. Binyon, "Arabs Hesitate over Western Move to Close Iraq Air Space," *Times*, August 19, 1992.

33. A. Philips, "Arab Fears Delay RAF Support for Iraq No-fly Zone," *Daily Telegraph*, August 25, 1992.

34. "Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Iraq's Compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolutions," September 16, 1992, *Bush Papers*, 1.

35. "UN Envoy to Leave Baghdad as Relief Talks Break Down," *International Herald Tribune*, August 22–23, 1992.

36. L. Doyle, "Iraq Rejects UN Olive Branch," *Independent*, August 22, 1992.

37. "Statement issued by the Members of the Coalition at New York, 26 August 1992, 10 a.m. (New York Time)," in Weller ed., *Iraq and Kuwait*, 725.

38. "Remarks on Hurricane Andrew and the Situation in Iraq and an Exchange with Reporters," August 26, 1992, *Bush Papers*, 2.

At first glance, the establishment of the SNFZ was effective in reducing the air threat from southern Iraq. Evidently remembering the air campaign in the Gulf War, the IQAF promptly moved its aircraft out of the SNFZ on 26 August 1992.³⁹ The original commander of JTF-SWA, Lieutenant General Michael Nelson, USAF, noted in early September of 1992: “We’ve been at this almost two weeks and he (Iraqi President Saddam Hussein) has clearly decided not to challenge the ‘no-fly’ zone.”⁴⁰ President Bush publicly concluded that the mission had succeeded in protecting the people of southern Iraq from attacks by the IQAF by mid-September 1992.⁴¹ In November 1992, there were indications of some small-scale activities by the Iraqi army in the area,⁴² so the coalition remained to monitor the situation.

Operation SOUTHERN WATCH was conducted by the JTF-SWA. This organization provided a headquarters (see Figure 2) for all CENTCOM assets in theatre and acted as the agency responsible for the planning and execution of SOUTHERN WATCH. As such, JTF-SWA maintained tactical control over US Navy, US Army, British and French forces assigned to the region.⁴³ Tactical control granted authority to the commander of JTF-SWA to task the RAF and French Air Force units participating in SOUTHERN WATCH to conduct activities in accordance with the coalition plan. They, however, could only do so in accordance with national direction on the employment of forces or the use of force. The integration of contributions from different nations included air assets and headquarters staff.⁴⁴ The Commander JTF-SWA was not responsible for sustaining them or providing overall direction. Both the British and French governments maintained overall political control over their forces and could direct them to participate or not in the operations.

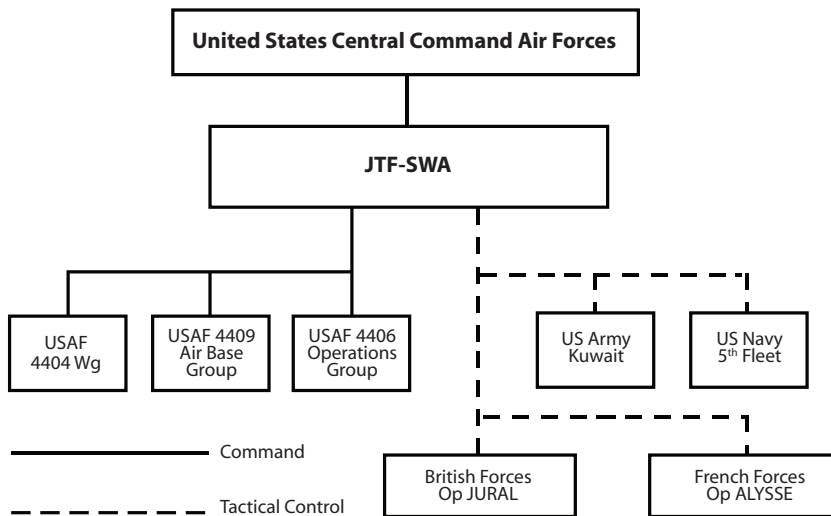


Figure 2. JTF-SWA organization circa 1997⁴⁵

39. J. Dettmer and C. Walker, “Iraq Moves Combat Aircraft Away from Shia Marshlands,” *Times*, August 26, 1992.

40. J. Bird, “Southern Watch,” *Air Force Times*, September 28, 1992.

41. “Bush Says Iraq Halts Raids on Shiites,” *International Herald Tribune*, September 18, 1992.

42. UK, Hansard *Parliamentary Debates*, 6th Series, vol. 214 (November 18, 1992), col. 250 (“Written Answers”).

43. JTF-SWA Briefing Package, 19.

44. *Ibid.* This is not inconsistent with French participation in missions, where operational/tactical intelligence sharing is common. See: *Livre Blanc Sur La Défense 1994*, 47 and 67; and T. Posner, *Current French Security Policy: The Gaullist Legacy* (London: Greenwood, 1991), 91.

45. JTF-SWA Briefing Package.

Due to the nature and complexity of airspace control as well as the British and French assets in theatre, neither nation was capable of independent operations. For example, neither brought any independent command and control (C2) aircraft like the airborne warning and control system (AWACS) aircraft. The first Deputy Commander JTF-SWA, Rear Admiral David Rogers, USN, noted that the RAF brought two versions of the Tornado. This added to the number of aircraft that could be used for attacks but, more importantly, increased the JTF's capacity to conduct tactical reconnaissance. He noted that the French contribution was an excellent air defence fighter.⁴⁶ This was consistent with the French policy position. By only providing air defence fighters, French aircraft could not be called on to strike Iraqi ground targets. The JTF-SWA flew a mix of planes. There were aircraft designed for air superiority (F-14, F-15C, F-16, F-18, Mirage F-1 and Mirage 2000), air reconnaissance (Tornado GR-1), bombers (F-117A and F-15E), electronic warfare (F-4G, E-3, EC-135 and EF111A) and ground attack aircraft (A-10).⁴⁷ The coalition could monitor Iraqi operations while maintaining air supremacy.

Flight operations over Iraq's southern skies were both costly (in political and economic terms) and dangerous. For the 11 years that the SNFZ was in existence, the coalition flew more than 30,000 sorties per year. Given the nature of the environment, the need to sustain forces (and maintain aircraft) deployed overseas and the need to provide for force protection, the long-term maintenance of an NFZ was far from inexpensive.⁴⁸ Such economic costs mounted over time, but the expenditure of political capital by a government or governments was much more costly in countries with populations sensitive to the presence of foreign military forces, such as Saudi Arabia. Last and not least, the Iraqi military also challenged aircraft enforcing the NFZ.

The Justification

SOUTHERN WATCH, in legal terms, was based on the precedent set by PROVIDE COMFORT II. The logic of SCR 688—in which there was a perceived need to protect the persecuted elements of Iraqi society, but without specific authorization by the UN—was applied to southern Iraq. Such justification required that the following conditions be satisfied:

- a. a suitable reason to act forcefully to modify behaviour;
- b. an agreement within the international community on the ends being pursued;
- c. an agreement within the international community that the ends being pursued warranted the use or threat of force; and
- d. the credibility of the belief that the ends being pursued were representative of international desires as opposed to national objectives.

The coalition's governments claimed that SCR 688 provided sufficient justification for the operation.⁴⁹ So how did this apply to the aforementioned conditions? The first condition appeared to be instantly satisfied by the general frustration with the Iraqi government's human rights record. The other conditions proved to be more contentious.

46. R. Chumley, "Southern Watch," *Airman*, no. 37 (January 1993): 3–4.

47. JTF-SWA Briefing Package, 35. It should be noted that the ground attack aircraft became more prevalent as a result of Operation VIGILANT WARRIOR.

48. Alexander Benard, "Lessons from Iraq and Bosnia and the Theory and Practice of No-fly Zones," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 27, no. 3 (September 2004): 459.

49. L. Doyle, "UN Was Bypassed over 'No Fly Zone,'" *Independent*, 19 August 1992.

The desired ends of OSW were unclear, and this lack of clarity had particular implications. Like PROVIDE COMFORT II, it represented what could be done given a series of political limitations by allowing the coalition to provide for the security of the Shia without intruding too deeply into Iraqi affairs. In this case, the desired end state was the absence of counter-insurgency operations or such operations weakened in intensity so that a refugee problem would not be created. Yet it also offered the coalition a potential tool for supporting the containment of Iraq, and this contributed to the international doubt about American motives during the second half of the decade.

The situation in southern Iraq, while it did not necessarily warrant the use of force, warranted the presence of forces. This was controversial as it eroded Iraqi sovereignty and led to questions of whether the means used were legal. The main issue in SOUTHERN WATCH was the legality of Iraq's forfeiture of its sovereignty due to human rights abuses. Saddam Hussein's government was recognized internationally as the legitimate government of Iraq. Yet due to Iraq's questionable human rights record, the international community tolerated foreign powers exercising control over sections of Iraqi airspace. This position has been criticized, motive notwithstanding, as the projection of military power into the territory of a sovereign state without positive justification.⁵⁰ With Iraq's acceptance of SCR 687, a ceasefire existed, and SCRs 678 and 686 authorized force if and only if Kuwait was threatened or Iraq acted in a provocative manner.⁵¹ Yet SCR 688 failed to provide positive justification for the presence of air power over Iraq.⁵² Thus, there was no *de jure* authorization of the NFZs by the UNSC. The presence of forces in and over Iraq had been tolerated by the international community as a matter of custom after PROVIDE COMFORT II.

The last condition is sufficiently vague to create a significant problem. What is representative of the international community? On the one hand, UNSC resolutions assign a legal quality to what are essentially political decisions and are useful in this regard. The existence of a philosophy of intervention (i.e., the *droit d'ingérence*) within international discourse could also be considered representative without requiring recourse to a political or legal authority. This was a curious situation. Both the British and French governments favoured the argument of the *droit* consistent with a philosophical outlook, but the American government consistently argued that SCR 688, a political decision with legal qualities, provided sufficient justification.⁵³ This argument assumed that some form of approval (even if not considered as binding) was required from the international community to avoid difficulties, as the *droit* was not considered to be universal or even a right by most states. To argue that SCR 688 was insufficient would have weakened the American position with regard to PROVIDE COMFORT II. Eventually, the British government changed its position to match the American.⁵⁴ Under the *droit d'ingérence*: "Limited armed action on behalf of a population in danger of being exterminated is legally justified, even in the absence of positive authorization from the Security Council."⁵⁵ This argument reinforced the concept that international law is fundamentally driven by consensus as opposed to controlled by rules set by a central authority, despite the cynical use of such rules by various governments. Such arguments were, therefore, only as valid as the international community decided, and few governments shared a common interpretation of the situation. The coalition's concerns for the Shia, much like its concerns for the Kurds, were sufficient to create a consensus within the international community that Iraqi sovereignty could be violated if it kept the situation in southern Iraq relatively calm and saved some lives. Ironically, it breathed some life into the *droit d'ingérence*.

50. M. Weller, "Intervention Plans Lack Specific UN Sanction," *Times*, August 20, 1992.

51. *Ibid.*

52. *Ibid.*

53. J. Bone, "Security Council Members Query the Legal Basis of 'No-fly' Zone," *Times*, December 28, 1992.

54. L. Doyle and C. Richards, "No-fly Zone Imposed on Iraq," *Independent*, August 27, 1992.

55. M. Weller, "Intervention Plans Lack Specific UN Sanction."

The rules of engagement (ROE) further complicated the legal situation that surrounded SOUTHERN WATCH. The ROE stated clearly that:

No threat to coalition operations over southern Iraq will be tolerated. The Iraqi Government should know that coalition aircraft will use appropriate force in response to any indication of hostile intent as defined in previous diplomatic demarches. Inter alia, illumination and/or tracking of aircraft with fire control radars and any other actions deemed threatening to coalition aircraft, such as the intrusion of Iraqi aircraft in the no-fly zone, would be an indication of hostile intent.⁵⁶

This stems from the right to self-defence enshrined in Article 51 of the UN Charter. As the forces conducting SOUTHERN WATCH were monitoring compliance with SCR 688, they needed some justification for the use of force in SNFZ enforcement. However, in the absence of de jure authorization for their presence over Iraq, this position was dubious. The SOUTHERN WATCH ROE, promulgated by the Commander JTF-SWA in accordance with the agreements among the coalition members, allowed force in self-defence. Due to the nature of the Iraqi IADS, the target needed to be illuminated by radar prior to launching a missile.⁵⁷ Illumination was dangerous from the perspective of the aircrews and the coalition in general. Data from a single radar could be shared across the IADS in real time, and other air defence systems could be brought to bear. Therefore, there existed, in the eyes of the coalition, sufficient justification to attack air defence radars and weapons systems. Larger uses of force, involving deliberate air strikes against specific targets, had come to require more elaborate justifications. However, coalition forces were already present over the skies of Iraq due to a de facto authorization, and their ROE permitted them to use force prior to the development of crises if threatened by Iraqi forces.

Modus Operandi

Those conducting SOUTHERN WATCH believed that their purpose was to deter Iraq as well as to monitor Iraq's compliance. While the rationale for SOUTHERN WATCH was to end the persecution of the Shia, it clearly served other purposes. For example, one squadron commander was quoted as saying: "We've been the primary deterrent to [Saddam Hussein] doing something stupid a second time."⁵⁸ This was a reference to the invasion of Kuwait, rather than the brutal treatment of certain parts of the population of southern Iraq. Operation VIGILANT WARRIOR was an example of the application of a deterrent strategy. This illustrates a fundamental problem with using air power and cruise missiles in both coercive and enabling manners. The distinction between the two purposes can become very blurry. Monitoring could be construed as a coercive act, but it also enabled the deterrence of Iraq.

From its inception in August 1992 until the summer of 1996, there were two main activities for the JTF-SWA. It sought to demonstrate its presence and monitor events in southern Iraq. Its patrols were organized to fulfil these roles. The standard OSW profiles consisted of four fighters that would fly from Dhahran Airbase and head for the Iraqi–Saudi border. South of the border, they would undergo aerial refuelling before entering the SNFZ in order to prevent tankers from having to operate over Iraq. The four fighters would fly around the zone for 30 to 45 minutes before returning to Dhahran. Occasionally, patrols were directed to fly over specific areas to observe events, but the main purpose of

56. "Statement Issued by the Members," in Weller ed., *Iraq and Kuwait*, 725.

57. This included the SA-2, SA-3 and Roland systems. The remainder of Iraqi air defence weapons are passive infrared guided. See T. Cullen and C. Foss, *Jane's Land-Based Air Defence 1996–1997* (Coulson: Jane's, 1996), 8–10, 98, 100, 102, 113, 115, 140, 247 and 250 for technical details.

58. Lieutenant Colonel Jim Hartney, USAF, Commander of the 27th Tactical Fighter Squadron, cited in S. Watkins, "Monotonous - But Worth It," *Air Force Times*, December 19, 1994.

the patrols was to create radar signatures to demonstrate their presence.⁵⁹ Such actions demonstrated that the coalition was present and watching what occurred in Iraq. It was inevitable that the Iraqi government, due to the nature of the IADS, detected the presence of coalition aircraft.

An NFZ creates particular requirements for air planners. Reconnaissance and air superiority aircraft are required for monitoring the airspace and territory within the zone. The key to a successful NFZ is maintaining a perpetual presence, and this translated into a series of infrastructure requirements. First of all, airfields with facilities that allow for the maintenance of modern jet aircraft are required. Second, to enforce an NFZ, the force requires a C3I system that can provide planning direction to its units, control them while in the NFZ and ensure that the airspace between the NFZ and the airfields is free of conflict. Tanker aircraft are also required, as the airfields are frequently far from the NFZ. In addition, a perpetual presence requires aircraft to be in the NFZ for protracted periods. Maintaining tanker tracks over northern Saudi Arabia leads one to conclude that the coalition wanted to make the best use of every sortie by increasing loiter times. Given the maintenance requirements for aircraft, it is counterproductive to send aircraft for short periods of time, as aircraft require the same number of maintenance hours regardless of whether the sorties last one or six hours.

The coalition was very concerned about force protection and the potential for casualties associated with operations over Iraq. The decision to select the 32nd parallel as the border of the SNFZ was not arbitrary. The overflights needed to be staged from a location that allowed the coalition to maintain sufficient coverage of the NFZ without unnecessary effort, and where the JTF-SWA could react quickly in the event of an Iraqi provocation, but be outside the range of Iraqi forces. An attack by Iraqi ground or air forces was considered highly improbable, but the possibility of previously well-hidden Scud (or even a rocket with a range of less than 150 km) could not be discounted.

The Iraqi government did not attempt to attack the coalition's bases in Saudi Arabia using conventional methods. Given that UNSCOM's assessment was that the Iraqi ballistic missile arsenal had been significantly reduced and the coalition could deal effectively with any Iraqi ground or air activities, this threat waned over time. Whether Iraq conducted or supported the 25 June 1996 attack on the Khobar Towers complex in Saudi Arabia may never be known; however, it led to an increase in the emphasis on force protection for the JTF-SWA and to Operation DESERT FOCUS, which was:

an operation designed to consolidate U.S. forces in the USCENTCOM area of responsibility (AOR) into more defensible locations. The majority of effort involved moving operational forces from the 4404th Wing (Provisional) [WG(P)] at Dhahran AB and the 4409th Operations Group (P) (OG(P)) at Riyadh AB to Prince Sultan AB at Al Kharj, Saudi Arabia.⁶⁰

The attack and subsequent move were not an insurmountable obstacle for the JTF-SWA, but rather a tragic setback. The operational tempo and SNFZ coverage were maintained. If it had been an Iraqi-inspired or supported act in a scheme of counter-coercion, it failed to cause the coalition to withdraw or reduce operations.

The tempo of operations would vary depending on the situation. The initial tempo of the operation was high, at approximately 120 sorties per day, but the weather and a lack of Iraqi resistance and activity allowed it to drop.⁶¹ The results from 1993 (see Figure 3) corroborate the hypothesis about

59. Paul K. White, *Crises after the Storm: An Appraisal of U.S. Air Operations in Iraq since the Persian Gulf War*, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy Military Research Paper No. 2 (Washington, DC: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 1999), 16.

60. JTF-SWA Briefing Package, 3.

61. Bird, "Southern Watch."

the relationship between threat perception and sortie rate. The peak of activity occurred in January. From there, the tempo remained at a rate of roughly 64 sorties per day, with some notable exceptions. In November, the monthly average for sorties was 44 per day. Over that year, the perceived level of threat or crisis fell, as Iraq was being more cooperative with UNSCOM in 1993–94. When the coalition's perception of threat to the forces of the JTF-SWA increased, and the political situation was such that force was required, the JTF-SWA would conduct a form of offensive counter-air campaign. The typical day for the air forces of the joint task force (JTF) would have approximately 75 sorties, of which 50 or 60 of them were over southern Iraq. The maintenance burden created by the number of sorties led to the need to tank aircraft over northern Saudi Arabia. These sorties were made up of a variety of aircraft which performed a number of roles, such as airspace surveillance, combat air patrol, the suppression of air defence, electronic warfare and tactical reconnaissance.⁶²

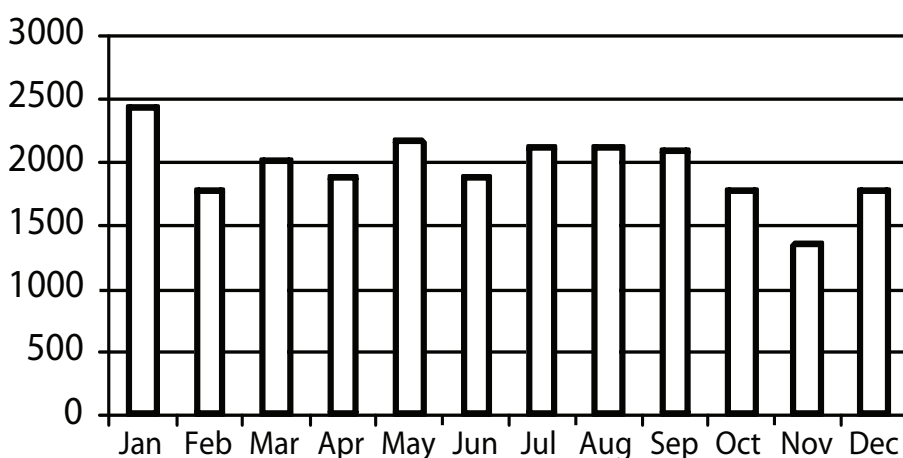


Figure 3. 1993 sorties by month⁶³

Enabling Operation

Since its inception, the JTF-SWA had assisted with a number of operations, such as VIGILANT WARRIOR, DESERT STRIKE and DESERT FOX. By launching SOUTHERN WATCH, the coalition enabled future threats and use of force. Forward presence allowed for two things beyond monitoring and constantly improving the intelligence picture with regard to southern Iraq. One, it allowed for the Iraqi government to assess the coalition's military capabilities (thus drawing the conclusion that military resistance would be costly if not conducted carefully); two, it increased the credibility of the coalition's threats. Ultimately, it enabled the containment of Iraq.

How did SOUTHERN WATCH enable future operations? As with its northern version, SCR 688 justified the presence of forces that enabled greater success in coercive operations. Its stated mission was to “[c]onduct presence and military surveillance operations over Iraqi territory south of 32 degrees north latitude to monitor and report on Iraqi compliance with UNSCR 688”⁶⁴ General Nelson described its mission by stating that “[t]he no-fly zone is really a means to an end. We implemented

62 Congressional Information Service S201-9 (1993), 64.

63. UN, “DoD Authorization for Appropriations for FY 95 and the Future Years’ Defense Programme (Part 1),” Congressional Information Service S201-21 (1995), 312.

64. Congressional Information Service S201-9 (1993), 63.

it so the coalition members could have better insight into what Saddam Hussein is doing in that area south of 32 degrees north and thereby be able to verify his compliance with the UN's security council resolution 688.⁶⁵ The information-gathering/monitoring function flowed from SCR 688. The JTF, through its presence, represented an implicit threat to the Iraqi government as well as a means of monitoring Iraqi military activities in the south. If the Iraqi government was to engage in undesirable activities, it was guaranteed that the coalition would impose a penalty.

So what could the coalition see from the skies over southern Iraq? As coalition aircraft flew over southern Iraq, they could gather information. The coalition could engage in the process of target acquisition; reconnaissance aircraft were very helpful in this regard. Coalition forces received very realistic training as a result of such provocations, and at the same time, they could reconnoitre potential targets. One USAF officer noted: "Flying over southern Iraq affords us the opportunity to scout out the targets we will be tasked to hit in wartime, practice attacking them, and evaluate and refine our tactics and thereby our chances for success."⁶⁶ Such information was necessary to make assessments of the nature of particular target sites by gauging the relative weight and type of air defence coverage, the best routes and altitudes for attack as well as the suitability of targets (in terms of the possibility of collateral damage or the target's proximity to other installations, i.e., hospitals or other facilities).⁶⁷ The coalition could also analyse the target sets and their relationships to one another, leading to the development of a near real-time intelligence picture of Iraq as a system of target sets over time. The SNFZ did not contain a significant number of individual targets. It did contain the majority of the Southern Air Defence Sector and some key transportation links, but only a small number of WMD-related sites. These were clustered around Baghdad. The SNFZ, in this case, held limited utility for the purposes of coercion but was very useful in terms of the defence of Kuwait should Iraq have acted. Given that UNSCOM was also present and exchanged information with the coalition, whether this was intentional or not, the coalition's knowledge of Iraq increased significantly. This assisted greatly in the process of target selection in later operations.

There were political dangers associated with the use of air power as an enabler while using a humanitarian justification. One, there was the obvious concern that the international community would see the justification as false. Two, the close working relationship between the coalition and UNSCOM lent credibility to accusations of partiality and, ultimately, weakened the political foundations of the coalition. Three, this led to a situation where the coalition could not win in a conventional sense. If Iraq complied with SCR 688 by ceasing its counter-insurgency operations in southern Iraq, there would be no justification for a force presence over southern Iraq, and there would be a further deterioration of the American and coalition political and legal positions. If Iraq failed to comply with SCR 688, the US and coalition were stuck with an open-ended military commitment from which they could not withdraw without displaying a lack of will.

The Evolution towards Coercion

The coalition moved slowly towards the NFZs becoming an instrument of coercion. By the end of 1992, it became apparent that the Iraqi military would fight for its airspace, and force protection became the priority. There was little in the way of a dedicated ground attack capability that would assist in the exercise of coercion. While aircraft weapons loads could be changed to include bombs as opposed to exclusively air-to-air missiles, this was not a dedicated capability. The final evolution occurred in

65. Nelson, cited in Chumley, 2.

66. S. Graton, "Combat Smart, Inherently Safe," *Combat Edge*, no. 4 (May 1996): 10.

67. An Iraqi government bunker located at Al-Firdos was struck by the coalition in mid-February 1991. It was considered a legitimate target by the coalition, who became aware after the fact that the bunker was also sheltering Iraqi civilians. See Clancy, 387–88.

the summer of 1996, when the patrol composition changed from four aircraft. A typical package involved four F-15s to provide defensive counter-air (DCA) support, four F-16CJ Wild Weasel fighters to provide SEAD support, eight F-16CG strike aircraft armed with laser-guided bombs and a pair of EF-111 electronic combat jamming aircraft. British Tornado and French Mirage fighter and reconnaissance aircraft were often integrated into the package. In addition, DCA support, usually provided by F-15s, always accompanied U-2 strategic reconnaissance aircraft on their missions.⁶⁸

Two observations can be made. First, the U-2s based in Saudi Arabia flew as part of UNSCOM, proving that the coalition and UN were virtually synonymous. Second, by this time, any patrol could be called upon to strike targets in Iraq. The change in armament load was combined with the expansion of the SNFZ to the 33rd parallel in September 1996 as part of Operation DESERT STRIKE. After the extension, coalition aircraft routinely appeared as far north as Baghdad's suburbs, and the SNFZ became a coercive instrument as a result.

SOUTHERN WATCH was an operation intended to monitor the situation in southern Iraq. A by-product of this was the application of a deterrence strategy towards Iraqi depredations. It had the benefit of enabling the timely use of force against Iraq in support of SCR 687. Yet, the operation used SCR 688 as the justification for a military presence. Coalition forces were permitted to employ force in order to reduce threats, thus enabling their continued presence. The US government believed that coalition casualties could have led to difficulties, such as public pressure to withdraw. The use of more elaborate justifications for other operations by JTF-SWA, such as DESERT STRIKE and DESERT FOX, demonstrated that its mission was not necessarily to monitor SCR 688 but, rather, to be present and to use force in support of SCR 687 when it was required.

While the coalition could reach across Iraq easily (the distance between the 32nd and 36th parallels was only 300 miles [482 km]), the historical practice of dealing with targets in central Iraq was to use cruise missiles or aircraft that employed stealth technology. Both means were considered and planned out by the coalition, yet the coalition opted to monitor (and later to monitor and coerce) Iraq with air power. In the spring of 1998, the Clinton administration sought to reduce its force presence in the region. This reduction of forces (built up largely for the abortive Operation DESERT THUNDER in February 1998), in terms of the number of aircraft and naval vessels, was done so that more T-LAM capable warships remained, placing a further emphasis on the use of cruise missiles.⁶⁹

Assessment

Were there unexpected costs? SOUTHERN WATCH came with political costs. A Western presence was not easy for some, as General Zinni noted:

Forward presence has put a strain on some relationships. If it's very visible, it can be counterproductive. We look for ways to lower the visibility. In part, we emphasise the pre-positioning of equipment; we also look for bases that don't put us in areas where we're very visible. It's best to pre-position and have low numbers of people off to the side.⁷⁰

Another means of reducing the political costs was to deploy AEFs to other states, such as Bahrain in October 1995 and Jordan in 1996.⁷¹ It became increasingly important to ensure the support of the

68. P. K. White, 37.

69. *Ibid.*, 54.

70. Zinni, cited in Cordesman, *Lessons of Desert Fox*, 62.

71. P. McKenna, "Air Jordan," *Airman* (August 1996): 4.

Gulf States, as a lack of support for air strikes elsewhere had forced the cancellation of strikes or the use of missiles or carrier-based air assets.⁷² When the Gulf States believed that Iraq was not a threat, they were less inclined to support the use of force. Did it help the Shia?

SOUTHERN WATCH's nominal purpose remained somewhat unfulfilled, as the Iraqis were relatively free to carry on with counter-insurgency operations albeit without air support. By 1994, it was noted that the Iraqis seldom, if ever, flew into the SNFZ; thus that particular threat to the peoples of southern Iraq vanished. Therefore, SOUTHERN WATCH achieved its first purpose. However, the absence of Iraqi air power was replaced by a more liberal use of artillery.⁷³ This suggested that the enforcement of SCR 688 was not the primary concern, or it was hindered by the lack of will to commit land forces or change the ROE to allow attacks on Iraqi ground forces. If the purpose of SOUTHERN WATCH was only the enforcement of SCR 688, then the presence of American and coalition forces was necessary until the Iraqi government ceased to engage in operations against the Shia and other minorities of southern Iraq. This meant, in a sense, that once the Special Rapporteur for Human Rights was satisfied with Iraqi behaviour, the need for the operation would no longer exist. However, the Special Rapporteur was seldom, if ever, satisfied. This itself supported the continued existence of the SNFZ and provided the coalition with a means of supporting the containment of Iraq.

72. For example, DESERT FOX was postponed due to the lack of support among the Gulf States for air strikes in November 1998. See S. Myers, "Arabs Show Little Support for Strikes against Iraq," *International Herald Tribune*, November 7, 1998. DESERT THUNDER was cancelled for the same reason. See "Bahrain Bars Sorties," *International Herald Tribune*, February 18, 1998; C. Lorieux, "Le ligue arabe se mobilise," *Figaro*, February 5, 1998; and S. Myers, "Saudis Won't Help in any Raid on Iraq but More NATO Allies Back U.S.," *International Herald Tribune*, February 9, 1998.

73. "Status on Iraq," Congressional Information Service H380-11 (1994), 1–2.

Chapter 8: January 1993

In late December 1992 and early January 1993, Iraq began to harass the coalition while defying the UN. The coalition attacked air defence assets in southern Iraq in order to reduce the possibility of coalition casualties during the SNFZ enforcement and, after that, a WMD production site to coerce the Iraqi government into compliance with SCR 687. Facing a choice of being disarmed and monitored either forcefully (with violently imposed costs) or peacefully (without violently imposed costs), the Iraqi government chose the latter. As a result, the coalition learned that coercion was effective in the short run.

At issue were Iraq's lack of compliance with SCR 687 and opposition to the NFZs. There were three specific areas of contention with regard to SCR 687. These were Iraq's denial of overflight rights to UNSCOM on 7 January 1993, the failure to remove Iraqi police posts on Kuwaiti territory as well as the incursion into UNIKOM's headquarters and seizure of munitions by an Iraqi mob on 10 January 1993.

Iraq's interference with UNSCOM was troubling for the international community as it pertained to the programme of Iraqi disarmament. On 7 January 1993, the Iraqi government, citing reasons of sovereignty, informed UNSCOM that it should be using Iraqi aircraft instead of UN aircraft.¹ The Security Council naturally objected and reminded the Iraqi government of its obligations under SCR 687. It seemed that Iraq sought to play the UN and coalition against one another.

The American government and military were very concerned about the risk of taking casualties over the SNFZ. During late 1992, it became apparent that the Iraqi armed forces were trying to challenge the coalition's command of the air over southern Iraq.² The IQAF began to send its fighters into the SNFZ when coalition aircraft were not present as a form of challenge.³ On 2 January 1993, an Iraqi air defence battery fired a SAM at a U-2 conducting an overflight of Iraqi territory on behalf of UNSCOM.⁴ A number of Iraqi mobile air defence systems, such as SA-2 and SA-3 missiles, moved into the SNFZ in late December and early January.⁵ General Hoar recalled:

Intelligence had revealed that the Iraqi Air Force had been making provocative attempt[s] to "trap" individual aircraft. For example, an individual Coalition plane might run across a single Iraqi fighter violating the zone. If he pursued, the Iraqi would cut and fly low. Meanwhile, two or three other Iraqi fighters would be waiting at a much higher altitude to trap and shoot down the Coalition plane. It appeared that a confrontation was looming, with their attempts to trap and the sudden activity with their air defence system. The latter was also dangerous, because their integrated system allowed them to lock the target with one radar, and pass the information to the others. This meant that it only took a second of lock for them to be able to fire on a plane ... Their next step would have been to shoot down one of our aircraft in the "Box" or a successful use of the "MiG trap," which was the enticement to fight with others waiting. The provocations did not come so much from the air defence sites, but the intent was to prevent their use in support of the provocative use of aircraft.⁶

1. UN, "Statement by the President of the Security Council concerning United Nations Flights into Iraqi Territory," S/25081, January 8, 1993, 512–13.

2. See Congressional Information Service H380-11, 1; and "Joint Chiefs of Staff Briefing on Current Military Operations," Congressional Information Service S201-9, 29 January 1993, 47–48 and 59 for details.

3. P. K. White, 16.

4. Congressional Information Service S201-9, 48.

5. M. Gordon, "Iraq Is Reported to Move Missiles into Areas Patrolled by U.S. Jets," *New York Times*, January 5, 1993.

6. Interview General Joseph Hoar, USMC, copy in author's possession.

The JTF-SWA came to realize that the IQAF was capable of sophisticated tactics that required the coordination of both air defence assets and aircraft.⁷ It was more concerned about the IQAF than the air defence assets as the former were more mobile and less predictable.

What was the Iraqi government trying to achieve with such actions? By creating situations where casualties could be inflicted on coalition forces or UN forces along the Iraq–Kuwait frontier, the Iraqi government sought to force a withdrawal or curtailment of the activities of such forces. By harassing UNSCOM and UNIKOM, the Iraqi government sought to compel the coalition to use force, thereby placing coalition forces at risk. In short, it sought to provoke a response, generate political opposition to the UN programme or the coalition’s enforcement of the NFZ and/or impose costs associated with either programme.

The US, in concert with its coalition partners and the Russian Federation, initially tried to defuse the situation with an ultimatum. All four governments demanded that the SAMs be removed from the SNFZ:

[T]he Perm [sic] Four—that is, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States—delivered the warning yesterday afternoon [6 January 1993] to Nizar Hamdoon, the Iraqi Permanent Representative to the United Nations. After that, the message was also given to the head of the Iraqi Interests Section here in Washington It was a clear warning that told them to stop violating the no-fly zone. It asked them for specific actions, and it asked them to comply right away “Remove the missiles beyond the 32nd Parallel”⁸

The Iraqis had 48 hours to move the missiles out of the SNFZ. This meant that by 2230 Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) on 8 January, the missiles had to be back in central Iraq.⁹ The coalition threatened to use force if Iraq failed to comply with the démarche.

The Iraqi government argued its sovereignty was at stake. Nizar Hamdoon stated: “Iraq does not recognize the no-fly zone because it is not a UN job. It was imposed by three Western powers, and based on that, Iraq reserves its right to move whatever it wants at the time it deems necessary.”¹⁰ He argued that Iraqi sovereignty could not be compromised without Iraqi consent; this was an argument consistent with paragraph three of SCR 688 and the 1991 MoU on humanitarian relief in Iraq. However, Iraqi actions and its government’s refusal to cooperate with UNSCOM suggested that it would not comply with UN resolutions, including the aforementioned MoU.¹¹ This weakened the Iraqi argument about sovereignty.

The coalition had two aims during the January 1993 crisis. First, it wanted to secure Iraqi compliance with SCR 687 and all of its programmes. Marlin Fitzwater, the White House spokesperson, stated after the Umm Qasr incident (see below):

This episode should make clear to Iraq that interference with UN and coalition operations, including humanitarian relief operations, Operation Provide Comfort, United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspections of Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction, and the United Nations Iraq–Kuwait

7. P. K. White, 25.

8. Department of State Daily Press Briefing, January 7, 1993, 12.

9. M. Gordon, “Iraq Is Reported to Move Missiles into Areas Patrolled by U.S. Jets,” *New York Times*, January 5, 1993.

10. Hamdoon, cited in “US Press Release: Iraq Ignores Allied Warning, 7 January 1993” in Weller ed., *Iraq and Kuwait*, 735.

11. Graham-Brown, 298 and 309.

Observer Mission (UNIKOM) force on the Iraq–Kuwait border, will not be tolerated. In this regard, we fully support the UN Security Council presidential statement of January 6 that demanded that Iraq comply with its obligations. We underscore the Security Council’s warning of serious consequences if Iraq fails to do so.¹²

If Iraq was successfully coerced into compliance with SCR 687 and its antecedents by the coalition, the worrisome threat to regional stability posed would be reduced.

Second, the coalition wanted to reduce the possibility of casualties stemming from Iraqi resistance over both NFZs. The *démarche* obtained the desired concession in word but not in spirit. After the missiles were moved from the SNFZ, some SAM batteries appeared in the NNFZ.¹³ The American government saw this as a renewed attempt at provocation. In a 12 January television interview, Marlin Fitzwater remarked:

We’re very concerned about this third incident because it continues the pattern of cheating on the UN resolutions that we’ve been seeing over the last several weeks. Saddam has obviously picked up this activity in the last many [sic] days. He’s tried to get around the resolutions in any number of ways. So the UN condemnation last night really put the world community on record as saying this is not acceptable and we’re now in a position of watching to see how he may proceed from here. It is a matter of extreme concern.¹⁴

If a threat to the planes enforcing the NFZs existed, then the coalition was less able to control the skies with impunity. The coalition’s ability to monitor the situation would be jeopardized. In a Department of State press briefing, it was stated:

There’s a threat to US forces and to allied forces as long as Iraq maintains its aggressive posture down there. I mean, they have repeatedly violated the no-fly zone. They’ve augmented their surface-to-air assets, their missiles, in the no-fly zone. Those actions or violations are covered with—coupled with—other actions that suggest an aggressive intent. That circumstance has made it necessary for the coalition to take measures to ensure the safety of its aircrews, and to discourage further Iraqi attempts to evade the no-fly regime in both the north and the south. Until Iraq changes its attitude basically, that sort of aggressive posture and intent will not have dissipated.¹⁵

The aim of any use of force was to prevent coalition casualties and to demonstrate the American and coalition preparedness to use that force.

The Iraqi government engaged in foot-dragging in other areas. Iraq and Kuwait were responsible for law and order on their respective sides of the DMZ, meaning that each state needed to maintain a police presence in the zone. Between June and September 1991, Iraq moved a series of 14 police posts into the DMZ, and 5 were placed in Kuwaiti territory. UNIKOM asked the Iraqi authorities to move them, only to be told that they “had been in place before 2 August 1990 and that pulling them back would prejudice Iraq’s position regarding the demarcation of the border. Once the demarcation had taken place, Iraq would comply with the ‘reasonable distance’ principle.”¹⁶

12. “Iraq Apparently Accedes to Coalition’s No-Fly Demands,” White House Press Release, January 12, 1993, 1.

13. M. Gordon, “Iraq Is Said to Shift Missiles into Excluded Zone in North,” *New York Times*, January 12, 1993; and D. Osborne and C. Richards, “Border Raids by Iraq Fuel Anger in US,” *Independent*, January 12, 1993.

14. Department of State Daily Press Briefing, January 12, 1993, 9.

15. Department of State Daily Press Briefing, January 7, 1993, 15.

16. UN, “Report of the Secretary-General on UNIKOM,” S/23000, September 3, 1991, 297.

The UNSC approval of UNIKBDC's findings on the land boundary in November 1992 meant that the posts had to move by the UNSC's assignation of a deadline: 15 January 1993.¹⁷

UNIKOM headquarters was housed in the former Iraqi naval base in the Iraqi town of Umm Qasr. This town, depending on the system of measurement used, has sat precisely on the border of, or been entirely within, Iraq. Of note is the period from 1932 to 1991 when the Iraqi government enforced the borders as if Umm Qasr was Iraqi, including the development of the port starting in 1961. UNIKBDC's efforts were based on demarcating the 1932 borders.¹⁸ Its security was a concern, as a number of Iraqi anti-ship missiles and other munitions remained in the base. The UN Secretariat and UNSC were well aware that these munitions posed a security threat and were exploring options for their destruction.¹⁹ On 10 January 1993, the Secretary-General reported:

[T]his morning at about 0700 local time, a party of some 200 Iraqis with trucks and heavy loading equipment forced entry into the six ammunition bunkers located in a former Iraqi naval base at Umm Qasr, on Kuwaiti territory, and took away most of their contents, including four HY-2G [Silkworm] anti-ship missiles ... [U]p to 500 Iraqi personnel continued today to dismantle prefabricated buildings in the former naval base, also on Kuwaiti territory, and to remove the parts and other items. This activity is in violation of the procedure established by the Security Council ...²⁰

This was a violation of the arms embargo and a move that rendered UNIKOM headquarters literally homeless.

The political context for the coalition's response and the constraints on its actions were derived from the policy positions and reactions to the use of force in a number of key states. The list included those states that played host to coalition forces (Kuwait, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Turkey), along with the members of the coalition itself and of the UNSC. Another constraint was international law. The military constraints that limited the coalition's options included actionable intelligence, the availability of forces and the limitations of the coalition's in-theatre assets.

The coalition enjoyed the support of the Gulf States at the outset of the crisis, and this was largely due to the attempt to find non-violent solutions before the use of force. Naturally, the Kuwaiti government was the most supportive, as it perceived a direct threat from the Iraqi actions with regard to the DMZ.²¹ Both the Saudi and Kuwaiti media showed more concern over the border violations than other issues. Saudi papers criticized Saddam Hussein's regime and its disregard for the UN.²² Kuwaiti commentary can be easily explained as self-interest, but the same argument could be applied to the Saudis. That state also had border disputes with Iraq and the United Arab Emirates.

17. UN, "Letter dated 8 January 1993 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General," Annex I to "Special report by the Secretary-General on UNIKOM," S/25085 (January 10, 1993), 514; and UN, "Statement by the President of the Security Council concerning general and specific obligations of Iraq under various Security Council resolutions relating to the situation between Iraq and Kuwait," S/24386 (November 23, 1992), 487.

18. For details, see Schofield, "The United Nations' Settlement," 70–81.

19. UN, "Letter dated 3 November 1992 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General," Annex III to S/25085, 515.

20. UN, "Special Report by the Secretary-General on UNIKOM," S/25085 (January 10, 1993), 513. "HY-2G" are Chinese-made anti-ship missiles popularly called "Silkworm."

21. S. Bhatia, "Saddam's Bulldozers Flatten UN," *Observer*, January 17, 1993; and "Kuwait Puts Air Force on Alert," *International Herald Tribune*, January 8, 1993.

22. "Press Views Iraqi Violations on Border," January 12, 1993, FBIS-NES-93-007, US Government document.

All the coalition members agreed that force was to be employed as a last resort. While still the President-Elect, Bill Clinton strongly supported the Bush administration's approach to the crisis.²³ This endorsement prevented the use of force from becoming a domestic political issue, potentially affecting the decision of when and how force should be employed. The British government also saw the Iraqi actions as threatening and defiant, and was prepared to use force if required.²⁴ The French government showed itself to be like-minded. A French communiqué dated 14 January 1993 stated: "The refusal of Iraq, in spite of the warnings, to comply with our demands has brought the allies to intervene."²⁵ While the coalition felt the need to deal harshly with Iraq, it hoped that this would be unnecessary.

Most UNSC members, including the Russian Federation, found the coalition's initial approach acceptable. The Russian government shared the view that Iraq's actions posed a problem. Its foreign ministry stated: "Russia had repeatedly, i.a. [sic] through her Embassy in Baghdad, urged the Iraqi side to display wisdom and readiness to cooperate with the UN Security Council, to refrain from steps leading to escalation of tension in the region."²⁶ Iraq's actions in the DMZ and its lack of cooperation aroused the ire of the Council.²⁷ The Council wanted the crisis and the tensions to end quickly, thus ensuring support for the *démarche*. This widespread consensus about the use of force as a last resort encompassed the view that any use of force should not be disproportionate and acted as a powerful restraint on the coalition.

There were three legal issues during this crisis. First, Iraq's desire to mitigate the erosion of its sovereignty by challenging the forces within the NFZs resulted in continued confrontations. The international community seemed to feel that the situation warranted the maintenance of the NFZs in the face of Iraqi resistance and the use of force to induce cooperation. Second, Iraq's actions with regard to UNSCOM and the DMZ were clear violations of SCR 687. By refusing to move the police posts, the Iraqi government tried to influence UNIKBDC's demarcation of the land boundary. The seizure of the Silkworm missiles and the prefabricated buildings at the former naval base in Umm Qasr by Iraqi nationals was a violation of the sanctions and the arms embargo. Last, the refusal to allow UNSCOM's overflights was a breach of SCR 687.²⁸

Violations of Chapter VII resolutions were punishable by force, if required. However, it is at least arguable that by a quirk of the wording of the relevant resolutions, aircraft that flew over Iraq had the positive right to engage if violations of the resolutions were manifest but, strictly, had no right to be there until infringements had in fact occurred.

Previous Iraqi actions had left the coalition with the sense that only its observable actions had any value. This meant that a premium was placed on the availability and accuracy of intelligence upon which to base any assessment of the situation. With the *démarche*, SAMs were the chosen targets as their movements were measurable.²⁹ However, there were some practical difficulties posed by the inclement weather over southern Iraq that month, as the measurement was contingent upon the coalition's ability

23 "US Press Release: Iraq Warned to Stop Harassment of U.N. Operations, December 28, 1992," in Weller ed., *Iraq and Kuwait*, 733.

24 "Interview with Malcolm Rifkind, UK Secretary of State for Defence, BBC Radio 4, on 8 January 1993" in Weller ed., *Iraq and Kuwait*, 735.

25 "Press statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France, 14 January 1993" in Weller ed., *Iraq and Kuwait*, 744.

26 "Press Release: Statement by the Russian Foreign Ministry, 14 January 1993" in Weller ed., *Iraq and Kuwait*, 745.

27 UN, "Statement by the President of the Security Council concerning United Nations' flights into Iraqi territory," S/25081 (January 8, 1993), 512–13; and UN, "Statement by the President of the Security Council concerning various actions by Iraq vis-à-vis UNIKOM and UNSCOM," S/25091 (January 11, 1993), 516.

28. For a list of the agreements, see UN, "Report of the Executive Chairman of UNSCOM transmitting an account of the Commission's operations in connection with the events since Iraq first informed the Commission that the Commission would not be allowed to use its aircraft to transport personnel and equipment into Iraq," S/25172 (January 29, 1993), 520.

29. D. Fairhall, "Character of Raid Dictated by Politics," *Guardian*, January 14, 1993.

to detect the missiles.³⁰ In short, neither the tactical reconnaissance aircraft nor the satellites were able to provide the required information, thus imposing a limitation on the attempt at coercion. The deadline came and went without action. Two days later, however, the American government was able to verify the Iraqi claim and noted that the missiles were moving out of the SNFZ.³¹ However, as Iraqi activities decreased in the SNFZ, they increased in the NNFZ. Thus, activity in the two NFZs had to be considered in conjunction with one another as well as that within the DMZ and Umm Qasr. This synoptic view became the determinant of the coalition's actions during the crisis.

With the assets already in theatre (see Table 7), the coalition could employ air power and/or cruise missiles. The latter meant the use of T-LAMs, with the option of using air assets to deliver air-launched cruise missiles. There was, however, a problem with the use of cruise missiles. The US military initially rejected the option of an unmanned strike. These were seen as inflexible because the range of target options was limited due to the time it would require to programme the missile guidance computers, and their use excluded the other members of the coalition.³² This need to show international resolve was a powerful incentive to opt for a manned strike.

Location	US	UK	France
Incirlik AB	38 x F-15E F-16 F-4G	6 x Jaguar	8 x Mirage F-1
Riyadh	2 x E-3 12 x KC-135 KC-10		
Mushayt	20 x F-117		
Taif	1 or 2 x U-2 2 x JSTARS		
Dhahran	20 x F-15E, C 20 x F-16 20 x A-10 20 x F-4G 6 x EF-111	6 x Tornado GR-1 2 x Victor	10 x Mirage F-1 1 x KC-135
Persian Gulf	USS <i>Kitty Hawk</i> (includes 70 x F/A-18, F-14, E-2C, EA-6B and A-6E) USS <i>Leahy</i> USS <i>Worden</i> USS <i>Cowpens</i> USS <i>Hewitt</i> USS <i>Stump</i> USS <i>Jarrett</i> USS <i>Roberts</i>	HMS <i>London</i> HMS <i>Nottingham</i>	

Table 7. Assets in theatre

30. Department of State Daily Press Briefing, January 8, 1993, 3.

31. "White House Statement on Iraq, 9 January 1993" in Weller ed., *Iraq and Kuwait*, 736.

32. Congressional Information Service S201-9, 66. The flexibility issue raises the question of whether the T-LAMs were not used initially in order to maintain a tool of escalation in case those air strikes failed.

So what target sets could be used to coerce Iraq? Given the political limitations, the coalition was left with four basic options. It could strike Iraqi airfields to impede the IQAF from flying, but the majority of the active IQAF airfields were north of the 32nd parallel and, therefore, outside the SNFZ. The coalition could also attack Iraqi army assets in southern Iraq, but the mandate for such action was questionable given that the raid on Umm Qasr was conducted by a mob as opposed to an identifiable military organization. Similarly, the coalition could strike at a WMD facility, but this did not address the coalition's problem with the SNFZ and risked appearing to be disproportionate. Attacking air defences, on the other hand, would demonstrate resolve and take greater steps toward force protection for the JTF-SWA.

The coalition could also deploy forces to the region. In this case, the deployment would reinforce the Kuwaiti armed forces as well as implicitly threaten the use of ground forces in support of UNIKOM. The crisis created a political and military opportunity for the US government. Not only would it show the Gulf States that the US would bring ground forces to the region quickly in times of crisis, but it also gave the US military the chance to practice doing so. To that end, a battalion-sized task force from the US Army's 1st Cavalry Division started to deploy on 13 January 1993.³³

The coalition opted to strike at air defences. The intent was to send the message that resistance would be costly. Iraq's actions in the DMZ were the catalyst for action. The strikes were intended to be a warning to the Iraqi government and a means of force protection. The CINC stated: "There were two purposes to the strikes. One, to end the provocations by significantly reducing their capability ... and two, to indicate to them that we were prepared to strike them militarily."³⁴ However, the choice of the target sets suggested that force protection was more important than Iraqi compliance. This came with the unintended consequence of reducing the credibility of future threats.

The air strikes on 13 January 1993 were launched against four SAM batteries, two of which were near Basra and two were near Nasariyah, as well as four fixed C3I and radar sites at An Najaf, Samawah, Tallil and Al-Amarah.³⁵ The strikes were supposed to occur on 12 January, but weather delayed them a day.³⁶ The strike aircraft were supported by a massive array of aircraft and were flying at around 9,000 feet (2,743 metres) due to the Iraqi SAMs.³⁷ The strikes were launched at night to minimize the risk of casualties. The JCS stated to the Senate Armed Services Committee that:

we conducted air strikes to neutralise the air defence sector which was controlled from An Najaf down to Samawah, at Tallil and back to Al Amarah, basically the air defence and control network has to run his [Saddam Hussein's] air defence system in the southern no-fly zone, as well ... [we had to] go after these SA-3 missiles that were still operationally deployed ...³⁸

In summary then, the intent was to render the southern air defence sector inoperable. The results of the strike were not as devastating as desired. The initial BDA revealed the existence of a number of problems and errors linked to weather and technical problems.³⁹ Of the SAM batteries, only one

33. "Allied Warplanes Hit Iraqi Missile Sites," *International Herald Tribune*, January 14, 1993.

34. Interview General Joseph Hoar, USMC, copy in author's possession.

35. P. K. White, 23.

36. Hoar, cited in D. Fulghum, "Allies Strike Iraq for Defying U.N.," *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, January 18, 1993.

37. Congressional Information Service S201-9, 67–68.

38. Congressional Information Service S201-9, 49. For a list of participating aircraft, see P. Almond, "Weather Caused Targeting Problems," *Daily Telegraph*, January 15, 1993; J. Boatman and P. Beaver, "Coalition Draws New Line in the Sand," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, January 23, 1993; Fulghum, "Allies Strike Iraq"; and G. Joffe, "The Allied Attacks," *Middle East International*, February 2, 1993.

39. Almond, "Weather Caused Targeting Problems"; and D. Fulghum, "Pentagon Criticizes Air Strike on Iraq," *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, January 25, 1993.

was destroyed, and the other two were ordered to disperse.⁴⁰ The results of the fixed targets were not much better. At Al Amarah, some radar and buildings were damaged, and Samawah experienced some damage to its radar. At Tallil, while there was some moderate damage to some buildings, the communications and radar systems were destroyed.⁴¹ The damage was not seen to be sufficient and proved to be somewhat controversial.

Yet there is a difference between physical damage and psychological effect. It appeared that the coalition was more concerned about the latter, or at least stated that was the case in light of the limited damage. Brent Scowcroft, President Bush's national security advisor, acknowledged that the strike was not as effective as was anticipated but stated this was irrelevant because the intent of the strike was to send a message to Baghdad.⁴² This message indicated that Iraq had a choice: either it could accept that the SNFZ existed and coalition aircraft would be present, or it could fight a DCA campaign with little prospect of victory. The Iraqi government chose to transfer the problem elsewhere. The American JCS noted that, after the 13 January strike, there was

a significant increase of events to the north. We had British, French and U.S. aircraft, and all received instances of AAA fire. Fortunately, none of the aircraft were hit. We also saw Saddam begin to deploy his aircraft and violate in a rather routine way the 36 no-fly zone with aircraft.⁴³

The results of the strike posed problems within the coalition. Each of the national contingents maintained an intelligence assessment capability, leading to differences in the perception of the situation. One account noted that the French and American assessments of the damage varied by 30 per cent. The American assessment maintained that approximately 50 per cent of the targets had been destroyed; whereas, the French assessment maintained that 80 per cent of the targets had been destroyed.⁴⁴ This contributed to the French perception of the later strikes being unnecessary or disproportionate. Thus, the BDA was important as it determined the coalition's choices of actions after 13 January.

Within days, the Iraqi government began to offer limited concessions by allowing UNSCOM to fly into Iraqi airspace if there were no coalition aircraft in Iraqi airspace at the same time. This was a form of bargaining where offers were being made in the hopes of forestalling other actions. The UN's historical account stated:

On 16 January, Iraq offered to ensure the safety of UNSCOM flights, but only if they entered Iraqi airspace from Jordanian airspace. UNSCOM responded that it did not have the operational capability to re-route its flights through Jordanian airspace and reminded Iraq of its obligations to cooperate with UNSCOM. While continuing to block all UNSCOM flights, Iraq stated on 17 January that UNSCOM aircraft could enter Iraqi airspace from Bahrain if UNSCOM ensured that no aircraft of the coalition States flew in the no-fly zones over Iraq whenever UNSCOM aircraft were in Iraqi airspace.⁴⁵

The Iraqi government was prepared to accede to the demands under SCR 687 but was not prepared to give up the right to defend Iraqi sovereignty in its entirety. The results obtained, therefore, were equivocal—the Iraqi government offered concessions as if haggling, but these fell short of the coalition's expectations and came with unacceptable conditions.

40. Boatman and Beaver.

41. Boatman and Beaver; Fulghum, "Allies Strike Iraq"; and Fulghum, "Pentagon Criticizes Air Strike."

42. Fulghum, "Allies Strike Iraq."

43. Congressional Information Service S201-9, 49.

44. M. Evans and J. Dettmer, "Allied Planes Assess Damage after Hits on Half of Iraqi Targets," *Times*, January 15, 1993.

45. *United Nations and the Iraq-Kuwait Conflict*, 86–87.

The ambiguous results of the 13 January strike led to additional strikes. This was intended as a message: if Iraq failed to cooperate with UNSCOM, the coalition would disarm Iraq by force. On 17 January 1993, three US warships in the Gulf (the USS *Cowpens*, the USS *Hewitt* and the USS *Stump*) and one in the Red Sea (USS *Caron*) launched a series of T-LAMs at the Zaafaraniyah Advanced Engineering Facility, a nuclear factory located in suburban Baghdad.⁴⁶ A Department of State spokesman stated that “it is near Baghdad and makes the point to the people of the country as well as to the government that we are willing to enforce the resolution ... it also helps in the process of eliminating nuclear weapons in the sense of the destructive act itself ...”⁴⁷

This target symbolized Iraq’s lack of compliance with SCR 687. Striking such a significant target made clear the coalition’s readiness to escalate its action beyond the NFZs and underscored its determination to see Iraq comply with the full letter of the UN resolutions.

The decision to use T-LAMs was based on two factors. One, the target was in Baghdad, an area of Iraq that was well defended against air attack. This made surprise important, which meant the use of either T-LAMs or F-117s. The T-LAMs were selected instead of F-117s because, as was explained to the media by an American spokesperson: “The main reason that we wanted to use the missiles is because it did not put US personnel in jeopardy. It did not—we did not have to use aircraft. We did not have to suffer the risk of having personnel go down.”⁴⁸ Two, the relative accuracy of T-LAMs made them a useful tool to use on facilities in built-up areas, as they offered the promise of minimal collateral damage. During this strike, 45 missiles were fired, and only 37 reached the target. Six of the other missiles fell within the target complex, or in a nearby orchard, without hitting their aim points. Another missile’s booster engine failed, and it plunged into the sea. The final missile, which is thought to have been hit by flak, struck the Rashid Hotel, where it burnt instead of detonating.⁴⁹

This was an embarrassment for the US, as there were civilian casualties, giving the Iraqi government a means to gain international sympathy.⁵⁰ UNSCOM provided BDA by inspecting the Zaafaraniyah facility at a later date; they discovered that the tools used in the factory for the production of nuclear equipment were absolutely destroyed.⁵¹ The strike suggested that a forceful means of removing Iraq’s WMDs was possible.

The coalition sent another package of aircraft on 18 January to finish off the targets that had not been destroyed or sufficiently damaged by the first strike.⁵² This time, the weather was more forgiving, and the strike was conducted by daylight to maximize their ability to acquire the targets.⁵³ This showed that the air defence threat had been sufficiently reduced so as to warrant the risk of a daylight attack. Further damage to the sector was merely a means of reinforcing the message.

46. R. Beeston and M. Fletcher, “US Fires 40 Cruise Missiles at Baghdad Nuclear Weapons Site,” *Times*, January 18, 1993; and D. Osborne and R. Fisk, “US Fires Missiles at Baghdad Factory,” *Independent*, January 18, 1993.

47. “US Press Release: Attack Shows U.S. Fully Backs U.N. Iraq Mandate, 17 January 1993” in Weller ed., *Iraq and Kuwait*, 747.

48. Ibid. T-LAMs used a low-altitude approach as opposed to a medium-altitude approach used by the 13 January strikes. See C. Bellamy, “Kamikaze’ Missiles Reduce Risks,” *Independent*, January 18, 1993.

49. Congressional Information Service S201-9, 67–69.

50. R. Beeston, “Foreigners’ Hotel Damaged in Raid,” *Times*, January 18, 1993; and J. Whittington, “Conflict with Iraq: Damage Goes on Display in Baghdad,” *Financial Times*, January 19, 1993.

51. “Status on Iraq,” Congressional Information Service H380-15, 22 March 1993, 1.

52. For details, see R. Beeston, “Daylight Raids Destroy Radar Centres,” *Times*, January 19, 1993; Boatman and Beaver; “Raids in 2 Regions,” *New York Times*, January 19, 1993; and “Statement in the House of Commons by the UK Secretary of State for Defence, 18 January 1993” in Weller ed., *Iraq and Kuwait*, 748.

53. Congressional Information Service S201-9, 69–70.

The diplomatic reactions to the strikes were mixed. The reactions of the regional allies were inherently tied to their own perceptions of the Iraqi threat, which explains the unequivocal support from the Turkish and Kuwaiti governments and the less enthusiastic support from the others. The UNSC and even the UN Secretariat were consistent in their support for the actions, but there was also a growing concern about the possible increase of tension in the Middle East as a whole. Within the coalition, there remained lurking the potentially serious issue of disagreement about the force of the application of the relevant UN resolutions. On the one hand, the French government maintained the view that the resolutions did not diminish Iraqi sovereignty beyond the strict terms of their application. On the other, the American and British governments took a much wider view, interpreting the focus of the resolutions to be the larger issue of Iraq's position vis-à-vis the Middle East as a whole and, consequently, offered much wider authorities.

The political reactions of the regional allies continued to be determined by the degree of threat they perceived emanating from Iraq. The Kuwaiti government, as in every other crisis, was cooperative throughout, as anything that weakened Iraq was seen as naturally strengthening Kuwait's security. The Turkish government did not necessarily share this narrow view of its security with regard to Iraq. Given its perception of PROVIDE COMFORT II, where the operation was the means of preventing further incursions by Kurdish refugees, threats to the existence of the NNFZ guaranteed that the Turkish government would support offensive operations against Iraq.⁵⁴ The Saudi Arabian press supported the idea of striking at Saddam Hussein's regime, arguing that UN SCRs had to be respected, whether pertaining to the Gulf, Israel or Bosnia.⁵⁵ This was the only time in the history of SOUTHERN WATCH that the Saudi government allowed force to be used from their bases.⁵⁶

Other states were concerned that further use of force would bring an unwelcome increase to tensions in the Middle East. The Chinese government's position was the best example: "We do not wish to see further deterioration of the situation in the Gulf region. Our consistent position is to peacefully settle international disputes."⁵⁷ This acted as a powerful incentive to ensure that future attempts at coercion would be gradual and proportionate. Such a strategy seeks to use the minimum level of force possible and escalate only when it is clear that a greater degree of force is required, which has the advantage of keeping tensions lower than with other strategies of coercion.

The British and French governments initially criticized the strike on Zaafaraniyah. Such statements were intended to distance the two governments from the strike and to appease concerns within the Middle East. Both were quick to note that only the US had T-LAMs, the means of striking Zaafaraniyah.⁵⁸ Soon after, the French government implied that it was opposed only to the T-LAM strikes because it believed that the strikes lacked UNSC authorization.⁵⁹

The French reaction to the strikes was irrevocably tied to the legal issues that surrounded both the T-LAM and air strikes of 18 January. In their interpretation, SCR 687 defined the existence of a ceasefire, and in the absence of a provocation, striking Zaafaraniyah was illegal. The other raids,

54. See "Demirel Discusses Iraq, Incirlik," January 19, 1993, FBIS-WES-93-011; and "Foreign Ministry Issues Statement," January 17, 1993, FBIS-WES-93-011.

55. See "Council Stresses Respect for All UN Resolutions," January 19, 1993, FBIS-NES-93-010; "Papers Call for Overthrow of Iraq's Saddam," January 19, 1993, FBIS-NES-93-010; and "Papers Support Air Strike against Iraq," January 19, 1993, FBIS-NES-93-010.

56. P. K. White, 26.

57. "Reply by Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesman, 18 January 1993" in Weller ed., *Iraq and Kuwait*, 749.

58. "Doorstep Interview with the UK Prime Minister, Wednesday, 20 January 1993" in Weller ed., *Iraq and Kuwait*, 751; and "Point de Presse du ministre d'État, ministre des Affaires étrangères, M. Roland Dumas, à l'issue de son audition devant la Commission des Affaires étrangères de l'Assemblée nationale," *La Politique Étrangère de la France: Textes et Documents*, January–February 1993, 45–46.

59. "Official Declaration Issued by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of France, 21 January 1993" in Weller ed., *Iraq and Kuwait*, 752.

the French government claimed, were justified under the terms of SCR 688 and the implied right to self-defence of coalition patrols over the SNFZ.⁶⁰ This is consistent with the French position on such matters; that is, that Chapter VII authority is limited to specific situations and is far from universal.

UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali and the UNSC believed that the 13 January series of strikes fell under the aegis of SCR 687 because their aim was to modify Iraqi behaviour to obtain compliance with the resolution.⁶¹ The US government argued that the strikes were justified under an even earlier resolution. The State Department claimed:

The statement [by President Bush] determines the Iraqi actions—that is, on two counts: the incursions and on the prohibition of flights by UNSCOM—constitute material breaches of Resolution 687, which established the ceasefire and provided the conditions essential for the restoration of peace and security in the region, and it warned Iraq of the serious consequences that will flow from continued defiance of the Council ... The statement lays the foundation for action by the Council or Member states that cooperated with Kuwait in accordance with Resolution 678 to respond to violations of the sort addressed by the Council in the statement. The possible use of force is not excluded.⁶²

Marlin Fitzwater claimed that “the strike was designed to help ... ensure that Iraq never again acquires weapons of mass destruction,” and he claimed that the strike was justified under the terms of SCRs 687, 707 and 715.⁶³ This reflected the greater goal—to obtain complete compliance. Both the British and French governments later agreed that the 13 January action was justified under the terms of SCRs 678 and 687.⁶⁴ This justification avoided the issue of Iraqi sovereignty by invoking the vaguely worded clauses about threats to regional peace and security. If it was the case that both NFZs were illegal due to a lack of positive authorization, then the provisions for self-defence under Article 51 of the UN would apply to Iraq’s forces only.

There were two schools of thought on the legality of the T-LAM strike. One position, echoed by the French foreign minister, was based on the assumption that while Iraq’s actions were undesirable, they did not necessarily constitute a breach of SCR 687. The American government, however, believed that Iraq’s actions were a breach, and remained so until Iraq began to comply. The British Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, sustained the argument in his statement before the House of Commons on 18 January 1993 that the French argument was weak at best, as the American position had been validated by warnings given to Iraq by the UNSC. Referring to the use of T-LAMs, he stated: “This action was taken to ensure that Iraq complies with its mandatory obligations under UNSCR 687 and related resolutions. Iraq has committed a number of material breaches of UNSCR 687 and wilfully ignored the warnings given by the Security Council and the US, UK, France and Russia on 11 and 14 January respectively.”⁶⁵ Such warnings were intended to notify the Iraqi government that it remained in breach of SCR 687 until it complied with the demands of the international community. At the same time, the warnings were also intended to signal the coalition’s readiness to listen to any Iraqi offer of concessions. This weakened the French legal argument, and it can be inferred that the subsequent French statements were for political purposes.

60. Ibid.

61. Congressional Information Service H380-10, 2; “UN Gives Official Backing after Ceasefire Violations,” *Guardian*, January 15, 1993; and UK, *Hansard Parliamentary Debates*, 6th Series, vol. 216 (January 15, 1993), cols. 855–56 (Written Answers).

62. Department of State Daily Press Briefing, January 12, 1993, 10. This was due to threats to the forces of the JTF-SWA.

63. “US Press Release: Attack Shows U.S. Fully Backs U.N. Iraq Mandate, 17 January 1993” in Weller ed., *Iraq and Kuwait*, 746.

64. “Press Statement Issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France, 14 January 1993” and “Statement by the UK Secretary of State for Defence, 13 January 1993” in Weller ed., *Iraq and Kuwait*, 738 and 744.

65. “Statement in the House of Commons by the UK Secretary of State for Defence, 18 January 1993” in Weller ed., *Iraq and Kuwait*, 748.

The Iraqi government had two choices: it could be disarmed forcibly or peacefully. The former would be somewhat reminiscent of DESERT STORM except that the coalition had improved its knowledge and understanding of the Iraqi WMD arsenal. Such a penalty, combined with the belief that UNSCOM could be deceived into unwittingly allowing a residual WMD capability to exist, led the Iraqi government to opt for peaceful and possibly limited disarmament.

What concessions were made by the Iraqi government and why? Naturally, it sought to give as little as possible, and its concessions came in a series of limited offers. The concessions offered were very specific and reflected a desire not to allow any further deterioration of the Iraqi military machine. For example, their first concessions pertained to permitting UNSCOM overflights to occur under specific conditions. On 17 January 1993, the Iraqi government announced that the police posts in the DMZ would be withdrawn and within two days they were gone.⁶⁶ The second concession may not necessarily have been prompted by the strikes. The Iraqi government declared a unilateral ceasefire on 20 January in order to allow the incoming Clinton administration to assess the situation and create constructive dialogue.⁶⁷ The Iraqi overture was based on a widespread perception of the incoming administration. Tim Trevan noted:

Soon after his election in November 1992 to the US Presidency, Bill Clinton was asked what he thought of Saddam Hussein In particular, Clinton said that, as a southern Baptist, he believed in deathbed conversions: he hoped he could reason with Saddam Hussein. Those of us with first-hand experience of Saddam's regime knew that this would be misinterpreted. It would not be taken as the philosophical musings of a new President wishing to be loved by everyone, but rather as a sign of weakness to be exploited.⁶⁸

President Clinton's initial conciliatory approach offered Iraq at least the possibility of complying with UN resolutions with minimal loss of face. That they did not seize this opportunity had two effects, both of them unfortunate. It cast doubt upon the approach that conciliation was the best way forward for the new administration and, thus, closed it off as a viable policy option. Second, the lost opportunity directly paved the way toward the Dual Containment policy adopted by President Clinton's administration later in 1993.

The NFZs remained tranquil until 22 January, when there was a brief series of incidents involving SAMs and illumination, but after that, both became dormant.⁶⁹ The DMZ also became tranquil.⁷⁰ With regard to UNSCOM, it must be noted that the Iraqi government offered very specific concessions. On 19 January, it removed its objections to allowing UNSCOM's transit over Iraqi airspace.⁷¹ That was the limit. It failed to accept the plans as mandated by SCR 715 and continued to complain about the overflights by U-2s in support of UNSCOM.⁷² The use of force convinced the Iraqi government to comply, at least partially, with SCR 687 and its antecedents and to stop resisting (at least actively) the SNFZ enforcement.

66. UN, "Addendum (S/25085/Add.1, 19 January 1993)," 515; and UN, "Security Council Resolution Concerning the Work of the Iraq-Kuwait Boundary Demarcation Commission," S/RES/773 (1992), August 26, 1992, 473.

67. "Statement Issued by the Revolution Command Council of the Republic of Iraq, 19 January 1993" in Weller ed., *Iraq and Kuwait*, 750–51. The incoming administration rejected it outright. See Department of State Daily Press Briefing, January 21, 1993, 9.

68. Trevan, *Saddam's Secrets*, 203.

69. Congressional Information Service S201-9, 51.

70. UN, "Report of the Secretary-General on UNIKOM for the period from 1 October 1992 to 31 March 1993," S/25514, 2 April 1993, 529.

71. *United Nations and the Iraq-Kuwait Conflict*, 86.

72. UN, "Third Report of the Secretary-General on the Status of the Implementation of the Plan for the Ongoing Monitoring and Verification of Iraq's Compliance with Relevant Parts of Section C of the Security Council Resolution 687 (1991)," S/25620, 19 April 1993, 531–35.

January 1993 represented the first real attempt at the coercion of Iraq. The Iraqi government was presented with choices. It could cooperate with UNSCOM (and possibly reduce the damage through deception) or be forcibly disarmed, as was demonstrated by the 17 January missile strikes. It could either tolerate the SNFZ or fight for the control of its airspace, as its air defences and assets were subjected to attrition by the forces of the JTF-SWA. None of the choices could be described as particularly attractive from the Iraqi point of view, as each choice represented disarmament and a loss of sovereignty with or without violence.

The state of communications between the coalition and Iraq was fair at best. It appears that the Iraqi government did not believe the original ultimatum was anything other than a bargaining position to be countered with a combination of acts of resistance and limited concessions in a form of haggling. The coalition, on the other hand, issued definite ultimatums and applied force when compliance was not forthcoming. The Iraqi reaction was to make placating statements while shifting the conflict to other venues (i.e., to UNIKOM or the NNFZ). It was not until the missile strike against the Zaafaranyah nuclear facility that the Iraqi government capitulated and accepted that a provocative approach was not going to bear fruit.

The coalition's actions, particularly the missile strike, somewhat increased the coalition's credibility in terms of its threats. While the coalition confirmed that it could and would attack Iraq in order to match threats with actions, it demonstrated a definite desire to protect its forces. The use of manned aircraft implied the acceptance of risk by the coercer, but the suppression of enemy air defences implied a concern over casualties while attempting to achieve a lasting military effect. This suggested that an Iraqi casualty-causing strategy might pay off eventually.

Iraq's willpower was not easily eroded during this operation. The timing of the operation (just days before the inauguration of President Clinton) was one reason, but the dispute between the French and American governments presented an image of disunity. This offered the Iraqi government some hope. However, it eroded significantly with the prospect of forcible disarmament and isolation. This isolation led to Iraq's speedy indication of its willingness to negotiate. The Iraqi government also learned that the coalition was capable of striking targets in suburban Baghdad and was prepared to fight for control of the SNFZ. The coalition's choice of target sets was a reaction to Iraq's provocations, and while the coalition derived some benefit from attacking Iraqi air defences, it is possible that the Iraqi government was able to justify its actions in terms of an ongoing conflict. The nuclear facility was a significant target in Baghdad, and the loss of the facility by force was a far worse option than the presence of inspectors.

This was a case where threat-based coercion failed and force-based coercion eventually succeeded. The original ultimatum did not bring about anything but the removal of the SAMs from the SNFZ, but even this was limited as additional missiles were moved into the NNFZ. The coalition responded by striking air defence assets in the SNFZ on 13 January, and this failed to cause the Iraqi government to offer concessions. The coalition escalated by attacking the Zaafaranyah facility, and this led to immediate concessions. Therefore, an incremental approach eventually led to meaningful results.

The coalition proceeded on a worst-case scenario. Their policy base rested on a number of linked pillars held together by the nexus of UNSCRs. First, Kuwait had to be secure. Second, Iraq had to comply in full with the resolutions. Third, Iraq was not to be subjected to such military depredation that the security of the Middle East region was put at untenable risk. This also led to the incremental approach to the problem, but given the overarching policy umbrella, it was an approach in which one step could be followed closely by others as the situation demanded.

The incremental approach was also important for a number of other reasons. First, a measured rather than an all-out response was, at least arguably, consonant with the wording of the UNSCRs in effect. It followed that dissenting views—for example, by the French government but also in more veiled terms by the Russian and the Chinese governments—could be dealt with within an existing diplomatic framework. Second, an incremental approach was consonant with public opinion, particularly within the US—the major phases of the Gulf War had been accomplished without major coalition casualties, setting the parameters for other courses of action. Third, incremental action minimized risks associated with an imperfect understanding of Iraqi intentions. Fourth, incremental action offered the limitation of action to military targets with minimal risk of collateral damage and civilian casualties—a consequence that would have been hard for the coalition in public relations terms.

A precedent had been established within the coalition for a process of escalating action according to result and response. Although an incremental approach to Iraq could be effective, a first-level response based on threats alone might be insufficient. The new Clinton administration learned that dialogue without force or the threat of force was insufficient when faced with military provocation. It was a lesson in hard realities.

Chapter 9: Operation VIGILANT WARRIOR

In October 1994, the Iraqi government deployed elements of the RGFC into southern Iraq. This stood in stark relief to the relative cooperation shown in 1993 and 1994, albeit with a rather notable exception. From February 1993 through to September 1994, the Iraqi government had been somewhat compliant, and the UN had become optimistic about the situation. The Secretary-General reported in early October 1994 that there had been significant cooperation over the summer and that there was reason to be optimistic about the future.¹ The situation was sufficiently stable that the Clinton administration sought to reduce the size of its commitment to the JTF-SWA. The exception was the attempted assassination of President George H. W. Bush in April 1993, during a visit to Kuwait City. After an investigation, the Iraqi intelligence service was accused of orchestrating the plot, and President Clinton directed a retaliatory strike in June 1993. The UN, however, found that the Iraqi government was being as cooperative as it had ever been, and this meant there was tangible progress in terms of resolving the border and disarmament issues. UNIKBDC was able to complete its tasks and UNSCOM began the destruction of some of the chemical weapons arsenals. It seemed that the two strikes in January and the retaliatory strikes in June left the Iraqi government with the impression that cooperation with the international community was preferable to the alternative.

It is not completely clear what the Iraqi government was trying to do, but the deployment of a large force to the Kuwaiti border in October 1994 coincided with a sudden burst of hostile rhetoric demanding a lifting of sanctions. The coalition believed that Iraq sought to invade Kuwait again and responded by sending additional ground and air forces to the Persian Gulf in Operation VIGILANT WARRIOR in order to demonstrate its resolve. There were additional political complications, such as the dispute that developed between the Clinton administration and key figures in the French government as well as the Russian government's attempt to influence the eventual outcome of the crisis. By November 1994, Iraq's government gave recognition of Kuwait. VIGILANT WARRIOR was a strategic success despite the fact that it may not be possible methodologically, to deem it a successful attempt at deterrence. These events are summarized in Table 8.

Date	Event
5 October 1994	JTF-SWA aircraft detected the deployment of elements of the RGFC to southern Iraq.
8 October 1994	The President authorized the deployment of forces to the Persian Gulf region.
9 October 1994	Iraqi forces north of the DMZ established logistical bases.
10 October 1994	The Iraqi government ordered its forces to withdraw from southern Iraq.
12 October 1994	Talks between the Russian and Iraqi governments began. The Iraqi government announced it had completed the withdrawal from southern Iraq. The "Ground Exclusion Zone" plan was suggested by the US Secretary of Defense, William Perry.
15 October 1994	The UNSC passed SCR 949, demanding that Iraq not deploy any further forces to southern Iraq.
7 November 1994	The coalition began to withdraw its reinforcements from the region.
10 November 1994	The Iraqi government announced that it would recognize Kuwait.

Table 8. Chronology of Operation VIGILANT WARRIOR

1. See UN, "Sixth Report of the Secretary-General on the Status of the Implementation of the Plan for the Ongoing Monitoring and Verification of Iraq's Compliance with Relevant Parts of Section C of Security Council Resolution 687 (1991)," S/1994/1138 (October 7, 1994), 665–84.

The widespread optimism in the summer of 1994 was misplaced. Despite the progress in terms of the Iraqi government's cooperation, the Iraqi economy was in awful shape: the annual inflation rate was 1,000 per cent, the Iraqi dinar was nearly valueless and the government cut the rations by at least one-third.² The Iraqi government faced an economic crisis of significant proportions. It behaved as it had in the spring of 1990—it changed its stance on matters and became aggressive towards its tiny neighbour. In effect, Saddam Hussein sought to “retreat to the front” to resolve the matter.

The “retreat to the front” came in the form of belligerent policy statements as well as the deployment of military forces. The Iraqi government stated in early October 1994 that it would not cooperate or even deal with the UN unless there was a lifting of economic sanctions.³ The Iraqi government apparently believed that if it brought pressure to bear, the UN would give in. There were precedents supporting this belief, such as the UN's inaction in Rwanda as well as affairs in Somalia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. In early October, the tone of Iraqi radio broadcasts changed. In a letter to the UNSC, the Kuwaiti government complained that an Iraqi News Agency radio broadcast issued veiled threats towards Kuwait, where it was stated that “the leadership in Iraq, in accordance with its constitutional and moral responsibilities, has no option but to prepare a new position that will straighten out matters and free the Iraqi people of the ordeal that has been imposed on them ... [W]e will wait until 10 October 1994, and then everyone will bear responsibility for their own position.”⁴ Elements of the RGFC moved into southern Iraq soon after. To the coalition, this appeared to be eerily similar to Iraq's behaviour in late July 1990.

While the coalition could draw analogies to the prelude to the August 1990 invasion of Iraq, its members were better prepared. First, the JTF-SWA's reconnaissance flights in the SNFZ revealed that some of the Republican Guard units deployed north of Baghdad were moving south. This validated the monitoring function associated with Operation SOUTHERN WATCH. There were elements of the Hammurabi and the Al Nida RGFC divisions deployed in or moving to southern Iraq. Another division, the Adnan, appeared to be deploying in depth.⁵ On 5 October, RAF reconnaissance flights observed trains off-loading the equipment of the three RGFC divisions at a rail yard only a few kilometres west of Basra.⁶ This was sufficient to have the coalition direct more intelligence resources and assets in order to develop a better picture of the situation on 6 October 1994.⁷ This led eventually to the fastest deployment of land forces over the greatest distance in military history.

The implied aggression inherent in Iraq's actions guaranteed a substantial degree of support for the coalition to use force. The coalition's members, as well as the GCC states, all agreed that action was necessary. However, given the forces in theatre and the perceived nature of the threat, it was impossible to act without reinforcements. Previously optimistic about Iraq's progress, the UN recoiled with horror at the Iraqi provocations.

The American government quickly drew a link between the Iraqi statements and troop movement and condemned both. For example, the White House Spokesman, Mike McCurry, commented:

2. P. K. White, 30.

3. See B. Crossette, “Iraqi Denounces Sanctions,” *New York Times*, October 8, 1994; and “Iraq Says No,” *Guardian*, October 5, 1994.

4. Cited in: “Leadership Sets 10 Oct Deadline on Sanctions,” FBIS-NES 94-194, 6 October 1994, 12. See also: UN, “Letter dated 6 October 1994 from the Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the UN addressed to the President of the Security Council,” S/1994/1137 (October 6, 1994), 1 and 3.

5. M. Gordon, “Pentagon Moving a Force of 4,000 to Guard Kuwait,” *New York Times*, October 9, 1994; and M. Gordon, “U.S. Sends Force as Iraqi Soldiers Threaten Kuwait,” *New York Times*, October 8, 1994.

6. D. Fulghum, “Iraqi Invasion Threat Reassessed by Military,” *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, November 14, 1994.

7. DoD Background Briefing, October 20, 1994, 1.

Iraq's threats to cease cooperation with the UN Special Commission (UNSCOM), and hints of use of force in the event sanctions against Iraq are not promptly lifted, underscore the importance of the Security Council's being assured of Iraq's peaceful intentions before considering to lift the sanctions regime. To achieve the lifting of sanctions, Iraq must comply fully with all UN Security Council resolutions. Confrontational tactics will prove no more successful now than in the past.⁸

President Clinton reiterated: "If Iraq really is trying to say in some insistent way that what they want is relief from the UN sanctions, there is a clear way for them to achieve that relief—simply comply with the United Nations resolutions."⁹ It was unthinkable that Iraq could be allowed to behave with impunity in such a belligerent manner. The British government shared the aforementioned view of the situation. In London, the Secretary of State for Defence, Malcolm Rifkind, and the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Douglas Hurd, held a press conference in which they stated: "We view with concern the troop movements in southern Iraq and the recent hostile statements by Iraq. If Iraq believes that its threatening behaviour will achieve anything, then it is making a serious error of judgement."¹⁰ To reinforce the implied threat, the British government began to deploy additional forces to the Persian Gulf. As an initial step, they sent 45 Commando, Royal Marines, and six additional Tornado aircraft to Kuwait.¹¹ To appear weak in the face of an Iraqi provocation might only encourage the Iraqi government to become bolder.

Even the normally more sanguine French government reacted more strongly than usual. It expressed its concern and deployed the warship *Georges Leygues* to the Gulf.¹² French forces in the region at the time amounted to six Mirage 2000C on Operation SOUTHERN WATCH, five Jaguars on Operation PROVIDE COMFORT II and two ships in Oman. The only French ground forces in the region were 4,000 troops in Djibouti.¹³ While not necessarily a great addition to the array of US forces in the region, the deployment of the French warship was an important gesture reflecting a useful degree of coalition solidarity in the face of a potential threat. Actions and deeds matched, and this supported the credibility of the coalition's implicit threat that Iraqi actions would be met with force. See Table 9 for a list of all forces in theatre 5 October, 1994.

The UNSC became concerned about the RGFC's presence in southern Iraq. It condemned the deployment and asked the Secretary-General to ensure that "the United Nations Iraq–Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM) redoubles its vigilance and reports immediately any violation of the demilitarised zone."¹⁴ While this may seem weak-willed, it was the extent of its possible actions. Without actual fighting, the UNSC could do little but observe and issue statements.

8. M. McCurry, "U.S. Warns Iraq about Troop Movements," White House Press Statement, October 7, 1994, 1.

9. "Press Conference by the President," White House Press Release, October 7, 1994, 5.

10. Statement cited in M. Nicholson and G. Graham, "Clinton Sends in Warships to Warn Iraq off Kuwait," *Financial Times*, October 8, 1994.

11. "Statement on Iraq," *Foreign and Commonwealth Arms Control and Disarmament Quarterly Review*, no. 35 (October 1994): 23.

12. Government of France, in author's possession, "Irak-Koweït-Communiqué du ministre des Affaires étrangères," October 8, 1994, 196; "Irak-Koweït-Communiqué du ministre des Affaires étrangères," October 9, 1994, 201; and *La Politique Étrangère de la France*, September–October 1994.

13. D. Buchan, "France Offers Gulf Forces, but without Enthusiasm," *Financial Times*, October 12, 1994; and J. Isnard, "Logique de force en Irak," *Le Monde*, October 12, 1994.

14. UN, "Statement by the President of the Security Council Concerning Cooperation by Iraq with UNSCOM and Reports of Movements by Iraqi Troops," S/PRST/1994/58 (October 8, 1994), 685.

	United States	United Kingdom	France
Air Forces (no naval air)	9 x F-15C 24 x F-16C 29 x support aircraft	6 x GR-1 Tornados 1 x tanker	6 x Mirage 2000, F-1
Land Forces	15 th Marine Expeditionary Unit Task Force 4 th Battalion, 7 th Air De- fense Artillery (TF 4-7 ADA)	NIL	NIL
Naval Forces (includes marines at sea)	USS <i>Leyte Gulf</i> USS <i>Hewitt</i> USS <i>Rodney M Davis</i> USS <i>Reid</i> USS <i>John L Hall</i> United States Naval Ship (USNS) <i>Mars</i> USNS <i>Pecos</i> USNS <i>Powhatan</i> USNS <i>McDonnell</i> ARG: USS <i>Tripoli</i> USS <i>Cleveland</i> USS <i>Fort McHenry</i> USS <i>Rushmore</i>	Armillia Patrol: HMS <i>Cornwall</i> HMS <i>Cardiff</i> AUX <i>Brambleleaf</i>	NIL

Table 9. Forces in theatre, 5 October 1994

There was little support for Iraq's stance as the deployment was seen as a threat to regional stability. Despite the fact that deployment of Iraqi forces north of the DMZ was not a breach of SCR 687, the UNSC was unusually supportive of the coalition. The menacing nature of the Iraqi government's actions changed the situation in New York. The Russian and French governments quickly abandoned their calls for a lifting of sanctions.¹⁵ Such leniency seemed futile with the RGFC seemingly prepared to invade.

On 8 October, the American government was quite concerned about what it considered Iraqi preparations for the invasion of Kuwait. The real object of concern was the addition of over 10,000 RGFC troops from three divisions to the 50,000 troops that garrisoned southern Iraq.¹⁶ This also reflected the pattern of invasion used in the summer of 1990, when RGFC elements moved forward to conduct the invasion and then were relieved by Iraqi army elements for the conduct of the defence. General John Shalikashvili, then the Chairman of the JCS, described his perception of the situation: "Our task was to deter him from moving into Kuwait or beyond, and if he did, to slow him down, stop him, and then push him back. That's the task that I saw at hand, and what you saw was the beginning of the force necessary to do that."¹⁷ CINC CENTCOM, then Lieutenant General J. H. Binford Peay III, US Army, identified what he thought was necessary to achieve this goal. The list of additional force requirements included a USMC amphibious ready group (ARG), a marine expeditionary force, more aircraft and an army corps.¹⁸ Since the RGFC contained the best-trained and best-equipped formations

15. See M. Nicholson, "Security Council Takes Harder Line," *Financial Times*, October 11, 1994.

16. Lieutenant General J. Sheehan and Major General P. Hughes in DoD News Briefing, October 8, 1994, 3; M. Gordon, "Pentagon Moving a Force"; and M. Gordon, "U.S. Sends Force."

17. DoD News Briefing, October 11, 1994, 3.

18. DoD Background Briefing, October 20, 1994, 2.

in the Iraqi armed forces, CENTCOM's planners assumed that they would have to contend with a sizeable mechanized force equipped with relatively modern tanks and artillery.

The detection of the RGFC's deployment gave the coalition warning that action was potentially imminent. The coalition, therefore, had a choice: it could deal with the threat with its assets in theatre; or, it could reinforce them in order to possibly deter the Iraqi government from acting and, at the same time, prepare for the defence of Kuwait should deterrence fail. The JTF-SWA could act immediately within the range of its capabilities, but even this was limited. Failure to reinforce the JTF-SWA would have suggested that the coalition was not sufficiently interested to take action.

There was a paradox at work during the crisis. An offensive air campaign was out of the question unless Iraqi forces actually entered Kuwait, which meant no action could be taken until it was possibly too late. The only viable target set was Iraq's fielded forces, but even attacks against them were unjustifiable unless Iraqi forces ventured into Kuwaiti territory. Political constraints reduced the coalition's ability to retain the initiative. Simply put, these meant air strikes were not viable.

The deployment of ground forces offered the certainty of communicating coalition resolve. The US Army or USMC forces brought from CONUS would certainly demonstrate that the coalition was willing to fight for Kuwait. Such a move also offered the promise of being better able to cut any flow of Iraqi units into Kuwait than an air campaign that reinforced Kuwaiti ground forces. However, this option relied on speed. CONUS-based units would have to board aircraft, fly to Kuwait, disembark and move to their assembly areas to link up with the prepositioned equipment. If the Iraqis invaded prior to the deployment of land forces to tactical positions, then they might be able to inflict serious casualties on the coalition or prevent the deployment in defence of Kuwait altogether. The combination of in-theatre assets and deployment of forces from CONUS allowed the coalition to provide a clear measure of defence for Kuwait and signal the intent to fight. This held the possibility of deterring the Iraqi government while preparing for the defence of Kuwait.

On 8 October 1994, the American government took further steps to dissuade the Iraqis from carrying out what appeared to be an invasion of Kuwait by launching Operation VIGILANT WARRIOR. President Clinton later reported to Congress:

Accordingly, on October 8, 1994, I ordered the immediate deployment of additional U.S. military forces to the Persian Gulf. These deployments included the USS *George Washington* Carrier Battle Group and its accompanying cruise missile ships, a US Army Mechanised Task Force, and personnel to operate two additional Patriot missile batteries. On October 10, I further ordered the deployment of over 500 U.S. Air Force and Marine Corps combat and supporting aircraft to the region.¹⁹

The USS *George Washington* carrier battle group left the Adriatic Sea and steamed south towards the Suez Canal. Two American warships, the USS *Hewitt* and the USS *Leyte Gulf*, were already there.²⁰ Within 48 hours of the order, the USS *George Washington* and its battle group sailed into the Red Sea from the Suez Canal. This added another 75 combat aircraft to the 67 that flew as part of SOUTHERN WATCH.²¹ The Army Mechanised Task Force to be brought into the theatre was a brigade of the 24th Mechanised Division stationed at Fort Stewart, Georgia. Yet President Clinton's description of the initial deployment to Congress omitted some of the units that deployed initially, such as the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU).

19. "Text of a Letter from the President to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate," White House Press Release, October 27, 1994, 2.

20. Sheehan and Hughes, 1; and "Forward Navy and Marine Units Respond to Gulf Threat," *Navy News Service*, October 12, 1994, 1.

21. DoD Background Briefing, October 20, 1994, 3; M. Gordon, "Pentagon Moving a Force"; and Sheehan and Hughes, 1.

The omissions are important to note for different reasons. The ARG was already in theatre conducting an exercise with the forces of the UAE. On 8 October, it promptly sailed north to the coast of Kuwait.²² The other was the deployment of the 23rd Composite Air Wing of the USAF. At the time, this unit was on a Red Flag exercise at Nellis Air Force Base (AFB), Nevada. It was withdrawn from the exercise and moved immediately to the theatre via its home base at Pope AFB, North Carolina.²³ This addition gave the CINC extra aircraft. The remainder of the 24th Mechanised Division was also placed on alert along with another composite air wing and I MEF.²⁴ The British also increased their contribution to the region. Her Majesty's Ship (HMS) *Cornwall* was off the coast of Kuwait City by 9 October.²⁵ For the state of the coalition forces on 8 October 1994, see Table 10 for those in theatre, Table 11 for those deploying and Table 12 for those on alert.

	United States	United Kingdom	France
Air Forces	9 x F-15 24 x F-16 29 x support aircraft	6 x GR-1 Tornados 1 x tanker	6 x Mirage 2000, F-1
Land Forces	NIL	NIL	NIL
Naval Forces	USS <i>Leyte Gulf</i> and escorts ARG 15 th MEU	Armilla Patrol	<i>Georges Leygues</i>

Table 10. Forces in theatre, 8 October 1994

	United States	United Kingdom	France
Air Forces	23 rd Composite Air Wing: 24 x A-10 18 x F-16 14 x C-130 9 x F-15 6 x KC-135 2 x RC-135	NIL	NIL
Land Forces	1 st Brigade, 24 th Mechanised Division TF 4-7 ADA	NIL	NIL
Naval Forces	USS <i>George Washington</i> USS <i>San Jacinto</i> USS <i>Barry</i> Carrier Air Wing 7 (~75 aircraft)	NIL	NIL

Table 11. Forces deploying, 8 October 1994

22. "Forward Navy and Marine Units Respond to Gulf Threat," 1; and Sheehan and Hughes, 1.

23. DoD Background Briefing, October 12, 1994, 4; and DoD Background Briefing, October 20, 1994, 4.

24. Sheehan and Hughes, 2–3.

25. M. Nicholson and R. Allen, "US Warns Saddam of 'Horrendous' Price for War," *Financial Times*, October 10, 1994.

	United States	United Kingdom	France
Air Forces	1 Composite Air Wing	NIL	NIL
Land Forces	24 th Mechanised Division (-) I MEF	NIL	NIL
Naval Forces	Maritime Prepositioning Ships	NIL	NIL

Table 12. Forces on alert, 8 October 1994

This was only the beginning. However, the announcement of the initial deployments did not appear to affect the Iraqi deployment of forces in southern Iraq. On 8 October, Major General Pat Hughes, the Director of Intelligence for the JCS, and Lieutenant General John Sheehan, the Director of Operations, claimed that “over the last 48 hours elements of two of the Republican Guard divisions have moved from positions north of the Baghdad area in the central part of the country down to within 20 kilometres of the Iraqi border.”²⁶ The situation appeared to be worse on 9 October, when the Iraqi forces began to establish logistical bases in southern Iraq and the number of Iraqi forces continued to climb.²⁷ This suggests that the Iraqi government intended to invade or was, at least, prepared to make a rather convincing demonstration of capability.

The preparation and deployment of American forces continued on 9 and 10 October. The Mechanised Task Force began to arrive, albeit in two tranches. Capitalizing on equipment that was prepositioned in Kuwait, initial elements of the 1st Brigade began to arrive in theatre on 10 October, a mere 24 hours after receiving deployment orders. Two days later, deployed elements of 1st Brigade were ready for combat.²⁸ Two Patriot batteries deployed under similar conditions.²⁹ In the meantime, the JTF-SWA increased the number of flights over southern Iraq. Brigadier General William Guth, the commander of the 4404th Composite Air Wing, USAF, noted in an interview with the press that “in an effort to show presence [the coalition air forces] about doubled the operational tempo.”³⁰ Two days later, the President ordered a greater force package to the Middle East. For the state of the coalition forces on 10 October 1994, see Table 13 for those in theatre, Table 14 for those deploying and Table 15 for those on alert.

	United States	United Kingdom	France
Air Forces	24 x A-10 18 x F-15 32 x F-16 51 x support aircraft	6 x GR-1 Tornados 1 x support aircraft	6 x Mirage 2000, F-1
Land Forces	TF 4-7 ADA 1 st Bde, 24 th Mech Div	45 Commando, Royal Marines	NIL
Naval Forces	USS <i>Leyte Gulf</i> and escorts USS <i>George Washington</i> and escorts ARG (with 15 th MEU)	Armilla Patrol	<i>Georges Leygues</i>

Table 13. Forces in theatre, 10 October 1994

26. Sheehan and Hughes, 1 and 3.

27. “Text of a Letter from the President,” 1.

28. DoD Background Briefing, October 20, 1994, 3.

29. Sheehan and Hughes, 1–2.

30. Brigadier General William Guth, cited in D. Fulghum, “Iraqi Invasion Threat Reassessed.”

	United States	United Kingdom	France
Air Forces	42 x A-10 66 x F-16 54 x F-15 117 x support aircraft	6 x GR-1 Tornados	NIL
Land Forces	24 Mech Div (-) Forward elements I MEF	45 Commando, Royal Marines 1 Battery, 29 th Field Regiment, Royal Artillery	NIL
Naval Forces	6 x F/A-18 Maritime prepositioning ships	NIL	NIL

Table 14. Forces deploying, 10 October 1994

	United States	United Kingdom	France
Air Forces	4 x HH 60	NIL	NIL
Land Forces	I MEF (Main) 101 st Aviation Bde	NIL	NIL
Naval Forces	Maritime prepositioning ships	NIL	NIL

Table 15. Forces on alert, 10 October 1994

The deployment of the greater force package seemed to dissuade the Iraqis from invading Kuwait, assuming their intention to invade actually existed. On 10 October 1994, the Iraqi government finally blinked. It sought to assure the UNSC that the RGFC would withdraw from southern Iraq.³¹ In reaction to that, President Clinton remarked:

Iraq announced today that it will pull back its troops from the Kuwait border. But we're interested in facts, not promises; in deeds, not words, and we have not yet seen evidence that Iraq's troops are, in fact, pulling back. We'll be watching very closely to see that they do so.³²

There was no immediate evidence of any changes in the Iraqi force posture. Therefore, the President announced the following day that the deployment of forces would continue to ensure that the Iraqis would not invade and would withdraw their forces to central Iraq.³³ A day later, evidence appeared that Iraqi forces had started withdrawing to the north. This did not mean that the coalition, and the US in particular, felt that the crisis had abated. Dee Dee Myers noted that:

we have seen some evidence that troops are withdrawing from the southern area, from the Bosra [sic] region of Iraq. There have been some indications that that is broad-based; there have been some movements such as tanks being loaded up on trains and other things that indicate that they are, in fact, pulling out. However, some units do appear to be in place, so we're continuing to monitor it closely.³⁴

31. UN, "Letter dated 10 October 1994 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq addressed to the President of the Security Council," S/1994/1149 (October 10, 1994), 2.

32. "U.S. Actions to Preserve Stability in the Persian Gulf" (October 10, 1994), *U.S. Department of State Dispatch*, vol. 5, no. 42, October 17, 1994, 689.

33. DoD News Briefing, October 11, 1994, 1; "Remarks by the President upon Departure for Detroit, Michigan," White House Press Release, October 11, 1994, 1; and Department of State Daily Press Briefing, October 12, 1994, 1.

34. DoD Background Briefing, October 12, 1994, 1; and "Press Briefing by Dee Dee Myers," White House Press Briefing, October 12, 1994, 1.

The American government recognized that it would take some time for the Iraqi forces to withdraw. The same day, the forward elements of I MEF began to deploy from Camp Pendleton, California, to the Middle East. This would add roughly 18,000 more troops.³⁵ The movement of a large mechanized force is not simple or easy to conduct at short notice. It was imprudent to rescind forward movement orders and to start redeploying these forces back over-the-horizon when the Iraqi forces had not completely withdrawn. On 15 October 1994, two RGFC brigades remained camped near Nasiriyah, some 180 kilometres west-north-west of Basra.³⁶

The two Iraqi brigades around Nasiriyah attracted American attention. While not a large force, it was still seen as a threat by the American government. In a radio address, President Clinton noted:

Much of the force that Iraq sent to the border has retreated. But significant elements still remain within striking distance of Kuwait. We're watching this situation very carefully and continuing with the deployment of our own forces. They will remain in the area and on alert until we are absolutely satisfied that Iraq no longer poses threats to Kuwait.³⁷

By late October, the size and saliency of the threat diminished. The Americans began to downgrade their force posture and stop some of their deployments. I MEF stopped deploying, but the 24th Mechanised Division continued deploying although under the guise of an in-theatre exercise. The prepositioning ships also began to treat the deployment as an exercise.³⁸ The British government decided to keep 45 Commando in theatre.³⁹ Exercising may have also been an aid to the American attempts to base equipment in theatre. Previously, only one brigade's worth of equipment was held there, and political concerns had obviated the prepositioning of additional equipment.

In addition to this, American force levels in the region were increased. Twenty-four A-10 ground-attack aircraft were deployed to Al Jaber AB in Kuwait on a permanent basis.⁴⁰ This reinforced the JTF-SWA's ability to deal with Iraqi armoured and mechanized formations, such as the RGFC, should that become necessary. In early November 1994, the virtual absence of threat prompted the US to withdraw some of its forces. The DoD spokesman announced: "The threat to the security and stability of the region remains, however, [and] US forces must therefore remain in the region to help enforce UN Security Council Resolutions."⁴¹ The 24th Mechanised Division would return to Fort Stewart, Georgia, the number of aircraft in JTF-SWA would remain augmented, and the US naval presence would return to its pre-crisis level.⁴² This marked the end of the actual crisis, but a diplomatic aftershock was still to come.

Was VIGILANT WARRIOR a success? It is not possible to answer that question without first examining some of the diplomacy that surrounded the crisis as the diplomatic wrangling affected Iraqi behaviour. Within the French government, divided opinion on Iraq's intentions to invade became public. This meant a difference of opinion within the coalition, which was, to say the least, unhelpful. However, VIGILANT WARRIOR was a powerful demonstration of American and coalition resolve and capability. While the crisis stopped short of actual hostilities, it served both to cement the bond

35. DoD Background Briefing, October 12, 1994, 2.

36. G. Graham and M. Littlejohns, "US Warns Iraq on New Build-ups," *Financial Times*, October 17, 1994.

37. "Radio Address by the President to the Nation," White House Press Release, October 15, 1994, 2. See also DoD Background Briefing, October 20, 1994, 1.

38. DoD Background Briefing, October 20, 1994, 2 and 3–5. See also DoD News Briefing, October 20, 1994, 1–2; and DoD News Briefing, October 25, 1994, 1–2.

39. P. Almond, "British and US Forces to Stay on in Kuwait," *Daily Telegraph*, October 26, 1994.

40. M. Gordon, "U.S. Will Station Warplanes in Kuwait," *International Herald Tribune*, October 28, 1994.

41. "Troop Withdrawal Plans Set," News Release, Office of Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs), 1–2.

42. *Ibid.*

between the coalition and its Arab allies and to affirm that the coalition truly was serious about its responsibilities pertaining to further threats against Kuwait.

The Franco–American dispute began from two differing interpretations of certain resolutions and the degree of the threat posed to Kuwait by Iraq. The French government was also opposed to the creation of a ground exclusion zone (GEZ), the Clinton administration’s solution for preventing future attempts at invasion. During the crisis, William Perry, the US Secretary of Defense, came up with this idea of excluding the RGFC from southern Iraq while allowing existing garrisons to remain.⁴³ The French government, fearing that a GEZ might be potentially destabilizing, was opposed to the idea, as it provided the Iraqis with a very simple means of testing allied will.⁴⁴ Based on a historical precedent, this was not necessarily incorrect, but both NFZs fulfilled the same criterion. French Defence Minister François Léotard claimed that to label this a crisis was an exaggeration, and had more to do with American domestic politics than with an Iraqi threat. Furthermore, he, like many in the French cabinet, did not believe that Iraq had done anything illegal in deploying its troops in southern Iraq,⁴⁵ which was merely threatening and not illegal. The intent behind a GEZ was to ensure that there would be no ambiguity about the illegal nature of such deployments. This would provide the coalition with another means of containing Iraq and further warning in case of future deployments. The French position sacrificed any chance for surprise in order to achieve the status of legality; whereas, the American government sought to maintain freedom of action while avoiding further diplomatic effort. The American Permanent Representative to the UN noted that this hindered British and American efforts to maintain consensus with their Arab allies.⁴⁶ Minister Léotard implied that VIGILANT WARRIOR, like most cases, was an American overreaction. This was reminiscent of earlier arguments about the appropriateness of means for dealing with Iraq. Within a week, French Foreign Minister Alain Juppé publicly stated that more peaceful means were required for dealing with Iraq.⁴⁷ The necessity for action had been questioned, and concomitant with this was a loss of credibility.

The Clinton administration continued to work towards the creation of a GEZ in southern Iraq. On 14 October, Christine Shelly, the Department of State press briefer, stated that:

our primary objective has been to end the threat to Kuwait, which was posed by the movement of Iraqi troops to the southern area and then to ensure that such a situation does not recur. We’re presently consulting with Security Council members on a resolution that is designed to accomplish both of those objectives. I’m told there were some informal P-5 type exchanges this morning.⁴⁸

While the Franco–American argument festered, the programme was still being pursued at the Security Council. The US government sought to obtain a resolution that would order the withdrawal of the Iraqi forces from the Kuwaiti border.⁴⁹ On 15 October, the UNSC passed SCR 949 as a Chapter VII resolution. This eliminated the French government’s concern about positive authorization, but their point about a means of testing allied will remained valid. The resolution stated that the UNSC:

43. “Press Briefing by Dee Dee Myers,” White House Press Briefing, October 12, 1994, 6–7 and 9.

44. “Entretien du Ministre d’État, Ministre De La Défense a ‘France 2,’” October 12, 1994; Propos sur la Défense, no. 46 (October 1994), 146; “Irak-Réponse du ministère des Affaires étrangères, M. Alain Juppé à une question orale au Sénat,” La Politique Étrangère de la France, September–October 1994, 217; “Press Briefing by Dee Dee Myers,” White House Press Briefing, October 12, 1994, 2; and E. Sciolino, “U.S. Offers Plan to Avoid Threat from Iraq Again,” *New York Times*, October 13, 1994.

45. “Point de Presse du 11 Octobre Déclarations du Porte Parole,” October 11, 1994, French Foreign Ministry Press Release; “Press Briefing by Dee Dee Myers,” White House Press Briefing, October 12, 1994, 4–5; and Department of State Daily Press Briefing, October 13, 1994, 9–10.

46. G. Graham, S. Dalby, and M. Nicholson, “US and France Clash over Exclusion Zone in Southern Iraq,” *Financial Times*, October 14, 1994.

47. M. Naïm, “Selon Alain Juppé, il faut ‘reunir les conditions de la paix et non préparer une nouvelle guerre,’” *Le Monde*, October 18, 1994.

48. Department of State Daily Press Briefing, October 14, 1994, 12.

49. B. Crossette, “U.S. Is Demanding a Quick U.N. Vote on Iraqi Pullback,” *New York Times*, October 15, 1994.

1. condemns recent military deployments by Iraq in the direction of the border with Kuwait;
2. demands that Iraq immediately complete the withdrawal of all military units recently deployed to southern Iraq to their positions;
3. demands that Iraq not again utilise its military or any other forces in a hostile or provocative manner to threaten either its neighbours or United Nations operations in Iraq; and
4. demands therefore that Iraq not redeploy to the south the units referred to paragraph 2 above or take any other action to enhance its military capacity in southern Iraq.⁵⁰

This gave the coalition a licence to use force if the Iraqis repeated their southward movement. It left the Iraqi garrisons in southern Iraq alone. However, without the presence of Iraqi garrisons in the largely Shiite south, it might invite Iranian efforts to exert influence or interfere in southern Iraq. It remained necessary to contain Iraq but not at the expense of the hallmarks of territorial sovereignty.

The Russian government intervened as VIGILANT WARRIOR drew to a close because the reintegration of Iraq into the international community held out potential economic benefits for Russia. Igor Ivanov, the Russian 1st Deputy Foreign Minister, and Viktor Posuvalyuk, the head of the Middle Eastern department of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, travelled to Iraq in order to bring about what was, from the Russian government's point of view, the preferable outcome to the crisis.⁵¹ Iraq would have to demonstrate good faith to the international community to earn its trust; however, this was the exact opposite of the effect of Iraq's recent actions. A joint Iraqi–Russian communiqué to the Security Council stated that:

Iraq announced officially that at 2100 hours on 12 October it had completed the withdrawal of its troops to rearguard positions. The Russian Federation expressed its warm appreciation of this step on the part of Iraq. Iraq affirmed its readiness to resolve in a positive manner the issue of recognising Kuwait and borders, as laid down in Security Council resolution 833 (1993).⁵²

The price for the recognition of Kuwait was the lifting of sanctions.⁵³ Neither the American nor the British governments believed this expression of willingness for the recognition of Kuwait would be sufficient to justify the end of sanctions. The coalition decided to keep additional forces in theatre until they were satisfied that the RGFC units had withdrawn.⁵⁴ Both the American and British governments supported the idea of a timetable and probationary period for the lifting of sanctions in principle but, given Iraq's recent belligerence, were unwilling to allow such a scheme to begin at the time.⁵⁵ The sanctions remained in place, and a timetable for their lifting remained a mere possibility.

The Russian government sought to convince Washington that the Iraqi government needed to be rewarded. The Russians realized that any of their solutions to the crisis would require American concurrence in order to prevent the use of the American veto within the UNSC. The Russian Foreign Minister, Andrei Kozyrev, reported that the Iraqis said they were willing to

50. UN, "Security Council Resolution Concerning Military Deployments by Iraq in the Direction of the Border with Kuwait," S/RES/949 1994 (October 15, 1994) in *United Nations and the Iraq–Kuwait Conflict*, 694.

51. M. Nicholson, "Russian Envoys Start Baghdad Talks," *Financial Times*, October 13, 1994.

52. UN, "Letter from the Representatives of Iraq and the Russian Federation Transmitting the Text of a Joint Communiqué Containing Iraq's Announcement that It Had Withdrawn Its Troops to Rearguard Positions on 12 October 1994," S/1994/1173 (October 15, 1994) in *United Nations and the Iraq–Kuwait Conflict*, 695.

53. B. Crossette, "Russia and Iraq Work Out Plan to Ease Gulf Tension," *New York Times*, October 14, 1994; and A. La Guardia, "Iraq Tries to Strike Bargain on Kuwait," *Daily Telegraph*, October 14, 1994.

54. G. Graham, M. Nicholson, and S. Dalby, "US Rebuffs Russian Mediation on Kuwait," *Financial Times*, October 15, 1994.

55. Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs Robert Pelletreau testified before the House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs that it was US policy to ensure that there was an unidentified test period of UNSCOM's monitoring system, in "Developments in the Middle East," October 4, 1994, Congressional Information Service Department H381-13, 37–38.

recognize Kuwait.⁵⁶ He met with Warren Christopher in New York to discuss the situation on 17 October.⁵⁷ Their meeting resulted in a series of joint declarations about what the two had pledged to do. This amounted to vague statements about the necessity of cooperation and the lack of reward for the withdrawal of threats.⁵⁸ Reports circulated that the Iraqi People's Assembly was going to meet to approve the recognition of Kuwait.⁵⁹ The Assembly, instead of doing as was predicted, issued a statement of support for Saddam Hussein.⁶⁰ The key to the problem was the potential lifting of sanctions. The reward for Russian intervention, in Iraqi eyes, was a schedule for the lifting of the sanctions, and this was the intended reward for Iraq if they chose to recognize Kuwait.⁶¹ The American and British governments remained unwilling to allow the sanctions to be lifted and refused even to discuss a timetable.⁶²

The Russian intervention eventually made progress. Two days after the US troop withdrawal was announced on 7 November 1994, the Russian government announced that the Iraqi government promised that it would recognize Kuwaiti sovereignty.⁶³ This measure did not lead to an immediate change of heart in the American government, and the State Department issued a backhanded warning about the Iraqi promise: "If today's announcements are followed by the necessary implementing measures, it will mark an important achievement for the United Nations Security Council which has steadfastly insisted that Iraq must comply—and comply fully—with all its requirements."⁶⁴ The Russian gambit failed to bring about a timetable, let alone a lifting of sanctions. Both the American and British governments were adamant that the Iraqi statement had to be ratified and proven to be true.⁶⁵

The American and British governments left themselves open to accusations of threat inflation or having "moved the goalposts" to prevent the lifting of sanctions. The Iraqi government then complied with their wishes by submitting all the documentation to the Security Council as proof of their recognition.⁶⁶ In response to these actions, the Iraqi government was praised by Madeleine Albright, the President of the Security Council at the time, who noted that "[t]he Security Council considers this decision by Iraq to be a significant step in the direction towards implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions."⁶⁷ Operation VIGILANT WARRIOR had been more of a success than expected.

56. "Russian Says Iraqis Yield on Sovereignty of Kuwait," *International Herald Tribune*, October 15–16, 1994.

57. Department of State Daily Press Briefing, October 17, 1994, 10.

58. *Ibid.*, 8.

59. M. Nicholson, "Iraq to Approve Border," *Financial Times*, October 18, 1994.

60. M. Nicholson and M. Littlejohns, "No Formal Kuwait Recognition," *Financial Times*, October 18, 1994.

61. "As You Were," *Economist*, October 22, 1994.

62. M. Walker and M. Tran, "US Fears Russian Sanctions Plan Will Let Saddam off the Hook," *Guardian*, October 18, 1994; and C. Laurence, "Iraq Oil Sanctions Will Not Be Lifted," *Daily Telegraph*, October 18, 1994.

63. R. Matthews, "Baghdad Recognises Kuwaiti Sovereignty," *Financial Times*, November 11, 1994; and "Moscow Wins Iraqi Pledge over Kuwaiti Sovereignty," *Financial Times*, November 9, 1994.

64. Department of State Daily Press Briefing, November 11, 1994, 2.

65. See M. Evans, "Sanctions Must Stay, Foreign Office Says," *Times*, November 11, 1994; G. Jansen, "Saddam Sees the Light?" *Middle East International*, November 18, 1994; J. Kampfner and G. Butt, "Iraqi Recognition of Kuwait Will Not End Embargo," *Daily Telegraph*, November 11, 1994; and "U.S. Insists Iraq Must Do More than Recognize Kuwait," *International Herald Tribune*, November 9, 1994.

66. UN, "Letter dated 13 November 1994 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq transmitting the declaration of the National Assembly (10 November 1994) and decree of the Revolutionary Command Council No. 200 (10 November 1994) affirming Iraq's recognition of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Kuwait and of its international boundaries as endorsed by the Security Council in its resolution 833 (1993)" in *United Nations and the Iraq-Kuwait Conflict*, 696–98; and UN, "Statement by the President of the Security Council concerning Iraq's recognition of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Kuwait and of its international boundaries as endorsed by the Security Council in its resolution 833 (1993)," S/PRST/1994/68 (November 16, 1994) in *United Nations and the Iraq-Kuwait Conflict*, 698–99.

67. UN, "Statement by the President of the Security Council concerning Iraq's recognition of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Kuwait and of its international boundaries as endorsed by the Security Council in its resolution 833 (1993)," S/PRST/1994/68 (November 16, 1994) in *United Nations and the Iraq-Kuwait Conflict*, 698–99. See also: Department of State Daily Press Briefing, November 14, 1994, 11.

VIGILANT WARRIOR was an attempt at coercion through power projection, by relying on threats rather than the use of force. Air power was used to monitor the situation and to bring forces in from over-the-horizon. The Iraqi choice was simple: it could have withdrawn the three RGFC divisions from southern Iraq; or, it could have crossed the DMZ and entered Kuwait in some form of feint, raid or invasion. It chose the former. The coalition's deployment was intended to cause the Iraqi government to do nothing (inaction being the coalition's desired concession). This was an attempt to deter Iraq, and the attempt at threat-based coercion was sufficient for success.

The Iraqi government's motives remain unknown. One can only construct theories as to why it ordered the RGFC to southern Iraq and whether an invasion would have occurred in the absence of VIGILANT WARRIOR. In November of 1994, reports surfaced that, even in the USAF, there were doubts that the movements were a prelude to an invasion, as the only forces that moved were ground forces.⁶⁸ Iraq's actions were the result of its economy dictating that the government try to reduce domestic pressure by seeking a provocation with the coalition, and/or they were the result of the Iraqi government seeing an opportunity for action. If they were the former, then an invasion of Kuwait was not necessary to address the problem. A renewed threat from the coalition would suffice to reduce the pressure on the government. Byman and Waxman offered the only, although unverifiable, evidence supporting the other explanation: a high-level Iraqi defector stated that Saddam Hussein would have attacked had there been no response.⁶⁹ A possible invasion of Kuwait could be used as a bargaining tool for lifting sanctions.⁷⁰ The deployment could have had any number of purposes. If the Iraqi movement into southern Iraq had been a feint for diplomatic reasons, or even as a preliminary military exercise to test American and coalition resolve, then it would be semantically wrong to claim that Iraq backed down. This all suggests that Iraqi forces would have attacked had no reaction occurred, but VIGILANT WARRIOR cannot be described as a case of successful deterrence. The operation represented the application of a strategy of deterrence, but it may have taken place in the absence of a deterrence situation.

VIGILANT WARRIOR represented the application of a combined approach to deterrence using both land forces and air power. The JTF-SWA offered a command and support infrastructure for over-the-horizon forces as an enabler. In addition, it offered significant reconnaissance and intelligence capability that translated into strong situational awareness. The reinforcement of JTF-SWA with ground forces served as a means of reducing the probability of Iraq attaining any benefits from offensive operations against Kuwait. The JTF-SWA detected the movement of Iraqi forces into southern Iraq but did not necessarily deter it. Had it been a successful deterrent, no such movement would have taken place as a prelude to invasion. The CINC's list of requirements would have been more than sufficient to defend Kuwait against an invasion. It also would have been sufficient to mount offensive operations on land against Iraqi forces in Iraq should they have not complied with SCRs 687 and 949.

The danger with VIGILANT WARRIOR was that it was possible to draw the wrong lesson. An example of this occurred before the operation was complete:

The end result of this force build-up, which was, I hasten to add, accompanied by actions on our part to deter the Iraqis and to be ready to act against them if that was required, also took place during that time. So the fact of the Iraqi build-up was certainly being paralleled, if you will, by our activities during this period. The bottom line for the Iraqis was two Republican Guard armoured divisions and some other combat support elements,

68. Fulghum, "Iraqi Invasion Threat Reassessed."

69. Byman and Waxman, *Confronting Iraq*, 56.

70. Herr, 5–15.

notably air defences, some additional artillery, and some support equipment capability, came into the south and arrayed themselves in a threatening manner against Kuwait, near the Kuwait border.⁷¹

These statements imply that the Iraqis were actually going to invade. Short of proving that it was Saddam Hussein and the Iraqi government's intent to invade Kuwait a second time, it is not possible to say that deterrence actually occurred. However, this may have been more indicative of a degree of success with SOUTHERN WATCH in that the Iraqi government knew that its forces would take high casualties if they conducted aerial operations across the SNFZ. The operation certainly demonstrated American and allied resolve—after the troops began to arrive in theatre, Iraqi forces were withdrawn.

The crisis prompted greater cooperation from the GCC states regardless of the popular perception of the situation. The GCC foreign ministers met in Kuwait 11–12 October 1994, and the American Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, and the British Foreign Secretary, Douglas Hurd, attended. The Department of State spokesperson later commented that:

the Gulf Co-operation Council said that it would not let Saddam Hussein intimidate the international community again in this way. The countries participating in the meeting granted overflight clearances and beddown for coalition aircraft; that the GCC also agree urgently to review the burden-sharing questions to make sure that there would be an equitable sharing of the costs and other support associated with the US presence there and other presence ...⁷²

The threat had thus created the diplomatic position that the coalition was united against a potential invasion of Kuwait. This, of course, meant that the normally more reluctant host nations were more willing to allow coalition military forces into their territories and were more accepting than ever of the JTF-SWA. The threat posed by the Iraqi deployment of forces near the DMZ provided an opportunity for the US armed forces to test their capability for rapid deployment in a cost-justifiable manner. This heightened sense of threat reinforced the JTF-SWA's ability to enable future operations.

VIGILANT WARRIOR demonstrated that victory went to the swift (or defeat went to the hesitant). It provided a concrete example to the Gulf allies that the coalition's efforts were not solely about containing (or punishing) Iraq; they were also devoted to their defence. After VIGILANT WARRIOR, both the governments of Kuwait and Qatar allowed the US military to store a brigade's worth of equipment within their territories. This increased the American military's ability to rapidly deploy a contingent in the Gulf region.

The nature of the communication between the coalition and Iraq further complicated the issue. Most of the communication was conducted indirectly, either by decree or through a third party (the Russian government) or through actions (i.e., the deployment of forces). This last form of communication relied on the Iraqi government's ability to perceive the increase in coalition forces over time, which was difficult to prove yet easy to assume. The speed of the coalition's deployment demonstrated its capability to project power into the theatre, and this made its threats more credible.

The erosion of Iraqi willpower was hard to judge, as the penalty was maintaining the status quo. Given that the state of the Iraqi economy may have provided the impetus for some form of action, Saddam Hussein may have attempted a feint to provide the Iraqi people with a threat against which they could rally and forget their economic woes. If this were the case, then Saddam Hussein had

71. DoD Background Briefing, October 20, 1994, 1.

72. Department of State Daily Press Briefing, October 12, 1994, 5.

achieved his aim. However, the Iraqi government made its strategic situation worse than it had been, as its actions in October 1994 contributed to its isolation. The coalition demonstrated its capability to act quickly, and it is likely that Saddam Hussein was sufficiently deterred from undertaking offensive operations until Iraq had a significant arsenal of WMDs to support such operations, thus increasing the significance of WMDs.

Whatever the true reason behind Iraqi troop movements, VIGILANT WARRIOR brought about real gains for the coalition. This was a strategic victory in that Iraqi actions renewed the justification for containment while allowing for diplomatic progress. Most notable was the Iraqi recognition of Kuwait, but it was equally significant that the UN, under SCR 949, gave licence for force on the basis of threat and in the absence of movement beyond territorial boundaries. The removal of the perceived military threat by Iraq was a fact, as opposed to a chimera. The SNFZ became a southern exclusion zone (SEZ), and this allowed 24 ground-attack aircraft to be based in Kuwait on a permanent basis.⁷³ The coalition, therefore, became truly capable of taking direct action in southern Iraq against Iraqi forces in the air or on the ground. This was the political and military high-water mark of the coalition.

73. S. Watkins, "No End in Sight," *Air Force Times*, December 19, 1994.

Chapter 10: Operation DESERT STRIKE

In late August 1996, the KDP invited the Iraqi government to intervene in the KDP's war with the PUK. The coalition reacted to this by conducting Operation DESERT STRIKE in early September 1996. This had some unintended consequences, of which the main one was the increase of the fissure within the coalition to the point of fracturing it.

Operation DESERT STRIKE (see Table 16 for a chronology of events) was a series of missile strikes in order to extend the SNFZ to the 33rd parallel. This meant that the coalition controlled Iraqi airspace in the south as far north as Baghdad's suburbs. Correctly noting the implied threat to Baghdad, Iraqi forces challenged the SNFZ extension. This led the coalition to attempt removing Iraq's air defence capability in this area by threat and force of arms.

Date	Event
17 August 1996	The PUK allowed Iranian forces to pursue elements of the KDP-I in PUK territory in exchange for arms.
22 August 1996	The KDP requested military assistance from the Iraqi government.
31 August 1996	RGFC elements captured the city of Irbil in northern Iraq.
3 September 1996	American forces struck a series of air defence assets in southern Iraq using air- and sea-launched cruise missiles.
4 September 1996	The SNFZ was extended to the 33 rd parallel.
10 September 1996	The Iraqi government was warned not to rebuild its air defences in southern Iraq.
17–18 September 1996	QUICK TRANSIT I, the first of three evacuations of Kurdish refugees to Guam, was conducted.
22 October 1996	QUICK TRANSIT II occurred.
23 October 1996	The KDP and PUK agreed to a ceasefire.
25 November 1996	The oil-for-food deal was revived.
4 December 1996	QUICK TRANSIT III occurred.
9 December 1996	SCR 986 came into effect.
27 December 1996	Displeased with the removal of the humanitarian element of PROVIDE COMFORT II, the French government withdrew its forces.
1 January 1997	PROVIDE COMFORT II became Operation NORTHERN WATCH.

Table 16. Chronology of DESERT STRIKE

The Kurdish Civil War and DESERT STRIKE set in motion a chain of events that led to the evacuation of a number of Kurds associated with NGOs operating in Iraqi Kurdistan. These evacuations caused humanitarian operations in northern Iraq to end, which in turn caused the French government to withdraw from PROVIDE COMFORT II. Thus, DESERT STRIKE's long-term costs were considerable for the coalition both in diplomatic and political terms. The Iraqi government's exploitation of an opportunity created by the Kurdish Civil War allowed it to cause the fragmentation

of the coalition that had stood in place since DESERT STORM. It even weakened the consensus within the international community over the necessity and means to contain Iraq.

The Kurdish Civil War cannot properly be understood without discussing events in Iraqi Kurdistan from fall 1991 to summer 1996. After the coalition withdrew its ground forces from the region in fall 1991, the Kurds assumed control of the region and the Government of Iraq withdrew to behind a fortified line dubbed the Saddam Line.¹ The withdrawal of services by Iraq also meant the exclusion of the Kurds from any rationing schemes to relieve the effects of sanctions. In effect, the Iraqi Kurds became stateless, and they lacked the means to maintain order. Crime, banditry and a lack of services prompted the major Kurdish factions to seek to form a government through elections.² The two major parties, the Parti Demokrati Kurdistan (Kurdish Democratic Party) and the Yekiti Nishtimani Kurdistan (the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan), ended up splitting the parliamentary vote with 50.22 per cent to the KDP and 49.78 per cent to the PUK.³ The parties agreed to share power in a coalition government; however, they both maintained large paramilitary forces and drew their political support from regional constituencies. The KDP drew its support from the north and west, and the PUK from the south and east. Indeed, there seemed to be significant progress; by fall 1992, the Kurdish National Assembly was working on the development of a federalist system to deal with Iraq.⁴ Yet there were tensions beneath the surface that would lead to bloodshed.

The tensions emanated from the discrepancies in opportunities to carry on trade. Simply put, the KDP controlled the western portion of Iraqi Kurdistan bordering on Turkey. Trade in this area was greater than in the eastern, largely PUK-controlled portion of Kurdistan bordering on Iran. Trade across the Turkish border began as early as 1992, with the creation of the oil trading company Kurdoil. The income thereby generated was bolstered by the duties levied by Kurdish customs officials in border towns such as Zakho.⁵ This, of course, stood in stark contrast to the limited trade across the Iranian border. The conflict started in 1994 over customs revenues, and “an important factor in the KDP–PUK battle for territory was to gain more opportunities for taxation and to bring more organizations under their control. Furthermore, the more people each side controlled, the greater their share of food and humanitarian supplies to be distributed in the region under the UN’s plan.”⁶

This led to the creation of two rump capitals with the PUK in Sulaimaniyah and the KDP in Irbil.⁷ Despite numerous ceasefire attempts, the conflict continued, and it would rage until 1998, with others beginning to exploit the situation for their own purposes, which in turn led to further outside intervention.

On 17 August 1996, the Iranian government offered the PUK arms in exchange for the ability to cross PUK-held territory in pursuit of guerrillas from the Iranian KDP. Prior to that point, the Iraqi KDP was gaining the upper hand in the conflict, and the Iranian offer was rather welcomed as a result. The PUK immediately used their newly gained weapons in a series of attacks.⁸ In response to the PUK’s deal with the Iranian government, the KDP’s leader, Massoud Barzani, sought outside assistance by inviting the Iraqi military to intervene.⁹ Several RGFC divisions helped the KDP to recapture the city of Irbil.

1. M. Gunter, “A De Facto Kurdish State in Northern Iraq,” *Third World Quarterly* 14, no. 2 (1993): 295.

2. *Ibid.*, 297.

3. *Ibid.*, 299.

4. H. Elis, “The Kurdish Demand for Statehood and the Future of Iraq,” *The Journal of Social, Political and Economic Studies* 29, no. 2 (Summer 2004): 200.

5. Gunter, “A De Facto Kurdish State in Northern Iraq,” 301.

6. J. Barham, “Hunger for War Booty is Driving Fight between Kurds,” *Financial Times*, September 10, 1996.

7. M. Gunter, “The Kurdish Question in Perspective,” *World Affairs* 166, no. 4 (Spring 2004): 202.

8. E. Mortimer, “Saddam Exploits Kurds’ Division,” *Financial Times*, September 2, 1996; and S. Myers and others, “A Failed Race against Time: U.S. Tried to Head Off Iraqis,” *New York Times*, September 5, 1996.

9. Myers and others, “A Failed Race against Time.”

As tensions mounted in northern Iraq in late August 1996, Boutros Boutros-Ghali suspended the oil-for-food deal, concerned that anyone monitoring the oil sales or aid distribution to the Kurds was in danger. Irbil was the intended hub of the aid distribution network under the deal.¹⁰ The deal provided a humanitarian underpinning for actions that were less palatable to broader public opinion. Losing or diminishing the oil-for-food deal risked a significant public relations setback.

The coalition's aim shifted throughout the crisis. At first, it sought to end the KDP–PUK conflict through mediation, as this was a source of major embarrassment. The logic behind American policy toward the Kurds and Iraq was that although Saddam Hussein was undesirable, his overthrow by Iraqis was preferable to other options. If the Kurds were engaged in internecine conflict, then they were not contributing to the future overthrow of Saddam Hussein. This was a significant embarrassment for the coalition; the fact that PROVIDE COMFORT created a secure space for Iraqi Kurds only to have them fight among themselves was contradictory at best. The Clinton administration was well aware of this contradiction and sought to end the conflict through mediation. Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Robert Pelletreau was sent to try to bring about a ceasefire. After speaking to Jalal Talabani, the PUK leader, and Massoud Barzani, Pelletreau was able to convince both factions to meet in London.¹¹ The talks began on 23 August 1996, and the US State Department spokesperson reported that the two parties agreed to a ceasefire and would return their forces to their previous positions.¹² However, even with such declarations, both the KDP and PUK broke the ceasefire shortly thereafter.

The US intelligence community became aware that the Iraqi government was moving forces northwards in response to Massoud Barzani's request and suspected that this was not just an exercise. On 28 August 1996, the US government believed that between 30,000 and 40,000 Iraqi troops were about to enter Kurdish territory.¹³ The NSC presented a series of options which "developed the argument for our general strategic approach that we're using here, rather than responding tactically to a move by Saddam in the north, to pick the time and place of our own choice for an adequate and measured response."¹⁴ The US government wanted to maintain the initiative, but the situation put them in a reactive posture. All American forces in the Gulf region went on alert.¹⁵ The Clinton administration was afraid of the indirect consequences of the Iraqi seizure of Irbil, as recalled by William Perry:

The Iraqis, emboldened by their success against the relatively weak PUK forces, might—if they saw no reaction from the international community—move to suppress both the PUK and KDP; or they might move against their neighbours to the south—as they did in August of 1990 and again in October of 1994. Without a military response, Saddam Hussein's position in the country and the region would be strengthened and vital interests to the United States could be threatened.¹⁶

10. S. Myers, "U.N. Halts Deal for Iraq as U.S. Pledges Action on Attack," *New York Times*, September 2, 1996; Department of State Daily Press Briefing, September 11, 1996, 17; and Department of State Daily Press Briefing, September 16, 1996, 14.

11. "Press Briefing by Mike McCurry and Mark Parris, Senior Director for Near East and South Asian Affairs," White House Press Release, September 3, 1996, 2.

12. G. Davies, "Kurdish Cease-Fire," U.S. Department of State Press Statement, August 23, 1996, 1; and Myers and others, "A Failed Race against Time."

13. "Press Briefing by McCurry and Parris," 1–3; and William Perry and Joseph Ralston, "Curbing Saddam's Military Adventure," briefing delivered September 3, 1996, *Defense Issues* 11, no. 79, <http://www.defense.gov/Speeches/Speech.aspx?SpeechID=951> (accessed January 29, 2013).

14. "Background Briefing by Senior Administration Official," White House Press Release, August 31, 1996; and "Press Briefing by McCurry and Parris," 5–6.

15. J. Adams, "US Jets Poised for Iraq Strike," *Times*, September 1, 1996.

16. DoD News Briefing, September 3, 1996, 2.

As the conflict threatened the oil-for-food deal and encouraged the Iraqi government to engage in military adventures, it posed a threat to stability. It was not possible for the American government to stand by and let a position develop in which Saddam Hussein was able to entrench greater control over the Iraqi people and greater control over the political and physical geography of Iraq. The American position was, of course, tendentious. On the one hand, they wanted to weaken Saddam Hussein's hold on his country. On the other, they were naturally anxious about being seen to meddle too overtly in the internal politics of Iraq. Such actions could call into question the content of the relevant UN resolutions and, thereby, could unglue the coalition and run counter to general Arab feelings about the sovereignty of Iraq. The danger was that Iraq's unity and control were being confused. It is possible to argue that if Iraq's armed forces were kept busy exercising control over Iraq, then they would be less able to project power into Iraq's neighbours.

On 30 August 1996, the Clinton administration issued its first warning to Iraq. It warned that "there would be serious, grave consequences for launching any type of offensive manoeuvre against Irbil."¹⁷ It was a habit of the Iraqi government to refuse acceptance of messages from the United States, which made communication difficult. Yet there could be no misconstruing of American intent. As well as the alert of coalition military forces, aircraft sorties increased under both SOUTHERN WATCH and PROVIDE COMFORT II.¹⁸ Such actions served to underscore public declarations on the matter.

Iraqi forces overran Irbil early on the morning of 31 August. They bombarded the city before dawn, and immediately after the barrage, the Iraqi forces, spearheaded by a column of 60 tanks, seized control of the city.¹⁹ Saddam Hussein ordered the Republican Guard to withdraw from Irbil on 1 September.²⁰ The Turkish government reported that the withdrawal was actually occurring, but the PUK and other resistance organizations claimed that Iraqi forces and the KDP were rounding up and massacring members of the Iraqi opposition.²¹ This evidence increased the Pentagon's suspicion that the Iraqi government was leaving a residual security and intelligence presence.²²

The 1996 presidential election had a definite influence on the Clinton administration's decision making. Clinton recalled in his memoirs that this crisis occurred while he was on the campaign trail.²³ First, President Clinton was sensitive to the effects of the crisis on polls and the opportunities it would create for his political opponents. President Clinton's Republican opponent, Senator Bob Dole, was very critical of the President's approach to Iraq during the campaign and advocated a strong response to Iraq's action. Second, the Democratic Party National Convention forced President Clinton to delegate a number of tasks to members of his administration.²⁴ President Clinton discussed the options with Vice President Al Gore and, on the evening of 2 September 1996, opted to use force.²⁵ At the same time, he "reaffirmed that vital national security interests of the United States existed in containing Iraq, and a key to that containment is the US military presence in the region. In particular,

17. "Press Briefing by McCurry and Parris," 3.

18. *Ibid.*, 4.

19. "Press Briefing by Senior Administration Official," White House Press Briefing, August 31, 1996, 2.

20. S. Myers, "U.N. Halts Deal for Iraq."

21. S. Kinzer, "Iraqi Troops Said to Round Up Kurd Leaders," *New York Times*, September 3, 1996.

22. E. Sciolino, "Facing Saddam, Again," *New York Times*, September 4, 1996; and T. Weiner, "Iraq Pulling Out, But Leaving Spies Behind, U.S. Says," *New York Times*, September 6, 1996.

23. Bill Clinton, *My Life* (New York: Random House, 2004), 728.

24. M. Fletcher, "How Saddam's Desert Marauders Ambushed Clinton Campaign Caravan," *Times*, September 5, 1996; "Press Briefing by McCurry and Parris," 4–5; S. Myers, "U.S. Calls Alert as Iraqis Strike a Kurd Enclave," *New York Times*, September 1, 1996; and S. Myers, "Pentagon Says Command Site Was Struck," September 3, 1996.

25. "Press Briefing by McCurry and Parris," 6.

the linchpin of that is what we call Operation SOUTHERN WATCH.”²⁶ The President defined the main American interests as the military containment of Iraq as opposed to the stability of northern Iraq. This is an interesting definition. It allowed him the flexibility to choose the time and place of the coalition’s reaction without necessarily being bound to intervene in Iraqi Kurdistan.

This statement represented a major change in the American public posture. Initially, it had clothed its actions as saving the oil-for-food programme. It had then moved its position to that of repelling the RGFC incursion into northern Iraq. The latter severely strained the ambit of the appropriate UN resolutions. The new position marked a move to an overt attempt to deny Saddam Hussein the control of Iraq that he seemed to be wresting back. The containment of Iraq required that Iraqi military aspirations in the north and the south be denied. This was, of course, a policy with considerable risk in terms of public relations and perceptions; that is, it could be attacked as being a cynical abrogation of the initiatives for humanitarian relief and replacing them with objectives that lay squarely and almost exclusively within American interests.

Neither the British nor the French government wanted to intervene any further in the internal politics of Iraq; nor did either want to engage in massive retaliation. Both governments tried to impress upon the US that the furthest they should go was an airstrike.²⁷ Iraqi forces, after all, had not acted outside Iraq’s borders; they had been invited north by a Kurdish faction. Furthermore, the incursion did not threaten, at least initially, regional stability. The French government publicly stated that the Iraqi incursion did not violate any of the UNSC resolutions.²⁸ The Secretary-General recalled: “While Iraq’s military move into the north was deplorable, it was, after all, an Iraqi government operation within the sovereign territory of Iraq.”²⁹ After all, even SCR 688 paid lip service to Iraq’s sovereignty. The French government was not the only one concerned with the situation. The Russian government agreed that action was required, but did not feel drastic measures were necessary.³⁰ The question was difficult and remains unanswered: does the mistreatment of a state’s population negate the legitimacy of the state’s monopoly of violence? Even today, the international community wavers on this issue, where idealistic, yet noble, notions of justice are juxtaposed with realistic views of what can be done in the face of resistance by the offending state.

The Arab allies believed that action was necessary but wanted to avoid exacerbating the crisis. In response to a question about the support of the regional allies, the Department of State spokesperson stated:

[W]hat I can tell you is that I don’t believe you’ve seen any active opposition to the military move of the United States by those countries. We did have a variety of conversations with them preceding the attack. We let them know what, in a preliminary basis, some of our options were as we looked at the situation.³¹

The Saudi government forbade offensive operations being conducted from their soil, and the Turkish government feared that operations against Iraq would lead to another refugee crisis.³² This severely limited the coalition’s range of options for military operations. It also provided the coalition a lesson for future operations of this nature—an adversary can exploit host-nation sensitivity to limit military options.

26. Perry, in DoD News Briefing, September 17, 1996, 1.

27. J. Fitchett, “Keep Retaliation Limited, Allies Urge Clinton,” *International Herald Tribune*, September 3, 1996.

28. Department of State Daily Press Briefing, September 3, 1996, 4.

29. Boutros-Ghali, 297.

30. Department of State Daily Press Briefing, September 3, 1996, 6.

31. *Ibid.*, 8.

32. S. Myers, “Pentagon Says Command Site Was Struck,” *New York Times*, September 2, 1996; Sciolino, “Facing Saddam, Again”; and P. K. White, 40. See also Horner, “What We Should Have Learned.”

The two implicit aims of the strikes were to support the military containment of Iraq through the SNFZ and to rescue the oil-for-food deal by reversing Iraq's incursion into northern Iraq. There was another, yet less obvious, aim, which was minimizing the risk of casualties, be they American, coalition or Iraqi. This made target selection very difficult. If Iraqi casualties were a concern, strikes against Baghdad, the capital of Iraq and the heart of its government, would be unacceptable. The President had already had a foretaste of the effect of American casualties on public perceptions during an election year, and earlier that year, Khobar Towers, an apartment building employed as an American military barracks near Riyadh, was bombed. That was a foremost consideration. Another was reflected in a White House press briefing, in which the briefer noted that the President—during his meeting with Tony Lake and the JCS Director of Operations, Lieutenant General Peter Pace, USMC—wanted to minimize the amount of collateral damage and civilian casualties.³³ A choice of target that led to large numbers of Iraqi casualties would have been unacceptable to the Arab allies, certainly odious to the remainder of the Islamic world and unpopular in Europe.

So, political factors significantly constrained the coalition's actions. Due to host nation sensitivities, it could not employ air assets from within the theatre of operations. It could, therefore, only use air assets from over-the-horizon, carrier-based air assets or cruise missiles. The use of carrier-based aviation required the striking aircraft to conduct airborne refuelling over Iraq, rendering the tankers easy prey for the IADS and IQAF.³⁴ Air assets were also restricted to a rather narrow lane of entry and egress where Iraqi territory bordered on the Persian Gulf, again making them easier targets for Iraqi air defences and increasing the probability of coalition casualties. This would be even worse if the air assets had to strike targets in Iraqi Kurdistan, as it would mean crossing over central Iraq, with its air defences, twice. This did not meet President Clinton's guidance to the JCS Director of Operations and, thus, left only one means—cruise missiles.

The further that targeting strayed from installations clearly designated within relevant UN resolutions, the more difficult it was to support the targeting diplomatically and politically. The US certainly wished to diminish perceptions of itself as an aggressive bully. Yet, equally, it was sure that the situation warranted intervention on a larger scale than hitherto. In light of the oil-for-food proposal, it would have been counterproductive to attack any economic target (i.e., telecommunications, oil, economic infrastructure or even industry). The WMDs were not the focus of the crisis, and their value as a target set, in this case, was minimal. The RGFC units in northern Iraq were not a feasible target given their mobility and the requirement to programme missile guidance systems. The number of vehicles and their ability to move faster than the missiles could be programmed caused them to be the proverbial mother-of-all time-sensitive targets. This left the coalition with two choices for target sets: the Iraqi intelligence and security apparatus, and the air defence assets. Most of the intelligence and security apparatuses were in Baghdad, and the implication of the President's guidance to the JCS was that targets in that city were off-limits.³⁵ This left air defences as the only viable target set, and the coalition chose to send a combination of air- and sea-launched cruise missiles through the narrow gap to widen the air approaches to Baghdad and, by so doing, implicitly threaten Iraq's government.

The coalition reacted a day after the RGFC withdrew from Irbil. The President, after consulting with his advisors and allies, authorized the use of force while a pair of B-52 bombers from Guam flew towards the Persian Gulf.³⁶ As the bombers entered the airspace over the Gulf, they were joined

33. "Press Briefing by McCurry and Parris," 7.

34. Horner, "What We Should Have Learned," 4; and Byman and Waxman, *Confronting Iraq*, 63.

35. Horner, "What We Should Have Learned."

36. I. Brodie, M. Theodoulou, and J. Sherman, "Order to Attack Saddam Is Signed," *Times*, September 3, 1996.

by their escort, a number of F-14D aircraft from the aircraft carrier the USS *Carl Vinson*.³⁷ Thirty-one T-LAMs were fired by the *Carl Vinson's* carrier group, and the B-52s launched 13 conventional air-launched cruise missiles (CALCMs) at the targets. The target set was based on the integrated air defence capability associated with southern Iraq, with facilities in Al Kut, Al Iskandariyah, An Nasiriyah and Tallil.³⁸ The targets were hit at approximately 9:25 a.m. Baghdad time.³⁹ A second strike was ordered, as there were four sites where the effect of the first series of strikes had been questionable due to cloud cover over the target.⁴⁰ The USS *Russell* fired eight more Tomahawks, the USS *Hewitt* fired two others, the USS *Laboon* fired five and the USS *Jefferson City* contributed two more missiles to the second strike.⁴¹

The American government deliberately chose to ignore the problem in northern Iraq. William Perry and Vice-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Joseph Ralston, USAF, claimed in a 3 September briefing that “[o]ur response protects the United States interests by strengthening our ability to contain future Iraqi attacks. We have chosen the time, the place and the modality of our response to suit our strategic interests and our comparative advantage, not his.”⁴² The strikes enabled the transformation of the SNFZ into a coercive instrument by expanding it to the 33rd parallel. This represented an attempt to wrest the initiative back from the government of Iraq by reacting from a different location.

The President drew a distinction, however cosmetic, between the action to extend the SNFZ and the military strikes to make it effective:

Our objectives are limited, but clear: to make Saddam pay a price for the latest act of brutality, reducing his ability to threaten his neighbours and America’s interests. First, we are extending the no-fly zone in southern Iraq. This will deny Saddam control of Iraqi airspace from the Kuwaiti border to the southern suburbs of Baghdad, and significantly restrict Iraq’s ability to conduct offensive operations in the region. Second, to protect the safety of our aircraft enforcing the no-fly zone, our Cruise missiles struck Saddam’s air defence capabilities in southern Iraq.⁴³

Ironically, what appeared to be a coercive act (the missile strikes) was really an act intended to enable an increase in the coercive value of the SNFZ. General Ralston stated: “The message that we are sending to Saddam Hussein. ... That is, if he violates the norms that are expected, that he will suffer a penalty. In this particular case, he is suffering a penalty in loss of sovereignty over his airspace.”⁴⁴ A Department of State spokesman claimed that:

we have attacked Saddam Hussein’s centre, his strategic centre, the assets that are most precious to him—command and control assets, anti-aircraft assets. We chose to react to the events of recent days by choosing targets that were in our interests to destroy. Those are the targets we destroyed. They weaken Saddam Hussein. They weaken him militarily, and, in a general sense, they reduce his ability to pose a threat to the region.⁴⁵

37. GlobalSecurity.org, “Operation Desert Strike,” http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/desert_strike.htm (accessed January 29, 2013).

38. B. Starr, “Clinton’s Line in the Sand Puts Pressure on DoD,” *Jane’s Defence Weekly*, 11 September 1996.

39. “Pentagon Says Command Site Was Struck,” *New York Times*, September 3, 1996.

40. “Press Briefing by Mike McCurry,” White House Press Briefing, September 3, 1996.

41. “Statement by the Press Secretary,” White House Press Release, September 3, 1996.

42. Perry and Ralston, 2.

43. “Statement by the President,” White House Press Release, September 3, 1996, 1.

44. DoD News Briefing, September 4, 1996, 6.

45. Department of State Daily Press Briefing, September 4, 1996, 9.

The Iraqi incursion, then, provided the coalition an opportunity to expand the SNFZ in order to apply further pressure on Saddam. It also obviated the uncomfortable and undesirable position of having to pick a side in the Kurdish conflict.

It was unwise, given the logistical requirements for maintaining the SNFZ, to enlarge the zone without guaranteeing the safety of the enforcing aircraft. General Ralston revealed how the operation affected the situation, and the American reasoning behind their action as:

the rationale for this is the fact that our strategic interests of the United States are certainly to the south, and we want to make it as difficult as possible for Saddam in some unpredictable way to threaten his neighbours, certainly, to the south. By increasing the size of the no-fly zone that gives us additional warning; but more importantly, it significantly impacts his training of his armed forces and reduces their readiness. In order to facilitate our pilots enforcing that no-fly zone, we wanted to do everything possible to reduce the risk to our aircrews. So our strikes yesterday were designed to reduce the threats to our airplanes and our pilots enforcing the no-fly zone. We had targeted surface-to-air missile sites as well as his integrated air defence network.⁴⁶

There were some concerns associated with the strike and the extension. The 32nd parallel was originally chosen in order to ensure that the tanker orbits took place within the safety of Saudi airspace. With the extension of the SNFZ and in particular because of the removal of hostile air defence assets, the coalition could risk putting tanker aircraft onto station within the zone, thus allowing for greater NFZ loiter times.

How effective were the strikes? The first strike was conducted using unmanned means, such as CALCMs and T-LAMs. Of the 13 CALCMs, 8 of the 10 targets were struck, and three of the missiles failed their pre-launch inspections.⁴⁷ However, it was noted that “[p]art of the problem with the CALCMs were [sic] that they were fired at targets they were not intended to destroy, a product of hasty planning The planning error occurred because no air component commander, with specialized knowledge of the effects of aerial weapons, was assigned by Central Command to help plan the mission.”⁴⁸

This was a hastily planned strike forced by the coalition’s strategy of asymmetrical response to Iraqi actions. On the first strike, 9 to 12 of the 14 T-LAMs hit their target, and 12 to 15 of the second wave of 17 T-LAMs hit the target.⁴⁹ The hastiness of the operation meant that the T-LAMs were reliant on global positioning systems (GPS) as opposed to the digital terrain mapping normally used by the missile. This translated into a relative lack of accuracy.⁵⁰ Secretary Perry noted that these systems had a circular error probable (CEP) of between 10 and 15 metres, and given that the warheads weighed 2,000 pounds (907 kg) in one case and 1,000 pounds (454 kg) in the other, they would have had some effect on the target.⁵¹ Given the popular perception of the accuracy of a T-LAM, it was necessary for the DoD to explain why it had not met all expectations. The executive officer of the USN’s cruise missile office was quoted in the *New York Times* explaining some of the theory behind the employment of the missile, where it was necessary to fire “multiple missiles on some aim points. And in the case of complex targets, they have chosen to go back and restrike”⁵² With complex targets, more would be required, and in the case of doubt, it would make sense to fire another salvo.⁵³

46. Ralston, in DoD News Briefing, September 4, 1996, 1.

47. “Pentagon Bolsters Force in Gulf as Iraq Ignores Warnings,” *Jane’s Defence Weekly*, September 18, 1996.

48. D. Fulghum, “Hard Lessons in Iraq Lead to New Attack Plan,” *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, September 16, 1996.

49. “Pentagon Bolsters Force in Gulf.”

50. *Ibid.*

51. Perry and Portillo, DoD News Briefing, September 4, 1996, 4.

52. J. Cushman, “Pentagon Defends Missile’s Accuracy,” *New York Times*, September 5, 1996.

53. Ralston, in DoD News Briefing, September 4, 1996, 4.

Did the strikes improve the military situation? As noted, the effectiveness of coalition aircraft in terms of the time spent in the SNFZ and their distance of penetration was increased. The extra space allowed the coalition to detect and react to threats to Kuwait with greater speed and, therefore, increased the degree of early warning. Due to the extended range, aircraft enforcing the SNFZ could now easily strike at most of Iraq's air defence network.⁵⁴ With the southeastern air defence network out of operation, the allies would have a path clear of opposition, the means to detect incursions and a free hand to launch strikes at Baghdad.⁵⁵ Yet this all had little, if anything, to do with the crisis in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Viewed in light of the SNFZ extension and its role in the primary American policy toward Iraq, one can discern that containment was the American objective. In his later statement to the House of Representatives International Relations Committee, Robert Pelletreau stated:

Our policy is to contain Iraq, employing political, economic and military measures. This policy has enjoyed bipartisan support through two administrations. ...

The key elements of containment are:

- inspections and monitoring by UNSCOM to prevent Iraq's pursuit of weapons of mass destruction;
- a strong UN sanctions regime;
- no-fly zones below the 33rd parallel and above the 36th parallel to prevent Iraq's use of airpower; and
- a no-drive zone pursuant to UNSCR 949, whereby Saddam is prohibited from reinforcing his ground forces in the south.⁵⁶

The SNFZ extension was another means of placing pressure on Iraq to comply with SCR 687 and its antecedents. William Perry reiterated this: "Our objective remains the same as it has been from the beginning, to deter Saddam Hussein from taking actions which commit atrocities to his own people, which attack his neighbours, and which upset the security and stability of the region."⁵⁷ A White House press spokesman, Mike McCurry, went further than William Perry, by claiming:

One of our goals here was to not be fixated on responding to his tactical moves, nor towards the Kurds. There are a lot of practical and geopolitical reasons for that, but our interests were, first and foremost, to restrict his ability to pose further threat [sic] to international peace and security, consistent with U.N. Security Council resolutions, and also pose a threat to long-time allies of the United States in the region.⁵⁸

If Iraqi compliance with UN resolutions could not be obtained, Iraq would still have to be contained.

54. Starr.

55. E. Schmitt, "Air Zone Enforced," *New York Times*, September 5, 1996.

56. US, Statement by Robert H. Pelletreau, Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs, before the House Committee on International Relations, Washington, DC, September 25, 1996 ("Developments in the Middle East") <http://www.state.gov/www/regions/nea/960925.html> (accessed January 29, 2013), 5.

57. Perry and Portillo, 4.

58. "Press Briefing by McCurry and Parris," 8.

The SNFZ extension provided evidence to support suspicions within the international community that the containment of Iraq was the only goal for the US-led coalition. This goal bore little relation to the humanitarian situation despite the public statements to the contrary. Marc Weller argued: “In consequence, the humanitarian veneer which had covered the aerial exclusion zones was peeled off. It appeared that the worst fears of the opponents of a right of humanitarian ‘intervention’ in international law were being fulfilled: the doctrine appeared to be abused by powerful states as a cover for power politics.”⁵⁹ This dichotomy between the coalition’s actions and statements was a significant blow to the coalition’s public image, and another soon followed.

The allies were not exactly enthusiastic about the strikes and SNFZ extension. Despite its provision of logistical support of the first strike, namely the use of the airfield at Diego Garcia for refuelling aircraft for the B-52s, the British government was unimpressed with the NFZ extension. Initially, British forces were ordered not to enforce the extension, but this was rescinded shortly after.⁶⁰ The French government was unequivocal about its position, as “*sa participation s’effectuera au sud du 32e parallèle ...*”⁶¹ The British government then tried to table a resolution at the Security Council that directly addressed the situation in northern Iraq and which represented an attempt to mitigate the effects of the dichotomy.

The strikes and extension of the SNFZ also proved to be rather unpopular with certain members of the UNSC. The Russian government was extremely upset by the strikes and called them disproportionate.⁶² It also made it known that it believed that any further actions should be authorized specifically by the UNSC.⁶³ The Chinese government had troubles of its own in Tibet; it opposed the SNFZ extension due to its potential as precedent setting. The Arab world recoiled from it, fearing it would fuel a fundamentalist backlash.⁶⁴ The British delegation to the UN continued to campaign for a draft resolution but became caught up in a wrangle over the tone and language of its contents. The French, Chinese and Russian delegations to the UN wanted to weaken the condemnation of the Iraqi government and include a condemnation of the American strike as well as SNFZ extension.⁶⁵ By 6 September, the British government gave up, and it seemed that any vestige of international recognition of the legality of the strikes was lost.⁶⁶

The unusual legal justification for DESERT STRIKE led to a lack of consensus within the UNSC. The Clinton administration maintained that the incursion by Iraqi forces violated SCRs 688 and 678.⁶⁷ Hervé Charette, the French Foreign Minister, claimed on a number of occasions that American

59. M. Weller, “The US, Iraq and the Use of Force in a Unipolar World,” *Survival* 41, no. 4 (Winter 1999–2000): 95.

60. C. Whitney, “Washington Is on Its Own: Allies Express Support But Shun Involvement,” *International Herald Tribune*, September 4, 1996. The British political and military support for the strikes can be found in I. Black, “US Presses for Support on Iraq,” *Guardian*, September 17, 1996; M. Binyon, “Rifkind Backs Blow against Man Who ‘Cannot Be Trusted,’” *Times*, September 4, 1996; “Hawk Major Stands Alone,” *Guardian*, September 4, 1996; and Perry and Portillo, 4.

61. French Foreign Minister Hervé Charette, in “France-États-Unis-Iraq-Communiqué du ministère des Affaires Étrangères,” September 5, 1996, French Foreign Ministry Press Release. The translation: “[I]ts participation will occur to the south of the 32nd parallel ...”

62. Lavrov cited in A. Mitchell, “U.S. Continuing Bid to Smash Air Defense,” *New York Times*, September 4, 1996.

63. Boutros-Ghali, 297.

64. I. Black and M. Tran, “Allies Pin Down Saddam’s Forces: Russia Leads Protests,” *Guardian*, September 6, 1996; J. Bone, “Allies Out of Step on Text on UN Resolution,” *Times*, September 5, 1996; and “Saddamned,” *Economist*, September 7, 1996.

65. B. Crossette, “U.N. Council Members Negotiate, Fruitlessly,” *New York Times*, September 6, 1996.

66. J. Bone and T. Rhodes, “Britain Gives up Bid for UN Unity against Saddam,” *Times*, September 7, 1996; and “Move to Censure Iraq Fails,” *New York Times*, September 7, 1996.

67. Department of State Daily Press Briefing, September 3, 1996, 10 and 16; Department of State Daily Press Briefing, September 4, 1996, 2; and “Press Briefing by McCurry and Parris,” 10–11.

actions were neither justified nor authorized by the Security Council.⁶⁸ The jurisprudential basis of American action was, to say the least, shaky. It is a general principle of law that the legality of actions can only be determined by reference to governing law or, in this case, to the legality and scope of the governing UN resolutions. The latter point has to be emphasized. UN resolutions are not of themselves necessarily legal. They can be subject to judicial test. Second, even if the resolutions are themselves legal, it is also a matter for judicial review whether particular actions fall properly within their ambit. It is clearly insufficient as a test of legality that those taking action persuade themselves that the action is legal. It is also clearly insufficient to meet the test of legality that there is support by more than one party to the action, as this is collusion rather than legality. Thus, the US found itself facing problems because of its action. The US defence was that the scope of UN resolutions gave empowerment for the action it undertook. Yet in significant measure, its inducement of legality apparently flowed from the fact that the majority of the coalition partners agreed that the action should be taken. This is a doubtful premise, and moving from the strictly legal argument, the premise became even weaker when members of the coalition themselves questioned the legality of action and took the stance that the UN resolutions provided insufficient legal cover for the actions actually taken.

The Turkish government also became increasingly concerned about the situation in northern Iraq. Fears of terrorism in Turkish territory prompted it to launch airstrikes against the PKK bases in northern Iraq.⁶⁹ In late September, the Turkish government informed its American counterpart of its intention to establish a 10-km-wide buffer zone along their border. The buffer zone was established within days.⁷⁰ Ankara was also concerned about the state of disorder and sought to pre-empt a refugee crisis similar to that of March–April 1991.

The strikes were unpopular with the Gulf States, but the extension of the SNFZ itself met with approval and support. Both Kuwait and Bahrain agreed to greater numbers of American forces on their soils. Additional aircraft were based at Al Jaber AB in Kuwait and Sheikh Isa AB in Bahrain.⁷¹ The Saudi government supported the extension of the SNFZ and its relation to the policy of the containment of Iraq.⁷² However, there were a number of reports that the strikes were not well received in the Arab world.⁷³ While the popular reaction focused on American imperialism or arrogance, the governmental reactions were less emotional. Most governments feared that the strikes would contribute to the growth of fundamentalism and the further erosion of Iraqi sovereignty.⁷⁴ Indeed, the recent events at Khobar Towers underscored the Saudi concern on such matters. The presence of Western military forces on its soil invited acts of terror, and air strikes against Iraq only invited further anger from within the population.

Finally, the strikes and extension failed to address the KDP–PUK conflict. Fighting continued in Sulaimaniyah on 6 September 1996.⁷⁵ The renewed fighting in northern Iraq led to another refugee crisis.

68. French government document in author's possession, "Entretien du ministre des Affaires étrangères, M. Hervé de Charette, avec l'Europe" (September 8, 1996); *La Politique Étrangère de la France* (September–October 1996), 21; "51^e Assemblée générale des Nations unies—Entretien du ministre des Affaires étrangères, M. Hervé de Charette, avec la presse française" (September 24, 1996); and *La Politique Étrangère de la France* (September–October 1996), 92–93.

69. S. Kinzer, "Turks, Opposing U.S., Urge Iraq to Take Control of Kurdish Area," *New York Times*, September 21, 1996; "Turkey to Keep Iraq Security Zone," September 25, 1996; and Department of State Daily Press Briefing, September 5, 1996.

70. "U.S. Backs Turkish Troop Move," *New York Times*, September 8, 1996.

71. DoD News Briefing, September 17, 1996, 2–3.

72. *Ibid.*, 3.

73. N. MacFarquhar, "Foes Say Saddam's Gamble Paid Off," *International Herald Tribune*, September 7, 1996; "Mixed Reaction in Arab Capitals," *Financial Times*, September 4, 1996; and C. Walker, "Outrage in Arab World Puts Peace Process at Risk," *Times*, September 4, 1996.

74. B. Crossette, "Clinton Finds Little Support at the U.N. for Iraqi Strikes," *New York Times*, September 5, 1996.

75. H. Pope, "Policing Saddam," *Independent*, September 7, 1996.

On 9 September, the KDP captured Sulaimaniyah and the Lake Dokan dam.⁷⁶ A large number of refugees fled towards the Iranian border. The UN estimated that there were between 70,000 and 75,000, while the Iranian government thought there were as many as 200,000.⁷⁷ The United Nations High Commissioner's Office for Refugees (UNHCR) dispatched some personnel to assist the Iranian government with its new problem.⁷⁸ The refugee crisis highlighted the problems associated with the Kurdish Civil War by reinforcing the point that the fighting hindered aid distribution. The PUK and KDP resumed fighting on 10 October.⁷⁹ Within four days, the PUK recaptured Sulaimaniyah.⁸⁰

The American government tried frantically to obtain another ceasefire. The KDP–PUK conflict made it difficult for the American government to argue that the Iraqi government should not control the aid distribution in northern Iraq. The purpose of the ceasefire talks was to allow the oil-for-food deal to go forward and to prevent another potential refugee crisis. Robert Pelletreau was able to get both parties to agree to talks on 16 October 1996.⁸¹ The State Department stated that the talks were an attempt to bring about peace and to secure guarantees from both parties that they would not seek Iraqi or Iranian intervention, thus containing the conflict.⁸² It did not appear hopeful. The fighting continued as the talks started, and on 18 October 1996, Koi Sanjaq fell yet again to the KDP.⁸³ However, progress eventually began to be made on the peace talks, and by 23 October 1996, they led to a ceasefire and an agreement to continue with some reconciliation talks later.⁸⁴ The ceasefire solidified when the parties agreed to the creation of a buffer zone and its monitoring.⁸⁵ This ceasefire removed the remaining obstacle for the oil-for-food deal, and a few weeks later, the deal was revived and agreed upon by both the UN and Iraq.⁸⁶ On 10 December 1996, oil was flowing through the Kirkuk–Yumurtalik pipeline, and Iraqis rejoiced.⁸⁷ This would reduce the human cost of sanctions and prevent a further decline in the American image on the international scene.

Did the SNFZ extension have an effect on Iraq's actions? The new zone came into effect at noon (GMT) on 4 September 1996. Prior to this, between 20 and 25 Iraqi fighter aircraft were moved to airfields in central Iraq.⁸⁸ The Iraqi government seemed prepared to deny battle and accept the new scope of the SNFZ. The JTF-SWA ordered that coalition aircraft not fly below 20,000 feet in order to avoid AAA and Roland fire.⁸⁹ At the end of the first mission to fly north of the 32nd parallel, two MiG-29s challenged the extension by flying south of the 33rd parallel and then fled before any allied aircraft could attack them.⁹⁰ On 11 September, two SA-6s fired at a pair of F-16s over the NNFZ.

76. J. Barham, E. Mortimer, and P. Waldmeir, "Saddam's Kurdish Allies Take Key Town," *Financial Times*, September 10, 1996; D. Jehl, "Faction of Kurds Supported by Iraq Takes Rival's City," *New York Times*, September 10, 1996; and C. Nuttall, "Iraq's Kurdish Allies Take Key Towns," *Guardian*, September 9, 1996.

77. D. Jehl, "Fearful Kurds Huddle at Iran's Closed Door," *New York Times*, September 11, 1996; and M. Theodoulou, "Tehran Begs for Help as Kurds Flood to Border," *Times*, September 11, 1996.

78. Department of State Daily Press Briefing, September 12, 1996, 4–5.

79. Department of State Daily Press Briefing, October 9, 1996, 8; and Department of State Daily Press Briefing, October 10, 1996, 10.

80. D. Hirst, "Saddam's Kurdish Foes Retake City," *Guardian*, October 14, 1996; "Kurdish Faction Recaptures Stronghold of Iraq-Aided Rivals," *New York Times*, October 14, 1996; and M. Theodoulou, "Vital Kurdish City is Recaptured by Anti-Saddam Group," *Times*, October 14, 1996.

81. Department of State Daily Press Briefing, October 16, 1996, 9.

82. "Rival Kurds Open Peace Talks," *International Herald Tribune*, October 31, 1996.

83. Department of State Daily Press Briefing, October 18, 1996, 3.

84. S. Myers, "Kurd Rivals in North Iraq Said to Agree to Ceasefire," *New York Times*, October 24, 1996.

85. S. Erlanger, "Kurdish Factions Extend Ceasefire in Iraq: U.S. Still Cautious," *New York Times*, November 1, 1996.

86. B. Crossette, "Iraq and U.N. Make Deal on Oil Sales for Aid," *New York Times*, November 26, 1996.

87. J. Bone, "UN Authorizes 'Oil for Food' Deal," *Times*, December 10, 1996.

88. E. Schmitt, "Air Zone Enforced"; and Ralston, in DoD News Briefing, September 4, 1996.

89. P. K. White, 41.

90. Perry and Portillo, 1; Schmitt, "Air Zone Enforced"; and P. K. White, 42.

Two F-15Es were dispatched to destroy the launchers, but they failed to find the target.⁹¹ A day later, the Iraqis fired three missiles in the SEZ, but there were no allied aircraft in the vicinity.⁹² The aforementioned incidents were tests of coalition will and capability to enforce the existence of the NFZs. At the same time, the Iraqi government tried to repair their damaged air defence network. On 10 September, General Shalikhshvili stated: “We have warned Saddam that any attempt to repair those sites or to reinforce them will be taken very seriously, and he must understand the consequences.”⁹³ The immediate consequence was that the coalition might engage in another series of strikes.

The American government began to deploy some of its forces after the second warning. These included four B-52s, which were deployed to Diego Garcia as well as the USS *Enterprise* and its battle group, which was augmented with several warships. The third brigade of the 1st Cavalry Division as well as a Patriot battery flew to Kuwait several days later.⁹⁴ Saddam Hussein ordered a halt to the attacks on 13 September.⁹⁵ This was Iraq’s concession to the pressure of the combination of the strikes, the expansion of the SNFZ and the deployment of an American armoured brigade. The deployments continued because the Americans believed that Iraq was continuing to threaten the aircraft enforcing the NFZs. There were two reasons for this belief. First, the Kuwaiti government became concerned after Iraqi Prime Minister Tariq Aziz had made some threatening public statements.⁹⁶ Second, the US, having wrecked the fixed air defence missile launchers, wanted the Iraqis to reveal their mobile launchers.⁹⁷ This would obviate any chance of allied aircraft being unpleasantly surprised. Given the Iraqi record of compliance, this was futile. It was only in mid-September that Saddam Hussein ordered a halt to resistance to the enforcement of the NFZs. It is not entirely clear why the decision was made, but the timing of the decision is consistent with the announcements of deployments of American forces to the Gulf. It is likely that the Iraqi government was sensitive to large deployments and perceived them as a prelude to the renewal of hostilities.

Another second-order effect of this crisis was the American decision to end its participation in the relief operations associated with PROVIDE COMFORT ahead of schedule. Since the RGFC’s incursion into Iraqi Kurdistan, any American presence in northern Iraq, whether for aid or not, was unwelcome. The Clinton administration stated that its direct support would end, but its support for the relief organizations would continue.⁹⁸ Worse yet, those Kurds that had worked closely with American organizations were probable targets for retribution by the Iraqi government. A day later, the Clinton administration announced that it would evacuate approximately 2,000 of their Kurdish employees and Iraqi National Congress (INC) members.⁹⁹ The first evacuation, labelled Operation QUICK TRANSIT, began on 16 September 1996.¹⁰⁰ This evacuation finished by the end of the month.

91. P. Shenon, “U.S. Is Preparing Bigger Air Strikes on Targets in Iraq,” *New York Times*, September 12, 1996.

92. P. Shenon, “U.S. Sends Another Carrier to Bolster Mideast Forces,” *New York Times*, September 13, 1996.

93. Shalikhshvili cited in M. Fletcher and M. Theodoulou, “Clinton Is Ready to Make Saddam Pay ‘Hell of a Price,’” *Times*, September 10, 1996. See also Department of State Daily Press Briefing, September 10, 1996, 3; and Department of State Daily Press Briefing, September 11, 1996.

94. L. Laporte and M. Cummings, “Prompt Deterrence: The Army in Kuwait,” *Military Review* LXXVII, no. 6 (November–December 1997): 39; N. MacFarquhar, “U.S. Warning Iraq that New Attacks Are Still Possible,” *New York Times*, September 16, 1996; “Pentagon Bolsters Force in Gulf as Iraq Ignores Warnings,” *Jane’s Defence Weekly*, September 18, 1996; P. Shenon, “U.S. Sends another Carrier to Bolster Mideast Forces,” *New York Times*, September 13, 1996; and M. Walker and I. Black, “US Ups Stakes against Iraq,” *Guardian*, September 13, 1996.

95. P. Shenon, “Iraq Orders Halt to Missile Strikes on American Jets,” *New York Times*, September 14, 1996; and M. Theodoulou and M. Evans, “Baghdad Halts Attacks on Coalition Air Patrols,” *Times*, September 14, 1996.

96. DoD News Briefing, September 17, 1996, 5–6.

97. P. Shenon, “Iraq Has Not Fully Met Demands, U.S. Says,” *New York Times*, September 16, 1996.

98. S. Myers, “U.S. Seeks to End Direct Aid for Kurds,” *New York Times*, September 12, 1996.

99. Department of State Daily Press Briefing, September 11, 1996, 14–15.

100. Department of State Daily Press Briefing, September 16, 1996, 5–6.

The American government began to consider the merits of a second evacuation. This meant that NGOs associated with the American government would leave northern Iraq.¹⁰¹ QUICK TRANSIT II began on 19 October, and this time, it consisted of 600 people associated with the INC.¹⁰² The American government sought to prevent the collapse of the Iraqi opposition. The evacuations had a deleterious effect. The French government stated that if PROVIDE COMFORT II lost its humanitarian aspect, it would withdraw its forces from that operation.¹⁰³ Without this legitimizing part of the operation, consensus soon evaporated. The Clinton administration announced in late November that it was going to conduct a third evacuation. This time, 5,000 people who worked for the NGOs during PROVIDE COMFORT II would be evacuated in QUICK TRANSIT III.¹⁰⁴ This began on 4 December 1996. The Acting Department of State Spokesman, John Dinger, announced on Christmas Day: “Because of changes to the mission as a result of the closing last fall of the Military Command Centre in Zakho, and the end of humanitarian assistance in the north under UNSCR 986 to international organisations, the title ‘Provide Comfort’ will no longer be used.”¹⁰⁵ This signified the end of the humanitarian relief operations mandated by PROVIDE COMFORT II.

The French government withdrew from PROVIDE COMFORT II due to the cessation of relief operations in northern Iraq. It announced that on 1 January 1997, French aircraft would no longer enforce the NNFZ.¹⁰⁶ Given the interest of particular French government officials, such as Bernard Kouchner, in the state of humanitarian affairs related to the Kurds, this was hardly surprising. Without the humanitarian element, the French government would not participate any longer, and PROVIDE COMFORT II became Operation NORTHERN WATCH.

DESERT STRIKE was intended to provide a coalition response to Iraq’s intervention in the KDP–PUK conflict. Iraq’s choice was limited by its withdrawal from Irbil before the attack. The SNFZ extension was more or less a punishment after the fact as opposed to an act of coercion. The extension completed the transformation of the SNFZ into a coercive instrument, but the coalition could not take particular actions in northern Iraq due to a combination of political and military factors, thus weakening the credibility of its threats. The SNFZ extension seemed to imply the coalition’s preparedness to attack Baghdad, and the Iraqi government seemed to act on this threat and sought to escalate, thus requiring another threat by the end of September. The second- and third-order effects of the crisis offered some hope to the Iraqi government. These effects included the French government’s refusal to enforce the extension, the American QUICK TRANSIT series of operations and the French concerns about the abandonment of humanitarian efforts in northern Iraq. Despite claims to the contrary, the coalition’s overall capability was constrained politically. Such constraints meant that it was unable to strike the RGFC in northern Iraq. The coalition chose to attack air defence assets, a target set of limited significance, in a scheme of incremental escalation. This satisfied the Clinton administration criteria but failed as a coercive operation.

101. Department of State Daily Press Briefing, September 20, 1996, 8; and Department of State Daily Press Briefing, September 25, 1996, 8.

102. Department of State Daily Press Briefing, October 21, 1996, 7.

103. French government documents in author’s possession, “Entretien accordée par le ministre délégué aux Affaires européennes, M. Michel Barnier, au quotidien ‘Turkish Daily News,’” *La Politique Étrangère De La France: Textes et Documents*, September–October 1996 (Paris: French Foreign Ministry, 1996), 218. See also “Kurdistan iraquien—Communiqué du ministère des Affaires étrangères” (November 2, 1996), French Foreign Ministry Press Release. The loss of infrastructure was noted in C. Nuttall, “Relief from Iraqi Oil Sales at Risk,” *Guardian*, December 6, 1996.

104. Department of State Daily Press Briefing, November 26, 1996, 19. See also “US Completes Kurdish Airlift,” *Guardian*, December 17, 1996; and “US to Evacuate Aid Workers from Iraq,” *Guardian*, November 27, 1996.

105. U.S. Department of State Press Statement, “Extension of Coalition Air Operation over Northern Iraq,” December 25, 1996.

106. French government documents in author’s possession, “Participation française aux dispositifs ‘Provide Comfort’ et ‘Southern Watch’—Communiqué du ministère des Affaires étrangères” (December 27, 1996); and *La Politique Étrangère De La France: Textes et Documents*, November–December 1996 (Paris: French Foreign Ministry, 1996), 309.

It is a matter of fact that the SNFZ was extended and coalition aircraft were enabled to operate within its confines with relative impunity. It is also a fact that this was achieved at a cost. The NNFZ was almost ignored by the US, and the result of that, in combination with the action in the South, was to alienate France and, in the end, to cause their virtual withdrawal from the coalition. The creation of Operation NORTHERN WATCH was a direct result of the Iraqi intervention and not the coalition's actions on 3 September. While the increase of Iraq's containment was achieved, it was at the expense of the weakening of the coalition. The latter expended a significant amount of political capital to gain a military advantage. Saddam Hussein's capacity to harass Kuwait was reduced by the extension of the SNFZ, so that strand of the strategy was successful.

With respect to the inhibition of action by the Iraqi government, the situation is much more confused. The strikes seem to have failed to alter Iraqi actions as they were a retaliatory act. The RGFC was ordered to withdraw before the strikes. There were northwards and eastwards movements of Iraqi forces along the roads from Kirkuk towards Chamchamal and Sulaimaniyah.¹⁰⁷ They lingered there, and at least a battalion of troops camped near Qosh Tepe, 15 miles [24 km] southeast of Irbil, for a week after the strike.¹⁰⁸ These forces later withdrew to the south. DESERT STRIKE meant that Iraq would incur a high cost if, in the future, it tried to move back into the SNFZ. This was true with regard to incursion by aircraft but even more so if the Iraqis tried to rebuild air defence capability. However, in terms of cost to the Iraqi military machine, apart from the loss of assets, they were minimal. The extension of the NFZ did not impose any direct and unavoidable cost on Iraq, if it was content that the enlarged SNFZ should exist. While it was another turn of the screw on Iraq, it was still insufficient pressure to cause the Iraqi government to comply with the UN resolutions. The expenditure of political capital did not improve the strategic situation.

After December 1996, the JTF-SWA was intended to be a coercive instrument, yet it was a weak one. The SNFZ denied the Iraqi government the use of some of its airspace and backhandedly assisted Shiite rebels hiding in the Marshes. There was also the associated psychological effect of placing the Iraqi government and military under scrutiny. Yet the SNFZ did not impose a significant cost upon the Iraqi government; nor did the SNFZ erode Iraqi hope or contribute to Iraq's isolation. In fact, the decision to transform the nature of the SNFZ was sufficiently controversial as to become beneficial to the Iraqi government. While the denial of a section of its airspace was an impediment to Iraq's activities, it did not prevent the counter-insurgency. The imposed cost was so minor that it was easy for the Iraqi government and military to become immune to its effects. The NFZs really only addressed the fringes of Iraq by protecting, in a fashion, some of the less loyal segments of Iraqi society.

107. "Press Briefing by Mike McCurry," White House Press Briefing, September 3, 1996, 2; and M. Theodoulou, "Saddam's Tanks Push on Despite Pullout Claim," *Times*, September 2, 1996.

108. D. Jehl, "Some Iraqis Are Still Dug in Inside the Kurdish Region," *New York Times*, September 8, 1996; and P. Shenon, "Pentagon Sees Slim Chance of U.S. War Role in Northern Iraq," *New York Times*, September 9, 1996.

Chapter 11: Operation DESERT FOX

Introduction

One cannot understand the American-led war to overthrow Saddam Hussein without reference to Operation DESERT FOX. Without the context provided by DESERT FOX, discussions of the 2003 war end up mired in the justifications offered by the Blair government and Bush administration for their decision to go to war with Iraq. Throughout 1997 and 1998, Iraq exploited every opportunity to hinder UNSCOM's inspections and end the regime of sanctions. The coalition reacted by planning operations against Iraq; but inevitably, these were cancelled due to international opposition. By late 1998, the international community was frustrated enough to have UNSCOM conduct a test of Iraq's compliance with a view to ending sanctions. Iraq failed to comply, and this led to the coalition's conduct of Operation DESERT FOX, a four-day-long bombing campaign in December 1998. Not focusing solely on the destruction or neutralization of Iraqi air defence assets, the intent of the strikes conducted during DESERT FOX was to be more prolonged and devastating. The coalition was determined to remind Iraq that its disarmament would occur, either peacefully or by force. DESERT FOX was hailed as a victory by the American and British governments, but it failed to achieve its aim of obtaining Iraqi compliance with UN resolutions. Iraqi resistance, both political and military, increased as a result.

From late 1996 on, many saw the coalition's activities as a merciless system of containment. After all, the conduct of Operations QUICK TRANSIT I, II and III suggested that the coalition leader was unconcerned about the provision of humanitarian aid in Iraqi Kurdistan, and indeed, these US actions caused the French government to withdraw its forces from Operation PROVIDE COMFORT. The remaining coalition members renamed the operation that maintained the NNFZ as Operation NORTHERN WATCH. The international community no longer believed that the coalition's humanitarian justifications were genuine. The coalition's support of UNSCOM consisted mainly of the threats about the use of force. However, threats relied on the coalition's credibility in the eyes of the Iraqi government. This relied upon international support, which had declined since DESERT STRIKE.¹ This was due to a genuine scepticism about the coalition's claims of a humanitarian basis for their actions, the bluntness of sanctions and the popular sympathy within the Arab world for the plight of the Iraqi people.

The Road to Confrontation

One of UNSCOM's major concerns in 1997 and 1998 was that the Iraqi government was concealing its WMD programmes in order to maintain, at least in some form, its arsenal. Scott Ritter, an American member of UNSCOM, noted:

From the outset he [Saddam Hussein] decided to outwit the disarmament provisions of the Security Council Resolution. Immediately after the adoption of 687, an emergency committee, chaired by Tariq Aziz and loosely based on the SSO [Special Security Organization] Committee, met in Baghdad to craft Iraq's response The committee had clear instructions from Saddam Hussein: save as much of the Iraqi weapons of mass destruction capability as possible.²

The SSO (Amn Al Khass) is an Iraqi security organization that deals with presidential affairs, such as the quest for WMDs and the protection of the leadership of Iraq. In 1997, UNSCOM strongly suspected that a conspiracy existed to conceal Iraqi WMDs, and imagery taken during inspections in

1. A. Cockburn and P. Cockburn, 264.

2. Ritter, 105.

1991, 1996 and 1997 provided further evidence.³ Iraqi behaviour during the summer of 1997 led to greater suspicion. UNSCOM reported:

In June 1997, the Commission experienced delays and obstructions throughout the inspections including the removal of material from sites. ... [G]iven the information about concealment practices and the absence of evidence about their termination, the Commission believed it had no choice but to continue.⁴

Inspections during August and September 1997 confirmed the existence of a conspiracy. This led to the decision within the UN to remove Iraq's curtain of deception.⁵ Past incidents and Iraq's incomplete accounting of its WMDs led the international community to draw such conclusions. Because of the decision to change approaches, UNSCOM became more intrusive, and the patience of the international community with Iraq grew thin. The coalition (now consisting primarily of the US and UK) remained hesitant regarding force because of concerns about French, Chinese and Russian opposition to attempts at coercing the Iraqi government into compliance. For example, the French government maintained a presence within Operation SOUTHERN WATCH, although they maintained the national caveat that French aircraft would not enforce the SNFZ north of the 32nd parallel. While the French, Chinese and Russian governments did not support Iraq's obstructive tactics, they were equally, if not more opposed to the use of force against Iraq. See Table 17 for a chronology of the events in 1997.

Date	Event
June	A series of incidents occurred where UNSCOM inspection teams were hindered or denied access to inspection sites.
September	On three separate occasions, the Iraqi government denied UNSCOM access to inspection sites because they were considered presidential sites.
23 October	The UNSC stated that it would impose a travel ban on all Iraqi government or military officials until 11 April 1998 unless Iraq cooperated.
30 October	The Iraqi government demanded that American members of UNSCOM leave Iraq within seven days. It also barred two American arms inspectors from re-entering Iraq after a vacation.
12 November	The UNSC imposed a travel ban on Iraqi officials.
23 November	The Iraqi government announced that any palaces and presidential sites would remain off-limits to UNSCOM inspection teams.
December	Despite delays and interference, several off-limits sites were inspected despite the Iraqi pronouncement of 23 November, and UNSCOM reported that there was evidence that material had been removed.

Table 17. 1997 chronology

Alternatives to force were, therefore, required. In light of the economic sanctions and the NFZs, it would be difficult to refer to the alternatives as only symbolic. The first censure was SCR 1134 (23 October 1997), which threatened a travel ban that was subsequently imposed in SCR 1137

3. UN, S/1999/94, 175. The imagery from 1991 was taken prior to, during and after the incidents at Abu Gharaib (June 23, 1991) and Al Fallujah (June 28, 1991). See *Arms Control Reporter* 1991, 453.B.116.2 to 453.B.116.5.

4. UN, S/1999/94, 176.

5. *Ibid.*, 177.

(12 November 1997).⁶ Richard Butler, the Executive Chairman of UNSCOM, noted wryly that “this action sent the clearest possible signal to Iraq—namely that the Security Council was wavering in its resolve to enforce its own law.”⁷ The Iraqi government responded to the news of SCR 1137 by ejecting all American citizens in the employ of UNSCOM from Iraq. Richard Butler, thinking in terms of UNSCOM’s unity, ordered a complete withdrawal from Iraq to Bahrain. Naturally, the French, Russian and Chinese governments were critical and objected to this decision.⁸ The coalition seriously considered using force to remedy the situation, and only Russian diplomatic intervention seemed to sway the coalition from doing so.⁹ The Iraqi government avoided another series of strikes while weakening the political status of the coalition, thus gaining a political victory.

The Iraqi government returned to its old ways as soon as the crisis ended. The Iraqi government denied access to some presidential sites—the term referring to palaces or government buildings used by the Iraqi President to govern the country—and as such, the Iraqi government argued that inspectors could violate Iraqi sovereignty should they obtain access. This, of course, led the Clinton administration to reconsider yet again the use of force.¹⁰ In late November 1997, support for the coalition using force against Iraq was non-existent. The lack of support was even more acute in the Middle East. A number of Gulf State governments made it a matter of public record that the use of force risked derailing the Middle East peace process.¹¹ The French and Russian governments made it clear that they would use their power of veto on any attempt to seek UNSC authorization for the use of force.¹²

The crisis dragged on, and in early 1998, the coalition, augmented by a number of their allies, prepared to deal with the problem of Iraq forcefully. This operation was dubbed DESERT THUNDER in early 1998. Yet, it was evident that many states, including the other P-5 members, were opposed to the use of force due to the effects of sanctions. The blunt nature of sanctions and the Iraqi government’s means to mitigate their effects had a human toll, and this non-violent means came to be seen as somewhat draconian, despite the best efforts to target the regime as opposed to the Iraqi people. See Table 18 for a chronology of the 1998 events.

Date	Event
12 January	The Iraqi government announced that it would bar UNSCOM’s inspection team led by Scott Ritter, an American, as it contained too many American and British citizens and was, therefore, biased or spying.
14 January	Following an Iraqi government protest about the inspection team having too many Americans, the American government stated that it was prepared to allow changes to the team.
	The Russian Foreign Minister contacted the American Secretary of State to register his government’s opposition to the use of force.
15 January	Both the French and Russian governments offered to replace the American and British members of the Ritter team with their own nationals.

6. UN, Security Council Resolution 1134, S/RES/1134 (1997), October 23, 1997; and UN, Security Council Resolution 1137, S/RES/1137 (1997), November 12, 1997.

7. R. Butler, 91.

8. *Ibid.*, 102–4.

9. S. Erlanger, “Use of Force Avoided,” *International Herald Tribune*, November 24, 1997.

10. “Saddam’s ‘Brinkmanship’ Draws New U.S. Warning,” *International Herald Tribune*, December 17, 1997.

11. D. Jehl, “Arabs Concerned Clinton Could Lose His Focus on Peace in the Mideast,” *International Herald Tribune*, January 28, 1998.

12. A. Cockburn and P. Cockburn, 272 and 275.

Date	Event
16 January	In order to break the deadlock, the UN offered to accelerate UNSCOM's activities and to allow Iraqi participation.
19–21 January	The UNSCOM Executive Chairman, Richard Butler, held two days of talks with the Iraqi government. He was unable to obtain Iraqi permission for access to presidential sites but did obtain an agreement on the use of technical experts for third-party assessments.
22 January	The Russian and Chinese governments urged the UNSC to certify that Iraq had halted its nuclear programmes despite UNSCOM's claims to the contrary.
23 January	Richard Butler briefed the UNSC on the 19–21 January talks and claimed that with Iraq's activities, UNSCOM was unable to fulfil its mandate.
26 January	The Russian government sent its Deputy Foreign Minister, Viktor Posuvalyuk, to Iraq to find a diplomatic solution to the crisis.
29–31 January	Madeleine Albright, the American Secretary of State, travelled to Europe to meet with the British, French, Russian and other European governments in order to obtain support for contingency operations against Iraq.
1 February	Both the Egyptian and Saudi governments called for a diplomatic solution to the crisis. The latter refused to allow any strikes to be conducted from its territory due to political sensitivities.
3 February	The British government announced it would also participate in military operations against Iraq if required.
	The Chinese government announced its opposition to the use of force.
4 February	The Iraqi government offered to open eight presidential sites for one month, and the American government rejected the offer.
5 February	The French government refused to participate in any military action against Iraq.
11 February	The Iraqi government expanded its earlier offer to 60 days.
12 February	William Cohen, the American Secretary of Defense, visited Russia and was told that if offensive operations were conducted against Iraq, then Russo–American relations would be damaged.
20 February	Kofi Annan visited Baghdad to meet with the Iraqi government to reach a diplomatic solution and discuss the oil-for-food deal.
22 February	After a meeting with Saddam Hussein, Kofi Annan announced that he had reached a deal with the Iraqi government that resolved the crisis.
30 March	Richard Butler reported to the UNSC that Iraq still needed to provide more details with regard to its full, final and complete disclosure (FFCD) on its chemical projects, especially its projects on VX, a deadly nerve gas.
9 April	UNSCOM reported that it suspected that Iraq was concealing its biological warfare programmes. Technical evaluations proved the Iraqi declarations to be in error or false.

Date	Event
13 April	The IAEA announced that Iraq had complied with all requirements pertaining to its former nuclear weapons programme.
2 June	UNSCOM announced its concern about Iraq's accounting of missile warheads.
5 July	Talks between UNSCOM and the Iraqi government on the remaining requirements for a lifting of sanctions ended abruptly with the Iraqi rejection of all of Richard Butler's proposals for UNSCOM's activities.
29 July	The Russian government, with the support of its French and Chinese counterparts, proposed an SCR stating that Iraq had complied with its obligations under SCR 687 for the destruction of its nuclear arsenal.
5 August	The Iraqi government announced that it would cease to cooperate with UNSCOM. It would, however, allow monitoring by cameras to continue.
9 September	The UNSC adopted SCR 1194 that condemned Iraq's lack of cooperation and suspended all sanctions reviews until Iraq cooperated.
5 October	Following a visit by Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister, Kofi Annan outlined to the UNSC a comprehensive review of Iraqi compliance with SCR 687 if Iraq cooperated with UNSCOM. The review would see Iraq providing an accurate count of its arsenal, which UNSCOM would reconcile with its accounts on a deadline.
6 October	Richard Butler stated in his October review of UNSCOM's progress that Iraq was close to fulfilling its requirements for ballistic missiles and chemical weapons but that discrepancies remained in the area of biological weapons.
30 October	The UNSC completed the proposal of the comprehensive review. Iraq announced that it would no longer cooperate with UNSCOM unless Butler was fired and sanctions were lifted.
Early November	The US reinforced the JTF-SWA with the USS <i>Enterprise</i> carrier battle group and 129 extra aircraft.
15 November	President Clinton called off a series of air strikes at the last minute after being notified that the Iraqi government agreed to cooperate with UNSCOM.
17 November	UNSCOM began a series of inspections designed to test Iraq's claims.
25 November	Citing national security concerns, the Iraqi government refused to hand over a series of documents to UNSCOM.
9 December	An UNSCOM inspection team was denied access to a Ba'ath party office. The Iraqi government later declared all party offices to be off-limits to UNSCOM.
11 December	An UNSCOM team was denied access to an inspection site due to the Islamic Sabbath.
15 December	Richard Butler submitted his findings to the UNSC.
16 December	As the UNSC debated Butler's findings, the coalition members launched DESERT FOX. The operation lasted until the night of 19 December 1998 (Baghdad time).
23 December	Iraqi resistance continued over both NFZs, where aircraft and AAA were employed against the coalition.

Table 18. 1998 chronology

In addition to the significant opposition to a military operation against Iraq, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, offered to mediate between Iraq and the coalition. The Secretary-General and his staff wanted to resolve the crisis peacefully, as opposed to using threats or violence. Richard Butler claimed this desire was so compelling that they “detached the goal of conflict resolution ... from the fundamental requirement of disarming Iraq.”¹³ This naturally impacted negatively on the political support offered to UNSCOM. Even the coalition’s leaders began to back away from their previously forceful positions. By mid-February 1998, even President Clinton favoured a diplomatic solution due to the lack of international support for the use of force. Scott Ritter noted acerbically that “in allowing Madeleine Albright to encourage the mission of Kofi Annan to Baghdad in February 1998, the Clinton Administration set the stage for the full endorsement of the Memorandum of Understanding with its self-defeating secret protocol.”¹⁴

This secret protocol allowed the inspections of presidential sites to occur only once, and the Secretary-General promised to work towards a lifting of the sanctions on Iraq.¹⁵ Kofi Annan’s MoU saw the Iraqi government reconfirm its acceptance of SCRs 687 and 715 as well as grant access to the presidential sites in exchange for the inspection of said sites by a special group consisting of a number of diplomats and technical experts.¹⁶ This group would exclude those tainted by association with the coalition’s intelligence services in respect to Iraq’s concerns on the matter. The results of Kofi Annan’s visit were popular within the UNSC and the international community.¹⁷ It appeared to be a reasonable solution to many when compared with another attack on Iraq. On 2 March 1998, the UNSC endorsed the Secretary-General’s deal, therefore authorizing the plan contained within it, secret protocol and all.¹⁸

This came at a very difficult time. While the deal appeared to lead to some form of Iraqi cooperation, there remained some concerns. For example, the Technical Expert Mission (TEM) for Biological Warfare noted that previous versions of the *Full, Final and Complete Disclosure* were incomplete and inaccurate in many areas, including the history of the programme, its organization and its acquisition procedures.¹⁹ UNSCOM’s consolidated report of April 1998 noted that it would be unable to fulfil its mandate for the destruction of ballistic missiles as well as chemical and biological weapons.²⁰ The IAEA reported that there were no problems with access or evidence of concealment of nuclear activities.²¹ This complicated the issue, as it was not completely clear what Iraq still possessed.

UNSCOM tried to obtain Iraqi cooperation throughout the spring and summer of 1998 in the formulation and implementation of a schedule for UNSCOM’s inspection and final activities. This effort ended by August 1998 when the Iraqi government demanded that sanctions be lifted unless UNSCOM proved an Iraqi arsenal still existed.²² The coalition suspected that by speaking out without being able to use force it risked a further loss of credibility. It was, therefore, necessary to set the stage for future uses of force. The first step was SCR 1194 (9 September 1998), which suspended any

13. R. Butler, 129.

14. Ritter, 190.

15. *Ibid.*, 182.

16. UN, “Letter Dated 25 February 1998 from the Secretary-General Addressed to the President of the Security Council,” S/1998/166 (February 27, 1998).

17. C. Wren, “Security Council Supports Iraq Accord,” *International Herald Tribune*, February 25, 1998.

18. UN, Security Council Resolution 1154, S/RES/1154 (March 2, 1998).

19. UN, “Letter dated 8 April 1998 from the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission Established by the Secretary-General Pursuant to Paragraph 9 (b) (i) of Security Council Resolution 687 (1991) Addressed to the President of the Security Council,” April 8, 1998, 3–10.

20. UN, “Note by the Secretary-General,” S/1998/332 (April 16, 1998), 7–14.

21. UN, “Letter Dated 9 April 1998 From the Secretary-General Addressed to the President of the Security Council,” S/1998/312 (April 9, 1998), 3–4.

22. UN, “Letter dated 27 January 1999 from the Permanent Representatives of the Netherlands and Slovenia to the United Nations Addressed to the President of the Security Council,” S/1999/94 (January 27, 1999), 6.

review of sanctions until the Iraqi government decided to cooperate with UNSCOM.²³ This was a step towards a peaceful solution in order to avoid violence.

By autumn 1998, the key issues were the states of the Iraqi chemical and biological arsenals. Richard Butler held the opinion that:

the disarmament phase of the Security Council's requirements is possibly near its end in the missile and chemical weapons areas but not in the biological weapons area; Iraq is permitting the monitoring work of the Commission to be exercised only at a less than satisfactory level, yet its development is vital to the future; and full disclosure by Iraq of all necessary materials and information remains the crucial ingredient for both an end to the disarmament process and future monitoring.²⁴

Earlier that year, UNSCOM undertook a TEM to evaluate the validity of Iraqi government claims that VX had never been weaponized. By late October, this TEM found evidence of degraded VX in warheads and, therefore, concluded that Iraq had weaponized VX.²⁵ President Clinton, in a 3 March 1999 letter to Congress, remarked on the events of the summer and autumn of 1998: "The build-up to the current crisis began on August 5 when the Iraqi government suspended cooperation with UNSCOM and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), except on a limited-range of monitoring activities. On October 31, Iraq announced that it was ceasing all cooperation with UNSCOM."²⁶

For a time, the Iraqi government's behaviour created international political support for the Clinton administration. The UNSC passed SCR 1205 on 5 November 1998, which threatened that sanctions would not be reviewed until Iraq cooperated.²⁷ This rebuke was a manifestation of the residual opposition within the Council to the use of force, but it was also a tacit acknowledgement that it was not prepared to declare Iraq in compliance. The coalition was prepared to attack a series of targets in Iraq in mid-November, but this was called off at the last minute. Having seen Iraqi casualty estimates, President Clinton became concerned and delayed the attack on 15 November 1998 to wait on the Iraqi government's pledge of cooperation. This came with only minutes to spare before launching.²⁸ The pledge averted the strikes but committed the international community to giving the Iraqi government another chance.

The Iraqi pledge of cooperation hardly seemed credible, and it was necessary to verify this pledge. Sandy Berger, the American National Security Advisor, recalled: "On the 17th of November, UNSCOM began to test Iraq's co-operation. The timetable for that effort was established by UNSCOM's Chairman, Richard Butler."²⁹ The aforementioned tests were "focused on four main areas, pursuant to the Commission's mandate: requests for information through access to documents and interviews of Iraqi personnel, monitoring inspections, inspections of capable sites, and disarmament inspections relating to proscribed weapons and activities."³⁰ This was the first step towards coercion. There was an implicit threat of punishment if the Iraqi government failed to cooperate with UNSCOM. Dr. Edgar Buckley, Assistant Under-Secretary (Home and Overseas), of the British Ministry of Defence explained:

23. UN, "Note by the Secretary-General," S/1998/920 (October 6, 1998), 5.

24. UN, S/1998/920, 18.

25. Butler, 9; UN, "Report of the VX Expert Meeting," October 23, 1998, 3; and UN, S/1999/94, 7.

26. "Iraq's Compliance with the UN Security Council," U.S. House of Representatives Document 106-34, March 3, 1999, 2.

27. UN, Security Council Resolution 1025 (1998), S/RES/1205 (1998), November 5, 1998, 2.

28. B. Graham, "Clinton Overruled Most Advice on Raids," *International Herald Tribune*, November 17, 1998.

29. "Press Briefing by National Security Advisor Sandy Berger," White House Press Briefing, December 16, 1998, 2.

30. UN, "Letter dated 15 December 1998 from the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission established by the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 9 (b) (i) of Security Council resolution 687 (1991) addressed to the Secretary-General," Annex I to "Letter dated 15 December 1998 from the Secretary-General Addressed to the President of the Security Council," S/1998/1172 (December 15, 1998), 4.

When the requirement came to prepare a specific possible attack on Iraq in response to Saddam Hussein's withdrawal of cooperation with UNSCOM in October, a plan was drawn up to include a specific selection of these targets designed to achieve the desired military effect. This plan was on the point of being put into operation on 14 November when Saddam Hussein capitulated and promised unconditional full cooperation with UNSCOM in the future.

Following that crisis a new plan was drawn up, codenamed Operation DESERT FOX, against the possibility that, as in the past, Saddam's word would prove worthless.³¹

If Iraq failed to sufficiently comply with the demands of the coalition and the UN during this test period, force would surely follow.

The test period ended on 15 December 1998. Richard Butler submitted his report to the UN Secretariat on the same day. Since the results of this report determined Iraq's fate, it was very controversial. The Director General of the IAEA, Mohamed El Baradei, claimed: "The Iraqi counterpart has provided the necessary level of cooperation to enable the above-enumerated activities to be completed efficiently and effectively."³² For the most part, monitoring met with Iraqi cooperation. However, in one incident, the Iraqis would not allow photographs to be taken due to national security concerns. On 11 December 1998, another monitoring team was forbidden to conduct an inspection due to the fact that it was the Islamic Sabbath.³³ Later that month, UNSCOM was denied access to "a facility occupied by the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI). The site of this facility was declared as being not under the authority of Iraq. ... A dialogue has begun on this matter and the PMOI has accepted in principle that its sites are subject to access by the Commission."³⁴

In six other inspections, the Iraqi government declared the sites sensitive, and therefore, UNSCOM had to adhere to the procedures for such sites. The report contained the observation: "In light of the clear evidence that Iraq had taken advance actions at certain of the locations planned for inspection in order to defeat the purposes of inspection, the Executive Chairman decided not to conduct the full range of inspections the team had planned. No inspections of presidential sites took place."³⁵ Richard Butler concluded the report by stating "in the light of this experience, that is, the absence of full cooperation by Iraq, it must regrettably be recorded against Iraq that the commission is not able to conduct the substantive disarmament work mandated to it by the Security Council and, thus, to give the Council the assurances it requires with respect to Iraq's prohibited weapons programmes."³⁶ The stage was set; the coalition now had a clear justification for the use of force against Iraq.

What was the Iraqi government trying to achieve by resisting UNSCOM? William Cohen, the American Secretary of Defense, believed that Saddam Hussein's goal was to get rid of UNSCOM and, therefore, lift the sanctions on Iraq.³⁷ Iraq's complaints had met with a more sympathetic reaction from the international community in 1997–1998, and it would seem logical to the Iraqi government that passively resisting UNSCOM was a fruitful course of action. The Iraqi government was pursuing a

31. Buckley cited in Cordesman, *The Role of British Forces in DESERT FOX* (Washington, DC: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 1999), 2.

32. UN, "Letter dated 14 December 1998 from the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency addressed to the Secretary-General," Annex I to S/1998/1172, 2.

33. UN, "Letter dated 15 December 1998," Annex I to S/1998/1172, 6.

34. *Ibid.*, 7. The PMOI is an Iraqi-backed Iranian resistance movement also known as the Mojahedin e-Khalq.

35. *Ibid.*, 8.

36. *Ibid.*

37. DoD News Briefing, "Operation DESERT FOX," December 17, 1998, 4–5.

strategy of provocation designed to make the coalition appear aggressive. To cause the coalition to take action or threaten action would likely cause the international community to seek another compromise or even generate further sympathy for Iraq's plight.

The Clinton administration and the British government found the situation unacceptable. Joe Lockhart, the White House Spokesman, noted that "the report from Chairman Butler and UNSCOM raises a serious concern about Iraq's willingness and ability to comply with the commitments they made in mid-November."³⁸ The American government claimed that Iraq's lack of cooperation with UNSCOM was a breach of SCR 687 and that SCR 678 authorized force for actions subsequent to the Gulf War.³⁹ The vague wording of the latter created a legal loophole that had never been clarified. In mid-December 1998, as it appeared that Iraq was not cooperating with UNSCOM, the coalition began to prepare for offensive operations. For example, as a warning for Iraq, the US deployed seven B-52 bombers to Diego Garcia on 11 December.⁴⁰ UNSCOM needed the coalition's support to fulfil its mandate, yet it could not act without the UNSC's backing.

There were serious problems with the Clinton administration's policy on Iraq. In late 1998, it remained a policy of containment based on four elements:

- a. the maintenance of sanctions;
- b. UNSCOM;
- c. the credible threat of force; and
- d. support from allies.⁴¹

In his memoirs, Bill Clinton stated that the available intelligence suggested that an arsenal still existed and the weakened state of Iraq's conventional capabilities increased the salience of Iraq's WMDs.⁴² However, the administration was coming under increasing pressure from Congress to do more about the Iraq problem in 1998. The *Iraq Liberation Act* was one means. This committed the Clinton administration to support attempts to oust Saddam Hussein. Martin Indyk remarked: "The policy, as expressed by the President and the Secretary of State and others, is containment, and over time, an effort to produce—to help the Iraqi people produce a government that is more representative of their aspirations and more willing to meet Iraq's obligations to the international community."⁴³

Naturally, the administration was hesitant to implement the *ILA*. A number of important senators, such as Majority Leader Trent Lott, Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Jesse Helms and Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman Richard Shelby, wrote to the President, urging him to implement the *ILA* more vigorously,⁴⁴ which consequently occurred.⁴⁵ This suggested that the administration was uncomfortable with the contents or at least their potential ramifications as it pushed them closer to a policy of regime change.

38. "Press Briefing by Joe Lockhart," White House Press Briefing, December 16, 1998.

39. Department of State Daily Press Briefing, December 16, 1998, 4.

40. M. Evans, "B-52s Send Warning to Iraq," *Times*, December 11, 1998.

41. "Press Briefing Sandy Berger," 3. See also Madeleine Albright, *Madam Secretary: A Memoir* (New York: Hyperion Books, 2003), 364–65.

42. Clinton, 833.

43. United States Information Agency, "Transcript: Indyk December 18 Teleconference on US policy on Iraq," Washington File, December 21, 1998, 6.

44. Letter from Senators Lott, Helms, Shelby, Kyl, Lugar and Brownback to President Clinton, December 16, 1998, 1–2.

45. "Press Briefing Sandy Berger," 7.

The President had an affair with a White House intern named Monica Lewinsky in 1996 and, when questioned about it, lied. In mid-December, the scandal over the affair and President Clinton's testimony led to a debate in Congress over impeachment. On 16 December 1998, the House of Representatives was considering impeachment while the coalition launched DESERT FOX.⁴⁶ This was a rare event, as it is traditional for Congress to separate domestic political concerns from the execution of foreign policy in times of emergency, but the threat of impeachment strained the relationship between the President and the largely Republican Congress.⁴⁷ This domestic backdrop also weakened the credibility of the coalition's threats.

At the UNSC, Richard Butler's report met with a number of different reactions. The Secretary-General advocated a more diplomatic approach, recommending three other options:

- a. further review of the trial period;
- b. further time for Iraq to cooperate; and
- c. review of Iraqi cooperation since 1991.⁴⁸

In effect, this was not far from the compromise struck in February 1998. Many of the other members, feeling that Butler's report was inaccurate or misleading, agreed with Kofi Annan's recommendations.

The French government, for example, sought to develop a new system of arms control for Iraq, believing that the American government sought to maintain the sanctions in order to remove Saddam Hussein as opposed to the disarmament of Iraq.⁴⁹ This belief, along with economic self-interest, contributed heavily to the French opposition to the use of force. It offered a compromise in a less intrusive version of UNSCOM as a result. This compromise solution would come to fruition within the year as the United Nations Monitoring, Observation and Verification Inspection Committee.

Being the likely targets of Iraqi WMDs, the Gulf States were more supportive of the coalition position in November 1998. At that time, the GCC states were prepared to allow the coalition to conduct offensive operations from their territories.⁵⁰ In early December, the GCC issued a statement placing responsibility for any consequences that would follow UNSCOM's tests on Saddam Hussein.⁵¹ By mid-December, however, only Kuwait and Oman were prepared to host forces conducting offensive operations against Iraq.⁵² Drawing from the DESERT STRIKE experience, the Clinton administration reduced its force presence in Saudi Arabia, as it could substitute cruise missile from over-the-horizon assets without political complications if force was to be employed.⁵³

The Arab hesitancy to allow operations to be staged from their territories was tied to the fact that Ramadan, an Islamic festival, was to start with the coming of the new crescent moon on 18 December 1998. This presented the coalition leadership with a dilemma. On the one hand, to attack during Ramadan would be an insult to the Islamic world and would have potentially alienated the very

46. P. Wolfson, "Congress-Iraq," *Voice of America*, December 16, 1998.

47. P. Wolfson, "Congress/Impeachment," *Voice of America*, December 16, 1998. See also R. Hendrickson, "Clinton's Military Strikes in 1998: Diversionary Uses of Force?" *Armed Forces & Society* 28, no. 2 (Winter 2002): 322–23.

48. UN, S/1998/1172, 1. R. Butler noted that these recommendations were similar to proposals made by the Russian government earlier that year on pages 176–77.

49. R. Butler, 200–01.

50. S. Myers, "Arabs Show Little Support for Strikes Against Iraq."

51. "Press Briefing Sandy Berger," 6.

52. D. Jehl, "Saudis Limit U.S. Aircraft Hitting Iraq," *International Herald Tribune*, December 19, 1998.

53. P. K. White, 54.

states that hosted coalition forces. On the other, delaying any operation until after the festival could have led to a situation where other interested states, such as the PRC or Russia, could have generated enough opposition to prevent the conduct of any operation.⁵⁴ If the coalition were to act, it had to do so quickly.

Therefore, the Clinton administration believed that speed was of the essence. Sandy Berger recalled: “We’ve learned from previous episodes that the longer the time between CNN [Cable News Network] reporting that we’re thinking about acting and actually acting, the more time Saddam Hussein has to disperse his forces, the more time he has to move things that we would like not to be moved.”⁵⁵ Given that the Iraqi government could move WMD-related materiel from site to site and that some material, such as precursor chemicals and dual-use materiel, were difficult to track, it was imperative to act quickly before the situation changed.⁵⁶

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Henry Shelton, US Army, stated that “one of the reasons that we revised our plan back on 15 November so that we could strike within 24 hours was to try to hold down on the amount of movement time allowed, so that in those suspected areas, we could achieve maximum effectiveness.”⁵⁷ Surprise was vital but did not come without costs. The timing of Butler’s report obviated any degree of surprise. There had been no real political preparation for the use of force, as this report was considered sufficient evidence of the breach. As a result of the requirement for surprise, there were no serious efforts to win over the international media or community.⁵⁸ Surprise was necessary to ensure that coalition casualties were kept to a minimum, and President Clinton recalled: “Secretary Cohen and General Shelton strongly urged that we act at the point where we could have maximum impact with minimum risk to our own people because of the surprise factor.”⁵⁹ The President was also concerned about the possibility of Iraqi casualties, and ordered that efforts be taken to minimize the possibilities of Iraqi casualties and collateral damage.⁶⁰

The coalition’s options were somewhat constrained because only Kuwait and Oman were willing to allow offensive operations to be staged from their soil. Of course, over-the-horizon and carrier-based power were also available, but this excluded all of the JTF-SWA assets based in Saudi Arabia. In addition to this, the coalition was restricted to its narrow route of entry and egress into Iraqi airspace along the Persian Gulf and Kuwait.

The fact that the crisis was based on Iraqi behaviour with regard to UNSCOM meant that more significant target sets became suitable. Both WMD assets and the intelligence and security apparatus that aided in their concealment were obvious choices. Given that the entry/egress route was narrow, Iraq’s air defences in the south that protected the approaches to Baghdad needed to be suppressed. This would lead to a situation where unmanned power would be used to suppress Iraqi air defences so that coalition aircraft could attack WMD targets in the Baghdad area. The forces in theatre on 15 December 1998 are listed in Table 19.

54. Cordesman, *Lessons of Desert Fox*, 14.

55. “Press Briefing Sandy Berger,” 5.

56. “Broad Range of Targets May Be Only Option,” ABC News, December 17, 1998.

57. DoD, News Briefing, “Operation DESERT FOX,” December 18, 1998, 7.

58. Cordesman, *Lessons of Desert Fox*, 14.

59. Remarks by the President in photo opportunity with Foreign Policy Team, White House Press Release, December 17, 1998, 2.

60. United States Information Agency, Transcript: Albright Interview on *Larry King Live*, December 16, Washington File, December 16, 1998, 2.

Location	USAF	USN	RAF/RN
Saudi Arabia	18 x F-15 18 x F-16 6 x AWACS 2 x JSTARS 4 x RC-135 12 x KC-135 20 x C-130 2 x U-2 (UN flagged) 6 x UH-60	2 x EA-6B	6 x Tornado GR-1
UAE	12 x KC-10		
Warships afloat/ Gulf		USS <i>Enterprise</i> USS <i>Gettysburg</i> USS <i>Stout</i> USS <i>Nicholson</i> USS <i>Hayler</i> USS <i>Carr</i> USS <i>Miami</i> USS <i>Detroit</i> USS <i>Ardent</i> USS <i>Dextrous</i> ARG: USS <i>Belleau Wood</i> USS <i>Dubuque</i> USS <i>Germantown</i>	HMS <i>Boxer</i> RFA <i>Brambleleaf</i>
Forces on ship		USS <i>Enterprise</i> : 14 x F-14B 36 x F-18C 4 x EA-6B 8 x S-3B 5 x E-2C 6 x SH-60 USS <i>Belleau Wood</i> : 31 MEU 5 x AV-8B 4 x AH-1W 12 x CH-46E 4 x CH-53 4 x UH-1N	
Diego Garcia	15 x B-52		
Kuwait	13 x A-10 22 x F-16 3 x EC-130 3 x HC-130 2 x C-130E 3 x HH-60 2 x HH-63		12 x Tornado GR- 1

Location	USAF	USN	RAF/RN
Oman	10 x KC-10		
Bahrain	6 x B-1		2 x VC-10

Table 19. Forces in theatre, 15 December 1998⁶¹

Operation DESERT FOX was launched on the night of 16 December (Baghdad time). Joe Lockhart announced:

At the direction of the President, United States military forces have launched a substantial military strike against Iraq. The President decided to take this action this morning, after reviewing the conclusions of the report to the United Nations Secretary-General and Security Council yesterday by UNSCOM Chairman Richard Butler, and discussing the situation with his foreign policy team here at the White House.⁶²

The objectives and conduct of the operation demonstrated that Iraqi cooperation with UNSCOM was the nominal American and the coalition goal. There was a secondary goal—if UNSCOM were to disappear, then the coalition itself would have to retard Iraq’s ability to rearm.

The first night of DESERT FOX, 16 December 1998, saw the coalition concentrate its efforts first against the Iraqi IADS. The British Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS), General Sir Charles Guthrie, British Army, remarked in a 17 December 1998 press conference that: “The decision to use sea-launched systems at the outset of the campaign was made both to maximize tactical surprise and operational security. The United States did not use land-based aircraft either.”⁶³ It was impossible to obtain strategic or even operational surprise, as the Iraqi government was well aware that Butler’s report would lead to the use of force by the coalition. In preparation for the imminent loss of control, Saddam Hussein assigned responsibility for each of four sectors of Iraq to four trusted aides.⁶⁴ General Shelton remarked in a press conference the following day: “Last night’s actions principally involved our naval forces in the Gulf with more than 70 Navy and Marine Corps strike support aircraft from the USS *Enterprise*; and well over 200 Tomahawk cruise missiles launched from Navy ships.”⁶⁵ The attacks against air defences were intended “to create access for the aircraft flying north and in fact to create access even for the cruise missiles so that we increase the probability of those reaching their targets as well.”⁶⁶

These targets were also referred to as supporting targets, in that they were necessary in order to enable further strikes.⁶⁷ Over 50 targets were struck that night, and the majority were air defence assets. Some WMD, WMD security and WMD production targets were also attacked.⁶⁸ These targets did not include dual-use facilities due to the possibility of collateral damage and political sensitivity.⁶⁹

61. Data from GlobalSecurity.org, “Operation Desert Fox Order of Battle as of Wednesday 23 December 1998,” http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/desert_fox_orbat_981223.htm (accessed January 29, 2013).

62. Statement by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart, White House Press Briefing, December 16, 1998.

63. UK, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Edited Transcript of Press Conference Given by the Secretary of State for Defence, George Robertson, and the Chief of Defence Staff, General Sir Charles Guthrie, news release, London, Thursday, December 17, 1998, 2.

64. Ritter, 128; and “Saddam Consolidates Rule,” *International Herald Tribune*, December 17, 1998.

65. DoD News Briefing, “Operation DESERT FOX,” December 17, 1998, 2.

66. DoD, Thomas Wilson, Director of Intelligence of the Joint Staff, “Operation DESERT FOX,” News Briefing, December 18, 1998, 8.

67. *Ibid.*, 14.

68. DoD News Briefing, “Operation DESERT FOX,” December 17, 1998, 2.

69. Cordesman, *Lessons of Desert Fox*, 25.

This had the effect of leaving some WMD-related industries intact and reinforced the Iraqi belief that the coalition would be unable to carry out its threat of destroying Iraq's chemical and biological weapons.⁷⁰

On the first day, the President also authorized the deployment of the Crisis Response Force (CRF). The CRF consisted of a second carrier battle group, extra aircraft and an army task force. The Secretary of Defense ordered its deployment after President Clinton's 16 December Address to the Nation.⁷¹ The USS *Carl Vinson* and its battle group arrived in the Red Sea on 17 December 1998. The remainder of the CRF arrived on 20–21 December 1998.⁷²

The second day of the operation expanded the target list. These targets included economic targets, such as the Basra oil refinery, since it was a conduit for the illegal shipments of oil.⁷³ Other targets included certain airfields, command and control targets (like the headquarters of Iraqi military intelligence and the RGFC) as well as its divisional and corps headquarters.⁷⁴ With the target list expansion, the coalition began to use manned air assets from Carrier Air Wing 3 on board the USS *Enterprise* as well as aircraft based in Kuwait and Oman. In terms of air defence on both days, coalition spokesmen revealed that the Iraqis had employed only some limited AAA.⁷⁵ The 16 December missile strikes had been successful in enabling the expansion of target sets for the application of manned air power.

Operations continued on 18 December 1998 because the coalition had not completed the BDA. CINC CENTCOM later commented: "At the end of the third day and going into the fourth day, I was asked if I felt our objectives were achieved or could be achieved. I felt I needed the fourth night. Part-way through that I was asked again, and informed the Chairman that I was satisfied that we had achieved the objectives as I saw them."⁷⁶ The CINC was referring to the target sets involving the RGFC. At the DoD briefing on 19 December 1998, General Shelton remarked that "the majority [of strikes] today were directed against Republican Guard units, which were restrikes of the same units . . ." ⁷⁷ These would be the last of the operation.

DESERT FOX ended after the strikes on 19 December 1998. The President remarked at a press conference: "It will take some time to make a detailed assessment of our operation, but based on the briefing I've just received, I am confident we have achieved our mission."⁷⁸ His optimistic assessment was not necessarily borne out by all of the evidence offered by his spokesmen. Yet, they were not prepared to assume the political risk of offending the Islamic world by continuing the operation during Ramadan.

The initial BDA (see Table 20) suggested that the operation was successful in terms of physical destruction. To be fair, it is difficult to gauge victory or defeat from estimates of the destruction of targets or target sets. Early reports claimed that the strikes were going well since the targets were being significantly damaged.⁷⁹ The Pentagon briefers admitted that the BDA priority during the first two days was to assess the damage done to the IADS.⁸⁰ On the second day, they concluded that "the

70. *Ibid.*, 105.

71. L. Kozaryn, "Saddam Abused His Last Chance, Clinton Says," *Armed Forces Information Service*, December 17, 1998.

72. DoD News Briefing, "Operation DESERT FOX," December 17, 1998, 3.

73. DoD News Briefing, "Operation DESERT FOX," December 18, 1998, 3.

74. United States Information Agency, Transcript: Cohen/Shelton/Wilson Briefing on Iraq Dec. 19, Washington File, 19 December 1992, 2.

75. DoD News Briefing, "Operation DESERT FOX," December 18, 1998, 4.

76. DoD News Briefing, December 21, 1998, 12.

77. DoD News Briefing, December 19, 1998, 5.

78. United States Information Agency, Transcript: Clinton Remarks on Iraq December 19, 1998, Washington File, December 19, 1998, 2.

79. J. Katzaman, "Initial Damage Assessments Show 'Good Coverage,'" *Air Force News*, December 17, 1998. See also Cordesman, *Lessons of Desert Fox*, 46–47.

80. DoD, Wilson, "Operation DESERT FOX," December 18, 1998, 15.

southern Iraq air defence system has been degraded and has largely proven to be ineffective against the strikes which have been conducted to date.”⁸¹ The strikes were, at the very least, having an impact on the Iraqi government’s security apparatus for the production of WMDs. The focus of effort was against missile production facilities as opposed to biological or chemical facilities, as delivery systems posed a greater threat in the immediate sense than the WMDs themselves. On 19 December, more details of the coalition’s BDA were revealed. (See Table 21.)

Target Set	# of Targets Damaged						Description
	Nil	Light 1–14%	Moderate 15–45%	Severe 46–75%	Destroyed 76–100%	Unknown	
IADS	8	1	1	2	1	14	southern sector degraded
C2	2	0	2	5	5	4	security headquarters severely damaged
WMD Security	1	4	9	1	2	2	
WMD Production	0	2	1	0	0	8	missile research and repair facilities damaged
RGFC	0	1	2	1	0	4	divisional and corps headquarters moderately to severely damaged
Airfields	1	0	3	1	0	0	
Economic	0	0	0	0	0	1	

Table 20. BDA, 18 December 1998⁸²

Target Set	# of Targets Damaged						Description
	Nil	Light 1–14%	Moderate 15–45%	Severe 46–75%	Destroyed 76–100%	Unknown	
IADS	0	4	4	5	1	18	southern sector degraded
C2	0	2	4	4	7	3	security headquarters severely damaged
WMD Security	0	5	6	5	2	0	
WMD Production	0	4	5	1	0	1	

81. *Ibid.*, 8.

82. Data from “BDA Assessment Slides,” December 18, 1998.

Target Set	# of Targets Damaged						Description
	Nil	Light 1–14%	Moderate 15–45%	Severe 46–75%	Destroyed 76–100%	Unknown	
RGFC	0	1	5	3	0	0	divisional and corps headquarters moderately to severely damaged
Airfields	0	1	4	0	0	1	
Economic	0	1	0	0	0	0	

Table 21. BDA, 19 December 1998⁸³

There were serious concerns about the BDA after the operation. On 21 December 1998, it was reported that of 99 targets struck, 28 had been destroyed or severely damaged, 46 had light or moderate damage, and 23 were still being assessed.⁸⁴ At the end of the operation, in response to a question about BDA, the CINC replied: “If I had to put a score sheet up, which I am reluctant to do—but I will because I know in some ways that’s the way we get focused on BDA—we successfully hit 85 percent of our targets, as we know it now. And fully successful in terms that I’m completely satisfied that we had the results gained was 74 percent.”⁸⁵ The data, to say the least, was suspect.⁸⁶ This cast doubts on the American claim of victory. From this 74 per cent assessment came the Secretary of Defense’s observation: “We estimate that Saddam’s missile programme has been set back by at least a year.”⁸⁷ By January 1999, this estimate was changed to two years.⁸⁸ The coalition was well aware that UNSCOM was effectively finished. If Iraq could not be contained with inspections, it would have to have its means of WMD delivery destroyed to retard the development of a WMD capability in the absence of UNSCOM. Containment, therefore, had an expiry date.

After the strikes, the coalition members believed prematurely that their aim had been achieved. President Clinton reported to Congress:

Since December 23, following the conclusion of Desert Fox, we have seen a significant increase in the frequency, intensity, and coordination of the Iraqi air defence system to counter enforcement of the no-fly zones. Since that date, US and coalition aircraft enforcing the no-fly zones have been subject to multiple AAA firings, radar illuminations, and over 20 surface-to-air missile attacks.⁸⁹

The Iraqi government more or less went to war by increasing resistance within the NFZs. Due to the perceived success of DESERT FOX, the CRF began to redeploy on 28 December 1998. The USS *Enterprise* and its battle group left for the Mediterranean, and the majority of the B-52s

83. Data from “BDA Assessment Slides,” December 19, 1998.

84. B. Graham, “Pentagon Evaluates Impact of Bombing Raids,” *International Herald Tribune*, December 21, 1998.

85. DoD, news briefing, December 21, 1998, 3.

86. Cordesman, *Lessons of Desert Fox*, 90.

87. Cohen, cited in “Defence Department Report, Saturday, December 19,” United States Information Agency, Washington File, December 19, 1998.

88. Shelton, cited in L. Kozaryn, “Zinni Says Saddam’s ‘Shaken, Desperate,’” *Armed Forces Information Service*, January 12, 1999.

89. “Iraq’s Compliance with the UN Security Council,” House of Representatives Document 106–34, March 3, 1999, 4.

along with 6 B-1 bombers, 10 A-10s ground-attack aircraft and 10 KC-10 tanker aircraft were withdrawn. Ground force levels also declined.⁹⁰ The coalition reversed its deployment just as Iraq began to actively resist.

On the domestic front, the strikes did little to ward off President Clinton's opponents. Despite the tradition of forgetting partisan issues in times of crisis, Congress continued to ponder what should be done about the President's alleged perjury. Late on 16 December 1998, the House of Representatives opted to postpone the vote on impeachment.⁹¹ However, this did not last long: the next morning, they decided to reopen the debate.⁹² Despite the appearance of protesters in a number of American cities, the American public was supportive of President Clinton's decision to strike Iraq. Poll data showed that the majority (from 60 per cent to 80 per cent, depending on the data) supported the actions against Iraq.⁹³

The consequences of the strikes did not help the situation. On 15 December 1998, the American Ambassador to the United Nations, Peter Burleigh, warned Richard Butler that strikes on Iraq would be likely in the wake of Butler's report. As a result, UNSCOM and IAEA personnel were evacuated to Bahrain, and other UN personnel, such as those responsible for humanitarian relief, began to evacuate on 16 December 1998.⁹⁴ The executive chairman reported to the UN Secretariat that "the prime considerations in his decision were to ensure the safety and security of the Commission's personnel and the need to act immediately."⁹⁵ This was not received well by the international community. The coalition's use of force appeared to be the cause of and not the catalyst for UNSCOM's cessation of operations.

There were mixed reactions within the Arab world. Most of the governments stated that it was Saddam's fault that the strikes had occurred.⁹⁶ Pan-Arab sentiment gave rise to a popular expression of sympathy for the Iraqi people.⁹⁷ Some of the other political bodies, such as the Arab League, echoed this sentiment by condemning the operation.⁹⁸ Part of the problem could be attributed to the nature of briefings where the key audience appeared to be the American people, seeming to ignore the Arab world.⁹⁹

Naturally, Iraqi spokesmen objected strongly to DESERT FOX. Nizar Hamdoon complained that the bombing started before the UNSC could decide on the matter of Richard Butler's report. He also complained about Ambassador Burleigh's warning to UNSCOM about its withdrawal from Iraq.¹⁰⁰ In addition to this, Ambassador Hamdoon outlined that it was the Iraqi government's belief that the US, by conducting DESERT FOX, sought to weaken the regime in order to cause an ouster of Saddam Hussein.¹⁰¹ In one press conference, Madeleine Albright stated there were three goals to DESERT FOX. These were:

90. L. Kozaryn, "Gulf Force Draws Down," *Armed Forces Information Service*, December 28, 1998.

91. D. Swan, "Congress/Iraq/Impeachment," *Voice of America*, December 16, 1998.

92. United States Information Agency, Congressional Report, Thursday, December 17, Washington File, December 17, 1998.

93. M. Leland, "Bombing Opposition," *Voice of America*, December 17, 1998.

94. UN, Daily Press Briefing of Office of Spokesman for Secretary-General, December 16, 1998, 2. See also UN, "Secretary-General's Advisory on United Nations Personnel in Iraq," *SG/SM/6842 IK/266*, press release, December 16, 1998; and UN, "Temporary Relocation of IAEA Personnel from Iraq to Bahrain," *IAEA/1330 IK/263*, press release, December 16, 1998.

95. UN, Note by the Secretary-General, S/1999/401, April 9, 1999, 7.

96. United States Information Agency, Transcript: Secretary of State's Briefing on Iraq Dec. 17, Washington File, December 17, 1998, 3.

97. For examples, see R. Engel, "Arabs/Iraq," *Voice of America*, December 18, 1998; "As-Sharq," cited in A. Guthrie, "A Skeptical World Reacts to US-Iraq Attack," *Voice of America*, December 17, 1998; and "World Opinion Roundup: Air Strikes Against Iraq," United States Information Agency, Washington File, December 17, 1998.

98. Engel.

99. Cordesman, *Lessons of Desert Fox*, 39. On 44, Cordesman noted that the Arab world was fascinated by the Lewinsky affair and that American actions at the time were all seen in that light.

100. "Statement by Ambassador Nizar Hamdoon to members of the Security Council of the United Nations during its meeting of December 16, 1998, regarding the ongoing aggression of the U.S. and U.K. against Iraq," 1–2.

101. Ambassador Hamdoon, Interview on *Larry King Live*, December 17, 1998, United States Information Agency, Washington File, December 17, 1998, 1 and 5.

- a. **Short-term.** Degradation of Iraq's WMDs and C2 infrastructure;
- b. **Medium-term.** Compliance with all UN SCRs; and
- c. **Longer-term.** A government in Iraq that was more representative of the Iraqi people.¹⁰²

The 19 December Presidential radio address reinforced the policy statements made by the Secretary of State. President Clinton stated that the US would use force to ensure that Saddam Hussein would not pose a threat, that the US would seek to maintain sanctions until the Iraqi government complied with UN resolutions and that it would “strengthen our engagement with Iraqis who want a new government, one that will respect its citizens and live in peace with its neighbours.”¹⁰³ Such pronouncements and laws like the *ILA* would only serve to confirm suspicions that regime change in Iraq was a primary American objective, thus helping engender international sympathy for Iraq's cause.

Key UNSC members criticized the operation. The French government, echoing Arab sentiment, stated that it was concerned about the fate of the Iraqi people. In addition, it did note that Iraq failed to comply, thus prompting the American-led action.¹⁰⁴ While this statement hardly appears to be critical of DESERT FOX, the French government later made its distaste known: on 30 December 1998, it decided to withdraw its forces from SOUTHERN WATCH.¹⁰⁵ Both NORTHERN WATCH and SOUTHERN WATCH became exclusively Anglo–American operations.

The Russian and Chinese governments were outraged by DESERT FOX. During the UNSC debate on the Butler report, Sergei Lavrov, Russia's Permanent Representative to the UN, questioned the right (or lack thereof) of the coalition to use force without prior authorization of the UNSC.¹⁰⁶ Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, speaking at a conference in Madrid, claimed that Butler was “grossly exceeding his authority in Iraq.”¹⁰⁷ More serious actions were taken. The Duma, Russia's parliament, postponed the ratification of the START II treaty.¹⁰⁸ Madeleine Albright replied by warning that “if START II is not ratified ... they [the Russians] will have to use scarce defence funds for the problem of maintaining missiles that they don't need rather than on some of their other force needs.”¹⁰⁹ President Yeltsin recalled the Russian Ambassador to the United States.¹¹⁰ The Russian government believed that its concerns were being ignored,¹¹¹ condemned the coalition in the UN and agitated for the executive chairman's resignation.¹¹² The Chinese government was like-minded, claiming that the Butler report was groundless and that the use of force could only worsen the situation.¹¹³ Sun Yuxi, the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman, called for a halt to the strikes, as they lacked authorization and were a violation of the UN Charter.¹¹⁴

102. Transcript of the Secretary of State's Briefing on Iraq December 17, 5–6.

103. “Radio Address of the President to the Nation,” December 19, 1998 (10:06 Eastern Standard Time), cited in A. Cordesman, *Desert Fox: Key Official US and British Statements and Press Conferences* (Washington, DC: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 1999), 111.

104. France, Foreign Ministry, Audition du Ministre Des Affaires Étrangères, M. Hubert Védrine, Devant la Commission des Affaires Étrangères de l'Assemblée Nationale, press release, December 22, 1998, 1; and J. Nundy, “France/Iraq,” *Voice of America*, December 17, 1998.

105. “Patrols Ended, France Confirms,” *International Herald Tribune*, December 30, 1998.

106. UN, SC/6611, press release, December 16, 1998, 2.

107. P. Heinlein, “Russia/Iraq,” *Voice of America*, December 16, 1998.

108. START II is the acronym for the “Strategic Arms Reduction Talks,” an American–Russian forum for the reduction of their nuclear arsenals.

109. Transcript of the Secretary of State's Briefing, December 17, 1998, 7.

110. B. Rodgers, “Russia/U.S.–Iraq–Update,” *Voice of America*, December 17, 1998.

111. M. Gordon, “Moscow Orders U.S. Envoy Home to Protest Air Strikes,” *New York Times*, December 18, 1998.

112. M. Ruston, “UN/Iraq Friday,” *Voice of America*, December 18, 1998.

113. UN, SC/6611, press release, December 16, 1998, 2 and 5.

114. United States Information Agency, “China Condemns U.S. Airstrikes against Iraq,” Washington File, December 17, 1998; and S. Ho, “China/Iraq,” *Voice of America*, December 17, 1998.

The Iraqi government did not comply with UN resolutions after DESERT FOX. There were two reasons for the lack of effect. First, the coalition declared victory before the Iraqi government admitted defeat. This may have been a public relations gambit, or the coalition's purpose was really to support containment by eliminating, or at least retarding, Iraq's missile capability prior to UNSCOM's possible replacement by a weaker inspections regime. Second, it appeared that Iraq's defeat became necessary, thus indicating that coercion had failed. Iraq began to treat the coalition as an enemy and fought back, as if it were at war. Ambassador A. Elizabeth Jones, the Principal Assistant Secretary of State for Near East Affairs, testified before the Senate Committee for Foreign Relations:

Ever since the December air strikes, the government offices in Baghdad have been dispersed; the government is unable to function with the efficiency that it has in the past. More importantly, the Republican Guard has been dispersed and is unable to take advantage of the relative comforts of Baghdad. ...

... Saddam Hussein failed in his primary strategy through the fall, which was to get sanctions lifted and to gain control of the money from the sale of oil and from the lifting of sanctions.¹¹⁵

Yet, Saddam Hussein did not do what the coalition wanted him to do and offer to cooperate with UNSCOM. Why was this the case? The CRF was withdrawn from the region as Iraqi forces resisted in both the NNFZ and the SNFZ, and the *ILA* provided empirical proof for the Iraqi government that the coalition sought its overthrow. Not to resist would have meant that the Iraqi government had already surrendered to the coalition's demands and the right to rule.

In DESERT FOX, the Iraqi government was presented with the choice of cooperating with UNSCOM or being disarmed by force of arms. This message was impossible to misinterpret given the lead-up of the crisis. The timing of the crisis, overshadowed as it was by an American political scandal and Ramadan, offered Iraq a powerful opportunity. If the coalition attacked, it was sure to appear to be overly forceful, and this would have definite political benefits for the Iraqi government. Similarly, the chance that President Clinton might be impeached offered additional benefits and gave the impression that the American actions on the foreign front were an attempted diversion from affairs on the domestic front. The Iraqi government had ample reason to believe that any coalition action would be short—and unpopular—with the international community. UNSCOM's report and the speed at which the coalition acted upon it created significant political friction, and this reduced Iraq's political isolation. The coalition, however, was able to provide Iraq with a clear perception of its capability despite the fact it was limited to entering Iraqi airspace via the Iraq–Kuwait border. The coalition finally attacked the two most significant target sets. However, this was still insufficient to coerce Iraq. The Iraqi government was well aware that even if DESERT FOX significantly damaged its arsenal, this was irrelevant as UNSCOM was now gone. It had both offers of mitigation (in that whatever replaced UNSCOM would respect Iraqi sovereignty) and hope (because of the international outcry). The pain became more than bearable.

Conclusion

DESERT FOX was a failure. The Iraqi government did not comply with the coalition's demands for cooperation with UNSCOM. The coalition withdrew before Iraq even offered a hint of concessions. Neither the implied threat (a period of testing Iraqi cooperation) nor the use of force convinced the Iraqi government that compliance was preferable to resistance. Coalition actions seemed to reinforce the value of resistance. The international community no longer seemed to be concerned about the enforcement of SCR 687 and its antecedents. Richard Butler reported in April of 1999:

115. U.S. Senate Hearing, *United States Policy toward Iraq* (Ambassador Jones' testimony), March 9, 1999, 5–6.

Under the Commission's monitoring plan, Iraq is required to provide to the Commission semi-annual declarations on activities, facilities, materials and other items that might be used for prohibited purposes. Iraq has not provided the declarations which were due on 15 January 1999. The Commission has not received any other notifications required from Iraq under the monitoring plan.¹¹⁶

He also observed that from 6 October 1998 on that "the Commission has not received, in the period under review [until 11 April 1999], the cooperation required of Iraq to enable it to conduct its work as mandated by the Security Council."¹¹⁷ What did this mean for the coalition? Scott Ritter summarized the situation best by stating:

Desert Fox ... provided the final proof that the US was fully committed to an open-ended policy of containment and little else. Precision bombardment with cruise missiles made many walls crumble. UNSCOM crumbled with those walls in Baghdad. Weapons inspections ceased. And a once-mighty coalition of allies has disintegrated.¹¹⁸

The coalition could only extend the most crucial element of containment for a short time after UNSCOM ended. The American and British governments were forced to gamble and lost.

116. UN, S/1999/401, 13.

117. *Ibid.*, 14.

118. Ritter, 29.

Chapter 12: From the Air Defence War to the Invasion of Iraq

Introduction

After Operation DESERT FOX, the coalition found itself in a more difficult position vis-à-vis Iraq's containment. The government of Iraq remained dressed in the cloth of victimhood while it increased its symbolic and actual resistance of the coalition's efforts at containment. Iraqi challenges to the two NFZs as well as coalition activity over those zones increased significantly. At the same time, Iraqi representatives denounced the coalition's efforts at enforcement and the international community's attempts to rebuild some form of inspection regime to address the concerns over the remains of Iraq's arsenal of WMDs.

Containment, based on the combination of the terms of SCR 687 and the military means to ensure their enforcement, began to unravel. Elements of the international community became increasingly sympathetic to the Iraqi government's cynical pleas for greater sovereignty, and consequently, they argued for a less intrusive replacement for UNSCOM. As the debates over replacing UNSCOM raged in the UN headquarters in New York, coalition aircrews duelled with Iraq's fighter pilots and air defence crews. The existence of such duels remained dependent on Turkish and Saudi cooperation with the coalition as well as the continued expenditure of financial and political capital on the part of the remaining two coalition members.

After the fall of 2001, three factors contributed to the eventual decision and preparations for Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. First, there was the perception that the Government of Iraq, a known sponsor of secular terror organizations, might make common cause against the coalition's members with radical Islamic terror groups and provide them with WMDs. Second, and related to the first factor, there was the loss of situational awareness with regard to the state of Iraq's WMDs, and this created fertile ground for the coalition's fears of what Iraq could do with them. Third, there was the long-term cost of containment and the perception that the situation was not only untenable but also too costly to continue.

Once the coalition's members opted to cause a change of regime, they accepted that containment and, by inference, coercion would fail. With that acceptance came a change in the two NFZs' purpose. They retained their monitoring function but began to serve as a preliminary campaign to suppress enemy air defences in preparation for the invasion. At the same time, the two coalition members began the exercise of diplomatic preparation for an invasion.

Aftermath of DESERT FOX

In the wake of Operation DESERT FOX, the Iraqi government opted to increase the degree of resistance. This was done with little deception and even less ambiguity. As early as 19 December 1998, Iraqi Vice-President Taha Yassin Ramadan publicly proclaimed: "The issue of UNSCOM is behind us now. The commission of spies is behind us now. It no longer has a task ... all that has to do with inspection, monitoring, and weapons of mass destruction is now behind us."¹ His words were an accurate summary of the situation—UNSCOM ended with the launching of Operation DESERT FOX. While such proclamations may have come across as political theatrics, they were an accurate reflection of the Iraqi government's intentions. Around the same time, the Revolutionary Command

1. Charles Duelfer, *Comprehensive Revised Report with Addendums on Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction* (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Office, 2004), 56.

Council convened and resolved to engage in a deliberate programme of resistance.² This led to the first true challenges to the NNFZ and SNFZ since January 1993.

Iraq's air force and air defence forces began to challenge the American and British patrols over Iraqi skies with much greater frequency. While the resistance began with efforts to hinder Operation DESERT FOX, it appeared to take on greater importance after 23 December 1998 when Saddam Hussein declared that Iraq no longer considered the NFZs valid.³ The implication, of course, was that they were a violation of Iraqi sovereignty that the Iraqi government was obligated to challenge. Iraqi violations of the NFZs thereafter increased significantly. From 23 December 1998 to 8 January 1999, a mere two and a half weeks, there were over 40 violations, ranging from aircraft quickly entering and exiting the NFZ as a form of test, to attempts at the MiG trap.⁴ This was a significant change from the previous six years of comparatively isolated incidents.

There was a bit of distinction between the activities in the two NFZs. A greater activity level on the part of the air defence forces existed in the NNFZ, and this led to more emphasis on dealing with the air defence threat. For example, the coalition responded to an illumination by air defence radar on 11 January 1999 with an attack on the site.⁵ Approximately two weeks later, there were a series of Iraqi SAM launches or AAA fire against American aircraft near Mosul.⁶ A week later, there was another series of attacks intended to address the air defence threat there.⁷ To keep the northern skies safe, the coalition had to be more aggressive in countering Iraq's air defence system.

At the same time, however, the coalition had to be extremely sensitive to the possibility of collateral damage in the NNFZ. Given that the pipelines transporting oil in support of the oil-for-food deal ran north from Mosul into Turkey and the existence of a volume of cross-border trade, this was not surprising. The Turkish government did not wish to see either interrupted, as it not only helped the economy but also stabilized the situation for the Kurds of northern Iraq. Collateral damage ran the risk of encouraging Iraq's Kurdish population to flee to the north.

Coalition aircraft in the SNFZ had a slightly different experience. While Iraqi resistance began with Operation DESERT FOX, it continued into 1999 with a series of SAM launches and the occasional challenge by the IQAF.⁸ By end-January 1999, the IQAF became increasingly bold, and in one incident near Basra, it tried to run the MiG trap involving AAA and no less than four aircraft.⁹ The Iraqi military proved to be an adaptative adversary. It sought different tactics, such as the use of what was referred to as expeditionary SAM groups, namely a series of mobile launchers that would enter the zone briefly, fire at coalition aircraft and return to their earlier positions. Such innovations were borne of necessity and the experience of seeing coalition aircraft over Iraq since the end of the 1991 Gulf War. They also tried using a networked series of smaller radars to maintain coverage and early warning.¹⁰ The latter represented an attempt to maintain an early warning system despite the coalition's efforts to destroy those radar sites that posed a threat through illumination. In another incident, coalition aircraft struck at an anti-ship missile site on the Persian Gulf, thus expanding the

2. *Ibid.*, 57–58.

3. DoD, "Air Force Sends More Planes to Persian Gulf," Department of the Air Force, January 12, 1999.

4. *Ibid.* See also A. Cordesman, *Iraq in Crisis*, 64, 67–68 and 72.

5. DoD, "Air Force Sends More Planes to Persian Gulf." See also Cordesman, *Iraq in Crisis*, 83 and 85–86.

6. DoD, "Aircraft Fire at Missile Sites in Northern and Southern Iraq," Department of the Air Force, January 25, 1999.

7. Cordesman, *Iraq in Crisis*, 95.

8. DoD, "Coalition Fighters Fire at Iraqi Aircraft," Department of the Air Force, January 5, 1999.

9. DoD, "Aircraft Fire at Missile Sites in Northern and Southern Iraq," Department of the Air Force, January 25, 1999.

10. M. Knights, *Cradle of Conflict: Iraq and the Birth of Modern Military Power* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2005), 233–34.

range of potential targets.¹¹ Even with such broad interpretations of what was and was not permissible in terms of the ROE, the latter became a concern within SOUTHERN WATCH.

Facing a heightened threat level, the JTF-SWA considered modified options for operating in Iraqi skies. Noting that the Iraqi armed forces had developed new tactics and had become all too familiar with the contents of the existing ROE, the commander requested an amendment.¹² His intent was to broaden the ROE to the point where he could direct retaliatory strikes after the fact as opposed to an immediate reaction. This would provide him with a series of potential responses to Iraqi actions at the time and place of his choice.¹³ The coalition governments authorized the adjustment, but there were some limits. In order to avoid difficulties with the Saudi government, retaliatory strikes would be flown from Kuwait or from aircraft carriers in the Persian Gulf. The limited air reconnaissance and air superiority capability left at Prince Sultan AB was devoted to patrolling the zone.¹⁴ This reduced the risk of host nations' objections to politically troubling plans or actions. Such steps allowed for unilateral and, more importantly, rapid action when deemed necessary.

NORTHERN WATCH also experienced challenges with their ROE. Unlike SOUTHERN WATCH, aircraft in the NNFZ could only attack the offending air defence battery immediately.¹⁵ The Turkish government sought a lot of information on what munitions were in use, limited the number of flying days and times, and sought to deconflict national and coalition-controlled airspace. They became increasingly concerned about collateral damage after a pipeline was struck in late February 1999. Given that the majority of targets in the NNFZ were associated with the IADS, this was not considered a significant issue to the coalition, but the Turkish government did not want to see economic infrastructure harmed.¹⁶ This led to the adoption of creative solutions when the risk of collateral damage appeared to be high. In one case, aircraft dropped inert bombs on a target to avoid the potential for secondary explosions while still making a clear statement.¹⁷

Yet, the regime of containment, maintained since the spring of 1991, was unravelling at a rapid rate. There were two interrelated issues at the heart of a mixed-motive game between multiple states. The first issue was the economic sanctions, their cost in terms of Iraqi well-being and the varying interpretations of the likelihood that they were successful in encouraging Iraqi cooperation with the international community. The other issue was the state of the Iraqi arsenal of WMD and different views of the best means to ensure Iraq carried out its obligations under SCR 687.

The UN Security Council began to consider options for replacing UNSCOM and considered loosening the economic sanctions. Many members of the international community appeared to believe that positive incentives were necessary to entice Iraqi cooperation. France and Russia argued that “carrots” were necessary to provide such an incentive, since a decade of “sticks” (such as economic sanctions and air strikes) had been harmful and had not yet led to the goal of disarming Iraq. The effects of sanctions were a concern to many states, as the perception persisted, and not incorrectly, that sanctions were a blunt instrument. At the same time, however, the US and UK were trying to change that perception, as they suggested that the regime of sanctions might be lifted in the future.

11. Cordesman, *Iraq in Crisis*, 95.

12. J. Tirpak, “Airpower in the Gulf: 10 Years Later,” *Air Force Magazine*, January 2001, 26.

13. Knights, 212–13 and 215. See also Cordesman, *Iraq in Crisis*, 120–21.

14. Knights, 214.

15. J. Kitfield, “The Little War with Iraq,” *National Journal* (March 2, 2002).

16. Knights, 219–23 and 226.

17. *Ibid.*, 227.

Over 1999, both issues were of great interest in the halls of the UN Headquarters. By December 1999, the SC passed SCR 1284 with 11 abstentions, including Russia, France, the PRC and Malaysia.¹⁸ Despite the widespread sympathy for the plight of Iraqis, the coalition appeared to get the most of the bargain. SCR 1284 did a number of things. First, it mandated UNMOVIC's existence as a replacement for the defunct UNSCOM. Second, it noted Iraq's obligations to ensure the repatriation of Kuwaiti goods and citizens. SCR 1284 also removed the limit on oil exports.¹⁹ The oil-for-food deal continued, and this gave the Iraqi government a source of hard currency. In addition, some of Iraq's neighbours (and traditional partners in trade) began to engage in trade protocols.²⁰ This loosened the sanctions as much as the coalition's members would permit, while maintaining as much of a mechanism to cause Iraq's compliance with the terms of SCR 687 as the other P-5 members would allow.

Transition between Administrations

Domestic pressure and the international situation led to some further actions on the part of the Clinton administration. In response to the unravelling of containment, the Clinton administration made symbolic gestures. For example, they named a coordinator for the transition in Iraq, and they identified those eligible for aid but not "lethal aid or combat training."²¹ To be fair, this was a means of looking as if they were doing something to aid the Iraqi resistance without committing to something much larger. There was a significant amount of domestic pressure being brought to bear on the Clinton administration for two reasons. One, coalition activity in Iraqi skies highlighted the issue for the American body politic. Two, this was a period when both the Democratic and Republican parties began to prepare for the 2000 presidential primary and election campaigns. In the end, both of the campaigns were relatively quiet on the issue of Iraq.

Most remember the 2000 presidential election as a result of the requirement to recount the votes in the state of Florida, and this served to create stark contrasts between the two political parties in the United States. Initially, though, there was little difference between the second Clinton administration and the first George W. Bush administration on the issue of Iraq. The initial Bush administration policy remained unchanged from its predecessor, including the restrictions on the types of aid to be provided to Iraqi resistance movements.²² Regime change in Iraq was simply not an issue that the new administration was willing to undertake at that time.

In fact, the administration spent more time initially trying to shore up political support for the existing scheme of containment than considering the matter of regime change. In February 2001, Secretary of State Colin Powell toured the Middle East in an attempt to obtain regional support for a scheme known as "smart sanctions."²³ This was an effort to alter the popular image of sanctions as a blunt instrument that ultimately harmed Iraqis. The effort paid off over the next year, and elements of the scheme ended up as part of SCR 1409 in May 2002. This resolution allowed for the import and sale of any goods that did not appear on the Goods Review List. The latter was a lengthy list of military-related material that could not be sold or imported into Iraq.²⁴ This reduced sanctions to military materiel and those chemicals with dual-use capability.

18. K. Katzman, "Iraq: Weapons Threat, Compliance, Sanctions, and U.S. Policy," Congressional Research Service (CRS) Issue Brief for Congress, IB92117, December 10, 2002, 2.

19. C. Blanchard and K. Katzman, *Iraq: Oil-for-Food Programme, Illicit Trade, and Investigations*, RL30472, (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2007), 2. See also UN, Resolution 1284 (1999), S/RES/1284 (1999), December 17, 1999.

20. Duelfer, 56–57 and 60–61.

21. K. Katzman, *Iraq: U.S. Regime Change Efforts and Post-Saddam Governance*, RL 31339 (Washington, DC: Library of Congress), 13–15.

22. *Ibid.*, 15–16.

23. Katzman, "Iraq: Weapons Threat," 11.

24. UN, Resolution 1409 (2002), S/RES/1409 (2002), 14 May 2002. See also UN, "Letter dated 3 May 2002 from the Deputy Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council," S/2002/515 (May 3, 2002).

Meanwhile, there was a growing concern about what the Iraqi government could be doing to rebuild its WMDs in the absence of UNSCOM. There was evidence to sustain the belief that Iraq was trying to rebuild its ballistic missile capability with missiles capable of striking targets between 650 and 750 km away.²⁵ This would put both Tehran and Tel Aviv in range, depending on the location of the launch sites of the missiles. In response to such information, the administration began to ask the broader community how possible this would be under the known conditions.²⁶ Furthermore, other evidence began to surface that other states had been engaging in military technology transfers to Iraq that threatened coalition aircrews.

While the NFZs were far from quiet, there were notable exceptions that highlighted Iraq's resistance. For example, provocations in the two NFZs led to much larger operations in accordance with the aforementioned playbook methodology. On 16 February 2001, a 24-aircraft package struck a series of C3I nodes outside Baghdad and north of the 33rd parallel. The BDA suggested there was a definite effect on the nodes and by default, the IADS.²⁷ What made this strike so interesting was the justification. Coalition spokespeople stated the strikes were launched to destroy a Chinese-made upgrade to the IADS through the use of fibre optic cable. The speed of transmissions and the increased ability to hide the cable from detection/tracking would be a hindrance to coalition operations.²⁸ If the allegations were correct, it would also prove that even some of the Security Council members were engaging in sanctions busting.

The summer of 2001 also saw other strikes against Iraq's air defence C3I systems. In late July and early August, the coalition launched strikes against other C3I nodes near An Numaniyah and An Nasiriyah. Between the two strikes came a series of Iraqi responses, largely in the form of SAM launches against coalition aircraft.²⁹ The pattern of launch and strike carried on into late August.³⁰ Two years after DESERT FOX ended, Iraq's armed forces still offered resistance to the NFZ enforcement.

To give an index of the level of resistance, one need only consider the mean number of SAM launches per month in the NNFZ in 2001. On average, the Iraqi forces launched 34 SAMs a month; this is roughly one per day in only the NNFZ.³¹ While it may seem as minimal when compared to the volumes of air defence fire launched at other aircraft in the course of military history, it needs to be considered through the eyes of crews flying in the NFZs with great frequency.

Containment also came with political costs. Not only were the NFZs dangerous for coalition aircrews, their maintenance was expensive for all concerned. By the spring of 2001, the coalition's members considered shutting down the NNFZ. A number of factors led to this consideration, such as the effect on the demands of the operational tempo, the sheer cost and the deleterious influence on Turkey's trade with Iraq.³² The latter was worth roughly \$35 billion, and this was ample motivation for Ankara to make its concerns heard in Washington and London.³³ The sheer cost of enforcing the

25. Duelfer, 60.

26. *Ibid.*, 59.

27. DoD, "U.S./British Warplanes Hit Iraqi Military Sites," February 16, 2001; and A. Prados and K. Katzman, "Iraq-U.S. Confrontation," CRS Issue Brief for Congress, IB94049 (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 2001), 7.

28. P. Gibbons, "U.S. No-Fly Zones in Iraq: To What End," *Washington Institute for Near-East Policy PolicyWatch* no. 632 (Washington, DC: Washington Institute for Near-East Policy, 2002), 1; and T. Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2006), 26.

29. DoD, "Air Force Aircraft Participate in Strike on Iraqi Sites," Department of the Air Force, August 10, 2001; and DoD, "U.S./British Planes Attack Iraqi Military Sites," Department of the Air Force, August 10, 2001.

30. DoD, "Coalition Forces Strike Iraqi Command, Control Sites," Department of the Air Force, August 29, 2001.

31. J. Kitfield, "The Little War with Iraq," *National Journal*, March 2, 2002.

32. D. Fulghum, "U.S. May Suspend Northern Watch Patrol," *Aviation Week and Space Technology* 154, no. 20 (14 May 2001), 31–32.

33. Katzman, "Iraq: Weapons Threat," 12.

NFZs also made it attractive to shut down the operation. After all, the British contribution cost roughly £4.5 million (\$7.2 million Canadian) per month.³⁴ As shown in Table 22, the American contribution per year was not much smaller.

NFZ	FY1998	FY1999	FY2000	FY2001
OSW	1497.2	954.8	755.4	678.0
NNFZ	136.0	156.4	143.6	138.7

Table 22. Cost (US\$ millions) of US participation in NFZ operations³⁵

SOUTHERN WATCH was the more expensive of the two, but addressed the greater concern of preventing Iraq from invading Kuwait and/or creating situations that invited Iranian intervention. The Iraqi government, by this point, was no longer interested in dealing with the Kurds, and there were no designs on Turkey. The same was not true of the south of Iraq, which bordered on Kuwait and Iran. Activities there could be a prelude to an invasion of Kuwait or sufficient justification to attract significant Iranian attention.

The Road to Invasion

The events of September 2001 seemed to reduce Iraq's salience; however, this was purely a matter of perception. While the world's attention turned towards the collapsing Taliban government in Afghanistan and the global war on terrorism, the coalition continued to maintain the NFZs in the face of Iraqi resistance. In Iraq's skies, it was business as usual as coalition aircraft struck air defence facilities in both NFZs in late September and early October.³⁶ Iraq's air defence crews and aircrews cared more about trying to enforce Iraqi sovereignty than they did about the American reaction to attacks by radical Islamic terrorists.

However, the American reaction to the events of 9/11 contained the seeds of the invasion of Iraq. After Kabul, Afghanistan fell to the Northern Alliance with the assistance of a significant number of American air assets in November 2001, CENTCOM began to plan for how a war against Iraq might be waged in the event that they would be directed to do so.³⁷ There was a genuine fear within elements of the American body politic that Iraq might be tempted to share its arsenal of WMDs with other enemies of the US, and the only way to prevent this was to change the regime in Iraq.

The fear of Iraq's potential support for terror organizations, while not realistic, did have some valid bases. Iraq was on the list of sponsor states of terror organizations, but these were primarily secular Palestinian organizations such as Abu Nidal. To believe that al-Qaeda, a network of radical Islamic terror organizations, and the Government of Iraq, a secular authoritarian government, would make common cause against the US meant that both had to abandon some of their ideological foundations. That this was a leap of logic did not prevent Iraq from being described that way. In January 2002, during a State of the Union address, President Bush described Iraq as a member of the Axis of Evil, along with North Korea and Iran.³⁸ This term referred to states that sought to have arsenals of WMDs and were known supporters of terror organizations. In hindsight, the address seems to have been a warning to all three states.

34. Prados and Katzman, 10.

35. *Ibid.*, 11.

36. DoD, "Coalition Forces Strike Iraqi Artillery Site," Department of the Air Force, October 2, 2001; and DoD, "Southern Watch Aircraft Counter Iraqi Threats," October 10, 2002.

37. Ricks, 32.

38. Katzman, "Iraq: Weapons Threat," 3.

The term “warning” appears more valid in light of the NFZs. Other sources indicated that the coalition opted to increase their activities in both NFZs in early 2002. Prior to this point, the coalition monitored events in Iraq from the skies, but after the decision to consider the invasion of Iraq, the NFZs were exploited for intelligence purposes and used to prepare the battlefield kinetically for future operations.³⁹ The coalition’s aircraft spent less time in the enforcement than they did conducting reconnaissance flights, gathering data relevant for targeting and gradually suppressing air defences to prepare for a wider air campaign. The effort came to be known as Operation SOUTHERN FOCUS.

The political preparations for war came shortly thereafter. By the summer of 2002, the Blair government noted the change in tone within the Bush administration—Washington was preparing for war.⁴⁰ Vice President Dick Cheney telegraphed the administration’s intentions in an August 2002 speech at a Veterans of Foreign Wars conference. The nature of his speech created a domestic expectation that the administration would act to deal with the problem of Iraq.⁴¹ In effect, Americans expected the President to deal with the dictator that might provide WMD to terrorists.

Within a month, the Bush administration made a similar point to the international community. During his speech to the UN General Assembly in September 2002, President Bush stated that the United States would act alone if necessary to obtain Iraq’s compliance with the terms of SCR 687. The Iraqi government, in response, pledged to cooperate.⁴² This was an example of threat-based coercion in the public eye, and the Iraqi reaction was not surprising. To have reacted any other way would only strengthen the coalition’s arguments that Iraq was flouting its obligations.

This, however, is not to suggest that the Iraqi government was going to comply fully. Its response was to release a series of prisoners, ostensibly Kuwaitis, from its jails a month later.⁴³ This was another example of the distinct pattern of the Iraqi government making a limited concession in order to end an immediate crisis. Some referred to this as another application of the “cheat and retreat” gambit. While the coalition sought full compliance, the Iraqi government sought to minimize concessions.

The coalition’s members were less than satisfied with the limited concessions. While the British government appeared to say little on the matter, the American government made other attempts at threat-based coercion. During a 7 October 2002 speech in Cincinnati, Ohio, the President outlined what he saw as the fundamental problem with Iraq: the existence of an arsenal of WMD, a pattern of the use of that arsenal and links to terror organizations.⁴⁴ Terrorist organizations, at that time, were the *bête noire* of American politics—they gave the administration a strong hand in bringing the country towards expanding the global war on terrorism. This would only serve to make the threats against Iraq all the more credible. More importantly and far more subtly, the administration also announced that the groups eligible for funding under the *ILA* could begin to draw down their funds.⁴⁵ Saddam’s enemies could, therefore, increase their activities against the central government. It was tacit evidence that the coalition was ready to see the Ba’athist government of Iraq replaced by something else.

39. Knights, 256–58.

40. Ricks, 39.

41. *Ibid.*, 49–51.

42. Katzman, “Iraq: Weapons Threat,” 3.

43. *Ibid.*, 7.

44. Information Clearing House, “President Bush Outlines Iraqi Threat,” 7 October 2002, <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article3711.htm> (accessed January 29, 2013).

45. Katzman, *Iraq: U.S. Regime Change*, 20.

Operation SOUTHERN FOCUS continued throughout this period. Coalition aircraft, Iraqi aircrews and Iraqi air defence crews were all far from inactive during the period. Between mid-September and mid-October, there were roughly four incidents a day in both NFZs; three-quarters of these occurred in the SNFZ.⁴⁶ This trend continued into November–December as the coalition sought to define and reduce Iraq’s air defence capability. In late November, after an Iraqi fighter strayed into the SNFZ, the coalition struck a series of air defence sites.⁴⁷ Within a month, JTF-SWA aircraft struck a series of C2 nodes for the IADS over a three-day period.⁴⁸ The world’s attention was focused elsewhere and the heightened level of activity went relatively unnoticed.

The Blair government also began to make its case public. The *September Dossier*, named for the month that it was released, alleged that the Iraqi government was still engaging in clandestine chemical and biological weapons production as well as maintaining military procedures for weapons release. In addition, the *Dossier* corroborated the earlier story about an illicit missile capability.⁴⁹ Both coalition members remained concerned about the threat posed by Iraq retaining any form of WMD capability.

One of the points of focus was the drama unfolding in the halls of the UN building in New York. Iraq’s relative lack of compliance with UN resolutions proved to be a source of frustration for Iraq’s friends and foes alike.⁵⁰ For Iraq’s foes, it was evidence that the government could not be trusted unless force was involved. For Iraq’s friends, the lack of compliance invalidated their arguments about its willingness to cooperate. As a result, and after significant negotiations, SCR 1441 passed. Its goal was to obtain Iraqi compliance through threat, with one chance remaining for Iraq to comply.⁵¹ SCR 1441 declared Iraq to be in breach of its obligations but provided a final opportunity for the Iraqi government to rectify the situation.⁵² This was the result of bargaining between Iraq’s friends and foes.

SCR 1441, however, led to the first deployments into Iraq by UNSCOM’s successor organization, UNMOVIC. Their inspections began in November 2002 and seemed to be proceeding well under the circumstances. Iraq also submitted another version of their FFCD.⁵³ Unfortunately, even the less intrusive UNMOVIC found this wanting. UNMOVIC experts found little new significant information in the part of the FFCD relating to proscribed weapons, nor much new supporting documentation or other evidence. New material, however, was provided concerning non-weapons-related activities during the period from the end of 1998 to the present, especially in the biological field and on missile development.⁵⁴ Their central conclusion was that there was insufficient evidence to validate Iraq’s claims.

Early 2003 saw the situation continue to deteriorate. While the coalition’s members advanced arguments about Iraq’s clandestine developments, UNMOVIC continued to try to carry out its mandate. On 27 January, Hans Blix declared that the government of Iraq was generally cooperative but that problems remained. First, its late 2002 disclosure contained the same gaps as its predecessors. The document trail contained the same flaws and did not address the now four-year-old concerns about WMD-related items alleged to be within Iraq. Second, the Government of Iraq did not grant

46. DoD, “Iraqi Forces Continue Strikes against Coalition Aircraft,” October 1, 2002.

47. DoD, “Coalition Forces Strike Iraqi Communications Facilities,” November 22, 2002.

48. DoD, “Coalition Aircraft Strike Iraqi Sites on 3 Consecutive Days,” December 16, 2002.

49. UK, House of Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee, “The Decision to Go to War in Iraq,” Ninth Session of Parliament 2002–2003 (London: Her Majesty’s Stationary Office, 2003), 13–14, 16 and 19.

50. Duelfer, 62.

51. *Ibid.*, 62–63.

52. UN, Resolution 1441 (2002), S/RES/1441 (2002), November 8, 2002, 3.

53. UN, “Note by the Secretary-General,” S/2002/1303, November 27, 2002, 3. Also see Katzman, “Iraq: Weapons Threat,” 4.

54. UN, “Note by the Secretary-General,” S/2003/232, February 28, 2003, 3.

UNMOVIC the desired level of access to interviewees.⁵⁵ Such observations added credence to the coalition's claims about clandestine programmes—it appeared that Iraq had something to hide and was actively trying to do so.

The coalition's members were adamant about Iraq's desire to conceal its arsenal. A week after UNMOVIC's report, American Secretary of State Colin Powell went before the UNSC to argue the American position on the situation regarding Iraq's WMDs. He presented a number of things—including evidence from audio intercepts and satellite imagery, allegations of what was possible given UNMOVIC's assessments and a presentation on Iraq's mobile production systems.⁵⁶ Much of the evidence has since been discredited, but it illustrates the prevailing belief within the administration at the time.

The next 45 days saw the coalition accelerate their efforts in the two NFZs. Operation SOUTHERN FOCUS continued as the coalition slowly built up its forces in the region in preparation to invade Iraq.⁵⁷ If Iraq could not be contained with the removal of its WMD arsenal, then it would have to be transformed. The democratization of Iraq became the coalition's goal.⁵⁸ This was a direct result of the slow death of containment.

The 12-year duel between the coalition and Iraq ended on 20 March 2003, when the coalition launched Operation IRAQI FREEDOM and overthrew the Ba'athist government. The invasion was an admission that the various attempts at coercion had ultimately failed to bring about a long-term solution to the problem of Iraq. While Iraq had been successfully contained during that 12-year period, a short-term effort at coercion supported by a long-term presence was a costly approach to the problem of dealing with a state that would not admit defeat.

55. Hans Blix, Briefing by Executive Chairman of UNMOVIC to the United Nations Security Council, January 27, 2003.

56. Colin L. Powell, Remarks to the United Nations Security Council, <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article3710.htm> (accessed January 29, 2013).

57. Knights, 263.

58. Katzman, *Iraq: U.S. Regime Change*, 1.

Chapter 13: Conclusion

This work describes the 12-year duel between the coalition and Iraq. This duel was a series of attempts at the coercion of Iraq within a broader framework intended to contain the country in the short term while encouraging a long-term change in behaviour. This change, however, required the Iraqi government's compliance, and when this was not forthcoming, the coalition employed air power to encourage that government to cooperate with the international community. There were two main questions in this work. Was the coercion of Iraq successful at fulfilling the coalition's goal of containing Iraq? Are there any general academic and policy lessons about coercion for the future?

The Coercion and Containment of Iraq

Over the 1990s, there was a gradual evolution towards the use of coercion as an unintended consequence of the NFZs. These started as a means of preventing the crises that led to Operation PROVIDE COMFORT II; that is, providing security for the Kurds and the Shia in Operation SOUTHERN WATCH. NFZs were a by-product of volatile crises and the coalition's need to maintain a forward presence in the Persian Gulf. This presence itself was required to address the significant distance-time problem. However, due to the flexibility of the coalition's air assets, it only involved simple changes of force structure, bomb loads and intent to go from a mission of monitoring and presence to a mission of coercion. Changing force packages and extending the SNFZ in Operation DESERT STRIKE were attempts at implicit coercion, but there was no specific demand. SCR 688's intent was to maintain international respect for Iraqi sovereignty while protecting particular Iraqi minorities. The international community tolerated the existence of the NFZs due to the humanitarian concern associated with the protection of Iraqi minorities. To tie protective measures for humanitarian purposes to an explicit threat would be unacceptable. NFZs relied on an implicit communication of weak threats and demands and were sufficiently controversial to see Iraq receive both offers of mitigation and hope. Although the NFZs served as an enabler for the application of political pressure, their utility as a coercive tool was limited.

Were the means used to threaten Iraq appropriate to the threat as linked to the political justifications (SCRs 678 and 687) as well as to each particular crisis? Were the threatened target sets valued by the Iraqi government? In the first case, Operation VIGILANT WARRIOR, the coalition threatened force in order to prevent an Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Coalition activities and force levels were increased to signal its readiness to use force. In the second case, Operation SOUTHERN WATCH post-August 1996, the coalition merely increased the pressure by increasing the SNFZ to the 33rd parallel. This represented an implied threat that the coalition could attack targets in Baghdad without notice. While this might personalize the situation for Saddam Hussein, this gambit was not inherently tied to the earlier UN resolutions and had little to do with RGFC actions against the Iraqi Kurds in September 1996. This became politically contentious, which weakened the credibility of an implied threat. It is not possible to ascertain intended target sets for VIGILANT WARRIOR, as this represented an attempt at deterrence of a potential Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

Were the means employed sufficiently threatening or destructive? This really equates into two simpler questions: Could the coalition actually hit the targets being threatened? Was there a doctrinal match between the means being threatened and the target sets in terms of the optimization of weapons effects? In the threat-based cases, the coalition could hit the targets being threatened (Iraqi land forces or targets in southern Iraq; their capability to locate and destroy targets was well proven in Operation DESERT STORM). For VIGILANT WARRIOR, both questions point towards an assessment of

whether the coalition could effectively deny Iraq had there been an invasion. The combination of air assets and ground forces would have prevented a *fait accompli* and would have been capable of repelling or reversing an invasion shortly thereafter.

In the post-Operation DESERT STRIKE iteration of SOUTHERN WATCH, these questions focus on whether the coalition could strike targets in Baghdad with little to no warning. This, of course, was a risky proposition. While effective in the DESERT STORM air campaign, strikes on the Iraqi capital were the province of T-LAMs and stealth aircraft, but not without a rather focused SEAD effort. SEAD is vital, but to coerce successfully, it may be necessary to deliberately assume risk to maintain tactical surprise or to convey the appearance of recklessness to the adversary. This meant that this threat's credibility was weakened by perceptions of casualty aversion and a requirement to bring additional over-the-horizon assets unless the coalition was prepared to assume additional risk. This suggests that a strategy of gradual escalation is inconsistent with a threat based on surprise.

This question of success or failure relies on the political effect on the Iraqi government. This was not a matter of whether aircraft could locate and service target sets, but rather the assessment of the effect on Iraq's leadership based on behaviour. The intended effect of successfully striking target sets was a change in the Iraqi government's decision making as demonstrated by behaviour. This set the conditions for the examination of coercion as a means of supporting a regime of containment. The evidence from the cases of coercion will be summarized and examined in the light of the aforementioned criteria (less the last two). The actual cases of coercion were: January 1993, VIGILANT WARRIOR, SOUTHERN WATCH (post-August 1996) and DESERT FOX.

January 1993 (Coercion Success)

The first attempt at coercion took place in January 1993. The Iraqi government had to choose between cooperation with UNSCOM or forcible disarmament as well as tolerating the SNFZ or fighting for the control of its airspace. At this time, the state of communications was fair at best. It appears that the Iraqi government appeared to believe the original ultimatum was a bargaining position and offered paltry concessions in a form of haggling. It was not until the missile strike against the Za'afaraniyah nuclear facility that the Iraqi government's offers became valuable. This increased the coalition's credibility in terms of its threats, but this was somewhat constrained. (One should note that the use of air power implies the acceptance of risk by the coercer but that SEAD implies a casualty aversion that might be exploited.)

Iraq's willpower was not easily eroded during this operation. The timing of the operation (just days before the inauguration of President Clinton) was one reason, but the Franco–American dispute presented an image of disunity. This offered the Iraqi government some hope. However, this hope eroded significantly with the prospect of forcible disarmament and its isolation. This isolation led to Iraq's speedy indication of its desire to negotiate through offers of increasingly valuable concessions. Coercion brought about a grudging (and perhaps feigned) willingness to cooperate in the short term.

VIGILANT WARRIOR (Coercion Success)

VIGILANT WARRIOR was an attempt at threat-based coercion through power projection in order to deter an Iraqi action and deny it if deterrence failed. Air power assets monitored the situation and brought forces in from over-the-horizon. The exact Iraqi motives remain unknown. This makes the analysis of the case more difficult, as Iraq's thinking behind its choice of whether to invade Kuwait remains unknowable without access to the Iraqi archives. The nature of the communication (largely indirect or through a third party, such as the Russian government) further complicates the issue.

The speed of the coalition's deployment demonstrated its capability to project power into the theatre, and this made its threats credible.

The deployment's speed likely prevented Saddam Hussein from undertaking offensive operations at least until Iraq had an arsenal of WMDs to support such operations. The significance of WMDs, thus, increased. The erosion of Iraqi willpower is hard to judge, as the penalty was the maintenance of the status quo. In fact, the Iraqi government made the situation worse, as its actions in October 1994 renewed its isolation, despite the Russian government's offers of mitigation. *VIGILANT WARRIOR* was not a tactical victory, despite Iraq's lack of action, but a strategic victory in that Iraqi government action renewed the justification for Iraq's containment. Iraq's actions harmed its attempts to break out of the regime of sanctions. While this was a success from the coalition's perspective, it had less to do with the coalition's efforts than the Iraqi government's choice of action.

SOUTHERN WATCH, Post-August 1996 (Coercion Failure)

DESERT STRIKE was an enabling operation in response to Iraq's intervention in the KDP–PUK Civil War in August 1996. Iraq did not have a choice, as it had already withdrawn from Irbil when the coalition struck a portion of Iraq's air defences. The coalition's action was slow and came off as a reprisal as opposed to an act of coercion. This reprisal came in the form of air and missile strikes against air defence nodes in southern Iraq in order to enable the safe expansion of the SNFZ to the 33rd parallel. The extension completed the transformation of the SNFZ into a coercive instrument, but the coalition appeared to be ill-prepared for actions in northern Iraq, thus weakening the credibility of its threats.

In its original iteration, the SNFZ was intended to act as a means of showing presence and monitoring Iraqi operations in southern Iraq, while also enabling a rapid response to Iraqi provocations. By the end of 1996, a combination of Iraqi brinkmanship in the skies and military operations on the ground led the coalition to tailor the forces and the SNFZ to be capable of striking Baghdad at the coalition's whim. This was an attempt at coercion with an implicit (and therefore weak) threat. It was unclear as to what the desired behaviour was beyond compliance. The pain itself was not sufficient to erode Iraqi willpower, and the follow-on effects of Iraq's seizure of Irbil gave the Iraqi government optimism that it could regain control within the NNFZ.

While the SNFZ extension seemed to imply the coalition's preparedness to attack Baghdad, the Iraqi government found hope from the French government's refusal to enforce the extension and its concern about the abandonment of coalition humanitarian efforts in northern Iraq. The Iraqi government saw that the coalition's cohesion and capability were waning and that, despite its rhetoric, it was unable to strike the RGFC in northern Iraq. The coalition chose to attack air defence assets, a target set of limited significance, in a scheme of incremental escalation. This satisfied the Clinton administration's criteria, but failed as a coercive operation. Despite the threat, the Iraqi government became more belligerent toward UNSCOM in 1997 and 1998.

DESERT FOX (Coercion Failure)

DESERT FOX was a definite attempt to coerce Iraq. The Iraqi government was presented with the choice of cooperation with UNSCOM or disarmament by force of arms. Due to the test period that followed the crisis of November 1998, it was clear to the Iraqi government what was expected and that this was a punishment for its intransigence. The Iraqi government, having good reason to believe that the coalition's operations would be short and unpopular with the international community, chose the option of disarmament by force and offered limited resistance. It did so while waiting for

Ramadan to occur, in the belief that the coalition's military operations would cease in order to avoid offending Muslims worldwide by conducting military strikes during its most holy observance period. The prospect of President Clinton's impeachment and the lack of credibility that surrounded all his decisions wrecked the threat's credibility. Iraq's willpower was scarcely eroded. The proverbial trigger for the coalition's operations created significant political friction, and this reduced Iraq's political isolation.

A combination of international outrage at the lack of authorization and/or consultation coupled with the timing of the operation gave the Iraqi government both offers of change (i.e., the replacement of UNSCOM) and a genuine hope. The Iraqi government was also aware that the political conditions were such that if military operations occurred, UNSCOM would end. It had both offers of mitigation and hope because of the international outcry. The pain became more than bearable. In addition, the Iraqi government opted to increase its degree of resistance that led to the air defence war that ran from 1999 to the invasion of Iraq.

The success or failure of coercion hinges on the erosion of willpower and the prevention of external support. In any case, when external offers of support for Iraq existed or the Iraqi government could derive hope from political support, coercion failed. When the Iraqi government was isolated and could not foresee anything but a deterioration of the situation, coercion succeeded. The results of these four cases are summarized in Table 23.

Variable	January 1993	VIGILANT WARRIOR	SOUTHERN WATCH (post-1996)	DESERT FOX
Iraqi Choice	cooperate with UNSCOM or be forcibly disarmed tolerate the SNFZ or fight for the airspace	attack and fight or do not attack	behave or else	cooperate with UNSCOM or be forcibly disarmed
Communications	marginal	marginal	weak	good
Credibility of Threat	marginal	good	weak	marginal
Erosion of Willpower	significant	unclear due to the nature of the situation	weak	weak
Isolation	significant	significant	limited	very limited
Perception of Capability	significant	significant	significant	significant
Result	success	qualified success	failure	failure

Table 23. Summary of cases by criteria

Assessment

Coercion was a means of sustaining the containment of Iraq. Containment relied on removing the Iraqi WMD capability and maintaining sanctions to prevent its rearmament and new military adventures. The coalition contained Iraq between 1991 and 2003, to a point, but could not translate this into a permanent change in behaviour. Sanctions remained in place after 1998, but UNSCOM never fulfilled its purpose, as the removal of Iraq's WMDs was not completed. Although one could argue

it was far more successful than believed at the time. The regime of containment also lost credibility within the international community as the political costs of containment increased. It appeared to the international community that the coalition and UN were synonymous, although the justifications for action depended on the notion of an impartial UN acting as the world judge. The coalition's ability to influence decisions with regard to the Iraq–Kuwait situation began to weaken its political position.

As the coalition became increasingly frustrated with the situation in the late 1990s and sought to increase the pressure on Iraq, other agencies or governments became suspicious and/or critical of the coalition's means and ultimate ends. Certain members of the coalition began to consider the prospects of removing Saddam Hussein from power, but this was beyond the pale for political reasons until 2002–2003. This reduced the utility of coercion as a means of supporting the containment of Iraq regardless of the targets within Iraq or how much damage the coalition inflicted on significant target sets. The loss of consensus within the international community about the containment of Iraq led to two things. First, there were more indications of external support (i.e., public calls for the replacement of UNSCOM or a lifting of sanctions by third parties). Second, such statements or proposals offered the Iraqi government a good chance that the international community (including the coalition members) might abandon the containment of Iraq (in the form of diplomatic and economic sanctions). This made it possible for the Iraqi government to live through any attempt at coercion, but this ultimately led to the decision that containment was no longer a viable means of dealing with Saddam Hussein's Iraq.

Lessons for the Future

Forward Presence

The value of enabling future military operations through an in-theatre presence cannot be overstated. The target state cannot help but perceive the existence and strength of military forces in the theatre. This allows the target state to assess the coercer's capability to carry out its threat in advance. If a coercer's threats are matched with actions, their credibility (in terms of the certainty of resolve) will be established in the minds of the target state's decision makers. Similarly, it is advantageous to demonstrate unambiguously the capacity to control. This process, to a certain extent, occurred in DESERT STORM and was reinforced in VIGILANT WARRIOR through the deployment of additional forces. Forward presence made this possible.

Do the Means to Coerce Matter?

Were the means employed effective for coercion? The answer to this question is not clear. First, there are two types of coercion, and each has a different metric for success, such as effective as a threat or effective as a penalty. Second, to discern effect in either case means that there must be some relation between the means employed and the credibility of threat, and this could not be determined. Targeting was sensitive to external political influences, limiting the coalition's range of available options and, ultimately, making it impossible to isolate military success from political success.

Was the employment of air power and cruise missiles appropriate for the target sets chosen in the cases of January 1993 and DESERT FOX? In both cases, the target sets (air defences, WMD sites and WMD-related sites) pertained to the political justifications and the crisis. In both 1993 and 1998, the core issue was Iraq's non-compliance with SCR 687's terms of disarmament. Similarly, both cases focused on more significant target sets than the threat-based cases. In January 1993, a missile struck the Zaafaranyah nuclear plant, which reinforced the coalition's demand for Iraq's cooperation with the UN by suggesting that Iraq's disarmament could occur forcefully as opposed to peacefully. The strikes against the southern air defences were an attempt to ensure the continued safety of the aircrews

enforcing the SNFZ and, ultimately, the SNFZ itself. The coalition's choice of target sets was a reaction to Iraq's provocations, and while the coalition derived some benefit from attacking Iraqi air defences, it is possible that the Iraqi government was able to justify its actions in terms of an ongoing conflict.

The nuclear facility was a significant target for two reasons: it was a WMD facility, and it was in suburban Baghdad. This created a great deal of pain. The loss of the facility by force was a far worse option than the presence of inspectors. DESERT FOX saw the coalition expand its range of target sets to include RGFC and WMD-related sites. However, this was a scheme borne of the tacit acknowledgement by the Clinton administration that UNSCOM had lost political support. This, in turn, suggested that Iraq would go without supervision until a replacement scheme (albeit one that would probably be much less intrusive) was developed. The coalition, therefore, sought to inflict as much damage as possible on Iraq's WMD programmes in an attempt to retard Iraq's rearmament.

Were the means employed sufficiently destructive for the target sets? In both cases, the coalition's efforts (particularly those by manned aircraft) were hampered by the aircraft payloads, the effects of weather on weapon accuracy and BDAs. Despite embarrassing incidents that suggested otherwise, the coalition was quite capable of striking and inflicting damage on targets. UNSCOM later confirmed the effects on Zaafaranyah, and although the coalition's reporting methodology was suspect, the results of DESERT FOX show that the combination of air power and cruise missiles significantly damaged the Iraqi WMD programme.

Strikes against targets of greater significance were the exception rather than the norm due to broader diplomatic processes. When the diplomatic conditions appeared to be more favourable for the use of force (such as in January 1993 and, to a limited extent, in DESERT FOX), the coalition chose more significant target sets. The coalition used threat-based coercion under two conditions. The evidence suggests that the means are far less relevant to the alteration of the adversary's decision calculus than the political situation, as the latter tends to limit the coercer's range of options.

Target Sets

Target selection is not the key variable in the determination of success or failure. Target sets, for the purpose of coercion, must be sufficiently significant to prevent failure. From the evidence at hand, it appears that by picking the right targets, one merely reduces chances of failure. The cases of January 1993 and DESERT FOX (shown in Table 24) provide a useful illustration.

Case	Target Set	Results
January 1993	air defence assets	Failure – target not significant
January 1993	Zaafaranyah nuclear facility	Success – target significant
DESERT FOX	WMD assets and support assets	Failure – political environment

Table 24. Coercion and target sets

As UNSCOM made progress between 1993 and 1998, Iraq's supply of WMDs dwindled, and this raised their significance in the eyes of the Iraqi government. Yet, they were the prime target in DESERT FOX, and the coalition failed to coerce Iraq. It is still possible to fail to coerce an adversary if the right targets are selected, but it is impossible to coerce an adversary if insignificant targets are threatened or struck. The appropriate selection of target sets is merely a precondition for success and not its determinant.

The Limits of Political Justification

The utility of political justification is limited by the degree of harmony within the international community. Differing perceptions of the situation led to public disputes between the American and French governments. Examples included the Franco–American dispute in *VIGILANT WARRIOR*, the issue of different interpretation of the SCRs and the concern that containment was more important than the plight of the Iraqi people, as was demonstrated in the French withdrawal from *PROVIDE COMFORT II*.

There was also a difference in diplomatic approach to the problem of Iraq between the George H. W. Bush and Clinton administrations. The George H. W. Bush administration demonstrated a collective understanding that justifications were also constraints to action, but the Clinton administration, as well as that of George W. Bush, did not seem to share this belief. It is likely that the difference was due to the American position as related to the era. In the case of the George H. W. Bush administration, the US still had to contend with a declining superpower for an adversary, but in the Clinton and George W. Bush administrations, the US was the sole remaining superpower. The two images of the use of force (i.e., the “insurance policy” or the “bank account”) go back to the American position in the international community as well. This relates to the notion of the UN as the world judge. If the coalition, as the proverbial executioner, could influence the proverbial judge, then the outcomes are suspect and lack credibility within the international community.

Even with the widespread sympathy for the American position with regard to seeking to eliminate the threat of radical terror, there was little change in the international community’s negative views on the utility and costs of the containment of Iraq. As the coalition’s members began to engage in the diplomatic preparations for ending containment, they found many states, including some of their allies, profoundly opposed to the possibility of regime change in Iraq for various reasons. These included concerns over a potential precedent eroding the concept of state sovereignty, the effects on the Middle East as a whole, a potential precedent regarding the unilateral use of force and the economic incentives offered by the Iraqi government.

These factors created the image that there was a seam between the coalition and the international community, which the Iraqi government could exploit. This translated into a lack of credibility of the coalition’s threats, external offers of mitigation as well as the promise of an end to Iraq’s diplomatic and economic isolation. Coercion ultimately became counterproductive to the broader exercise of containment.

Is Triumph Seductive?

One could also ask if withdrawal was at all possible. Having defeated Iraq in 1991, the coalition became committed to Iraq’s containment in the absence of a more permanent solution. So long as Iraq posed a threat to regional stability, the coalition had to maintain sanctions and make military efforts. The Iraqi threat, while reduced in the military sense, remained, in that Iraq could still menace its neighbours and act as a political spoiler. Similarly, withdrawal would have made the Gulf War seem like wasted effort if the region remained unstable. After January 1993, it would have exposed the Clinton administration to a traditional (and therefore predictable) Republican argument of a weak Democratic leader. Worse yet, it offered the possibility that the US, if not involved in that region, might be called upon to assume greater responsibilities elsewhere. This is one of the imponderables of democracies in the present era. They may be seduced by an early triumph and will not allow withdrawal without significant cost or anguish, which unfortunately leads them into an intractable situation.

Central Conclusion

The political and diplomatic contexts of any given crisis seem to determine the outcome in advance of the threat or use of force. Consequently, success in coercion is contingent on the setting of the appropriate political conditions (ones that can be supported by the use of force) within the international community. Successful coercion borders on control by shaping the adversary's choice, without actually imposing one's will by force of arms. It should not be a mere reaction to a belligerent's provocations, but a carefully conceived and prepared military action executed to support a broad diplomatic plan. Acting in the absence of appropriate political conditions due to a crisis is excusable; failing to set suitable conditions over time is ineptitude. Attempts at coercion are counterproductive at best, and at worst, they are a waste of effort and munitions without those diplomatic efforts needed to keep the adversary in a psychologically weak position.

Abbreviations

£	United Kingdom pound
9/11	11 September 2001
AAA	anti-aircraft artillery
AB	air base
AEF	air expeditionary force
AFB	air force base
APC	armoured personnel carrier
ARG	amphibious ready group
AWACS	airborne warning and control system
BDA	battle damage assessment
BW	biological weapons
C2	command and control
C3I	command, control, communications and intelligence
CALCM	conventional air-launched cruise missile
CENTCOM	United States Central Command
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CINC	commander-in-chief
CNN	Cable News Network
CONUS	Continental United States
CRF	Crisis Response Force
CTF	combined task force
CTF-PC	Combined Task Force Provide Comfort
DCA	defensive counter-air
DMZ	demilitarized zone
DoD	Department of Defense (US)
EC	European Community
FBIS-NES	Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Near East and South Asia
FF	French Francs
FFCD	full, final and complete disclosure
FY	fiscal year

GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GEZ	ground exclusion zone
GMT	Greenwich Mean Time
HMS	Her Majesty's Ship
I MEF	I Marine Expeditionary Force
IADS	integrated air defence system
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ILA	<i>Iraq Liberation Act</i>
INC	Iraqi National Congress
IQAF	Iraqi Air Force
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
JSTARS	Joint Surveillance and Target Attack Radar System
JTF	joint task force
JTF-SWA	Joint Task Force – Southwest Asia
KDP	Kurdish Democratic Party
KDP-I	Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran
kg	kilograms
km	kilometres
KTO	Kuwaiti Theatre of Operations
MCC	Military Coordination Committee
MEF	marine expeditionary force
MEU	marine expeditionary unit
MoU	memorandum of understanding
MSR	main supply route
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NFZ	no-fly zone
NGO	non-governmental organization
NNFZ	northern no-fly zone
NSC	National Security Council
NSS	<i>National Security Strategy</i>
OSW	Operation SOUTHERN WATCH
P-5	Permanent Five
PGM	precision guided munitions
PKK	Partiya Karkari Kurdistan
PMOI	People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran

PRC	People's Republic of China
PUK	Patriotic Union of Kurdistan
RAF	Royal Air Force
RFA	Royal Fleet Auxiliary
RGFC	Republican Guard Forces Command
RMA	Revolution in Military Affairs
RN	Royal Navy
ROE	rules of engagement
SAM	surface-to-air missile
SC	Security Council
SCR	Security Council Resolution
SEAD	suppression of enemy air defences
SEZ	southern exclusion zone
SNFZ	southern no-fly zone
SSO	Special Security Organization (Amn Al Khass)
TEM	Technical Expert Mission
T-LAM	Tomahawk Land-Attack Missile
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UAV	unmanned air vehicle
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNIKBDC	United Nations Iraq–Kuwait Border Demarcation Commission
UNIKOM	United Nations Iraq–Kuwait Observer Mission
UNMOVIC	United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
UNSCOM	United Nations Special Commission on the Disarmament of Iraq
UNSG	United Nations security guards
US	United States
USAF	United States Air Force
USMC	United States Marine Corps
USN	United States Navy
USNS	United States Naval Ship
USS	United States Ship
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VX	a nerve gas
WMD	weapon of mass destruction
WWII	Second World War

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