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ENGAGING THE WORLD

U.S. Relations with Iraq

From the Mandate to Operation Iraqi Freedom



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PROGRAM

COVER

In the full span of U.S.-Iraq relations before Operation Iraqi Freedom, only two Iraqi heads of state visited Washington, D.C. The first was Prince ‘Abd al-Ilah (*left, saluting*), the regent of Iraq, shown with President Harry S. Truman at the White House on May 28, 1945. Photo by Abbie Rowe. *National Park Service/Truman Presidential Library.*

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ENGAGING THE WORLD

The ENGAGING THE WORLD series focuses on U.S. involvement around the globe, primarily in the post-Cold War period. It includes peacekeeping and humanitarian missions as well as Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom—all missions in which the U.S. Air Force has been integrally involved. It will also document developments within the Air Force and the Department of Defense.

U.S. RELATIONS WITH IRAQ

U.S. RELATIONS WITH IRAQ was initially begun as an introductory piece for a larger work on U.S./coalition involvement in Operation Iraqi Freedom. It covers U.S. interaction with Iraq dating back to the Ottoman Empire, through the British mandate after World War I and the rise of U.S. oil interests; relations with the Hashemite monarchy until its overthrow in 1958; increasing tensions in the 1960s and 1970s; an uneasy alliance against Iran in the 1980s; Operation Desert Storm; and ongoing contention with Saddam Hussein in the 1990s and early 2000s over Iraq's weapons programs that ultimately resulted in multinational military action in 2003.

Opinions, conclusions, and recommendations expressed or implied within are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Air Force, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. government. Cleared for public release.

Contents

INTRODUCTION	1
ONE	
The Ottoman Years, the Mandate, and Oil: The Early Decades through the World Wars	3
TWO	
Oil, Israel, and the Soviet Threat: Post-World War II to the 1958 Coup d'État	13
THREE	
Internal Instability and Sparse Relations: The 1960s and 1970s	25
FOUR	
The Enemy of Our Enemy: The 1980s	35
FIVE	
The Gulf War to the Brink of Operation Iraqi Freedom	43
NOTES	55

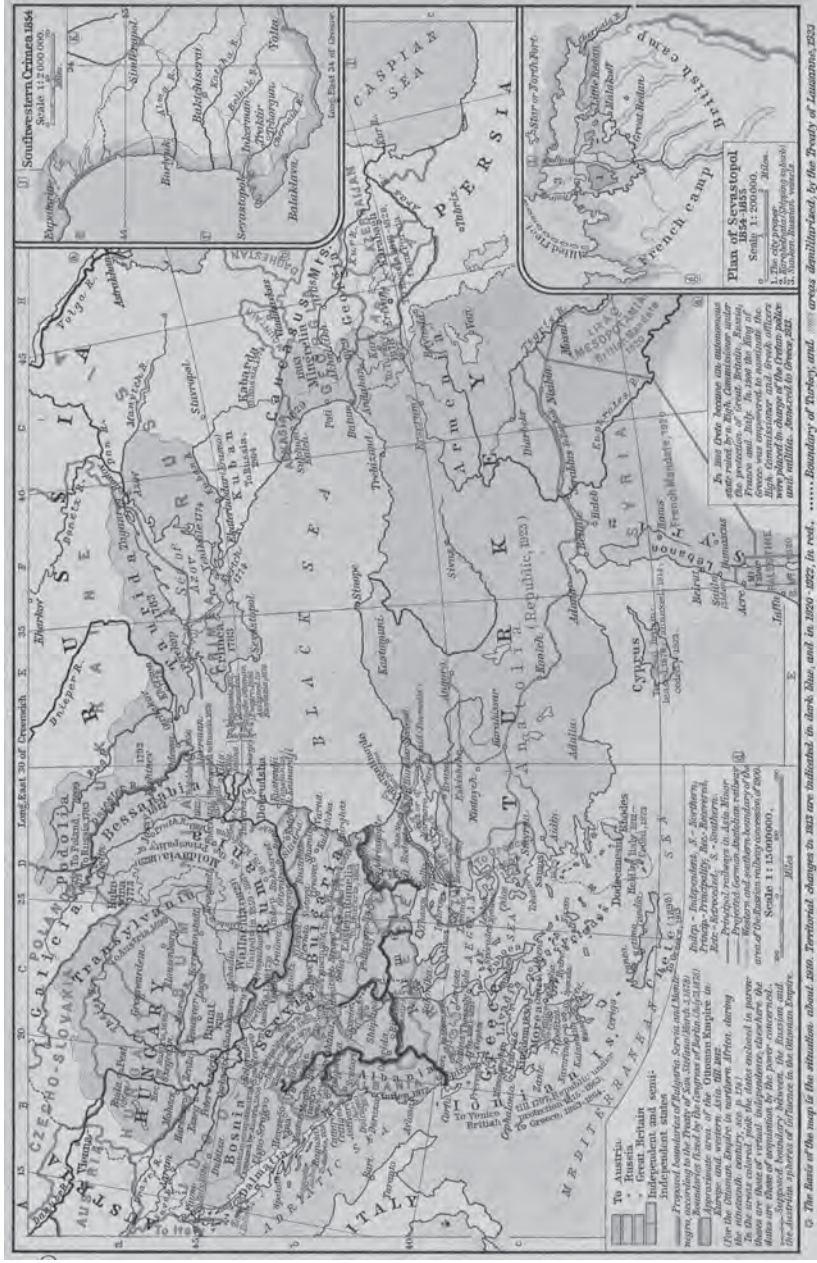


Introduction

Relations between the United States and Iraq have ebbed and flowed throughout the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, from their zenith in the 1950s to their nadir between 1990 and 2003. Interestingly, the state of diplomatic relations has often been a poor indicator of the strength of other ties between the countries. For example, trade grew significantly during the late 1970s and early 1980s when no official diplomatic relations existed, while productive diplomatic connections in the 1940s and 1950s rarely reflected the growing popular resentment in Iraq toward the United States.

This work gives a brief overview, largely from the U.S. perspective, of how the United States interacted with Iraq through the twentieth century, providing background for understanding of the Gulf War (Desert Shield/Desert Storm) and conflict in Iraq in the twenty-first century. It was written as an introductory piece for a larger study of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The book draws heavily on primary sources in U.S. foreign relations materials and references secondary works for readers seeking more detail on particular subjects.¹ The topic of oil recurs throughout the story, as do themes of wider relations among Middle Eastern states, the Arab-Israeli question, and, for the second half of the twentieth century, conflicting U.S.-Soviet Cold War interests and alliances. The study deals only cursorily with Iraqi internal affairs and ethnosectarian issues. It does not go into detail on the decisions for war in 1991 and 2003, as those deliberations are widely documented.

One constant in U.S.-Iraqi relations has been that the United States typically placed its relationship with Iraq in a position secondary to other regional interests, chiefly oil, the fight against the spread of communism, and the Arab-Israeli conflict. Only from 1990 to 1991 and from 2002 to the time of this publication has Iraq been a central focus of U.S. foreign policy.



This map from William R. Shepherd's *Historical Atlas* (1923) shows the final delineation and dispersal of the Ottoman Empire. The League of Nations placed Iraq (lower right), the area generally known at that time as Mesopotamia, under British mandate in 1920. Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection, University of Texas.

The Ottoman Years, the Mandate, and Oil: The Early Decades through the World Wars

Until World War I, official U.S. involvement in Mesopotamia, the area that became known as Iraq, was generally limited to what are now called “citizen services.” U.S. diplomats in what were then parts of the Ottoman Empire provinces of Mosul, Basra, and Baghdad focused their work on assisting U.S. citizens in the area, most of whom were Christian missionaries.¹ These efforts involved protecting the missionaries or helping them seek redress for crimes allegedly committed against them. Other matters addressed included petitioning Ottoman authorities for permission for U.S. universities to engage in archeological excavations around Baghdad, as well as some issues not involving U.S. citizens, such as commerce and import/export agreements.² In light of these activities, the depth of U.S. involvement through these very few diplomats in remote postings was limited.

During World War I, U.S. attention in the area remained focused on the safety of its diplomats, citizens, and local employees. In 1916, regional Ottoman officials, eager to demonstrate that the Ottoman Empire had rejected the legal protections traditionally afforded foreigners, harassed U.S. diplomats and local employees through arbitrary arrests and house searches. The United States protested to the Ottoman government in Constantinople. In 1917, the United States entered World War I on the side of the Allies but only declared war on Germany, never entering a state of war with the Ottoman Empire. Nonetheless, some U.S. citizens, including a few who had been residing in Baghdad, were temporarily prevented from leaving Ottoman territory, despite agreements between the United States and the Ottoman Empire.³

After the war, the United States remained somewhat removed from the situation in the Middle East. President Woodrow Wilson, speaking at the Paris Peace Conference in January 1919, rebuffed the idea of the United States becoming a “mandatory power”—that is, one of the World War I victors to which temporary control of a former Ottoman or German holding was assigned by the League of Nations—in the Middle East. He cited Mesopotamia by name as an area U.S. forces would not agree to

occupy because, Wilson reasoned, the United States had not been at war with the Ottoman Empire.⁴ Later in the year, the report of the King-Crane Commission, a U.S. delegation sent to the Middle East in mid-1919 to gauge support for different postwar government options, showed a marked preference among the “Syrians” (those from the general area of current-day Syria and Lebanon) polled in favor of the United States becoming the mandatory power in Mesopotamia.⁵ Despite the report and the desires of the other Allies, Wilson believed that neither the people of the United States nor the U.S. Senate would accept a mandate in the region. In the end, he was correct; the Senate in May 1920 defeated a proposal to accept a U.S. mandate in Armenia, leaving the United Kingdom and France to become the mandatory powers in the former Ottoman provinces. In 1920, the League of Nations assigned the three Mesopotamian provinces—united and soon named Iraq—to the United Kingdom as its mandatory power to prepare it for independence.⁶ The British had occupied parts of the area since 1914 and had thoughts of colonizing the oil-rich province of Basra.



Emir Faisal (*front*) at the peace conference at Versailles in 1919. Saudi-born Faisal worked with T. E. Lawrence (*second row, second from right*) while Faisal led the Arab Revolt against the Ottoman Turks. In 1920, the Syrian National Congress proclaimed Faisal as king of Syria, but the French expelled him when they received the mandate. The British made him king of Iraq in 1921, a move welcomed by a majority of the population. Nuri al-Sa'id (*second from left*) became a powerful figure in the Iraqi Hashemite kingdom, serving multiple terms as prime minister. *Wikimedia Commons/Public Domain.*



President Woodrow Wilson (right) at the Paris Peace Conference in May 1919 with (from left) Prime Ministers David Lloyd George of the United Kingdom, Vittorio Orlando of Italy, and Georges Clemenceau of France. Wilson vowed that the United States would not become a “mandatory power” after World War I, and responsibility for the newly formed nation of Iraq fell to the British. *Library of Congress.*

Because of this experience, many in Iraq did not welcome the decision to place it under British mandate, prompting a revolt in 1920.⁷

At the same time, the United States began pursuing its own interests in the area. The war had shown the United States the importance of petroleum resources, and contemporary studies demonstrated the growing inadequacy of U.S. oil reserves.⁸ Meanwhile, British businessmen expressed an apparent desire to monopolize the oil market. By late 1919, the United States began pressing the United Kingdom to allow U.S. companies access to Mesopotamian oil assets.⁹ At the San Remo conference in April 1920, however, the British and French reached a secret agreement that granted oil predominance in Iraq to the British, with the French holding a 25 percent share, but no rights for American or Italian companies.¹⁰

U.S. pressure on the British for access to the oil concession was constant during the mandate period. For the twelve years that the United Kingdom held its special position in Iraq, the United States was in ongoing negotiations with the British regarding the involvement of the U.S. companies in the oil concession, or right to develop, in Iraq.¹¹ Even when the United States raised other subjects of discussion with the British regarding Iraq, those topics seemed partially petroleum-related, such as negotiations regarding



An Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC) well near Kirkuk, 1932 (*above*). Five U.S. firms collectively held a 23.75 percent share in the Iraqi oil concession. In the 1930s, the IPC built pipelines to carry the oil to the Mediterranean (*below*). The section shown, crossing the Esdraelon Plain circa 1934, terminated in Haifa. This line proved invaluable during World War II but closed permanently after Israeli independence in 1948. *Library of Congress.*





Hashemite brothers Faisal I of Iraq (left) and Abdullah I of Transjordan (right) in Jerusalem in 1933 just before Faisal's death. The first Iraqi congress in 1920 offered the throne of its country to Abdullah. The British favored Faisal for Iraq, and Abdullah became emir and subsequently king of Transjordan. *Library of Congress.*

the protection of “economic rights of American nationals in Iraq.”¹² Other U.S. business endeavors certainly existed in Iraq at this time, but none were pursued as strongly or for as long as petroleum interests.¹³

In October 1927, the Turkish Petroleum Company (TPC), the consortium that held the drilling concession in Iraq, had its first major oil strike, in a field north of Kirkuk at Baba Gurgur, confirming the long-held assumption of Iraq's production potential. Negotiations with international petroleum companies intensified after the strike, and in July 1928, the firms signed an oil rights compact. The deal became known as the Red Line Agreement because of a demarcation drawn on a map by one of the negotiating officials outlining the old Ottoman Empire.¹⁴ A collective of five U.S. oil companies, designated the Near East Development Corporation, received a 23.75 percent share. The following year, TPC became known as the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC).¹⁵

In October 1932, Iraq officially became independent from the United Kingdom, although the continued presence of British political advisers and military forces signified that independence was by no means complete.¹⁶ The Hashemite monarchy the British installed under Saudi-born King Faisal I



Festivities at the palace in Baghdad on October 6, 1932, commemorating Iraq's membership in the League of Nations. Iraq's independence dated from October 3, although the British continued to exercise considerable influence. *Library of Congress.*



Troops arrived in Baghdad in support of a successful military coup d'état on October 29, 1936. Six more coups followed over the next five years. *National Archives.*



Prince 'Abd al-Ilah (*saluting*) and Prime Minister Nuri al-Sa'id at the opening of the Iraqi parliament in November 1942. When Ghazi I of Iraq, the only son of Faisal I, died in an accident in 1939, his cousin Ilah became regent, serving until Ghazi's son, Faisal II, reached maturity and assumed leadership in 1953. Al-Sa'id was a powerful political figure, serving eight stints as prime minister. Both men and the young king perished in the 1958 coup. *Library of Congress.*

ruled Iraq until it was overthrown in 1958. Indeed, Iraq was a central piece of what one scholar described as “Britain’s informal empire in the Middle East.” The British also controlled neighboring Transjordan, where they had placed Faisal’s brother, Abdullah I, as emir in 1921, and Palestine, giving them a corridor from Iraq—and its oil—to the Mediterranean.¹⁷

As the transition approached in 1932, correspondence between the United States and the United Kingdom had focused on how Iraq would be administered after the mandate ended; whether the British intended to consult the Americans prior to making decisions about that administration; and how the British would assure protection of U.S. commercial interests

and U.S. nationals in Iraq. The following year, the United States insisted on being consulted regarding any border changes in the Middle East, including modifications to the Syria-Iraq line.¹⁸ The United States may have been somewhat aloof in the postwar negotiations on the Middle East, but, due in large part to involvement of U.S. oil companies in the region and increasing U.S. petroleum needs, it had overcome those reservations.¹⁹

Beginning in 1934, the United States negotiated directly with the government of independent Iraq on diplomatic matters. The first order of business that year was an extradition treaty to replace the one agreed to under the British mandate in 1930. The United States and Iraq followed this agreement four years later with a treaty on commerce and navigation.²⁰

In 1937, a more purely political issue, the final disposition of Palestine, surfaced in U.S.-Iraqi relations. The question quickly rose in importance as Iraq “appear[ed] to be taking the lead in opposition to [the] Palestine partition” plan that the British Peel Commission had proposed, according to the U.S. chargé d’affaires in Baghdad. The Iraqi foreign minister gave the U.S. chargé an alternative proposal for a single independent state of Palestine.²¹ The Palestine issue would continue to disrupt U.S.-Iraqi relations throughout the 1940s and, to varying degrees, for the rest of the twentieth century.²²

By 1938, the United States and its allies were gravely concerned about the prospect of another world war. Diplomatic correspondence between the United States and Iraq in this period reflected this growing stress as the United States attempted to gauge Iraq’s position regarding such a conflict.²³ The feeling of wartime urgency found its ultimate expression in covert U.S. support for the United Kingdom’s quelling of an April 1941 coup—believed to be pro-Axis—and the subsequent British reoccupation of Iraq that same year.²⁴ This move occurred despite U.S. secretary of state Cordell Hull’s earlier stated desire to refrain from “interference in the internal affairs of Iraq or an effort to bring about the overthrow of cabinets.”²⁵ This instance may have been the first in U.S.-Iraqi relations where exigent political circumstances trumped U.S. wishes for a civil relationship.

Only five months after the end of the attempted coup, in November 1941, the United States began assisting the British with a World War II-related building project in Iraq, but after the United States entered the conflict in December 1941, it abandoned the effort in Iraq to conserve resources for projects in Iran benefiting the Soviet Union.²⁶ In January 1942, with a pro-British government again in power in Baghdad, Iraq requested and was quickly granted eligibility for lend-lease aid from the United States. Iraq officially entered the war in January 1943 on the side of the Allies and gave U.S. forces the same immunity from prosecution by Iraqi courts and “freedom from taxation” as had been granted to British



President Harry S. Truman welcomed Prince ‘Abd al-Ilah (left of Truman, saluting) to the White House on May 28, 1945, the first state visit to Washington by an Iraqi leader. Photo by Abbie Rowe. National Park Service/Truman Presidential Library.

troops.²⁷ Although there were a few wartime disagreements on taxes and damage claims, the growing strength of the U.S.-Iraqi relationship was epitomized by the White House visit of Prince ‘Abd al-Ilah, the regent of Iraq, on May 28, 1945. Two months later, on July 31, the two countries signed a lend-lease agreement, under which the United States would “continue to supply the Government of Iraq with . . . defense articles, defense services, and defense information.” A mutual desire for closer relations culminated in the appointment of a full U.S. ambassador, George Wadsworth, to Iraq in November 1946.²⁸

MIDDLE EAST



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Central Intelligence Agency, 2012.

Oil, Israel, and the Soviet Threat: Post-World War II to the 1958 Coup d'État

Through 1947, American exports of oil exceeded imports. But the postwar boom in the United States, which included rapidly increasing mobility and suburbanization, created an unprecedented demand for petroleum products. The number of cars on U.S. roads increased from 26 million in 1945 to 40 million as of 1950, and the price of crude oil more than doubled between 1945 and 1948.¹

The region of the world that could meet this burgeoning demand was the Middle East, and U.S. petroleum firms were eager to tap its considerable reserves. There were complications, however, chief among them the so-called Red Line Agreement that American, British, and French companies had reached in 1928 regarding Iraqi oil development. The Saudi government and its U.S. partners in the Arabian American Oil Company (Aramco), Texaco and Standard Oil of California, wanted to bring in additional U.S. firms to increase capital and markets. However, the companies most eager and able to participate, Standard Oil of New Jersey and Standard Oil Company of New York, were limited by a clause in the Red Line Agreement that said that they and other partners in the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC) could not operate independently within the demarcated area, which included the Arabian Peninsula. Two and a half years of squabbling ensued, with various parties threatening lawsuits and antitrust proceedings and the French government demanding U.S. support for its company, *Compagnie Française des Pétroles* (CFP), to become an Aramco partner. An agreement in May 1947 reconstituted the IPC, giving the French a larger stake and effectively buying them off in reference to Aramco partnership, but the companies and governments involved did not settle all of the details of Aramco expansion until November 1948.²

By the later 1940s, the mutual aspirations at the end of World War II for closer relations between the United States and Iraq had cooled, for several reasons. First, with more U.S. firms involved in the much vaster oil fields of Saudi Arabia, exploitation of those in Iraq became of lesser importance to them, to the consternation of the Iraqis and the French,



Faisal II (left) was three years old when his father, Ghazi I, died. The year before he assumed the throne at age eighteen, he toured the United States for five weeks in August-September 1952, meeting President Harry S. Truman on August 16. *Department of State/Truman Library.*

whose only petroleum foothold in the Middle East was in Iraq.³ Second, although the Iraqi government continued to push for a closer bilateral political relationship with the United States after the war, the United States decided to informally coordinate its Middle East policy with the United Kingdom. According to diplomatic historian Melvyn P. Leffler, “No matter how much the two Anglo-Saxon nations might compete for oil concessions, markets, and investment opportunities, U.S. policymakers relied on the British to uphold their common strategic interests in this part of the world.”⁴ This coordination included an understanding, as outlined in a top secret State Department document in 1947, that “the British [would] maintain their strong strategic, political, and economic position in the Middle East, and that they and [the United States would] follow parallel policies in that area.”⁵

This harmonization of efforts included U.S. support for the United Kingdom in its secret negotiations with Iraq in late 1947 for an agreement

to replace the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1930.⁶ Because of the conditions of the 1930 accord, which included extensive British interference in Iraqi foreign policy and military affairs, Iraq had been pressing the United Kingdom for a treaty revision. The updated document, which made some concessions to the Iraqis but effectively extended the 1930 pact, became known as the Portsmouth Agreement or Treaty after the city in England in which it was finalized. Iraqi popular discontent with the accord and the secret negotiations preceding it was so great, however, that the 1948 protests it caused, known as the *wathba* (leap), led Iraq's regent, 'Abd al-Ilah, to decide against ratification of the pact. Although this rejection did not have an apparent direct effect on the relationship between Iraq and the United States, the anger toward treaties the Portsmouth Agreement engendered among Iraqis soured prospective U.S.-Iraqi negotiations for a new treaty of friendship, commerce, and navigation.⁷

The third major reason for the negative direction of the U.S.-Iraqi relationship involved the issues of Jewish immigration to Palestine and the prospects for a Jewish national home. Since 1937, Iraqi officials had been conveying their views on the future of Palestine in meetings and



The U.S. Information Service (USIS) and subsequent U.S. Information Agency took an active role in Iraq after World War II. Participants at this April 1947 USIS event in Baghdad viewed films on irrigation and agricultural development. Guests included several leading landowners and sheikhs. On front at the far left is once and future prime minister Tawfiq al-Suwaydi, seated next to U.S. ambassador George Wadsworth. *National Archives.*



During the 1952 tour, Iraqi regent Prince 'Abd al-Ilah (*left*) and Faisal II met with Sen. Theodore F. Green (D-RI) at the U.S. Capitol (*above*), and Faisal spoke with Brooklyn Dodgers star Jackie Robinson after seeing a baseball game in New York (*below*). Department of State/Truman Library.



correspondence with U.S. officials: adamant opposition to partition, that is, separate Jewish and Arab states, and a lesser opposition to Jewish immigration generally.⁸ As the issue grew in international importance after World War II, so did the perception among Arabs generally, including Iraqis, that the United States was the driving force behind the plan to create a Jewish state in Palestine. A State Department official observed in 1946 that “Iraq has shown a great interest and an evident desire to be in the vanguard of the Arab opposition to the Zionists.”⁹

Relations in this period reached their nadir after the November 29, 1947, vote in the United Nations General Assembly in favor of partitioning Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states. Only a few days later, on December 4, 1947, protestors ransacked the U.S. Information Service offices in Baghdad. By May 1948, Israel had declared its independence, and Arab armies, including Iraq’s, went to war with the new state.¹⁰ Popular resentment of the United States among Iraqis crept into the diplomatic relations when U.S. embassy personnel had difficulty meeting with their Iraqi counterparts. Relations improved somewhat later in the year, and by early 1949, Iraqi officials asked the United States for assistance in arranging a withdrawal of their troops from the theater of Arab-Israeli conflict. Soon after, the United States began planning for economic assistance to Iraq to help it absorb Palestinian refugees.¹¹ That assistance, however, was not immediately forthcoming, leading Iraq to accuse the United States of unequal treatment regarding economic aid when compared with European and other Middle Eastern countries, especially Israel.¹²

U.S.-Iraqi relations in 1950 revolved around Iraqi requests for development and military aid from the United States, with the British traditional relationship with Iraq continuing to irritate the Iraqi government, which believed the United Kingdom’s virtual monopoly on aid to Iraq was restricting its growth in all sectors. The United States, although it seemed willing to consider the aid requests, was reluctant to give too much aid too quickly and wanted to preserve what the U.S. ambassador, Edward S. Crocker, called the “special British position in Iraq.” In November 1950, however, a U.S. policy document mentioned the possibility of “Soviet penetration” in Iraq and the consequent need to “bolster Iraq.”¹³ It was this possibility that soon altered the U.S.-Iraqi relationship.

In 1951, Iraqi leaders changed their tactics regarding aid. With the Korean conflict underway, Iraqi military requests became couched in terms of regional defense and the fight against the spread of communism. This language resonated with the United States, then viewing the world through the lens of the Cold War.¹⁴ In the same period, Iraq and the foreign oil companies that ran the IPC signed a new agreement granting Iraq a significantly greater share

of oil revenues.¹⁵ Thus, Cold War concerns provided Iraq the justification for requesting military equipment from the United States, while oil revenues gave it the funds to acquire that matériel.

The 1951–52 revisions to the oil agreement came after several years of contention over the oil rights issue that placed U.S. officials in the challenging position of trying to placate the Iraqis, the British government, and powerful multinational petroleum firms. Ambassador Crocker noted in January 1950 that “oil concessions and royalty rates are touchy subjects.” Although he conceded that he was “not qualified to make recommendations in matters of international oil politics,” he strongly advised that it would be in the best interests of “the whole Western position,” and of the companies involved, to “give the Iraqis a better deal.” An agreement later in 1950 in neighboring Saudi Arabia granted its government twice the royalty rate that the Iraqis received.¹⁶

The leverage Iraq needed to gain a new deal came from Iran, which nationalized its oil industry in the spring of 1951. The British government and British petroleum firms organized a boycott of Iranian oil, almost completely shutting off Iranian exports.¹⁷ Those companies needed an



Tawfiq al-Suwaydi, the Iraqi minister of foreign affairs and former prime minister, signed an aid agreement with the United States in 1951 with the guidance of foreign ministry economic director Bahir Faiq while Ambassador Edward S. Crocker (center) waited to sign on behalf of the United States. *National Archives.*



An Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC) refinery in the mid-1950s. The multinational firms in the IPC revised the oil agreement in 1951–52, giving Iraq a much higher royalty rate on the oil extracted than it had previously received. *Department of State/National Archives.*

increased supply from elsewhere to help fill the Iranian void, and they rapidly escalated production in Iraq. Recognizing an opportunity, particularly with a growing fear in Europe and the United States that other Middle East countries might follow Iran's lead in nationalization, Iraqi prime minister Nuri al-Sa'id pushed harder for a new agreement with the IPC, this time with support from the British. Iraq negotiated a deal that netted it a higher royalty rate than the Saudis were receiving.¹⁸

In 1951, the United States reached its first direct aid deal with Iraq, providing money and expertise for agriculture, public health, and development.¹⁹ At that time, the United States still saw the United Kingdom as the security lead in the Middle East, but circumstances were evolving. The British, under Prime Minister Clement R. Attlee, had attempted to create an anticommunist regional security alliance among Middle Eastern countries, including Iraq, but, according to scholar Rory C. Barrett, the "stench of colonial domination had effectively undermined" the effort. In the fall of 1951, the Labor Party lost the majority, and Winston S. Churchill replaced Attlee as prime minister. For political, strategic, and economic reasons, the new government began developing a modified regional defense plan. It was, however, a new U.S. administration that brought more leverage on collective Middle East defense.²⁰



An Anglo-American summit at the White House in June 1954, with Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, Prime Minister Winston S. Churchill, President Dwight D. Eisenhower, and Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden. Eisenhower and Dulles increased direct U.S. aid to the Middle East, including Iraq, in an effort to counter Soviet involvement in the region. *National Archives.*



U.S. Air Force helicopters from Dhahran Air Field, Saudi Arabia, delivered emergency supplies to flood victims along the Tigris River south of Baghdad in April 1954. *National Archives.*

Dean G. Acheson, U.S. secretary of state under Harry S. Truman from 1949 to the beginning of 1953, had worked closely with the British and generally supported their position in the Middle East. His successor, John Foster Dulles, was an outspoken anticolonialist whose appointment London opposed. The incoming president, Dwight D. Eisenhower, told Churchill two weeks before his January 1953 inauguration that he planned to be aggressive in the use of economic and military aid in the Middle East in an attempt to fend off Soviet influence in the region and to rebuild Arab relations with the United States and Europe. Dulles carried these ideas with him when he visited the Middle East, including Iraq, in May 1953.²¹

Despite ample oil revenues, Iraqi leaders still sought military grants from the Americans and the British. Prime Minister Nuri al-Sa'id argued that Iraq needed the oil revenues for internal economic development to prevent communism from gaining a foothold among the populace. He also pointed out that other countries in the region, such as Saudi Arabia and Turkey, had been given military aid grants.²² The arguments, made directly to Dulles during his May 1953 visit, were particularly persuasive with the new Eisenhower administration given its fear of communism's spread.²³ It was during this trip that Dulles began to envision Iraq as part of a "strong defensive arrangement of the northern tier of states" against a possible Soviet threat.²⁴ After extensive negotiations, Iraq and the United States signed an April 1954 military assistance treaty in which the United States agreed to provide "equipment, materials, or services" and advisory personnel to Iraq in exchange for Iraq contributing to "the defensive strength of the free world" and, if the United States so needed, "raw and semi-processed materials."²⁵

The United Kingdom, fearing it would lose its position in Iraq, concluded a similar treaty with the Iraqis in March 1955 that soon merged with a January 1955 Turkish-Iraqi treaty to become the larger Baghdad Pact in April 1955. The United States, and especially Secretary Dulles, decided that such a convention fulfilled a U.S. desire for an anticommunist belt of allied "northern tier" states to stand between the Soviet Union and the Middle East, so the United States encouraged Pakistan and, eventually, Iran to join the pact that same year.²⁶ However, fearing that further growth might exacerbate Arab-Israeli tensions or stoke Arab nationalism and understanding the taint of imperialism that British involvement brought to the agreement, the United States did not join the accord, although it did maintain observer status and membership on a number of the pact's committees.²⁷

The United States did provide considerable military aid to Iraq from 1954 to 1958, but according to the U.S. ambassador during that period, Waldemar J. Gallman, "Nuri did not want to build a large, efficient military

machine. What he wanted were showy pieces of equipment, of political value domestically and in inter-Arab terms. ‘Big guns’ was the ever-present plea on Nuri’s lips, repeated practically every time he and I met.”²⁸

While it may have contributed to the deterrence of the Soviet Union, Iraq’s military relationship with the United States and the United Kingdom had consequences within Iraq. Popular discontent with the Iraqi regime’s relations had manifested itself in major protests that included the *wathba* in 1948 and the *intifada* (shaking off) in November 1952. The Suez Crisis in October and November 1956, in which France, the United Kingdom, and Israel took the recently nationalized Suez Canal from Egypt by military force, provoked unrest among many Iraqis who were angry with their leaders for maintaining an alliance with the British. Demonstrations and labor strikes proliferated. The following year, insurgents blew up a portion of the IPC pipeline in Syria, curtailing Iraqi oil production and revenues, as well as internal development the oil money was financing.²⁹

Several elements were influencing the Middle East during this period, most prominently the pan-Arab movement spearheaded by Egyptian leader Gamal Abdel Nasser.³⁰ In February 1958, Egypt and Syria announced that they had unified as the United Arab Republic. In an attempt to stem this pan-Arab expansion in their region, which some feared had communist undertones, young Hashemite cousin-kings Faisal II of Iraq and Hussein of



In this example of U.S. development aid in the 1950s, an Iraqi farmer used an American-made tractor to plow a field to plant wheat at the Abu Ghraib Experimental Farm, west of Baghdad. *National Archives.*



Two-time Olympic decathlon champion Bob Mathias visited more than forty countries on goodwill tours for the State Department in the mid-1950s. He is shown here during a demonstration at Baghdad College, probably in 1956. *National Archives.*

Jordan agreed to bind their countries as the Arab Federation. U.S. officials favored this arrangement and quietly increased aid to Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon. The Iraqi leadership floated the idea of Saudi Arabia joining their confederation, but relations were too problematic to make it work.³¹

The first test for the Iraqi-Jordanian alliance came in July 1958. When Jordan sought reinforcement on its border with Lebanon, which was in the midst of a revolt, Nuri al-Sa‘id ordered an Iraqi force to Jordan. The Iraqi troops, however, never left Baghdad. On July 14, the “Free Officers,” united in their opposition to the ruling monarchy and its Anglo-American associations, took the capital in a coup d’etat. They executed Faisal II and Prince ‘Abd al-Ilah immediately, and Prime Minister Nuri al-Sa‘id succumbed the next day.³² The leader of the coup, General ‘Abd al-Karim Qasim, assumed power.³³



A map from a 1973 State Department paper, “USSR-Iraq: The Lines of Tension,” shows the major oil fields in Iraq, in the north near Kirkuk and to the southeast at Rumaylah. National Archives.

Internal Instability and Sparse Relations: The 1960s and 1970s

U.S. relations with Iraq were troubled in the years following the 1958 coup.¹ The primary strategic concern of the United States remained halting or slowing the spread of communism, but the Iraqi communist party was one of 'Abd al-Karim Qasim's main sources of support, and the Soviet Union became one of Iraq's chief suppliers of military arms and economic aid. Moscow had broken off relations with Iraq in 1955 when the latter joined the Baghdad Pact, but it recognized Qasim's new government almost immediately in July 1958.² There were other U.S. concerns as well. The Hashemites and their prime minister had been an important regional counterweight to pan-Arabism and Gamal Abdel Nasser's growing influence, which Qasim continued to resist into the early 1960s. U.S. and European firms also still had considerable investments in Iraq's oil fields, which were producing nearly a million barrels a day by 1960.³

One of the most tangible signs of the distance that separated the policies of the United States and the new Iraqi leaders was Iraq's withdrawal from the Baghdad Pact on March 24, 1959. The Soviets pledged \$137 million for economic development in Iraq at the same time. As U.S. influence in Iran increased, the Soviets stepped up their involvement in Iraq.⁴ The United States considered military intervention in Iraq on multiple occasions, to prevent or respond to "a Communist take-over," but settled on a policy of being "friendly" but not forcing itself on Iraq.⁵ It maintained this policy over the next two years as Iraq's relationship with the Soviet Union grew stronger and then subsided, as Qasim survived multiple assassination attempts, and as Iraq faced periods of instability and isolated cases of open rebellion. One example of this "friendly" policy was the continued attendance of Iraqi students at U.S. military schools even after the 1958 coup, a practice that persisted through worsening relations until at least February 1963.⁶ Nevertheless, U.S. officials were at least aware of, if not complicit in, an October 1959 plot against Qasim that included twenty-two-year-old Saddam Hussein among the potential assassins.⁷

On the diplomatic front, the "friendly" policy toward Iraq continued until 1961, when the status of Kuwait provoked a new rift in U.S.-Iraqi



'Abd al-Karim Qasim led the coup d'état that overthrew the Iraqi monarchy in 1958, only to be deposed and killed five years later. *Baghdad Bus Map, 1961.*

relations. On June 19, the Kuwaitis and the British terminated the Anglo-Kuwaiti Treaty of 1899, which had bound Kuwait to the United Kingdom as a sort of quasi-protectorate.⁸ This step toward full Kuwaiti independence led Iraq to reassert on June 25 its long-standing claim that Kuwait was part of Iraq because Kuwait had originally been a section of the Ottoman province of Basra, one of the three provinces joined in 1920 to create Iraq.⁹

Although Kuwait was a fraction of the size of the countries surrounding it and had a population of only a quarter million as of 1960, it had an immense oil reserve, the largest proven reserve in the world at that time.¹⁰ With Kuwait's location on the Persian Gulf, its oil could be extracted and shipped much more cheaply than could that of its neighbors. Qasim made his claim on Kuwait for essentially the same reasons Saddam Hussein did three decades later: cheaper oil and a larger market share.¹¹ The British and Americans had considerable financial stakes in the country through the firms that comprised the Kuwait Oil Company, British Petroleum and Gulf Oil.

While the United States declined Kuwait's request for a U.S. public statement supporting Kuwaiti independence, the United Kingdom sought

U.S. “public and moral” support for any British military actions in Kuwait and suggested that it might soon need military backing if Iraq chose to use force to assert its claim on Kuwait. President John F. Kennedy agreed almost immediately to “give full political and logistic support, if required, to the United Kingdom in connection with certain actions . . . to forestall any Iraq attempt to take over Kuwait by force.”¹²

On June 29, 1961, the U.S. Navy ordered a task force destined for South Africa to change course and sail toward Bahrain to reinforce British troops, who were on their way to Kuwait at the request of Shaykh Abdullah al-Salim al-Sabah, the emir of Kuwait. He believed that Iraq was preparing to take Kuwait by force. British troops entered Kuwait on July 1, but the United States turned its naval force around on July 3 as chances for a nonmilitary solution to the dispute improved when it was brought before the United Nations (UN) Security Council on July 2. The United Kingdom feared any further buildup could be unnecessarily provocative. The Arab League resolved the issue in the short term when it admitted Kuwait as an independent state on July 20, and the league reached an agreement with Kuwait on August 12 for Arab League forces to replace British troops in Kuwait, reassuring Kuwait of its security and removing the British from the situation.¹³

According to scholar Phebe Marr, Iraq “grossly mishandled” the Kuwait affair, adding that it “isolated Qasim from all his Arab neighbors and solved no problems at home.”¹⁴ The Iraqi government further injured U.S.-Iraqi relations when, in December 1961, it revoked the Iraq Petroleum Company concession to any fields not already in production, approximately 99.5 percent of the country. American firms Esso (formerly Standard Oil of New Jersey) and Socony Mobil collectively held roughly a quarter stake in these rights as part of the IPC consortium.¹⁵ The State Department believed this move was in retaliation for U.S. support in the UN Security Council for two resolutions, on July 7 and November 30, affirming Kuwaiti independence and backing its admission to the United Nations, respectively.¹⁶ Others think Qasim acted to bolster his public standing amid a flagging economy, conflict with the Kurds, and the Kuwait fiasco. This action proved self-defeating for Iraq, however. With no incentive to invest in increased production and no rights for further exploration, the international oil concerns focused their efforts elsewhere, and Iraq’s production and profits stagnated during the 1960s as those in Saudi Arabia and Iran surged.¹⁷

After threatening diplomatic consequences for any state that formalized relations with Kuwait, Iraq recalled its ambassador from the United States on June 2, 1962, and asked the U.S. ambassador to Iraq to leave upon learning that President Kennedy had officially received the Kuwaiti ambassador and appointed a U.S. ambassador to Kuwait on June 1.¹⁸ This



Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr (left) during his brief tenure as prime minister, meeting with Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser and Syria's Lu'ay al-Atassi in Cairo in April 1963. Al-Bakr was overthrown that November but reassumed power in 1968. *Bibliotheca Alexandrina/Wikimedia Commons.*

move was a downgrading relations to the chargé d'affaires level, an overt diplomatic statement of how seriously Iraq interpreted the issue. Relations worsened through the end of 1962 and the beginning of 1963, but the United States avoided further confrontation, in part because it expected "anti-Qasim nationalist forces," troubled by Iraq's pro-communist stance, to stage another coup in Iraq.¹⁹

On February 8, 1963, Qasim was overthrown and killed in a coup led by members of the Ba'ath Party, the Iraqi branch of a Syrian political movement that began in the early 1940s and espoused secularism, socialism, and Arab nationalism. Tellingly, Qasim had so isolated himself and his country's interests that the Americans, the Soviets, and Nasser were all pleased by the change.²⁰ Although the United States was cautiously optimistic regarding the new anticommunist regime, it nonetheless maintained a policy very similar to the one it had charted during the Qasim years. A memorandum drafted by Robert C. Strong, director of the U.S. State Department's Office of Near Eastern Affairs, in the week following the coup advised that the U.S. "posture should be that of a friend whose presence is known and appreciated but is not overwhelming."²¹ The United States permitted limited arms sales soon after the coup, and U.S. willingness to supply more weapons increased as it became apparent that the new regime had truly broken with the Soviet Union. The Soviets stepped



By the Arab League summit in September 1964, new president ‘Abd al-Salam ‘Arif (*center*) represented Iraq. He was shown with (*from left*) King Hussain of Jordan, Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, President Habib Bourguiba of Tunisia, and King Hassan II of Morocco. *Bibliotheca Alexandrina/Wikimedia Commons.*

up arms support to the Kurds of northern Iraq, an ethnic group that had been agitating for independence since the nineteenth century.²² A more direct sign of improved U.S.-Iraqi cooperation was the upgrading of relations to the ambassador level and the appointment in June 1963 of Strong as the new U.S. ambassador to Iraq. However, at least one senior official on the U.S. National Security Council, Robert W. Komer, recognized that the coup had destabilized the area in general and Iraq itself, leaving it vulnerable to yet another coup.²³

In November 1963, that predicted coup, in reality an extension of the previous one, took place. When a power struggle broke out between two factions of the Ba‘th Party, President ‘Abd al-Salam ‘Arif, a respected military leader and non-Ba‘th member of the government, used the chaos as an opportunity to take control of the government and, more importantly, the military, despite the “purely honorific significance” that the Ba‘th leaders had intended for the office of the presidency.²⁴ From November 1963 through April 1966, ‘Arif worked to consolidate his power, quashing yet another coup attempt by Arab nationalists in September 1965.²⁵ Relations with the United States remained as moderately cordial during this chaotic, unstable period in Iraq as they had been under the previous Ba‘th government. Stumbling blocks were occasional harassment of Iraqi nationals employed at the U.S. embassy in Baghdad; Iraq’s continued

irritation regarding the issue of Palestine; and Iraqi suspicion that the United States was aiding Kurdish rebels in northern Iraq, or at least not pressing its ally, Iran, to stop its support for the Kurds.²⁶

In April 1966, ‘Arif died in a helicopter crash. His elder brother, ‘Abd al-Rahman ‘Arif, succeeded him as president. This President ‘Arif also quashed a coup attempt, in June 1966, and although he was different from his younger brother, less driven and less ambitious, Iraqi relations with the United States were nearly the same, with the Kurds and the Palestine issue again being the hindrances in the relationship.²⁷ The United States did slightly alter its arms sales policy for Iraq in July 1966. As it had for more than a decade, the United States maintained hope that Iraq “could break out of Nasser’s sphere and become [a] stabilizing influence” in the region, as foreign policy special assistant Walt W. Rostow told President Lyndon B. Johnson in January 1967. He added that efforts to improve relations were “important to our oil companies,” reiterating the long-held concern that “a more radical government in Iraq might threaten to nationalize them.”²⁸

Everything changed as a result of the 1967 Arab-Israeli War (also known as the Six Day War or *naksa* [the setback] in Arabic). On June 7, Iraq severed diplomatic relations with the United States “for alleged air and other aid to Israel” during the conflict.²⁹ From this point until mid-1972, the United States had no direct representation in Baghdad; Belgium served as the protecting power for U.S. interests in Iraq.³⁰ The lack of personnel hindered both simple and complex diplomatic tasks. For example, it took days for the United States to assess the outcome of the July 17, 1968, coup in which President ‘Arif was exiled and the Ba‘th Party again came to power under party chairman Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr. A trusted member of his inner circle was a thirty-one-year-old relative of his, Saddam Hussein, who quickly rose in prominence and position. It is unclear if the United States ever perceived the second part of the coup on July 30 in which the Ba‘th Party rid the new government of non-Ba‘th elements.³¹

Similarly, lacking any diplomats in Iraq, the United States was unable to exert much pressure on the Iraqi government when, for example, Iraqi Jews were harassed and hanged in Baghdad, or when the Iraqi government seized the former U.S. embassy property.³² Later in this same period, Iraq increased its ties with the Soviet Union, securing a \$140 million aid deal in August 1970 and signing of a fifteen-year treaty of friendship and cooperation in April 1972, which increased U.S. fears of communist domination of the area. Saddam Hussein brokered both agreements.³³ On June 1, 1972, Iraq nationalized the Iraq Petroleum Company, including the portion owned by U.S. companies Esso and Mobil.³⁴ The Soviets had been aiding the Iraqis since 1967 in developing their own oil production and provided a market



Foreign policy special assistant Walt W. Rostow (left) told President Lyndon B. Johnson in January 1967 that if Iraq could “break out of Nasser’s sphere,” it could become a “stabilizing influence” in the region. In June of that year, however, Iraq ended diplomatic relations with the United States in the midst of the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. July 1967 photo by Kevin Smith. LBJ Library.

for Iraqi petroleum after nationalization.³⁵ With no diplomatic relations and virtually no trade, this period was the worst in the U.S.-Iraqi relationship to that date, as well as the peak of Iraqi-Soviet engagement.³⁶

The remainder of 1972 brought several changes in U.S. relations with Iraq. First, on October 1, the United States opened a U.S. interests section in the Belgian embassy in Baghdad, staffed by U.S. personnel, marking the first time U.S. diplomats had been employed there since Iraq severed relations in 1967.³⁷ Also in 1972, the United States began helping Iraqi Kurds in their ongoing efforts against the Iraqi government. Although Iraqi Kurdish leaders had petitioned the U.S. government regularly since 1963 for support, and the Iraqi government had accused the United States of supplying the Kurds or allowing Iran to do so since 1958, the United States had persistently declined the Kurds’ requests, providing only surplus food to Kurdish refugees. By mid-1972, the combination of increasing Soviet-Iraqi ties and oil nationalization finally led the United States to covertly provide money, small arms, and ammunition to the Iraqi Kurds, ultimately \$3 million in military support and \$2 million in economic aid.³⁸ U.S. assistance was brief, however, and Kurdish leaders were again pleading with the United States for aid in 1974.³⁹ All U.S. support to the Kurds ceased by 1975, contributing to the collapse of the Iraqi Kurdish resistance.⁴⁰



Saddam Hussein and Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr in November 1978. Hussein emerged as the real power in Iraq during the decade and formally succeeded his relative al-Bakr as president in July 1979. *Wikimedia Commons/Public Domain.*

The ongoing Arab-Israeli conflict was another point of friction between Iraq and the United States. In 1973, the two countries were active on opposing sides of the latest Arab-Israeli War (also known as the Yom Kippur War, the October War, or the 10th of Ramadan War). Two Iraqi divisions engaged directly in the October 1973 hostilities in support of the Egyptian-Syrian offensive.⁴¹ The United States, which had not participated in the 1967 war, viewed the conflict through the lens of the Cold War and agreed to resupply Israel to balance the Soviet-backed Arab forces. The United States airlifted military supplies to Tel Aviv (Operation Nickel Grass) and prevented an Israeli defeat.⁴² Partly in response to U.S. participation, Iraq nationalized the Basra Petroleum Company, including the shares held by U.S. oil companies Exxon (as Esso became known in 1972) and Mobil—the last holdings of U.S. petroleum firms in Iraq.⁴³ In addition to the lack of U.S.-Iraqi diplomatic relations and the Iraqi drift into the Soviet sphere, Iraq had severed by far its most significant economic relationship with the United States.

Diplomatic relations between the United States and Iraq remained nearly nonexistent through the remainder of the 1970s, although the U.S. interests section in Baghdad had intermittent low-level contact with the Iraqi foreign ministry.⁴⁴ U.S. secretary of state Henry A. Kissinger met with Iraqi foreign minister Sa‘dun Hammadi in a rare exchange in December 1975, and U.S. secretary of state Cyrus R. Vance met with Hammadi in October 1977.⁴⁵ The United States made no arms sales and sent no aid to Iraq during this period, although it did provide military textbooks at Iraq’s request, and an Iraqi military delegation visited the United States to

examine how Iraq might form a military academy.⁴⁶ Iraq was still much more closely aligned with the Soviets than with the Americans during this time, but it was looking to move away from dependence.⁴⁷

Quite apart from military and diplomatic relations, however, economic relations between the United States and Iraq improved rapidly after 1972. Despite the nationalization of U.S. oil company interests in Iraq, U.S.-Iraqi trade grew from nothing in 1972 to \$20 million in 1973; \$200 million in 1975; and almost \$500 million in 1976. In January 1974, the U.S. interests section in Baghdad requested the assignment of an economic/commercial foreign service officer to Baghdad due to the expectation of even more growth. In 1978, no less than Saddam Hussein—still the second in command in Iraq but its most powerful figure—stated that while diplomatic relations were not likely to improve soon, U.S.-Iraqi economic relations should not suffer as a consequence.⁴⁸

Persian Gulf Region



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Central Intelligence Agency, 1981.

The Enemy of Our Enemy: The 1980s

The end of the 1970s and the turn of the decade brought a number of major events in the Middle East. The Camp David Accords of September 1978 established peace between Israel and Egypt (formalized in a treaty in March 1979) and fundamentally altered regional dynamics. Saddam Hussein, who held the real power in Iraq for much of the 1970s and would assume the presidency in July 1979, sought to establish Iraq as the leader in the Arab world in opposition to Israel and called a summit of Arab countries in Baghdad in October 1978 to coordinate resistance to the Camp David agreement. Iraq built an alliance with Syria over this issue, and Hussein went so far as to call for the assassination of Egyptian leader Anwar Sadat.¹ At the same time, in the fall of 1978, demonstrations against the government in Iran intensified, culminating in early 1979 in the ouster of Iranian leader and U.S. ally Muhammad Reza Pahlavi, the Shah of Iran. In November of that year, Iranian students stormed the U.S. embassy in Tehran and took sixty-six people hostage, holding fifty-two of them until January 1981.²

On September 22, 1980, Iraq invaded the recently established Islamic Republic of Iran. The causes driving this action were complex and involved numerous long-festering problems between the neighboring countries.³ Two more immediate issues sparked the conflict: fears by Iraq's Sunni leadership that the new radical Shi'i rulers in Iran, including Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, who Hussein had expelled from Iraq in 1978, would attempt to turn Iraq's large Shi'i population against the government; and Hussein's desire to bolster his reputation in the Sunni-predominant Arab world.⁴ During the agitating before the war began, Iran claimed that the United States was encouraging Iraq to invade, increasing the threat to the hostages in Iran.⁵

These events from the late 1970s and early 1980s changed the political landscape of the Middle East profoundly. One of America's closest allies in the region, Iran, became one of its worst enemies, and Arab-Israeli tensions simmered while the Iran-Iraq War ignited. Against this backdrop, U.S.-Iraqi relations continued on the same general course established earlier in the 1970s: poor diplomatically, but excellent economically. On



A video capture from Iraqi television shows Donald H. Rumsfeld shaking hands with Saddam Hussein in Baghdad in December 1983. Rumsfeld was serving as a Middle East special envoy for President Ronald W. Reagan.

the diplomatic front, in 1979, the United States placed Iraq on a list of countries that had “repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism” and were therefore subject to export controls on some items.⁶ Nevertheless, in 1980, U.S. exports to Iraq were on track to reach \$700 million that year.⁷ In September 1980, U.S. secretary of state Edmund S. Muskie and Iraqi foreign minister Sa’dun Hammadi met in the highest-level meeting since the Vance-Hammadi exchange in 1977, but they accomplished little.⁸ In June 1981, when Israel bombed Iraq’s Osirak nuclear reactor, the U.S. response was comparatively muted, again putting the United States and Iraq on opposite sides of the Arab-Israeli conflict.⁹ Nonetheless, there was little harm to the economic relations, and U.S. exports to Iraq reached \$914 million in 1981.¹⁰

The year 1982 marked the beginning of a period of improvement in U.S.-Iraqi diplomatic relations. As the Iran-Iraq War shifted in Iran’s favor, the United States started to fear the possible effects of an Iranian victory: the spread of revolution, instability in the region, and interrupted oil supplies. As scholar Zachary Karabell put it, “regardless of Hussein’s brutality, he was perceived as the only person standing between Khomeini and the Middle East.” A study published by the Brookings Institution soon after the shift in U.S. thinking described Iraq in military terms as the “eastern flank of the Arab World.”¹¹

While the United States remained officially neutral in the war, it began to support Iraq through both overt and covert means. In February 1982, the United States removed Iraq from the “supporters of terrorism” list on which it had been placed in 1979.¹² This redesignation allowed direct support through credit guarantees from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for the purchase



President Ronald W. Reagan with Iraqi foreign minister Tariq Aziz at the White House on November 26, 1984, as the United States reestablished official relations with Iraq.
National Archives.

of U.S. agricultural commodities, through short-term financing from the U.S. Export-Import Bank for the purchase of other U.S. commercial goods, and through the export of so-called dual-use items that could be employed for civilian or military purposes.¹³ In February 1983, Hammadi visited Washington for a meeting with Secretary of State George P. Shultz, and Shultz met with Hammadi's successor, Tariq Aziz, in Paris that May.¹⁴ At some point in 1983, the United States began supplying intelligence to Iraq for use in the war against Iran.¹⁵ That December and the following March, Donald H. Rumsfeld visited Baghdad as a Middle East special envoy of President Ronald W. Reagan, meeting directly with Hussein in December 1983.¹⁶

In March 1984, the U.S. State Department issued a condemnation of Iraq's use of chemical weapons against Iran, which briefly cooled the improving relations. Fears about the military situation soon overrode human rights concerns, however. On April 5, a National Security Decision Directive ordered the secretary of state, "in coordination with the secretary of defense and the director of central intelligence, [to] prepare a plan of action designed to avert an Iraqi collapse" in the Iran-Iraq War, including ways to provide "military support to Iraq" through other countries.¹⁷

In the summer of 1984, the State Department assigned veteran diplomat David G. Newton to Baghdad to be chief of mission. As he recalled, his requirement was "to do everything that we could to help, within legal limits, to make sure the Iraqis didn't lose the war." On November 26, 1984, the United States and Iraq reestablished official diplomatic relations, with Aziz visiting with Reagan at the White House on that date after meeting with Shultz. The Senate confirmed Newton as ambassador in 1985, and he served in Baghdad until 1988.¹⁸ Official relations allowed the United States to provide more direct economic aid and credit, but U.S. officials knew the limits of the government with which they were dealing. According to Newton, "nobody ever expected Saddam to permit the country to become



Iraq hit the USS *Stark* (FFG 31) with two French-supplied Exocet antiship missiles on May 17, 1987, one of several incidents in that period that created tension between the United States and Iraq. The Iraqis claimed the attack was an accident, and the Americans accepted the explanation. *Department of Defense/National Archives.*



A U.S. Navy tanker convoy in the Persian Gulf in October 1987, escorting the reflagged tanker *Gas King*. One scholar described the reflagging and escort program as a “de facto military alliance with Iraq.” *Department of Defense/National Archives.*

a democracy,” but the United States hoped that “he would at least ease up a little on his own population and not be as repressive.” The distrust was mutual, as Hussein saw conspiracy behind many American actions.¹⁹

Relations between the two countries endured significant stress in the latter part of the Iran-Iraq War, but each problem or point of contention was moderated by a gesture of goodwill. In 1986, the United States admitted to secretly selling arms to Iran via Israel; condemnation from Iraq came the next day.²⁰ To counter that ill will, the United States announced a plan in April 1987 to reflag Kuwaiti ships as U.S. vessels, creating what one scholar called a “de facto military alliance with Iraq,” a major supplier of the oil Kuwait was shipping.²¹ Before that reflagging occurred, Iraq struck the USS *Stark* (FFG 31) on May 17, 1987, with two French-supplied Exocet antiship missiles, apparently by accident. Hussein sent a letter of regret to President Reagan the next day.²² As a result of the incident, the Iraqis allowed a U.S. Air Force air attaché from the U.S. embassy to work with the Iraqi air ministry to develop procedures to prevent future mistakes.²³ When the State Department reported to Congress about the *Stark* attack and the progress of the reflagging preparations, it focused on the threat from Iran, not Iraq.²⁴

In 1988, after Iraq used chemical weapons against Iraqi Kurdish rebels, U.S. State Department officials in Washington met with Jalal Talabani, an Iraqi Kurdish leader, and the State Department and Congress later in the year publicly condemned Iraq’s use of chemical weapons, angering Iraqi officials. However, the State Department also opposed sanctions on Iraq, with an official stating before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs that dialogue with Iraq was the preferable route to ending the use of chemical weapons.²⁵

The extremely destructive, deadly, and costly Iran-Iraq War concluded in August 1988 with a United Nations-brokered cease-fire.²⁶ In the wake of the war, the United States showed a preference for dialogue and cooperation rather than sanctions and condemnation as part of a policy of “constructive engagement” with Iraq.²⁷ As President George H. W. Bush codified in National Security Directive (NSD) 26 in October 1989, the United States offered “economic and political incentives for Iraq to moderate its behavior” regarding, for example, human rights in Kurdistan, as well as “pursue, and seek to facilitate, opportunities for U.S. firms to participate in the reconstruction of the Iraqi economy.”²⁸ Continuing the agricultural credit guarantee program and the Export-Import Bank financing fulfilled the NSD-26 stipulations. However, these incentives did not succeed in enticing “Iraq to moderate its behavior,” though there were some limited successes in 1989, such as the halting of arms shipments to Lebanon, the possibility of a new constitution, and reduced rhetoric on the Arab-Israeli conflict.²⁹



On April 19, 1988, U.S. Navy aircraft from the USS *Enterprise* (CVN 65) destroyed the Iranian frigate IS *Sahand* (74) in retaliation for the Iranian mining of the USS *Samuel B. Roberts* (FFG 58). *Department of Defense/National Archives.*



United Nations weapons inspectors visited Iran after the Iran-Iraq War to document Iraqi use of chemical weapons during the conflict. *United Nations/Wikimedia Commons.*

Some scholars have argued that the ongoing forgiveness the United States showed during and after the Iran-Iraq War, particularly in incidents such as the gassing of the Kurds and the attack on the *Stark*, possibly led Hussein to believe that the United States would overlook more aggression.³⁰ Indeed, the extent to which NSD-26 failed soon became evident.



725880 (R00180) 8-92

Central Intelligence Agency, 1992.

The Gulf War to the Brink of Operation Iraqi Freedom

Until 1990, U.S. involvement with Iraq had been in relation to broader issues, including containment of the Soviet Union and post-revolution Iran. But the partnership of convenience the United States and Iraq had established during the 1980s rapidly unraveled during 1990 in the face of Iraqi threats toward, and subsequent invasion of, Kuwait, beginning an extended period of enmity between the countries that culminated in Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003.¹

In early 1990, Saddam Hussein perceived U.S. State Department reports on human rights violations in Iraq as attempts to destabilize his regime and reacted harshly against the United States.² In late March 1990, when U.S.-made nuclear weapons parts bound for Iraq were seized in the United Kingdom, Hussein declared in an April 1 speech that the United States, the United Kingdom, and Israel were trying to frame him; that he had chemical weapons and did not need nuclear weapons; and that Iraq would “make fire eat up half of Israel” if Israel attacked Iraqi installations on the pretext of attacking Iraqi nuclear capacity, as had happened in 1981.³ The last comment prompted a reply from the White House of President George H. W. Bush characterizing the statement as “particularly deplorable and irresponsible.”⁴ In May, Hussein accused Kuwait and other oil-producing countries of participating in the same conspiracy through overproduction of oil.⁵ In July, he threatened the use of military force against the Persian Gulf states and moved Iraqi forces to the Iraq-Kuwait border.⁶

Despite the deterioration in relations, the United States continued to seek engagement with Iraq. In late April 1990, the State Department publicly opposed trade sanctions, hoping instead that a mid-April U.S. Senate delegation to Iraq had made clear to Hussein the gravity of his country’s actions. The Commodity Credit Corporation credit guarantees and Export-Import Bank credit program continued until May. Intelligence sharing, although it had decreased since the end of the Iran-Iraq War, continued at least through May 1990, if not longer.⁷ In a meeting with Hussein on July 25, U.S. ambassador April C.

Glaspie expressed “President Bush’s desire for friendship and, second, his strong desire . . . for peace and stability in the Mid-East.” Hussein replied that, with regard to growing tension with Kuwait, negotiations precluded any violence in the near term.⁸

The United States initially seemed to accept these sentiments as sincere, but by the end of July, it was considering export controls on dual-use items, materials that had legitimate civilian applications but could also be used for “chemical, biological, or missile proliferation.” This measure was under consideration because the United States feared Iraqi development of such weapons in light of its past “attempts to develop weapons of mass destruction,” because the State Department perceived U.S.-Iraqi relations as “more and more troubled,” and because the United States foresaw the possibility of having to defend Kuwait if Iraq attacked it.⁹

As of 1990, Kuwait held one-tenth of the world’s proven crude oil reserves (68 billion barrels), more than twice Iraq’s at the time (30 billion). An Iraqi takeover of its tiny neighbor tantalized Hussein with potential control of 15 percent of the world’s oil reserves and production, as well as a position of prominence along the Persian Gulf. If Iraq took Kuwait, it would have become “the planet’s dominant oil power,” as Daniel Yergin put it. He explained that “oil was fundamental to the crisis, not ‘cheap oil,’ but rather oil as a critical element in the global balance of power.”¹⁰



Coalition troops examine the remains of a Soviet-built Iraqi scud missile shot down during Operation Desert Storm by a U.S.-provided MIM-104 Patriot surface-to-air missile. *National Archives.*



U.S. Air Force F-15s and F-16s over the Kuwaiti desert where retreating Iraqi troops had set fire to hundreds of oil wells in February 1991. *National Archives.*

While Iraqi forces waited on the Iraq-Kuwait border, delegations from Iraq and Kuwait traveled on July 31, 1990, to Jiddah, Saudi Arabia, to participate in Saudi-sponsored negotiations intended to defuse the crisis.¹¹ The summit ended abruptly on August 1, however, when the Iraqi delegation departed, and on August 2, Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait.¹² Hussein's publicly stated reason for the incursion was his assertion that Kuwait and the United States were participating in a conspiracy to destabilize his regime by keeping oil prices low through overproduction.¹³ The United States condemned the invasion, voted in favor of a UN Security Council resolution (UNSCR) imposing sanctions on Iraq, and began sending troops and aircraft to defend Saudi Arabia. A foreign policy consisting of issuing public statements, imposing sanctions, voting for UNSCRs, and using or threatening to use military power was the U.S. response to Iraq for the rest of 1990. Three months later, on November 28, after the United States had built an international coalition against Iraq's actions, UNSCR 678 authorized "all necessary means to uphold and implement" Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait if Iraq did not pull out by January 15, 1991.¹⁴ On January 12, the United States closed its embassy in Baghdad.

Iraq did not comply with the terms of the resolution, and on January 17, 1991, coalition forces attacked Iraq and Iraqi troops in Kuwait with aircraft, followed by a ground invasion on February 24. Although Iraq retaliated by setting hundreds of Kuwaiti oil wells on fire and launching missiles at Saudi Arabia and Israel, the coalition quickly defeated the Iraqis



Kurdish refugees in northern Iraq in front of a defaced mural of Saddam Hussein, photographed during Operation Provide Comfort, a U.S.-led coalition relief effort launched in the spring of 1991. *National Archives.*



Kurdish refugees unload food supplies from a CH-53E Super Stallion helicopter during Operation Provide Comfort. The initial Provide Comfort lasted from April to July 1991. *U.S. Air Force.*

and expelled them from Kuwait. Iraq agreed to surrender on February 27, and a cease-fire went into effect on February 28. Cease-fire negotiations at Safwan, Iraq, between the coalition and Iraq began on March 1, and Iraq accepted the terms on March 3.¹⁵

The immediate postwar events of April 1991 shaped U.S.-Iraqi relations for the following decade. First, the UN Security Council passed UNSCR 687 specifying the cease-fire terms for Iraq. The resolution included provisions for destruction of Iraq's chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons capacity and for "on-site inspection" to ensure compliance.¹⁶ The United Nations formed a UN special commission to fulfill this duty in concert with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). While Iraq initially complied with the provisions, it soon denied access to the inspectors. This pattern became common in the 1990s as Iraq repeatedly refused to comply with the inspection regimes stipulated in UN resolutions, in turn incurring further UN sanctions and eventually admitting inspectors before becoming obstinate and beginning the sequence again.¹⁷ This cycle defined Iraqi relations with the United Nations, and with the United States, which justified many of its military actions from 1991 through 2003 based on UN Security Council resolutions.

The passage of UNSCR 688 on April 5 served as another milestone for U.S.-Iraqi relations in 1991. In February, President George H. W. Bush had called for "the Iraqi military and the Iraqi people to take matters into their own hands, to force Saddam Hussein, the dictator, to step aside."¹⁸ People in the north and south of Iraq took this message to heart and rose up in rebellion in March. The Iraqi regime quelled the rebellions quickly and violently, leading to UNSCR 688, which called for Iraq to end "the repression of the Iraqi civilian population in many parts of Iraq" and permit humanitarian organizations to help those populations.¹⁹ Two days after the resolution passed, the United States began airdrops of supplies to fleeing Kurds as part of Operation Provide Comfort; the operation soon included multinational ground forces, governmental and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) focused on relief and aid operations, and coalition aircraft enforcing a no-fly zone that prohibited Iraqi military aircraft above the 36th parallel. The operation ended in July 1991, but the coalition followed it immediately with Operation Provide Comfort II, which included patrols of the no-fly zone by U.S., French, Turkish, and British aircraft, a very small military contingent of coalition forces in Zakho, Iraq, and, within a few months, a U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) presence with associated NGOs.²⁰

In September 1996, the ground forces, USAID, and NGOs left when one of the two main Kurdish factions cooperated with the Iraqi government,

resulting in Iraqi forces entering the northern city of Irbil. After the departure of the ground forces and aid agencies, only the no-fly zone remained, causing France to withdraw from the small coalition because, its officials said, there was no longer a “humanitarian component” to the effort.²¹ The operation became Northern Watch in January 1997, and enforcement of the northern no-fly zone by U.S., British, and Turkish aircraft continued into 2003.

Violations of UNSCR 688 also served as the justification for Operation Southern Watch, the enforcement of a no-fly zone over southern Iraq. As the Kurds had rebelled in northern Iraq, so did the Shi‘i population in southern Iraq in March 1991. Iraqi forces quashed this southern uprising as well. In August 1992, a coalition consisting of the United States, the United Kingdom, and France began surveillance and no-fly-zone enforcement south of the 32d parallel “to monitor the situation” in southern Iraq, where, President Bush said, “a majority of the most significant recent violations of Resolution 688 have taken place.”²² In September 1996, after Iraqi forces entered Irbil, the coalition extended the southern no-fly zone to the 33d parallel, although France declined to allow its aircraft to patrol within the extended part of the zone. In December 1998, after the launch of Operation Desert Fox, France stopped patrolling the no-fly zone altogether, with its foreign ministry later stating that “the nature of the operation changed in



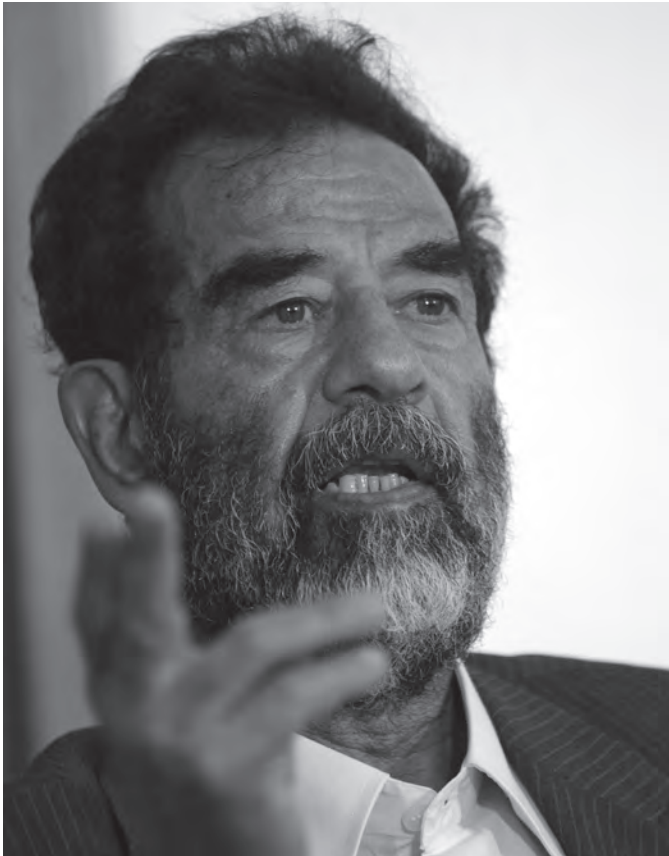
A1C Kerry E. Corley is shown reading to Kurdish refugees from Iraq at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, in 1996. U.S. forces relocated more than 6,000 Kurds from northern Iraq as part of Operation Pacific Haven. *Department of Defense/National Archives.*



A U.S. Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcon from Moody Air Force Base armed with AIM-9 Sidewinder missiles and a Royal Jordanian Air Force F-1 Mirage enforced the no-fly zone above the 36th parallel in northern Iraq in 1996. The operation became Northern Watch in January 1997. *National Archives.*

relation to its initial objectives of surveillance.”²³ As did Operation Northern Watch, Operation Southern Watch continued into 2003.

In addition to the enforcement of the two no-fly zones, much of U.S. policy toward Iraq in the 1990s consisted of demonstrations of military force in response to perceived Iraqi aggression toward its neighbors or populations within the country, or because of Iraqi refusal to cooperate with UN weapons inspectors. In June 1993, the U.S. Navy, under the orders of President William J. Clinton, launched a Tomahawk cruise missile attack on Iraqi intelligence headquarters in reprisal for that organization’s attempted assassination of former President Bush while he visited Kuwait in April.²⁴ In October 1994, Iraq assembled 80,000 troops at the Iraq-Kuwait border, apparently in an attempt to have UN economic sanctions lifted; the United States increased its own forces in the area, leading Iraq to pull back its troops.²⁵ In September 1996, when Iraqi forces moved into Irbil, U.S. ships and aircraft launched cruise missiles at air defense targets in southern Iraq to prepare for coalition patrols in the expanded no-fly zone, followed by U.S.-led evacuations of more than 6,000 Kurds from northern Iraq, Operation Pacific Haven.²⁶ In December 1998, in response to Iraq’s refusal to admit UNSCOM weapons inspectors, the Americans and the British launched Operation Desert Fox, four days of air strikes that targeted Iraq’s weapons-of-mass-destruction production capacity as well as Hussein’s



Saddam Hussein speaking in court in July 2004. Throughout the 1990s and the early 2000s, he continually defied efforts by the international community to regulate and rein in Iraqi chemical and nuclear weapons programs, ultimately resulting in his regime's downfall in 2003. *National Archives.*

residences.²⁷ In February 2001, an increase in the sophistication of Iraqi air defense systems, a greater frequency of firings on coalition aircraft in the southern no-fly zone, and a desire “to send a clear signal to Saddam” led the United States and the United Kingdom to launch attacks from aircraft in the southern no-fly zone on air defense targets north of the zone, closer to Baghdad.²⁸

UN-imposed economic sanctions were the other major aspect of U.S.-Iraqi relations in the 1990s and early 2000s. In August 1990, soon after Iraq invaded Kuwait, the United States drafted a resolution for the UN Security Council to place the first economic sanctions on Iraq in an attempt to coerce Iraq into withdrawing.²⁹ The UN Security Council passed this resolution, UNSCR 661, on August 6, 1990, calling on “all States” to

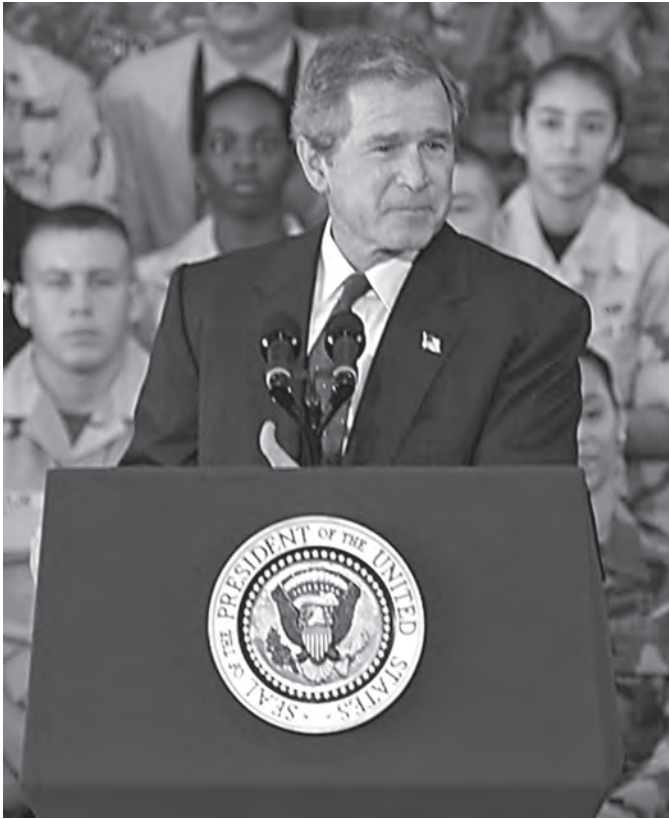
cease trade and any financial relationship with Iraq or Iraqis. The Security Council followed with two others, UNSCR 665 on August 25 and UNSCR 670 on September 25, each expanding the scope of the sanctions.³⁰ In 1991, after Operation Desert Storm, the UN reiterated UNSCR 661 sanctions in UNSCR 687, which stipulated that sanctions would continue until UN inspectors were assured that Iraq no longer had weapons of mass destruction or the capability to produce them.³¹

The constant battles between Iraq and the UN over weapons inspections resulted in the sanctions remaining in force until the 2003 invasion. The effects of the sanctions included severe inflation, a precipitous decline in gross domestic product, and a humanitarian crisis of some degree, this last effect a consequence of Iraqi refusal to make use of specific exceptions to the embargo for food and medical supplies.³² UNSCR 986, which expanded these exceptions into what became known as the “oil-for-food” program, partly mitigated this crisis, as did subsequent UNSCRs, which further eased the sanctions.³³ Nonetheless, although the Iraqi economy rebounded somewhat in the period from 1997 to 2003, the country remained in a perpetual state of recovery from Operation Desert Storm.³⁴

The easing of sanctions by the United Nations did not represent an improvement in U.S.-Iraqi relations. On the contrary, with the passage of the Iraqi Liberation Act in November 1998, U.S. policy toward Iraq hardened, exemplified in Operation Desert Fox in December 1998.³⁵ As the



U.S. Navy and Coast Guard personnel of a visit, board, search, and seizure team (VBSS) prepare to board an unidentified boat in the Persian Gulf in August 2002 that was suspected of smuggling Iraqi oil. *National Archives.*



President George W. Bush speaking to military personnel at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, on March 26, 2003, a week after the launch of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Photo by SSgt. Norma J. Martinez, USAF. *U.S. Air Force.*

UN reduced the sanctions, direct military confrontation between the two countries increased in the no-fly zones.³⁶ This showdown escalated still further with U.S. air strikes in January 2001.

After the attacks of September 11, 2001,³⁷ the United States became more aggressive in its policy and rhetoric toward Iraq.³⁸ In his State of the Union address in January 2002, President George W. Bush named Iraq as one of three countries forming an “axis of evil” that “threaten the peace of the world” by “seeking weapons of mass destruction” for itself or to “provide . . . to terrorists,” linking Iraq to the possibility of further attacks like those experienced the previous September.³⁹ Over the next fourteen months, the United States called for Iraq to end its nuclear and chemical weapons programs, while Hussein grew increasingly defiant.⁴⁰ In October 2002, President Bush sought and received authorization from the U.S. Congress to use force against Iraq if necessary to “defend the

national security of the United States against the continuing threat posed by Iraq” and to “enforce all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions regarding Iraq.”⁴¹ On November 8, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1441, which gave Saddam Hussein a “final opportunity to comply” with the “disarmament obligations” outlined in previous resolutions. Under the auspices of this resolution, UN and IAEA weapons inspectors returned to Iraq.⁴²

The United States continued to make its case against Iraq with the international community and to build a coalition to, in President Bush’s words, “take whatever action is necessary to defend ourselves and disarm the Iraqi regime.”⁴³ Hussein remained defiant, and on March 19, 2003, Bush used the authority granted by Congress the previous October when he ordered military forces of a “coalition of the willing” to begin air strikes in Iraq, launching Operation Iraqi Freedom. He told Congress that reliance “on further diplomatic and other peaceful means alone” would not “adequately protect the national security of the United States against the threat posed by Iraq.”⁴⁴

The American-led coalition toppled the Iraqi regime in a matter of weeks, but rampant insurgent resistance kept U.S. and other international forces engaged in Iraq through 2011.⁴⁵



Thirty-foot-tall bronze busts of Saddam Hussein that had adorned the Republican Palace in Baghdad shown in 2005 on the grounds of the palace after their removal. *National Archives.*

Notes

INTRODUCTION

1. The only book-length examination of U.S.-Iraq relations is an overview by Peter L. Hahn, *Missions Accomplished? The United States and Iraq since World War I* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012). Dissertations that cover significant periods are Frederick W. Axelgard, “U.S. Policy Toward Iraq, 1946–1958” (PhD diss., Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, 1988); Naim Joseph Salem, “The Drama of U.S. Iraq Relations: From World War II to the Gulf War” (PhD diss., University of South Carolina, 1992); Brandon Wolfe-Hunnicut, “The End of the Concessionary Regime: Oil and American Power in Iraq, 1958–1972” (PhD diss., Stanford University, 2011), [https://stacks.stanford.edu/file/druid:tm772zz7352/Concessionary%20Regime%20\[e-submit\]-augmented.pdf](https://stacks.stanford.edu/file/druid:tm772zz7352/Concessionary%20Regime%20[e-submit]-augmented.pdf). The standard general histories of Iraq are Phebe Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq*, 2d ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2004 [a 3d edition is now available]), and Charles Tripp, *A History of Iraq*, 3d ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007). For social/political history, see Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq: A Study of Iraq's Landed and Commercial Classes and of its Communist, Ba'athists, and Free Officers* (1978; reprint, London: Saqi Books, 2004). For economic/political history, see Edith T. Penrose and Ernest F. Penrose, *Iraq: International Relations and National Development* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1978). For a study of the country's governance, see Aadeed Dawisha, *Iraq: A Political History from Independence to Occupation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009).

ONE

The volumes of the *Foreign Relations of the United States*, prepared by the U.S. Department of State and published by the U.S. Government Printing Office (hereafter GPO), appeared under a variety of names before the title was standardized in the 1930s. Throughout the notes, these volumes are indicated as *FRUS*, [date]. Volumes from 1861 through 1960 are online here: <http://uwdc.library.wisc.edu/collections/FRUS>. Those from 1952 to 1980 are online here: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments>.

1. American missionaries had been in the Mesopotamian area since the 1830s. Hahn, *Missions Accomplished*, 17. There was also a significant U.S. archaeological expedition in Mesopotamia in 1889–90. John A. DeNovo, *American Interests in the Middle East, 1900–1939* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1963), 17, 43–44. For the late Ottoman period in general, see Gökhan Çetinsaya, *Ottoman Administration of Iraq, 1890–1908* (New

York: Routledge, 2006); Ghassan R. Atiyah, *Iraq, 1908–1921: A Political Study* (Beirut: Arab Institute for Research and Publishing, 1973); Tripp, *History of Iraq*, 8–29.

2. *FRUS, 1888–90*, v. 1, pt. 2, 1363–64, 1584–88; *FRUS, 1889–90*, 705–6; *FRUS, 1893–94*, 1:642–705; *FRUS, 1896*, 865; *FRUS, 1906*, 2:1396–97; *FRUS, 1903*, 742, 753, 757; Lee Ann Potter, “1889 Consular Dispatch from Baghdad,” *Social Education* 71, no. 7 (November 1, 2007): 344–47.

3. *FRUS, 1916*, 966; *FRUS, 1918*, suppl. 2, 251.

4. *FRUS, 1919: Paris Peace Conf.*, 3:788.

5. *FRUS, 1919: Paris Peace Conf.*, 12:800–801; James Gelvin, “The Ironic Legacy of the King-Crane Commission,” in *The Middle East and the United States: A Historical and Political Reassessment*, ed. David W. Lesch (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996), 11–27.

6. DeNovo, *American Interests and Policies in the Middle East*, 115–27; Hahn, *Missions Accomplished*, 17–18.

7. For the mandate and the period of British control, see Toby Dodge, *Inventing Iraq: The Failure of Nation-Building and a History Denied* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003); Peter Sluglett, *Britain in Iraq: Contriving King and Country, 1914–1932* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007); Reeva S. Simon and Eleanor H. Tejirian, eds., *The Creation of Iraq, 1914–1921* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004); James Barr, *A Line in the Sand: The Anglo-French Struggle for the Middle East, 1914–1948* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2012); Abbas K. Kadhim, *Reclaiming Iraq: The 1920 Revolution and the Founding of the Modern State* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2012); Charles Townshend, *When God Made Hell: The British Invasion of Mesopotamia and the Creation of Iraq, 1914–1921* (London: Faber and Faber, 2010).

8. Daniel Yergin, *The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money, and Power* (New York: Free Press, 1991), 194–95; Stephen J. Randall, *United States Foreign Oil Policy since World War I: For Profits and Security*, 2d ed. (Montreal, Canada: McGill-Queen’s College University Press, 2005), 13–18; Stephen Pelletière, *Iraq and the International Oil System: Why America Went to War in the Gulf* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2001), 33.

9. John A. DeNovo, “The Movement for an Aggressive American Oil Policy Abroad, 1918–1920,” *American Historical Review* 61 (July 1956): 854–76; Randall, *U.S. Foreign Oil Policy*, 13–29; Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, 59; *FRUS, 1919*, 2:259–61.

10. Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, 56–59; Yergin, *The Prize*, 189–90; Randall, *U.S. Foreign Oil Policy*, 17. For more background, see William Stivers, *Supremacy and Oil: Iraq, Turkey, and the Anglo-American World Order, 1918–1930* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982); Geoffrey Jones, *The State and the Emergence of the British Oil Industry* (London: Macmillan, 1981).

11. *FRUS, 1920*, 2:649–75; *FRUS, 1921*, 2:71–93, 106–19; *FRUS, 1922*, 2:333–52; *FRUS, 1923*, 2:240–64; *FRUS, 1924*, 2:222–41; *FRUS, 1925*, 2:230–44; *FRUS, 1926*, 2:362–70; *FRUS, 1930*, 3:308–11; *FRUS, 1931*, 2:597–611.

12. *FRUS, 1927*, 2:781–24; *FRUS, 1928*, 2:952–57; *FRUS, 1930*, 3:291–308.

13. DeNovo, *American Interests and Policies in the Middle East*, 348–49. There were, for example, significant U.S. and British archaeological digs in Iraq starting in the early 1920s. *Ibid.*, 352–53.

14. The area encompassed by the Red Line Agreement included all of the Arabian Peninsula, the Levant, the Sinai Peninsula, and the Asian part of Turkey. It did not include Kuwait, Iran, or the part of Egypt west of the Red Sea. Yergin, *The Prize*, 205; Randall, *U.S. Foreign Oil Policy*, 39.

15. Yergin, *The Prize*, 203–6; Randall, *U.S. Foreign Oil Policy*, 33–42; Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, 59–69; U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, “Milestones, 1921–

1936: The 1928 Red Line Agreement,” <http://history.state.gov/milestones/1921-1936/red-line>. Iraq received no share of its own oil rights but was granted small royalty payment on each barrel extracted. Armenian-British businessman Calouste S. Gulbenkian, who had set up the TPC in 1912 and who reputedly drew the “red line,” kept a 5 percent share for himself. Collectives each holding a 23.75 percent stake were the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (later known as British Petroleum [BP]), the Dutch Shell Group, the Compagnie Française des Pétroles (CFP, now Total), and the Near East Development Corporation (NEDC). The original American firms in the NEDC were Standard Oil of New Jersey (later Esso, Exxon, then ExxonMobil), Standard Oil Company of New York (later Mobil, then ExxonMobil), Gulf Oil (which later became Chevron when acquired by Standard Oil of California), the Pan-American Petroleum and Transport Company (which sold its foreign properties to Standard Oil of New Jersey in 1932), and Atlantic Richfield (later ARCO, eventually acquired by BP).

16. “League Raises Iraq to Full Membership,” *New York Times*, October 4, 1932; Susan Pedersen, “Getting Out of Iraq—in 1932: The League of Nations and the Road to Normative Statehood,” *American Historical Review* 115 (October 2010): 975–1000; Tripp, *History of Iraq*, 73–75.

17. Daniel Silverfarb, *Britain’s Informal Empire in the Middle East: A Case Study of Iraq, 1929–1941* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1986). For the period between independence and World War II, see also Reeva S. Simon, *Iraq Between the Two World Wars: The Militarist Origins of Tyranny* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004); Peter Wien, *Iraqi Arab Nationalism: Authoritarian, Totalitarian, and Pro-Fascist Inclinations, 1932–1941* (New York: Routledge, 2006); Marr, *Modern History of Iraq*, 37–60; Tripp, *History of Iraq*, 75–104; Dawisha, *Iraq*, 67–109.

18. *FRUS, 1932*, 2:672–85; *FRUS, 1933*, 2:1002–9.

19. For oil issues in the Middle East during this period and beyond, see Yergin, *The Prize*, 280–302; Randall, *U.S. Foreign Oil Policy*, 62–69; Irvine H. Anderson, *Aramco, the United States, and Saudi Arabia: A Study of the Dynamics of Foreign Oil Policy, 1933–1950* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981); Aaron David Miller, *Search for Security: Saudi Arabian Oil and American Foreign Policy, 1939–1949* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980); Gregory P. Nowell, *Mercantile States and the World Oil Cartel, 1900–1939* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994); Stephen H. Longrigg, *Oil in the Middle East: Its Discovery and Development*, 2d ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961); J. H. Bamberg, *The History of the British Petroleum Company, Vol. 2: The Anglo-Iranian Years, 1928–1954* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1994); David Styan, *France and Iraq: Oil, Arms, and French Policy Making in the Middle East* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006).

20. *FRUS, 1934*, 2:781–87; *FRUS, 1936*, 3:401–5; *FRUS, 1937*, 2:767–84; *FRUS, 1938*, 2:763–69.

21. *FRUS, 1937*, 2:894–95, 903.

22. Michael Eppel, *The Palestine Conflict in the History of Modern Iraq: The Dynamics of Involvement, 1928–1948* (Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 1994); Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, 93–94. In addition to the long-standing Arab-Jewish issues involved, there was a significant economic one as well. Virtually landlocked Iraq and its oil partners had built two pipelines to carry petroleum from the Kirkuk oil field to the Mediterranean, a system that opened in 1935 and that proved vital for the Allies during World War II. One pipeline ended in Tripoli, in French-controlled Lebanon, while the other terminated in Haifa, in British-administered Palestine. The oil companies involved built refineries in both Haifa and Tripoli. The Haifa line closed permanently in 1948 after Israeli independence and

the resulting war. Bamberg, *History of the British Petroleum Company*, 164–65; Daniel Silverfarb, “The Revision of Iraq’s Oil Concession, 1949–52,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 32 (January 1996), 72; Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, 139, 147; Christine Moss Helms, *Iraq: Eastern Flank of the Arab World* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1984), 40–41.

23. *FRUS*, 1938, 1:74, 79, 726; *FRUS*, 1939, 1:144, 151; *FRUS*, 1940, 2:141.

24. Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, 99–107; Marr, *Modern History of Iraq*, 53–56; Tripp, *History of Iraq*, 100–104; Hahn, *Missions Accomplished*, 7–8, 21–22; James A. Thorpe, “The United States and the 1940–1941 Anglo-Iraqi Crisis: American Policy in Transition,” *Middle East Journal* 25 (Winter 1971): 79–89. For German efforts in the region, including Iraq, see Lukasz Hirszcwicz, *The Third Reich and the Arab East* (Toronto, CA: Toronto University Press, 1966).

25. *FRUS*, 1940, 3:703–26 (quote, 722); *FRUS*, 1941, 3:486–514; Axelgard, “U.S. Policy Toward Iraq,” 16–19.

26. T. H. Vail Motter, *The Middle East Theater: The Persian Corridor and Aid to Russia* (Washington, DC.: Center of Military History, U.S. Army, 1952), 44–64.

27. *FRUS*, 1942, 4:343–46; *FRUS*, 1943, 4:636–42. For Iraq during the war, see Marr, *Modern History of Iraq*, 56–60; Hahn, *Missions Accomplished*, 22–23.

28. Disagreements: *FRUS*, 1942, 4:343–46; *FRUS*, 1944, 5:500–503; visit: *FRUS*, 1945, 8:586.; signing of lend-lease agreement: *FRUS*, 1945, 8:586; “Agreement between the Governments of the United States of America and the Kingdom of Iraq on the Principles Applying to Aid for Defense,” *United States Statutes at Large* 59:1535–37; relations: *FRUS*, 1945, 8:845–1033; *FRUS*, 1946, 7:568–70; Richardson Dougall and Mary Patricia Chapman, *United States Chiefs of Mission, 1778–1973* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1973), 80.

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1. Yergin, *The Prize*, 409.

2. *Ibid.*, 409–19; Randall, *U.S. Foreign Oil Policy*, 244–51; Michael B. Stoff, *Oil, War, and American Security: The Search for a National Policy on Foreign Oil, 1941–1947* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1980), 195–208.

3. Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, 141–44; Hahn, *Missions Accomplished*, 26–27.

4. Melvyn P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992), 77. Leffler also observed that “military officials shaped postwar British policy in the Middle East” (*ibid.*). See also William Roger Louis, *The British Empire in the Middle East, 1945–1951: Arab Nationalism, the United States, and Postwar Imperialism* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon, 1984); Steven G. Galpern, *Money, Oil, and Empire in the Middle East: Sterling and Postwar Imperialism, 1944–1971* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Daniel Silverfarb, *The Twilight of British Ascendancy in the Middle East: A Case Study of Iraq, 1941–1950* (New York: St. Martin’s, 1994).

5. *FRUS*, 1947, 5:576. See also *FRUS*, 1946, 7:368–70.

6. *FRUS*, 1947, 5:594–96; *FRUS*, 1948, v. 5, pt. 1, 202–4. For overall Western defense strategy in the region, see Michael J. Cohen, *Fighting World War Three from the Middle East: Allied Contingency Plans, 1945–1954* (Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 1997).

7. Marr, *Modern History of Iraq*, 64–66; Tripp, *History of Iraq*, 116–18; Batatu, *Old Social Classes*, 545–66; *FRUS*, 1950, v. 5, pt. 1, 204–7; *FRUS*, 1950, 5:649–50.

8. *FRUS*, 1937, 2:894–95, 903; *FRUS*, 1938, 2:894–1002; *FRUS*, 1939, 4:694–823; *FRUS*, 1944, 5:560–657. See also Eppel, *Palestine Conflict in the History of Modern Iraq*.

9. *FRUS, 1945*, 8:678–844; *FRUS, 1946*, 7:569 (quote), 594–95; *FRUS, 1947*, 5:1132–34, 1151–53.

10. *FRUS, 1947*, 5:1292. For U.S. foreign policy concerning the creation of Israel and the resulting conflict, see Peter L. Hahn, *Caught in the Middle East: U.S. Policy Toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1945–1961* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Michael J. Cohen, *Truman and Israel* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990); Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers, 1945–1948* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982). Iraq was the only Arab nation that fought against Israel in 1948 that did not sign the armistice, meaning that it technically remained in a state of war with Israel. Hahn, *Missions Accomplished*, 50.

11. Axelgard, “U.S. Policy Toward Iraq,” 53–60, 69–70. There was a flood of immigration in the other direction as well. The vast majority of Iraq’s Jewish population, estimated at 120,000, had left Iraq by 1951, with most of those emigrants moving to Israel. They left behind millennia of history in the Babylonian region and a tangled legacy of property claims. See Moshe Gat, *The Jewish Exodus from Iraq, 1948–1951* (London, UK: Frank Cass, 1997); Orit Bashkin, *New Babylonians: A History of Jews in Modern Iraq* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012); Nissim Rejwan, *The Jews of Iraq: 3000 Years of History and Culture* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1985); Itamar Levin, *Locked Doors: The Seizure of Jewish Property in Arab Countries* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2001); Michael R. Fischbach, *Jewish Property Claims Against Arab Countries* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008).

12. *FRUS, 1950*, 5:636–38.

13. *FRUS, 1950*, 5:636–57 (1st quote, 642; 2d quote, 651).

14. *FRUS, 1951*, 5: 545–48, 553–54; Axelgard, “U.S. Policy Toward Iraq,” 75–76. For U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East in light of the Cold War, see Roby C. Barrett, *The Greater Middle East and the Cold War: U.S. Foreign Policy under Eisenhower and Kennedy* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2007); Fawaz A. Gerges, *The Superpowers and the Middle East: Regional and International Politics, 1955–1967* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994).

15. Silverfarb, “Revision of Iraq’s Oil Concession,” 69–95.

16. *Ibid.*, 69–77; *FRUS, 1950*, 5:641; Anderson, *Aramco, the United States, and Saudi Arabia*, 188–96; Yergin, *The Prize*, 445–49.

17. Yergin, *The Prize*, 450–66; Silverfarb, “Revision of Iraq’s Oil Concession,” 77–78; Pelletière, *Iraq and the International Oil System*, 95–116.

18. Silverfarb, “Revision of Iraq’s Oil Concession,” 78–90; Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, 156–60.

19. Daniel C. Williamson, “Exploiting Opportunities: Iraq Secures Military Aid from the West, 1953–56,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 36 (February 2004): 90; *FRUS, 1951*, 5:545–58.

20. Barrett, *Greater Middle East and the Cold War*, 10–11; Cohen, *Fighting World War Three*, 298–323. For the broader regional shift from the point of view of a British scholar, see Ritchie Owendale, *Britain, the United States, and the Transfer of Power in the Middle East, 1945–1962* (London: Leicester University Press, 1996).

21. Barrett, *Greater Middle East and the Cold War*, 10–13. Dulles’s visit to Iraq was the only one by a U.S. secretary of state prior to 2003. Office of the Historian, U.S. Department of State, “Travels of the Secretary: Iraq,” <https://history.state.gov/departmenthistory/travels/secretary/iraq>.

22. *FRUS, 1952–54*, v. 9, pt. 1, 90–96; Williamson, “Exploiting Opportunities,” 89–102.

23. Nigel John Ashton, “The Hijacking of a Pact: The Formation of the Baghdad Pact and the Anglo-American Tensions in the Middle East,” *Review of International*

Studies 19, no. 2 (1993), 124–25. For Iraq’s internal developments during this period, see Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, 163–96.

24. *FRUS, 1952–54*, v. 9, pt. 1, 384.

25. *United States Treaties and Other International Agreements, 1954* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1956), 5:2496–2501. For U.S. military aid from the time of this agreement until the coup in July 1958, see Axelgard, “U.S. Policy Toward Iraq,” 195–212.

26. Ashton, “Hijacking of a Pact,” 134–35. See also Ara Sanjian, “The Formulation of the Baghdad Pact,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 33 (April 1997): 226–66; Magnus Persson, *Great Britain, the United States, and the Security of the Middle East: The Formation of the Baghdad Pact* (Lund, Sweden: Lund University Press, 1998); Gerges, *Superpowers and the Middle East*, 24–28.

27. Axelgard, “U.S. Policy Toward Iraq,” 180; Daniel C. Williamson, “Understandable Failure: The Eisenhower Administration’s Strategic Goals in Iraq, 1953–1958,” *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 17, no. 3 (2006): 598–99; Barrett, *Greater Middle East and the Cold War*, 37, 48, 76; Marr, *Modern History of Iraq*, 74–76; Donald J. Becker, “U.S. Policy Regarding the Baghdad Pact” (PhD diss., American University, 1975); *FRUS, 1955–57*, 12:58; *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1958* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1962), 888–90, (hereafter *AFP Current Docs.*).

28. Paul Jabber, *Not by War Alone: Security and Arms Control in the Middle East* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 153. See also Gallman’s memoir of the period, *Iraq Under General Nuri: My Recollections of Nuri al Said, 1954–1958* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1964).

29. Tripp, *History of Iraq*, 137–38; Marr, *Modern History of Iraq*, 76; Hahn, *Missions Accomplished*, 29–31; Gerges, *Superpowers and the Middle East*, 57, 64. Gerges intimates Syrian government complicity in the pipeline destruction.

30. See Salim Yaqub, *Containing Arab Nationalism: The Eisenhower Doctrine and the Middle East* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Malcolm H. Kerr, *The Arab Cold War: Gamal Abd al-Nasir and His Rivals, 1958–1970* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971); Malik Mufti, *Sovereign Creations: Pan-Arabism and Political Order in Iraq and Syria* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996); Nigel John Ashton, *Eisenhower, Macmillan, and the Problem of Nasser: Anglo-American Relations and Arab Nationalism, 1955–1959* (New York: St. Martin’s, 1996).

31. Yaqub, *Containing Arab Nationalism*, 181–236; Barrett, *Greater Middle East and the Cold War*, 41–79; Gerges, *Superpowers and the Middle East*, 90–102.

32. *FRUS, 1958–60*, 12:307–21. See also Majid Khadduri and Edmund Ghareeb, *War in the Gulf, 1990–91: The Iraq-Kuwait Conflict and its Implications* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 62, which asserts that al-Sa’id committed suicide.

33. For the revolution and coup, see Juan Romero, *The Iraqi Revolution of 1958: A Revolutionary Quest for Unity and Security* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2011); Robert A. Fernea and William Roger Louis, eds., *The Iraqi Revolution of 1958: The Old Social Classes Revisited* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1991); Batatu, *Old Social Classes*, 764–807; Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, 199–210; Axelgard, “U.S. Policy Toward Iraq,” 236–43. For the broader regional and international implications, see Gerges, *Superpowers and the Middle East*, 112–16; Barrett, *Greater Middle East and the Cold War*, 67–79.

THREE

1. For works that focus on the revolution and the period following, see Marion Farouk-Sluglett and Peter Sluglett, *Iraq Since 1958: From Revolution to Dictatorship*, 3d ed. (London: I. B. Tauris, 2003); Michael Eppel, *Iraq from Monarchy to Tyranny: From the Hashemites to the Rise of Saddam* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004); Samira Haj, *The Making of Iraq, 1900–1963: Capital, Power, and Ideology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997); Majid Khadduri, *Republican Iraq: A Study in Iraqi Politics since the Revolution of 1958* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969); Uriel Dann, *Iraq Under Qassem: A Political History, 1958–1963* (New York: Praeger, 1969); Robert B. Blanke, “United States Foreign Policy in Iraq from 1958 to 1959: Communists, Nasser, and the Qasim Regime” (master’s thesis, University of Texas, 1995). See also Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, 211–316; Batatu, *Old Social Classes*, 808–1002.

2. Oles M. Smolansky and Bettie M. Smolansky, *The USSR and Iraq: The Quest for Soviet Influence* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991), 15–16.

3. For a detailed examination of U.S. diplomatic quandaries with Iraq between the coup and the 1961 Kuwait crisis, see Nathan J. Citino, “Middle East Cold Wars: Oil and Arab Nationalism in U.S.-Iraqi Relations, 1958–1961,” in *The Eisenhower Administration, the Third World, and the Globalization of the Cold War*, ed. Kathryn C. Statler and Andrew L. Johns (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006), 245–69. For how Iraq fit into the superpower competition in the Middle East during this period, see Gerges, *Superpowers and the Middle East*, 125–32.

4. *FRUS*, 1958–60, 12:224; Barrett, *Greater Middle East and the Cold War*, 112–13; Marr, *Modern History of Iraq*, 93; Smolansky and Smolansky, *USSR and Iraq*, 16; Haim Shemesh, *Soviet-Iraqi Relations, 1968–1988* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1992), 7.

5. *FRUS*, 1958–60, 12:331–36, 423–37; Axelgard, “U.S. Policy Toward Iraq,” 241; Wolfe-Hunnicut, “End of the Concessionary Regime,” 40–52; Citino, “Oil and Arab Nationalism,” 257–59.

6. *FRUS*, 1961–63, 18:351.

7. Citino, “Oil and Arab Nationalism,” 254–58.

8. *FRUS*, 1961–63, 17:161; Khadduri and Ghareeb, *War in the Gulf*, 11–13.

9. *FRUS*, 1961–63, 17:159–62; Khadduri and Ghareeb, *War in the Gulf*, 6–63; Salem, “Drama of U.S.-Iraq Relations,” 60–79. See also Simon C. Smith, *Kuwait, 1950–1965* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); Jill Crystal, *Oil and Politics in the Gulf: Rulers and Merchants in Kuwait and Qatar* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

10. As of 1961, Kuwait’s proven reserve was 65 billion barrels, ahead of Saudi Arabia (55 billion), Iran (35 billion), and Iraq (26.5 billion). “World Proven Crude Oil Reserves by Country,” OPEC website, <http://www.opec.org/library/Annual%20Statistical%20Bulletin/interactive/current/FileZ/XL/T31.HTM>; Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, 274–75.

11. Citino, “Oil and Arab Nationalism,” 262.

12. *FRUS*, 1961–63, 17:163–64, 168, 171–72.

13. *FRUS*, 1961–63, 17:172, 176–79; Khadduri and Ghareeb, *War in the Gulf*, 65–66.

14. Marr, *Modern History of Iraq*, 110. See also Elie Podeh, “‘Suez in Reverse’: The Arab Response to the Iraqi Bid for Kuwait, 1961–1963,” *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 14 (March 2003): 103–30.

15. *FRUS*, 1961–63, 17:364–65; Pelletière, *Iraq and the International Oil System*, 127–28.

16. *FRUS*, 1961–63, 17:179, 364–65.

17. Wolfe-Hunnicut, "End of the Concessionary Regime," 66–72; Yergin, *The Prize*, 535.
18. *FRUS, 1961–63*, 17:702–3; Salem, "Drama of U.S.-Iraq Relations," 17; Wolfe-Hunnicut, "End of the Concessionary Regime," 77–78.
19. *FRUS, 1961–63*, 17:654–56, 705, 740–44; *FRUS, 1961–63*, 18:334–35; Hahn, *Missions Accomplished*, 47–48; Wolfe-Hunnicut, "End of the Concessionary Regime," 78–82.
20. Batatu, *Old Social Classes*, 722–48; Smolansky and Smolansky, *USSR and Iraq*, 16. For possible U.S. complicity with the Ba'athists in the coup, see Eric Jacobsen, "A Coincidence of Interests: Kennedy, U.S. Assistance, and the 1963 Iraqi Ba'ath Regime," *Diplomatic History* 37 (November 2013): 1029–59; Weldon Matthews, "The Kennedy Administration, Counterinsurgency, and Iraq's First Ba'athist Regime," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 43, no. 4 (2011): 635–53; Wolfe-Hunnicut, "End of the Concessionary Regime," 82–87.
21. *FRUS, 1961–63*, 18:348. For analysis of what led Strong and others to a "romantic" and flawed view of the Ba'ath, see Wolfe-Hunnicut, "End of the Concessionary Regime," 136–38.
22. *FRUS, 1961–63*, 18:446, 470–73, 673–75; Smolansky and Smolansky, *USSR and Iraq*, 64–65; Wolfe-Hunnicut, "End of the Concessionary Regime," 115–20. For the Kurds, see Edmund Ghareeb, *The Kurdish Question in Iraq* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1981); David McDowall, *The Modern History of the Kurds*, 3d ed. (London: I. B. Tauris, 2004); Kerim Yildiz, *The Kurds in Iraq: The Past, Present, and Future* (London: Pluto Press, 2004); Michael Gunter, *The Kurds of Iraq: Tragedy and Hope* (New York: St. Martin's, 1992); Sa'ad Jawad, *Iraq and the Kurdish Question, 1958–1970* (London: Ithaca Press, 1981); Mohammed Shareef, *The United States, Iraq, and the Kurds: Shock, Awe, and Aftermath* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2014).
23. "Envoy to Iraq Confirmed," *New York Times*, May 29, 1963; "Support by Nasser for Kurds Reported," *New York Times*, June 18, 1963; Dougall and Chapman, *U.S. Chiefs of Mission*, 80; *FRUS, 1961–63*, 18:397.
24. *FRUS, 1961–63*, 18:790–91; Batatu, *Old Social Classes*, 1003–26.
25. Batatu, *Old Social Classes*, 1006–35; Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, 317–52.
26. *FRUS, 1964–68*, 21:333–58. For an assessment of U.S.-Iraq relations during this period, see Wolfe-Hunnicut, "End of the Concessionary Regime," 144–86.
27. "Iraq Reports Suppression of a Revolt by Officers," *New York Times*, July 1, 1966; Batatu, *Old Social Classes*, 1062–63; *FRUS, 1964–68*, 21:359–80.
28. *FRUS, 1964–68*, 21:360–61, 371 (quotes).
29. *FRUS, 1964–68*, 21:381. The United States did not provide air support to Israel during the 1967 war. See *FRUS, 1964–68*, 19:320, 321, 432; Richard B. Parker, "USAF in the Sinai in the 1967 War: Fact or Fiction?" *Journal of Palestine Studies* 27 (Autumn 1997): 67–75. According to the Penroses, Iraq sent "what was in effect a 'token' force that played no part in the fighting" during the 1967 conflict. Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, 348.
30. *FRUS, 1969–76*, v. E–4, doc. 250, <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76ve04/d250>.
31. *FRUS, 1964–68*, 21:387–88; Batatu, *Old Social Classes*, 1073, 1085, 1086; Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, 358–78. For the subsequent period, see Batatu, *Old Social Classes*, 1073–1110; Majid Khadduri, *Socialist Iraq: A Study in Iraqi Politics since 1968* (Washington, DC: Middle East Institute, 1978).
32. Iraqi Jews: *FRUS, 1969–76*, v. E–4, docs. 244–46, 248, 255, 280, 282, 283–84, 288, <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76ve04/ch5>; *FRUS, 1969–76*, v. E–4, doc. 327, <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76ve04/ch6>; Embassy property: *FRUS, 1969–76*, v. E–4, docs. 253, 256, 290, 291, <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76ve04/ch5>.

33. Smolansky and Smolansky, *USSR and Iraq*, 17–19, 53–54, 165–66; Shemesh, *Soviet-Iraqi Relations*, 63–66; Wolfe-Hunnicut, “End of the Concessionary Regime,” 268; *FRUS, 1969–76*, v. E–4, docs. 272, 274, 275, 278, 281, 295, 298, 300, 305, 307, <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76ve04/ch6>.

34. Wolfe-Hunnicut, “End of the Concessionary Regime,” 209–62; Samir Saul, “Masterly Inactivity as Brinkmanship: The Iraq Petroleum Company’s Road to Nationalization, 1958–1972,” *International History Review* 29 (December 2007): 746–92; Smolansky and Smolansky, *USSR and Iraq*, 37–62; *FRUS, 1969–76*, v. E–4, doc. 311, <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76ve04/ch6>.

35. Smolansky and Smolansky, *USSR and Iraq*, 20–21, 43–45; Shemesh, *Soviet-Iraqi Relations*, 78–80.

36. Wolfe-Hunnicut, “End of the Concessionary Regime,” 263–88; Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, 381–420; Shemesh, *Soviet-Iraqi Relations*, 57–96.

37. *FRUS, 1969–76*, v. E–4, doc. 323, <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76ve04/ch6>.

38. Kurdish appeals for U.S. support: *FRUS, 1961–63*, 18: 116–17, 665–66; *FRUS, 1964–68*, 21:347–48; *FRUS, 1969–76*, v. E–4, docs. 258, 259, 293, 299, 301, <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76ve04>. Iraq accuses United States of supporting Kurds: *FRUS, 1958–60*, 12:362, 365, 369, 373; *FRUS, 1964–68*, 21:348–55. United States provides food to Kurdish refugees: *FRUS, 1964–68*, 21:372; U.S. aid: *FRUS, 1969–76*, v. E–4, docs. 302, 303, 313, 315, 317, 318, 319, 321, 322, 325, <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76ve04/ch6>.

39. “Request for U.S. Aid to Kurds,” Memorandum of Conversation, April 9, 1974; “The Kurdish Situation,” Memorandum of Conversation, June 19, 1974, U.S. Department of State, Freedom of Information Act documents (hereafter DOS FOIA). There are no direct links for these documents, but they can be accessed by a search at <http://foia.state.gov/>.

40. Gerald K. Haines, “Looking for a Rogue Elephant: The Pike Committee and the CIA,” *Studies in Intelligence* 42 (Winter 1998–99): 88; Ghareeb, *Kurdish Question*, 171–74; Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, 369–76. For Soviet entanglement in the Kurdish issue, see Smolansky and Smolansky, *USSR and Iraq*, 63–98.

41. Kenneth M. Pollack, *Arabs at War: Military Effectiveness, 1948–1991* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), 167–76; Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, 366–69. Although the Iraqis supported their Arab brethren, they were furious that Egypt and Syria started and ended the war without their input, further isolating Iraq within the Arab world. Hahn, *Missions Accomplished*, 59.

42. Edward T. Russell, “Military Airlift to Israel: Operation Nickel Grass,” in *Short of War: Major USAF Contingency Operations*, ed. A. Timothy Warnock (Washington, DC: Air Force History and Museums Program, 2000), 75–81.

43. Salem, “Drama of U.S.-Iraq Relations,” 19–20.

44. For this period, see the Iraq section in *FRUS, 1969–76*, v. 27.

45. Low-level contacts: “(1) Madam Saddam Hussein Visit (2) US-Iraqi Relations,” Telegram BAGHDA00338, U.S. Interests Section Baghdad to U.S. Secretary of State, May 30, 1974, DOS FOIA. Kissinger-Hammadi meeting: “Henry Kissinger to Iraq in 1975: ‘We Can Reduce Israel’s Size,’” *Middle East Quarterly* 13 (Fall 2006): 71–78; Vance-Hammadi meeting: “Carter Pledges Restraint, Offers to Cut A-Arms 50%,” *Milwaukee Sentinel*, October 5, 1977.

46. “Req for Military Pubs,” Telegram BAGHDA00092, U.S. Interests Section Baghdad to U.S. Secretary of State, February 27, 1974; “Request for Military Publications,” Telegram BAGHDA00398, U.S. Interests Section Baghdad to U.S. Secretary of State, June

25, 1974; “Ministry of Defense Delegation Visiting US,” Telegram BAGHDA00897, U.S. Interests Section Baghdad to U.S. Secretary of State, August 26, 1975, DOS FOIA.

47. Shemesh, *Soviet-Iraqi Relations*, 147–73; Smolanksky and Smolansky, *USSR and Iraq*, 188–229.

48. Salem, “Drama of U.S.-Iraq Relations,” 20; “Assignment of Economic/Commercial Office to Baghdad,” Telegram BAGHDA00023, U.S. Interests Section Baghdad to U.S. Secretary of State, January 12, 1974, DOS FOIA; “Iraq is Now Seeking a Moderate Image,” *New York Times*, July 30, 1978.

FOUR

1. Shemesh, *Soviet-Iraqi Relations*, 155, 169; Jimmy Carter, *Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President* (New York: Bantam Books, 1982), 410; Hahn, *Missions Accomplished*, 72. Hussein reversed course in relations with Egypt by the time of the Iran-Iraq War, however, as Egypt sold Iraq \$500 million in ammunition before Sadat’s assassination in 1981 and completed \$2.7 billion in military transactions between 1981 and 1984. Helms, *Iraq*, 185.

2. For the impact of the Iranian revolution on Iraq, see Marr, *Modern History of Iraq*, 174–76; Tripp, *History of Iraq*, 212–14.

3. For the causes of the war, see Shahram Chubin and Charles Tripp, *Iran and Iraq at War* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1988), 13–30; W. Thom Workman, *The Social Origins of the Iran-Iraq War* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1994); F. Gregory Gause, “Iraq’s Decisions to Go to War, 1980 and 1990,” *Middle East Journal* 56 (Winter 2002): 47–70.

4. Edmund A. Ghareeb, *Historical Dictionary of Iraq* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2004), 106; Dawisha, *Iraq*, 221–23; Barry Rubin, “Iran’s Revolution and Persian Gulf Instability,” in *The Iran-Iraq War: New Weapons, Old Conflicts*, ed. Shirin Tahir-Kheli and Shaheen Ayubi (New York: Praeger, 1983), 128.

5. In fact, according to President James E. Carter, it was “crazy threats” by the Iranians “to kill the American hostages if they [were] invaded by Iraq” that led his administration to authorize what turned out to be the ill-fated rescue attempt of the hostages, Operation Eagle Claw, on April 24, 1980. Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 506–19. For consideration of any American complicity with Iraq, which Carter denied (*ibid.*, 506, 559), see Bryan R. Gibson, *Covert Relationship: American Foreign Policy, Intelligence, and the Iran-Iraq War, 1980–1988* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2010), 32–33; Bruce W. Jentleson, *With Friends Like These: Reagan, Bush, and Saddam, 1982–1990* (New York: Norton, 1994), 34–35.

6. U.S. Congress, *Congressional Record*, 96th Cong., 2d sess., 1980, v. 126, pt. 1, 1039–41.

7. Juan de Onis, “Ambivalent U.S.-Iraq Relationship Improving despite Diplomatic Rift,” *New York Times*, September 28, 1980.

8. Bernard D. Nossiter, “Muskie Confers with Iraqi Aide; Gets Assurances,” *New York Times*, October 1, 1980.

9. William E. Farrell, “Arab League Urges Sanctions on Israel for Attack on Iraq,” *New York Times*, June 12, 1981. For the question of whether the Osirak air strike triggered Iraq’s military nuclear program, see Norman Cigar, *Saddam Hussein’s Nuclear Vision: An Atomic Shield and Sword for Conquest* (Quantico, VA: Marine Corps University Press, 2011), 7–8.

10. Helms, *Iraq*, 197.

11. Henry Tanner, “Mideast’s Balance Held Endangered,” *New York Times*, May 16, 1982; Jentleson, *With Friends Like These*, 33–42; Zachary Karabell, “Backfire: U.S. Policy Toward Iraq, 1988–2 August 1990,” *Middle East Journal* 49 (Winter 1995): 30; Helms, *Iraq*; Donald Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown: A Memoir* (New York: Sentinel, 2011), 4. In addition to *With*

Friends Like These, a more recent work that examines U.S.-Iraqi relations during this period, largely through subsequently declassified documents, is Gibson, *Covert Relationship*. For contemporary commentary from the policy community, see Thomas Naff, ed., *Gulf Security and the Iran-Iraq War* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1985).

12. *AFP Current Docs.*, 1982, 784n5.

13. U.S. General Accounting Office, *International Trade: Iraq's Participation in U.S. Agricultural Export Programs*, Report to the Chairman, Task Force on Urgent Fiscal Issues, Committee on the Budget, House of Representatives, GAO/NSIAD-91-76, November 1990; U.S. General Accounting Office, *The U.S. Export-Import Bank: No Evidence of Financing Restricted Chemical Exports to Iraq*, Report to the Chairman, Subcommittee on Defense, Committee on Appropriations, U.S. Senate, GAO/NSIAD-91-284, September 1991; *AFP Current Docs.*, 1990, 439–40; U.S. General Accounting Office, *Iraq: U.S. Military Items Exported or Transferred to Iraq in the 1980s*, Report to the Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, GAO/NSIAD-94-98, February 1994; David G. Newton, interview by Charles Stuart Kennedy, November 1, 2005, transcript, Foreign Affairs Oral History Project, Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, 69, <http://www.adst.org/OH%20TOCs/Newton,%20David%20G.toc.pdf> (hereafter Newton interview).

14. Gibson, *Covert Relationship*, 92–93; “Secretary’s May 10 Meeting with Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz,” May 11, 1983, National Security Archive, <http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB82/iraq17.pdf>.

15. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, *Nomination of Robert M. Gates to be Director of Central Intelligence*, 102d Cong., 1st sess., September 16, 17, 19, 20, 1991 (Washington, DC: GPO, 1992), 1:187. Some claim the intelligence sharing began as early as 1982; see Seymour M. Hersh, “U.S. Secretly Gave Aid to Iraq Early in its War Against Iran,” *New York Times*, January 26, 1992; Howard Teicher and Gayle Radley Teicher, *Twin Pillars to Desert Storm* (New York: William Morrow, 1992), 207.

16. Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown*, 3–8 (quote, 8); Gibson, *Covert Relationship*, 113–18; Donald H. Rumsfeld to George P. Shultz, “Rumsfeld Mission: December 20 Meeting with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, December 21, 1983, <http://library.rumsfeld.com/doclib/sp/38/12-21-1983.%20Cable.%20Rumsfeld%20Mission%20-%20Dec%2020%20Meeting%20with%20Iraqi%20President%20Saddam%20Hussein.pdf>; Rumsfeld to Shultz, “Rumsfeld One-on-One Meeting with Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz, December 21, 1983, <http://library.rumsfeld.com/doclib/sp/37/1983-12-21%20Cable%201%20on%201%20meeting%20with%20Iraqi%20Deputy%20PM%20and%20F.pdf>.

17. *AFP Current Docs.*, 1984, 520–21; Ronald W. Reagan, National Security Decision Directive 139, “Measures to Improve U.S. Posture and Readiness to Respond to Developments in the Iran-Iraq War,” April 5, 1984, Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, <http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/reference/Scanned%20NSDDS/NSDD139.pdf>.

18. Newton interview, 66, 69 (quote); *AFP Current Docs.*, 1984, 525–26; Gibson, *Covert Relationship*, 139–40; “Ambassador to Iraq Named,” *New York Times*, April 27, 1985.

19. Newton interview, 69–70, 74; Michael R. Gordon, “Papers from Iraqi Archive Reveal Conspiratorial Mind-Set of Hussein,” *New York Times*, October 26, 2011, A12; “Saddam Hussein’s Iraq,” Cold War International History Project, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/collection/168/saddam-hussein-s-iraq>.

20. *AFP Current Docs.*, 1986, 404–7; “Iraqi Denounces U.S. for Secret Shipments of Weapons to Iran,” *New York Times*, November 15, 1986.

21. *AFP Current Docs.*, 1987, 420; Jentleson, *With Friends Like These*, 59–82.

22. *AFP Current Docs.*, 1987, 421–23, 425–26; Steven V. Roberts, “Apology from Iraq,” *New York Times*, May 19, 1987.

23. Newton interview, 71. Newton stated in the 2005 interview that the Americans believed the attack was a mistake.

24. *AFP Current Docs.*, 1987, 423–26.

25. Elaine Sciolino, “Kurdish Chief Gains Support in U.S. Visit,” *New York Times*, June 22, 1988; *AFP Current Docs.*, 1988, 458–60; see also Joost Hiltermann, *A Poisonous Affair: America, Iraq, and the Gassing of Halabja* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007). Ambassador Newton noted that it was “really quite difficult” to get information on the Kurds because Iraq was “a complete police state.” Newton interview, 74.

26. Estimates of those killed in action range from 500,000 to 1 million, with nearly twice that many wounded, and perhaps 1.5 million refugees. Gibson, *Covert Relationship*, 233.

27. Karabell, “Backfire,” 31.

28. George H. W. Bush, “U.S. Policy Toward the Persian Gulf,” National Security Directive 26, October 2, 1989, George H. W. Bush Presidential Library, <http://bush41library.tamu.edu/files/nsd/nsd26.pdf>.

29. *AFP Current Docs.*, 1990, 438–39.

30. Michael T. Klare, “Arms Transfers to Iran and Iraq during the Iran-Iraq War of 1980–88 and the Origins of the Gulf War,” in *The Gulf War of 1991 Reconsidered*, ed. Andrew J. Bacevich and Efraim Inbar (Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 2003), 5, 18–20; Dawisha, *Iraq*, 224. For this period, see also Karabell, “Backfire,” 29–47; Amantzia Baram, “U.S. Input into Iraqi Decisionmaking, 1988–1990,” in Lesch, *Middle East and the United States*, 325–53; Gause, “Iraq’s Decisions to Go to War, 52–55.

FIVE

1. The literature on the Gulf War is extensive. For works exploring its causes, see in particular Lawrence Freedman and Efraim Karsh, *The Gulf Conflict, 1990–1991: Diplomacy and War in the New World Order* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993); Khadduri and Ghareeb, *War in the Gulf*; Amantzia Baram and Barry Rubin, eds., *Iraq’s Road to War* (New York: St. Martin’s, 1993); Jeffrey A. Engel, ed., *Into the Desert: Reflections on the Gulf War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

2. Gause, “Iraq’s Decisions to Go to War,” 56–58; *AFP Current Docs.*, 1990, 436.

3. Jeff Gerth, “Atom Bomb Parts Seized in Britain En Route to Iraq,” *New York Times*, March 29, 1990; Saddam Hussein, “President Warns Israel, Criticizes U.S.,” *FBIS Daily Report: Near East & South Asia* FBIS-NES-90-064 (April 3, 1990): 32–36 (quote). See also Cigar, *Saddam Hussein’s Nuclear Vision*.

4. *AFP Current Docs.*, 1990, 438.

5. Gause, “Iraq’s Decisions to Go to War,” 57–58.

6. *AFP Current Docs.*, 1990, 448–50.

7. *AFP Current Docs.*, 1990, 439–42; Karabell, “Backfire,” 43; U.S. Congress, *Congressional Record*, 102d Cong., 2d sess., 1992, v. 138, pt. 4, 4699–4706.

8. U.S. Department of State, “Saddam’s Message of Friendship to President Bush,” Telegram BAGHDAD 04237, U.S. Embassy Baghdad to U.S. Secretary of State, July 25, 1990, box 43, National Security Council: Richard N. Haass files, Bush Presidential Records, George H. W. Bush Presidential Library, online on a different site at <http://www.margareththatcher.org/document/0DFD0DDB2BA34EF59F2570CE7EEE03C8.pdf>.

9. *AFP Current Docs.*, 1990, 451–53.

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11. Khadduri and Ghareeb, *War in the Gulf*, 114–17.

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