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March 1991

A Moment For Euphoria— And Scorekeeping

This is no time for euphoria, we are now told. The U.S. has won a swift and monumental military victory, with fewer coalition casualties than anyone imagined, but a "triumphal" attitude won't do.

Well, yes, we shouldn't be arrogant, but pardon me while I indulge in some euphoria. It cheapens the sacrifice of those who fought not to celebrate what they've accomplished. The "burdens of victory" speeches can wait. Let's go ahead and have a parade, a dress rehearsal for the mother of all parades to welcome the troops home.

The parade line-up helps us see who won and who besides Saddam Hussein really lost this war. The Iraq crisis was always going to "define" the Bush presidency, but an event so clarifying also defines the American establishment. Such clarity is not universally flattering.

In the front ranks should march the U.S. military, led by the generals who fought in Vietnam. They learned *their* lessons. The military seems to be the American institution corrupted least by the 1960s and 1970s. Norman Schwarzkopf's astonishing Wednesday press conference was sweet vindication after 20 years of press sniping and elite sneers. And remember: The people now deriding their victory as shooting

Potomac Watch

By Paul A. Gigot

"fish in a barrel" are the same people who said the war shouldn't be fought because it would be too bloody.

Gen. Colin Powell may by now seem overpraised, but recall one fact: His predecessor as chairman of the joint chiefs, Adm. William Crowe, turned out to be Sen. Sam Nunn's military adviser. As for civilians, history will show the contributions of Defense Secretary Dick Cheney and Undersecretary Paul Wolfowitz to the brilliant battle plan. The National Security Council war triumvirate—**Brent Scowcroft**, Bob Gates and Richard Haass—held the line against premature concessions.

How about the secretary of state? James Baker's February attempt to build up the new figurehead Soviet foreign minister, Alexander Bessmertnykh, was a mistake. But his friendship with Eduard Shevardnadze secured the initial Soviet support. He and Undersecretary Bob Kimmitt also twisted more arms than we'll ever know.

Hey, here comes Congress, though the ranks seem a little thin. Democratic Reps. Stephen Solarz, Les Aspin and Dante Fascell are the deserving flag-bearers. Indiana's Richard Lugar can take a bow, having served as scout for Mr. Bush's hawkish flank. Sen. Al Gore is in there, taller than he used to be. But who's that making ticker-tape out of "I support the president" press releases (postdated Jan. 15)? It's New Jersey Sen. Bill Bradley!

Other Bigfeet seem to be missing. Sanctions Sam Nunn must be out burying his presidential candidacy at Burning Tree. Dick Gephardt could be polishing his 1992 campaign theme that while sanctions were enough against Saddam, only war will do against Japan. Pat Moynihan has a treatise to write on how Saddam could have been toppled by the World Court. Lee Hamilton is proving in yet another TV soundbite that error is its own reward. And by the way, Where's George (Mitchell)?

There goes the pundits' band, though by now maybe we'd rather have the Shriners. It's hard to know who did worse, the Arabists or armchair strategists. Judith Kipper is still waiting for face-to-face talks with Saddam, while Robin Wright holds her breath for the uprising in the Arab street. (I began to think things would work out when I read the Washington Post headline: "Bush Seen Seeking Little Advice From U.S. Experts on Arab World.") Fouad Ajami gave the best insight per soundbite and had the best Arab proverb: "The jackal is a lion in his neighborhood."

In the battle of Big Thinkers, Henry Kissinger knocked out Zbigniew Brzezinski in the first round. James Schlesinger did a Carter flashback and claimed, after Aug. 2, that there was nothing President Bush could do. As for the ubiquitous Edward Luttwak, no general, armchair or otherwise, has been so thoroughly routed since the Italian Africa corps.

Among the media, National Review and The New Republic magazines deserve pride of place, as do columnists Jim Hoagland and Charles Krauthammer (save for their fixation on the air war). Defrocked Gen. Mike Dugan was right about the air war after all, but other generals were right that a ground campaign was needed to guarantee victory.

Who's that following the horses? On the left, it must be National Public Radio's James Fallows, who should consider doing his next book on the theme, "The Vietnam Syndrome: A Personal Memoir." Mike Kinsley can write the foreword.

On the right, the neo-isolationists look a bit bedraggled. Pat Buchanan is now so admiring of President Bush that he's almost in the Amen Corner. George Will is presumably wounded in action, having been bitten by a lap dog.

Which brings me to the commander in chief. George Bush is now the toast of Washington, but some of us credited him with this capacity to lead early on. The establishment's Bushies-come-lately forget that his success required him to ignore their advice at every stage—to deploy troops, expand the buildup, set a deadline, begin the war, reject Soviet gamesmanship, finish it on the ground.

The war president had what the budget president didn't—conviction and resolve. He led, and unlike much of the self-doubting elite, he understood that the people and coalition would follow. In his memoirs, Dean Acheson wrote that as secretary of state he came to believe Churchill's line that "the hope of the world lies in the strength and will of the United States." George Bush believes this too.

The President's Role . . .

ALREADY we sense that there is a growing disinclination in some places to give George Bush and his government and the military who were involved the credit due them for the prosecution and outcome of the war. Increasingly one reads of how mere "technology" defeated Saddam Hussein or how the administration must have stupidly and grossly (or knowingly and cynically) "overestimated" the size and strength of the Iraqi military forces or how the result was clearly foreordained since we didn't pick on someone our own size, etc.

But there was nothing foreordained about what happened, and many of those now implying that there was should go back and quietly reconsider their own warnings throughout this episode as to how dangerous and unpredictable, if not downright disastrous, a military encounter would be, some even recommending that Saddam Hussein be given those Kuwaiti islands and oil fields he so coveted. No, it was not foreordained, and it was not a mere function of automatic pilot and vastly superior firepower either. The people who did it did it.

We observed in this space the other day how skillfully we thought the president and Secretary Baker (Gen. Scowcroft and his deputy, Robert Gates; and Undersecretary Eagleburger among others were involved in this too) had been in managing to keep the coalition together and in

defusing a series of political booby traps along the way. The planning and execution of the operation—not some built-in military superiority—are what account for the speed and success of the warfare, and this was largely the work of Secretary Cheney, Gen. Powell and Gen. Schwarzkopf, supported by an exceptional military force. The president himself was at the center of these events from Aug. 2 onward, and his instincts were sound, just as the difficult choices he made were right.

We in the press are not accustomed to coming right out with appraisals like these. To our own cynical ear they have the ring of the toastmaster to them, and we are inclined to leap quickly back into our own prose to add the reservations on this point or that, the yet unknown consequences of the Gulf action, the difference between this record of glory and the mousing around that went before, the awful—even if inevitable and relatively reduced—destruction and bloodshed the conflict brought. We are much more at home with skepticism, not to say complaint, much less anxious that it will in time be disproved or play us false.

But we think it is not just romance at work here or the relief of the moment or the astonishment of having a policy we thought was right come out (for once) right. The president and his administration did an exceptional job in a very tough and touchy situation.

Into His Own

How President Bush Deftly Orchestrated Swift Victory Over Iraq

A Hard-Liner From the Start,
He Seized the Initiative
And Kept Allies Together
Poll Shows Record Approval

By GERALD F. SEIB

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

WASHINGTON—After months of diplomatic drama and domestic fervor over the question of going to war, the point of no return for George Bush arrived incongruously enough on the afternoon of Jan. 16.

The president sat in the somber and windowless Roosevelt Room, holding a mundane discussion about education policy with a panel of outside experts. As the conversation droned on, the educators remained utterly unaware of what was really going on in Mr. Bush's mind: He was resolving to send the country to war.

Immediately after that meeting, aides say, Mr. Bush sent the signal to Defense Secretary Dick Cheney to begin bombing Iraqi troops to force them out of Kuwait. Four hours later, U.S. and allied warplanes unleashed one of the most violent air attacks in military history.

And Wednesday—six weeks to the day after hiding his intentions from those educators, precisely four days after he ordered the climactic ground attack—Mr. Bush was able to sit in the Oval Office and declare victory. The allies had liberated Kuwait, and a cease-fire could begin.

"This is not a time of euphoria, certainly not a time to gloat," Mr. Bush told the nation. But in fact the president and his aides are going to find it hard not to gloat as they reap the rewards of Mr. Bush's personal success.

Just months after he was under political fire for fumbling through budget negotiations with Congress, Mr. Bush is being hailed for handling almost flawlessly the war that will define his presidency. He constructed and held together one of the most cumbersome international coalitions ever seen, gave his military commanders enough time to build up their forces, avoided the trap of moving too quickly into a ground war and deftly kept the Soviet Union from giving Saddam Hussein a diplomatic way out of a military trap.

Now, a new Wall Street Journal/NBC News poll indicates that Mr. Bush's job-approval rating is not only the highest he's ever had—it's the highest any president has had in nearly half a century and the second-highest attained since polls have been conducted in this country.

In sampling conducted Tuesday and Wednesday night, 85% of American voters

approved of Mr. Bush's performance as president, while only 11% disapproved. It is the highest presidential job-approval rating since Harry Truman received a record 87% approval in a Gallup Poll in June 1945, shortly after he assumed the presidency and the war in Europe had ended.

In this postwar glow, the approval of Mr. Bush's performance is across the board. It totals 76% among Democrats and an astonishing 96% among Republicans. Blacks, in a sharp reversal from recent polls, approve of his job performance by better than two to one—66% to 30%. There is no gender gap to speak of: The president's performance is approved of by 88% of men and 82% of women.

There is a question, however, whether the president can transfer his success abroad to the daunting array of problems on the home front. He now must face a record budget deficit, a fragile banking system, a crisis in health-care costs, concern over low educational attainment—problems that have worsened while he was riveted on events in the Gulf.

And even the greatest popularity can be ephemeral. Winston Churchill had similar ratings among Britons in the early years of World War II, peaking at 93% in 1943, only to find himself unceremoniously dumped from power two years later.

For Mr. Bush, the last seven months held plenty of opportunity for things to go wrong in the Gulf, as an inside look shows.

Mr. Bush's top aides at one point urged him to cool his rhetorical broadsides against Saddam Hussein, which they feared were scaring the U.S. and its allies as much as the Iraqi leader. There was a difficult vote to win congressional authorization for war—won in large part through a previously undisclosed strategy of focus-

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ing on three key pairs of wavering Democratic senators from three states.

Mr. Bush spent hours on the phone with Mikhail Gorbachev in the closing days of the war to prevent the Soviets from handing Saddam Hussein a diplomatic victory. But he also was diverted by such matters as having to calm comedian Bob Hope, who was worried about bureaucratic glitches in his plans to hold a show for U.S. troops.

Through it all, there was one constant, administration aides say. Mr. Bush was always the most hard-line of all senior officials on the subject of Saddam Hussein. He wasn't urged on to war so much as he chose the course himself and was encouraged in his inclination by his advisers.

"I don't think he was ever eager to go into military action," says White House Chief of Staff John Sununu, who spoke with Mr. Bush almost daily over the last seven months. "But I can tell you I don't think he was ever reluctant to go into military action."

The drama began unfolding at about 6 p.m. on Aug. 1, when national security adviser Brent Scowcroft and National Security Council aide Richard Haass walked into the presidential residence to tell Mr. Bush of mounting signs that Iraq was preparing to invade Kuwait in the pre-dawn darkness half a world away.

At about 8:45 p.m. Mr. Scowcroft called the president back to confirm that a full-fledged invasion was under way. That set off a fevered process in which the broad lines of policy that led directly to war in the desert unfolded in just a few days.

The U.S. immediately froze Kuwaiti assets to keep them out of Iraqi hands, and helped draft the crucial first United Nations Security Council resolution—Number 660—condemning the invasion and demanding that Iraq withdraw. The precise terms of that resolution were to be the key for pushing the war effort ahead more than six months later.

Meeting With Thatcher

Two other events in the first few days also served to galvanize Mr. Bush's will in ways that were to remain important for months to come. The day after the invasion, he flew to Colorado for a previously planned speech and a meeting with British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, who also was visiting. Mrs. Thatcher, administration aides say, was in her finest Iron Lady mode, stressing that Saddam Hussein had to be stopped.

The second steeling event came on Aug. 5, as Mr. Bush was returning by helicopter to the White House from a weekend at Camp David. Iraq had promised to withdraw from Kuwait by that day. But as Mr. Bush stepped from his helicopter, Mr. Haass, the NSC aide, appeared at his side with a note summarizing intelligence indications that a few Iraqi trucks with sol-

diers had left Kuwait, but that there hadn't been any withdrawal. Mr. Bush's jaw hardened, and he stepped to microphones to say for the first time that the occupation of Kuwait "will not stand."

By then, he had dispatched three top aides—Defense Secretary Dick Cheney, Deputy National Security Adviser Robert Gates and Gen. Colin Powell, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff—to Saudi Arabia to discuss with King Fahd a large-scale deployment of American troops. King Fahd quickly agreed.

Side by Side

But a bizarre course awaited the three senior U.S. officials as they left Saudi Arabia. They were directed quickly to Egypt to meet President Hosni Mubarak and recruit Egyptian participation in the multinational military force.

Mr. Mubarak, it turned out, was in the Mediterranean port city of Alexandria, meeting with Iraqi officials who were trying to explain away their invasion.

Compounding the situation, Mr. Cheney, Mr. Gates and Gen. Powell quickly learned that their big U.S. Air Force jet couldn't land at the small airport in Alexandria. It had to land in Cairo, where the U.S. Embassy scrambled to find a small jet used by the military attache. As the small plane pulled up to the terminal at Alexandria, the American officials were bemused to note that they were directed into a parking place immediately next to a bigger Iraqi jet used by the delegation from Baghdad—perhaps the last moment that Iraq would enjoy any air superiority over the U.S.

Then, as the U.S. delegation was in the air heading home from Cairo, Mr. Gates got a call from Mr. Scowcroft, the national security adviser back in Washington. He warned that Mr. Bush might want them to do a U-turn as they flew over the Mediterranean and head to Morocco to sound out King Hassan about contributing to the multinational force.

When, Mr. Scowcroft asked, was the last possible moment the plane could change course and still make it to Morocco without running out of fuel? One hour, the flight crew quickly calculated. Mr. Scowcroft signed off to consult with Mr. Bush—and called back 50 minutes later with instructions to turn and head to Morocco. They landed with just minutes to spare.

Hitler Analogy

Soon the military deployment was under way, and more U.N. resolutions began tumbling out. Something else important happened in those early days to set Mr. Bush's mind: "He himself identified the parallel between Saddam and Hitler in the 1930s," Mr. Sununu recalls. "That served as an analog for him all along that helped him resolve any question in his mind—if there was any question."

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Over the next few months, subtle changes emerged in the circle of advisers Mr. Bush came to rely upon. The formal National Security Council gave way to a less-formal group that became known around the White House as the Big Eight: Mr. Bush; Vice President Dan Quayle; Secretary of State James Baker; Messrs. Scowcroft and Gates; Mr. Cheney; Mr. Sununu, and Gen. Powell. That is the group that has come to meet casually, often on sofas and casual chairs in the presidential residence, to plot war strategy. Like Mr. Bush, they work informally, without a lot of decision memos.

"This group doesn't do paperwork," one senior official says.

Within the Big Eight, though, four officials became Mr. Bush's inner War Cabinet: Mr. Scowcroft, Mr. Baker, Mr. Cheney and Gen. Powell.

Mr. Scowcroft emerged as the sounding board Mr. Bush used most, though. It was he, officials say, whom the president has frequently called for war updates, often beginning with no more than, "What's happening?"

Tight Group

This group has been remarkably cohesive—though occasional tensions showed as the crisis dragged to the end of last year. At one point as Mr. Bush was speaking on the campaign trail in the fall, Mr. Baker and Mr. Scowcroft became concerned at how he was carrying out a broad decision to step up war rhetoric. They worried that his declarations that "I've had it" and that Saddam Hussein is "worse than Hitler" might cost him support at home and in Europe while sounding like bluffs to Arabs. They gently suggested he tone it down.

By late last year the administration had to decide whether to seek a new U.N. resolution explicitly authorizing military action. Mr. Scowcroft was skeptical that one was needed; Mr. Baker favored going for one. Mr. Scowcroft gave way, and Mr. Baker spearheaded the drive to secure the resolution.

As the crisis hit the stretch run toward war, Mr. Bush clearly was shaping his own policy. Officials say he alone came up with the idea of offering to send Mr. Baker to Baghdad to confront Saddam Hussein, unveiling the idea to Mr. Sununu and Mr. Scowcroft as they stood in the courtyard of the home of Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari during a visit there.

But the Baghdad mission fizzled amid diplomatic wrangling. And as the year drew to a close—and with the U.N.'s newly established Jan. 15 withdrawal deadline following closely behind—Mr. Bush headed off to Camp David for a 12-day Christmas break. Upon his return, he finally decided to seek a congressional resolution authorizing the use of force to expel Iraq from Kuwait. The administration knew it could win

one easily in the House—but the Senate was too close to call.

That led to a lobbying strategy in which the White House focused on six Democratic Senators from three states: John Breaux and Bennett Johnston of Louisiana; Howell Heflin and Richard Shelby of Alabama; and Richard Bryan and Harry Reid of Nevada. The White House calculated that each senator would be more likely to vote for war if he knew his home-state partner was going to do the same. That way, they could provide each other political cover back home. If the White House could get them to stick with each other, and keep most Republicans in line, it could obtain a thin majority.

Mr. Sununu led an intensive sales effort, in which business and civic allies in those states were enlisted to lobby those key Senators. In the end all six went Mr. Bush's way, and he won his resolution by a 52-47 vote on Jan. 12.

After a meeting between Mr. Baker and Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz in Switzerland failed to produce any progress, Mr. Bush moved resolutely to military action. On the morning of Jan. 15—the day the U.N. deadline expired—he gathered the Big Eight in the Oval Office and signed the presidential directive ordering hostilities to start.

Action was set to begin the next day, though Mr. Bush could have called it off up till a short time after his meeting with the education experts.

Bombs Away

He didn't, of course, and the bombing began. Aides say that, from the outset, Mr. Bush had signed an order that authorized both the immediate air war and the ground attack, at some unspecified point.

To complete the crucial decision of when to launch a ground attack, Mr. Bush dispatched Mr. Cheney and Gen. Powell to Saudi Arabia in the second week of February for consultations with Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf, commander of U.S. and Western forces in the war. They returned on Feb. 11 and met Mr. Bush privately in the White House, after which the other members of the Big Eight joined in.

Mr. Bush made his final big decision of the war. The air campaign would continue for a short time longer, but Gen. Schwarzkopf would be given several optional times for beginning the ground war. About a week later, administration officials say, Gen. Schwarzkopf picked his time: 8 p.m. Washington time on Saturday Feb. 23.

That left Mr. Bush to deal with the war's final twist. As G-Day approached, Iraq and the Soviets began issuing highly conditional Iraqi offers to withdraw from Kuwait. Mr. Bush adopted a two-pronged strategy: He would publicly express gratitude for the Soviet diplomacy, while pri-

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vately telling Mr. Gorbachev in gentle terms that the coalition would insist on much tougher terms for ending the war. And at the suggestion of Gen. Powell, he cut short the diplomatic minuet by issuing a clear-cut ultimatum that Iraq withdraw under allied conditions and set a deadline that he knew was just eight hours before Gen. Schwarzkopf planned to move—guaranteeing himself a free hand to start the final attack as soon as Iraq failed to comply.

Finally, just two days ago, allied forces were wrapping up their last tank battle against Iraq's Republican Guard. Word began to seep in that Iraq was about to send a letter to the U.N. finally accepting all of its conditions. But Mr. Bush again beat Saddam Hussein to the punch: He had decided to go on national TV to announce victory and a cease-fire, which he did before Iraq's final acquiescence was widely known. Mr. Bush thus managed not only to start the war on his timetable, but to end it on his terms as well.

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CONGRESS HAILS JOB DONE BY U.S. TROOPS

Congress exulted Thursday over victory in the Persian Gulf war, praising President Bush, U.S. military commanders and especially the American troops who carried out the dramatically successful operations.

Rep. Molinari called for a ticker-tape parade in New York City to welcome home the U.S. troops.

The Senate approved by voice vote a resolution expressing the "appreciation of the nation" to Bush and down the chain of command to the troops in the field and the coalition partners....

Sen. Mitchell said the coalition military campaign was "remarkable" and showed the "courage and patriotism" of the U.S. forces in the Gulf....

The same energies must now be used to build "a better and more stable" situation in the Persian Gulf area, Mitchell said, calling that goal "as important as the military victory."...

"There will be a difficult period now in trying to stabilize and bring peace to the region," Rep. Foley said, adding that Congress "will work closely with the President" in the next phase....

Rep. Michel said the success of the U.S. military forces should put "an end to the ritualistic denigration of the military that unfortunately has been prevalent in certain ideological quarters for the last 20 years."...

"It is not acceptable for Saddam Hussein to remain as the ruler of Iraq," Rep. Engel said. Saddam should be "captured and tried in an international court." (Robert Shepard, UPI)

BUSH' VICTORY: NO ELATION BUT QUIET SATISFACTION

After President Bush announced a cease-fire in the Gulf war during his eight-minute speech from the Oval Office Wednesday night, he invited his closest advisers up to his living room for a drink and a postmortem.

The men congratulated each other on a job well done and talked, as usual, of the war in football terms.

No one expressed elation, said a participant. They felt as if they had won the first half of the game but still had to play the second half and make the victory last. They looked ahead, not back....

Although the Big Eight's hallmark is close-knit loyalty to Bush, there were major disagreements. Bush, Scowcroft and Quayle were the most ready for war from the beginning. Baker wanted diplomacy to work and argued against a ground war. Cheney seemed to keep his own counsel.

But when the decisions were made, there was no apparent backbiting, no leaking, no public disagreements. The men were businesslike at their meetings -- no shouting and no temper tantrums....

For now, Bush, through perseverance, patience, enormously detailed planning and the world's finest military machine, has liberated Kuwait, won a war and probably ensured that some future aggressors will be dissuaded. (Ann McFeatters, Scripps Howard)

KOHL SEEKS CHARTER SHIFT FOR FUTURE U.N. WARS

BONN -- The German government, still stung by international criticism of its early silence on the Gulf war, quickly promised Thursday to play a major role in postwar planning and seek a constitutional change to let German soldiers participate in future U.N. military actions....

Kohl, who has been widely criticized at home for neglecting Germany's close ties to the U.S. since the war began, denied having any differences with President Bush. "There was never any irritation or disagreement," he said. Kohl announced that he will visit both Washington and Moscow in the coming months....

Kohl said Germany will seek to guarantee Israel's security while resolving the Palestinian problem, but added that the PLO had lost credibility by supporting Iraq in the Gulf war. "The question of the PLO will have to be looked at differently in light of its reactions in the past weeks," he said.

(Marc Fisher, Washington Post, A31)

PLO SAYS SMASHING IRAQI ECONOMY WAS CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY

SYDNEY, Australia -- The smashing of Iraq's economic infrastructure during the Gulf war was a "Crime against humanity" for which the U.S. should pay reparations, a PLO official said Friday.

"The United States' and Britain's destruction of the economic, historic and civilian infrastructure of Iraq is a crime against humanity, nothing short of the barbaric Mongol invasion and sacking of Iraq in the 12th century," Ali Kazak, the PLO representative in Australia, told reporters....

"Similarly, there was no reason or excuse for Iraq's destruction of the economic infrastructure of Kuwait, the burning of its oil wells, refineries and public buildings," he said.

(Reuters)

SUNUNU SAYS U.S. DOESN'T WANT TO FORCE IRAQIS TO GO HOME

The U.S. doesn't want to force Iraqi POWs to return to their homeland if they don't want to go, but believes most will eventually want to return, President Bush's principal assistant said Thursday night.

The scores of thousands of Iraqi prisoners are in the hands of Saudi troops, and their fate will be part of discussions among coalition members at the U.N., said John Sununu.

"We don't want to force anybody to do anything they don't want to do," Sununu said in an interview on CNN's "Larry King Live" program....

President Bush has called on the Iraqi people to depose dictator Saddam Hussein, and Sununu said the U.S. was "looking forward to an Iraq that can be very much part of the solution to the regional issues."

"Whether it's an overthrow or a natural succession or whatever it is, we think the Iraqi people are entitled to make the choice themselves. But we think they'll make a right choice eventually."

(AP)

The Washington Post _____
 The New York Times _____
 The Washington Times _____
 The Wall Street Journal _____
 The Christian Science Monitor _____
 New York Daily News _____
 USA Today 2A _____
 The Chicago Tribune _____

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'Big Eight' gave president guidance

From the earliest days of the Persian Gulf crisis, President Bush turned to his War Council for guidance.

Known as "the Big Eight," they are George Bush's closest advisers:

► National security adviser Brent Scowcroft spun the grand strategy.

► Deputy security adviser Robert Gates shepherded

the intelligence gathering.

► Defense Secretary Dick Cheney oversaw implementation of the military plan.

► Gen. Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, ran the operation. (Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf was field commander in Saudi Arabia).

► Secretary of State James Baker orchestrated

the diplomatic maneuvers.

► White House chief of staff John Sununu coordinated the assignments.

► Press secretary Martin Fitzwater devised long-term media strategy.

► Vice President Quayle stood in for Bush to deliver his message to audiences Bush could not meet.

— Jessica Lee

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times Wire Service
The Washington Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Christian Science Monitor _____
New York Daily News _____
USA Today _____
The Chicago Tribune _____

Date 2 MARCH 1991

DOUBLING THE FORCE
When a Buildup Becomes Political

The public outrage that spurred support for the sending of troops in August eroded when Bush and Congress bogged down in a bruising budget fight during September and October.

An Israeli-Palestinian clash in Jerusalem drew attention away from Kuwait, and the CIA began reporting that there were no signs that Saddam could be pressed by sanctions alone to leave Kuwait.

Reports of atrocities in Kuwait and Iraq's mistreatment of Western hostages, including their use as "human shields" at military and industrial installations, created a tension among policy makers between a strategy of waiting out the Iraqis and taking the initiative to eject them.

"There was a sense of drift," a senior Administration official said. "Saddam seemed to have the initiative. We felt we had to do something to get it back."

Bush pressed the Pentagon to develop the offensive military options, but Schwarzkopf protested that he did not have his defensive forces in place yet and the Iraqis were still pouring more troops into Kuwait.

Rushed as it was, the first offensive plan presented early in October to Cheney, Powell and the Joint Chiefs of Staff in a Pentagon conference room known as "the tank" was an unimaginative "up the middle" through the Iraqi front lines "right smack into his strength," as a senior official put it.

Over the next few weeks, Schwarzkopf sent back a plan to conduct a flanking attack around Iraq's front line, a more imaginative approach, but Cheney and Powell agreed with the commander's assessment that there were not enough allied forces to conduct such an attack while also preventing the Iraqi army from coming south.

U.S. officials said their initial dispatch of 180,000 troops would have given them both defensive and offensive options if the level of Iraqi forces in the region remained at 100,000.

But as the Iraqi force climbed to 430,000 by the end of October, the United States had to match this to maintain a credible offensive option.

Powell told Schwarzkopf to state his full military requirements to drive the Iraqi army out of Kuwait, and he flew to Saudi Arabia on Oct. 21 to discuss the plan and its timetable and brought it back to Cheney.

When the Pentagon leaders took the plan to the White House on Oct. 30, it called for a timetable to begin a large-scale bombing campaign against Iraq in mid-January followed by a ground campaign late in February.

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The plan required almost doubling the 200,000 U.S. forces in the gulf in little over three months, with a major call-up of the reserves.

In the two-hour meeting, Bush made two fundamental decisions: first, to set in motion the machinery for a mid-winter war against the Iraqi army and, second, to win a U.N. mandate for that war. To that end, he dispatched Baker on a round-the-world tour to round up support for a Security Council resolution authorizing the use of force.

Powell, Cheney, Scowcroft, Baker and Bush all felt there was a reasonable chance that the enormous mobilization of U.S. military power, combined with the setting of a deadline, might be enough to scare Saddam into leaving Kuwait, officials said.

Cheney's nightmare was that Saddam would find more troops to send to the front to force another round of escalation.

Bush showed no hesitation in making the controversial decision to increase troop strength, but decided to keep it secret until Nov. 8. Why?

Nov. 8 was a very important date because it was after Nov. 6," a White House official said, referring to the election.

The troop increase sent a shudder through both the alliance and among many Americans.

A senior White House official said: "Shortly after we announced the increase in troop strength, we got a sharp reaction from Capitol Hill, and the press was saying that nobody knows why we are there, and it looked like we had a big domestic problem."

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From the First, U.S. Resolve to Fight

By THOMAS L. FRIEDMAN
and PATRICK E. TYLER

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, March 2 — The Bush Administration began planning an offensive campaign to dislodge Iraqi forces from Kuwait early last fall even as Administration officials insisted in public that the only mission of United States forces was to defend Saudi Arabia and enforce United Nations sanctions.

According to a reconstruction of major internal deliberations and decisions by President Bush and his senior advisers during the seven-month Persian Gulf crisis, offensive military planning began in earnest in September, and on Oct. 30, a week before Congressional elections, the President secretly approved a timetable for launching an air war against Iraq in mid-January and a large-scale ground offensive in February that would strike deep into Iraqi territory to outflank and encircle President Saddam Hussein's Army.

This war-planning process went forward in conjunction with American diplomatic and economic pressure on Iraq to leave Kuwait, and senior officials indicated that Mr. Bush all along hoped — at times even believed — that sanctions coupled with the threat of war would be enough to dislodge the Iraqis.

The planning steps that the President approved in October were those carried out when the air war began on Jan. 17. The only element of the plan made public was the announcement by Mr. Bush on Nov. 8, two days after the election, that he had ordered a major reinforcement of American forces in the Persian Gulf to give them an offensive capability. That critical decision increased American troops from 230,000 to more than 500,000 and gave the allies the troop strength for the decisive flanking action carried out in February in the Iraqi desert.

Another plan submitted to the Pentagon early in October by Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, commander of United States forces in the Persian Gulf, had been rejected because it envisioned a ground offensive directly into the heart of Iraqi forces and fortifications in Kuwait.

In addition to the timetable for offensive military action, the Administration's reconstruction of events shows that while the gulf crisis ended on the high note of military victory, earlier officials had been short of insight into President Hussein's intentions and bereft of military options to stop his invasion of Kuwait last summer.

It also shows that despite the Administration's carefully maintained image of unanimity on major decisions, there were debates at the White House and the Pentagon on how to respond to the Iraqi aggression.

A briefly contentious point was whether and how to keep Israel from striking back in response to Iraqi Scud missile attacks. At one stage, the President's advisers seriously debated letting the Israelis unleash their Jericho missiles on Iraqi territory. When this was overruled, the White House arranged for the Israelis to receive intelligence information on American military progress against the Scuds.

The reconstruction also provides an insight into a central mystery of the gulf crisis — why Mr. Hussein ignored all warnings that his army would be destroyed and his country crippled. According to top officials, Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi Foreign Minister, told Secretary of State James A. Baker 3d at the end of their meeting in Geneva on Jan. 9:

"Your Arab allies will desert you. They will not kill other Arabs. Your alliance will crumble and you will be left lost in the desert. You don't know the desert because you have never ridden on a horse or a camel."

Sending Troops

Allies Debate:

How Soon to Help

At 2 A.M. on Aug. 2, 80,000 troops from Iraq's Republican Guard pushed across the border with Kuwait and headed south toward Kuwait City, the emirate's capital. The first intelligence reports reached Washington around 6:30 P.M. Aug. 1, Eastern Daylight Time as the invasion was occurring. At 9:15 P.M., Kuwait's Crown Prince, Sheik Saad al-Abdullah al-Sabah, telephoned the American Embassy asking for immediate military help to stop the invasion but, worried about how this would be seen in the Arab world, he insisted that the request "not be made public or treated as official."

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times A1
The Washington Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Christian Science Monitor _____
New York Daily News _____
USA Today _____
The Chicago Tribune _____

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At 10:30 P.M. Washington time, the embassy got a second telephone call from Sheik Saad. Ignore the first request, the desperate Kuwaiti Prime Minister said. Now the Government was "officially requesting help" and was willing to make it public. But before an answer could be conveyed back to Sheik Saad, he had dashed to Dasman Palace to pick up the Emir, the country's ruler, and was heading south in the royal limousine to Saudi Arabia.

"We had told them all along, 'You can't ask us for help when your enemies are knocking on the palace door,'" a senior Administration official said. "We just did not have the military assets in place."

Indeed, the nearest significant military help, the aircraft carrier Independence, was far away in the Indian Ocean.

The view in Washington was that for the time being "Kuwait was a goner," a senior official said. The whole focus of thinking was: how far south would the Iraqis move?

The first official contact with Saudi Arabia was made through the United States Embassy in Riyadh, where a senior diplomat asked what the kingdom wanted from the United States.

"The Saudis were a little flustered, a little scared," a senior official recalled. "They didn't know what they wanted." The Pentagon offered to send a squadron of tactical fighter planes.

"We'll get back to you," a senior Saudi official replied.

The President awoke the next morning to a crisis unforeseen in the post-cold-war era. At 5 A.M., Brent Scowcroft, the President's national security adviser, presented him the draft of orders to freeze all Iraqi and Kuwaiti assets in the United States. Later, his senior advisers gathered in the Cabinet Room. During a brief photo session, Mr. Bush was asked whether the United States was prepared to intervene militarily. "We're not discussing intervention," he said.

When the cameras left, the atmosphere was one of shock and frustration. The President wanted options, but there appeared to be few that could immediately reverse the Iraqi push into Kuwait.

Nevertheless, when Treasury Secretary Nicholas F. Brady began to lay out how the United States might adapt to expected higher oil prices, Mr. Bush interjected, according to a senior official: "Let's be clear about one thing: We are not here to talk about adapting. We are not going to plan how to live with this."

If Mr. Bush was frustrated and angry, it was because he had personally invested in the notion that Mr. Hussein's behavior could be moderated. Only a few days earlier, his then-friend, King Hussein of Jordan, had told him "absolutely not," when Mr. Bush asked if Iraq would invade Kuwait, an official said.

When the National Security Council reconvened on Friday, Aug. 3, Mr. Scowcroft opened the meeting with a strong admonition that the discussion of options would be based on the recognition that Iraq's invasion was unacceptable and if allowed to stand, would fundamentally alter the balance of power in a vital part of the world.

Defense Secretary Dick Cheney, initially annoyed by a reticence among uniformed officers to provide concrete choices, brought General Schwarzkopf to explain the Pentagon's updated plan to use troops in a crisis in the Persian Gulf. It called for more than two divisions of ground troops, about 700 combat aircraft and a big naval flotilla.

"I remember the body language when Norm talked about the 140,000 troops," a senior official said. "Good God, that's a lot of people" was the expression on some faces, he said.

Mr. Bush, however, focused on the principal obstacle to such a troop movement — the Saudis. He had telephoned King Fahd and assured him that the United States would stand by Saudi Arabia, and he directed Mr. Cheney and Gen. Colin L. Powell, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to brief the Saudi Ambassador, Prince Bandar bin Sultan, on the threat and on the troop plan.

Convinced that the sending of troops was the right course, Prince Bandar recommended that a high-level envoy fly to Saudi Arabia to convince King Fahd, who would have to make a quick decision. The deliberations moved to Camp David on Saturday. General Schwarzkopf took the President and his aides through a series of charts depicting the full plan to move troops to the gulf.

"This is what it will take to defend Saudi Arabia," the general said. Then, flipping to a final chart depicting an even larger use of troops, he added, "And if you want to liberate Kuwait, this is what it will take."

Although the group was focused on the immediate problem of defense, General Schwarzkopf had introduced the concept of offense from the very beginning.

Mr. Bush and his advisers debated who should go to Jidda, the royal capital, and whether a high-level mission would run the risk of disastrous recriminations if the Saudis could not make up their minds. In the midst of the talks, Mr. Bush received a telephone call from Egypt's President, Hosni Mubarak, who said he had an authoritative report that the Saudis had decided not to accept American forces.

Mr. Bush telephoned King Fahd to sound him out, without mentioning the Mubarak call. The King delayed in accepting a visit from Mr. Cheney. He wondered whether a delegation of technical experts might not be better. Mr. Bush offered General Schwarzkopf, but continued to push Mr. Cheney as the head of the mission, because if the King decided to receive an envoy of his level, it would be more difficult for him to say no.

King Fahd delayed 14 hours before agreeing to see Mr. Cheney. In the ornate Red Sea palace at Jidda, Mr. Cheney delivered his brief and then watched as the King and his brother spoke in Arabic to express some of their ambivalent feelings about the Kuwaitis.

"We have to do this, what will happen to Kuwait?" King Fahd said to Crown Prince Abdullah, according to one of the Arabic-speaking Westerners present.

"There is still a Kuwait," responded Prince Abdullah, the King's brother.

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"Yes, but the entire population is living in our hotel rooms," the King shot back. Saudi Arabia was on board, as long as the Americans agreed in writing to leave when the threat passed and to get Saudi approval before initiating any offensive military action.

The dimensions of the planned military buildup were closely held by Mr. Bush and his inner circle. A senior White House aide scoffed at a published report in mid-August that the American force strength could reach 200,000.

Doubling the Force

When a Buildup Becomes Political

The public outrage that spurred support for the sending of troops in August eroded when the President and Congress bogged down in a bruising budget fight during September and October. An Israeli-Palestinian clash in Jerusalem drew attention away from Kuwait, and the Central Intelligence Agency began reporting that there were no signs that Mr. Hussein could be pressed by sanctions alone to leave Kuwait.

Reports of atrocities in Kuwait and Iraq's mistreatment of Western hostages, including their use as "human shields" at military and industrial installations, created a tension among policy makers — between a strategy of waiting out the Iraqis and taking the initiative to eject them.

"There was a sense of drift," a senior Administration official said. "Saddam seemed to have the initiative. We felt we had to do something to get it back."

Mr. Bush pressed the Pentagon to develop the offensive military options, but General Schwarzkopf protested that he did not have his defensive forces in place yet and the Iraqis were still pouring more troops into Kuwait.

Rushed as it was, the first offensive plan — presented early in October to Mr. Cheney, General Powell and the Joint Chiefs of Staff in a Pentagon conference room known as "the tank" — was an unimaginative "up the middle" through the Iraqi front lines "right smack into his strength," as a senior official put it.

Over the next few weeks, General Schwarzkopf sent back a plan to conduct a flanking attack around Iraq's front line, a more imaginative approach, but Mr. Cheney and General Powell agreed with the commander's assessment that there were not enough allied forces to conduct such an attack while also preventing the Iraqi Army from coming south.

American officials said their initial dispatch of 180,000 troops would have given them both defensive and offensive options if the level of Iraqi forces in the region remained at 100,000. But as the Iraqi force climbed to 430,000 by the end of October, the United States had to match this to maintain a credible offensive option.

General Powell told General Schwarzkopf to state his full military requirements to drive the Iraqi Army out of Kuwait, and he flew to Saudi Arabia Oct. 21 to discuss the plan and its timetable and brought it back to Mr. Cheney. When the Pentagon leaders took the plan to the White House on Oct. 30, it called for a timetable to begin a large-scale bombing campaign against Iraq in mid-January followed by a ground campaign late in February.

The plan required almost doubling the 200,000 American forces in the gulf in little over three months, with a major call-up of the reserves.

In the two-hour meeting, Mr. Bush made two fundamental decisions: first, to set in motion the machinery for a mid-winter war against the Iraqi Army and, second, to win a United Nations mandate for that war. To that end, he dispatched Secretary of State Baker on a round-the-world tour to round up support for a Security Council resolution authorizing the use of force.

General Powell, Mr. Cheney, Mr. Scowcroft, Mr. Baker and the President all felt there was a reasonable chance that the enormous mobilization of American military power, combined with the setting of a deadline, might be enough to scare Mr. Hussein into leaving Kuwait, officials said. Mr. Cheney's nightmare was that Mr. Hussein would find more troops to send to the front to force another round of escalation.

The president showed no hesitation in making the controversial decision to increase troop strength, but decided to keep it secret until Nov. 8. Why?

"Nov. 8 was a very important date because it was after Nov. 6," a White House official said, referring to the election.

The troop increase sent a shudder through both the alliance and among many Americans. A senior White House official said: "Shortly after we announced the increase in troop strength, we got a sharp reaction from Capitol Hill, and the press was saying that nobody knows why we are there, and it looked like we had a big domestic problem."

It was during this period, aides say, that the President began thinking about "going the extra mile to avert a war" by sending Mr. Baker to Baghdad and inviting Foreign Minister Aziz to Washington — a move he announced immediately after the United Nations Security Council vote on Nov. 29 sanctioning the use of force if Iraqi troops were not out of Kuwait by Jan. 15.

The Air War

Bush Becomes 'A Different Man'

On Dec. 16, President Bush, in an interview with the British broadcaster David Frost, said of Mr. Hussein, "It's my view that he doesn't know what he is up against and that he doesn't believe the willpower of the United States. He is still unconvinced."

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Yet two days later, speaking to Time magazine, Mr. Bush stated, "My gut says he will get out of there."

The contradictory instincts expressed in these two interviews reflected the President's mood swings in the weeks leading right up to the Jan. 16 decision to launch the air war. Some described it as a toughening of mood.

If there was a last chance to avert war, it was on Jan. 9, when Mr. Baker met Mr. Aziz in Geneva. The marathon session recessed after two hours and Mr. Baker reported by telephone to Mr. Bush that the Iraqi minister's "tone" was very reasonable.

At the time, Mr. Bush was meeting with a group of 15 members of Congress, and those present say that as the Geneva meeting resumed and stretched to six hours, Mr. Bush seemed cautiously optimistic that a deal might be in the works. Then came a final call from Mr. Baker.

"The President excused himself to take the call and was gone for about eight minutes," said Representative Mel Levine, Democrat of California. "When he came back, our conversation stopped. The President's whole demeanor had changed. He was somber and grim. You could see it all over his face. He looked at us and said two words: 'No progress.' I felt it was a defining moment. He was a different man. When we asked why the meeting had lasted so long, he simply said: 'History.'"

This was apparently a reference to Mr. Aziz's long recitation of Iraqi and Arab grievances with the United States. That was not the Iraqi's official's only complaint, though. He also laid into the Soviet Union.

"We don't have a patron anymore," Mr. Aziz complained to Mr. Baker. "If we still had the Soviets as our patron, none of this would have happened. They would have vetoed every U.N. resolution."

Mr. Baker warned Mr. Aziz during their session that a war with the United States would not be like Iraq's war with Iran.

Mr. Aziz came back with his prediction that the Arab allies would abandon the United States and that in any event the desert would defeat the Western armies.

After the Baker-Aziz meeting, all of the President's advisers agreed that war was now inevitable. On Tuesday morning, Jan. 15, Mr. Bush sat in a wingbacked chair by the fireplace in the Oval Office and signed a "national security directive" for war on Iraq.

The Israelis

Need to Placate A Worried Ally

As early as September, President Bush and Secretary Baker began sounding the Arab allies out about how they would respond if the Iraqis launched missiles against Israel to bring her into the war.

The answers that came back over the next few months were generally positive: provided that the Israelis didn't attack Iraq first, and any Israeli retaliation was "proportionate," none of America's Arab allies would have a problem, they indicated.

On Dec. 11, Israel's Prime Minister, Yitzhak Shamir, came to Washington and met with President Bush in the Oval Office — the first time the two men had spoken since the war began. The President, officials said, told the Israeli Prime Minister that in the event of war the United States had "concrete plans" to destroy fixed Iraqi Scud launching sites in western Iraq, as well as all the mobile launchers in the area.

But Mr. Bush also told Mr. Shamir that since Washington was doing all it could to avoid any linkage between the gulf crisis and the Arab-Israeli dispute, so the Israelis had to avoid linking them by retaliating for any Iraqi attacks. Mr. Shamir, anxious to patch up strained relations with Mr. Bush, promised that Israel would not launch a pre-emptive strike and that he would "consult" with the President before responding to an attack by Iraq.

The Administration reciprocated by establishing a secure hotline — code-named "Hammer Rick" — between the Pentagon's crisis center and the Israeli Defense Ministry in Tel Aviv, so that the Israelis could be given instantaneous warning of Scud launches detected by American satellites.

Minutes after the first Iraqi Scuds slammed into Tel Aviv on the evening of Jan. 17, Mr. Cheney used the Hammer Rick line to talk to an agitated Defense Minister Moshe Arens, while in Mr. Scowcroft's office at the White House, Mr. Baker telephoned Mr. Shamir, as did Mr. Bush later.

The message from Washington, a senior official said, was simple and clear: "We are going after western Iraq full bore. There is nothing that your air force can do that we are not doing. If there is, tell us and we will do it. We appreciate your restraint, but please don't play into Saddam's hands. We also told them that night that we would give them more Patriots with American crews."

At one point during that tense evening, the President's most senior Cabinet and foreign policy advisers and Vice President Dan Quayle were sitting in Mr. Scowcroft's office and one top Administration official — no one will identify who — suggested that since it was "inevitable" that the Israelis were going to retaliate at some point, why not let them go now, using their arsenal of Jericho missiles instead of airplanes. After a discussion among the President's men — unbeknownst to the Israelis — the majority view was that the Israelis had to be, and could be, talked out of retaliating.

Mr. Shamir, a senior official said, was "very cool" and never insisted on retaliating, even though he was under pressure: Israel's Air Force chief, Maj. Gen. Avihu Binun, kept arguing that his pilots could do a better job

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than the Americans, and that the Patriot missile batteries would not protect Israel, American officials said.

Mr. Arens was not so cool. He told Mr. Cheney and Mr. Baker that Israel would have to retaliate at some time and asked Mr. Cheney again that night for access to the electronic identity codes Israeli fighter planes would need to distinguish between American and Iraqi jets. In turning down these requests, Mr. Cheney helped to ease the Israelis' anxiety by ordering more intelligence sharing to show the Israelis exactly what missile targets the allies were hitting in Western Iraq and how successful they were.

Essentially, the conversations of that night — both the American appeals and the Israeli responses — were repeated with every single SCUD attack. Mr. Arens would ask for the codes, and later for an air corridor through Saudi Arabia so that Israeli planes could retaliate without going through Jordan. Mr. Cheney would refuse all requests, Mr. Bush would say how much the Israeli restraint was appreciated and Mr. Shamir would weigh it all and sit tight.

Mr. Bush knew he had a secret ally: The Israeli public, which was overwhelmingly against retaliating and whose feelings highly influenced Mr. Shamir. When Mr. Arens came to see Mr. Bush on Feb. 11 to tell him again Israel had to do something, the President came armed with the latest Israeli public opinion polls tucked into his breast pocket.

On Monday night Feb. 11 Mr. Cheney visited the White House to tell the President that General Schwarzkopf had asked for a "window" of dates to begin the ground war, with the earliest date being Feb. 21.

The president agreed that would be the planning date. Within a day or two, General Schwarzkopf refined his H-Hour as 4 a.m. on Feb. 24 (8 p.m. Feb. 23 EST).

Once the military timing was set, a new factor came into play with when the Soviet Union initiated its 11th-hour attempt to mediate a face-saving withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait.

Administration officials said the first inkling came on Thursday Feb. 14 in a cable sent by Mr. Gorbachev to Mr. Bush reporting on the discussions which his envoy Yevgeny M. Primakov had held in Baghdad the previous day with Mr. Hussein.

In his cable, Mr. Gorbachev said that Mr. Hussein displayed "some change in attitude" when pressed for an unconditional Iraqi pull-out from Kuwait in accordance with the United Nations resolutions that merited exploration.

Mr. Gorbachev, apparently under pressure from his military to show more independence from the United States and protect their long-time Iraqi clients from destruction, added in his cable that given the possibility for a peaceful solution "it might be desirable" if the United States did not launch a ground war

until talks with Mr. Aziz were completed.

This was not received with enthusiasm.

"The initial feeling was that at the final moment of decision-making this old ghost from the past got up to haunt us," a senior Administration official said. "We were well aware of the wreckage potential. From the start, the President took the view that Gorbachev, for domestic reasons, obviously needed to be seen to be playing a role. We had to reject that role, but not dismiss it in a way that would embarrass him."

Essentially from Monday night until noon on Saturday, President Bush and his advisers engaged in a dizzying series of phone calls and cables with Moscow to administer a mercy killing to the Soviet peace initiative. Each day Mr. Gorbachev would say he had brought the Iraqis a little closer to an unconditional withdrawal, and each day Mr. Bush would point out the conditional fine print that the Iraqis were adding — particularly their insistence right up to the end that once they withdraw all sanctions, reparations and other demands embodied in the United Nations resolutions would have to be dropped.

The turning point came Thursday night, when the President, having concluded that the Soviet diplomacy was getting out of hand, decided he wanted to put out a statement with his own terms for an Iraqi withdrawal in compliance with "all" the United Nations resolutions. During the White House deliberations, General Powell suggested to the President, "Why not just set a deadline?" on Friday for noon Saturday because a date would be "helpful" for his forces who were poised to attack at the already appointed hour of 8:00 p.m. eastern time on Saturday.

Nevertheless, even Saturday morning the Soviets floated a new "improved" plan at the United Nations Security Council, but when pressed by Washington Moscow could not confirm that the Iraqis were on board. The Soviets were so unsure of where the Iraqis stood that they did not press the Security Council to vote on their plan, which Washington would have vetoed.

At noon Saturday, when the American ultimatum for Iraqi forces to be out of Kuwait expired, Mr. Bush and Mr. Baker called Mr. Gorbachev. They thanked him again for his "efforts," reiterated why they were still considered insufficient and told him that if he was in contact with the Iraqis he should tell them "that they didn't believe it when we said that the air war would start right after Jan. 15 so they should believe this deadline," and get out while they still had a chance to save something.

For Bush, Persian Gulf War Was Transforming Moment

Long Experience Shaped Leadership Policies

By Dan Balz and Ann Devroy
Washington Post Staff Writers

In the early days of the Persian Gulf crisis, as the first American troops were landing in Saudi Arabia, one of President Bush's closest advisers was asked how Bush saw the conflict. "He knows this is a big-time issue," national security adviser Brent Scowcroft replied. "He knows it's not Grenada, not Panama. There are very large stakes here."

At a time when others were warning of the risks of committing U.S. forces to the gulf or questioning the wisdom of risking war over cheap oil, George Bush already knew his mind and, with a singularity of purpose, persuaded the American people and much of the rest of the world to embrace it.

Thomas Jefferson wrote that "no man will ever bring out of the presidency the reputation he brought into it." For Bush, the Persian Gulf War is that transforming moment, a crisis that may have been tailor-made for him, with his often-ridiculed long résumé suddenly seen as a precious asset and his wimp image vanquished with the rout of Iraqi forces in the desert.

"All of this happened because George Bush wanted it to happen," said Stephen Hess of the Brookings Institution. "The definition of leadership is getting people to do what people don't want to do, and really great leadership is getting them to do it and like it."

Just how lasting the transformation may be is unanswerable, as Bush now turns from the clarity of the confrontation with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein to the issue of lasting peace in the Middle East and challenges at home that are as large—and as largely unattended—as they were when the war began Jan. 17. Even admirers of Bush's handling of the gulf war warn that in Iraq's invasion of Kuwait he had a target perceived as a fearsome evil that will not exist in the same way when he confronts domestic problems at home. And Democrats take some solace from the fact that the

British turned against Prime Minister Winston Churchill after World War II.

But there are lessons from his handling of the gulf crisis—which has been compared with President John F. Kennedy's handling of the Cuban missile crisis—that transcend political popularity and that will be studied by scholars and future presidents, just as Bush learned from the successes and failures of his predecessors.

From the beginning, the gulf crisis fit the world Bush had learned about as a young man, and he defined the threat of Iraq's invasion in the largest and simplest terms: good vs. evil, with a new world order in the balance.

Bush's point of embarkation in the gulf was World War II: the appeasement of Hitler at Munich, the need to resist a dictator's aggression and the symbol of a world united against a dangerous enemy.

But the long résumé—House member, Republican National Committee chairman, U.N. ambassador, envoy to China, director of the Central Intelligence Agency—provided him with instincts that anchored his decision-making as he moved forward. From the decision to use the

United Nations as the focal point of diplomacy to his handling of Congress to his instinct for political communication, Bush drew on those experiences to shape his policies.

"His biographer is going to see a very straight line from his coming of age . . . to the biggest crisis in his life," said Stephen Ambrose, the biographer of former presidents Dwight D. Eisenhower and Richard M. Nixon. His inaugural speech offered two insights: "Great nations, like great men, must keep their word," he said. "When America says something, America means it, whether a treaty or an agreement or a vow made on marble steps."

Thus Bush's vow in August that "this aggression will not stand" was not merely a political statement in this age of devalued rhetoric. "He had a clear message, and it was a popular message," Hess said. "You can't compromise with evil."

Another clue to Bush's handling of the crisis that came in his inaugural speech was a reference to Vietnam. "That war cleaves us still. . . . Surely, the statute of limitations has been reached," he said. He has sought to vanquish that demon, and when confronted with Saddam's aggression, vowed not to repeat the mistakes of President Lyndon B. Johnson. That meant a

massive troop deployment, not gradualism, and it meant no micro-managing from the White House. And, said Larry Berman, a University of California-Davis professor, it meant avoiding a political objective that could not be achieved militarily. "In the Persian Gulf, the military strategy could be matched with the political objective . . . of a free Kuwait," he said.

It also meant winning as quickly as possible, something Bush had vowed from the beginning. Bush learned not only from World War II and Vietnam, "he also took some lessons from Grenada and the Falklands. Get in and get out and control the press in such a way as to minimize the images of war that produce dissent," said Dorothy B. James, dean of Connecticut College and a student of the presidency.

Bush carried public opinion as he moved from one phase of the conflict to another, building on the tendency of Americans to rally behind their president. Said one adviser, Bush was "ahead of the polls but being told not to worry" by adviser Robert Teeter, who argued that as long as public confidence in Bush stayed high, Americans would follow him if he could make the case.

Even when Democrats challenged his decision to double the

number of troops in the gulf, Bush successfully parried, fending off the opposition at a time when the public was deeply divided over the prospect of a shooting war. "What Bush did, by knowing his own mind and where he was pushing things, he probably kept the voices of doubt and uncertainty from becoming the dominant sense or mood," said Democratic pollster Peter Hart.

Bush's reputation as an inarticulate and uninspiring communicator proved to be less of a problem than some critics predicted. Marie D. Natoli, a professor of political science at Emanuel College, said Bush's calm in the face of the crisis called to mind President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who she said "was able to bring a sense of rationality and perspective . . . during a time of crisis." Bush's life-agoes-on attitude, she added, was an "insightful reading of the public he was elected to lead, not to alarm."

"His personal impact on this was so great," Ambrose said. "He had the alternative on August 2 to simply ignore it, or to try to deal with it only in a verbal way. . . . What I'm most impressed with is the way he lined up both the country and the United Nations Security Council behind it before acting. His sense of timing has been excellent."

The Night That Bush Decided

TIME
MARCH 4

George Bush, as is his habit at times of crisis, escaped the White House on Thursday for a bit of what he calls "prudent recreating"—an evening at Ford's Theater to see *Black Eagles*, a play about black airmen in World War II. Says one of his top advisers: "I think it helped clear his mind" for what he knew would be one of the most fateful decisions of his presidency.

Shortly before Bush departed for the show, he had spoken with Mikhail Gorbachev, who reported that he and Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz had agreed on terms for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait, terms that would allow Saddam Hussein to preserve much of his military machine and political prestige.

Bush quickly convened nine top aides, and while he watched his play, they plotted a countermove. "It was a very delicate business," said a senior official. "We wanted to maintain as good a relationship as possible with the Soviets, but at the same time, we were determined not to back down—to make Saddam either surrender to us or face military defeat."

At 10:20 p.m., when Bush returned to his private study on the second floor of the White House residence, his war cabinet was waiting. It was a warm evening for February; the fireplace was dark. Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Colin Powell was clad in a green turtleneck and sports jacket. Vice President Dan Quayle and Defense Secretary Dick Cheney wore tuxedos, having come from a dinner for visiting Queen Margrethe II of Denmark. Cheney had removed his eyeglasses and was absently chewing one end of the frames. Like everyone else, he was studying a pair of freshly copied documents in his lap.

One was a list of "criteria" by which the allies would judge whether an Iraqi withdrawal was unconditional and worthy of an allied cease-fire. The second was a single-page argument about why the Gorbachev-Aziz agreement was "unacceptable."

Bush scanned the drafts, nodded and said, "I like both of these. Let's put them together. It's not enough to just say we

don't accept the Soviet plan. I went through this with Gorbachev on the phone, and he knows it's unacceptable and he knows the specific reasons why, and we ought to lay them out to the whole world."

"Well, let's set a date and set a time," suggested Powell.

"I think that's a good idea," Bush replied immediately.

Powell explained that a deadline would be "helpful to the military because then my guys in the field know what to expect. They know exactly what to be looking for and when." National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft agreed.

The discussion then turned to the question of "Do we make the date tomorrow night or Sunday or Monday or when?" Bush wanted it as soon as possible. So did Powell. Secretary of State James Baker cautioned that the U.S. ultimatum must have allied support and must be seen to allow a reasonable time for Iraqi acceptance. "The diplomatic question was the toughest," said a participant. "We had 28 partners, and the biggest concern was making sure we could get everybody on board."

Someone suggested that noon Saturday be the deadline. Bush: "I think that's a good idea. What's it do for you, Colin?" Powell: "It's good for me." Noon in Washington was sundown in Kuwait, where allied forces hold the advantage in night-fighting ability. Bush then asked, "What's it do for you, Jim?" Baker: "It's good for me too, but it is a new item that the allies don't know about and we need to get back to them about."

At that point, about 11:15 p.m., Bush said, "O.K., we're agreed then. It's noon Saturday."

The meeting broke about midnight. Baker went back to his office to phone the allied foreign ministers, and Bush went off to bed, confident that whatever course Saddam chose, he would be acting on a timetable and conditions set not by himself or the Soviet Union but by the U.S. and its allies. ■

ABC -- THIS WEEK WITH DAVID BRINKLEY

Moderator: David Brinkley. **Panelists:** George Will, Sam Donaldson. **Guests:** Prof. Bernard Lewis, Princeton University; National Security Adviser Scowcroft.

Guest: Prof. Lewis.

Donaldson: Secretary Baker is going to the Mideast this week, and he's going to visit Israel for the first time. Some believe he will put pressure on Israel to move off the dime.... What do you think?

Lewis: I think there is general agreement...that something has to be done. And what was not acceptable was that movement on the Palestinian question should be presented to Saddam Hussein as a reward for his aggression. Now that that question no longer arises, I think we may expect some movement.... Obviously some form of negotiation...is necessary and desirable -- and I would go further and say inevitable -- at this stage.

Guest: National Security Adviser Scowcroft.

Brinkley: ...Is the possibility of war crimes trials being considered?

Scowcroft: I just don't want to say at this point....

Will: ...I'd like you to comment on something that's been said widely around town -- and that is that if this invasion and American response had occurred two years from now with the defense budget on its projected slope down, we might not have been able to do what we did.

Scowcroft: I think that's true.... I think one of the first [lessons] should be that we ought to be taking a new look at the projections of our defense budget and the forces to see whether or not they are exactly what we want.

Donaldson: ...The final hours when the Iraqis were retreating in a full-scale rout...up that highway to Basra..., one of our pilots described it as a turkey shoot. Are we going to look back and think, well, that really wasn't necessary?

Scowcroft: No, I think no. Our objective was not to kill people but to destroy that army in southern Iraq and Kuwait..., to remove the offensive capability of Iraq. That was very important for the future stability of the region, and I think we did it.

Will: ...Secretary Baker is heading for the Middle East..., and I don't believe he's going to Amman. What does that tell us about the new alignment of the nations we consider possibly fruitful participants in a peace process?

ARAB-AMERICAN TELEVISION

Chung reports on Arab-American television, a new satellite network formed as a result of the Gulf crisis. The network has shown Iraqi casualties not seen on the networks and has allowed Arab-Americans to view their own perspectives on the war and vent their anger against the mainstream press.

(Osama Siblani, Arab-American News: "We've been projected as bums, terrorists, bloodthirsty, sand niggers, everything -- you name it, we came across in the media this way.") (CBS-11)

UNITED JET CRASH

Chung reports a United Airlines jet with 25 people on board crashed in Colorado Springs today, just missing houses and apartment buildings. Authorities believe there were no survivors.

CBS's Bob McNamara reports on the crash. There was a wind shear alert on at the time of the crash. (ABC-Lead, CBS-4, NBC-6)

NAVY JET CRASH

Chung reports that three Navy crew members died today when their T-39 jet crashed in a Chicago suburb near the Glenview Naval Air Station. No one on the ground was hurt. (ABC-2, CBS-5, NBC-5)

BALTIC ELECTIONS

Utley reports on the votes for independence in Latvia and Estonia. Early indications are that both were endorsed overwhelmingly.

NBC's Jim Maceda reports from Estonia on the independence movement there. A massive turnout there ensured a majority yes vote to the question of independence. But the nationalist government fears that a strong vote in favor of independence will give President Gorbachev an excuse to do in Estonia what he's already done in Lithuania and Latvia. So far, Gorbachev has only called the Baltic votes illegal, and he wants a national referendum in two weeks on the future of the union. Seven of the 15 republics have already refused, calling it irrelevant. (NBC-9, ABC-7)

SUDAFED RECALL

Chung reports that a nationwide recall was ordered for Sudafed 12-hour decongestion capsules by the manufacturer following two deaths linked to cyanide tampering in Washington state.

(CBS-9, NBC-7, ABC-6)

Scowcroft: ...The Palestinians are very powerful in Jordan; we've seen that. And I think the king accommodated, to a certain extent willingly, to that presence. And therefore I think the role of Jordan is a big question mark. But I think in general what you can say is that this is a triumph for the moderate Arabs.

Will: ...Now that the PLO has sided with an aggressor nation and called for the gassing of Israel and all the rest, can we now step back and say that was a mistake and that the PLO is flatly an unsatisfactory negotiating partner?

Scowcroft: I think the PLO made a colossally bad decision and judgment. Now it is not up to us to say who runs the PLO or what organization it should be, or necessarily what the allegiance of the Palestinian peoples themselves should be. But I think that the PLO has demonstrated that it had something other than, I think, the Palestinians at heart.

Will: But it is a suitable negotiating partner for a realistic peace process?

Scowcroft: I think it's very difficult with its present leadership.

Donaldson: Could the coalition tolerate Saddam's remaining in power?

Scowcroft: I think it could tolerate it, but I think the character of the peace could depend quite a bit on whether or not Saddam Hussein remains in power.

Will: Are we trying to put pressure on the Iraqis by dangling some money in front of them, saying that aid might be forthcoming if you get rid of this guy?

Scowcroft: No, George, we're not.

Donaldson: There are reports that in late October when...you and other officials were saying that our purpose there was purely defensive that you were already planning the offensive operation. Are those reports correct?

Scowcroft: Sam, we never said our purpose was purely defensive. From the very outset, the President said he wanted to keep his options open.... The additional deployment was to keep our options open.

Brinkley: ...Is there something on the drawing board or in existence beyond the Patriot?

Scowcroft: Yes. There's something the Israelis are developing with SDI funding support, an Arrow ground-to-air ballistic missile.

Discussion segment: Cokie Roberts joins.

Will: ...Ideally, [war crimes trials] should be done by Kuwaitis and also Iraqis.... Absent that, it seems to me it's not imperative that we make a big deal about it.

Roberts: The problem is, we don't have a tribunal in place to do it.... But there are bills introduced in the Congress to establish that kind of thing, to have an international tribunal set up to regularly have war crimes trials. But I don't see it going anywhere.

Donaldson: ...Palestinians who sided with Iraq...are being dragged out, to some extent, and executed on the spot [in Kuwait City].

Will: ...The U.S. may look back on this ten years from now and say [the Gulf war] was not a moment in which we achieved a new peak of power, but where we became enmeshed, in a way, in international laws, so-called, and multi-lateral diplomacy in a way that further restricts us.

Roberts: ...It will be a restrictive thing if we keep going back to it.

Brinkley: Who are the winners here?

Will: The U.S. military, George Bush preeminently. The Republican Party.... It wasn't a defining moment for the Democratic Party, it was a reinforcing moment. It reinforced a lot of doubts people had about it, anyway. The biggest loser is the Palestinian leadership, not the Palestinian people....

Donaldson: The winner, in my mind, was the U.S. military, the officers and men; and the loser was the stereotype of the U.S. military mind.... From Gen. Schwarzkopf on down, they wanted to not only minimize casualties, but worried more about the possibility of American casualties than any other single matter.

Roberts: ...Hafez Assad...has clearly come out of this ahead, and the U.S. defense industry. Raytheon, for instance, is a big winner in this.... The Democratic Party was a big loser. I think it will be very difficult for the Democrats to elect anybody, and in announcing for President.

Political Memo

In Bush's Inner Circle, Quayle Still a Bit Player

By MAUREEN DOWD

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, March 3 — By all rights, Dan Quayle should be enjoying a little boost right now.

President Bush pointedly kept his Vice President at his side throughout the Persian Gulf war. When the President and Secretary of State James A. Baker 3d returned to the White House from Camp David on Feb. 23, the night the ground war began, Mr. Quayle was there to greet the helicopter, bounding across the lawn past the cameras with an eager smile.

One of Mr. Quayle's pet projects as a Senator, continuing the financing for research on anti-missile weapons, was confirmed by the stellar performance of the Patriot missile.

Mr. Bush's view of the Soviet peace negotiations as meddling was bolstered by Mr. Quayle, whose longtime skepticism about Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev came to seem more valid. And the Vice President was even hailed as part of the President's new inner circle, along with Defense Secretary Dick Cheney and

poll, published on Friday, showed that half of voters, including a plurality of Republicans, would prefer to see Gen. Colin L. Powell, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as Mr. Bush's running mate next year. The general, whose appeal cuts across racial and party lines, got 50 percent to Mr. Quayle's 23 percent.

But when Mr. Bush was asked about General Powell's political future at a news conference on Friday, he answered shortly that such questions would be better directed to General Powell.

Speculation Draws Some Spite

The Vice President and his staff members are intensely annoyed by the speculation about the imposing general who directed one of the most successful wars in history; they had feared him as competition long before the war started.

Asked about the poll on Friday by Bill Nigut of WSB-TV in Atlanta, Mr. Quayle dismissed it as "nonsense, ridiculous," and repeated verbatim a defensive mantra often used by Mr. Bush: "Don't pay any attention to the polls. Just listen to the President. Watch what I do. Watch what he does. And listen to what he has to say."

Moving quickly to head off speculation that Mr. Quayle might be dropped so that Mr. Bush could make a historic campaign with a black running mate, the White House chief of staff, John H. Sununu, said on the "Evans and Novak" program on the Cable News Network Saturday that General Powell had "indicated to a number of us he'd like to be considered for another stint as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs."

Mr. Sununu said the Bush-Quayle ticket was "lock solid."

Those close to Mr. Bush say that he is extremely loyal, as long as his own political future is not jeopardized.

No Reason to Turn Around

But now that Mr. Bush's postwar popularity ratings are in the stratosphere, they reason, why should he have to admit that he made a mistake in choosing Dan Quayle?

On the contrary, by relentlessly pushing the 44-year-old Vice President into the picture, the President used the war as an opportunity to let the world and the late-night comics know that Dan Quayle would be his man for 1992.

"A high crescendo of aggressive backbiting and mini-campaigns to get rid of Quayle was starting to build in Republican circles, with serious people speculating about different scenarios that might come about with either Powell or Baker," said Eddie Mahe, a Republican consultant. "But now, George Bush has sent a precise

and powerful signal that 'Dan Quayle is my Vice President, and he is going to be my Vice President, so just knock it off, folks.'"

It might quell Republican plots to replace Mr. Quayle, but the visibility has not translated into greater stature for the Vice President.

'A Constituency of One'

"He still has a constituency of one," said Richard Viguerie, the conservative organizer.

As one Republican close to the White House put it: "The difficulty with thrusting him forward in the pictures is that it causes frissons of terror each time you see him. You think, oh, my God, he's not actually advising Bush, is he? This is serious life-and-death stuff, not business for Dan Quayle."

Indeed, as Mr. Bush is heaped with praise for showing good judgment in the war, he has at his side the Vice President who still represents, in political circles, the biggest question mark about his judgment.

Mr. Quayle's defenders say that his only problem is that he is in a job that is intrinsically demeaning; Mr. Bush and Walter F. Mondale had the exact same problem, they say.

Mr. Mondale disagrees. While he admits it is "a weird job" and its holder is, as Nelson A. Rockefeller put it, "stand-by equipment," Mr. Mondale maintains that the public is still able to "get a notion about your ability and values, your influence and strength."

Mr. Mondale said that a political image is like "mixing cement. When it's wet, you can move it around and shape it, but at some point it hardens and there's almost nothing you can do to reshape it."

Many political observers agree that Mr. Quayle's problem is that his image has hardened. He is seen as someone for whom things have come too easily, an image exacerbated by the soft cast of his face and the blank and sometimes startled look in his bright blue eyes.

He was put on the ticket in 1988 partly for star quality, and Mr. Bush's media adviser, Roger Ailes, even hoped women might try to tear at his clothes. But Mr. Quayle, while pleasant, does not have charisma, most analysts agree.

As one Bush intimate said, with a small sigh, "It didn't turn out quite as we had planned and hoped."

The Vice President's image is set, and the comics love it.

the national security adviser, Brent Scowcroft, in a New York Times column last week by William Safire.

And yet, paradoxically, the historic moment has seemed to dwarf, not enhance, the Vice President.

The ridicule about Mr. Quayle's peach-fuzz glow — he still looks, as the editor of The New Republic, Leon Wieseltier, once put it, "like the second or third lead in a spring break movie" — has continued unabated. White House aides were repeating one joke they had seen on television about the President sending out during the war meetings for 20 Domino's pizzas and one "happy meal" for Dan Quayle.

As Mr. Bush's other advisers are hailed for their contributions to the diplomatic and military tour de force, there are only two things anyone in Washington wants to know about Dan Quayle. Is he dyeing his temples gray to look older? And is Mr. Bush going to dump him in 1992 so he can create the ticket that Republicans crave and Democrats dread: Bush and Powell?

The answer to both questions seems to be no.

A Wall Street Journal/NBC News

Allied Blitzkrieg

Newsweek

Time

U.S. News & World Report

20

In the largest ground attack since World War II, U.S.-led forces stun and disrupt Saddam's troops

Date 4 MAR 91

With an avalanche of ordnance and phalanxes of hard-charging tanks, allied land forces finally swarmed into Kuwait and southern Iraq at 4 o'clock Sunday morning. The defeat of Saddam Hussein's Army was foreordained. But confident American generals had a grander goal in mind: the greatest feat of arms since World War II. They expected tough fighting; they knew there would be allied casualties; they were prepared for Saddam to strike back with poison gas or some other terror weapon. But what unfolded in the desert on Sunday was an unequal contest between the most advanced armored divisions in the history of warfare and a large but crude Third World army already groggy from 38 days of relentless bombing. The issue was not whether the Iraqis would be defeated, but how shatteringly. The allies were after total victory, a victory on such a scale and of such technical elegance that the campaign would be taught in military academies for generations to come, like Hannibal at Cannae or Napoleon on a very good day.

Near the end of the first day's fighting, it seemed almost too easy. The attackers achieved all their initial objectives: a 20-mile advance into Kuwait by the heavy armored columns of the U.S. VII Corps and other forces and, far to the west, a 70-mile thrust into Iraq by U.S. airborne and tank units with the French Foreign Legion as their spearhead. There was an airborne assault on Kuwait City, probably by the U.S. 82nd Airborne Division. There were reports of amphibious landings by the U.S. Marines. Allied air forces were "surging," mounting combat sorties at about double their normal rate. "Friendly casualties have been extremely light. As a matter of fact, remarkably light," said Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf, the allied commander. With a news blackout in force, Schwarzkopf offered few details. "So far, we're delighted with the progress of the campaign," he told reporters in Riyadh. Asked about the direction of allied attacks, he said: "We're going to go around, over, through, on top, underneath and any other way it takes."

Saddam lashed back with his most practiced weapon: rhetoric. "Fight them, brave Iraqis," he exhorted his Army and his people in a radio broadcast, vowing to defeat "Bush and his stooges." Beating up on easy prey, the Iraqis continued to retaliate by setting fire to Kuwaiti oil wells; about 500 were in flames by Sunday. And there were reports that their Army of occupation was murdering Kuwaiti civilians and rounding up others to hold hostage against the allied attack. So far, however, Iraqi troops in the field weren't putting up

much of a fight. Schwarzkopf said more than 5,500 prisoners had been taken in the early fighting. Hundreds of Iraqi troops reportedly raised white flags before the allies even reached their positions. Chemical weapons had not yet appeared on the battlefield; Schwarzkopf said stories of the Iraqis using poison gas turned out to be "bogus." He mentioned only one Iraqi counterattack, a thrust of unspecified size that the Marines repulsed with their armor, antitank weapons and air support.

Peace plan: The news blackout, announced by Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney, meant that an anxious home front would learn few details about the campaign for the first 48 hours or so. Cheney said the blackout would help protect "the men and women whose lives are on the line." Even before the fighting began, Washington's security arrangements proved to be remarkably leakproof. White House officials said President Bush secretly approved the approximate date for the ground war shortly after Cheney and Gen. Colin Powell, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, returned from Saudi Arabia on Feb. 10. The president and his advisers stuck to that schedule through some frantic diplomacy last week, as Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev tried to forge a compromise peace plan. Gorbachev got Saddam to promise that he would withdraw from Kuwait. But the

Iraqi dictator ignored the far more stringent terms in an ultimatum from Bush. On Sunday, Moscow issued a statement regretting that a "very real chance" to end the war peacefully had been missed and insisting that a settlement could still be negotiated.

The allies had already decided to settle the Persian Gulf crisis by other means. Their strategy was based on speed, deception and massive armored assaults backed up by constant aerial bombardment. Iraq had its forces deployed in three tiers: the front line, the tactical reserves farther back in Kuwait and the theater reserves along Kuwait's northern border or in southern Iraq. The essence of the allied battle plan was to engage each of the three

levels as quickly as possible, from a direction or in a manner that those forces were not expecting.

Saddam's best troops, the Republican Guard, made up most of the theater reserve; they were stretched out along Iraq's border with Kuwait. The job of attacking them was assigned to Army Lt. Gen. Frederick Franks, the VII Corps commander, whose force consisted of four American divisions and elements of a fifth, as well as Britain's "Desert Rats," the First Armoured Division. For weeks, the news media had speculated that VII Corps would execute a looping "left hook" through Iraqi territory west of Kuwait. Expecting such an attack, the Iraqis moved a Republican Guard tank division and a regular Army mechanized division into the area west of a long, deep gulch called Wadi al-Batin. As the ground war began, however, it appeared that VII Corps was attacking farther east, near the Kuwaiti border, bypassing the forward Republican Guard divisions.

CONTINUED

Daring thrust: In the second major thrust of the ground campaign, Schwarzkopf and the commander of the U.S. XVIII Corps, Lt. Gen. Gary Luck, opted for an audacious plan known to their logisticians as "the leapfrog." The ultimate objective is a deep thrust to block the Republican Guard's lines of supply and retreat in southern Iraq. The attack was launched from a point about 200 miles west of the Kuwaiti border and almost due south of Baghdad—much farther west than the Iraqis seem to have expected. But deep thrusts depend vitally on logistics, a sure supply of ammunition, fuel, water, food and spare parts, ferried in by planes and trucks. The first task for the attackers—including the U.S. 101st Airborne Division and Third Armored Cavalry Regiment and the French legionnaires and light infantry—is to set up a string of supply bases in Iraqi territory. As each new base is set up, supplies will leapfrog to the head of the line. The attack was so daring, and came from such an unexpected quarter, that advance elements of the force, including the legionnaires, moved into Iraqi territory some 12 hours before the formal start of the ground offensive.

"The troops are doing a great job," Schwarzkopf said on Sunday. But in many military offensives, the first day is relatively easy, as the attackers cross unoccupied territory or cut through thinly defended frontline positions. Saddam had placed some of his poorest troops along Kuwait's southern border, as cannon fodder that might exact some small price in blood from the allied attackers. Senior Pentagon officials and commanders in the field weren't sure exactly how much damage the air campaign had done to Iraqi forces, including the better ones deployed farther back. There was not enough proof that the 545,000-man Iraqi force dug in across Kuwait and southern Iraq had sustained significant losses. The CIA was skeptical about bomb-damage assessments from Schwarzkopf's headquarters in Saudi Arabia, where intelligence analysts reported that more than a third of the Iraqi armor and artillery had been destroyed. Schwarzkopf himself told a reporter last week that air attacks were "killing" more than 100 enemy tanks a day and that the Iraqi Army was on the verge of collapse. That, said one Pentagon official, "is not the Iraqi Army's conception of itself, based on what we've gleaned" from intercepted radio transmissions.

Dim picture: There were other intelligence problems as well. Weeks of photo reconnaissance gave U.S. planners little assurance that Iraq's supplies of poison gas and antitank weapons were being destroyed. Despite the pounding that Iraqi units had taken from the air, many U.S. officers believed elite units would emerge from their

bunkers to fight on. "There are some [Republican Guard] units out there that... are going to just kick butt," one official said.

White House officials say Schwarzkopf's battle plan was finalized during Powell and Cheney's visit to Saudi Arabia on Feb. 9 and 10. Bush was briefed, and the approximate date of the ground war was approved, on Feb. 11. Then, last week, Gorbachev's last-ditch peace initiative seemed to put the plan on hold. When Bush and his top advisers gathered on Thursday evening to discuss the U.S. response, Powell recommended that Saddam Hussein be given until noon Saturday to begin his withdrawal from Kuwait. That left Schwarzkopf just enough time to complete his preparations for the offensive if, as everyone expected, Iraq rejected the deadline. The White House mood was grim. As national-security adviser Brent Scowcroft told it, Bush and his men were increasingly concerned that "Kuwait was going up in flames." They were also annoyed by Gorbachev's attempt to undercut the U.S.-led coalition. "The Soviets have their own objectives in this that may not be parallel to the [interests of] the United States," Scowcroft said.

At 1 p.m. Saturday, Bush publicly voiced his "regret" over Iraq's refusal to comply with the U.S. deadline—and that statement was a signal for Schwarzkopf to proceed. Bush himself then called the leaders of allied nations to inform them of the general timing of the attack; none objected, according to White House officials. He had already talked with Gorbachev, who urged him to wait two more days before launching the ground attack to give the Iraqis another chance to back down. Bush declined, saying the coalition plan would proceed as scheduled; he did not tell the Soviet leader when the allied attack would come. He also called Richard Nixon, Jimmy Carter, Gerald Ford and Ronald Reagan and alerted House and Senate leaders to the impending offensive. He made plans to address the nation at 10 o'clock Saturday night and took off for Camp David.

Despite the initial success of the Desert Storm ground offensive, no one in Washington believes that victory over Saddam Hussein will be cost-free. The task now for Schwarzkopf and his commanders is to keep U.S. casualties to a military minimum—and the task for Bush, as commander in chief, is to lead the nation to accepting the losses that are inevitable even in a successful war.

TOM MORGANTHAU and RUSSELL WATSON with
JOHN BARRY, DOUGLAS WALLER and
ANN MCDANIEL in Washington and
C. S. MANEGOLD and PETER KATEL in Riyadh

THE GULF WAR

The gulf war's final curtain

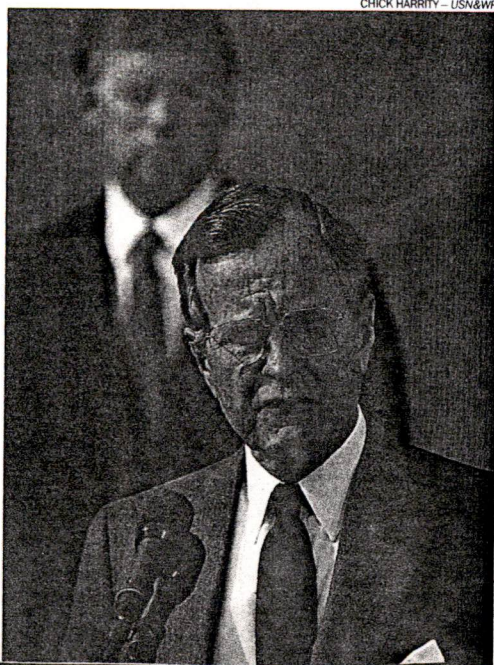
George Bush set the stage with his ultimatum to Saddam Hussein—surrender or face the wrath of an allied ground offensive. Now, the last act in this morality play is at hand

It certainly held the promise of high drama: Both hands of the clock straight up at noon, time for the mustachioed villain to clear out of town. But Saddam Hussein still didn't get the message. High noon in Washington was 8 p.m. in Baghdad, and the deadline for him to start moving his troops out of Kuwait came and went as a few feeble blue tracers arced across the night sky and the nightly swarm of allied airplanes arrived to pound targets in and

around the city. Outside Washington, in the padded woods of the Catoctin Mountains at Camp David, Md., George Bush took a long walk, chatted for nearly half an hour with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev by phone and when the deadline passed he was strolling back to the Aspen Lodge for lunch. After all the fevered diplomacy of the past few days, zero hour felt strangely anticlimactic.

Except that across the vast desert and on the oily waters of the Persian Gulf, all

around the tiny emirate dismembered and devoured by Iraq on a broiling summer day seven months ago, allied soldiers were already probing defenses and scouting attack routes far behind Iraqi lines. Meanwhile, more than a half-million more American and allied troops were moving up to their "LDs"—lines of departure—for the blitzkrieg that has been scripted as the final act of this late-20th-century morality play. It is the largest invasion force assembled since World War II, and Saddam Hussein has only himself to blame for the fire it will rain down around his ears. "It's about time," said Sgt. Paul Dayton, far north in the Saudi desert as the deadline passed. First Lt. Charles Hoskinson agreed: "He is not going to withdraw."



CHICK HARRITY — USA&W

Ground zero. With Hussein's refusal to leave

A peculiar thing about this war is that George Bush didn't have to end it this way. Advised by his top military commanders that a battle on the desert floor could mean substantial casualties, the president might have molded a different ending from one of the two Soviet peace proposals that lurched like awkward trial balloons into the swirling diplomatic mists above Moscow. But that would not have yielded the clean ending George Bush believes the American people and their partners in the anti-Iraq coalition now demand. And perhaps just as important, for this president from the last generation with a personal memory of World War II, it would not have yielded the *right* ending.

To the end, Hussein played the villain to perfection. Having engineered the rape of Kuwait and launched erratic but



Kuwait, allied troops moved north. Third Armored Cavalry tank commander Pat Armijo leads a tank column to the front.

still dangerous Scud missiles against civilians in Saudi Arabia and Israel, one just minutes before the deadline to start evacuating his troops from Kuwait, he saved his worst for last. While their commander pretended to negotiate for peace last week, Hussein's soldiers began rounding up Kuwaitis and shooting them in the streets, according to intelligence and other reports. Knowledgeable officials said that some Kuwaiti prisoners, already tortured horribly, were shot at point-blank range, perhaps to eliminate both the witnesses and the evidence in any war crimes trials. Another report said Iraqi soldiers were ordered to arrest some 40,000 Kuwaitis, presumably to be executed. And this on the heels of torching more than 170 of Kuwait's 950 oil wells, a "scorched earth" policy that clearly enraged Bush. Aides say the pres-

ident now believes as an article of faith that the Iraqi leader must pay dearly for those and other crimes. "In the end," says a senior adviser to the president, "he would not tolerate even the appearance of giving Saddam Hussein a face-saving way out, not any way to claim there were rewards for his aggression."

Officially, the reason for the war against Iraq was to drive Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait and restore the emirate's government. But people familiar with Bush's thinking say the real reason was Saddam Hussein himself and his enormous capacity for destabilizing the volatile Middle East with his million-man Army, his megalomaniac vision and his weapons of mass destruction. "Overall, our stated aim has been to get him out of Kuwait," says a Bush aide. "Our unstated but real objective, however, has been to

reduce or eliminate his military potential and, ideally, to eliminate his political capability: To cut him down as a political figure with any influence."

The models are clear. Just as Gamal Abdel Nasser was deflated by the 1967 Arab-Israeli war and Muammar Qadhafi by the American bombing in 1986, Bush wants to make sure that Saddam Hussein is neutered. On a nuts-and-bolts level, this means guaranteeing that he is unable to repair to Baghdad with roughly half his military forces intact and no brakes on his ability to begin using Iraq's substantial oil revenues to begin producing a new arsenal of biological, chemical and perhaps even nuclear weapons. Even more important, it means depriving Hussein of any shred of political victory. Already, he has chucked the Palestinian cause over the

■ THE GULF WAR

side, exposing his use of it for the cynical gambit it was. Already, there are reports of dissension within his inner circle, complaints that, having given back the few spoils won in eight years of war with Iran, he now offers to return Kuwait in exchange for a lifting of sanctions and a few other conditions.

But only by taking the war to its ultimate conclusion and not conceding an ambiguous and premature peace can George Bush prove, to Iraqis, to their fellow Arabs and to the world, that the Iraqi dictator made a fatal mistake when he sent his Republican Guard crashing into Kuwait. "The Arab world has seen plenty of losers," says a senior Arab diplomat. "They do not need one more."

Still, it was a near thing, that ambiguous and premature peace. The 11th-hour Soviet proposal had all the makings of a coalitionbuster, and until the moment George Bush strode out the porch door of the Oval Office and into the Rose Garden to deliver his brief and plain-spoken ultimatum, it was unclear how much mischief Mikhail Gorbachev and Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz had conjured up in their late-night Kremlin meetings. When it first became clear that the Soviets were working on some kind of substantive peace proposal with Aziz, there were dark mutterings in the White House of a Gorbachev double cross.

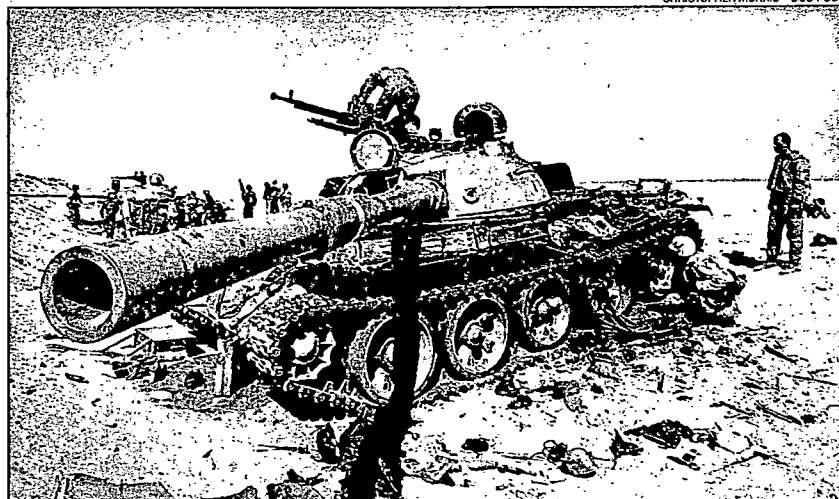
In fact, the Soviet leadership says it had good reasons for trying to head off a ground war. There was wide speculation that Gorbachev's last-minute maneuvering was just a stick thrown into the spokes of the American-led coalition, designed to appease his hard-line critics in the KGB and the military, who have long enjoyed a close relationship with Saddam Hussein and his Ba'ath Party leadership. The Soviets say this isn't so. A war so close to their border could inflame their increasingly restive Muslim minorities. "When we are speaking about ground war," says Vyacheslav Matuzov, counselor for the Middle East at the Soviet Embassy in Washington, "we are not in principle against the ground war. But we are speaking about danger of spreading this war."

But there were other reasons, too. The Soviet peace proposal, though still-born, could yield Moscow some dividends among more radical Arab states, and it will ensure the Soviet Union a larger role in the Middle East after the war. The last thing Moscow wants is to see the Persian Gulf turned into an Anglo-American lake. There also was some brave talk about how the Soviet Union,



Victors and vanquished. Soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division processing some

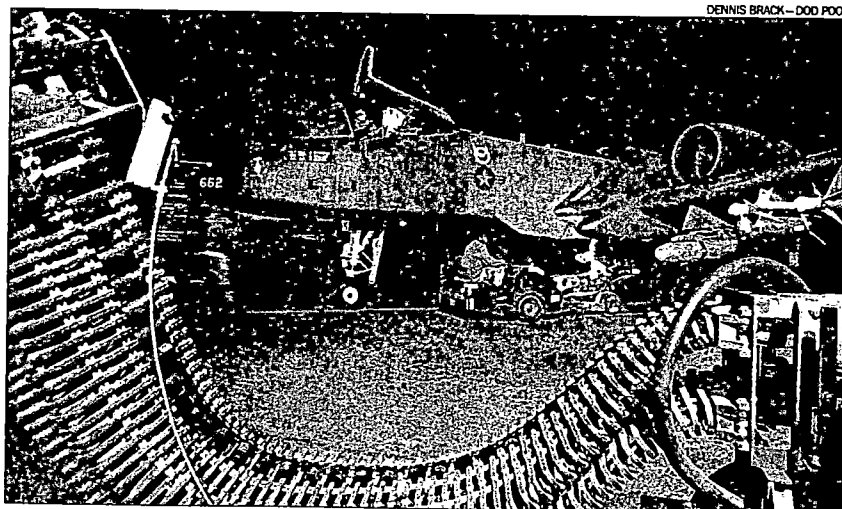
CHRISTOPHER MORRIS - DOD POOL



Confirmed kill. Marines examine a T-62, another of Iraq's disabled tanks.



400 Iraqi prisoners near the Saudi border. There will be many more ahead.



DENNIS BRACK—DOD POOL

Killer. 30-mm rounds are loaded onto an A-10 Warthog antitank aircraft.

for all its troubles, is still a player on the great stage. "We believe that as a great power," says Foreign Ministry spokesman Vitaly Churkin, "... the Soviet Union is obliged to contribute to finding a way to end the conflict."

George Bush didn't want or need that kind of help, however. When high-stakes diplomacy is truly engrossing, it bears an amazing resemblance to championship tennis, and the volley Bush hit back to Gorbachev at week's end was a splendid passing shot. After his declaration of the high-noon ultimatum in the Rose Garden, there was a bit more fancy footwork from Aziz and his Kremlin interlocutors, but Bush had been so effective that most of the world paid no heed. The second Soviet plan called for a three-week withdrawal instead of the one week specified by Bush; it specified four days for Iraqi troops to leave Kuwait City instead of the two demanded by Bush, and it called for supervision by a United Nations task force instead of the American-led coalition. Until the very end, Moscow kept pointing to the deal it had worked out with Aziz, but it was as if the thing never existed; what mattered were the terms laid out by Bush. "The president wanted to tell the Soviets to get lost," says an adviser, "but to do it in a nice way." It may go down as one of the administration's defining moments, at once extinguishing the notion that the United States and the Soviet Union are equal partners in a new world order and mustering unprecedented public support for Bush as he approaches re-election. A new *Washington Post*-ABC News poll shows that 86 percent of respondents approve a ground war if that's what it takes to get Iraq out of Kuwait.

The last act got off to a rocky start, however. The first phone call from Gorbachev to Bush came on Thursday night, and it prompted the talk of a double cross. Bush already had heard the news of the Soviet peace proposal on CNN. It turned out Gorbachev had tried to call Bush before the announcement of the peace proposal was made in Moscow, but the White House couldn't arrange for a notetaker and translator that quickly. When the call finally came, Bush and Gorbachev spoke for 33 minutes, and White House officials say the president was sympathetic to the reasons for Gorbachev's actions.

Sympathetic, but not encouraging. After he rang off, Bush darted out to see a play at Ford's Theatre called "Black Eagles," about a squadron of black pilots in World War II. In his study on the second floor of the White House residence, under an enormous golden chandelier, a clutch of senior ad-

■ THE GULF WAR

visers continued deliberating the Soviet proposal. Bush returned just after 10:30, taking a seat behind a massive oak desk, the advisers scattered around him in a ragged arc: Vice President Dan Quayle and Defense Secretary Dick Cheney in tuxedos (there was a reception that night for Danish Queen Margrethe II); Gen. Colin Powell, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in a turtleneck and slacks; the rest of the men in suits. Bush said they were at a "critical point," according to one official, and Powell urged that the United States set a date

minutes, and at one point, according to an official, Gorbachev told Bush that he felt "stuck in the middle." Again, Bush sympathized, but he wouldn't be budged. He also realized, according to a senior administration official, that Gorbachev, however much he might dabble with peace proposals, wouldn't wander too far off the reservation. "Gorbachev has always come back and hewed the line set by the coalition very closely," this official says. "... When it becomes clear their agenda conflicts with ours, they hew the line." Bush thanked the Soviet leader again for his intercession, made several more phone calls and strode into the Rose Garden to deliver the bad news for Saddam Hussein. After that, the whole group vanished into the White House mess for lunch. Let the record reflect that Bush dined on spaghetti with tomato sauce.

STEVE ELFERS - DOD POOL



Night fight. Low-light glasses give allies an edge.

and time for the Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait as quickly as possible. "That's a good idea," Bush said, according to an official. Secretary of State Baker said he did not expect any of the allies to object, and various times were suggested. Eventually, the group settled on one. "Okay, then," Bush concluded, "it's going to be noon, Saturday." That would make it Day 38 of the war against Iraq. Before they broke up, one of the advisers asked what would happen if Saddam Hussein surprised them all and accepted. Powell stepped in. "We monitor," he said. "No problem."

Now they had to make good on Baker's pledge. Through the night, the secretary of state and National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft telephoned other coalition leaders. Despite fears by some that it would crack, it held; the Soviet deal just wasn't good enough.

That's what Bush told Gorbachev the next day. The phone call actually started with Baker outlining the terms Bush would announce in his ultimatum for withdrawal. Bush was over at the Labor Department, swearing in his new Labor Secretary, former Illinois Rep. Lynn Martin. When he got back to the Oval Office, he picked up the phone, re-emphasizing the points Baker had just made to Gorbachev. The call lasted 75

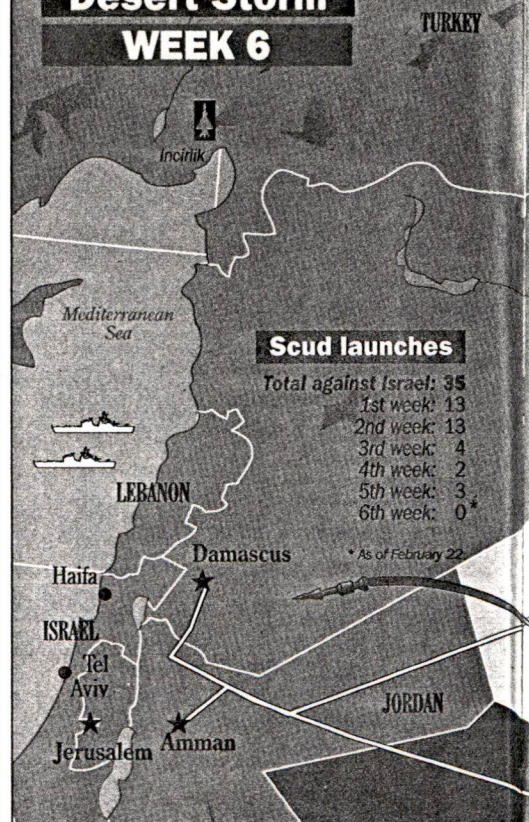
One big reason for the president's studied calm is the assurances he has had from his commanders in the field. Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf says the Iraqi Army, hit by thousands of tons of bombs delivered by nearly 100,000 allied sorties over the past month, is "near collapse." Though the White House insists that politics has played no part in

the calculation of when to engage ground forces against Saddam Hussein's troops, it is clear that the coalition, which has held so far, is not endlessly durable. Gorbachev clearly saw that, too. During the past few weeks, when it became increasingly obvious that Bush's true objectives extended beyond the withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait and included all of the points specified in the 12 United Nations resolutions, Gorbachev spied the growing gap between the United States and some of its partners. The talks with Tariq Aziz put a wedge neatly into the gap, but fortunately it wasn't big enough to break the alliance. Another such attempt could have greater success, or Saddam Hussein could eventually come to his senses and try to exploit one of the many opportunities to end the hostilities that have come his way.

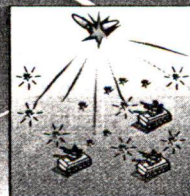
In any case, Bush's battlefield commanders have told him that the ground forces are "good to go," as the infantry likes to say. And without the acquiescence of Saddam Hussein, the pounding delivered by the air campaign would not be sufficient to ensure victory; to the contrary, some experts believe that engaging the ground forces sooner could end the war more quickly.

That also will enable the allies to punish those of Saddam Hussein's

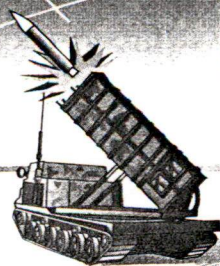
Desert Storm WEEK 6

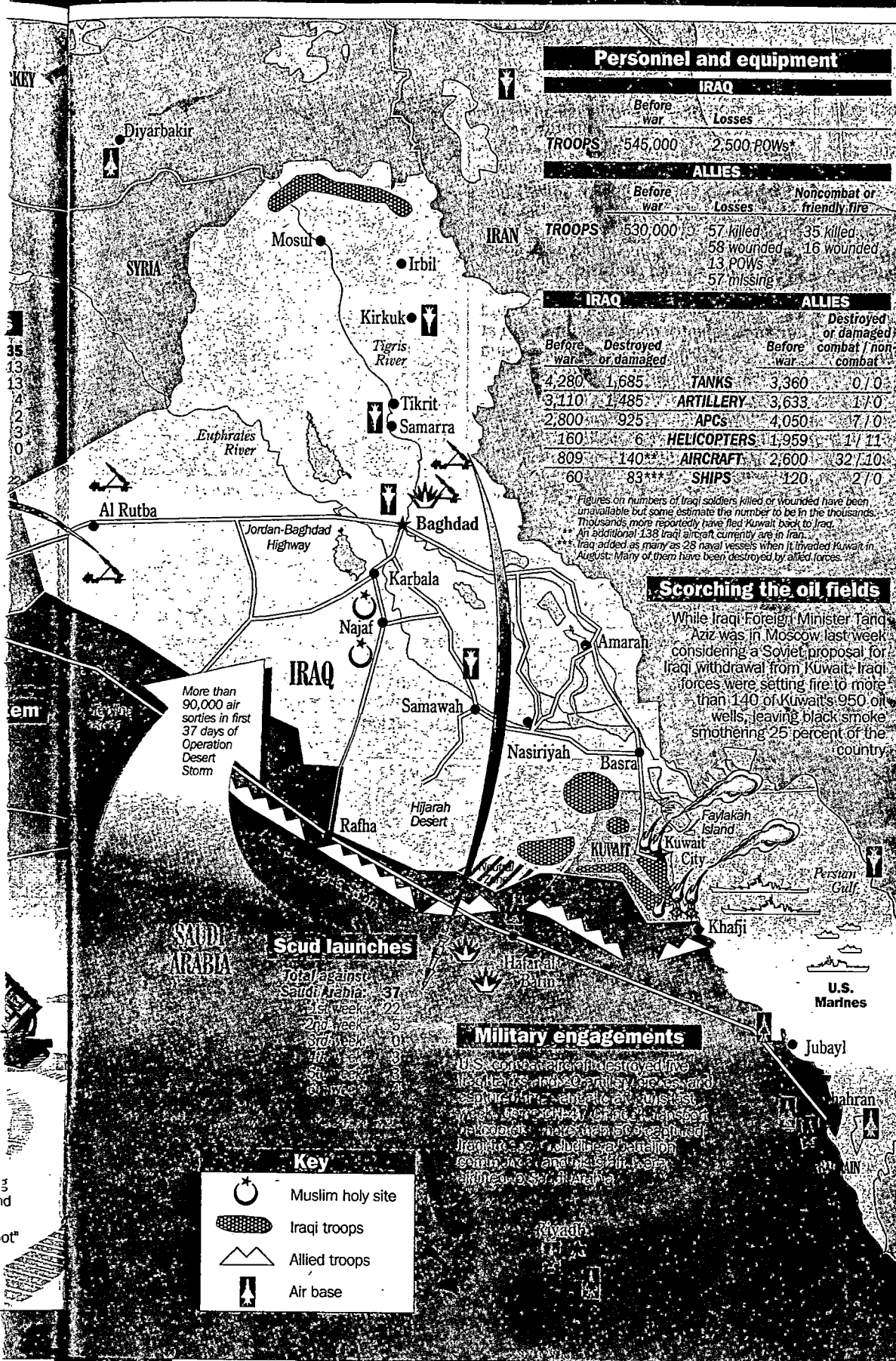


Multiple Launch Rocket System



The MLRS's crew of three is capable of firing as many as 12 rockets, each armed with almost 8,000 grenade-size anti-personnel bomblets. One such barrage can saturate a 60-acre area from more than 18 miles away in less than one minute. The MLRS is capable of destroying armored vehicles, troop concentrations and air defense sites. It can travel 40 mph cross-country and employs shoot-and-scoot tactics, increasing its chances of surviving an enemy counterattack.





■ THE GULF WAR

troops who most deserve punishment. Hussein's Republican Guard, the 150,000-man elite unit dug into fortifications and bunkers in Southern Iraq near Basra, is the same outfit that spearheaded the invasion of Kuwait in August and committed some of the most unspeakable atrocities. Though it has been the target of relentless bombing from the air, intelligence officials believe the Republican Guard has been well protected by its dug-in position, even though much of its equipment—including most of the 700 to 800 top-of-the-line, Soviet-built tanks—has been destroyed. A withdrawal would have allowed the Guard to repair to Baghdad relatively unscathed.

In the last act of the war against Iraq, the Republican Guard will enjoy no such luck. Better fed, better protected and, in fact, created by Saddam Hus-

sein, the Republican Guard will take the brunt of the allies' worst blows. The battle plan for Desert Storm necessarily remains secret, but military officials say one option is a lightning-fast attack north all the way to the Euphrates River, trapping the Republican Guard between fast-moving American mechanized forces and the heavily armed VII Corps to the south, and cutting the vital city of Basra off from Baghdad. Marine amphibious forces off the Kuwaiti coast could cause further confusion by attacking from the east, or even just by bluffing. Employing heavy mechanized and armored infantry divisions along with at least one fast-moving airmobile division that can leapfrog the infantry in helicopters, the U.S. Army could lead the allies clear around both the Guard and fortified Kuwait, with its minefields and chemical weapons. Since the Republican Guard functions as Hussein's Praetorian Guard, it would face a hard



Civilian casualties. Despite remarkable

BUSH'S TOUGHENING VIEWS

Evolution of the hard line

President Bush's thinking about the way to resolve the gulf crisis has evolved considerably since the day the crisis began. The key turning points:

August 2-3. At the instant Saddam Hussein's troops invade Kuwait, Bush does not see it as a crisis. Within hours, however, he concludes that Hussein intends to move into Saudi Arabia to control the region's oil supplies. Prodded by British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, Bush declares "It will not stand."

August 6. Bush orders American troops to protect Saudi Arabia at the Saudis' request. He begins a furious round of phone calls to create an international coalition to secure Kuwait's liberation. An economic embargo to choke off Iraq's economy is put in place with the passage of a United Nations Security Council resolution authorizing sanctions against Iraq.

August 9. The president comes to terms with the fact that force must be used in the crisis. He authorizes American ships to fire upon ships suspected of breaking the embargo.

November 8. The arrival of 230,000 American troops in Saudi Arabia since August puts the United States in a strong defensive position. But Bush, on

the basis of advice from Pentagon officials and intelligence reports of a continuing, immense Iraqi buildup, comes to believe that a defensive threat to Saddam Hussein is not enough. He orders the deployment of an additional 200,000 troops so that the coalition can prepare for offensive operations.

November 29. Bush believes it is best

"just war." He returns to the White House proclaiming that the crisis is a struggle between "good and evil."

January 12. Bush, realizing that Congress is intent on voting on the war, pushes hard for support of his position and wins in both chambers. He concludes that if the congressional resolution coupled with U.N. support fails to

persuade Hussein to withdraw, nothing will.

January 16. The president launches a massive air campaign against Iraqi military targets. He decides to let the military run the war according to a plan meticulously developed over five months.

Early February. Gen. Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, tells the president that the likelihood of actually driving Hussein from power by capturing

or killing him is remote, even if a ground assault is launched. Bush agrees that he can live with Hussein if Iraq's war-making capabilities are destroyed and the dictator is humiliated.

February 22. Bush, concluding that a triumphant military victory is imminent, rejects the Iraqi-Soviet peace offer and sets an ultimatum for Hussein's withdrawal.

BY KENNETH T. WALSH

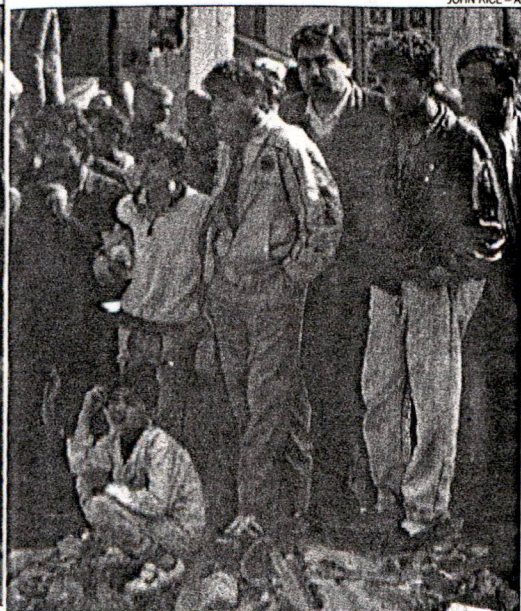


The chief. A Thanksgiving visit in the desert

to act against Hussein with the coalition's blessing. So he secures passage of a U.N. Security Council resolution that sets January 15 as the deadline for Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait. He clings to the hope that Hussein will "get the message" and realize he faces devastation if he does not back down.

Christmas vacation. The president spends much of his time pondering his next moves and establishes a moral rationale for fighting what he believes is a

JOHN RICE - AP



precision, Iraq's citizens are suffering.

choice if it saw what might appear to be a move toward Baghdad itself: either come out of its holes to save Hussein and be decimated from the air; or stay in them, abandon its leader and suffer an air-land siege.

On the ground, military officials say, it may well be a bloody fight, but one the United States and its allies will win. The Iraqi Army is not good at fighting on the run, and it has never had a meaningful engagement with troops fighting with close air support. All of that suggests, as the history of the air campaign to date has shown, that the Iraqis and their stubborn leader have not got a clue what they'll be up against.

Several things could happen next. Dispatching the Republican Guard deep in the enemy's rear would cut off the 400,000 Iraqi troops still in Kuwait. A "fixing" force, made up presumably of Arab, allied and some American troops, would anchor Kuwait's southern

border with Saudi Arabia, crossing the minefields carefully through lanes cleared by U.S. and British combat engineers. That expectation could certainly be realized if large numbers of Iraqi soldiers throw down their weapons. Lines of supply to Iraqi troops, especially those far south on the front lines in Kuwait, already have been all but obliterated by the devastating air war. Desert Storm commanders hope that once the Iraqis realize they're completely cut off from the rear, they will begin surrendering en masse.

Kuwait City itself is not a militarily significant target, but it is important for political reasons, and there is reason to believe that Bush and his commanders would like to see it liberated in the early days of the ground war. If Iraqi forces resist there, however, casualties could mount quickly. Intelligence reports say Iraqi soldiers have bricked artillery pieces and tanks into buildings, and if

ANOTHER COMEBACK STEP

Nixon's the one for Bush

Richard Nixon is making another comeback. The newest "new Nixon" is one of George Bush's most valued informal advisers.

Bush speaks to—and hears from—Nixon more than he does from any other former president. White House aides say that Nixon is in contact with Bush or his senior staff virtually every month, mostly by phone, although Nixon occasionally sends Bush lengthy letters analyzing foreign affairs. The relationship was cemented in 1989, when Nixon helped lobby Congress to defeat legislation that was critical of Bush's policies toward China after the massacre in Tiananmen Square. And it has flowered recently.

Six months ago, Nixon wrote a three-page, single-spaced treatise on U.S.-Soviet relations that Bush now regards as prescient. Nixon advocated a skeptical approach to Mikhail Gorbachev, expressing concern that the Soviet leader's moves toward democracy and a market economy might not last very long because of internal pressures from the right. Nixon also speaks regularly on the phone with Brent Scowcroft, Bush's national-security adviser, and about domestic politics with Chief of Staff John Sununu.

When Bush called Nixon after Iraq invaded Kuwait, the former president urged Bush to "move strongly and decisively" and argued that the crisis represented "a defining moment in history—it's important for the world," according to a top official. Further reinforcing Bush's views, Nixon argued that as the only remaining superpow-

eventually was named by Nixon to several key jobs. But Bush's affinity for Nixon also flows from their mutual experiences—as long-serving vice presidents and foreign-policy experts. Most important, the two men share a hard-headed, pragmatic view of international affairs. Bush tells friends he thinks Nixon did not get proper credit for his

foreign-policy achievements, notably his opening to China, where Bush served as U.S. liaison in 1974 and 1975. He also says he learned from Nixon's mistakes. Bush was Republican Party chairman at the height of the Watergate scandal and says that experience showed him how dangerous it is for presidents to be driven by personal animosity.

The other three living ex-presidents have little to do with Bush's policy-

making. Ronald Reagan is treated with what one White House insider calls "polite correctness," but Bush's predecessor follows international developments only sporadically, so the two have little to talk about. Likewise, Gerald Ford has little of Bush's passion for global affairs, and Jimmy Carter is considered too liberal and partisan to be of much help. For Bush, Nixon's the one.

BY KENNETH T. WALSH



Confidant. A trusty sounding board

er, the United States needed to show that it would act decisively to stop aggression and preserve its vital interests. Bush phoned Nixon again before noon on January 17, just hours after the war began, and Nixon's view was that the war could be won quickly because Iraq's forces were overrated.

The Bush-Nixon relationship has deep roots. Bush was a particular favorite of the Nixon White House when he was a young congressman, and he

the Marines have to retake the city block by block, it will be ugly.

The other potential source of large numbers of casualties is Saddam Hussein's chemical arsenal. Battlefield commanders will try to stay out of range of Iraq's superior artillery. Pentagon officials say air attacks have destroyed nearly 1,500 of Iraq's 3,100 artillery pieces, but the remaining ones, particularly the South African-made G-5s,

official, "getting into the ring with a heavyweight." But what if the welterweight won't quit? Having lost Kuwait and most of his Army, will he finally surrender in his bunker in Baghdad or will one of his own people finally get fed up and shoot him? Having the allied forces go in and dig him out is a prospect no one relishes.

However the final scene of the last act plays out, it is clear that George

says Patrick Clawson, an economist at the Foreign Policy Research Institute, "unless it produces vastly more oil than it now does under OPEC." But it will take Iraq between 18 months and three years just to rebuild its production capability back to its current OPEC quota of 3.14 million barrels a day. And the Saudis and the Turks could both exert more pressure by refusing to reopen the pipelines Iraq will need to export its oil.

CHRISTOPHER MORRIS—DOD POOL



Old Glory. Though few of the U.S. troops are combat vets, commanders say they've never seen more dedicated, well-prepared soldiers.

could wreak havoc on ground troops, especially with shells containing mustard or nerve gas. Presumably, there are still some short-range Iraqi missiles capable of delivering chemical agents. "I pray to God it's not going to happen," says Col. Samuel Raines, commander of the U.S. Army's 7th Engineer Brigade, among the first units deployed in the ground war. "But yes, I'm convinced they're going to use chemicals."

One thing no one can quite answer is what happens after the initial phase of this last act. General Schwarzkopf emphasizes speed and maneuverability, and given the advantages of his troops, the retaking of Kuwait ought to go as smoothly as anything can in war. "This is a welterweight," says one Pentagon

Bush and his allies will have achieved, at whatever the cost, the objectives they set for themselves when they embarked on this venture back in August, even if Saddam Hussein survives the onslaught. "He could still be sitting there in Baghdad," says an administration official, "so at that point you'd still have to deal with him in power. You don't have any guarantees." What the United States can guarantee, however, is that Hussein cannot rearm and re-emerge as a violent and destabilizing force in the region. Iraq has debts of \$80 billion to \$100 billion left over from the Iran-Iraq War, which will make it difficult to do anything but rebuild, and slowly. "There is no way Iraq can afford civilian reconstruction and debt service,"

Iraq could get money quickly by negotiating with the big oil-commodity traders, but such deals would have to be at commercial rates, and for Iraq to borrow much money for reconstruction from major banks and lending institutions would require a nod of approval from the West. "If the U.S. goes on a campaign and says, 'No, don't do it,'" says Clawson, "we can make it hard for the Iraqis." It's already been hard for the Iraqi people. In the coming days, thanks to their megalomaniac leader, it's going to get much, much harder.

BY BRIAN DUFFY AND KENNETH T. WALSH
WITH BRUCE B. AUSTER, LOUISE LIEF, GLORIA BORGER,
STEVEN V. ROBERTS, JEFF TRIMBLE IN MOSCOW AND PETER
CARY IN SAUDI ARABIA

SCUFFLING IN THE WHEELHOUSE?

The brief eclipse of James Baker

Secretary of State James Baker, who cultivates a reputation as the high-flying pooh-bah of U.S. foreign policy, is taking flak from behind his own lines. First, Baker irritated President Bush by issuing a joint statement with Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh last month that erroneously suggested a softening of U.S. views on an Iraqi peace settlement. Then Baker began telling members of Congress that he did not fashion the administration's war policy and could not take full responsibility for it. Now Defense Secretary Dick Cheney tells friends Baker is too interested in playing peacemaker and should never have given Mikhail Gorbachev an opening to play deal maker in the gulf.

The rifts, while not major, reflect new strains within the administration over foreign policy, especially over how to deal with the Soviets, an issue that



Strange bedfellows. Baker and Bessmertnykh

will return to the top of the administration's agenda after the gulf crisis. Baker had invested heavily in his personal relationship with reformist Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, who abruptly quit in December.

Turf battles. Now, with Gorbachev moving rightward, Deputy National Security Adviser Robert Gates and others argue that the United States must not rely on Gorbachev's expressions of good will but must insist on concrete change, especially in now faltering arms-control negotiations.

The strains between Baker's State

Department and the more hard-nosed National Security Council staff stem in part from the usual bureaucratic turf battles. For the moment, the NSC has wrested the upper hand from Baker and his small State Department inner circle. The council is dominating postwar Middle East planning, while Cheney, National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft and Gen. Colin Powell, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs

of Staff, are running the war.

But when the war ends, senior officials predict, Baker will reclaim his perch as something akin to deputy president for foreign affairs. "There aren't many things in life you can be sure of," Bush told an aide last week when asked about the secretary of state's eclipse, "but my relationship with Jim Baker is one of them." As if to reinforce the point, when Bush headed for Camp David last weekend, he took his old pal with him.

BY KENNETH T. WALSH

closely to the Shevardnadze line, which strictly adheres to the United Nations resolutions against Iraq. Primakov has been less critical of Baghdad than of the U.S.-led coalition's attack on Iraq. In recent interviews, Primakov called the continuation of the war "unjustified from any point of view," and said that if an allied ground attack should interrupt peace efforts, "then the responsibility will be with those who start the war." But the splits in the Soviet foreign-policy establishment are not confined to the gulf: In general, the Foreign Ministry has taken a more conciliatory, pro-Western line than either the military or the Communist Party's international-affairs bureaucracy.

Another major element in the new Soviet-American dialogue is Gorbachev's increasing vulnerability to criticism at home, on both foreign and domestic policy. Unlike his predecessors, who could expect rigid adherence to their policies, Gorbachev is less able to exert his will over an increasingly truculent military and administrative apparatus. Indeed, the making of Soviet foreign policy today more closely follows Western practice, in which domestic political and pop-

ular opinions must be taken into account.

The biggest pressure on Gorbachev has come from the conservative military-industrial complex, which forms the core of his power base. As *perestroika* has lost steam, Gorbachev has relied more heavily on traditional pillars of Soviet power—the military, the KGB and the Communist Party—to execute his policies and manage the troubled country.

Nightmares. But his reliance on conservatives has made Gorbachev even more vulnerable to their stinging attacks on his pro-Western foreign policy. Conservatives argue that the gulf war is bringing on the nightmare prospects of a protracted U.S. military presence near Soviet borders, the destruction of a longtime ally and even the fear—however irrational—that the effects of chemical, biological or nuclear war could spread to Soviet territory.

The new toughness over the gulf is also tainting the overall U.S.-Soviet relationship. As the conservative voices rise, the Soviets are increasingly impatient with U.S. criticism over the Baltics. They also are digging in over North Atlantic Treaty Organization charges that they are trying to evade limits imposed by the

Conventional Forces in Europe treaty.

The friction, though, could bring new opportunities for Washington. If the United States no longer feels the need to paper over its differences with the Kremlin in the name of partnership, it can avoid misunderstandings built on false hopes. The joint statement on the gulf issued last month by Baker and Bessmertnykh is a case in point. The document was intended as a means to stroke the Soviets, who were growing unhappy over the conduct of the war, and to make them feel like part of the team. But while the United States dismissed the joint statement as "no big deal," the Soviets say it was the basis of their last two peace plans.

Such misunderstandings, even built on good intentions, may be easier to avoid if the administration adopts a less personal, more realistic view of Soviet-American relations. One senior Bush adviser already is eschewing the flowery phrases in favor of a decidedly bland, but perhaps more accurate, description of U.S.-Soviet relations: "normal rivalry."

BY JEFF TRIMBLE AND DOUGLAS STANGLIN
WITH KENNETH T. WALSH AND LOUISE LIEF

The Inside Story of Moscow's Quest for A Deal



YURI ABRAMOCHIN—NOVOSTI

When Mikhail Gorbachev launched his own diplomatic offensive to resolve the Persian Gulf crisis last October, he asked his personal adviser, Yevgeni Primakov, to take on the task. Primakov, 61, was an ideal choice: as a correspondent for Pravda in the 1960s, he traveled extensively throughout the Middle East and met Saddam Hussein many times.

Primakov knew Saddam "possessed a firmness

that often turned into cruelty, a strong will bordering on implacable stubbornness." But he believed that, given enough time and incentive, the Iraqi leader would have withdrawn from Kuwait without the allies going to war. Primakov, who took part in last week's meetings between Gorbachev and Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz, is writing a book about his diplomacy titled The War Which Might Not Have Been.

By YEVGENI PRIMAKOV, ADVISER TO PRESIDENT GORBACHEV



I returned from Baghdad the night of Feb. 13, where I was sent by Mikhail Gorbachev to meet with Saddam Hussein to try once again, this time while war was being waged, to turn him toward a political settlement. The road to Baghdad was not an easy one. The city was being bombed heavily by the U.S. Air Force and other members of the multinational coalition. In fact, according to the Iraqis, Baghdad was being subjected to particularly severe air attacks at the time we were there.

My conversation with Saddam was also not easy, and yet there was every reason for me to sum it up in a cable to Moscow this way: "There are certain promising signs." After our conversation on the night of Feb. 12, Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz told me about the decision of the Iraqi leadership to send him to the Soviet Union to continue the contacts. Three days later, on the eve of Aziz's arrival in Moscow, the Revolutionary Command Council of Iraq issued its sensational statement, ac-

knowledging for the first time its readiness to pull Iraqi troops out of Kuwait.

Thus it was no wonder the eyes of the world were focused on Moscow last Monday, Feb. 18, when President Gorbachev met for several hours with Aziz. Saadoun Hammadi, Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister, attended the meeting, as did Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh. I also took part.

President Gorbachev put forward a specific plan for a political resolution of the crisis. He suggested a formula providing for the withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait without preconditions and without the continuation of war. This time there was not the usual rhetoric from Aziz. He took the firm Soviet stand calmly, almost in a businesslike manner, showing no signs of displeasure. Aziz then returned to Baghdad to confer with Saddam. Three days later, on Thursday, Feb. 21, he flew back to Moscow with a reply. After another meeting between Aziz and Gorbachev, the U.S.S.R. emerged from the meeting with a fresh proposal that captured the world's attention. The Gorbachev plan, which incorporates an unconditional and complete

withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait, was accepted by Baghdad.

I realize full well that the Iraqi leadership is to blame for this war. But even so, I believe it could have been averted.

■ There Was an Alternative

The intensive way in which the U.N. Security Council adopted 12 resolutions in three months in connection with Iraq's take-over of Kuwait was emotionally justified. But even at the time, it became clear that the process was yielding little of real substance. On the contrary, there was an escalation of Iraq's unlawful actions both against Kuwait and against representatives of other states. This was, perhaps, mostly a result of Saddam's psychological peculiarities. He may have thought he had a lot of time for maneuvering and should start from the harshest position possible.

The harsh economic sanctions and impressive show of military might, paradoxical as it may seem, created room for a diplomatic effort to find a peaceful way out of the dead-end situation Saddam had created. The first stage of the mediation effort was characterized by a desire to find a solution within an Arab framework. One approach was, and continues to be, to link the withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait with steps toward a political settlement of the Palestinian problem. Saddam stressed this idea in his Aug. 12 speech, when he announced his readiness to discuss all problems at once: Kuwait, the removal of Israeli forces from the occupied territories, and the withdrawal of the Syrians from Lebanon.

His offer was meant to harvest political and propaganda gains in the Arab world, where sympathy for Iraq, as the only real fighter for a solution to the Palestinian problem, was growing. It must be said quite bluntly that among the Arab masses, the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait might have been considered a justifiable price for resolving the Palestinian problem. This aspect seems to have gone unnoticed by Washington and by leaders in certain other Western capitals, where the broad support of the Arab masses for Saddam is underestimated.

The chances of adopting Saddam's formula for achieving a political settlement of the Kuwait crisis were practically nil. Yet a two-pronged option remained open: Why not try to make use of the Arabs' interest in resolving the Palestinian problem to compel Iraq to leave Kuwait? And at the same time, why not take a chance on using the political settlement of the crisis as an impetus for bringing about a solution of another major security issue in the region, the Arab-Israeli problem?

■ Rendezvous in Helsinki

When George Bush invited Gorbachev to meet with him in Helsinki on Sept. 9, the prevailing opinion in Moscow, let's be frank, was that things would not end in war. It was thought something would come out of using the arsenal of political and economic sanctions and a military show of force.

On the eve of his meeting with Bush, Gorbachev talked with his advisers until well after midnight. He once again focused on stepping up efforts to resolve the Palestinian problem in order to get Iraq out of Kuwait. In other words, we should ensure that Saddam's withdrawal was unconditional but also state definitively that such a move would open the way for a more active search for a solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. It was not a question of adopting Saddam's plan of Aug. 12, in which he specifically linked an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories to an Iraqi departure from Kuwait. On the other hand, if the U.S. had agreed to our approach to the problem and had been able to talk Israel into agreeing to it, Saddam would not have been able to play the Palestinian card.

Gorbachev was accompanied to Helsinki by Marshal Sergei Akhromeyev, his chief military adviser. Akhromeyev warned the Americans that military action would result in colossal destruction and human casualties. He also warned that the war could not be brought to an end by air strikes alone and that the Iraqis were not afraid of losses on their side.

During their conversation, Gorbachev and Bush emphasized avoiding an armed clash in the Persian Gulf. This possibility could not absolutely be ruled out, since a great deal—some considered everything—depended on Saddam. But Gorbachev told me afterward that he had concluded that the U.S. President intended to solve the Kuwait problem through political methods.

In an effort to strengthen Bush's will, Gorbachev told him that the dispatch of armed forces to the gulf and the active policy of the Security Council had already resolved a number of strategic tasks: armed action had not spread to other countries of the Arabian Peninsula, and an oil crisis, which had threatened the world economy as a result of both Kuwait's and Iraq's suspension of oil exports, had been averted. Gorbachev also pointed out that the stand against aggression had received international support. Now what was needed was additional diplomatic efforts.

■ Saddam Hussein and Me

My long-standing acquaintanceship with Saddam was no secret. I first met him in 1969, when I was working as a *Pravda* correspondent in the Middle East. At that time, he was not yet the President, but he had already become one of the most influential members in the Iraqi leadership. I also became closely acquainted with Aziz, who then served as editor in chief of *Ath-Thawra*, the main newspaper of the Baath Party.

Those were unstable times. The wing of the Baath Party in which Saddam and Aziz were members had just come to power. In the offices of both men there were submachine guns. Even at that stage, many features of Saddam's character were clearly evident, features that were preserved and developed further when he became the leader of Iraq. He possessed a firmness that often turned into cruelty, a strong will bordering on implacable stubbornness, a readiness to go charging toward his goal, regardless of obstacles and the price, and an overblown understanding of such concepts as honor and dignity. Saddam was quite rational, but he had a penchant for making unexpected about-turns.

I met with Saddam many times, when he visited Moscow and during my missions to Baghdad. Our relationship developed in such a way that I could talk with him without all the diplomatic niceties. Saddam accepted such a style of conversation, and it seemed to me that he liked it that way.

My ties to Saddam were taken into account when President Gorbachev instructed me in early October to go to Baghdad as his personal representative to help resolve the Kuwait crisis. I was accompanied by the deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers, Igor Belousov.

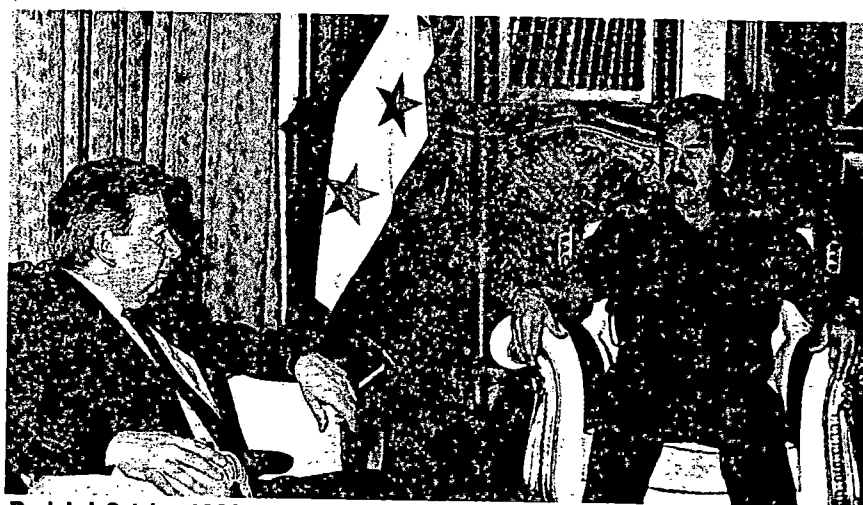
If I have to fall to my knees and surrender or fight, Saddam said, I will choose the latter.

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We had two objectives: to reach an agreement to allow our 7,830 military and industrial specialists based in Iraq to leave, and to show Saddam the total hopelessness of refusing to abide by the Security Council's demands. We also wanted to look for a way to bring about the withdrawal of the Iraqi forces from Kuwait by diplomatic means.

Aziz met us at the airport. I talked with him for several hours, and the session was probably the toughest I've ever had with an Iraqi official. He focused entirely on trying to prove that Kuwait belonged to Iraq from the point of view of history, politics and economics. He spoke about how certain other Arab states "purposefully," as Aziz emphasized, made Iraq act the way it did. I thought to myself how Aziz, arriving in Moscow in 1980 a few days after the beginning of the Iran-Iraq war, had tried to prove to me that it was not Iraq but Iran that had started the fighting.

In Aziz's monologue one could easily hear the sharp note of displeasure and dissatisfaction with the policy of the Soviet Union, which "should have acted in a different way, consider-



Baghdad, October 1990: Saddam admits that he suffers from a Masada complex

ing its treaty with Iraq." But when we asked Aziz why Iraq had not notified Moscow before it intervened in Kuwait, he sidestepped the question.

The talk with Saddam took place in the Presidential Palace on Oct. 5. Deeply engrossed in the written message from President Gorbachev, Saddam did not react directly to the fairly strong phrases in it about the need to get immediately out of Kuwait and to restore the sovereignty of that state. But the atmosphere at the beginning of the talk was tense.

After Saddam repeated everything about Kuwait that we had heard earlier from Aziz, Belousov and I raised the question about our specialists. He responded instantly and definitely: All who wished could leave, but in the next two months the quota would be limited to 1,000, so as not to hamper work or halt the projects.

"We must not agree with that," Belousov said quietly.

Knowing that our embassy had received approximately 1,500 applications to get out of the country, I suggested drawing up a schedule for the departure of 1,500 specialists a month.

"Let it be your way," Saddam finally agreed.

Then the subject changed. Saddam contended that as soon as Iraq had scored a military success over Iran in 1988, it became the target of a "multilateral conspiracy." Neither the U.S. nor Israel, Saddam said, could allow the existence of an Iraq with "beefed-up military muscles." Saddam contended that Saudi Arabia and certain emirates in the gulf were involved in this "conspiracy." Economic pressure had come into

play, with Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates violating the oil-export quotas that had been set down by OPEC. The price of oil had dropped from \$21 to \$11 per bbl., which, he said, "spelled economic ruin" for Iraq.

I shall not go into the essence of his charges—something in all this may have corresponded to the truth; something was a figment of his imagination, the result of overwrought suspicions. But that is what he really believed.

"Doesn't it seem to you that just like the Israelis, you have a Masada complex?" I asked Saddam. He nodded his head.

"But then your actions will to a great extent be determined by the logic of a doomed man?" I asked.

It seemed to me that Saddam also agreed with this, but he said nothing in reply.

Then we switched to a discussion of the possible consequences of refusing to remove Iraqi forces from Kuwait and the world's reaction to the Kuwait crisis. I especially wanted to bring up these two subjects, since I realized that it was possible Saddam did not have complete information. He gave priority

to positive reports: for example, about the support Iraq was receiving in the Arab world, about the antiwar demonstrations in the West, about the first hints of differences between the allies in the anti-Iraqi coalition. And as for bad news, the bearer could pay a high price.

"If you do not remove your forces from Kuwait, you will inevitably become the target of an attack," I told him. "You must have some sense of responsibility for the war that will come down on the region. Of course, you realize that the purpose of my mission here is not intimidation. But perhaps there is no way out of the situation other than the pullout of Iraqi forces."

Saddam's response was mixed. He said, in the event of a military option, he would employ all the means at his disposal and would undoubtedly spread

the flames of war to other countries, especially Israel. If I have to fall to my knees and surrender or fight, Saddam said, I will choose the latter.

At the same time, Saddam noted—and here I would like to convey what was said with almost a stenographer's accuracy—the following: "As a realist I understand the true state of affairs. Yet I cannot resolve the question of Kuwait if it is not tied up with the solution to other problems of the region. I have already expressed this idea on Aug. 12. However, I want to make one thing clear [and here Saddam was stepping back somewhat from his Aug. 12 statement]. The time linkage and the process leading to a solution of the Palestinian problem are to be discussed at negotiations."

■ We Devise a Plan

After returning to Moscow on the evening of Oct. 6, I informed President Gorbachev in detail about the meetings in Baghdad. Once he heard my oral report, he told us to draw up proposals, hoping to continue the peace mission. I submitted my ideas on Oct. 8.

The whole plan hinged on finding the dividing line between "rewarding" aggression and "saving face" for Saddam. This would be the price for the withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait and for avoiding the military option, with all its dangerous consequences.

This is how we thought it might happen. Iraq had to

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pledge that it would pull out its forces from Kuwait and then carry out the withdrawal. But Saddam would also know that once his troops had pulled out, a process would start that would lead to a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The members of the Security Council would actively participate in this process.

Another problem we could not bypass was the territorial and economic disputes between Iraq and Kuwait. Once again, according to our proposals, Saddam would know ahead of time that talks with the Kuwaiti leadership about these disputes would be organized within an Arab framework—but only after the withdrawal of Iraq's forces from the entire territory that was under Kuwait's sovereignty until Aug. 2.

Serious thought also had to be given to a regional security system. On the one hand, Iraq's neighbors were apprehensive, and not without reason, because its aggressive behavior in the past few years was based on a rapidly growing military potential. On the other hand, Saddam himself was anxious, since he was sure that he would remain in the "gunsights" even if Iraqi troops were pulled out of Kuwait.

It became absolutely clear that one of the main elements of such a security system had to be a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Without such a settlement, it would be impossible even to define the borders of the neighboring countries, to say nothing of ensuring their safety.

To sum up, our proposed approach was to guarantee the withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait by political means. This would be done by convincing Saddam that following his withdrawal, but not in "linkage"—I want to stress this—certain steps would be taken that promoted a settlement of regional disputes and stabilized the situation in the Middle East.

■ At the White House

I arrived in Washington on Oct. 18 to discuss my plan with U.S. officials. It was easy to see the genuine interest of the Americans in these meetings. The heightened interest in exchanging views with me might have been due to the fact that since the beginning of the gulf conflict, Washington had not had any direct contacts with Saddam. It seemed to me that they got their information about the situation mainly from their allies: Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Turkey.

I met first with Secretary of State James Baker. Also taking part was Dennis Ross, director of the policy-planning staff and the State Department's chief expert on the Middle East. What was immediately evident to us was that while taking an interest in the details, Ross listened to my explanation in a reserved way, if not to say quite negatively. The main idea—making Iraq understand that once troops were withdrawn, we would be ready to discuss the Arab-Israeli issue in order to resolve the Palestinian problem—drew a decidedly negative response.

"Israel won't go for that," Ross curtly said.

Ross also voiced skepticism about drawing a line between "rewarding" Saddam and "saving face" for him, which we considered necessary to ensure Iraq's exit from Kuwait.

There was little that was new in my next meeting, with National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft and his deputy, Robert Gates. Scowcroft was more interested in our perceptions of the situation in Iraq than in the proposals for getting out of the crisis. The meeting became lively after the unexpected arrival of President Bush. He had made a dash through the pouring rain from his private residence, just to drop by for a minute, all soaking wet, to shake our hands.

"I had to come by, knowing you were here with Scowcroft," he declared. This human side of Bush really makes you like him. "I'm looking forward to our meeting tomorrow morning," he told us as he left.

On the morning of Oct. 19, we were received in the White House by the President. Also present were Baker, Scowcroft, head of the White House staff John Sununu, and other close aides of the President. Bush asked whether it was really possible to interpret Saddam's contention that he was a "realist" as a sign of his readiness to get out of Kuwait. The President displayed a keen interest in the psychological characteristics of Saddam and in the history of my relations with him. Bush asked many specific questions, and he took notes. It was obvious that some of my observations and judgments did not coincide with the point of view of the President. For example, he was very doubtful that there was growing support for Saddam in the Arab world.

On the whole, it seemed that Bush was still hesitating whether or not to make the final decision for a military strike against Iraq. He did not rule out and actually spoke in favor of our holding a second meeting with Saddam. But he stressed that it must have a limited focus: "to inform Saddam about the uncompromising position of the U.S." However, and this too was quite typical, Bush immediately added, "If a positive signal should come from Saddam, it will be heard by us."

The two-hour meeting ended with President Bush saying he thought he had learned many interesting things from us. There was something new in a number of ideas that had been presented. But he noted that he had to consult with his advisers.

"Do you plan to stay on in Washington?" he asked.

I said I was ready to stay over if there was a need for it.

"I'll give you an answer in about two or three hours," Bush replied, and warmly said goodbye.

Forty-five minutes later, during lunch, Gates told me, "The President has asked me to inform you that you can decide for yourself what time you want to leave." I understood this to mean that there would be no continuation of the talks.

■ Meeting with Mrs. Thatcher

Shortly before I left Washington, President Gorbachev called to say I should stop in London to see Margaret Thatcher. The Prime Minister received us at her country residence, Chequers. She listened attentively to the information I presented her, without interrupting. But then, for a good hour, she allowed no one to interrupt her monologue, in which she outlined in a most condensed way a position that was gaining greater momentum: not to limit things to a withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait but to inflict a devastating blow at Iraq, "to break the back" of Saddam and destroy the entire military, and perhaps industrial, potential of that country.

Mrs. Thatcher did not mince any words. No one should interfere with this objective, she declared. Saddam should not have even the shadow of a doubt that the world community would step back. It would achieve its objectives. No one should

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even try to ward off the blow against the Saddam regime. "So you see no other option but war?" I managed to get in with difficulty.

"No," Thatcher replied.

"When will the military action start?" I asked.

"This I cannot tell you, since the military action should come as a surprise to Iraq," she replied.

The talk with Mrs. Thatcher had already gone beyond the two hours allotted. Sensing that it was becoming more abrasive, I thought I should wind it up. "I found this conversation with you useful," I told her. "Your stand is now clear to me. I do hope that this conversation was of some use to you too."

Then, all of a sudden, the Iron Lady was again the kind and polite hostess.

"Let's change the atmosphere," she said. "We'll go to the library and forget about business." It seemed to me that Mrs. Thatcher was pleased that I followed her example and preferred whiskey.

When I arrived back in Moscow, I reported the results of

over, a powerful strike, against Iraq is unavoidable if you do not announce your withdrawal from Kuwait and carry out this withdrawal in practice."

"How can I announce the withdrawal of troops if I am not informed how the question of the removal of the U.S. forces from Saudi Arabia will be resolved?" Saddam replied. "Will the U.N. sanctions against Iraq be lifted, or will they remain in force? How will my country's interest concerning an outlet to the sea be ensured? Will there be some form of linkage between the Iraqi troop pullout from Kuwait and a solution to the Palestinian problem?"

Without knowing the answers to these questions, Saddam said, he could do nothing. "This will be suicidal for me," Saddam stressed. "And it is not only a question that is of concern to me. If, without receiving answers to these questions, I announce a troop withdrawal from Kuwait, it will be Iraq that commits suicide. That is precisely why I am expecting these contacts will continue."

Therefore, although with great stress and strain, the mechanism of a political settlement could have been set in motion, at least, a little bit. I especially underscore "with great stress and strain" and "at least, a little bit." There was no reason to exaggerate the possibilities for developing this process, but at the same time, there was no reason to belittle them either.



Moscow, February 1991: Aziz, Primakov, Bessmertnykh and Gorbachev discuss options

the trip to Gorbachev. My main conclusion: the barometer of the situation was clearly pointing to a military solution. The President instructed me to continue the mission, and I left for Cairo, Damascus, Riyadh and Baghdad on Oct. 24.

■ Meeting Saddam Again

My second session with Saddam proved just as long as the first. Saddam invited practically the entire Iraqi leadership to the first part of the meeting. All were dressed in military uniform. Saddam pointed out that there were "hawks" and "doves" among his advisers. I wouldn't rule out the possibility that Saddam had said this on purpose, to show that there was room for maneuver. But even so, I had my doubts that Saddam's words about a diversity of opinion in the Iraqi leadership reflected the true picture. Everything was decided by one man.

It seemed to me that certain changes had taken place during the three weeks that had passed since the first meeting. During our talk on Oct. 5, Saddam had emphasized that Kuwait "historically belonged" to Iraq, but this time the subject was not broached at all. Nor was he dismissive when I told him that the withdrawal of Iraqi forces must be carried out "as a first step toward any other actions." He also seemed willing to speak about the specific conditions for such a withdrawal.

Later, when we talked one-on-one, I began by saying, "You have known me for a long time, and apparently you have become convinced that I try to tell you the truth. A strike, more-

hung like the Sword of Damocles over Iraq. However, it seemed to me that if such a resolution became a reality, then the field for action would be narrowed. And I was firmly convinced that psychologically, for Saddam, the adoption of such a resolution would be counterproductive.

On Nov. 29, Resolution No. 678, calling for the U.S. and its allies to "use all necessary means" to liberate Kuwait if Iraq did not withdraw by Jan. 15, was adopted.

President Gorbachev decided that we should try to set up one last meeting between American and Iraqi officials. Flying to Baghdad at the end of December, Belousov tried to talk Saddam into holding a meeting with American representatives in Geneva, when President Bush's proposal for such a session already seemed to be blocked. The meeting between Baker and Aziz was held on Jan. 9, but it produced no results.

At 2:45 a.m. on Jan. 17, I was awakened by the ringing of the telephone. Gorbachev said Bessmertnykh, Defense Minister Dmitri Yazov and KGB chief Vladimir Kryuchkov were on their way to the Kremlin and asked me to come too. Then he explained: Several minutes ago, the U.S. Secretary of State had called the Foreign Minister at home and informed him that military action would start in a matter of minutes. Gorbachev asked that Bush be informed urgently of his request that the attack be postponed for a time, so that one more attempt could be made to talk Iraq into announcing its readiness to remove its troops from Kuwait. Baker told Bessmertnykh that the military action had begun. Missiles and bombs were already exploding on Iraq and Kuwait.

and-control centers; the U.S. had even set up a helicopter-refueling depot about 25 miles behind the Iraqi border fortifications. As the deadline approached, allied engineers cut wide passages through defensive sand berms that the Iraqis had erected along the borders, creating gaps that soldiers and tanks could pour through. Allied planes began using napalm for the first time in the war, dropping it on oil-filled trenches in front of Iraqi positions. The Iraqis had planned to set fire to the oil when allied troops tried to cross; the napalm was apparently intended to burn it off prematurely so that the fires would be out when the coalition troops arrived. The Ira-

qis, in a final nose-thumbing gesture, lobbed more Scud missiles at Israel only minutes before the deadline.

Bush gave Saddam the Saturday deadline after a frustrating week of Soviet efforts to broker a deal that would be acceptable to both Iraq and the allies. Moscow had secured Baghdad's commitment to a supposedly "unconditional" pullout from Kuwait, but the agreement was accompanied by a string of conditions. Washington and its major partners advanced a number of reasons for rejecting the Soviet-mediated offer, ranging from simple distrust of Saddam to news of the scorched-earth policy in Kuwait. But the predominant reason

American tanks use mine-clearing blades to breach sand berms

was a feeling that delay was beginning to work against the allies. They were being pulled into the very "bazaar bargaining," as one British official phrased it, that they had sworn to avoid. Worse, they were being maneuvered into a box. Had negotiations stayed on the course they were taking, the U.S. and friends would have had to either consent to a Soviet rescue of Saddam from certain defeat, and all too likely his resuscitation as an aggressive menace to Middle East and world peace, or risk being called warmongers.

The Night That Bush Decided

George Bush, as is his habit at times of crisis, escaped the White House on Thursday for a bit of what he calls "prudent recreating"—an evening at Ford's Theater to see *Black Eagles*, a play about black airmen in World War II. Says one of his top advisers: "I think it helped clear his mind" for what he knew would be one of the most fateful decisions of his presidency.

Shortly before Bush departed for the show, he had spoken with Mikhail Gorbachev, who reported that he and Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz had agreed on terms for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait, terms that would allow Saddam Hussein to preserve much of his military machine and political prestige.

Bush quickly convened nine top aides, and while he watched his play, they plotted a countermove. "It was a very delicate business," said a senior official. "We wanted to maintain as good a re-

lationship as possible with the Soviets, but at the same time, we were determined not to back down—to make Saddam either surrender to us or face military defeat."

At 10:20 p.m., when Bush returned to his private study on the second floor of the White House residence, his war cabinet was waiting. It was a warm evening for February; the fireplace was dark. Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Colin Powell was clad in a green turtleneck and sports jacket. Vice President Dan Quayle and Defense Secretary Dick Cheney wore tuxedos, having come from a dinner for visiting Queen Margrethe II of Denmark. Cheney had removed his eyeglasses and was absent-mindedly chewing one end of the frames. Like everyone else, he was studying a pair of freshly copied documents in his lap.

One was a list of "criteria" by which the allies would judge whether an Iraqi withdrawal was unconditional and worthy of



Formally, the allies denied they were negotiating at all. But that was true only in the sense that diplomats and heads of government were exchanging views mostly by telephone and cable rather than face-to-face around a table. Otherwise, the pattern of offer and counterproposal, of demands advanced, accepted, modified or dropped, was pretty much what it might have been in a formal conference.

The ballet began with a Baghdad announcement Friday, Feb. 15, indicating Iraq's "readiness to deal with" the basic U.N. resolution demanding withdrawal from Kuwait—subject to farfetched conditions; one demanded reparations for allied

bombing. But though Bush promptly denounced the proposal as a "cruel hoax," Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev proclaimed himself encouraged enough to invite Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz to Moscow for new talks. Aziz arrived on Sunday, Feb. 17, by a roundabout route that underscored the total air supremacy the allies have achieved over Iraq. He was driven across the Iranian border, then helicoptered to Tehran, and flew from there to the Soviet capital. If he had flown directly from Baghdad, his plane might have been shot down.

In Moscow, Gorbachev handed Aziz a Soviet proposal that was quickly communicated to the allies fighting Iraq. Basically,

Some of the 400 Iraqis who surrendered after a U.S. helicopter assault last week

Iraq would withdraw, supposedly unconditionally, from Kuwait. In return, Moscow would undertake to preserve Saddam from any punitive actions—a war-crimes trial, for instance—guarantee Iraq's territorial integrity, try to get economic sanctions against Iraq lifted and work for an overall Middle East peace conference, which among other things would address the problem of the Palestinians and Arab-Israeli disputes.

That touched off a round of telephone consultations among Washington, Lon-

an allied cease-fire. The second was a single-page argument about why the Gorbachev-Aziz agreement was "unacceptable."

Bush scanned the drafts, nodded and said, "I like both of these. Let's put them together. It's not enough to just say we don't accept the Soviet plan. I went through this with Gorbachev on the phone, and he knows it's unacceptable and he knows the specific reasons why, and we ought to lay them out to the whole world."

"Well, let's set a date and set a time," suggested Powell.

"I think that's a good idea," Bush replied immediately.

Powell explained that a deadline would be "helpful to the military because then my guys in the field know what to expect. They know exactly what to be looking for and when." National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft agreed.

The discussion then turned to the question of "Do we make the date tomorrow night or Sunday or Monday or when?" Bush wanted it as soon as possible. So did Powell. Secretary of State James Baker cautioned that the U.S. ultimatum must have allied

support and must be seen to allow a reasonable time for Iraqi acceptance. "The diplomatic question was the toughest," said a participant. "We had 28 partners, and the biggest concern was making sure we could get everybody on board."

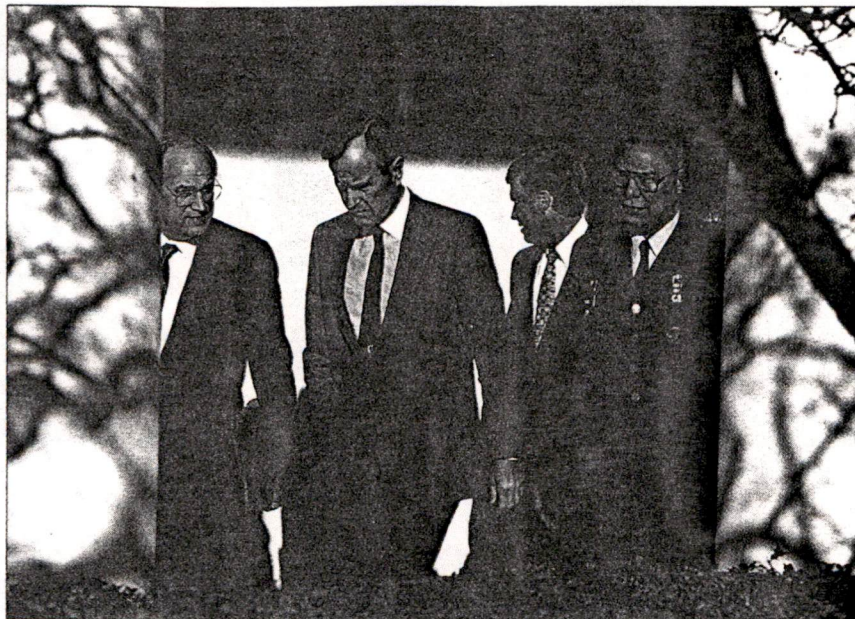
Someone suggested that noon Saturday be the deadline. Bush: "I think that's a good idea. What's it do for you, Colin?" Powell: "It's good for me." Noon in Washington was sundown in Kuwait, where allied forces hold the advantage in night-fighting ability. Bush then asked, "What's it do for you, Jim?" Baker: "It's good for me too, but it is a new item that the allies don't know about and we need to get back to them about."

At that point, about 11:15 p.m., Bush said, "O.K., we're agreed then. It's noon Saturday."

The meeting broke about midnight. Baker went back to his office to phone the allied foreign ministers, and Bush went off to bed, confident that whatever course Saddam chose, he would be acting on a timetable and conditions set not by himself or the Soviet Union but by the U.S. and its allies. ■

Bush's United Front

No second-guessing among the president's men



ROBERT TRIPPETT—SIPA

At the White House with Cheney, Vice President Dan Quayle and Powell

The usual joking and bantering had stopped. The mood in the White House was somber and subdued. The president was said to be weary. "The damn drums keep me up," he said earlier this month, referring to the day-and-night drumbeat of antiwar demonstrators camped out in Lafayette Park across Pennsylvania Avenue. Yet while Bush's usual high spirits were slightly muted, he also seemed calm and resolute. If the White House spinners were to be believed, Bush was Gary Cooper in wingtips, steady and cool at High Noon. Indeed, Bush looked strong and steady when he announced that he had ordered a massive ground assault to begin. The president, who can appear flummoxed dealing with querulous members of Congress, seemed sternly confident about waging a violent ground war against Saddam Hussein.

The Oval Office is usually a vortex. Politicians and favor seekers troop through, demanding and wheedling. Cabinet officers squabble, the press snipes and the public watches skeptically. Yet since the gulf war began, Bush has been blessed with an unusual absence of discord and second-guessing. His 86 percent approval rating is the highest since Harry Truman's on the eve of VJ Day in 1945, thanks in part to an adversary who

accommodates Bush with fresh outrages every day. Herded along by the president's telephone diplomacy, the allies have for the most part stayed in line. At home, Congress is quiescent, the right wing is quiet and the Democrats are in hiding. Even more remarkable for a town where infighting and leaking are SOP, the president's own aides and advisers were not trying to trump one another or their bosses through the press.

This unanimity of purpose stands in stark contrast to other war cabinets in recent history. Horrified by the toll and futility of the Vietnam War, Robert McNamara, Lyndon Johnson's secretary of defense, resigned in tears. Jimmy Carter's secretary of state, Cyrus Vance, was so opposed to military intervention during the Iran hostage crisis that he resigned after the failure of the Desert One rescue mission. Ronald Reagan's secretaries of state and defense, George Shultz and Caspar Weinberger, quarreled bitterly over the decision to commit troops to Lebanon in 1983. Even John F. Kennedy's "Excom" was racked by fights between hawks and doves on its way to resolving the Cuban missile crisis.

Bush's war councils have not been free

of debate. His advisers have sparred over questions of timing and tone. But they have been unanimous about taking a hard line with Saddam. There are no doves at the White House; Bush's men, like their boss, are all hawks. No one has counseled the president to negotiate with Saddam or delay the ground war to allow diplomacy to take its course.

Like minds: The united front is no accident. Bush intentionally picked like-minded men to serve him. He wanted advisers who value collegiality and know how to keep their mouths shut. Moderation, pragmatism and a certain gray-suited reserve describe Defense Secretary Dick Cheney and national-security adviser Brent Scowcroft. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell is cocky and breezy, but he is a political general (he served a year as Reagan's national-security adviser) and he knows how to get along with his civilian superiors. Secretary of State James Baker is a more politically ambitious and complex figure, but he is also the president's best friend. Pun-dits like to speculate that Bush and Baker harbor feelings of rivalry beneath the Texas old-boy fellowship, and reporters and junior staffers alike are constantly looking for (and trying to stir up) competition between Baker and Scowcroft. But the reality is that any disagreements between the two on the gulf crisis have occurred within a fairly narrow spectrum, with Scowcroft taking a slightly more hawkish line. Over the weekend, Bush answered the gossip that Scowcroft had replaced Baker as top foreign-policy adviser by taking Baker with him to Camp David, leaving Scowcroft to mind the White House.

THE WAR DESERT STORM

There is a larger purpose to all this togetherness. If the United States is to play top cop in Bush's "new world order," it cannot appear weak and divided. The administration seems determined to show Third World bullies that the America they remember from Vietnam, hobbled by gradualism and dissent, has been replaced by a united front willing to use massive force. But unanimity has its risks, too. A president is not necessarily well served by appointing clones. Self-assurance can breed arrogance. So far, the administration has only needed to stay united in success. A setback in the desert could start the fingers pointing even among Bush loyalists. Public support could evaporate in an instant. In that case, the warm band-of-brothers feeling will fade, and the Oval Office will become a very lonely place.

EVAN THOMAS and ANN MCDANIEL

Quayle's High Visibility Fails to Allay Worries

Qualifications Still Concern, Poll Shows

By Ann Devroy
Washington Post Staff Writer

A week ago, President Bush, surrounded by his senior advisers, marched out of the Oval Office to announce new U.S. demands in the Persian Gulf crisis.

As they moved toward the Rose Garden, the blue-suited men divided into two groups. Into the shadows and out of camera range went White House Chief of Staff John H. Sununu, Defense Secretary Richard B. Cheney, national security adviser Brent Scowcroft and others. Into the spotlight went Bush and Vice President Quayle, who took his place before the world's television cameras one step behind the president.

For Quayle, the war has brought weeks of unusually high visibility. Yet, despite his new prominence—some say because of it—Americans continue to have doubts that Quayle is qualified to take over the presidency, according to a new Washington Post-ABC News Poll of 1,004 adults taken Feb. 22-26. The poll, duplicating questions asked in August 1989, found that 49 percent of those questioned said they thought Quayle would not be qualified to take over the Oval Office and 43 percent felt he would. In 1989, 52 percent said he would not be qualified; 38 percent said he would.

Throughout the war, Bush has given him prominence as a key adviser. He has been present and active in the dozens of crisis meetings at the White House and Camp David. He has given speeches that were televised because of the expanded war coverage, made more than a dozen visits to military bases (many covered on live television) and worked behind the scenes on congressional and U.S.-Israeli relations.

Nevertheless, while voters con-

tinue to be unworried about Quayle in the vice presidential slot, he is unable to make the leap of approval from No. 2 to No. 1.

A separate Post-ABC News survey over the weekend showed that many Americans would prefer that Bush replace Quayle with Cheney; Secretary of State James A. Baker III; Army Gen. Colin L. Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; or Army Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, commander of Operation Desert Storm in the Persian Gulf.

The question of a vice president's fitness to be president is always the ultimate test of the officeholder. The presumption is that Quayle, like Bush before him and vice presidents stretching back into history, are waiting their turn to seek the top office. Bush said the most important characteristic for choosing a vice president is "who [would be] best to take over in case of something happening to the president."

Quayle's "problem," one senior official said, "is that he is a public caricature based on the first few weeks of the 1988 campaign. He is actually quite different inside, but the vice presidency, being what it is, you just don't have the sustained public attention, even in times like these, where people think about you enough to change their minds."

The next time that sustained public exposure will occur is in the 1992 presidential campaign, if Quayle remains on the ticket. All Bush's senior aides say Bush will not drop his vice president because that would amount to a confession of error in making the initial choice. "Besides, the reason he'd do something like that is (a) he needs the couple points a new vice president might bring or (b) he wants to have a clear successor in place," one party operative said. Neither is the case with Bush today, he said.

White House and vice presidential aides strongly promote the notion that Quayle is an adviser in more than just name, and some administration officials who are not particular fans of Quayle agree.

According to Sununu, Quayle's role in the crisis has centered on three areas: helping with Congress, particularly in the Senate in securing votes to pass the resolution authorizing military force; being an unofficial channel to and from the Israelis and the American Jewish community; and arguing the case "of what could and could not be done with particular weapons."

Quayle is a longtime supporter of the Patriot missile system, and was

WASHINGTON POST-ABC NEWS POLL

Q ■ Regardless of your personal feelings about Dan Quayle, do you think it was a mistake or it was not a mistake for George Bush to pick Quayle as his vice president?

	Feb. 26, 1991	Aug. 8, 1989
Mistake to pick Quayle	39%	43%
Not a mistake to pick Quayle	51%	47%
Don't know/No opinion	11%	10%

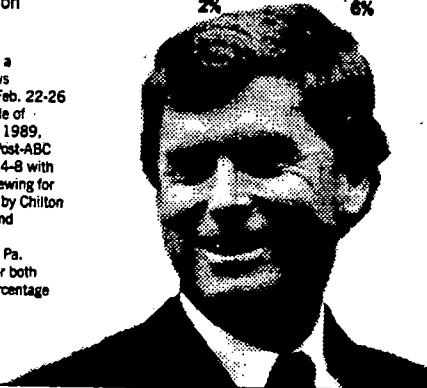
Q ■ If something were to happen to George Bush, do you think that Dan Quayle would be qualified to take over as president of the United States, or not?

Quayle would be qualified	43%	38%
Quayle would not be qualified	49%	52%
Don't know/No opinion	7%	10%

Q ■ Is having Dan Quayle as vice president something that worries you, or something that doesn't worry you?

Worries you	29%	31%
Does not worry you	69%	63%
Don't know/No opinion	2%	6%

NOTE: The Feb. 26 poll is a Washington Post-ABC News telephone poll conducted Feb. 22-26 among a nationwide sample of 1,004 adults. The Aug. 8, 1989, poll is also a Washington Post-ABC News poll conducted Aug. 4-8 with a sample of 1,022. Interviewing for these polls was conducted by Chilton Research of Radnor, Pa., and International Research Communications of Media, Pa. Margin of sampling error for both polls is plus or minus 3 percentage points.



THE WASHINGTON POST

given credit by then-Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger in 1986-87 when he fought to resurrect the system in a House-Senate conference after funding had been cut.

Quayle's position as chief backer of Israeli interests in the administration has been less visible publicly than his other roles. "He has been an alternative voice" inside arguing for a softer line toward Israel, a senior official noted. Sununu said Quayle "historically has very good relations not only with the American Jewish community but also with representatives of the Israeli government [and] was helpful in impressing on them the seriousness of our position and, in turn, bringing us their concerns . . ."

Unlike Bush, who showed his hand only to President Ronald Reagan and kept silent in meetings, Quayle has been outspoken in many sessions. Quayle, one official said, "has gone against the grain in his fealty to Israel" and in promoting

early, along with Baker, the need to get congressional approval for military action. Quayle had argued unsuccessfully that Bush should call Congress back into session over the Christmas holiday period.

The vice president also has served as a rhetorical trial balloon, of sorts, making some of the "moral" case for war, for example, that Bush would incorporate into his speeches later. Quayle has made some points the president did not care to make—criticizing anti-war demonstrations and questioning the role of the news media.

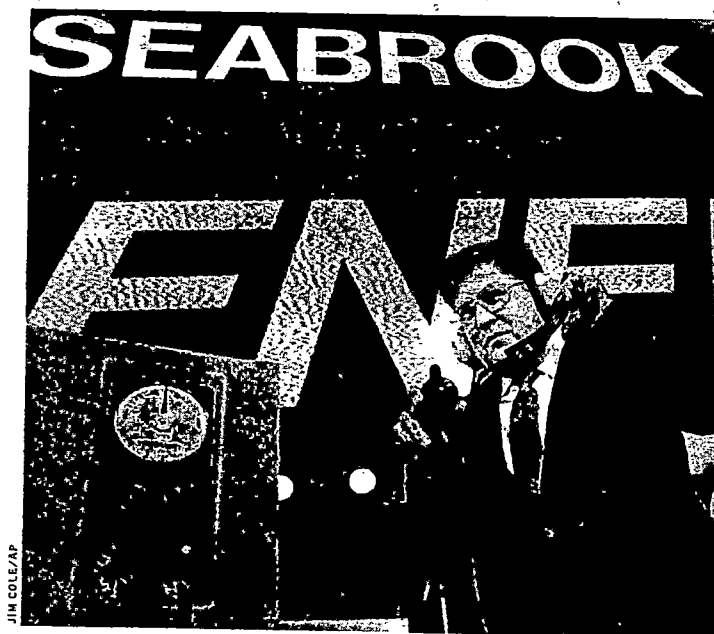
One senior official, asked about Quayle's standing today, noted: "Given how weak he was coming out of the campaign, and given the generational and experience differences with Bush and his other advisers, he has managed to make himself heard and weigh in. Has he crossed the credibility barriers? No, I am afraid not. And George Bush keeps raising those barriers higher."



project. As one Massachusetts Democrat puts it, "He's a Shiite Muslim on nuclear power." In the 1986 election, Sununu's plurality was less than a quarter of what it had been in 1984. At the end of his second term, citing the difficulties of raising and educating eight children on his Governor's salary, Sununu decided to return to private life as an engineering consultant.

Lee Atwater emerges from his office at the Republican National Committee with a guitar and proceeds to play a few blues chords. Then he begins to rhapsodize about John Sununu. "No politician has ever done as much for another politician as John Sununu did for George Bush," he says. Then he says it again. This is the Republican litany. "In my business, the only way to get a true evaluation is in foxhole times," Atwater says. "In those last 10 days before the New Hampshire primary in 1988, he was like a field general. He made the difference."

Culturally, Atwater and Sununu are at opposite poles. The 39-year-old party chairman has just cut an album with such bluesmen as B.B. King; Sununu's taste runs to Zamfir, whose plaintive flute melodies are hawked on late-night TV. But when it comes to politics, the two men have been in harmony since their days on the front lines in New Hampshire, which proved so cru-



"The chief of staff has to be firm," says Sununu, with Bush and national security adviser Brent Scowcroft.

In 1985 Sununu checked the power at Seabrook, the nuclear facility that damaged his political standing.

cial to both men's ascendancy.

In March 1987, Atwater, then national chairman of the Bush presidential campaign, concluded that Bush would lose the Iowa caucuses. A victory in New Hampshire became essential, and Atwater turned to Sununu. The Governor, using his influence with mayors, sheriffs and planning board chairmen, personally recruited Bush "captains" for most of the

234 towns and cities in New Hampshire. But it wasn't enough. A few days before the primary, Sen. Robert Dole of Kansas was ahead in the polls. Atwater felt a TV ad attacking Dole as straddling key issues could make the difference—but his candidate thought it was too tough. Atwater sent Sununu to see Bush. By the time Bush came around, however, it was the Saturday before the primary and too late for



At LaSalle Military Academy in 1957, Lt. Col. John Sununu greeted Bishop Walter Kellenberg of Rockville Centre, N.Y.

BIO

ward the Bush White House, hoping it will prove less intransigent than the Reagan team. Even the press, with a few exceptions, has been writing glowing valentines to Sununu in the age-old tradition of reporters cultivating a source.

Still, Sununu's job as gatekeeper to the President is, by its nature, one that is likely to make enemies. It is no surprise that environmentalists, pro-choice advocates and liberals have run afoul of him. Yet Republicans have discovered that Sununu can be even tougher on his friends than on his enemies. Full of contradictions, he is, by turns, petty and magnanimous, a rigid

ideologue and a cool accommodationist, an easygoing colleague and a bully.

Ultimately the key question about this former New Hampshire Governor is whether the very qualities that got him to the White House will eventually do him in. "He is the embodiment of the phrase 'too smart by half,'" says one Capitol Hill Republican. "He is extraordinarily bright. But along with that comes an arrogance and a parochialism that is really unbecoming."

Whatever one thinks of him, John Sununu does not come from central casting—in appearance, intellect, professional training or ethnic background. Short and stout, the 50-year-old chief of staff is a one-man melting pot. His father, John Sununu Sr., is descended from Lebanese and Greek Orthodox immigrants. His mother, the former Victoria Dada, was born in El Salvador to a Greek family that had settled in Central America. John Jr.—the eldest of three children—was born in Havana in 1939 while his family was on a business trip. (For several years before the war, his father—who was in the export business—distributed French films in Cuba.)

The family lived in a well-to-do section of Forest Hills, Queens, and—like Sununu's own family today—was a straitlaced Catholic brood with a conservative Republican bent. At LaSalle Military Academy on Long Island, Sununu received so many medals at commencement that the school administrator told him just to wait onstage.

While at MIT, where he majored in mechanical engineering, Sununu married Nancy Hayes of Cape Cod. By the time he graduated, they had three children and Sununu was working at an engineering firm, Astro Dynamics, where he remained until 1965. He earned his doctorate at MIT in 1966, then began teaching at Tufts, where he served as associate dean of the college of engineering. In 1969 the Sununus joined an exodus of tax refugees from Massachusetts and moved to Salem, N.H. "We needed a larger home," says Nancy. "The tax climate appealed to us, and it was only a half-hour commute to Tufts."

In New Hampshire, Sununu served on

his local planning board, then won a term in the state legislature. He ran twice, unsuccessfully, for the State Senate, then lost a race for the state executive council (a five-member team with veto power over many gubernatorial decisions) and ran, unsuccessfully again, for the U.S. Senate. "Every time I lost, I ran for a higher office," he says. All that exposure finally paid off in 1982, when Sununu was elected Governor.

Governor Sununu inherited a \$44 million state deficit and by 1985 had turned it into a \$47.8 million surplus, thanks in part to a booming New England economy. But he also applied his technical mind to overhauling state accounting procedures. In 1984 he was reelected with 67 percent of the vote.

Everyone who dealt with Sununu was dazzled by his intellectual agility and his ability to spout numbers at the drop of a hat. Yet along with his brilliance came a caustic personality that earned him the

nickname King John. "He almost perfected a way of alienating people," says Paul McEACHERN, the Democrat who ran against him for Governor in 1986 and lost. "He would tell people their shortcomings, be-

"He is extraordinarily bright. But along with that comes an arrogance and a parochialism that is really unbecoming."

rate them, intimidate them with his intellect. In my book, that's not the sign of a mature, well-adjusted person."

"I do my homework, and I expect others to have done theirs," Sununu says. "If people try to bluff, to pretend what they think is right is right, when it happens not to correspond to the facts, well, I'm not comfortable with that." His politics, he says, are partly a product of his engineering background. "I'm a problem solver," he says. "I analyze things. I believe there is a cause, a reason and a process."

Some critics believe Sununu's faith in his logic borders on arrogance. "His way of arguing is to say, 'You don't know what you're talking about. Let's talk,'" says New Hampshire State Sen. Susan McLane, a Democrat. "He is very bright. But he can be cruel and rude. He has a real character flaw when it comes to listening."

When he was Governor, the issue surest to ignite Sununu's temper was the controversial nuclear power plant at Seabrook, N.H. Even when construction delays and licensing snags ran the plant hopelessly over budget and turned it into a political liability, Sununu adamantly supported the



Friends describe Nancy Sununu (with her husband at a governors' conference in 1986) as "the original supermom."

John Sununu

BIO

Genial colleague, furious advocate, George Bush's top aide has an intellect he has been known to use like a blackjack

By Craig Unger

John Sununu leans back in his chair in the West Wing of the White House and smiles contentedly. He is at home here, one door down from the Oval Office, and home for him is a comfortable place. Jovial and avuncular, the President's chief of staff seems oblivious to the pressures that accompany what is arguably the second most powerful job in the land. This is, after all, a man whose wife calls him Johnny, who still collects baseball cards and who is terrific with kids—having eight of his own. Around the White House he is known for encouraging pranks and good-natured banter, and colleagues of both genders say he can be as cuddly and sweet as the teddy bear he resembles.

To Capitol Hill insiders, however, Sununu is anything but cuddly. In a government that is frequently criticized for promising one thing and delivering another, Sununu is the man who plays Tough Cop opposite George Bush's kinder, gentler Officer Friendly. In recent weeks, for example, Sununu has been playing hardball on the environment. While Bush continues to talk in reassuring generalities about his environmental concerns, Sununu, apparently with Bush's approval, has worked behind the scenes to take the teeth out of the Administration's rhetoric on two key issues: global warming and revision of the Clean Air Act.

It is a criticism Sununu has heard before. "Ninety-nine point nine percent of the decisions come through here to go to the President," he says. "I'm the guy who says, 'No.'"

Yet as he begins his second year as chief of staff, he has already lasted longer than many pundits predicted. In fact he is enjoying something of a belated honeymoon after drawing early fire for his failure to round up congressional support for John Tower as Secretary of Defense. President Bush's popularity is soaring, and congressional Democrats still feel conciliatory to-



"I like to argue," admits Sununu (on a ski break in New Hampshire). "I like to battle over ideas. A lot of people don't."

BIO

New Hampshire's only commercial VHF station to change its advertising schedule. Sununu and Atwater drove to the station, where Sununu sweet-talked the manager. "It is extraordinary for a sitting Governor to do that," says one campaign source. "Sununu's help was decisive." His reward was the White House job.

A year into the Bush Administration,

John and Nancy Sununu are comfortably settled into their home in Oakton, Va., 35 minutes from Washington. Nancy, 50, says the house feels empty now that all but two of their children have grown up and gone. But the most difficult aspect of their move has been financial, she says, with almost half her husband's \$96,600 salary taken up by tuition. Nancy herself works for the Republican Governors' Association and says she may run for the New Hampshire congressional seat now held by Re-

publican Chuck Douglas. More likely, her candidacy is just an idle threat meant to torment Douglas, who has taken political potshots at her husband and whose "family values" she says she finds objectionable. (He has been divorced three times.) Sununu, who has been called squeaky clean even by his critics, is the standard against which she judges such things. "I think that family values are stronger among ethnic Americans, and that comes through with Johnny," Nancy says. "Our home life is a lot of fun. He is really a very funny person. He'll make a joke about anything, he'll tease us all the time."

Arriving at his office each morning by 6:45 A.M. Sununu meets with the President at 8 A.M. and at 4:30 P.M., but during the course of the day may see Bush as many as a dozen times. Said to have the President's ear as much as any single adviser, Sununu says he expresses his own opinion only when the President asks, and he asks most often about domestic issues such as education, the environment, health care and law enforcement. "This is a President who likes to get involved in the decision sequence early," says Sununu. "So I make people available to him early. My job is to help everyone the President wants to see get access to him."

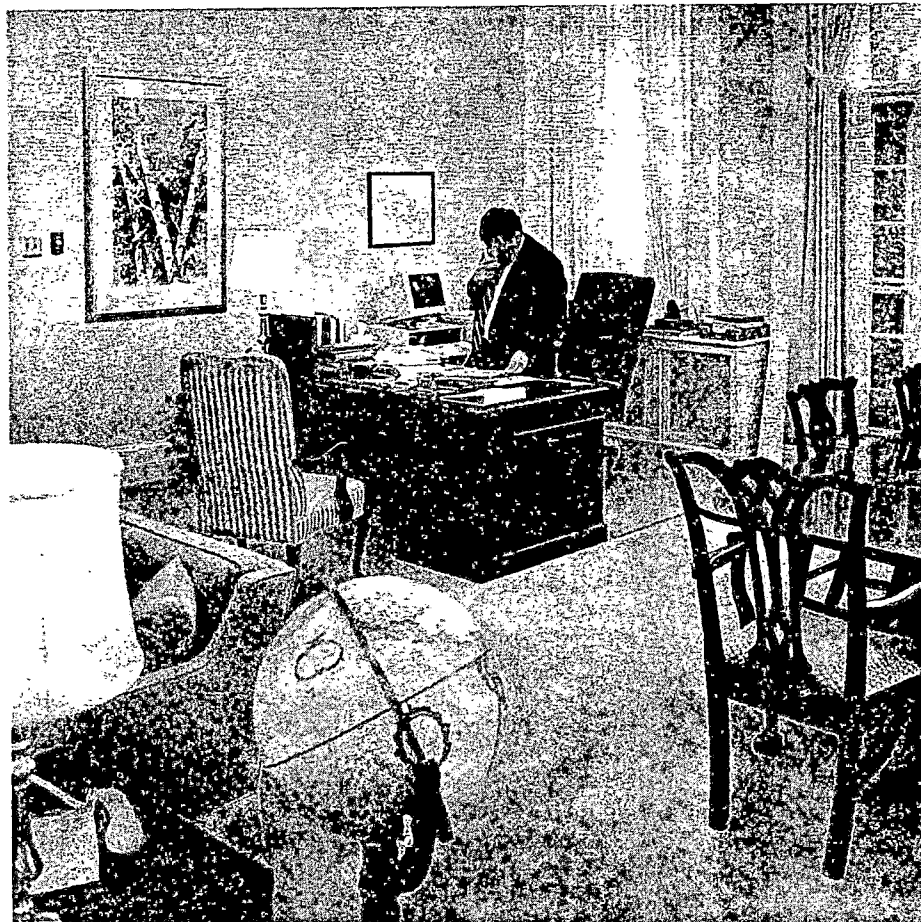
On Capitol Hill, Sununu has received praise from such unlikely sources as Sen. Ted Kennedy, with whom he hammered out compromises on a bill giving new rights to the disabled. But his prickly character is remarked on at least as often. Early on, senior staffers at the White House began to tell each other they had been "Sununued"—that is, summoned to Sununu's office, ordered to do something and then been cut off when they offered an opinion. Sununu reportedly hung up on one congressional committee chairman three times during a heated foreign policy debate and once screamed at a congressional aide so loudly he could be heard down the hall. "In Washington you just can't scream at senators and get results the way you can in New Hampshire," says one Republican operative.

So far, though, Sununu has been able to control himself more successfully than many of his detractors predicted. Former House Majority Whip Tony Coelho, now a New York City investment banker, debated Sununu during the 1988 presidential campaign and says, "He's caustic, direct and very ideological. But he fights for what he believes in, and at some point he'll work something out. Someone has to do the dirty work. People bellyache because he's effective." □



Sununu, Nancy and assorted offspring gathered last month for a weekend on the slopes at Waterville Valley, N.H.

"The slowness of the legislative process is the hardest thing for me to get used to," says Sununu (at the White House).



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News/Opinion

AIR FORCE

March 1990

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Scowcroft Urges Caution

By James W. Canan, Senior Editor

BRENT Scowcroft has been there before. This is his second time around as National Security Advisor to the President, the powerful White House post that he held fifteen years ago under President Ford. Through two decades, as government official and as private citizen, Mr. Scowcroft has had a great deal to do with shaping and carrying out US strategic and foreign policies.

He is still in the thick of them, and his positions are characteristically clear.

Mr. Scowcroft counsels against a unilateral reduction of US strategic forces. He would be willing to cut those forces, however, on two conditions—if the Soviets cut theirs and if there were no net loss of US strategic strength in the bargain.

Tactical forces are another matter. The National Security Advisor believes that the time may be at hand to transform US forces and their missions, possibly expanding the role of the Air Force.

Through the years, Mr. Scowcroft has gained recognition as a thoughtful, politically moderate man who could always be counted on for fruitful, nonideological public service. In the Nixon and Ford Administrations, first as Henry

Kissinger's right-hand man and then in his own right, Mr. Scowcroft became closely identified with the US policy of détente with the Soviet Union.

Détente died when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1979. Mr. Scowcroft subsequently said it had been "a good try" and added, "I backed détente, but we oversold it. It was a very sophisticated policy, and the American people got the wrong idea from it that the Soviet threat was over."

He made that comment in an interview seven years ago, just after President Reagan chose him to head the President's Commission on Strategic Forces, which became known as the Scowcroft Commission. Now, back in the White House and at work for President Bush on policies apropos of a seemingly friendlier and more tractable Soviet Union, he leaves no doubt that his message of 1983 still stands.

"We Have to Be Cautious"

Mr. Scowcroft credits the Soviet Union with having a constructive attitude toward the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START). He is certain that Soviet leader Gorbachev

means well. But he takes the view that actions speak louder than words and, from that standpoint, sees "almost no change" in the Soviet strategic setup, either in strategic systems or in a willingness to make major concessions on such systems in the furtherance of START.

"So I think we have to be cautious," the National Security Advisor says in his soft-spoken manner.

On assuming the Chairmanship of the President's Commission on Strategic Forces in 1983, Mr. Scowcroft also declared, "We Americans have tended to look on nuclear weapons as being so horrible that they will never be used. The Soviets are no more anxious for nuclear war than we are. But they do believe one could occur, and they are doing everything they can to prepare for it."

"The essence of our planning to deter nuclear war must be not what we think about its possibility, but what the Soviets think about it. We have to convince the Soviets that they must never conclude that nuclear war is a rational course of action."

Those words, too, ring as true

SCOWCROFT...CONTINUED

now as they did then, Mr. Scowcroft believes. He concedes that the possibility of nuclear war is probably lower now than at any time in the history of the US-Soviet nuclear confrontation. He warns, however, that such a war—or the abrupt threat of one resulting from a Soviet reversion to type—cannot be ruled out, given the political volatility in the land of the Volga. He doubts that deep-seated suspicion of US nuclear intentions—some would call it paranoia—has been expunged from the Soviet mindset, notwithstanding Gorbachev's conciliatory leadership.

"So the rationale for the [Scowcroft] Commission—ensuring strategic stability—is at least as important as it ever was," the National Security Advisor declares.

"We need to respond to any changes in the strategic environment," he continues, "but we also need to remember what got us here. If the possibility of nuclear war has been reduced, it is testimony to the wisdom and success of our strategic policies over the last forty years or so."

Mr. Scowcroft has been a central figure in the formulation and implementation of those policies for much of that time. They are predicated on the triad of strategic forces—land-based ICBMs, submarine-launched ballistic missiles, and bombers—that the Scowcroft Commission reevaluated, and recommended reshaping, in 1983.

Among other things, and perhaps most importantly, the bipartisan Commission stoutly endorsed the MX ICBM program. By then, the Reagan Administration had redesignated MX the "Peacekeeper" missile, but it took awhile for the new name to catch on. Commission members referred to the ICBM as MX, and some still do. Mr. Scowcroft himself harks back to "the MX commission."

The commission recommended that the Air Force deploy 100 ten-warhead Peacekeeper missiles in Minuteman III missile silos and that USAF also develop a smaller, single-warhead ICBM, which became known as Midgetman, to be deployed in a less vulnerable, mobile

mode in the 1990s.

Taken as a whole, the Scowcroft Commission's recommendations proved politically and strategically palatable on all sides and, thus, were pivotal in persuading Congress to approve Peacekeeper production and Peacekeeper silo basing. Congress took a fancy to Midgetman in the belief that its single-warhead configuration would make it easy for the Soviets to verify its deployed numbers of warheads under the terms of an arms treaty and that its mobility would keep it safe from attack.

One ICBM or Two?

Midgetman went into development. The budget crunch that lay ahead would make the Air Force settle for fifty Peacekeepers and propose dispensing with Midgetman. Opposition to Midgetman seems to have grown stronger lately in the wake of USAF's move to re-deploy Peacekeeper missiles from silos to railways, thus giving them the mobility that had been Midgetman's *raison d'être*.

Should the US back away from the two-ICBM program that the Scowcroft Commission once proposed? "Well, no," Mr. Scowcroft replies. "We're not spending all that much money on them [the Peacekeeper and Midgetman programs] right now, and it seems prudent to keep on with both of them while we see how things go."

The National Security Advisor is not locked into any particular strategic system, though. He takes the view that all strategic weapons are negotiable and that "if we can enhance our security more by giving up a system than by fielding it, we ought to do so."

Consistent with this viewpoint, Mr. Scowcroft reportedly proposed behind the scenes earlier this year that the US offer to negotiate with the Soviet Union a ban on all mobile, multiple-warhead, land-based ICBMs. Such a ban would be a blow to Peacekeeper and a boon to Midgetman.

By all accounts, the Scowcroft proposal was cold-shouldered at the Pentagon, where there is far greater support for Peacekeeper than for Midgetman, but was welcomed on Capitol Hill, where it's the other

way around. A Presidential endorsement of the Scowcroft proposal was considered unlikely.

But it has always been considered unwise in Washington to sell Mr. Scowcroft short in the strategic arena, where he has shown that he has the touch.

The makeup of the entire US strategic force was very much at issue when the Scowcroft Commission was put to work by President Reagan in 1983. The hottest, most immediate questions were whether to put Peacekeeper missiles into production, how many of them to build, how to base them, and what kind of new land-based ICBMs—if any—the US should begin developing.

All those questions were subsets of a broader one of surpassing interest to the Air Force—whether land-based ICBMs had seen their best days and were on the way out, given the seemingly chronic and increasingly divisive issue of their vulnerability. The answer would lie in how the narrower, hotly controversial Peacekeeper issues were resolved.

The Reagan Administration, like the Carter Administration before it, was committed to the Peacekeeper program. Mr. Scowcroft's political mandate was to find a way to forge a commission consensus in support of Peacekeeper and of a particular basing mode that would be acceptable to all the many political and military factions then at war over the weapon.

Mr. Scowcroft had his heart in the job. He had spent twenty-eight years in the Air Force, retiring as a lieutenant general in 1975, and was a firm believer in land-based missiles as an indispensable leg of the strategic triad.

"Without MX," he said at the time, "it's hard for me to see what incentive the Soviet Union would have to move to arms control and greater world stability."

He was by no means confident of success. "I was not enthusiastic about becoming Chairman of the President's Commission on Strategic Forces," he recalled later. "I questioned whether we could reach a consensus in proposing constructive solutions to the MX issue and the problems of shaping our future strategic missile forces."

Wryly, he also noted back then,

SCOWCROFT...CONTINUED

"Our report will have to be politically and militarily acceptable, first to the President, then to the Defense Department, the State Department, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and then to the Senate and the House. That's a tall order."

Vindicating the Strategic Triad

The Commission brought it off. In the afterglow of its well-reasoned report, it was credited with justifying Peacekeeper and with reaffirming the rationale for the strategic triad. Its recommendations, which also covered bombers, cruise missiles, and submarine-launched ballistic missiles, became the intellectual framework for the Reagan Administration's far-reaching strategic modernization program.

The report was a smash hit, in large measure because its conclusions came from a membership so clearly knowledgeable, diverse, and, maybe most important, bipartisan. Its members and *ex officio* "senior counselors," all of them big names in US defense, foreign, and domestic policy circles, were drawn from throughout the political spectrum and had publicly expressed about as many views on Peacekeeper as there were in the strategic and political communities at large. They were a tough bunch for their Chairman to pull together, and when all was said and done, they gave him a collective tip of the cap for having shepherded them stylishly and well.

Among the members was William J. Perry, Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering in the Carter Pentagon. Dr. Perry had worked closely with the Air Force and with his boss, Defense Secretary Harold Brown, who served as a senior counselor to the Scowcroft Commission, in devising and proposing several mobile basing modes for Peacekeeper. All were rejected by Congress through the late 1970s for one reason or another and were political anathema to the incoming Reagan Administration in 1981.

Dr. Perry, who strongly believed that the nation needed Peacekeeper but who had become weary of doing battle in its behalf, had extraordinary praise for Mr. Scowcroft. He

said that he had agreed to serve on the Commission on Strategic Forces "only because I believed that Brent's leadership, intellectual ability, and personal qualities could make it succeed. He is first-rate."

A Consensus-BUILDER

Mr. Scowcroft established a reputation as a consensus-builder during his Air Force career, which he capped while serving in the White House. He became President Nixon's military assistant in 1972 and then, while still in uniform, became Vice Chairman of the National Security Council. His boss and benefactor was Henry A. Kissinger, who headed the NSC as Mr. Nixon's National Security Advisor before becoming Secretary of State.

Mr. Scowcroft, having retired from the Air Force, took charge of the NSC in December 1975. At about the same time, Richard Cheney became White House Chief of Staff, succeeding Donald Rumsfeld, who had moved to the Pentagon as Secretary of Defense in place of James Schlesinger.

Mr. Scowcroft and Mr. Cheney left the White House on January 20, 1977, when the Carter Administration got under way. Mr. Scowcroft took charge of the Washington office of Kissinger Associates, an international consulting firm that Mr. Kissinger ran (and still runs) from offices in New York. Mr. Cheney later took Wyoming's seat in the House of Representatives and, after serving five terms, rejoined Mr. Scowcroft in the upper reaches of the Bush Administration as Secretary of Defense.

Mr. Scowcroft, Mr. Cheney, and Secretary of State James Baker make it a point to meet at breakfast about once a week when all are in Washington. There have been reports of a rift between Mr. Baker and Mr. Scowcroft, of differences over foreign policy, and of competition for the President's attention. Administration sources dismiss such reports. They acknowledge some differences between the two but describe them as minor. The Secretary of Defense was said to be strongly against the Scowcroft proposal for a bilateral ban on all mobile, multiple-warhead ICBMs, but relations between the two men re-

portedly remained warm.

Mr. Scowcroft's associates insist that he does not see himself as a rival of Mr. Baker or of Mr. Cheney and that he gladly defers to them when it comes to advising the President on defense and foreign affairs and policies. He believes that his job is to integrate such policies and to mold—and advise the President on—the broader strategic concepts that drive, or are derived from, those policies.

The National Security Advisor sees his most important responsibilities as making sure that the President knows the right questions to ask while in the process of coming to decisions, that the President finally has good and sufficient information on which to base each decision, and that, in the end, "what gets done is what the President wanted done."

Mr. Scowcroft goes about his business without flourish or fanfare. He has never been one for flamboyance, playing power games, or letting his ego get in the way. It has been said of him through the years that he "quietly dominates" settings in which he finds himself, including top-level gatherings of more temperamental types, and that he has a rare talent for persuasion, for bringing out the reasonableness in others.

He has his detractors, of course, many of them in the ranks of political archconservatives. Some have always been suspicious of him because of his long association with Mr. Kissinger, whom they reviled for his pursuit of détente with Moscow. Others take a dim view of Mr. Scowcroft to this day for having served on President Carter's bipartisan General Advisory Committee on Arms Control. They accuse him of having lent his influence and credentials to the selling of SALT II, which they abhorred.

Strength in Constancy

The fact is, the General Advisory Committee on Arms Control did not endorse the proposed SALT II treaty that President Carter submitted to the Senate and withdrew from Senate consideration after the Soviets invaded Afghanistan. Mr. Scowcroft recalls. In any case, he simply

SCOWCROFT...CONTINUED

did what he thought he had to do and let the whole thing pass.

Mr. Scowcroft has never seemed to be thrown off stride by praise or criticism. One of his greatest strengths, admirers claim, is constancy, an attribute that he in turn believes is a major reason for the success of US national security policy in the cold war.

"We've come a long way, partly because we were never an attractive opportunity for the Soviets," Mr. Scowcroft says. Thus, he notes, the US should be careful about changing course, but should also "be in tune with reality," which is that budgets are tight and the Soviets have been making peaceful moves and don't look as menacing as before.

This means that "we need to look seriously at the environment that's coming" and, in light of it, to prepare to make do with fewer new weapon systems and different force structures than formerly planned, Mr. Scowcroft says.

"I'm talking about a transformation in the nature of the threat in Europe," the National Security Advisor asserts. And a transformation

in the forces needed to meet that threat? "Yes," he replies.

If negotiations on conventional armed forces in Europe (CFE) result in a treaty along lines now anticipated, NATO and Warsaw Pact forces will be just about evenly matched, an unprecedented state of affairs in Europe, and "we would need to change some of our assumptions," Mr. Scowcroft says.

He adds, "We have been struggling for forty years with the disparity of forces in Europe. Compensating for numerical inferiority has been a hardy perennial in all of our planning. Now we may be able to wipe that out, and we're going to have to think hard about what that does for us, how that allows us to change the emphasis on forces to be provided, the timing with which we provide them, and so on."

NATO battle plans have always taken into account the possibility of a massive surprise attack by Soviet and other Pact forces. "Maybe we won't need to be concerned about that any more," Mr. Scowcroft says. "Many things could change in Europe, and we ought to look at our defense budget and requirements in light of them—as part of the NATO alliance. We ought not to go running off unilaterally."

How would his former service, the Air Force, fit into all this? "I think the Air Force would be at least as useful as it is now," the National Security Advisor says. "Air forces can be employed like mobile artillery, in support of a mobile defense, which is a consideration. They are flexible, responsive. They can be concentrated very quickly at points of breakthrough."

Mr. Scowcroft also sees an expanding role for stealthy systems, declaring that "Stealth will be more and more important to survivability on the battlefield." In broader perspective, he sees no easing of the military's emphasis on high technology, such as stealth.

The National Security Advisor believes that the strategic realities may turn out to be happily opportune for the US in its coping with fiscal realities. The transformation of military forces that may lie ahead could be just what the doctor ordered for the US to solve, or greatly ease, its "serious budget problem," Mr. Scowcroft believes.

"What we ought to be looking at now," he asserts, "are the steps, the cuts, that would make sense for us if CFE goes through. Will we be able to make further reductions? I think the answer is clearly yes." ■

WASHINGTON TIMES

March 1, 1990

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Bush calls Gorbachev, asks help on Nicaragua transition

By Frank J. Murray
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

NEWARK, N.J. — President Bush asked Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev yesterday to help achieve a peaceful transition of power to Nicaragua's new non-communist leader.

During a 40-minute phone call, Mr. Bush also assured Mr. Gorbachev the United States will conclude the arms-control agreements laid out in Moscow by Secretary of State James A. Baker III in early February.

They discussed — but "not in detail" — Mr. Gorbachev's victory Tuesday in obtaining passage of a law that Soviet critics argue would give him dictatorial powers. And Mr. Bush reviewed his talks about Ger-

man reunification with West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and European Council President Charles Haughey.

Asked directly about the question of Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega turning over control to Violeta Chamorro despite his new condition on demobilization of the U.S.-backed resistance, Mr. Bush sidestepped.

"I was very pleased with the Soviet statements about recognizing the winners of the election," he said. "And I think all countries [want] to be sure that peaceful transition takes place."

Mr. Bush would not divulge details of what he called "a very constructive conversation."

"I think we need to be doing a little

more of that kind of thing, and I think he agrees," Mr. Bush told reporters aboard Air Force One. "The mood of it, that's very hard to define, but it was very good, very forthright, very — where we differ we can spell out the differences without rancor. And I think that's important in the Soviet-U.S. relationship."

It was the third time in his presidency that Mr. Bush called his Soviet counterpart — in addition to their one summit meeting in person — and he has consistently guarded the privacy of those phone conversations.

"I think it's important that there be some confidentiality if we're going to be able to speak as frankly as we did today, and so I can't give you the full agenda, but I can tell you it

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Willingness to Use Force Marks Bush's 1st 2 Years

■ **Foreign policy:** Much like Teddy Roosevelt, the President sees military ventures as a standard option.

By JACK NELSON
TIMES WASHINGTON BUREAU CHIEF

WASHINGTON—Like most Americans, George Bush abhors the violence and bloodshed of war. Yet more than any President in this century, he has shown that he is prepared to use military force as a standard instrument of national policy.

From massive attacks on Iraq and Panama to lesser operations on three continents in just two years as President, Bush has demonstrated that—unlike his predecessors—he sees the use of force not as a last resort but as a standard option to employ whenever he thinks vital American interests are at stake and peaceful means are too

weak or too slow to protect them.

Even as vice president in 1988, a longtime aide disclosed in an interview, Bush advocated using military force against Panamanian dictator Manuel A. Noriega, an option

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that President Ronald Reagan rejected on the advice of his top military aides. Bush invaded Panama in the first year of his own presidency.

Indeed, according to one of his most senior aides on foreign policy and national security, Bush and some of his closest advisers came to office determined to change what they saw as the excessive reluctance of Reagan and his immediate predecessors to use military force.

Some historians and presidential scholars say that not since George Washington warned against "foreign alliances, attachments and intrigues" in his Farewell Address in 1796 has a President been more willing to raise the issue of military force or actually to employ it as an instrument of national policy.

The only President who "spoke in a comparable way" about the use of military power, said Ernest May, a Harvard University professor of history who co-authored "Usage of History for Decision Making," was Theodore Roosevelt, whose motto was "Speak softly and carry a big stick."

"President Bush has always been willing to use force as long as it is well planned and he considers it necessary to protect American interests," said a senior aide, who declined to be identified. "The invasion of Panama is a good example. He ended up being the chief executive who carried it out, but he had been willing to do it during the Reagan Administration. He is not a first-resort man, but he's not a last-resort man, either."

Another senior government official, seeing the Bush aide's assessment as "right on target," said that "once the President sets his jaw

and has a singleness of purpose that military action is the right way to do it, he won't be diverted from it by somebody worrying about 'Why don't we wait and see if something better happens?'"

"His experience is that something better is not likely to happen and you could lose your momentum and resolve by delaying the process," the official said. "The President demonstrated that in spades in the Iraqi war. It would have been very easy to delay the ground war when Saddam Hussein started his game-playing and said he was going to leave Kuwait and attached conditions, but the President rejected that as a cruel hoax."

As a presidential candidate in 1988, Bush pointedly included armed force among the basic elements in his approach to foreign policy. "We will integrate every available and suitable policy instrument into a multifaceted approach," he said. "That means using negotiations, intelligence, economic strength and aid, public diplomacy and, yes, military power."

Bush, in addition to ordering the invasion of Panama and the war against Iraq, has shown a willingness to use force in several more modest military operations.

In the midst of a summit meeting with Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev in Malta on Dec. 1, 1989, Bush took time out to be briefed on

an armed rebellion against the U.S.-backed government of Corazon Aquino in the Philippines and to order American warplanes to help suppress the coup attempt by providing air cover for troops loyal to Aquino.

On Nov. 23, 1989, Bush dispatched commandos to San Salvador after rebel forces seized a hotel where American military advisers were staying. Although Bush later boasted that he had helped rescue the hostages in an operation that was launched without seeking approval from the president of El Salvador, the White House subsequently acknowledged that Salvadoran government troops actually had rescued the military advisers.

About 30 U.S. military advisers were deployed to Colombia in September, 1989, to assist in the war on drug cartels after Bush signed a National Security Decision Directive allowing troops to train Colombians in areas beyond their base camps—a move that presumably would increase the risk that U.S. forces would come under fire.

After the San Salvador operation, Bush stressed that as commander in chief he would go to "any ends" to protect American citizens. "When you see Americans held hostage like this," he declared, "there's a message in all of this. This President, backed by our defense secretary, is going to pro-

tect the lives of Americans wherever we can and go to any ends."

Bush also used military units in two massive rescue operations that received relatively little attention because they occurred after Iraq invaded Kuwait.

On Aug. 5, 1990, just after the Iraqi invasion, U.S. Marines launched an air-sea operation to evacuate 61 Americans and 12 others from Liberia after threats to arrest all foreigners were issued by a rebel leader in that country's civil war.

On Jan. 3, 1991, two weeks before the U.S.-led allies began their aerial bombardment of Iraq, waves of Marine helicopters flying from two Navy ships into the heart of war-torn Somalia rescued 260 people, including the U.S. and Soviet ambassadors. The helicopters had been diverted from Operation Desert Shield in response to emergency calls for help to rescue senior diplomats from 10 nations.

And in the Persian Gulf crisis itself, although hostilities have ceased, Bush has issued two warnings to Iraq that officials said could lead to new U.S. assaults if Baghdad ignores the President's words. Bush cautioned against any use of chemical weapons by Hussein against Iraqi dissidents and called Baghdad's use of helicopter gunships to suppress uprisings a violation of the unofficial cease-fire

agreement.

In the case of Noriega, U.S. officials first debated whether to take military action shortly after his indictment in this country on drug-smuggling charges in 1988, during the Reagan Administration. Reagan sought the advice of his top national security advisers, and, according to several sources, Secretary of State George P. Shultz proposed several military options—including sending a U.S. special operations force into Panama to kidnap Noriega and bring

him to the United States to stand trial.

Military action, sources said, also was favored by two officials who now hold key positions in the Bush Administration: James A. Baker III, then the Treasury secretary and now secretary of state, and Gen. Colin L. Powell, then Reagan's national security adviser and now chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Reagan ruled out military action, sources said, after Defense Secre-

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tary Frank C. Carlucci and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Adm. William J. Crowe Jr., counseled against it. They argued that it would result in a bloody urban guerrilla war and endanger some 10,000 American citizens in Panama.

"Bush never tipped his hand during the discussions but advised Reagan that he favored military action," a senior Bush aide said. "Powell was ready to go, too, but he didn't press his case too hard because his constituency was the Joint Chiefs and the defense secretary."

Several "big changes" led to the December, 1989, invasion, this aide said. Many of the American civilians had left Panama by the end of 1989; Bush was President instead of vice president; he had named Powell chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Bush, Powell and Defense Secretary Dick Cheney "were ready to go."

Now, in the aftermath of the crushing victory over Iraq, Bush is looking ahead to the role military power will play in the "new world order" he envisions, "where diverse nations are drawn together in common cause to achieve . . . peace and security, freedom and the rule of law," as he put it in his State of the Union speech last Jan. 29.

Longtime Bush aides professed no surprise that Bush is more willing than most of his predecessors in the Oval Office to embrace military force as a policy option. His views have been shaped partly by his own experiences as a combat pilot during World War II, during which his plane was shot down over the Pacific, they said.

A veteran Bush aide said that the President's "feeling on the use of force goes back to his own military days. He's not very reflective and hasn't talked very much about using force, but he has great respect for the military. And remember, his experience was in World War II, not Vietnam, and in conversations he keeps coming back to the threats of Hitler. He compared Iraq going into Kuwait to the Germans going into Poland."

Aides note that Bush not only has often spoken out on the use of military force but also strongly supported three major U.S. military initiatives abroad during the eight-year Reagan presidency.

Bush never wavered in supporting the 1986 bombing of two Libyan cities in retaliation for terrorist attacks; the 1983 invasion of Grenada, with the stated purpose of protecting American medical students and other Americans from Grenada's leftist government, and a naval patrol of the Persian Gulf to protect Kuwaiti oil tankers registered under the U.S. flag during

the Iran-Iraq War.

In many speeches as vice president and as the Republican presidential nominee, Bush emphasized the role of the U.S. military in foreign policy. In 1983, for example, in ceremonies dedicating an Army reserve center in Houston, he said that the lessons of World War II should never be forgotten and that nations have no recourse but to protect themselves "against the bullies who threaten them."

Several of Bush's top advisers have been particularly harsh in their criticism of the Reagan Administration's approach to the use of force. As a private citizen during Reagan's tenure, for example, Brent Scowcroft, who as national security adviser may be Bush's most influential aide, was scathing in his criticism of views espoused by Casper W. Weinberger, Reagan's secretary of defense.

Weinberger, in a widely publicized speech, had laid out a series of tests that, he argued, must be met before the United States should send troops into action—including assurance of broad domestic political support. In the eyes of Scowcroft, a retired Air Force general, and others who shared his view, Weinberger's tests would have all but eliminated the military as an instrument of foreign policy.

They would have allowed a President to use force only in actions on the extremes of the

geopolitical scale. Scowcroft argued: on the one hand in small-scale "police actions," such as Grenada, and on the other hand, World War III.

Early in the Persian Gulf crisis, a senior Bush official made clear that a key goal for the Administration was to prove to the world, and to the American public, that a President could use military force without tearing the nation apart.

In the Administration's view, the official explained, a stable world requires a powerful America that can credibly threaten to use its might to enforce international rules. The President, the official said, must be free to use the military as one of several policy tools, not as a last resort to be reserved only for low-cost actions or "crusades."

An earlier generation of policymakers, the official said, were "traumatized" by the Vietnam War. Bush's team, he declared, was determined to show the world that the United States had outlived that legacy.

Bush's declaration of a "new world order" clearly envisages a much more active role for the United States and, if necessary, for its military.

In the new order Bush envisions, aides say, the President sees himself working to forge international coalitions—both diplomatic and, if required, military—to solve regional disputes, much as he did putting together the 28-nation coalition aligned against Iraq after

the invasion of Kuwait.

"India and Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sudan and Central America—all of these have some tensions and fighting that could explode into larger wars that would need to be

addressed," said a senior official. "The biggest danger, of course, is India and Pakistan, since they have nuclear weapons, although we've never publicly confirmed that."

A situation could develop that would require an international coalition that would not necessarily be led by the United States, the official said. "It could be an African regional war with a coalition led by African countries or it could be a coalition led by China or the Soviet Union."

In the decades before World War II, Washington's Farewell Address advising against foreign entanglements was quoted frequently by political leaders as justification for a strong isolationist tradition that came naturally to Americans, whose European ancestors had seen one war after another.

Even President Theodore Roosevelt, for all his bellicose rhetoric, was relatively cautious about actually using the military.

"In practice, Teddy Roosevelt was a good deal more disinclined to use force than President Bush," said Harvard's May, who has worked extensively with the Pentagon under several Presidents. Although Roosevelt "rejoiced" at U.S. troops taking Panama, May said, he resisted pressure from creditors of the Dominican Republic here and abroad to invade that Latin American country and barred other countries from taking such action.

The one President who may have been as inclined as Bush to use military power, May said, was James Polk, "who came into office [in 1845] bent on using force to resolve territorial disputes with the

He was prepared to precipitate a war."

Both Harry S. Truman and Dwight D. Eisenhower were much more reluctant to use military force than Bush, according to Robert J. Donovan, a former Times Washington Bureau chief and a biographer of both Truman and Eisenhower who covered their presidencies as a journalist. The experiences of both Truman and Eisenhower in World War II and the Korean War apparently made them cautious about the use of military power.

"Truman was forced to go into Korea," Donovan said. "He would have been impeached if he had let South Korea fall to the Communists. He got into Korea literally not knowing what he was getting into, and when a reporter asked him if he was getting into a police action, he said, 'Yes.' He thought he was getting into a border skirmish."

When the French were fighting the Vietnamese Communists in the 1950s, Donovan said, Eisenhower "was very cautious" about sending troops to relieve the embattled French forces at Dien Bien Phu. And, "when the Communists were taking over North Vietnam, he wouldn't send troops in because he couldn't get the French and British to go along with him."

For his part, Bush in the Persian Gulf crisis worked ceaselessly to build and then maintain an international coalition behind his policy—a coalition that included both Britain and France.

Times staff writer David Lauter contributed to this story.

Missed Signals

Why was the administration blindsided by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait? A close

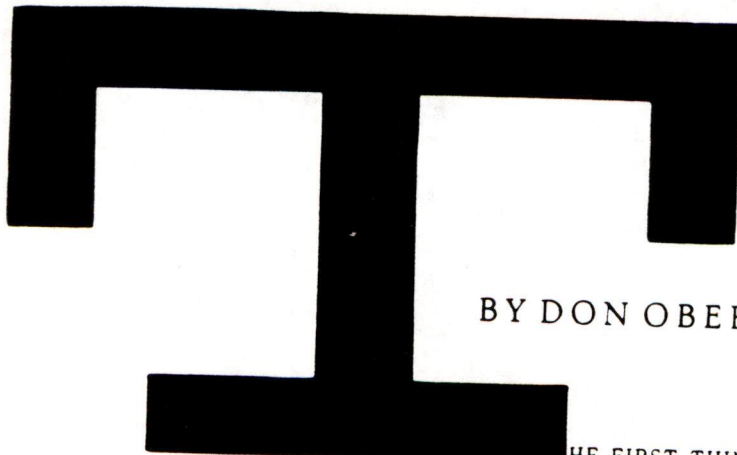
In the

look at the months leading up to Saddam's aggression reveals a number of

Middle East

troubling signs—and a mind-set that kept Washington from puzzling them out

The Washington Post Magazine
The New York Times _____
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New York Daily News _____
USA Today _____
The Chicago Tribune _____
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BY DON OBERDORFER

THE FIRST THING JOHN KELLY noticed when he arrived in Baghdad on February 11, 1990, was the extraordinary security, the most heavy-handed he had seen in 25 years as a U.S. diplomat in visits to more than 60 countries in all parts of the world. Security men in plainclothes could be seen at frequent intervals along the 11-mile road from the airport. The following morning, as Kelly rode in an official Iraqi car accompanied by Iraqi escorts for the few blocks from the Foreign Ministry to the Presidency, he was stopped three times by burly guards who poked their AK-47 automatic rifles in the window while carefully checking each person's credentials. When he was finally ushered into the presence of President Saddam Hussein, more bodyguards were evident, with guns that Kelly decided were far from purely ceremonial. The atmosphere of fear was so great, he noticed, that the hands of the urbane London-educated interpreter, Sadun Zubaidi, were trembling. Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz, a senior figure and a member of Iraq's Revolutionary Command Council, sat at attention on the edge of a sofa like a

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little boy at his Sunday school class.

A year after being named assistant secretary of state for Near East and South Asian affairs, Kelly was making his first visit to one of the most important and difficult countries in his domain. With the top officials of the Bush administration concentrating on other things, Kelly was the senior American diplomat dealing daily with the Persian Gulf. He had never served in the gulf, had served only briefly in the Middle East during a career mostly centered on Europe and Asia, and had never been in Baghdad before.

In a freewheeling 2½-hour conversation with Kelly on the morning of February 12, Saddam seemed fascinated by the declining position of the Soviet Union and its potential impact on the balance of power in the Middle East. The Soviets, who had long been Iraq's principal international patron, were "finished as a world power," said the Iraqi president, and the United States now had "a free hand" to maneuver. The next five years, he said, would determine whether the United States used its position of unchallenged preeminence in the area for "constructive purposes," or whether it would blindly follow Israel.

Kelly informed Saddam that the State Department's annual Human Rights Report, which was to be made public in a few days, would be sharply critical of Iraq's human rights record, which it termed "abysmal." The report posed particular objections to the regime's inhuman treatment of its rebellious Kurdish minority in the north, which had been suppressed with the intensive use of poison gas in 1988, causing tens of thousands of deaths and producing more than 65,000 refugees. "The Kurds love me," Saddam insisted. If there were time, he said, he would take Kelly to a Kurdish village where "the people come out and kiss my hand."

At the time of Kelly's trip—and right up until Iraq's invasion of Kuwait six months later—U.S. policy was guided by a directive from President Bush calling for the pursuit of normal relations with Iraq, on grounds that this would promote stability in the area. A few officials in Washington were becoming uncomfortable about this policy of detente with an often violent regime; however, despite such misgivings, Bush on January 17, 1990, had reaffirmed this policy, putting his signature on a presidential order declaring that expanded trade with Iraq, guaranteed by the Export-Import Bank, was in the U.S. national interest.

Almost exactly one year later, on January 16, 1991, Bush signed another order. This one sent American military forces into action against Iraq in by far the biggest, most costly and riskiest U.S. military engagement since Vietnam. A few weeks after the bombing of Iraq began, Bush said in response to a reporter's question that, in retrospect, he thought the war might have been avoided if the United States had been tougher with Saddam before the invasion of Kuwait. "We tried the peaceful route; we tried working with him and changing [him] through contact," said Bush. "The lesson is clear in this case that that didn't work."

The record suggests, however, that the administration had not paid much attention to the problems posed by this troublesome country. From the day Bush set his policy toward the Persian Gulf in October of 1989 until the morning after the Iraqi invasion, not one meeting of the National Security Council was convened to discuss Iraq. The second-level Deputies Committee, which is convened to study major foreign policy issues, had only two meetings about Iraq before tens of thousands of Iraqi troops moved south to threaten Kuwait shortly before the invasion. Secretary of State James A. Baker III's total involvement in Iraq policy before the invasion, said an aide, could be measured in hours rather than days.

Without attention at these high levels, the chances for a policy shift—or even for serious consideration of any foreign policy problem—are slim, especially in the Bush administration. More so than most of their predecessors, Bush and Baker operate U.S. foreign policy in an intensely personal and informal fashion, interacting freely in person or by telephone with foreign leaders and paying much less heed to career professionals. And during 1989 and the first half of 1990, Iraq was seen by most officials in the inner circle of the administration as a foreign policy problem of mid-range dimensions—to be handled by the middle ranks of government, the John Kellys and below—not as a menace that could destroy the status quo in the Persian Gulf and draw the United States into hostilities of massive proportions. It simply did not seem believable that Iraq was a serious threat to peace, especially in an era of reconciliation between the United States and the Soviet Union, when the walls were coming down in a long-divided Europe and fighting seemed to be ending in Afghanistan, Angola, Nicaragua and elsewhere.

How the United States sought to cope with Iraq as the war clouds gathered in the Persian Gulf is the subject of this report. Examining the record in greater detail than has been available before raises two haunting questions: Did the Bush administration fail to see the threat posed by Iraq because it was poorly organized to deal with an international problem that had not yet become a major crisis? And if it had paid more attention, more quickly, could the administration have headed off Saddam's attack on Kuwait and thus averted a dangerous and bloody confrontation, the long-term consequences of which are still unknown?

HOPEFUL BEGINNINGS

When April Glaspie went to Baghdad as U.S. ambassador in early August 1988, Iraq's war with Iran was into its eighth year and had become one of the deadliest of all time. The casualties of this conflict, which had begun when Iraq invaded its neighbor in 1980, were estimated as high as 1 million soldiers and civilians, possibly the highest toll of any war since World War II. After a final series of Iraqi victories, Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini announced to nearly everyone's surprise that he was ending the

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conflict, even though he declared he would rather drink poison than do so. Iran's most prominent war aim, the ouster of Saddam Hussein, remained unfulfilled, and most of the world saw Iraq as the victor.

As the war ended, Glaspie, a career officer known for her extensive contacts and shrewd political assessments in the Arab world, was confronted with an explosion of joy in Baghdad. Two things impressed her greatly in those delirious days and nights: the tremendous control of Saddam Hussein, who decreed after the first night that there would be no more joy-shooting into the sky as part of the popular celebration, after which that widespread practice stopped suddenly and completely; and the very high human costs of the war, which had inflicted losses in just about every Iraqi family she came to know. There was another loss as well, which would play a role in generating Iraq's next military conflict: The war with Iran, by U.S. estimates, had cost Iraq about \$500 billion. Iraq emerged from the conflict with debts of \$80 billion—about 1½ times its gross national product—including at least \$30 billion in short-term debt that had to be repaid to Europe, Japan and the United States in dollars or other hard currencies.

During most of the war, the United States, while professing neutrality, had tilted toward Iraq out of fear that an Iranian victory would spread Islamic fundamentalism throughout the Middle East. Except for the hidden flirtation with Tehran that was revealed during the Iran-contra scandal, the Reagan administration did all it could short of direct involvement or weapons sales to make sure that Iraq did not lose the war. It resumed diplomatic relations with Iraq after a 17-year rupture, removed it from a list of nations judged to be supporting international terrorism, secretly supplied it with U.S. intelligence information and openly granted U.S. agricultural credit guarantees and Export-Import Bank financing.

The unexpected end to the war in August 1988 came in the final months of the Reagan administration, an awkward time for reconsideration of U.S. policy. And the Persian Gulf lacked a high priority with the new administration, which did not complete its policy review for the region until nine months after President Bush took office.

"Access to the Persian Gulf and the key friendly states in the area is vital to U.S. national security," said National Security Directive 26, signed by Bush in October 1989, as the basis for U.S. policy. The designation of the area as "vital"—an uncommon description in such top-level policy papers—led to a logical consequence: "The United States remains committed to defend its vital interests in the region, if necessary and appropriate through the use of U.S. military force, against the Soviet Union or any other regional power with interests inimical to our own."

Regarding Iraq, an important and potentially rich country with the world's second-largest proven oil reserves, the underlying premise was that Baghdad had emerged from the war prepared to play a more constructive international role. The central as-

sumption of U.S. policy was that normal relations with Iraq would serve long-term American interests and promote stability in the Persian Gulf and the Middle East generally. The directive recognized that there were significant differences over chemical and biological weapons, and important U.S. concerns about Iraq's nuclear program. The state of human rights in Iraq was acknowledged to be a problem, as was Iraqi meddling in Lebanon and other Mideast areas. The thrust of the Bush directive, however, was that the United States should keep trying to use political and economic incentives to moderate Iraq's behavior and increase American influence. Specifically, U.S. companies would be encouraged to participate in the postwar reconstruction of Iraq, particularly in the energy area, as long as this did not conflict with U.S. concern about nuclear proliferation. There were suggestions in Bush's directive, one source said, that U.S. activities in Iraq might influence various segments of Iraqi society to moderate the brutal totalitarianism that had been evident in the past.

With U.S. policy in place, the Bush administration's first high-level meeting with Iraq occurred on October 6, 1989, when Foreign Minister Aziz came to Washington to meet Secretary of State Baker. In a presentation that surprised the Americans, Aziz accused the United States of being hostile toward Iraq and of "mounting a campaign" to punish and belittle the Iraqi state. Baker denied that there was any U.S. hostility toward Iraq, according to a State Department official who examined a transcript of the meeting, but told Aziz that "we have problems with your human rights practices because of the differences between your values and ours."

Iraqi Ambassador Mohamed Mashat said later that at the time of the meeting, "we had information that some authorities in the United States were working to destabilize Iraq" by sending emissaries to nearby Arab countries in the gulf and "planting fear of Iraq in the heads of the sheiks." This notion may have arisen from periodic briefings given to friendly Arab states by the U.S. military's Central Command, which had protected re-flagged Kuwaiti oil tankers during the Iran-Iraq war and was looking for a postwar mission in the Middle East. According to a U.S. intelligence official, these briefings identified Iraq as a potential threat in the region.

Despite the Iraqi accusations, Aziz asked Baker in the meeting to approve new U.S. credit guarantees for Iraqi food purchases from the United States. Such Commodity Credit Corp. guarantees, which had begun in 1983, had made Iraq the biggest single overseas purchaser of U.S. rice and one of the largest importers of U.S. corn, wheat and other grains. The following month, the administration provided Iraq with an additional \$500 million in agricultural sales credits. After Aziz's visit, the State Department recommended that Bush override congressional objections to continuing U.S. Export-Import Bank financing for commercial transactions with Iraq. In his January 17 order, Bush did so, certifying that to halt the Ex-Im guaran-

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tees would be "not in the national interest of the United States."

"That was the high-water mark of our cooperative efforts with the Iraqis," said a senior State Department official. "It was really downhill from that point forward."

DISTURBING SIGNALS

In the early weeks of 1990, the National Security Council staff director for Middle East affairs, Richard Haass, felt "a growing disquiet" that U.S. policy toward Iraq wasn't working quite as expected. At the suggestion of Haass, a former Rhodes scholar who had been a mid-level Defense and State Department official in the Carter and Reagan administrations, an interagency group held several meetings at the State Department to discuss whether the policy of limited cooperation with Iraq required adjustments. The discussions were not aimed at reversing the policy, according to a participant, but rather at sensitizing the bureaucracy, several rungs below the senior policymakers, to pay more attention to what was going on in Baghdad.

About the same time, Rick Herrmann and Steve Grummon, two junior aides on the Policy Planning Staff at State, were writing internal papers arguing that the policy was not just flawed in its execution but fundamentally wrong. One of their papers, "Containing Iraq," went to Policy Planning Director Dennis Ross, one of the handful of close Baker aides in a position to get an immediate and serious hearing from the secretary. The paper asserted that Iraq had emerged from the war much stronger than Iran and argued—in contrast to the prevailing administration view that Tehran was the focal point of danger—that Saddam Hussein's regime was the main threat to stability in the area and should be contained. Ross found the argument persuasive, but he did not act on it. As Baker's key aide on both Soviet and Middle East policy, he was preoccupied with the reunification of Germany and the drive to get Israeli-Palestinian negotiations going.

It was an outburst by Saddam himself that began to get the administration's attention. On February 24, just 12 days after his visit from Assistant Secretary of State Kelly, he spoke to a summit of the Arab Cooperation Council in Amman, Jordan. In those few days, the Iraqi president seemed to have made up his mind that the Americans' new "free hand" to maneuver in the Middle East, which he had described to Kelly, was inimical to Iraq. A bitterly critical Saddam declared there was "a real possibility" that in the next five years Israel would embark on "new stupidities" in the area as a result of encouragement by the United States now that it was in "a superior position in international politics." And he called for the U.S. fleet, which had operated in the area for more than 40 years, to go home now that Iraq's war with Iran had come to an end.

In Baghdad, anxious Arab diplomats called on Ambassador Glaspie to ask what had suddenly gone wrong in U.S.-Iraqi relations. Glaspie told them she was mystified. At the State De-

partment in Washington, John Kelly was surprised and puzzled. While Foreign Minister Aziz had challenged the U.S. intention to maintain naval forces in the area, Saddam had not brought this up in the January meeting. Moreover, the thrust of the Iraqi leader's remarks to Kelly had suggested a desire for better relations with Washington rather than more distant or even unfriendly ones. Kelly called in Ambassador Mashat and asked him why Saddam had made these pointed remarks. If Saddam had a problem with the United States or a point to make, Kelly asked, why had he not discussed it when Kelly was there? If it had emerged in the few days after the visit, why had it not been taken up through diplomatic channels before a public blast? On Washington's instructions, the same questions were put to the Iraqi Foreign Ministry by Glaspie.

From the State Department's viewpoint, there was no satisfactory answer from the Iraqis. It was noted, though, that two things had happened between Kelly's departure from Baghdad and Saddam's speech in Amman. One was the issuance on February 21 of the annual State Department Human Rights Report. Kelly, however, had warned Saddam and Aziz that this negative assessment was coming, and their reactions had not suggested that it would cause a serious rift.

The other intervening event, which Iraqi officials later told Glaspie had been a source of great indignation, was a Voice of America editorial broadcast in Arabic and other languages on February 15, which had not been seen in advance by the State Department and had hardly been noticed in Washington. The editorial, which stated that it was "reflecting the views of the U.S. government," criticized secret police abuses in Iraq and seven other countries. "The rulers of these countries hold power by force and fear, not by the consent of the governed . . . the tide of history is against such rulers. The 1990s should belong not to the dictators and secret police, but to the people," the editorial said.

Glaspie believed that Saddam had been supplied by aides with a recording or the text of the editorial and was infuriated. The Iraqi leaders "read the editorial as USG [U.S. government] sanctioned mudslinging with the intent to incite revolution," Glaspie informed Washington in a cable obtained under the Freedom of Information Act by New York Times columnist William Safire. Glaspie then wrote Aziz a statement of "regret" that the editorial left open an incorrect interpretation: "It is absolutely not United States policy to question the legitimacy of the government of Iraq nor interfere in any way with the domestic concerns of the Iraqi people and government." According to a VOA official, the editorial was sharply attacked at a State Department meeting attended by Baker and Kelly, and new procedures were put in place for advance State Department clearance of all VOA editorials dealing with the sensitive subject of Iraq.

Still, those officials who were aware of Saddam's outburst against the United States were puzzled. Could a human rights

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report or a Voice of America editorial make so much difference to a dictatorial ruler?

'THE SPRING OF BAD BEHAVIOR'

In early March 1990, several weeks after Saddam's Amman speech, former assistant secretary of state Richard Murphy visited Baghdad as an adviser to a Los Angeles-based international bank. Murphy, who was John Kelly's predecessor at State and who had spent a lifetime in Middle East diplomacy, quickly detected that something had changed in the Iraqi attitude toward the outside world. Foreign Minister Aziz and every other senior official Murphy saw told him that Israel was preparing to attack Iraq, as it had in 1981, when it launched a daring bombing raid against an Iraqi nuclear reactor. Murphy himself saw no sign of an impending Israeli attack, and no Iraqi official was able to cite evidence to back up the charge. Nevertheless, it was clear to him that Iraq's insistence that it was being threatened, and that the world was against it, would have consequences.

A second disturbing trend also engaged Murphy's attention. Since the end of the war with Iran, Iraq had made no effort to pay off its heavy debts and little effort to cut back either its million-man army—the fourth largest in the world—or its ambitious economic development program. The result was that, although Iraq was recognized everywhere as a potentially rich and viable country, it was piling up massive new debts; its credit rating was sinking and the interest rates on new loans had soared to 30 percent yearly. Saddam had adamantly rejected recommendations from foreign bankers that he reschedule Iraq's debts through a general negotiation with creditors. This procedure, known as a Paris Club, would have required secretive Iraq to open its books for the first time to outsiders.

As oil prices fell and Iraq's credit squeeze became even worse in early 1990, Murphy said later, "Saddam came to realize that he was being regarded as one of the world's worst credit risks and was facing bankruptcy"—despite his own view of himself as a rising power in his region and even beyond. The former assistant secretary of state, and many others, now believe this frustration over money was at the root of Saddam's drive against wealthy Kuwait. "To get out of bankruptcy, you rob a bank," Murphy said.

Saddam's first target, though, was Israel. On March 9, Iraq suddenly brought to trial an Iranian-born journalist for the London Observer, Farzad Bazoft, who had been arrested five months earlier for investigating an explosion at an Iraqi missile plant, and charged him with spying for Israel. Despite appeals for clemency from Britain and elsewhere, Bazoft was sentenced to death and executed within a week, an act that earned Saddam worldwide condemnation. Later that month, two more sensational stories broke. One was the assassination in Brussels of Gerald Bull, a naturalized American, who had been helping Iraq manufacture the longest-range artillery piece in history, dubbed "the supergun." Senior Is-

raeli intelligence officials, confirming what was rumored at the time, have recently claimed responsibility for the slaying. Shortly after Bull's murder, U.S. and British authorities culminated a lengthy sting operation by arresting Iraqi agents who had sought to obtain sophisticated capacitors, electrical devices that could be used in nuclear and missile technology.

Perhaps the most serious source of tension, though, was not publicly announced. Early in March, U.S. intelligence detected the construction of six fixed launchers for long-range Scud missiles at an Iraqi base near the Jordanian border, placing these weapons within range of Israel. A CIA report said that the launchers, which could easily be observed by U.S. satellites, were intended as a blunt statement by Iraq that it would retaliate against any Israeli attack on its chemical weapons or nuclear installations.

In an emotional speech at a military ceremony on April 1, Saddam made the threat explicit. After announcing that Iraq had developed binary chemical weapons previously possessed only by the United States and the Soviet Union, he discussed the Bazoft, Bull and capacitor cases in rambling fashion. Then suddenly he warned Israel against striking at Iraqi plants. *If Iraq is attacked, Saddam declared, "by God, we will make the fire eat up half of Israel."*

Unlike Saddam's complaints about the United States in February or the troublesome events of March, the sensational threat to burn Israel brought Iraq to the attention of top policymakers and onto the front pages of newspapers. The Iraqi leader was hailed in the Arab world for standing up to Israel. In Washington, however, State Department spokesman Margaret Tutwiler called Saddam's remarks "inflammatory, irresponsible and outrageous." A White House statement called the remarks "deplorable and irresponsible."

As the Western reaction rolled in, Saddam telephoned King Fahd of Saudi Arabia and asked him to send an emissary who could speak authoritatively on his behalf to Bush and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. Fahd sent his ambassador to the United States, Prince Bandar bin Sultan, the son of the kingdom's third-ranking royal figure, who has often been used as a confidential emissary. On April 5, Bandar flew to Baghdad and was taken in an Iraqi plane to meet Saddam in Mosul, north of the capital.

In a four-hour discussion, from which Bandar made 18 pages of notes, the Iraqi president asked the ambassador personally to assure Bush and Thatcher that he wanted good relations with the West and had no intention of attacking Israel. Instead, he was interested in obtaining their guarantee that Israel would not strike him.

Saddam made the point that when Israel destroyed the Iraqi nuclear reactor in June 1981, he did not retaliate because Iraq was at war with Iran. This time, he said, he would definitely retaliate against any attack. If he did not do so, Saddam claimed, he would not remain in office as president for six hours. In

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the strongest terms, he repeated that he would not initiate a strike against Israel but would only respond.

In that case, the Saudi ambassador asked, why had he made the public statement that caused such a worldwide reaction?

It was for "a different reason" from what was assumed. Saddam replied. Since Israel and the West were plotting against him and the Western media were attacking him constantly, "I must have my people mobilized to defeat this." The way to mobilize Iraqis was to announce that he would burn half of Israel if attacked, the president continued. "If I mobilize my people, I will be ready for whatever develops." Bandar would later kick himself for not realizing that Saddam's plans for mobilization could endanger countries closer at hand than Israel.

Toward the end of the meeting, Saddam dealt directly with the possible Iraqi threat to other Arab states. He said he wished to send a special message to King Fahd about "rumors in imperialist and Zionist circles that Iraq has evil intentions toward its neighbors" in the Persian Gulf. The rumors were untrue, he declared, and the Saudi monarch should not believe them.

Bandar took the messages to Fahd, Thatcher and Bush as requested. Thatcher, especially, was skeptical of Saddam's intentions, saying that Saddam was hardly believable. According to a Saudi source, Bush was upset by Saddam's threats and told Bandar, "If he doesn't mean to attack, why does he say these things?" Bush reportedly also told the Saudi ambassador, "We don't want anybody to attack anybody," suggesting an effort to restrain Israel as well as Iraq.

On April 12, five U.S. senators—led by Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole—made a now-famous visit to Saddam in Mosul. According to a transcript published by the Iraqis, Saddam charged that "an all-out campaign is being waged against us in America and the countries of Europe" in order to provide political cover for Israel to attack. He also criticized the United States for furnishing Israel with Patriot missiles after Iraq's offensive missile capability had become known.

Before flying to Iraq, the senators had telephoned Bush from another Middle East stop to assure themselves of his approval of their visit, in view of the controversy that had erupted following Saddam's threats to attack Israel and other countries with chemical weapons. Dole told Bush, according to the transcript, "I assured him personally that he was the

and "that he wants better relations, and that the U.S. government wants better relations with Iraq."

In Washington, concern had been building throughout "the spring of bad behavior," as Assistant Secretary of State Kelly called it, that Iraq was a much more difficult case than had been expected. After the "burn Israel" speech, pressure mounted from Israel's friends in Congress to legislate sanctions, including an end to U.S.-guaranteed agricultural sales, while the agricultural lobby mounted a campaign to preserve the sales on the grounds that other countries would simply get Iraq's business if they were canceled. Still, the unhappiness with Saddam was seen largely in the context of a threat to Israel rather than a threat against Arab neighbors. "It never occurred to us that they would take Kuwait," said a State Department official who was closely following the situation.

On April 16, the interagency Deputies Committee, headed by Deputy National Security Adviser Robert Gates, met at the White House for the first time to reconsider U.S. policy toward Iraq. Speaking for the State Department, Under Secretary of State Robert Kimmitt said Iraq's recent behavior no longer justified government-guaranteed rice and other grain sales, or government-backed Export-Import Bank credits. On the other hand, State continued to oppose the drive in Congress to cut off these benefits through legislation, on grounds that this would tie the administration's hands when and if the time came to renew them. Others at the meeting, according to a participant, argued that the credit programs should go forward because "all we would be doing is hurting U.S. rice producers and U.S. firms looking for business."

Some officials at State were disappointed that the meeting ended without a decision to terminate the credit programs. A Commerce Department official complained privately that "nothing was decided" at the meeting. However, Kimmitt left the meeting believing that, without State's support, no additional benefits for Iraq could receive interagency approval to go forward—and in fact, none did. Saddam subsequently complained that the United States had decided to starve Iraq.

The discussions at this and another Deputies Committee meeting at the end of May removed several of the inducements to Iraq for closer U.S. ties, but they did not fundamentally reverse the U.S. policy of seeking to improve relations with Baghdad. By the spring of 1990, "the realization was that [the policy] was perfectly right to try but that it wasn't working," said a senior official following the situation. "If we had the window somewhat toward

Iraq [in 1989], it was time to start narrowing, though not shutting, that window."

Testifying on Capitol Hill 10 days after the first Deputies Committee meeting, Kelly called Iraq "an important and difficult country which poses a challenge to American foreign policy," but he declared that it remained important to provide an opportunity for Iraq "to demonstrate that it does, indeed, wish to reverse this deterioration in relations." Rep. Tom Lantos (D-Calif.) said he detected an "Alice in Wonderland" quality in Kelly's testimony. "You sort of expressed a hope, which boggles my mind, that somehow . . . Iraq under Saddam Hussein will turn in the direction of being a responsible and civilized and peace-loving and constructive member of the international community. And I find this, to put it mildly, a non sequitur," Lantos said.

At the end of May, the administration received the first clear indication that Iraq's target might be an Arab state in the Persian Gulf rather than Israel. During the Arab League summit meeting in Baghdad on May 30, Saddam called in a group of Arab heads of state and complained bitterly of "economic warfare" being waged against him by Kuwait, according to a variety of sources. On that occasion, recalled Iraqi Ambassador Mashaat, "our president warned the Kuwaitis, 'You are wrecking our means of sustenance, and if you cut people's means of sustenance, it is equivalent to cutting their neck and killing them.'" A former U.S. diplomat with long experience and good contacts in the area said there was a sharp confrontation between Saddam and the emir of Kuwait, Sheik Jabir Ahmed Sabah, who flatly rejected Saddam's demand for billions of dollars in reparations and territorial concessions. "My view is this was a watershed," said the American source. In hindsight, he added, "there is some evidence that Iraq began serious invasion planning at that time."

In Washington, however, nobody was paying much attention. The day of the Arab summit in Baghdad, U.S. officialdom was focused on Mikhail Gorbachev's arrival in the U.S. capital for a four-day summit meeting with Bush. Neither the Washington Post nor New York Times reports on the Arab League meeting mentioned the Iraqi threats against Kuwait, which were made in a private meeting out of earshot of the press. Even when news of Saddam's challenge to his neighbor filtered back to official circles, it sparked only passing interest.

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Before mid-summer, said a senior administration official with Middle East responsibility, "you had all these pieces of stuff, all these speeches and behavior that one didn't like" from Iraq, but nobody rang an alarm bell or otherwise called for urgent attention. The official, who is in position to see all U.S. intelligence about the region, said that before mid-July he saw or heard no predictions from any agency or official of an Iraqi attack on Kuwait.

THE BIG PUSH

On Friday, July 20, a foreign military attache was traveling along the six-lane highway from Kuwait City to Baghdad when he encountered a remarkable sight: hundreds of Iraqi military vehicles filled with troops and weapons moving south toward the Kuwaiti border. The startled attache counted more than 2,000 vehicles on the road, transporting what turned out to be two divisions of the Republican Guard, Iraq's best troops. Within a few hours of the report, U.S. spy satellites had aimed their cameras at the border area, and analysts estimated that Iraq had moved 30,000 troops to positions near Kuwait. Kuwait's entire army was only about 20,000 men.

Iraq made little effort to hide the troop movements; either through inadvertence or on purpose, it had given the attache permission to be on the road when its troops were on the move. In the days to come, as the buildup along the border steadily rose to more than 100,000 troops, Iraqi tanks were loaded onto railroad cars in Baghdad within sight of main streets where passersby, including foreign diplomats, could easily observe them.

The very openness of the Iraqi military buildup and the nature of the political backdrop led most observers to believe that its purpose was intimidation of Kuwait rather than invasion. "The Iraqis are just flexing their muscles, and this is designed for political effect," an Arab diplomat said after receiving a U.S. intelligence briefing on the troop movements. The initial judgment of nearly all foreign governments was that Saddam was pressuring Kuwait to comply with its economic and territorial demands, not planning to seize the country.

The political buildup had begun several days before the troop movements with a two-pronged Iraqi campaign. On July 16, Foreign Minister Aziz sent a letter to the Arab League accusing Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates of "divulging infor-

sion" by exceeding their OPEC oil production quotas in a manner that brought world petroleum prices down. Kuwait was charged with "twofold aggression" for "stealing" \$2.4 billion in Iraqi oil from an oil field that straddles the Kuwait-Iraq border. The Aziz letter was not made public for several days; to the dismay of the State Department, no Arab country informed the United States about it.

The other part of the campaign was public from the start: a speech by Saddam to the Iraqi people on July 17 accusing unnamed gulf Arab states—widely identified as Kuwait and the U.A.E.—of stabbing Iraq in the back with "a poison dagger" by overproducing oil. Saddam charged this was part of a plan "inspired by America to undermine Arab interests and security." If words do not remedy the situation, Saddam warned, "something effective must be done."

Beginning with July 18, the day following Saddam's speech, either the State Department or the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad presented Iraq with formal demands for clarification every day for a week, except for the Islamic holy day of Friday, when the Iraqi Foreign Ministry is closed. A number of these diplomatic inquiries also warned that the United States would defend its interests in the region. In Washington, State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said the United States was "strongly committed to supporting the individual and collective self-defense of our friends in the gulf with whom we have deep and longstanding ties." Under questioning, he would not say whether the United States would provide military help to its friends in case of an Iraqi attack.

In response to the Iraqi troop movements, Kuwait on July 20 placed its armed forces on alert. Officials of the United Arab Emirates, in an unprecedented move, on July 21 asked the United States for a demonstration of U.S. military backing for its independence. The Pentagon, which long had been seeking closer military ties with the U.A.E., was ready to respond immediately with a joint Air Force refueling exercise of the two nations. At the State Department, the Near East Bureau initially recommended caution, and Under Secretary Kimmitt asked for time to establish that the request came from the top leadership of the U.A.E. Kimmitt also asked about the attitudes of other friendly countries in the region, and specifically if Saudi Arabia would join the operation.

When the answer came back from the Saudis, the leaders agreed with

the request, and when the Saudis were not receptive, the joint military exercise involving two U.S. aerial tankers and a U.S. cargo transport plane was authorized on July 23. At the same time, the Pentagon dispatched the six warships of its Middle East task force to positions closer to Kuwait and the U.A.E. According to a senior State Department official, Kuwait cautioned the United States against doing anything "militarily or rhetorically" to upset Saddam or give him cause to take military action. Kuwait persisted in this cautious attitude right up to the day of the invasion, the official said.

Under Secretary of State Kimmitt, a West Point graduate who served on the Carter and Reagan National Security Council staffs, was concerned that sending two aerial tankers might be just enough to embroil the United States without being taken seriously by Iraq. For this reason, he suggested that the aircraft carrier USS Independence and its accompanying battle group be deployed to the area as a show of force. The Pentagon demurred, however, suggesting that the Independence would need to stop for weapons familiarization at Diego Garcia, the U.S. base in the Indian Ocean, before heading into a potential battle zone.

On July 24, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak flew to Baghdad and Kuwait in an attempt to mediate the dispute that had broken out. Mubarak said after returning to Cairo that Saddam had assured him he had "no intention" of invading Kuwait. The trouble in the gulf, according to Mubarak, was only a "summer cloud," the kind that in Egypt produces no rain. An Egyptian diplomat said the Iraqi president had also told Mubarak he intended "only to frighten Kuwait" into complying with oil production quotas and raising oil prices at an emergency OPEC meeting that had been convened in Geneva. At the suggestion of Mubarak and others, according to a Kuwaiti diplomat, Kuwait lowered its state of military alert in order not to provoke Saddam.

The same day, the U.S. military exercise with the U.A.E. was announced in Washington. Asked about it by reporters, Mubarak replied: "I call on the United States that we do not escalate the issue between two brotherly Arab states." State Department spokesman Margaret Tutwiler, in the strongest U.S. official statement prior to the invasion, said that

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"Iraq and others know that there is no place for coercion and intimidation in a civilized world" and called for a peaceful settlement. In response to questions, she also noted, "We do not have any defense treaties with Kuwait and there are no special defense or security commitments to Kuwait."

In Baghdad, Ambassador Glaspie, who had had no success in obtaining assurances from the Iraqi Foreign Ministry in her daily visits, took Tutwiler's statement and the announcement of the refueling exercise to Deputy Foreign Minister Nizar Hamdoun on the morning of July 25. She asked Hamdoun, who previously had been a highly successful Iraqi ambassador in Washington, to bring the statements to the personal attention of Saddam. Shortly after returning to the embassy, Glaspie received word that Hamdoun wanted to see her again. When she went back to the Foreign Ministry, Hamdoun escorted her to an official car to take her immediately to the Presidency. There she was ushered into the office of Saddam Hussein, who had never before met her privately in her nearly two years as U.S. ambassador in Baghdad. When she walked into the president's office, he was holding the statements from Washington in his hand.

Glaspie's interview with Saddam, which was subsequently made public in abridged form by the Iraqis, has given rise to great indignation about her overly friendly tone, her statement that the United States had "no opinion" on Iraq's border dispute with Kuwait, and her failure to warn the Iraqi president against taking military action. Glaspie, who was not accompanied by any aides to the unexpected meeting, did not take notes as the conversation proceeded but managed to write some notes on an envelope when Saddam stepped out of the room temporarily during the interview. A State Department official familiar with her reporting cable said that, while about 80 percent of the conversation was stated with substantial accuracy in the subsequent Iraqi transcript, the document omitted her strongest statements, such as a warning that the United States would protect its vital interests in the area, and also omitted Saddam's most explicit assurances addressed to Bush that he had no intention of attacking Kuwait.

Saddam appeared to be upset with the joint U.S.-U.A.E. military exercise in the area, accusing the United States of "flexing muscles and pressure" on behalf of Kuwait and the U.A.E. "If you use pressure, we will deploy pressure and force,"

said Saddam. "We know that you can harm us, although we do not threaten you. But we too can harm you . . . You can come to Iraq with aircraft and missiles, but do not push us to the point where we cease to care. And when we feel that you want to injure our pride and take away the Iraqis' chance of a high standard of living, then we will cease to care, and death will be the choice for us. Then we would not care if you fired 100 missiles for each missile we fired. Because without pride life would have no value."

While Glaspie was in his office, Saddam was called into the next room to take a telephone call from Mubarak, one of the series of calls, messages and visits involving senior Arab leaders seeking to resolve the crisis. When he returned, Saddam told Glaspie that the Kuwaiti crown prince and prime minister, Sheik Saad Abdullah Sabah, had agreed to meet the vice chairman of Iraq's ruling Revolutionary Command Council, Izzat Ibrahim, in Saudi Arabia to begin defusing the crisis. After a protocol beginning, the negotiations would then be transferred to Baghdad, Saddam said. He reported that he had given his word that "we are not going to do anything until we meet with them" and that if there is hope for resolving the crisis, "then nothing will happen." But he added, "if we are unable to find a solution, then it will be natural that Iraq will not accept death."

Glaspie left Saddam's office pleased that U.S. concern had finally gotten his attention in major fashion. She believed the situation would be peaceful at least through the Baghdad meetings with Kuwait. As it turned out, the preliminary discussions in Saudi Arabia broke down, and the Baghdad meetings never took place.

In Langley, Virginia, on July 25, the same day as Glaspie's meeting, the Central Intelligence Agency was reaching another set of judgments, mostly on the basis of Iraq's deployments. For the first time, the CIA estimated that Baghdad was not bluffing, but would probably use force against Kuwait. However, the agency did not expect that Saddam would seize the entire country, believing instead that Iraq would limit itself to disputed territory along the northern border.

The next several days saw a flurry of meetings and telephone calls. OPEC oil ministers in Geneva agreed on strict production and export limits to bring oil prices up, and Kuwait and the U.A.E. agreed to a cease-fire. The Senate, following a similar action in the

House, voted to cut off all agricultural credits to Iraq and prohibit transfers of militarily useful technology. King Hussein of Jordan telephoned Bush twice, on July 28 and July 30, and, according to a U.S. official, "was extremely reassuring that this [quarrel] would be solved peacefully and Saddam Hussein would not resort to the use of military force." Mubarak and Fahd also communicated their view that the problem was being handled in an Arab fashion by the Arabs and that the United States should do nothing to upset the diplomatic apple cart. In Baghdad, Saddam's son-in-law and most powerful minister, Hassan Kamal, asked Glaspie to help obtain export licenses that were being blocked by the Commerce Department and, when she brought up the military buildup on the border, assured her, "We are not going to use the troops."

On the morning of August 1, the CIA obtained information that led it to conclude it was more likely than not that Iraq would invade Kuwait within 24 hours.

At 3 p.m. Assistant Secretary of State Kelly summoned Ambassador Mashat to his office. As the Iraqi ambassador settled into the sofa, Kelly delivered his message: "Mr. Ambassador, we know you have at least 100,000 troops on your border. This is extremely serious. It looks as though you are preparing aggressive action against Kuwait." Kelly reiterated the U.S. insistence that any differences must be resolved peacefully and asked the government of Iraq to pull back its troops from the border to defuse the growing chances of a military confrontation.

Mashat, according to a U.S. account, denied "any aggressive intention whatsoever" on the part of Iraq. He also said, "Any country has a sovereign right to deploy troops wherever it wants to within its frontiers."

Later that afternoon in a seventh-floor conference room at State, Under Secretary Kimmitt convened the last of several informal meetings of the interagency Deputies Committee to consider the Iraqi military buildup. Deputy National Security Adviser Gates, who normally chaired this group, was out of town on vacation. A crucial moment came when Kimmitt asked CIA Deputy Director Richard Kerr for a statement of the U.S. intelligence conclusions. Kerr, a 30-year veteran of the agency, responded that the CIA believed that within the next 24 hours Iraqi troops probably would cross the Kuwaiti border, at a minimum to the oil field in the north and to Bubiyan Island, which Iraq had long claimed. Kerr went on to say that the

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agency was uncertain whether Baghdad's troops would go farther, though they had the capability to take all of Kuwait without much difficulty. By the time the meeting ended about 6:30 p.m., a participant said, there was a consensus by the officials around the table that Iraq would act, but no consensus about how far it would go.

The NSC Middle East expert, Richard Haass, went from the meeting at State to the family quarters of the White House, where he and National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft conferred with Bush. The three men discussed what was known from intelligence sources, what Arab leaders were telling them reassuringly, and what options there might be for U.S. action to stave off an attack.

'WE WERE GUILTY OF A KIND OF MIND-SET'

As this article went to press, the United States and its allies had announced the end of their highly successful military campaign to expel Iraq from Kuwait. Many Americans had thought of little else for months as the international coalition

to oust Iraq was painstakingly created, as the deadline for withdrawal was given by the United Nations and ignored by Iraq and as the battle erupted. The costs in human life, destruction of property and expenditure of public funds have been high, and the long-term consequences for the United States in the Persian Gulf and Middle East generally are still uncertain.

Whatever the successes of U.S. policy in the period since August 2, it is clear that the United States and world at large would have been far better off if Iraq's invasion of Kuwait could have been averted without bloodshed. But as we have seen, hardly anybody in the official circles of Washington and other allied capitals saw it coming until late in the day.

Asked why nobody saw the invasion approaching, one official here said he has taken many long walks pondering why neither he nor others added up the danger signals until it was too late. "It was an intelligence failure of sorts. We were guilty of a kind of mind-set or a framework" about Iraq, he said. "It might even be cultural. The idea that a country would march up to the border, put 100,000 troops there, go in and do what they've done; I don't think anybody here thought they'd do it."

Such a mind-set or fixed conception is among the classic pitfalls of intelligence and policymaking in dealing with the dangers of surprise attack. Many earlier cases illustrate the tendency to down-

grade or dismiss troubling signs because—in the logic of outsiders—an attack does not seem to make sense. Such miscalculations contributed to the effectiveness and surprise of, among others, the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, the Chinese intervention in the Korean War in 1950, the Tet offensive in Vietnam in 1968 and the Egyptian attack against Israel in the Sinai in 1973.

Perhaps even more troubling in this case is the failure of the Bush administration even to focus on Iraq in serious fashion until nearly the eve of the invasion. During the first half of 1990, Bush, Baker and the relatively small inner circle that dominates foreign policymaking were preoccupied with what seemed much more urgent international issues, especially in the Soviet Union and Europe. "It's not that I didn't think the subject was important," said one senior policymaker who otherwise would have taken a major hand in policy toward Iraq, "and it's not just that I was heavily involved in many other things. It's just that there are only so many things you can direct your attention [to] and be working on . . . I didn't have the time."

Had the threat of destabilizing military action by Iraq been seen more clearly in Washington, the vital question is whether the United States could have headed it off by following different policies or issuing stronger warnings. Most of the half-dozen senior officials interviewed for this article said they believed, even in hindsight, that the United States could have done little that would have stopped Saddam, especially given that European powers were not alarmed and most of Iraq's Arab neighbors, including Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan and Kuwait itself, did not believe that Baghdad would attack Kuwait. The Arab nations continued to counsel caution and patience until Iraqi troops rolled across the border.

Last-minute U.S. assertions of its interest in peaceful resolution of disputes seem to have had little impact in Baghdad. Diplomatic messages and the dispatch of the refueling tankers to the U.A.E. in the week before the attack got Saddam's attention, but do not appear to have made much difference. Before the invasion, it would not have been credible to Saddam—or, for that matter, to officials of the administration in Washington—for the United States to warn that it might send 500,000 troops and spearhead an unprecedented international effort to reverse the aggression.

Nonetheless, it is possible that the invasion could have been averted by

from Washington. Former assistant secretary of state Richard Murphy, who was the State Department's top Mideast expert in the last half of the Reagan administration, said, "It is conceivable that a very blunt, harsh threat—you take one step toward Kuwait, and we'll clobber you"—might have worked. A State Department career official with extensive Persian Gulf experience said that, in retrospect, Iraq should have been warned more clearly against the audacious idea of seizing Kuwait. "I believe we should have said that directly, very firmly, repeatedly and very publicly," this official said. But he conceded that he, like everyone else he knew in the U.S. government, did not expect Iraq to occupy Kuwait until it happened.

In the family quarters of the White House on the night of August 1—the early hours of August 2 in the Persian Gulf—the president and his aides had little chance to ponder anything they might have done to avert the dangerous situation that confronted them. A little after 7 p.m., the telephone rang. Under Secretary of State Kimmitt was on the line to say that gunfire had broken out in Kuwait City. About an hour later, the full-scale invasion by Iraq was confirmed. ■

Don Oberdorfer has covered U.S. diplomacy for The Washington Post for 15 years.

MARY McGRORY

The Real 'Vietnam Syndrome'

If President Bush would like to formalize the defeat of the "Vietnam syndrome," which he proclaimed last Friday, he could do it in a grand way by recognizing Vietnam. He could start by lifting the trade embargo that has been in effect for 15 years.

Vietnam has been on the president's mind ever since he took office. He said rather mysteriously in his Inaugural Address that "the statute of limitations has been reached on Vietnam."

What he meant, it is plainer now, was that American presidents had been limited long enough in their use of force by the country's bitter memories of high casualties, head-down homecomings and political carnage.

While the president hailed the end of the "syndrome," others, especially women, dislike to see its demise. Men love war, as Gen. Robert E. Lee remarked, and would love it more if it were not so dreadful. The Persian Gulf War, which was a piece of cake for our troops, could make war a seductive alternative to the tedious, repetitive work of diplomacy.

But if he wants us to get over it, what better way to show it than by admitting Vietnam exists. Diplomatic recognition would say plainly that we have not only forgiven ourselves but have forgiven the enemy that improbably defeated us.

Bush could do it without the slightest difficulty. A president with a 90 percent approval rating could raise taxes with hardly a murmur. And now, having shown how tough he is, Bush could show his compassionate side.

Allowing Vietnam to take its place

among the many flawed nations—including, especially, some of our gulf allies—with which we habitually do business would say it has suffered enough.

There would be no serious resistance from the country. A Time magazine poll taken last November shows that 48 percent can handle recognition. The preliminary step of ending the trade embargo wins by better than 2 to 1, 69.5 percent to 30.5 percent.

It isn't just crazy leftovers from the '60s who favor a resumption of normal trade relations—and a competitive bid against the Japanese, Australian and European businessmen who are flocking to the new marketplace. Sen. Richard G. Lugar, a moderate Republican from Indiana, wrote the president a letter last October saying "the time has come," arguing among other considerations that "added U.S. presence and increased commercial contacts will contribute to an improvement in human rights practices and a lessening of the repressive political ethos that still exists in the country." He had seven cosigners.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is representing 35 to 40 American corporations that want to get into business. Several oil companies are among those pressing the State Department to loosen up before all the goodies are gone. Mark Van Fleet of the chamber says Foggy Bottom tells his clients that Vietnam has not joined in the "comprehensive" Cambodia peace settlement proposed by the United States and several other countries, and

that insufficient progress has been made on the perennial problem of the MIAs.

The fact is that there is always an alibi for maintaining the silly status quo. The real reason is that the Vietnamese beat us—and some Americans, unfortunately several of them in Bush's inner circle, can never forget it. The real Vietnam syndrome is particularly virulent in such Kissinger alumni as Brent Scowcroft and Lawrence Eagleburger, and Karl Jackson of the National Security Council staff, who is held responsible for the hard line on Cambodia.

There is also some resistance from older Vietnamese immigrants, who maintain a powerful hostility against the government of Vietnam, which has liberalized economically but not politically. Even so, it is hardly less democratic than Kuwait, the country we have recently liberated at such cost.

Others who might feel compelled to object are the old-line veterans organizations, the American Legion and the VFW. But it is difficult to think of veterans mounting any serious or sustained criticism against George Bush, who is being hailed by his countrymen as a combination of Henry V and Talleyrand.

Sen. Bob Kerrey (D-Neb.), who lost a leg in Vietnam and won the Medal of Honor, is one of those who is not sure that the passing of the syndrome is an unmitigated good for the nation's soul. And he's not sure that Vietnam veterans feel all that healed by the triumph in the gulf. They might feel a pang when they see the elaborate homecoming parades for the veterans of the 42-day war against an evaporating enemy. The Vietnam vets came home to cold stares, organized their own memorial and finally, to dedicate it, held their own homecoming parade, a shattering affair that began with a file of wheelchairs pushed by men in tattered uniforms.

WASHINGTON WHISPERS

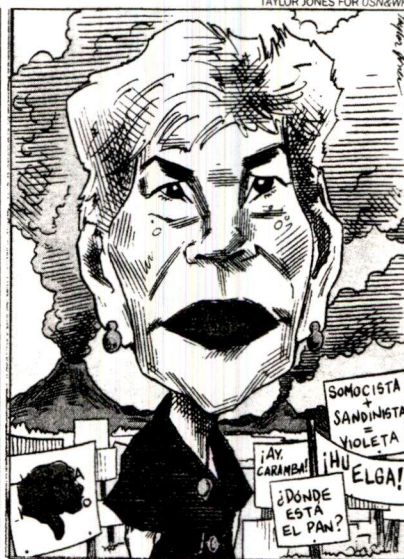
BAKER weighs taking Syria off the terror list

SOVIET GENERALS subvert arms-control treaties

GULF WAR MOVIE: Who will play George Bush?

■ **Rewarding Assad?** Before leaving on his Mideast mission, Secretary of State James Baker was urged by career diplomats to take Syria off the list of pro-terrorist states. They argued that such a gesture would reward Syria's participation in the gulf coalition, make Syria eligible for U.S. economic and military aid and encourage American investment by allowing companies to deduct taxes paid in Syria from their federal returns. What is required is that the president tell Congress that Syria has not been harboring terrorists for the past six months and will not do so in the future. But Congress may not be easily persuaded. Syria has been on the list since it was first compiled in 1979, and Damascus still serves as a haven for the Japanese Red Army and Palestinian extremists such as Ahmed Jibril, suspected of masterminding the Pan Am bombing that killed 270 people in 1988. (Others on the list are Iraq, Libya, Iran, Cuba and North Korea.) Arab diplomats add that Syrian President Hafez Assad is being urged by Saudis and other coalition partners to open talks with Israel—to trade a peace treaty for the Golan Heights, which Israel captured from Syria in the 1967 war and formally annexed in 1981.

■ **Postwar plays.** After victory in the gulf, most Democrats thought it wise to quip: George Bush did so well abroad, now let him do as well at home. But this week, pollsters warned that the ploy could backfire and advised party leaders to back off Bush for now and praise the troops instead—and let the press whine about the domestic agenda. Insiders expect the cease-fire to end as soon as the defense budget comes to the floor and Republicans push test votes on controversial weapons systems to make Democrats look weak on defense.



President Violeta Chamorro
An early exit?

■ **Dark skies for Violeta.** Nicaraguan President Violeta Chamorro is on the skids, and civil strife may erupt again. Conservatives are angry about her power sharing with Sandinista Army Chief of Staff Humberto Ortega. U.S. diplomats defend her, arguing that she has no alternative to close ties with the Sandinistas, who still control the military, and that the collapsing economy presents far more of a threat to her rule. Another concern is that widespread hunger will spark unrest. Predicts one respected Nicaraguan: "Chamorro won't make it through the year."

■ **Army-Navy game.** The superpower partnership, already uneasy because of reports of surreptitious Soviet aid to Iraq during the gulf war, may be further strained by new charges that the Soviet military is undermining existing and proposed arms-control treaties. Norwegian sources say the Soviets are trans-

ferring hundreds of late-model tanks and aircraft from their Army in areas such as eastern Germany and the Russian steppes to Navy outposts in the Arctic region, near the Norwegian border. That would circumvent the agreement limiting conventional forces in Europe. Navies are not part of the arms-reduction accords, and apparently it never occurred to Western negotiators that the Soviets would turn their Navy into a branch of the Army. On the START front, Moscow's negotiators assured the United States that they are not building any ballistic missile submarines. But, according to U.S. sources, U.S. spy satellites show four such submarines under construction.

■ **Minding mines.** Before and during the gulf war, Egyptian leaders were so wary of Arab sensitivities that they insisted that while their 42,000 soldiers would assist in the liberation of Kuwait, they would not set foot in Iraq. But in the wake of victory, Egyptian officials are acknowledging with great pride that Egyptian units, using equipment designed and manufactured in Egypt, led the allied forces in removing mines deep in Iraqi territory, helping to clear the way for the ground offensive.

■ **Casting around.** The BBC and HBO are arranging interviews with White House officials for a jointly produced TV film about the gulf war. George Bush's friends are speculating on who should play the lead roles. James Earl Jones is the consensus choice to portray Gen. Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Ossie Davis is also a possibility. Among the favorites to play Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf: Brian Dennehy, George Kennedy and Charles Durning. Some suggest Hume Cronyn for National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft. Who will play George Bush? Candidates include Cliff Robertson, who once played John F. Kennedy, and George Plimpton, the author known for his urbane manner and his book "Paper Lion," in which he lived out a pro-football fantasy and tried out with the Detroit Lions. White House nominees for the role of Saddam Hussein include Dustin Hoffman and Al Pacino.

EDITED BY CHARLES FENYVESI

US Failure to Deter Iraq Blamed on Policymaking

By George D. Moffett III

Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

and Jane Friedman

Special to The Christian Science Monitor

WASHINGTON

AS the post-mortem on the Gulf war continues, debate is growing over whether the way in which US foreign policy is made contributed to Washington's inability to deter Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait.

Until the eve of the invasion, the United States sought to strengthen Iraq as a means of countering Iran. To shore up Saddam Hussein the US bestowed food, intelligence information, and diplomatic recognition on Iraq.

Some State Department insiders now say it was the department's own ponderous bureaucracy that prevented the US from responding in time to the slowly gathering indications of Saddam's aggressive designs in the Gulf.

"The way the bureaucracy works, if there's not a major problem there's not going to be a concerted reexamination of policy," says one well-placed department official.

But many critics trace the failure of US policy to a decision-making process at the White House and State Department which is tightly controlled by a small coterie of senior advisers. With a more open process and with the wider participation of Middle East experts, they say, the US might have been able to read and respond to the warning signs more quickly.

"Saddam believed he could get away with the invasion of Kuwait, partly because neither the Reagan nor the Bush administra-

tions stood up to acts of Iraqi lawlessness," says Peter Galbraith, a senior member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. "Despite the warning signs the policy was never changed. This is what can happen when the policy process is closely held and the key players are preoccupied with other issues."

In congressional testimony this week, US ambassador to Iraq April Glaspie underscored the halting US response to Saddam's increasing belligerence. According to Ms. Glaspie, a high level review of US policy toward Iraq was not scheduled to begin until July 25, barely a week before Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

The last American president to consult widely before making policy decisions was Dwight Eisenhower, according to Walter Williams, author of a recent book on presidential policymaking entitled "Mismanaging America." Subsequent presidents have usually set policy on the advice of a small circle of high level advisers, usually generalists.

President Bush's circle of confidants during the Gulf crisis has largely been confined to three men, none of whom are Middle East specialists: Secretary of State James Baker III, national security adviser Brent Scowcroft, and Defense Secretary Richard Cheney. That pattern has been duplicated at the State Department, where Arab experts have been excluded from the policymaking loop.

"It's not that the experts are always right," says Dr. Williams, a professor of public affairs at the University of Washington. "But they can provide the background, the context, so that you can intercept bad ideas. The question is not so much who makes the final

decision but how much information and argument come into the process."

Twelve assistant secretaries preside over the State Department's main regional and functional bureaus.

Under George Shultz, President Reagan's secretary of state, the assistant secretaries were an integral part of the policy process.

"There was never a question of accessibility with Shultz; there was access," says Richard Murphy, a former assistant secretary for Middle East affairs who met with Shultz at least four times a week.

Under Baker, the assistant secretaries have largely been frozen out. Unlike Mr. Murphy, for example, John Kelly, the current assistant secretary for Middle East affairs, rarely travels to the region and has no role in policymaking.

"When I speak to [assistant secretaries]," says a congressional source, "I know I'm speaking to people who are not in the loop."

Those few who are in the loop - Mr. Baker, Undersecretary of State Robert Kimmitt, and Dennis Ross, head of the Department's policy planning unit - can only concentrate on a few issues at once.

During the run-up to the Gulf crisis, all three were focused on events in Eastern Europe.

"Iraq was neglected," says a congressional source. "There were efforts to have the Iraq policy reviewed, but Baker never got around to it because he was distracted. That's the result of a closed shop."

Once attention finally did shift to the Gulf, other important issues were neglected. "You have to have a system in which several

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
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The Wall Street Journal _____
The Christian Science Monitor ✓
New York Daily News _____
USA Today _____
The Chicago Tribune _____

Date 22 MARCH 1991

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problems can be addressed on the highest level on a regular basis," Mr. Galbraith says.

According to both congressional and administration sources, a few State Department officials did raise concerns as early as winter 1990 about the wisdom of continuing to support Saddam. For example, the department's terrorism experts grew suspicious when Saddam invited the notorious terrorist Abu Nidal to Baghdad. But with access severely limited, it was difficult to bring such views to Baker's attention.

"You have to delegate major roles to your underlings," says the congressional source. "A more open system in which responsibility is delegated and more people have access to top officials is a system inherently able to address more than one problem at a time."

Even critics of Baker's close-to-the-vest management style acknowledge that bureaucratic inertia played a role in the slow US response to changes in Iraq.

The bureaucracy is unable to respond to the kind of small, incremental changes in Iraqi policy that occurred during the months prior to Aug. 2, notes one department source.

No matter how large the circle of advisers, he adds, there is still a limit to the number of issues policymakers can deal with at one time. "Since the war, everyone has been too busy and too exhausted to take an activist role in the shaping the peace. It's a problem of time, not of a larger circle of advisers."

Riding the victory train

How the president plans to convert his gulf war success into a long-term political triumph

Like war, peace is unpredictable. And the Persian Gulf conflict has already loosed a whirlwind of new social, economic and cultural forces upon America. The clearest results are new pride in the nation, a sharp increase in George Bush's political stature, fresh adulation for the military and heightened respect for America's high-tech prowess, at least on the battlefield.

Not surprisingly, the president and his strategists are making plans to take advantage of it all. So far, key advisers have identified three main approaches in the molding of postwar America:

- Reinforce Bush's links to the values of patriotism, national self-esteem and a newfound can-do spirit. They plan to expand on the president's 1988 campaign strategy of using the Pledge of Allegiance and opposition to flag burning as "values issues." Already, Republicans are trying to make Democratic votes against war an antipatriotism issue.

- Emphasize that the war proves what *leadership* can do for America, not what *government* can do. Bush and his surrogates will argue that initiative and teamwork made the difference in the gulf. They don't want Americans getting funny ideas that the nation's success in war somehow validates big social programs at home, as many Democrats contend.

- Use the war to isolate strident critics. Even though many conservative Republicans opposed the war, Democrats who did so will be accused of being outside the "mainstream." So will liberal academics and liberal mainline church leaders who aggressively opposed the war. "It's a fundamental difference of values," says a Republican strategist. "The critics believe the world is a naturally passive place where aggressiveness needs to be nurtured to take root. We believe the world is naturally aggressive,

and that strength brings peace and weakness brings war."

Overall, White House strategists will try to filter all political discourse through the gulf war. For instance, the president introduced his warmed-over version of last year's crime bill with a burst of if-we-can-liberate-Kuwait-City-then-we-can-liberate-our-own-cities rhetoric. And Bob Dole, the Senate Republican leader, unveiled a GOP civil-rights bill last week, declaring: "Our military got the job done without quotas and without discrimination."

As usual, when it comes to national politics, Bush and his Republicans are thinking in terms of grand themes and overall strategy, while the Democrats, who control Congress, are thinking in terms of specific issues and legislative tactics. Democratic leaders are trying quickly to shift attention from vanquishing Saddam Hussein to their domestic agenda (see story on Page 26). Bush's response, in addition to regular trips to military bases to greet returning troops, will be simple: the veto. He has rejected 21 bills so far without a single

Conservative conquest. President Bush and his aides

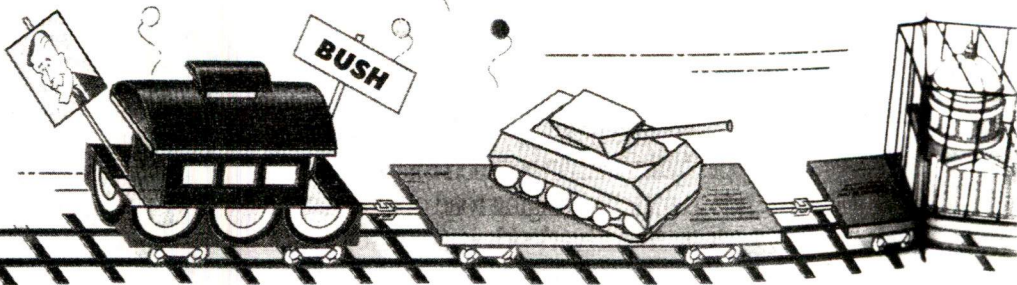
congressional override—and the gulf war only strengthens his hand.

The basic presumption in the Bush camp is that the gulf war has accelerated cultural and political trends that were already underway—not that it has reconfigured the nation's political life in the manner of previous wars. Vietnam, for instance, spawned a debilitating syndrome of self-doubt and recriminations that scarred the nation's psyche for nearly a generation. World War II affected everything from birth rates to income distribution, made the United States a superpower and encouraged important

Bush's basic plan

Promote the commander in chief: Sell his management of the crisis as solid leadership. In style: self-effacing, good natured, tireless. In substance: resolute, I-know-a-just-cause-when-I-see-one coalition builder.

Salute the military: Uphold today's armed services as the epitome of an institution that rewards performance, promotes self-discipline, respects authority, encourages teamwork, builds esprit de corps and accomplishes its mission.





his aides have devised a master plan to exploit the national trends set loose by the U.S. win.

advances for blacks and women. World War I ended in an immediate triumph for Democratic President Woodrow Wilson but, over time, led to an era of Republican reign, shifting social mores. Without megachanges like that in store—at least so far—Bush confidants have no fears that they'll be swamped by the kind of postwar turbulence that nearly drove Harry Truman from office at the end of World War II. Bush can also be comforted by the fact that in this century it has always been Republicans who profited politically from the ferment caused by wars or their aftermath—usually because

Democrats mishandled the conflict or the ensuing peace.

In the gulf war's aftermath, the biggest immediate fight will center on the invigorated claims that government programs for blacks and women should be expanded—in part because of the sacrifices they were being asked to make in the military during the war. In some quarters, Desert Storm has unleashed a faith in collective action similar to the commitment to civic involvement that followed the Civil War. Historian George Frederickson found that the War Between the States was

paralleled by an "inner civil war" that energized many citizens to fight society's ills. Democrats already are picking up the theme, summoning martial rhetoric and arguing for wars at home to strengthen civil-rights laws, remedy economic inequities and correct other ills.

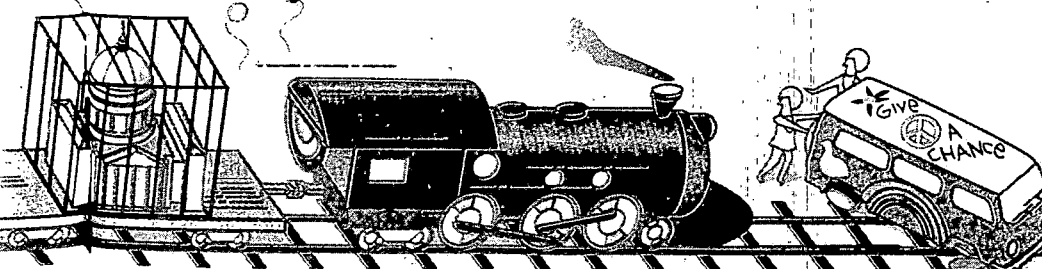
Bush will counter that the Democrats and other advocates of an activist federal government are missing the point. Above all, the president and his policymakers say, this war proved the enduring worth not of activist government but of basic American values such as the willingness to stand up for principle, to fight in a just cause for national interests and to support a weaker friend. It did not prove that government can and should be the instrument to tackle national ills. In the words of conservative political scientist James Q. Wilson: "Americans know that if you brought [Gen. H.] Norman Schwarzkopf home and told him to tackle crime, he'd start looking like any other big-city police chief—harried and frustrated. The public understands that we just don't know how to solve a lot of problems at home." Princeton sociologist Paul Starr, a prominent war supporter, is like many liberals who hope that the victory will give Americans "greater confidence in the capacity of government," but he isn't banking on it.

No new programs. Bush and his surrogates will specifically take on the advocates of expansive civil-rights legislation by arguing that the war reinforces military values of discipline, teamwork, respect for authority and, most important, rewarding people on the basis of merit—not race, gender or other factors unrelated to job performance. Bush's aides think most voters are simply too cynical about Washington to believe new programs can work. "In the end, people will trust leaders, not government, to do what's right," says a Bush adviser.

The White House does hope Bush can find a way to connect the success of a half-million American troops to everyday triumphs back home. Administration officials do not want to repeat what one calls "the man-on-the-moon syndrome": The first lunar landing in 1969 was so thoroughly treated as a product of government-sponsored technology that many Americans, while proud of the achievement, felt it had no real relevance to their daily lives or values. To avoid that reaction, Bush talks about the performance of average Americans in uniform, doing their jobs, working as a team toward a clear objective. "The war contradicts some fundamental things we've been told over the last 25 years," says an administration official. "It contradicts the idea that things are more

Contain government activism: Beat back arguments for more government. The war was not a victory for government but for leadership. Washington can protect national security but cannot devise and run social programs well.

Smash the critics: Go after those who questioned the war's morality and were fretful about casualties—especially liberal Democrats, mainline church leaders and some academics. Proxies, not the president, will make the attacks.



DAVID S. MERRILL—USN&WR

The Presidency

Hugh Sidey

Ford's Forgotten Legacy

If the gulf war spectacular had been a movie, the credits could have listed Jimmy Carter as a progenitor of the Tomahawk cruise missile and Ronald Reagan as merchant prince of the huge weapons inventory that crushed the evil foe. But the fellow who may actually have had more to do with authoring the success story is never mentioned: Jerry Ford.

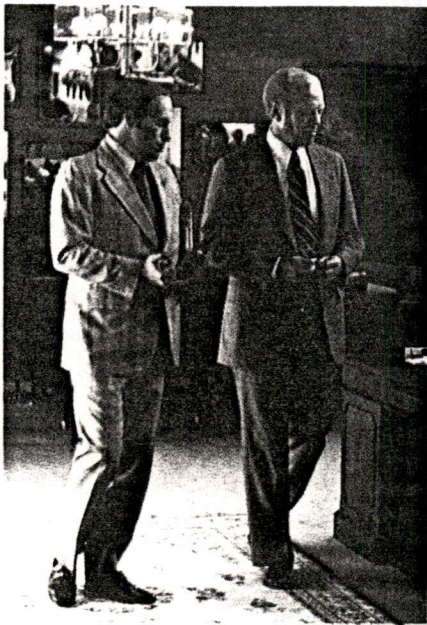
Jerry Ford? Correct. As might be expected, given his postpresidential flight paths, the former Commander in Chief hauled his golf clubs to the salubrious environs of Rancho Mirage, Calif., during the crisis. But Ford, like other Americans, lingered in front of the TV screen as the war unfolded. He was also watching his boys perform back in Washington. "They did a terrific job," boasted Ford.

Of the eight men in George Bush's war council, four were brought in directly or shoved along in their journey by Ford. Two others arrived at the fringes of power during Ford's brief tenure, and their talents were allowed full play in the meritocracy that Ford helped nurture.

"I think I had a knack of picking good people," said Ford last week. To start at the apex of what some are calling a

"presidential culture": Ford first spotted George Bush in 1966. Ford, then House minority leader, recalls that Bush was a "bright star" running for Congress in Texas. He hurried down to campaign for him, then helped put Bush on the powerful Ways and Means Committee. As President, Ford made Bush U.S. representative to China and later named him to head the CIA.

When he was Vice President, Ford had got to know Lieut. General Brent Scowcroft, deputy head of the National Security Council. In those days Henry Kissinger was not only Secretary of State but also National Security Adviser. Ford did not like the double duty for Kissinger. He did like Scowcroft. As President, Ford in 1975 gave Scowcroft the NSC title and turned the self-effacing general into a recognized player in vital deliberations. And when Bush moved into the Oval Office, he put Scowcroft back in



DIRCK HALSTEAD FOR TIME

Cheney and his ex-boss in 1976

the job Ford had given him 13 years earlier.

When Ford shuffled his Cabinet, he named a promising but largely unknown 34-year-old as the new White House chief of staff: Dick Cheney. After Ford lost the 1976 election, Cheney decided to run for Congress in his home state of Wyoming. Ford's political instincts stirred again. "I went right out to campaign for him," he says. Cheney won and became a respected and powerful Congressman—until Bush made him Secretary of Defense.

Ford's White House antennas had picked up good signals in 1976 about the Commerce Department's No. 2 man, James Baker. Ford tapped him to hunt delegates at the 1976 Republican Convention, then elevated him to national prominence as his campaign manager. Despite the Republican loss that year, Baker continued to rise, serving first in Reagan's Cabinet and then as Secretary of State for his friend Bush.

Colin Powell, current Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Bob Gates, now Scowcroft's deputy, were not directly touched by Ford, but his special brotherhood took them in as they moved through the Reagan years. Of the six men named above, one is President, and three others—Baker, Cheney and Powell—are possible successors to Bush. If that does not quite constitute a presidential culture, it stands as an impressive legacy from a man we sometimes forget, Jerry Ford.

Just before Dick Cheney became defense secretary, John Tower offered some friendly advice. The first thing you've got to do, he said, is show them who's boss—otherwise the generals will run all over you. Tower may not have known much about self-control or winning Senate confirmation, but he had a pretty good idea of how to tame the government's largest bureaucracy.

A week later Cheney got the chance to prove just who was in charge. He bridled after hearing that Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Larry D. Welch had been canvassing Congress members about modernizing land-based nuclear missiles—and took his grievance public. At his first press conference, Cheney upbraided the errant general for his “inappropriate . . . free-lancing.” Some time later, he confided to a colleague that the Welch incident “was a gift from God,” an opportunity to assert authority in his new position.

With the same combative spirit he pursued Saddam Hussein. Two days after the invasion of Kuwait, he exhorted President Bush to send U.S. troops in defense of Saudi Arabia, and later urged a large enough contingent to serve as an “offensive military option.” Highly critical of relying exclusively on economic sanctions, Cheney repeatedly argued for the use of massive force to dislodge Saddam. “It is far better for us to deal with him now than . . . five or 10 years from now,” he cautioned his former colleagues in Congress.

Cheney's relaxed and cordial style during televised press briefings established an aura of credibility for the war effort and helped maintain popular support for Desert Storm. At the same time, he endorsed the military's scheme to limit direct access to combat action through a pooled system of reporting, and he took a rigid line on releasing information that might compromise operational security. When Gen. Michael J. Dugan, who succeeded Welch as Air Force chief of staff, spilled details of the Pentagon's contingency plans for bombing Iraq, Cheney fired him. Although he gave the generals wide latitude in running the war, Cheney occasionally intervened himself. At one point he scrubbed from the Air Force's target lists a statue of Saddam in Baghdad.

The gulf war also stretched his diplomatic muscles. The same guy who once called former representative Jim Wright a “heavy-handed son of a bitch” now was dispatched to help wean King Fahd from his longstanding policy of banning U.S. troops from Saudi soil. Then there was his less publicized job of keeping Israel out of the war. While Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger defused Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, Cheney took the boil off Defense Minister Moshe Arens, and pushed hard to get the Patriot missiles deployed to Israel.

But Cheney will most likely be remembered less for his contributions to the war than for his amazing shrinking act of the military. Challenged by budgetary constraints and a defanged Soviet military threat, he has been charged with reducing the armed forces by a whopping 25 percent by 1995. He has already put on the endangered-species list some weapons systems—including the F-14 Tomcat, the nuclear-armed Trident submarine and the A-12 attack-jet program—while proposing to trim 520,000 troops, a Desert Storm-size contingent, from active duty.

He is a wary slasher, however. Always deeply skeptical of Soviet reform and Gorbachev's chances of survival, Cheney has

warned Congress not to hold him to these cuts—just in case the cold war, now in its slushy period, freezes over again. Small wonder he was in Moscow last October, the day after Gorbachev won the Nobel Peace Prize, chiding the Soviet president for his slow pace of demilitarization.

More calculating than contentious, Cheney has always been able to pick his fights. A six-term congressman from Wyoming, he usually voted for Reagan-sponsored legislation—aid for the contras, supply-side economics and a massive defense buildup—but took issue with the president on tax reform. Popular with fellow lawmakers, he still singled out Jim Wright for an ethics investigation, alleging unauthorized leaks of CIA activities in Nicaragua.

His political ascent is a casebook study. After dropping out of Yale, Cheney found his stride at the University of Wyoming and, with the help of his professors, won a congressional fellowship. At 27, he arrived in Washington and got a job working for Rep. William A. Steiger. He also met Rep. Donald Rumsfeld, who helped him maneuver his way into various positions in the Nixon and the Ford administrations, where he rose to become chief of staff in 1975—and made the invaluable friendships of **Brent Scowcroft** and James Baker. Campaigning for elected office for the first time in 1978, he posed as a Washington outsider. He liked joking with hometown crowds that “it was so cold up in Casper that all the lawyers had their hands in their own pockets.”

But there's nothing aw-shucks about his ambitions. On track to become House minority leader, he was frustrated by the prospect of thrashing about in a Democratic-controlled Congress. So he jumped at the offer of defense secretary. The war hasn't hurt his visibility—or his chances for the White House in 1996, when he will still be only 55. “This is a man who wants to be president, who could be president and who should be president,” says one prominent Republican. There's no better platform, after all, to show the world who's boss.

TOM POST with THOMAS M. DEFRANKE in Washington

NEWSWEEK

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THE PENTAGON'S POINT MAN

**Saddam-basher
Dick Cheney wants a shot
at the White House**

Bush, Cheney Dispute General on End of Fighting

By Ann Devroy
and R. Jeffrey Smith
Washington Post Staff Writers

President Bush and Secretary of Defense Richard B. Cheney yesterday contradicted remarks by Army Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, the ebullient commander of U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf, who said in a televised interview that he had recommended continuing the attack on Iraqi forces before Bush ordered the fighting ended one month ago.

Schwarzkopf's comments, made in a PBS interview, were at odds with the official White House version of how Bush decided on Feb. 27 to order the cessation of hostilities. "There was total agreement concerning when this war should end," the president reaffirmed to reporters yesterday, and

his spokesman, Marlin Fitzwater, said the general's remarks "contradict what happened at the time."

In the interview, taped March 20 and broadcast last night, Schwarzkopf said, "Frankly, my recommendation had been, you know, continue the march" against trapped Iraqi forces. He said the fighting was about to become a "battle of annihilation" that might have approached the crushing of 50,000 Romans by the Carthaginian general Hannibal at the battle of Cannae in 216 B.C. But the president's order to stop the war, he added, left "some escape routes" for fleeing Iraqi troops.

Schwarzkopf praised Bush's decision to end the war when he did as "very humane" and "very courageous." But he said that "historians are going to second-guess... forever" whether the timing was right, adding, "There were obviously a lot of people who escaped who wouldn't have escaped, if the decision hadn't been made, you know, to stop us where we were at that time."

The general's statements raised anew the question of whether the United States should have pursued and destroyed Iraqi forces that have since been used to quell Kurdish and Shiite Muslim rebellions in northern and southern Iraq. The remarks came at a particularly sensitive time for administration officials as they have stuck by a policy decision not to intervene in Iraq to halt the killing of rebels and innocent civilians by forces loyal to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

The White House and Defense Department moved quickly yesterday morning to rebut Schwarzkopf's comments, which were reported in some papers hours before they aired. One official, reflecting White House pique, quipped that the media-genic general was suffering from "camera-fatigue."

"The president is irked, but more than that, he's surprised," said another official. "There were a lot of witnesses to his conversation with Norm that day [Feb. 27], and they all agree he agreed with the decision to end the war and raised no recommendation to go on."

Cheney issued a terse written statement that avoided a direct rebuke of Schwarzkopf but clearly left the general's version of events at odds with the official administration account. Cheney said the decision to end the fighting had been "coordinated with and concurred in" by Schwarzkopf, who had "raised no objection to terminating hostilities."

The White House and Defense Department statements were described by various officials as an effort to short-circuit public debate over the timing of the decision to end the war. Such discussion has been fueled lately in part by reports from U.S. intelligence officials that a larger number of Iraqi forces may have escaped destruction in Kuwait and southern Iraq than previously believed.

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Administration officials said Bush read the accounts of Schwarzkopf's interview in newspapers and, according to one official, told his aides he "wanted this straightened out." There were early-morning conversations between the Defense Department and White House over how to respond, and Gen. Colin L. Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, phoned Schwarzkopf early yesterday morning to question him.

"The decision the president made to stop military action [effective Feb. 28] was correct and courageous, and it was based on the recommendations of his senior military advisers," Cheney said in his statement. "Gen. Schwarzkopf and Gen. Powell were consulted and made the recommendation to me and to the president that we had achieved our military objectives and agreed that it was time to end the campaign."

Bush, who had read the Cheney statement before it was issued, told reporters later that Cheney's version "is totally accurate.... I don't think you'll find anybody that disagrees with it."

Expressing his "full confidence in Gen. Schwarzkopf," the president suggested that the general may soon have more to say on the matter. A senior official said the White House "anticipates" that "the general will clear up his own misstatements."

The pivotal White House session on Feb. 27 in which the decision to end hostilities in the gulf was taken was attended by Bush, Cheney, Powell, Fitzwater, Vice President Quayle, Secretary of State James A. Baker III, White House Chief of Staff John H. Sununu, national security adviser Brent Scowcroft and his deputy, Robert M. Gates.

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The meeting was described by attendees as a lengthy military briefing conducted by Powell, who made the point that the administration's main military objectives in the war had been achieved.

A participant in that session said in a recent interview that Schwarzkopf, to whom Bush spoke at the end of the session, confirmed in that phone conversation that not only had Iraqi forces been pushed out of Kuwait, but "said we had achieved our ancillary objective and that is to destroy the offensive capability of the Iraqi military forces."

The official said the president felt there was a "fine point" between "giving ourselves a little more insurance" by destroying even more of Iraq's equipment and troops and "engaging in a turkey shoot, going after lines of troops and equipment that wanted to do nothing except get out of the way."

All Bush's advisers, he said, agreed the time had come to end the fighting. The issue of "not killing enough [Iraqis] was not really any part of the discussion," the official said. "As you recall, the issue was beginning to be when are we going to stop this bloody thing."

In that meeting, after the military briefing, Bush turned to Cheney and Powell and asked, "How does Norm feel?" according to Fitzwater.

The president had not spoken to Schwarzkopf during the war, in keeping with Bush's belief that the military, not the White House, should manage the fighting. To run the decision to stop the war past Schwarzkopf, Cheney used a specially installed phone in the Oval Office to call the general and ask, with Bush and others listening, "if he had any problems," Fitzwater recounted. "He said no."

Fitzwater said Schwarzkopf did not make any suggestion or recommendation or raise the issue that the war should be continued. "I don't know where this new statement comes from," the White House spokesman said yesterday.

Schwarzkopf, whose public popularity has rivaled the president's since the war's end, declined further comment yesterday, according to a spokesman for the U.S. Central Command in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

An administration official in Washington said White House aides generally attributed the incident to excessive "public exposure" by the garrulous field commander. White House officials sought to portray the remarks as a mixup, not a deliberate plot to question Bush's decisions.

"It was an honest, total screwup by him," an official said. "When you get caught up too much in your own remarks, you are bound to stumble and become a loose cannon. Schwarzkopf certainly fits that description today."

In the interview with David Frost, Schwarzkopf said "you don't pursue a battle worried about the casualties you inflict upon the enemy." He cited the dictum of one of his military heroes, the civil war General William T. Sherman, that "war is the remedy that our enemy has chosen; therefore let them have as much of it as they want."

"Had we gone on for another 24 hours," Schwarzkopf said, "we could have inflicted terrible damage" on Republican Guard forces escaping to the north as well as "the poor fellows" from Saddam's regular army that "were still trying to desperately retreat out of this very, very, small route of escape that was left open to them."

On other topics, Schwarzkopf offered the following views:

- Iraqi forces may have suffered "50,000 or 100,000 or 150,000" deaths during six weeks of combat that produced only 150 U.S. deaths. The ground phase of the war was expected to be over in three weeks, not the 100 hours it lasted.

- Saddam is a "megalomaniac" and "an evil man" with delusions of grandeur. "Philosophically, the man is a war criminal by any definition you choose to apply," Schwarzkopf said, but a Nuremberg-style trial is unlikely. "What normally happens to people like Saddam Hussein is, at some point they are taken care of by their own folks."

- If Israel had become involved in the war against Iraq, as a result of being attacked by Iraqi Scud missiles, "I don't think we could have held it all together," Schwarzkopf said. Israeli military forces could not have done anything that U.S. forces were not doing to eliminate the Scud threat, "but they did not know everything we were doing" and felt otherwise, he added.

- U.S. commanders knew from the outset of the war that the Iraqis lacked the ability to arm Scud missiles with poison gas warheads capable of bursting in the air above allied troops. As a result, any Scud chemical attack would have affected only a "very limited area," Schwarzkopf said.

- The strategy of a massive flanking maneuver by allied ground troops in the Iraqi desert was decided in early November after Schwarzkopf watched Saddam stuff virtually all of his forces "into a bag, for all intents and purposes, called Kuwait" and do little to protect their western flank. The U.S. commander said he knew the idea would succeed when the preliminary movement of U.S. forces westward along the Saudi-Iraq border remained undetected at the start of the air war.

"The day we executed the air campaign, I said, 'We gotcha.' Because, see, then it was impossible ... for them to reinforce that [western] flank," and further allied movement would not be detected, Schwarzkopf said.

- The Iraqi request at a postwar meeting with U.S. and allied officials for permission to use helicopters for troop transport seemed reasonable at the time, but in retrospect, "I think I was suckered," Schwarzkopf said. "I think they intended right then ... to use those helicopters against the insurrections that were going on."

4.

The Way to War

Michael Massing

With every passing day of the Gulf War it became increasingly clear that Washington's goals extended well beyond the announced one of liberating Kuwait. Thus, during the initial weeks of the conflict, US bombers pounded not only command-and-control centers, troop formations, airfields, and other targets directly related to freeing Kuwait, but also nuclear research facilities, weapons development centers, industrial plants, oil refineries, electrical power grids, and other components of Iraq's long-range war-making capacity.

When the Soviet Union proposed its peace plan, which would have allowed Saddam Hussein to leave Kuwait with much of his army and his prestige intact, the Bush administration firmly rejected it. On February 23, when the US-imposed deadline for an Iraqi withdrawal passed, American commanders waited no more than eight hours before launching a ground attack. It seemed clear that the US was as much committed to crippling Saddam Hussein as to liberating Kuwait.

This broader goal was present well before the fighting began. In fact, as far back as October, the administration had concluded that expelling Iraq from Kuwait was not enough—that Saddam Hussein's power to threaten neighboring states had to be contained as well. Once adopted, this objective became the driving force behind the policy, making the White House increasingly willing to risk a military confrontation with Iraq. An account of how this came about helps to explain why we went to war and how we waged it.

1.

In the first three days after Iraqi tanks moved into Kuwait, President Bush held a series of emergency meetings at the White House and at Camp David to fashion a response. Present at most of the sessions was a core group of advisers: Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney, Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Colin Powell, Secretary of State James Baker, White House Chief of Staff John Sununu, National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft, and Scowcroft's deputy, Robert Gates. Over the next five months, several administra-

tion officials told me, these men would continually be at the President's side, forming a tight circle of decision-makers that would control virtually every aspect of policy. Occasionally, the group would expand to include other officials, but the inner sanctum would remain beyond the reach of most government officials. Even the Joint Chiefs of Staff would have trouble getting to see their commander-in-chief.

People outside the government, too, had little part in the process. From time to time, the President would meet with specialists on the region—for instance, Lucius Battle, the former president of the Middle East Institute, and Fouad Ajami, a professor at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. Such sessions were rare, though, occurring no more than once every five or six weeks, according to officials. For the most part, the administration showed little interest in what experts on the Middle East had to say. In November, for instance, Judith Kipper of the Brookings Institution met Saddam Hussein in her capacity as a consultant to ABC News; returning to Washington, she received not so much as a phone call from the administration. All in all, George Bush and his aides worked in a highly insulated environment, largely cut off from other perspectives.

At those early August meetings, the President and his men took a number of swift decisions that would prove to have fateful consequences. The main matter before them was whether to send US troops to Saudi Arabia. Within hours of the invasion, Bush had told reporters that he had no intention of doing so, but he began to reconsider after meeting Margaret Thatcher on August 2 during a previously scheduled joint appearance in Aspen, Colorado. According to *Newsweek*, the British prime minister told Bush that Saddam Hussein had to be stopped and that only an American show of strength could accomplish that. By the time Bush returned to Washington, he was leaning heavily toward some type of deployment.

Only one of his advisers opposed the idea. Colin Powell had served two tours in Vietnam and, like many other officers who had fought there, felt squeamish about committing large

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Time

U.S. News & World Report

The New York Review

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numbers of Americans far from home. In 1984 Powell was working as an aide to Caspar Weinberger when the secretary of defense issued his famous rules of military engagement. "Before the US commits combat forces abroad, there must be some reasonable assurance we will have the support of the American people and their representatives in Congress," Weinberger had said, drawing on the Vietnam experience. Powell had taken the advice to heart. He had also absorbed the lessons of October 1983, when the ill-considered deployment of Marines in Lebanon had ended in catastrophe. Now Powell expressed reservations about sending troops to the Arabian desert.

The secretary of defense had no such qualms. Dick Cheney had not fought in Vietnam. In fact, he had no military experience whatsoever. Probably the most hawkish member of the inner circle, Cheney argued for a flexing of American muscle. This reinforced the President's own instincts, and so the decision was made: the US would send troops to the Gulf.

But how many? At this point, the administration's aim was entirely defensive in nature, seeking to deter an Iraqi attack on Saudi Arabia. For this purpose a relatively small ground force combined with ample air and sea power would probably have been adequate. But the Vietnam experience again imposed itself. If troops had to be committed, Caspar Weinberger had said, the military "should do so wholeheartedly, and with the clear intention of winning." Powell wanted to make sure that he would have enough forces in place to repel an Iraqi attack should one occur. So, he said, he would want to send units of the 82nd airborne division, the 101st airborne division, the 24th mechanized infantry division, and the 3rd cavalry division, plus naval warships, air force fighters, and a marine amphibious unit—more than 100,000 troops in all.

Deploying such a large force would create some problems of its own. For one thing, it would require mobilizing the reserves, which, in turn, would cause hardship for tens of thousands of Americans. Parents would be sepa-

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rated from their children, workers taken from their jobs, career plans disrupted. Clearly, there was a limit to how long such a force could be left in the field. Yet the economic sanctions the President was planning to impose on Iraq would require many months to take effect. The potential conflict did not preoccupy Colin Powell, however, Pentagon sources say. His main concern was to make sure that this would not be another Vietnam, that the military would not be asked to fight another unpopular war. What better way to test national resolve than to mobilize large numbers of civilians?

To the extent that others might have challenged this logic, memories of Vietnam again intervened. Everyone remembered how Lyndon Johnson had involved himself in minute military matters, to the point of selecting bombing sites for American planes. The results had been disastrous, and President Bush was determined to avoid a repetition, sources close to Powell told me. So the general would have his wish: the deployment would be a large one.

On August 5, Secretary Cheney left for Saudi Arabia to seek King Fahd's permission to station American troops in his country. According to published reports, some of Fahd's advisers regarded the plan as excessive, but the king himself was worried about Iraqi battalions massing on his border, and he readily acquiesced.

Once the word reached Washington, Powell ordered General Norman Schwarzkopf, the commander of all US forces in the Mideast, to set the deployment in motion. As it progressed, the force grew larger still. For the Pentagon did not have at hand a deployment plan adapted to the current crisis. The plan it did have—a remnant of the cold war—was based on the premise of a Soviet invasion of Iran. At the time of the Iraqi invasion Schwarzkopf had been adapting the plan to take into account a possible attack on Saudi Arabia, but much remained to be done. Forced to improvise, he fell back on the all-purpose deployment plan the Pentagon maintains for emergency situations anywhere in the world. It sets rigid deployment levels for every conceivable type of job, from tank operators and artillery gunners to chaplains, mechanics, and cooks. Armored personnel carriers, Sherman tanks, anti-aircraft missiles, field hospitals, radar experts, paratroopers, electricians,

trench specialists, psychological warfare teams—all were hurriedly airlifted to the Gulf, swelling the force there to almost 200,000. The deployment, Colin Powell would later say, was like "moving the entire city of Richmond, Virginia, 8,000 miles to the Saudi desert."

An impressive achievement, to be sure, but apparently no one had really thought through why Richmond had to be moved in the first place. "There was absolutely no attempt to design an appropriate force," according to Edward Luttwak, a military strategist at the Center for Strategic and International Studies who helped to develop the AirLand doctrine that has guided the US military in the Gulf. "Saudi Arabia could have been defended with 20,000 Air Force personnel and 16,000 ground troops." Putting in so many ground forces, he said, made it "more costly to stick with the policy of economic sanctions." Indeed, stationing so large a force overseas made its eventual use all the more likely. And the Bush administration was slowly arriving at a justification for doing just that.

2.

During the Gulf crisis, President Bush kept aboard Air Force One a copy of Martin Gilbert's *The Second World War*. As he shuttled about the country and the world, seeking to build support for his policy, he regularly dipped into its 747 pages. For Bush, who had flown fifty-eight missions as a fighter pilot during World War II—and for Baker and Scowcroft, who belonged to the same generation—that earlier event provided a convenient reference point for the current one. "The thing that kept really coming up, especially in the early months, was the example of the 1930s," one official told me. "Whenever people sat down together, the talk would turn toward the subject of appeasement. Everybody was clear that this wouldn't be another Munich."

The President first laid out the historical parallels in a speech at the Pentagon on August 15. Speaking in a martial setting, with rows of generals and admirals facing him, the President declared, "A half century ago, our nation and the world paid dearly for appeasing an aggressor who should, and could, have been stopped." Referring to Hitler, he added, "We are not going to make the same mistake again."

The advisability of referring to Hitler was the subject of vigorous debate within the administration prior to the speech. The White House had received abundant reports about Iraq's atrocities in Kuwait, but it worried about "demonizing [Saddam] too much," a senior administration official recalled when I talked to him in February. "People wanted to keep the language from getting too hot" lest the President himself become the issue. In the end, the White House decided to keep the reference to Hitler historical, rather than personal. It was not gas chambers and genocide that the President apparently had in mind when he spoke but the Rhineland, Munich, and Czechoslovakia.

As it turned out, the administration had little to worry about. The speech attracted some criticism but more praise. Indeed, the Hitler imagery quickly captured the public imagination. "We learned something from the '30s, but let us reflect also that Hussein has already gotten away with more than Hitler had before he finally was challenged," Mortimer Zuckerman wrote in the August 20 *U.S. News and World Report*. A few days later, William Safire devoted an entire column to "The Hitler Analogy." And the September 3 issue of *The New Republic* featured a cover photo of Saddam with his mustache clipped to resemble Hitler's. "Furor in the Gulf," the headline read.

As it crept into the political discourse, the Hitler analogy took on a life of its own, causing important changes in the policy itself. All the discussion about Chamberlain and appeasement made the very idea of talking with Baghdad suspect. Of course, it was not clear that there was anything

to talk about. Iraqi forces were already looting Kuwait and imprisoning many of its citizens. Saddam Hussein had declared Kuwait to be Iraq's nineteenth province, and he seemed unwilling to settle for anything less. Still, opening a line of communication might have allowed a face-saving arrangement at least to be explored—one, for example, in which Iraq would agree to withdraw in return for vague assurances that other regional problems (i.e., the Arab-Israeli one) would later be addressed. As Saddam became more and more identified with Hitler, however, the already dim possibility of dialogue became increasingly remote.

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The consequences of the analogy ran deeper than that, though. The more the past was analyzed, the starker its message seemed. Just as Munich had allowed Hitler time to build up his forces, so might Saddam emerge as a greater threat if he were allowed to remain in power. With oil reserves as limitless as his ambition, the Iraqi leader would be in a position to develop more weapons of mass destruction. For some, the logic seemed irrefutable: an Iraqi pullout from Kuwait—even if unconditional—would not really serve American interests in the Gulf. "Even attainment of the UN objectives might provide only a breathing space if Saddam Hussein remains in office and Iraq continues to build up its nuclear and chemical weapons potential," Henry Kissinger observed in *The Washington Post* on August 19. *The New Republic* argued that "if Hussein agreed to pull out of Kuwait and the United States went home, he'd still be in position to dominate the region, build up his nuclear arsenal, and plot to win his way another day." (In fact, while Hussein was clearly trying to acquire nuclear weapons, he had as yet no nuclear arsenal.)

The writer most closely read at the White House, one official told me, was Jim Hoagland of *The Washington Post*. Hoagland had covered Iraq for years and had had several meetings with Saddam Hussein. Such first-hand experience endowed his writings with special authority within the administration. "He had an effect on people's thinking," the official said. Hoagland left little doubt about where he stood. As early as August 7, he called for the use of "convincing military force against the Iraqi dictator to save the oil fields and to preserve American influence in the Middle East." Ronald Reagan's "strike against Moammar Gadhafi's terror network," he added, was "the right model for Bush to update and expand upon in dealing with Saddam."

In other quarters, too, opposition was building to any outcome that would leave Saddam in power. In the wake of Iraq's invasion, President Bush was frequently on the phone to Saudi Arabia's King Fahd and Egypt's Hosni Mubarak. Both men expressed alarm at the prospect of Saddam's emerging from the crisis with his arsenal intact. Having assumed such a prominent position in the anti-Iraq coalition, they feared the consequences should Saddam survive. In other words, a peaceful solution to the crisis was for them no solution at all.

The same was true for Israel. Ever since making peace with Egypt, Israel

had regarded Iraq as its most dangerous adversary in the region. When the Iran-Iraq war came to an end, Israel fully expected to be Saddam's next target. That he had gone after Kuwait instead seemed only a temporary distraction from his ultimate goal. Indeed, on April 2, 1990, Saddam Hussein, in announcing that Iraq had developed powerful new chemical weapons, declared that "we will make the fire eat up half of Israel, if it tries to do anything against Iraq." Kuwait's fate did not particularly concern Israel; after all, the ruling Sabah family had bankrolled the PLO for years. Disposing of Saddam, on the other hand, seemed a precondition for lasting peace in the region.

Unfortunately, for Israel, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's relations with the Bush administration had reached a low point, and the two men barely spoke during the first few months of the crisis, according to John Newhouse, writing in *The New Yorker*.¹ However, on Capitol Hill, several members of Congress—some of them long-time backers of Israel—were growing concerned over the administration's seeming indifference to the long-term threat posed by Iraq. Among those most worried was Representative Stephen Solarz. During an appearance by James Baker before the House Foreign Affairs Committee in early September, the Brooklyn Democrat gave voice to his fears:

I would like to know how you would respond to those who have argued that if Saddam Hussein should unconditionally withdraw his forces from Kuwait that it would be a Pyrrhic victory for the international community, inasmuch as it would leave intact his nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons programs, not to mention his million man army and the rest of his military infrastructure as a whole. I would like to know if you believe that the elimination of that military potential should become an important objective of the international community as we move toward a satisfactory resolution of this crisis.

Baker responded with a vague comment about the need to create a "new security structure" for the region. Solarz pressed the point:

Mr. Secretary, very bluntly, is it possible to eliminate the Iraqi nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons programs without physically destroying them?

Baker replied:

It is not possible to eliminate them without destroying them. It is conceivably possible, I think, Mr. Solarz, to come up with a security structure that would make it so clearly to the detriment of any subsequent leader or even the present leader to use or contemplate using any of those weapons that there would be very little risk that they would be used.

Dissatisfied, Solarz began seeking allies for a tougher position. He found one in Prince Bandar bin Sultan, the Saudi ambassador to the United States. It would be hard to think of a more unlikely couple—a Brandeis graduate from New York who was once an antiwar activist, and a former fighter pilot who was among the most flamboyant members of the House of Saud (and who during the Iran-contra affair had helped to funnel Saudi money to Richard Secord and Albert Hakim). Over the years, though, the two had become friends—Solarz had visited Bandar in his palace in Saudi Arabia—and they now shared a strong desire to see Saddam finished off.

On October 24, the two men gave a dinner in the Capitol building. The guests included the Kuwaiti and Egyptian ambassadors and a half dozen or so members of Congress, among them Representative Robert Torricelli, a middle-of-the-road New Jersey Democrat who was an ally of Solarz's on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and Senator Howard Metzenbaum (who would later vote against the administration's resolution authorizing the use of force). Bandar made the case that Saddam's ability to threaten the region had to be curtailed once and for all, and that economic sanctions were not going to do it. Two days later, a follow-up meeting was held at Bandar's estate in suburban Virginia. Joining the prince, Solarz, and Torricelli were, among others, Richard Perle, the famously tenacious former Pentagon official, and Robert Strauss, the former national chairman of the Democratic party. They decided

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to set up a bipartisan group to lobby for a policy of confrontation with Baghdad. Energetically seeking new members, they made an early convert of Ann Lewis, the former political director of the Democratic National Committee and a one-time adviser to Jesse Jackson. Along with Perle, she became a co-chair of the group, called the Committee for Peace and Security in the Gulf.

The White House welcomed the committee's activities. The existence of a high-profile group that included prominent Democrats willing to support a tough line on the Gulf lent the administration's policy a bipartisan cast. The committee, in turn, used its access to press the White House to expand its objectives to include "denying Saddam his extensive military capabilities," Robert Torricelli told me. "We pushed the administration on this."

The committee found a sympathetic ear in Brent Scowcroft and his top Middle East aide, Richard Haass. Though little known outside official circles, the thirty-nine-year-old Haass had an important part in shaping the administration's Gulf policy. As the NSC's senior director for Near East and South Asian affairs, he regularly briefed the President and helped draft many of his speeches (including the one on Hitler). Hardly a scrap of paper on foreign policy issued from the White House that did not first pass through Haass's hands.

He was not, however, a scholar of the Middle East. Most of Haass's visits to the region had been brief, apart from a year he spent in Israel while a junior at Oberlin College. Haass's writings on the Middle East were scant as well, consisting mostly of an August 1986 piece in *Commentary* magazine about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Titled "Paying Less Attention to the

Middle East," it argued that, in view of PLO intransigence and Soviet ambitions, the US should no longer encourage Israel to pursue a policy of trading territory for peace. As a State Department official from 1981 to 1985, Haass had concentrated on regional security matters and European affairs. Moving on to Harvard's Kennedy School, he devoted most of the next three years to arms control and the handling of regional conflicts. Haass, in short, was a generalist.

That, in turn, made him more open to the views of groups like the Com-

mittee for Peace and Security in the Gulf. Unlike regional specialists, who tended to assign great weight to Arab sensibilities, Haass saw the region primarily in relation to US security, which, he believed, was closely linked to Israel's. In his book *Conflicts Unending: The United States and Regional Disputes*,¹ Haass maintained that "any successful American policy would require continued support of Israel—political, economic, and military." As in his *Commentary* article, he argued that the Palestinian issue was not yet "ripe" for resolution. "Israel," he added, "is likely to be receptive to American views, and open to taking risks, only if the government and the people believe that the United States is acting as a friend and will be with Israel in any crisis." Such opinions about the strategic value not only of Israel but of Saudi Arabia and Egypt as well made him sympathetic to the view that Saddam's weapons of mass destruction and his capacity for military aggression had to be destroyed.

Ironically, the same strategic vision that now made Saddam seem so menacing to Haass and other administration officials had made him seem a desirable ally before August 2. As the nation with the largest military force in the Middle East, Iraq had long been valued in Washington as a counterweight to the fundamentalist regime in Iran. Throughout the Iran-Iraq war, the Reagan administration had faithfully backed Baghdad, to the extent of sharing sensitive intelligence information with Saddam Hussein. Even when the war ended, in 1988, Washington continued to back Baghdad with agricultural credits despite the regime's many known atrocities. As soon as the war with Iran ended, for instance, Saddam turned his fury on his own people, gassing Kurdish villages in the northern part of the country. Thousands were killed and many more were forced to flee the country. When the US Senate voted 87 to 0 to impose sanctions on Iraq, the Reagan administration responded with a frantic lobbying campaign that eventually killed the bill.

Soon after taking office, the Bush administration initiated a review of US policy toward Iraq. It was conducted by an interagency "deputies committee" set up to oversee US policy in the Persian Gulf. Richard Haass was one of its members. Saddam's police-state practices were, of course, well known in Washington. The State Department's own human-rights re-

port for 1988 thoroughly documented the chemical attacks on the Kurds. It also reported the routine practice of political killings, disappearances, and torture. Summing up, the report termed Iraq's human rights record "abysmal." Nonetheless, in the summer of 1989, the deputies committee recommended a continuation of the Reagan policy.

During the next year, "constructive engagement" with Iraq would be the prevailing theme. "Iraq is an important state with great potential," Assistant Secretary of State John Kelly declared on October 27, 1989, in a major address on the Middle East. "We want to deepen and broaden our relationship." As late as July 1990, the administration blocked a congressional bid to deny Iraq loan guarantees as a protest against its human rights record.

Everything changed on August 2, of course. Those who had so assiduously courted Saddam Hussein before that date now branded him a modern-day Hitler. The day-to-day monitoring of the crisis fell to the same deputies committee that had called for giving support to the dictator. (In addition to Haass, the members included the NSC's Robert Gates; Robert Kimmitt, an under secretary of state and one of James Baker's top aides; Paul Wolfowitz, an under secretary of defense and a close adviser to Dick Cheney; Admiral David Jeremiah. Colin Powell's deputy; and Richard Kerr, the number two man at the CIA.) October would be the key month in the committee's deliberations. The military leaders had made it clear that the troops in the desert could remain there for no more than six months before they would have to be rotated. With the midway point fast approaching, the administration would have to decide whether to stick with sanctions. The deputies devoted numerous sessions to the matter. They concluded that, economically, the sanctions were working very well—"more tightly," in fact, than anyone had expected, a senior official told me.

This assessment was reflected in the public statements of administration officials. On October 17, for instance, James Baker told a Senate panel that "sanctions are beginning to have an impact. We believe that the sanctions on exports have been particularly successful. There is no oil getting out." In

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closed-door testimony in the Senate, a top CIA official estimated that the sanctions had reduced Iraq's imports by 90 percent and its exports by 97 percent, helping to bring about a 40 to 50 percent drop in the country's GNP. Not a single high-tech military part had been smuggled in, the official added. CIA director William Webster would confirm much of this assessment publicly on December 5, telling a House panel that the sanctions would cause serious damage to Iraq's air force within three to six months and to its ground forces in nine months.

Nonetheless, a number of considerations were pushing the White House away from sanctions and toward a much tougher line. There were continuing calls for action from commentators like William Safire and Jim Hoagland. There were mounting fears in Tel Aviv, Cairo, and Riyadh about the prospect of Saddam's remaining in power. There were increasing reports from refugees of summary executions, torture, and looting in Kuwait. There were clear indications of an Iraqi buildup on the Kuwaiti-Saudi border. And, finally, there were 200,000 US troops sitting in Saudi Arabia with no clear mission. If the administration continued to rely on sanctions, those troops could still be there well into 1991 as the presidential election approached—not an enviable situation for George Bush.

And so, on November 8, the President announced that he was dispatching more than 150,000 additional troops to the Gulf. The initial deployment, he said, had done little to modify Saddam's behavior and so he wanted an "offensive military option" to show he meant business. To the extent that it had been difficult to sustain 200,000 soldiers in the field, it would prove doubly so with twice that number. In effect, by ordering the new deployment, the administration was indicating its acceptance of the view that a return to the status quo ante was unacceptable—that, one way or another, Saddam Hussein's war-making powers had to be radically reduced.

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From November on, as the military prepared to go to war, the administration prepared the political groundwork. Shortly after the President's surprise announcement of the new troop deployment, the United States asked the UN Security Council to authorize the use of force in liberating Kuwait. According to a Western diplomat, the original American proposal contained no waiting period. The idea of adding an interval to allow for negotiations was proposed by the Soviets and grudgingly accepted by Washington as the price of their support. The US wanted a January 1 deadline; Moscow held out for the 15th. As finally approved on November 29, Resolution 678 called for not only the liberation of Kuwait but also the return of "peace and security" to the region—an exceedingly vague phrase that US officials privately maintained encompassed the destruction of Iraq's military capacity.

On November 30, President Bush announced that he was sending James Baker to Baghdad and inviting Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz to Washington. Widely applauded on Capitol Hill, the move raised hopes that war might somehow be averted. But the optimism soon faded as the two sides began to argue over dates. Bush had said that any "mutually convenient time" before January 15 would be acceptable; when Baghdad chose January 12, though, the President said this was too close to the UN deadline. Eventually, Baker and Aziz met in Geneva on January 9. There, during a six-hour meeting, Baker presented, and Aziz rejected, a bluntly worded letter from President Bush. "Anything less than full compliance with UN Security Council Resolution 678 and its predecessors is unacceptable," stated the letter, which was drafted by Richard Haass. "There can be no reward for aggression. Nor will there be any negotiation." Aziz was equally un-

compromising, and when he invited Baker to visit Baghdad to see Saddam, the secretary of state declined. Baker never did make it to Baghdad.

The administration did not seem disappointed with this outcome. Indeed, Bush's initiative seemed to hold little promise from the start. The idea of sending Baker to meet Saddam without first preparing for the meeting through lower-level contacts disregarded some elementary rules of international diplomacy. And the President's insistence that Baker not negotiate—only demand an unconditional withdrawal—seemed designed to court failure. According to Elizabeth Drew writing in *The New Yorker*,⁴ Baker seemed genuinely interested in pursuing a diplomatic solution but was reined in by more hard-line officials, particularly Brent Scowcroft. "At first, I felt they were seriously looking for a political dialogue," I was told by William Quandt, a Middle East specialist at the Brookings Institution and a former member of the NSC. "In retrospect, though, it seems they never intended to have a serious diplomatic outcome—only to affect the domestic debate. The whole thing looked as if it wasn't meant to work in the first place."

With the January 15 deadline fast approaching, Congress took up the proposed resolution to authorize the president to use force in the Gulf. The vote was clearly going to be close, thanks in large part to Senator Sam Nunn, whose opposition to using force before sanctions could be fully tested provided cover to Democrats in both houses who were troubled by the administration's seeming eagerness to do battle. The Committee for Peace and Security in the Gulf helped to provide cover of a different sort. A few weeks earlier, the President had invited some of its members to the Oval Office. Stephen Solarz was among them. "I came away from the meeting feeling that, in the event of our going to war, Saddam's weapons of mass destruction would be high up on the list of priorities," he told me.

Solarz and other members of the committee began urging members of Congress to support the President's policy. On January 9, Solarz met with Brent Scowcroft at the White House to refine the language of the proposed resolution. The debate began the next day, and So-

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larz helped to lead the pro-administration forces in the House. In the end, eighty-six Democrats in the House and ten in the Senate voted for the resolution. The committee, says a senior administration official, "made a real difference on the Hill. People like Solarz were very good as a balance to Nunn because it showed that some of the smartest, most knowledgeable people in this area were on our side of the issue."

In the days leading up to the deadline, some administration officials thought Saddam might begin a partial withdrawal from Kuwait, thereby putting pressure on the US to delay its assault. This prospect caused "something close to panic" among administration officials, Edward Luttwak told me. "The worst-case scenario in their eyes was that he says 'yes' and withdraws." In fact, one official told me that the administration had anticipated such a contingency and had plans for frustrating it, but exactly what those plans consisted of he would not say.

He did talk about the administration's goals for the Middle East once the crisis passed. They included the development of more cooperative relations among the region's Arab nations, the creation of new economic institutions to ensure a broader distribution of oil wealth, and progress toward an Arab-Israeli settlement. This last point, the official said, "should be addressed with a lot of energy." Finally, he added, the US would seek a "more realistic set of security arrangements in the Gulf." He explained: "In the future, our friends in the Arab world will not rely as much as they did on Arab diplomacy. There will be a greater dose of realism, a recognition that diplomacy must be based on deterrence." In other words, the US would continue to rely on balance-of-power considerations to maintain stability in the region. Exactly what type of regime might eventually replace Saddam Hussein's was a question he did not address.

One way or another, though, the administration believed Saddam had to be halted. "My own reading is that there was a very strong inclination on the part

of the Bush administration to take advantage of this unique situation," Gary Sick, who handled Persian Gulf matters for Jimmy Carter's NSC, told me. "With all the forces we had over there, with the coalition in place and functioning—if they were ever going to stop this guy, this was the moment to do it." In the end, says Sick, "Bush bought into the imagery of the Hitler analogy."

So, too, in his way, did Saddam Hussein. Had the Iraqi dictator been less intransigent, less removed from reality, he could probably have escaped the cataclysm awaiting him. However, from the initial weeks of the crisis, when a hint of flexibility on Iraq's part could have conceivably opened the way to a settlement, until the eve of the UN deadline, when a move to withdraw could have stayed the executioner, Saddam Hussein acted like the determined and deranged dictator Washington had made him out to be.

And so, on the evening of January 16, the liberation of Kuwait began—with a relentless attack on Iraq's military machine. □

—February 28, 1991

INSIDE REPORT

Bush to King Hussein: Let's be friends again

PRESIDENT Bush has sent private word to King Hussein that it is time "to let bygones be bygones" and resume the intimacy that made Jordan one of America's closest Arab allies.

The message was given to Hussein adviser Adnan Abu Odeh by Gen. Brent Scowcroft, Bush's national security director, after a cozy one-hour chat in the White House.

The king infuriated Bush by supporting Saddam Hussein during the Gulf War. Both Scowcroft and Secretary of State James A. Baker, who met separately with Abu Odeh, told him that Bush is counting on all-out help from the king when the United States makes its long-awaited move for Arab-Israeli peace.

BUSH administration insiders were privately upset with one statement by Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf even before he told TV interviewer David Frost that he opposed President Bush's order to stop the war.

When he said at his war-ending pressing conference that he had "closed the door" on heavy Iraqi armor with a brilliant flanking movement, the outspoken general was premature — and the White House knew it. Many Iraqi tanks ended up getting through that door and were later used by Saddam Hussein against Shiite and Kurd rebels.

But Bush has ordered a blanket of silence to end speculation about a possible break between him and Schwarzkopf. The last thing the president wants is a public feud between himself and the nation's current hero.

THE first meeting between Boris Yeltsin and Secretary Baker failed to materialize because the Russian Republic president insisted on special treatment and the secretary of state worried about



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ROBERT NOVAK**

offending Mikhail Gorbachev.

Actually, Baker's advisers had urged him on this visit in Moscow not to spend all his time with Soviet President Gorbachev but to meet the heads of the Soviet republics, especially Yeltsin. A dinner was arranged for all the republic presidents.

But as president of the republic containing most of the Soviet Union's land and people, Yeltsin declined the dinner invitation and requested a special meeting.

But Baker feared that would be an affront to Gorbachev, and no meeting took place.

PRESIDENT Bush overrode the recommendations of his political advisers, who wanted him on hand for the return of the Gulf prisoners of war, and instead spent the weekend at Camp David.

The president argued that it would appear he was trying to horn in on a day that should have been one for the military. Unlike Ronald Reagan, Bush refuses to be controlled by his schedulers.

Out of the same desire not to bask in the glow of Operation Desert Storm, Bush also said no to appearing at Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf's welcome-home celebration. But that was before their front-page disagreement.

Despite a friendly phone call Thursday, the president and his general may have to appear together to surmount the gossip.

Iraq Shifts Troops To Combat Kurds

Clashes in North Appear Tougher Than South

By Rick Atkinson
Washington Post Staff Writer

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia, March 29—Iraqi military commanders have begun moving Republican Guard forces northward, apparently after concluding that the Kurdish rebellion poses a greater threat than the sputtering Shiite Muslim insurrection in southern Iraq, U.S. military sources said today.

Surviving elements of the Tawalkana, Medina and Hammurabi Armored Divisions—which were mauled by the allied coalition in the Persian Gulf War a month ago—are repositioning to combat the Kurds, although some Republican Guard officers have been transferred to regular army units to try to ensure political loyalty to President Saddam Hussein, according to U.S. intelligence.

Symptomatic of the beleaguered state of Iraq's army was an episode Wednesday in which a mechanized battalion of 900 men moving north from Basra apparently wandered into Iranian territory and was immediately captured by Iranian border forces, according to a senior U.S. officer.

U.S. intelligence is not certain how the unit wound up on Iranian territory after veering east through an oil field 20 miles north of Iraq's second-largest city. As of this morning there was no evidence that the Iraqi troops had been permitted to leave Iran, the officer said.

Forty Iraqi Hind and Hip helicopters are flying roughly 100 sorties a day against rebels in the north and south; P-7 turboprop trainer aircraft also have been detected in the air, serving either as attack planes or as spotters for the helicopter gunships.

U.S. intelligence has been unable to confirm the use of chemical weapons against the rebels or claims of atrocities, although "without doubt" the loyalist troops are firing indiscriminately at civilians "on streets and in buildings," the U.S. officer said. The loyalists have fired white phosphorous rockets at the rebels and may be using riot control gas, he said.

U.S. Air Force F-15s, supplemented by Navy and Saudi air force jets, continue to fly round-the-clock combat patrols over Iraq, Lt. Gen. Charles A. Horner, the U.S. air

commander here, said in an interview today.

The allied air activity is about "one-tenth" of the 3,000 sorties a day flown at the height of the gulf war, Horner said, and the fighters have orders to shoot down "any fixed-wing fighter aircraft" but not helicopters. The Bush administration said Tuesday it will stay neutral in the fighting between Saddam's troops and rebel forces, which erupted this month after the gulf war ended.

U.S. officials confirmed a CBS News report today that White House national security adviser Brent Scowcroft made an unannounced trip to the Middle East this week.

A senior administration official, speaking on condition that he not be named, said Scowcroft and Richard Haass, the White House senior director for Near East and South Asian affairs left Tuesday night and returned from the Middle East on Thursday. The visit with unidentified officials in the region was for "the general purpose of consulting on the situation [there] in the wake of the Persian Gulf War," the official said, adding that further details were unavailable.

Thursday night, several Iraqi artillery rounds fell on the U.S. side of the demarcation line in the Euphrates Valley. "We're not sure whether it's the rebels or the Iraqi army," a U.S. officer said. "We are pretty certain that it is not intentional, except that it's possible the insurgents could be trying to draw us in."

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Another 750 Iraqi soldiers surrendered to U.S. forces Thursday, including some who had been captured during the war and subsequently repatriated, according to a U.S. intelligence source. Many arrived on buses at U.S. checkpoints in the Euphrates Valley, stepping off the vehicles with their hands in the air and explaining that they would prefer to return to prison camps than fire against Shiite Muslim rebels or move north to fight the Kurds.

In an effort to stamp out the rebellion in the south, Baghdad has established military garrisons in "nearly every major city," according to a senior intelligence official. But when forces are moved from a garrison to combat rebels in another city, frequently the insurrection ignites again in the garrison town, as happened in the Euphrates River city of Nasiriyah.

"Most of the people in the south appear to be against Saddam Hussein, but they are unorganized and militarily untrained," the official said. "The people are very, very intent on rebellion. They are not being cowed by the government."

It appears that Saddam's forces have the southern rebellion in hand; the fighting, which began March 4, had largely died down by last Sunday in Basra, by Wednesday in Nasiriyah and by March 22 in Najaf—all key areas of the region.

Reuter reported today that Samawah, which straddles the main road through the Euphrates Valley, was retaken by Saddam's forces and was believed to be the last major southern town held by the rebels to fall. Loyalist troops were reported to have entered the town behind a human shield of women and launched house-to-house searches, shooting people in the streets.

In contrast to the Shiite rebels in the south, the Kurds in the north appear relatively unified and have some military ability, although "they don't appear to be militarily as capable as the Iraqi forces fighting them," the intelligence official said.

A spokesman for the rebel Patriotic Union of Kurdistan told Reuter in Damascus, Syria, today that Kurdish forces had recaptured the strategic northern oil city of Kirkuk, about 150 miles north of Baghdad, after heavy fighting for control. On Thursday, Iraq said it had retaken the city following a week of Kurdish control.

Refugees were fleeing the fighting for Kirkuk, many going on foot without even a change of clothes to Sulaymaniya, 75 miles to the east, correspondent Jonathan C. Randal reported. Hussein Hamid, from the Kurdish area of Turgut, went there with his family of 11, including two babies. He said shelling—and death—in Kirkuk seemed to be everywhere.

The fate of Kirkuk is considered critical to the uprising because if the town falls, government forces could move north to threaten Irbil, the largest city in Kurdish hands, and Dohuk, whose capture would relieve the Kurdish seizure of the key oil center of Mosul.

"If the Kurds are able to hold on to Kirkuk, it will be a very big blow to the government," said the U.S. officer. "If they're not, it doesn't mean

the Kurds will lose everything but it will be a blow to their cause."

Meanwhile, new stories of government atrocities in the north have begun to reach Kurdish-held territories, Randal reported. According to Kurdish sources, government forces captured Karahanjir, 12 miles east of Kirkuk, and killed every person in the town, including babies.

U.S. analysts believe the two rebellions, although separate geographically and politically, mutually prey on a Baghdad regime possibly strong enough to fight one civil war but not two. Saddam's best fighting units were damaged during the gulf war. For example, the three Republican Guard armored divisions, which some U.S. officials believe had 14,000 men each, now have roughly a brigade each, or about 3,000 soldiers.

Saddam is believed to be in Baghdad, where loyalist troops have reportedly repositioned to protect the capital and their president. The Iraqi military command and control network, virtually destroyed by allied bombing, is still a shambles, and the need to communicate by FM radio rather than secure land lines means that U.S. eavesdropping has been relatively easy, the official said. "It appears to us that civilian authority in the country is really non-existent, that the military is really in control," he said.

Iran appears to be providing "moral support" and safe haven for refugees, but there is no firm evidence of other military assistance to the Shiites, according to U.S. intelligence.

Jordan, on the other hand, appears to be sustaining its controversial support for Saddam's regime. U.S. intelligence two days ago detected a transport plane flying from Amman to Baghdad, although the contents of the aircraft are unknown, an official here said.

Randal added from Sulaymaniya:

In the Kurdish counterattack for Kirkuk, rebels battled an Iraqi force that was positioned between Kirkuk and Irbil and had cut the main supply road to Kirkuk at a place called Altun Kopri.

While the fighting continued in Altun Kopri, a bigger battle raged in Kirkuk itself, 30 miles south. Kurdish officials here said most of the town was in their hands but under heavy bombardment from artillery, multiple rocket launchers, tanks, and helicopters.

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White House Reveals Scowcroft Mideast Trip

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, March 29 — President Bush's national security adviser, Brent Scowcroft, made an unannounced trip to the Middle East this week to consult with American allies on the postwar situation in Iraq, an Administration official said today.

Officially, the White House would confirm only that Mr. Scowcroft had been in the Middle East.

"At the request of the President, General Scowcroft visited the Middle East this week," said Roman Popadiuk, a White House spokesman. "I have no further details."

Asked about the trip, an Administration official who insisted on anonymity said, "Scowcroft was sent to consult on the Middle East situation, particularly the postwar situation in Iraq."

The official said that Mr. Scowcroft was in the Middle East on Tuesday night to Thursday night but would not say what countries he visited. He was accompanied by Richard N. Haass, Mr. Scowcroft's deputy for Near East and South Asia affairs.

The official provided no further details and attempts to reach Mr. Scowcroft were not successful.

How Bush Went to War

From the Start, the President Was the No. 1 Hawk

By Lally Weymouth

ON VACATION at his Kennebunkport home last August, George Bush told a friend over dinner that he was totally committed to the liberation of Kuwait: We are going to try to do this without war, he said. But if the choice were war or appeasement, Bush said he would opt for war and risk losing the '92 election.

Friends argue that this was the George Bush they had always known: aggressive, willing to take chances. To them, it came as no surprise that he stood firm right to the end. But the fact remains that many commentators and even ordinary Americans who had voted for him were surprised by Bush's steadfast determination to drive Saddam Hussein from Kuwait.

When historians study this period, undoubtedly they will want to examine the disparity between the popular perception and the view of the president held by his intimates.

How did George Bush decide to go to war? When did he make the actual decision to send U.S. troops into combat?

Much of the tale must be pieced together. Bush, after all, loves secrecy and detests leaks; he limited the war meetings to a few top advisers—and excluded staff.

Still, from officials close to Bush and from friends of the president, it is possible to get a clearer picture of how George Bush led an initially reluctant America to war.

The story begins even before Aug. 2, the day Saddam invaded Kuwait. Until that time, the Bush administration had been pursuing the Reagan policy of trying to moderate Saddam through friendly diplomacy and trade. Bush himself listened carefully when Sens. Robert Dole, Alan Simpson and Howard Metzenbaum returned from meeting the Iraqi dictator in April 1990.

"The president was willing . . . to test whether or not a little bit of the carrot would move Saddam out of the threatening mode," recalls one of the president's closest aides. Bush, according to this senior official, actually entered into indirect discussions and contacts with the Iraqi dictator.

But then came Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. And everything changed—both for the

president and for America. Bush understood at once the far-reaching consequences of Saddam's aggression—for this country and for the West: In particular, the president focused on the threat to the principle of national sovereignty, the implications of having Saddam control up to 65 percent of the world's oil supply and the instability inherent in permitting a ruthless dictator to develop weapons of mass destruction.

Bush reacted to the greatest challenge of his presidency in a manner that can only be termed decisive and steely. Indeed, George Bush suddenly became the biggest hawk in Washington. Saddam's annexation of Kuwait revealed in the president a conviction he'd long seemed to many to lack.

When Bush intimates talk about the president's role as America went to war, they focus on the degree to which he took charge. In a very real sense, they say, the gulf war was George Bush's war.

When Saddam's troops crossed into Kuwait on Thursday, Aug. 2, the president himself became the crisis manager. He immediately endeavored to involve the United Nations. And on that very night, the Security Council adopted Resolution 660, calling for the unconditional withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait. The president acted to freeze Kuwaiti assets to prevent Iraq from getting its hands on \$80 to \$100 billion that Kuwait had invested abroad. The president also met with his advisers in an immediate effort to determine how far Saddam intended to go and what his ultimate intentions were. Yet the determination that would come hadn't yet formed in George Bush.

A previously scheduled trip to Aspen—where Bush, in addition to delivering a speech, met privately with British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher—helped "solidify views that had formed but not hardened in Bush," said one senior official directly involved in the effort to devise a strategy.

When he returned to Washington, Bush resumed meetings with his "war cabinet"—a small number of advisers that would eventually come to be called "the gang of eight." The group's members included the chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Gen. Colin Powell, White House Chief of Staff John Sununu, Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney, Secretary of State James A.

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Baker III, National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft, Scowcroft's deputy, Robert S. Gates, and Vice President Dan Quayle. (William Webster, director of the CIA, attended the early meetings but not the later ones.)

As early as the afternoon of Aug. 3, one high-ranking official who attended these sessions believes, the president had concluded that Saddam's invasion of Kuwait had to be fully reversed. On this issue, "his mind [by then] was set in stone," the official recalls.

What was Bush focusing on at this particular juncture? Bush's old friend, Secretary of Commerce Robert A. Mosbacher, speculates that living through World War II influenced Bush enormously: "He saw what Chamberlain had led to—he felt this guy [Saddam] had to be stopped." A Bush aide says, "I think he saw it as black-and-white, right-versus-wrong, by any measure." A long-time Texas-based Bush watcher offers a different take: "George Bush and Jimmy Baker don't like fanatics. The fact that someone won't deal is almost incomprehensible."

That weekend, the meetings continued at Camp David. Cheney went out to the presidential retreat and took with him Powell as well as Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf, chief of the U.S. Central Command (which encompasses the Arabian peninsula). The three men showed the president what sort of forces could be moved to the area, Cheney recalls. The problem was where precisely to send them: Saudi Arabia had always refused to accept U.S. troops.

Intent on at least creating a military option, the president—on Sunday, Aug. 5—sent Cheney, Gates and Schwarzkopf to meet with King Fahd. That Saudi Arabia was Saddam's next military target was by then readily apparent—both to the Americans and to the king. "It was clear that he feared for the future of his country," says a U.S. official who was present at the meeting with the Saudi monarch. The Americans informed Fahd that Washington was willing to bring troops and military resources to the region. "We tried to convey to them that they didn't have a lot of time, that they had to decide now."

Cheney says he had expected to wait for an answer, but Fahd tendered an affirmative response. The defense secretary returned to his hotel and called the president. Bush immediately authorized the deployment of U.S. forces. Cheney then called Powell: "It is a go." The first tactical fighter wing arrived in Saudi Arabia 14 hours later. The deployment had begun.

In the meantime, back at the White House, Bush put into motion his special brand of telephone diplomacy. Assembling the international coalition was "totally Bush driven and conceived," says a close aide. "The president used the telephone as it was never before used in international diplom-

cy." Sununu calls it "the reach out and touch someone coalition." There were different types of calls: the short call, just to bring people up to date and more detailed calls. The rules of diplomacy were set aside. No longer did foreign ministers spend three days preparing for head-of-state to head-of-state conversations. The heads of state were forming their own network—led by George Bush.

An initial tangible result came on Aug. 6 when the U.N. Security Council passed resolution 661, imposing worldwide economic sanctions on Iraq.

A key factor in the early phase of the gulf crisis was U.S.-Soviet cooperation. On Aug. 6, Secretary of State Baker issued a joint statement in Moscow with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, denouncing Iraq's invasion. The Soviets were outraged by Saddam for their own reasons, reports a high-ranking U.S. diplomat. They didn't want a confrontation with the United States or a blow-up in the Middle East.

It soon became clear, however, that Saddam wasn't budging, sanctions or no sanctions. And Bush was getting angry. So emphatic had Bush become by late October that Scowcroft suggested to the president that he softpedal the Hitler analogy he'd been using.

As weeks turned to months, Bush began to believe time was not on his side. "He began to weigh the costs of waiting," says a senior official. Turkey, manifesting itself as a firm ally, had closed its pipeline to hinder Iraq's ability to export oil. But that policy, it was estimated, would likely cost Ankara at least \$300 million a year. Moreover, the religious holidays were approaching in the Moslem world. And Saddam, hoping to force the allied coalition to crumble, was endeavoring, on a nearly daily basis, to create the image of the link between America and Israel.

Gradually, Bush began to lose faith in the efficacy of sanctions; the president started to focus on the military option. On Oct. 30, Bush decided to double the number of troops in the gulf. He kept it a closely guarded secret. The actual announcement would come a week later—after the midterm congressional elections.

As for Congress, criticism—already

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building through these weeks—erupted after the second troop deployment was announced. Some members argued that the administration had shifted from a defensive to an offensive posture.

Even as he secured an all-important U.N. Security Council resolution authorizing the use of force if Saddam failed to withdraw from Kuwait, Bush decided to demonstrate to the American people that he was willing to go the last mile to reach a diplomatic settlement. The U.N. resolution had set a withdrawal deadline of Jan. 15 for Saddam. On Nov. 30, one day after resolution 678 was passed by the Security Council, the president announced that he was ready to send Baker to Baghdad for a meeting with Saddam. Bush, simultaneously, would meet with Iraq's foreign minister, Tariq Aziz.

The president was convinced that Saddam's inner circle was keeping the facts from the dictator. Bush wanted Baker to make America's intentions plain to the Iraqi dictator. The plan worried some Middle East experts: They argued that the culture gap would lead Saddam and other Arabs to interpret Bush's gesture as a signal of America's willingness to back down. Indeed, fearing that a backroom deal was in the works, the Saudi ambassador to Washington, Prince Bandar Bin Sultan, rushed to the State Department to see Baker: "Trust us," said the secretary of state. According to an American official, Bandar almost shouted at Baker: "None of this read-my-lips stuff. The future of my country is at stake."

In Washington, however, an administration official, familiar with the president's thinking, maintains the Baker-Aziz meeting was never intended as a negotiating session but was meant to serve as a final opportunity to tell the Iraqis: "Get out or we'll get you out."

Over the Christmas holidays, one presidential adviser believes the president resolved the outstanding issues that remained in his mind: Is it right? It is just? Can we do it? All the decisions had been made when Bush returned to Washington on Jan. 3. It was just a question of: Would Saddam pull his forces out?

After a quarrel inside the White House, the administration decided to ask Congress to pass a resolution to authorize the use of force to dislodge Saddam from Kuwait. The president's lawyers had argued that he had the constitutional authority to use force without the consent of Congress, but Bush was key in the decision to go to Congress.

In the end, of course, the president got the few Democratic votes essential for his majority. What hasn't been revealed, says a

high placed official, is that even if Congress had failed to back the president, Bush planned to send American forces into combat to liberate Kuwait—if Saddam didn't pull out. The U.S. troops would have operated under Article 51 of the U.N. charter. (Article 51 authorizes any U.N. member, in this instance Kuwait, to use its own force in self-defense and to ask others for help.)

Right down to the Jan. 15 deadline, no one knew what to expect. Many experts on the region had told the president that the Iraqis would deal in the end. "We had seen him reverse course on short notice—like when he . . . gave Iran back everything he had fought eight years to achieve," Cheney said. "This guy was not predictable, at least in the Western sense of the word."

Some officials had expected Saddam to play some kind of delaying game—to suggest more talks, perhaps. "Saddam held the U.S. in contempt," said a U.S. official involved in the crisis. "He thought we didn't have it in us." To be more precise, Saddam misjudged Bush. As one of the president's aides remarked, "Saddam thought Bush was a wimp or a lapdog."

On the afternoon of Jan. 15, the president signed the order to go to war. Bush didn't believe in micromanaging the war. He reserved just two decisions for himself: When to start the air war and when to begin the ground war. This relatively hands-off policy, it's well to note, contrasts sharply with the manner in which Lyndon Johnson conducted the Vietnam War. "Tell me what you need," Bush told his generals, "and go do it."

The war actually began on the morning of Jan. 16, when B-52s took off on a secret mission from Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana. Their assignment: to drop missiles in western Iraq and return. At the White House, meanwhile, the president had lunch with his press secretary, Marlin Fitzwater, and the White House counsel, C. Boyden Gray. "We'd been talking about it for five months," said a Bush aide, trying to describe the White House on that day. "The whole thing has had that kind of eerie quality of scientific precision and coolness."

The war plan called for the air campaign to last at least a month, says Cheney. But, as expected, it did not dislodge Saddam from Kuwait. On Feb. 18, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, trying to salvage the Iraq regime, launched a "peace offensive." (To persuade a reluctant Saddam to go along, the Soviets showed him satellite photos of the destruction of his country.) Bush rejected the Soviet plan. It was a risky move that could have disrupted U.S.-Soviet relations.

On Feb. 13, the U.S. bombed a bunker in Iraq which the Pentagon said was used for military purposes. Saddam almost immedi-

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ately began to deal after this event. He reportedly didn't believe it was an accident—regarding it as the kind of cold, calculating act he himself engaged in. He took it as a signal of the U.S. determination to prevail.

The war ended as it began; the decision belonged to George Bush and to George Bush alone. History will determine whether the president's decision to terminate hostilities on Feb. 28 will be as celebrated as his determination to initiate them.

Once, in an interview with Diane Sawyer, Bush remarked candidly, "I haven't been tested by fire." Bush has now been tested.

"He was the most stable, steady hand throughout," says Cheney. "He was clear-headed when the future was murky. He never, ever wavered. He knew that he was going to get Saddam out of Kuwait one way or another."

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