

SAUDI ARABIA, SECURITY AND THE GULF

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
1	Introduction	1
2	Oil, Internal Security and Stability	11
3	External Security, the West and the Gulf	29
4	Conclusion	47

The 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait appeared to signal the end of the oil era. It was widely expected that the Gulf states would have to make some kind of arrangement towards a credible security arrangement. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) had taken increasing importance since its inception in 1981 to reassure its citizens, and reassure its two large northern neighbors, Iran and Iraq, that the peninsula was not a battlefield.

Introduction

The creation of some form of substantial security region, even if not on the same scale as the oil era, should have been possible to achieve in the region. At least the incentive should have been there, given the historic threat posed by Iraq, and the likelihood that the Iraq-Iran conflict would not go on forever. Facing both major powers in a region, it was not surprising that the GCC was established in 1981.

Since the beginning of the Iran-Iraq conflict in 1980, Kuwaiti rulers exercised what little bargaining power they had to dampen the temptation of either of their powerful neighbors to absorb the small state. They clearly had little faith in a GCC military capability, and resorted to buying protection. GCC military expenditures in the 1980s were substantial, but by 1990 the money had not bought a meaningful deterrent.

While Kuwait and Qatar were at loggerheads, Saudi Arabia's position remained relatively secure, despite occasional

The 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait appeared to dispel, for the time being at least, any illusions that the Gulf Arab states may have held about making progress towards a credible security arrangement. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) had taken increasing pains since its inception in 1981 to reassure its citizens, and remind its two large northern neighbours, Iran and Iraq, that the peninsula was not defenceless.

The creation of some form of substantial security regime, even if not on the same scale as the highly centralised Iraqi military, should have been possible to achieve in the region. At least the incentive should have been there, given the historic Iraqi threat to Kuwait, and the likelihood that the Iran-Iraq conflict would not go on forever, freeing both these major powers to return to meddling in the affairs of the lower Gulf.

Since the beginning of the Iran-Iraq conflict in 1980, Kuwaiti rulers exercised what little bargaining power they had to dampen the temptation of either of their powerful neighbours to absorb the small sheikhdom. They clearly had little faith in a GCC military capability, and resorted to buying protection. GCC military expenditure in the 1980s was substantial, but by 1990 the money had not bought a meaningful deterrent (1).

While Baghdad and Tehran were at loggerheads, Kuwait's position remained relatively secure, despite occasional

'accidental' air raids by Iran against Kuwaiti territory, designed no doubt to remind the Gulf sheikhdoms that their support for Iraq could prove costly. Neither Saddam Hussein nor Ayatollah Khomeini had any compelling political or economic motive to widen their highly personalised war. So, the infant GCC had the best part of a decade to put together a capable force. To this end, amidst much fanfare, GCC forces carried out a series of large scale annual military exercises on the Arabian peninsula, and gave increasing public prominence to high-level defence cooperation.

The GCC should have been able to achieve better results in the time available. The total population of the GCC states, even minus non-indigenous workers, together with their enormous financial resources could support a reasonable defence force (including the extensive use by Saudi Arabia of, for example, Pakistani troops (2)). Even given the understandable problems involved in coordinating joint defence programs, the GCC states had ten years' clear warning, and appeared to accept the high possibility of, a major military threat in the region.

This paper suggests that the lack of results stems primarily from the Gulf states not having weaned themselves off their dependence on an outside power to guarantee their security. When the United Kingdom announced its decision in 1968 to pull out of the Gulf, the United States was unprepared to fill the

psychological and security power vacuum (3). Although the United States had been taking over gradually from Britain in the Gulf since the 1940s, "it was not fully prepared to accept direct responsibility for the Gulf and peninsula, let alone take up Britain's shield" (4).

The Gulf states were left to ponder an uncertain security future with little warning - the UK had only just provided assurances to the region that it had no immediate plans to withdraw its protection (5). Moreover, the domestic British political debacle over the decision to quit the Gulf ensured an untidy withdrawal, leaving no framework for any future security arrangements (6).

J B Kelly, in his colourful condemnation in 1981 of Western policy in the Gulf, noted that between 1970 and 1971 the British Government destroyed any chance that there might have been to establish viable post-withdrawal security arrangements in the Gulf; "by conniving at Persian occupation of [the islands of] Abu Musa and the Tunbs, and by endeavouring to procure the surrender of Abu Dhabi territory to Saudi Arabia, the Heath administration had ... debased the value of any defence undertaking that might have been given the fledgling UAE" (7).

Of course, the UK withdrawal did not amount to a major military exercise :

The impact of withdrawal from the Gulf was more substantial in political terms since it necessitated the formulation of an independent political framework for the small emirates along the Arab littoral, but the real impact was essentially psychological. Britain had served as judge, arbiter, administrator and, of course, protector of this littoral for well over a century. Departure in 1971 was tantamount to removal of the safety net. (8)

So, the lower Gulf was left to do as best it could, in the absence, however, of any clear external threat to its security in the early 1970s (9). East-West detente may have given the newly cast-off protectorates and their peninsula neighbours a breathing space, but it also compounded their false sense of security. Saudi Arabia, although not under explicit UK protection, had effectively relied on the UK presence in the Gulf.

The vulnerability in 1990 of Saudi Arabia to external threat, and the inadequacy of its own defences, were made plain by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait (10).

It is clear that the West and the nervous Gulf states bear some responsibility for encouraging Iraq to develop its offensive capacity. The West failed to look beyond the end of the conflict with Iran, partly through American obsession with the threat of radical Islam, to ensure the containment of that capacity. The southern Gulf states, although anxious over the burgeoning arsenals to their north, continued to finance the Iraqi war effort, partly on the basis of historical Persian-

Arab antipathy, but also from understandable fears of radical Islam, and the size of Iran. By bankrolling the Iraqis, and not presenting too hostile a front, the Gulf states hoped to keep themselves out of the fighting.

During the 1970s, despite two major oil confrontations, the formation of the GCC, and tightening of OPEC's political control over its oil, the Gulf states in the end believed that the West would not tolerate the loss of a primary energy resource to a hostile power, and would therefore continue to provide a military safety net. Their belief has, of course, been justified by the massive Western response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

The security dilemma following 1971 for the West was how best to secure its interests without a tangible presence, or open invitation to intervene, in the region. One way would have been to establish a large standing military presence. This, however, was politically unacceptable to most Gulf states. The other would have been to actively encourage the GCC's military capability. But the West, and particularly the United States, had difficulties with this.

Firstly, it appeared to pose a threat to Israel (and consequently would certainly excite considerable domestic opposition in Washington). Secondly, it would mean transferring responsibility for protecting the oil fields to theocratic sheikhdoms less concerned with the

geostrategic priorities of the West than self-preservation. The result was unsatisfactory for all sides, involving a piecemeal approach to security and a chronic inability to devise comprehensive and lasting security arrangements.

This paper will examine some significant events and aspects of Saudi and GCC policy formulation in the 1970s and 1980s, with a view to identifying how security complacency became inbuilt. This was a period during which Saudi Arabia had to cope with staggering economic change, and had to face a bewildering array of new security challenges. This paper also looks at the motivation behind Saudi security decision-making, concluding that Riyadh has pursued remarkably consistent external policies, founded on a domestic predilection for consensus politics, and a coherent approach to its own security requirements - not always well understood in the West.

A good deal of the literature on Saudi Arabia, Gulf security and relations with the West has been written with a political agenda in mind, to prescribe policy changes which will enhance the West's ability to form long-term and beneficial strategic relationships in the region. Analyses of Saudi Arabia's security concerns have concentrated on how best to implement Western policies to secure Western interests - that is, security of oil resources, containment of the former Soviet Union,

and maintenance of an acceptable level of internal stability (intra and inter-state) to enable the first two goals to be pursued successfully (11).

Some attention in the literature is paid to the 'worldview' of the different Gulf states, to help explain the difficulties they might have in reaching agreement on security issues. Quandt, for example, recommended that these difficulties must be overcome if the region is to attain viability in self-defence, which is in the overall interests of the West. The United States has paid lip service to these prescriptions, notably in its public enthusiasm for the GCC.

A great deal of optimism has surrounded the creation of the GCC, and its member states often express hopes of achieving a NATO like defence structure with an EC like free market. One writer views "the true significance of the GCC ... in its potential as a building block in the construction of a global Islamic political society" (12).

This is a common and not unreasonable theme; that there exists a strong convergence of security interests between the West and the 'moderate' Gulf states. But reality has dictated caution; apart from the above-mentioned Western wariness over real Arab military control over vital oil resources, a powerful military in Saudi Arabia would pose an internal threat to the ruling Al Saud family, which

has been careful to devolve military power in the kingdom, especially after an abortive coup in 1969.

It is difficult to see how it is in Western interests to further militarise an already over-militarised region, unless its choice of ally were to be impeccable. The experience with both Iran and Iraq suggests that this is a dangerous assumption. So, although the prospects for Saudi internal stability and security seem good for the next decade, the West would be wise not to set too much store by developing a 'special relationship' with such a politically and culturally alien state as Saudi Arabia. The alliance can never be completely reliable.

The best that can be hoped for, or pursued, therefore, is a *modus vivendi*, based on the convergence of temporary economic, and strategic interests.

Anything more ambitious runs the risk of over-optimism, which has to a large extent characterised Washington's Gulf security policies, thereby reducing the West's options in scenarios such as that which led to the 1991 Gulf war. This paper focuses on a limited number of foreign policy and security decisions made by Riyadh and the other Gulf states, demonstrating some of the basic incompatibilities and misunderstandings between Western and Saudi perceptions of security.

Included also is a section on the Saudi ruling family's idea of security, which examines some of its security decisions, both internal and external, for indications of consistency. Saudi foreign policy decision-making has been remarkably consistent, but within its own order of security-related priorities, which are not the same as those of the industrialised West.

Riyadh's security focus during this period has been largely internal, and this focus has influenced heavily its external policy decision-making - both in process, by proceeding with caution and seeking consensus, and in the substance of decisions which have reflected domestic priorities.

Necessarily, much is left out of such a discussion. There is little reference to inter-state rivalries on the peninsula, which are an important component in the GCC's inability to cooperate more fully. There is also little reference to Moscow's strategic priorities, or to the wider dimensions of the superpower rivalry which, in particular, caused the United States to adopt extreme policies throughout the 1980s. The paper concentrates on those issues which seem to have most impact on policy formulation in the region itself.

The period from the early 1970s to the late 1980s is treated with a degree of artificial homogeneity. While I have chosen examples to demonstrate policy consistency,

or highlight a particular facet of policy motivation, from either decade, there is a substantial difference between the post and pre-1979 Gulf political and strategic scene. Even the oil shock of 1973 did not really shake the United States out of its post-Vietnam Guam Doctrine complacency, but the Iranian revolution and the invasion of Afghanistan certainly did.

It is not, however, the purpose of this paper to go over the familiar ground of comparing one decade to the other. Rather, both periods, with their differing backdrops, provide examples of long-term consistency in Saudi decision-making. It is quite remarkable that, despite the radical change in strategic perceptions, from Washington as well as in the Gulf, a decade of activism in defence in the region still could not prevent the invasion of Kuwait.

Oil

Oil, Internal Security and Stability

Oil

The use of the oil weapon following the 1973 Arab-Israeli war demonstrated to a complacent US Government "that business and politics in the Persian Gulf could not safely be separated from each other" (1). Production cutbacks by the Gulf states, in addition to the boycott, "permitted OPEC to quadruple the price of oil" (2). In 1978-79, the Iranian revolution created further opportunities to raise the price. OPEC, following the spot market, moved the price up to about \$32 per barrel by mid-1980. (3)

In less than a decade, "the entire production and pricing system of international oil was transformed, as was the perception of United States and Western interests in the Persian Gulf" (4). The impact in the West, psychological as much as economic, was profound.

But the 1973 embargo should not have come as quite a large psychological shock to the West as it did. In the lead-up to the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, Saudi Arabia was forging closer links with Egypt, and was increasingly influenced by Cairo's political agenda. King Faisal was probably the one Arab leader "trusted by Sadat and Asad" with details of the October attack against Israel. In Sadat, Saudi Arabia recognised a counter-revolutionary force which they welcomed after the strains put on the Saudi-Egyptian relationship under Nasser. After the 1973

war, Egypt and Saudi Arabia agreed to "discourage practices subversive of the status quo" and commenced armament production cooperation. For some time, the Saudis had balked at employing the oil weapon against the United States because of the potential damage to the relationship with Washington - and their final agreement to use it was critical to the implementation of the embargo(5).

The Saudis made a decision which the West found hard to understand in terms other than political weakness or economic greed. This error, or lack of sophistication in assessing Saudi motivation, has consistently prevented Washington from anticipating Saudi policy.

Riyadh, when faced with the choice, made a decision based on its own perception of its long-term security interests in the region; not to please a superpower trying to juggle a defence commitment to Israel with oil resource security. The Saudis, well aware that the United States was capable of, and probably actively considering, military intervention in the Gulf if the oil resources were threatened seriously, chose to take that risk rather than be perceived in the region as an American stooge (6). It was not much of a risk, as the Saudis were soon bargaining with Kissinger over the embargo, and the United States was not in danger of being crippled by lack of oil supplies.

That Sadat went too far, in Saudi eyes, by recognising Israel in 1975 underlines the local and regional focus of Saudi security policy. Again, Riyadh opted for Arab consensus over the advantages of a close bilateral link with Cairo. Indeed, it was precisely Egypt's potential to assist Saudi Arabia in pursuing moderate policies which attracted Riyadh in the first place to develop a closer link. An outcast Egypt, seen as a traitor to the wider Arab nation, no matter how moderate and anti-revolutionary, was not much use to the Saudis.

In 1981, William Quandt, dismissing a "simplistic" economics vs politics model, isolated a number of key factors which could help explain the rationale behind critical oil decisions. These were market conditions, revenue requirements, technical problems (for example the relative efficiency of producing light and heavy crudes), internal politics, expectations of future global energy requirements, OPEC pressures (particularly on the swing producer), associated gas (industrial development requiring a certain level of oil production to provide the needed gas), relations with the United States, and the Palestinian problem (7).

A plausible argument can be made out that any one or a combination of the above factors would account substantially for any given policy decision. For example, the November and December production cutbacks in 1973 may have stemmed from a complexity of factors in

Riyadh's thinking, whereas the embargo decision was predominantly influenced by the fairly straightforward political need to demonstrate Arab solidarity (8).

The chief drawback with Quandt's analysis is a tendency to impose a particularly Western hierarchy on Saudi policy formulation priorities, in an attempt to ascribe to Saudi Arabia a methodology in decision-making which would be readily understood in Washington. Quandt himself goes on, while examining several critical Saudi production and pricing policies, to conclude that caution remained the hallmark of Saudi decision making, relying on achievement of consensus in the Al Saud family, tinged with a common sense awareness of the limits of the kingdom's power (9). This achievement of consensus and unwillingness to pursue policies which do not pay a direct tangible security dividend have characterised Saudi policy for decades. They often override influences which would be critical in Western decision-making.

Another analysis helps to explain Riyadh's surprise over the strong US reaction to the 1973 embargo. What seemed to the Saudis a relatively transparent exercise in protecting their own regional vital interests, by demonstrating their Arab credentials, elicited a much more negative response in Washington than Riyadh might have expected.

Before 1973, American oil companies had been warning the Administration that OAPEC (10) was serious about an oil embargo if the United States continued what they perceived as an unbalanced policy towards the Arab-Israeli dispute. Former CIA Adviser Wilbur Crane Eveland, writing in 1980, noted that OAPEC had made it clear that before 1973 "restrictions on oil exports would be directed solely at inducing Israel to comply with the UN's dictates and to recognize the "rights" of the Palestinians" (11).

Eveland, noting that the United States Government had long employed "trade restrictions and economic sanctions ... to support foreign-policy objectives and to punish regimes whose policies" had offended it, found the American response to the OAPEC embargo and cutbacks to be extreme. Eveland went on to suggest that, in 1979, President Carter sought to salvage his sagging popularity in the polls by accepting advice to "attribute to the Arab oil-producing states all of America's economic problems". Eveland noted also that the American reaction ignored other significant factors in the functioning of the oil market.

There was little relationship between "OPEC's price ceiling of \$23.50 a barrel ... and what Americans paid for gasoline and fuel oil" - the spot market sometimes ranged as high as \$40. Also, the Arabian-American Oil Company (ARAMCO) partners in the United States bought oil

at preferential rates, but passed nothing on to the consumers - the embargo and cutbacks were not doing the US oil companies much damage. OPEC was also justified in cutting back production to protect its own economic interests - with the oil price pegged to a flagging US dollar, and OPEC investments in America losing value, it was only in keeping with American domestic practice to leave the oil in the ground until it appreciated in value (12).

Eveland's analysis gives the moral benefit of the doubt to OPEC members in his attempt to describe the failure of US policy. Although casting the Arab oil producers in a rather rosy light, the point is that the US reaction to the events of 1973 was out of proportion with the damage caused by the embargo and cutbacks. It is little wonder that Riyadh, otherwise eager to strengthen and broaden its relationship with the West to accelerate industrial development, would continue to be wary of any entangling alliances.

The first half of the 1980s produced little change in the general thrust of Saudi oil policy, which had been to act, as far as was practicable in the 1970s, as 'swing producer'. Production was cut in 1985 to 3.4 million bpd during the glut, but since then Riyadh has found its role a little more difficult to manage, in the light of "growing cash-flow problems" and cheating by other OPEC members on production quotas (13). This has placed

additional strain on the decision-making process in Riyadh.

A major factor throughout the 1980s in Saudi oil policy, was "the need to use petroleum export revenues to place the economy on a high-growth trajectory that will eventually lead to self-sustaining private-sector growth" (14). The Saudis have striven to achieve a uniformity of income to finance development. They are conscious of the speed with which overseas reserves are drawn down if global production and pricing fluctuations interfere with their ambitious development plans. Achievement of such a sophisticated economic structure has been slow in coming, with oil still accounting for the bulk of export earnings. Saudi leaders have been caught between the need to achieve development, but to do it without overt Westernisation of the society and economy.

This is nowhere better exemplified than in the restrictions placed on the operation of truly free market conditions within the kingdom, without which it seems doubtful that a reasonable level of productive private sector growth can be anticipated. The most egregious examples of this are to be found in the conditions for foreign companies operating in compulsory joint ventures, into which the Saudi partner contributes little more than a name and a national status. The political push, however, for modernisation without Westernisation, and for the 'Saudi-isation' of the workforce, has become the

guiding rule of Saudi development - again, it is consensus which is important, regardless of the apparent contradiction in the policy.

It is this balance, between pursuit of internal policies which have the backing of the key actors in the Al Saud family, and policies which do not isolate Saudi Arabia in OPEC and the region, which underpins the decision-making process (15).

One decision which demonstrated well the close interplay between Saudi domestic and foreign policies was the dismissal by King Fahd of Oil Minister Yamani in October 1986.

Yamani, who had been chosen by King Faisal in 1962, had established himself by the late 1970s as the country's expert and spokesman on petroleum matters, with a high international profile. The royal family came to rely upon his advice, as well as upon his negotiating skills within OPEC and with the West.

During a crisis in the oil market in 1984, Yamani objected to various barter arrangements for oil (including the infamous 'oil-for-Boeings' deal), probably alarmed that such transactions, designed mainly to "channel commissions to the constituencies of the Defence Minister and to other princes, would jeopardise the

kingdom's credibility in the oil market and its financial stability" (16).

Yamani, a Hejazi technocrat from the west of the country, had already lost popularity in Riyadh as more and more power was concentrated, after Faisal's assassination in 1975, in the hands of the branch of the royal family in charge in the capital, and also in the hands of its own new "intelligentsia" from the central Nejd region around Riyadh (17).

Yamani had emerged from the 1973 oil embargo and production cuts as a powerful asset to the Saudi leadership. Nonetheless, the danger signs were evident in the ensuing oil glut that he would find it difficult to maintain complete control of OPEC production and pricing policy by having Saudi Arabia play the eternal swing producer. Yamani's approach was sound, but his credibility in Riyadh was dependent upon the success of what was to become an impossible mission - to balance the economic and foreign policy interests of the country with the political interests of the royal family.

The second oil shock of 1979 helped produce the 1981-83 world recession, during which Saudi oil production fell from 9.8 to 5.1 million bpd (18). The forecasts for OECD growth were bleak, and alternative sources of energy, including the 'unknown quantity' of the Soviet Siberian pipeline, added uncertainty to Saudi financial planning.

To make matters worse, non-OPEC oil production increased sharply from late 1973 to mid 1985 (OPEC's share of global production over this period fell from about 56% to 34%).

Yamani was certain to attract some criticism at home, even if he could hardly be blamed for other countries' energy policies. In Riyadh, it was easy to point the finger at the swing producer policy as responsible for forcing the kingdom to pay for the unfair market practices of its competitors; "that the expansion of non-OPEC production should have taken place precisely because the kingdom was attempting to stabilise the market through output and price restraint was especially galling to Saudi leaders" (19).

By June 1985, Saudi Arabia abandoned its role as swing producer - Riyadh simply could not afford to keep reducing production, keeping to a set of guidelines which were failing to regulate non-OPEC production, and were failing also to compensate for "concealed price cuts and production increases" within OPEC itself (20).

Unfortunately for the Oil Minister, efforts to restore some semblance of order to the market (and Saudi Arabia's room to manoeuvre within it) caused prices to dive initially to around \$8 a barrel. Ostensibly, Yamani was sacked for disloyalty by ignoring instructions from King Fahd to advise OPEC that Riyadh's 'bottom line' price was

considerably higher than \$8. Yamani may have technically overstepped the bounds of his authority, but not, from a Western viewpoint, sufficiently so as to warrant the dismissal of the kingdom's most able representative to its most economically vital world forum. Yamani had good reason to believe that he had some latitude in bargaining at OPEC, and had obtained full support for his policies from The King and the royal Consultative Council (21).

Yamani's replacement, another Hejazi technocrat, has not emulated Yamani's personal style, and has not sought the same level of influence over Saudi oil decisions. He has posed no threat to stability within the Al Saud family, which is the key to Yamani's dismissal. The family had started to feel under the energetic former Oil Minister that control of the country's economic future was slipping from them, despite Yamani's impeccable record of competence and loyalty to his employers.

Yamani was dismissed not because he was subverting the country's economic and foreign policy interests, but because his continued presence as Oil Minister threatened the internal cohesion within the Saudi royal family.

It is the maintenance of this cohesion which has stood the House of Saud in good stead through a number of crises (such as Faisal's assassination in 1975). It makes for a narrow definition, however, of national security interests and leads to an obsession with

internal political threats. This preoccupation has had a continuous impact on national policy decision-making.

Internal Security and Stability

In formulating foreign policy, Saudi Arabia has often been more vitally preoccupied with repercussions of its policies back home, where popular opposition is likely to be expressed violently. Of course, oil income provides substantial material benefits to many Saudis (including first class medical and other welfare facilities, subsidised housing and virtually individual tax free earnings and expenditures - all of which increase pressure on Riyadh to meet physical expectations).

While this diminishes the likelihood of any serious challenge to the royal family's authority, the House of Saud is peculiarly sensitive to rumblings of discontent, having seen other monarchies tumble around them, and having used discontent itself to win power.

The Sauds base their legitimacy on being the true traditional keepers of Islam, descendants of the fanatical Wahhabi sect which expanded its power in the peninsula under a banner of religious puritanism. They are conscious of the power of radical Islam to motivate opposition, especially if other economic or political conditions set the stage.

It was with some concern, then, that Riyadh witnessed the collapse of the Shah in 1979. The Iranian revolution was a potential external security disaster (22), altering the balance of power in the region, and undermining Saudi confidence in the United States' two pillar policy, which had become the cornerstone of regional security policy after the British pullout. Even more ominous for the Saudis, the revolution acted as a beacon, and represented tangible evidence of success, for Islamic republicans.

Late in 1979, a band of 'fundamentalist' and anti-Saudi fanatics attempted to establish an Islamic republic, occupying the Grand Mosque in Mecca before being overwhelmed by Saudi security forces. A little later in the year, there were violent demonstrations by minority Shia groups on the other side of the country.

Neither of these incidents posed a real threat to Al Saud rule (23). Their handling by the Government did, however, raise some questions over whether Saudi Arabia's political structure was flexible enough ever to reconcile its technical, and necessarily outward-looking, modernisation programs with conservative religious opposition. The dilemma was acute - the royal family's hold onto power was predicated on economic success, but it had based its political legitimacy on its Islamic credentials.

The Mecca Mosque incident exposed the difficulty faced by Riyadh in maintaining its Islamic political legitimacy. Right-wing religious detractors were able to demonstrate compromises made in the name of progress (for example, education of women, use of artificial telecommunication devices, corruption, excessive materialism) which were slowly undermining the Islamic character of Saudi society. The Mecca rebel leader, Juhayman Al Oteibi, invoked the new Iranian revolution's contention that Islam and any sort of monarchy were inherently incompatible.

The abortive coup in Mecca was not only a conservative threat to the regime, but represented a provincial and tribal dissatisfaction with rule from Riyadh. Juhayman's family were traditional Hejazi leaders, who still resented being ruled by a royal family for whom they had little respect. Although Riyadh has hardly neglected the western part of the country (which includes Mecca and Medina, as well as the major port of Jeddah, Red Sea oil export terminals, and the strategically sensitive border areas next to Yemen), social integration has not kept up with the pace of the country's economic development, and Riyadh still views the Hejaz with suspicion.

The incident in Mecca betrayed also inadequacies in Saudi internal intelligence gathering, poor military capacity (especially by the National Guard) to deal with such contingencies, and paralysis in decision-making in Riyadh

when faced with a clash between security interests and religious legitimacy (24).

The almost simultaneous (following the Iranian Shia revolution) disturbances by the Shia minority in the oil-rich east elicited a more measured long-term response from Riyadh, even if the immediate reaction by the military was a little heavy-handed. Following the demonstrations, Riyadh went to some length to strengthen the consultative processes in the region. Political prisoners were released, and an unpopular Governor replaced with a more senior figure in the royal family. The central government also increased expenditure on local development projects (25).

Since the Mecca incident, the Saudis have been faced each year with potential security problems in Mecca by Islamic radicals, predominantly Shia and Iranian inspired, during the Hajj season. The history of Shia and Sunni discord may be ancient, but in the middle of the conflict between an Islamic revolutionary Iran and a secular socialist Iraq (which Riyadh was openly supporting financially), religious and political tensions were bound to be high during the pilgrimage. The single largest clash between Saudi security forces and Iranian pilgrims, in July 1987, once again, as in 1979, excited no significant anti-Saud feeling in the rest of the kingdom, nor did it even inspire Shia disturbances in the east (26).

Martin Kramer, writing in 1987, takes the long historical perspective on Shia disturbances at Mecca, noting the potential created by the Iranian revolution for a serious schism in the Islamic world, but arguing that the Saudi Arabian incidents remained isolated because there was very little wider interest in a major theological rift. While this may be true, it implies that the Saudi royals were less concerned by such incidents than they might be.

Indeed, since 1987, Saudi security concerns have been alleviated, by the death of the Ayatollah Khomeini, the end of the Iran-Iraq conflict, and a consequent shift in Iranian focus towards improved relations with the West (to aid Tehran's post-war reconstruction). More recently, these security concerns have been directed elsewhere by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 (a conflict with no serious domestic religious implications).

This does not mean that Riyadh has become complacent over internal threats (indeed, its relatively harsh treatment of Yemeni and Palestinian expatriate workers during the Gulf war demonstrates Riyadh's continuing sensitivity). There has been little progress in Riyadh towards a reconciliation between its role as protector of Islam's two holiest shrines, and the inevitable clash when pursuit of that role gets in the way of economic change. The internal threat may not be as real as the Al Saud believe, but it retains a powerful influence over

security decision-making. While this influence remains, Saudi policy will be heavily guided by domestic religious and tribal imperatives.

On a more optimistic note, the royal family's preoccupation with internal security has helped it to be responsive to the mood of its subjects. It has avoided falling victim to the forces of secular and religious change which have created such turmoil in much of the rest of the Arab world. Petrodollar wealth, as mentioned above, has found its way outside the royal family, leading to a high level of general prosperity. There are, however, other powerful influences acting for internal stability.

Saudi society is structured well to absorb discontent. The Saudi monarchy does not rule by divine right, and the monarch is equally subject to the rules of Islam. It is "a traditional Islamic system" where the King has no claim to divine authority ... and rules by consensus, not by whim" (27). The informal consultative process, the *shura*, between governors and governed, helps to ensure that policies are based, as far as practicable, on a broad-based consensus in the society at large. The process not only prevents the Government from taking hasty decisions, it also acts as a brake on rivalries within the royal family itself (for example, over the succession), and assists in dampening subnational sentiment. The moves by Riyadh to placate the Shia

population in the east played a significant part in holding their loyalty during the 1980s.

The high degree of socio-political stability is founded also on a resilient family social structure. The Government has encouraged the growth of a professional based bureaucracy, which has provided an outlet for non-royals to achieve power as technocrats. "It would take an enormous political or economic disaster seriously to undermine" the current structure (28).

The Saudis have sought to construct their foreign and security policies by the same rules familiar to them in framing domestic policy. Riyadh has sought to achieve consensus among its neighbours before making decisions, and has preferred to avoid open confrontation. This has occasionally led to Saudi reluctance to move quickly on defence related issues, such as permitting foreign bases, joining formal alliances, or taking a more pro-Western stance in OPEC or the Arab League. For the sake of regional consensus, regardless of the advantages of superpower patronage, the Saudis have been prepared to accept a good deal of Western criticism and, in the case of the 1973 oil embargo, direct sabre-rattling by the United States in the Gulf.

Arms Sales

The issue of arms sales, from the United States in particular, highlights a misunderstanding over what was reasonably expected from Riyadh in security commitment to Western strategic interests. After the United States

External Security, the West and the Gulf

to meet Saudi requirements, while at the same time describing the Kingdom as a pillar of a new defense strategy in the Gulf.

Under Nixon, "the primary objective of the Gulf policy ... had been to establish Iran as the preeminent military power in the region; and to the Saudi Arabia ... of less strategic importance" (1). Although

arms sales to Saudi Arabia rose under the Carter Administration, Iran remained Washington's "prime ally" in the Gulf, receiving the lion's share of Congressional approval for quantity and quality of arms sales from the United States. The reasons were clear:

"In American eyes, sales to the Saudis were aimed more at buying political cooperation than at securing security arrangements in the Gulf" (2). Saudi military surveillance aircraft were not offered to Riyadh until some three years after their purchase by the Saudis.

Arms Sales

The issue of arms sales, from the United States in particular, highlights a misunderstanding over what can reasonably be expected from Riyadh in security commitment to Western strategic interests. Often the United States, from a Saudi perspective, sold arms grudgingly only after humiliating and unnecessary Congressional debate. Once more, Washington's actions have demonstrated a reluctance to meet Saudi requirements, while at the same time describing the kingdom as a pillar of a new defence strategy in the Gulf.

Under Nixon, "the primary emphasis of the twin pillar policy ... had been to establish Iran as the predominant military power in the region; sales to ... Saudi Arabia ... were of less strategic importance" (1). Although arms sales to Saudi Arabia rose under the Carter Administration, Iran remained Washington's 'prime policeman' in the Gulf, receiving the lion's share of Congressional approvals for quantity and quality of arms sales from the United States. The reasons were clear; "in American eyes, sales to the Saudis were aimed more at buying political cooperation than structuring security arrangements in the Gulf" (2). Sophisticated AWACS surveillance aircraft were not offered to Riyadh until some three years after their purchase by the Shah.

From Riyadh's point of view, the unequal treatment was frustrating, and explicable only in terms of the strength of the Jewish lobby in Washington. If the United States were indeed serious about a two pillar security policy in the Gulf, and paid attention to Riyadh's concerns (which must have included the growing Iranian capability, even if possessed by a 'friendly' regime), arms acquisition should have been more straightforward.

Anthony Cordesman, writing in 1987, was highly critical of the way the West handled arms sales to the GCC states. One of Cordesman's priorities, understandably, was to recommend "ways in which Western arms sales can be coordinated to enhance US power projection capabilities" (3) in the Gulf. However, he is also aware of the long-term strategic benefit of meeting the Saudis' legitimate arms requirements. Commenting on the pressures placed on the United States to "take sides" in Middle East disputes, he wrote :

The resulting lack of balance and the failure to meet Saudi Arabia's arms needs has been a costly case in point. There are legitimate security issues involved in arms sales to the Gulf, and the technical and military trade-offs in providing Saudi Arabia with the air power it needs are complex and require careful judgement. At the same time, the myth that Saudi Arabia is likely to become a major military threat to Israel serves no one's interest. It ignores the consequences of the US not providing the arms Saudi Arabia needs, it ignores the true impact of the moderate and conservative Arab states on the Arab-Israeli balance, and it ignores the importance of Western ties to both the Arab states and Israel in reducing the risks of another Arab-Israeli conflict (4).

While laying the blame mostly with the United States for failure to "build sound Western strategic relations with Saudi Arabia and the other GCC states", Cordesman was also critical of the lack of effort made by the GCC to achieve weapons systems standardisation with US forces, while at the same time the GCC states turned to the United States for protection whenever Iran appeared menacing (5).

This is the crux of the problem, and explains why even Saudi Arabia and Oman, which Cordesman believes "have generally accepted the reality of their strategic situation, ... have often been erratic in looking beyond a given procurement or force planning issue" (6). In the end, the GCC states have relied upon Washington coming to the rescue, and have avoided the difficult decisions associated with creating a sophisticated collective deterrent.

In particular, several arms requests from the Gulf states have resulted in their distrust of American intentions, and led them to look elsewhere for more "reliable" suppliers, thereby compounding the problem of weapons systems incompatibility (7). The sales of Stinger missiles to Kuwait in 1984 and F-15 aircraft to Saudi Arabia the following year were blocked by pro-Israel lobbying in Congress (8), leading to Kuwaiti overtures to Moscow, and the eventual acquisition by Saudi Arabia of Tornados from the United Kingdom.

Charles Kupchan assesses that the United States viewed limited arms sales to the Saudis as a means of "regaining some of the political leverage lost by the Western oil companies" after 1973, and a conscious effort, despite official US denials, to influence directly the Saudi position on production and pricing in OPEC (9). This would have provided the Saudis with yet another reason to diversify arms acquisitions, and to shy away from developing a more integrated pro-United States defence system on the peninsula.

To be fair, as Cordesman acknowledges, the US Administration found itself in a bind over its political need to support Israel, and its post-1979 rush to make up for years of negligence in Gulf security planning (10).

The 1985-1986 arms sale fiasco demonstrated the complexities facing the United States in devising palatable policies, but it highlighted also the danger of trying to please too many parties at once.

Cordesman notes that the major problem facing the Reagan Administration in its proposed sale of F-15s to Riyadh was that "it had seriously miscalculated the effort it would have to put into getting Congressional support for the sale ... of being willing to pay the price of a long and grueling [sic] political battle" (11).

Both the proposed sales to Saudi Arabia and Jordan led to calls in Washington for a "linkage" between them and progress in the Middle East peace negotiations. The opposition in Washington to the sales, and in general to "US strategic relations with Saudi Arabia" eventually killed the deal, when the Administration had virtually assured King Fahd that it would go ahead (12).

Cordesman concludes that it was domestic bungling by the Reagan Administration which led to the loss of the fighter sale to Britain. For the Saudis, the complexities of American political lobbying practice did not excuse the US from reneging on strategic undertakings.

The United States

In general, United States policy in the Gulf since the British pull-out in 1971 has been relatively unsophisticated. At its simplest, the United States inherited a responsibility with which it had little close knowledge, unlike the UK which had been operating in the area for over three hundred years. J E Peterson characterised US policy in the 1970s as "benign inaction", and for the years after the Iranian revolution as "overreaction" (13).

United States policy in the 1970s was driven largely by its experience in Vietnam, in the wake of which President Nixon sought to minimize "the role of the United States as a world policeman" (14). The twin pillar policy was in reality an abrogation of responsibility in a region which, although of vital interest to the United States, seemed beyond Washington's diplomatic skills.

The change to the activist Carter Doctrine, in response to the cataclysmic regional events at the end of the 1970s, led to the creation of the Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) and a renewed US commitment to the region (at a time also of sharp deterioration in East-West relations) (15).

But since the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war, US policy towards the conflict has been inconsistent, and a source of concern to the Gulf states. The Reagan Administration, following the resumption of diplomatic relations with Baghdad in 1984, threatened the Iranians with military retaliation if they attacked neutral vessels in the Gulf. But no such warning was given to the Iraqis, who attacked shipping almost with impunity; the US Navy protected ships in the south of the Gulf, but did not escort tankers heading for the northern Iranian terminal at Kharg Island.

Washington also applauded the Saudi downing of two Iranian fighters in 1984, an incident which, far from

being praiseworthy "could have precipitated a major crisis and expansion of the Gulf war" (16).

A number of other specific incidents stand out as testimony to the narrowness of US policy towards the war. In 1987, the USS *Stark* incident, when an American frigate was hit by Iraqi Exocet missiles, only produced additional anti-Iranian invective from Washington. Yet at the same time the United States was involved in the 'Irangate' arms sale to Tehran. And even when an American cruiser shot down an Iranian civilian airliner in 1988, a short American expression of regret was followed by statements justifying the US action (17).

In Iran, the United States continually re-invented an enemy to justify its "overreactive" policy change in the Gulf after the revolution; "rooted in a policy-setting characterised by tunnel vision and historical amnesia, Reagan's strategy has certainly strengthened the USA's military posture and force-projection capabilities in the Persian Gulf but without blending that military strategy into a coherent diplomatic strategy" (18).

It is difficult to see how the lower Gulf states, despite their support of Iraq in the war, would have been reassured by Washington's blundering - it was quiet diplomacy in Riyadh and Tehran which prevented the Saudi-Iranian air clash in 1984 from escalating.

Gulf Cooperation Council

R K Ramazani notes the creation of the GCC was the product of an "extraordinary mixture of circumstances within one year's time [which] crystallized a consensus on the need for regional cooperation among the six monarchies" (19). Ramazani suggests that it is simplistic to suggest that the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war was the main catalyst in forming the Council, and that other factors were equally important in galvanising opinion towards greater regional cooperation.

Ramazani identifies four major "challenges" which caused the Gulf Arab states to get together; "the Iranian revolution, particularly the threat of subversion; the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan; the superpower competition, including unilateral American military intervention; and the threat of spillover from the Iraq-Iran war" (20).

Riyadh was especially concerned by the apparent inability or unwillingness of the United States to prop-up its erstwhile regional ally. Initially, though, there was considerable resistance, especially from Kuwait, for the GCC to incorporate defence cooperation. The trouble experienced over the last decade by the GCC states in developing defence cooperation was due largely to differences among them over the object of such a regime.

As noted above, Kuwait had stronger links than any other GCC state with the Soviet Union and, for example, the UAE had (and still has) longstanding territorial disputes with Iran (21). So long as Gulf leaders were divided over the purpose of their strategic alliance, uniform defence policy eluded them. Instead, a series of bilateral agreements with Saudi Arabia have been concluded, again not necessarily conducive to regional cooperation. Such agreements did, however, have the advantage of cutting the United States formally out of a regional defence agreement - the public enthusiasm from Washington for the GCC made leaders wary of shifting too close to the American camp.

A powerful disincentive for Gulf states to accept the overt reliance upon the United States was the perception that it was precisely the Shah's dependence on Washington which had hastened his downfall. Also, the US sponsored Camp David accords between Egypt and Israel were seen to have undermined President Sadat's position in Egypt, leading to a resurgence of the radical Muslim Brotherhood there and Sadat's subsequent assassination. To avoid too intimate a connection with Washington, Saudi Arabia even went so far as to actively purchase other states' non-involvement with the United States (22).

Essentially, "political divisions within the GCC prevented the Saudis from achieving the degree of

regional defense cooperation that they had been seeking" (23). The Saudis were keen to maintain and develop their position as the chief partner in the GCC relationship, but became hesitant in the 1980s to move closer to the United States, for fear of having the entire organisation branded an American puppet. Additionally, "the United States had failed to recognize the extent to which the erosion of the moderate camp [in the Arab World] made it difficult for the Saudis to risk close military cooperation" (24).

Ramazani's analysis concludes on a pessimistic note; "considering the deeper challenge of developing a sense of national identity in individual countries, it is difficult to envisage a sense of GCC identity among the people any time in the near future, whether the rulers aim at creating a confederation or something else as a vehicle for their cooperation" (25).

So, the "challenges" which led to the creation of the GCC, and the fear which these instilled in the ruling royal families, coupled with the continuing Iran-Iraq conflict, were not sufficient to overcome more deep-seated and immediate priorities.

That progress has been glacial and often more decorative than real, underscores a policy paralysis which has still to be addressed head-on. The GCC has achieved so little because, in the final analysis, none of the ruling

families, including the Saudis, have ever tackled comprehensively the issues involved in forming a regional deterrent. To be credible, such a deterrent would require a high level of political motivation, and technical expertise and cooperation. This could lead to the formation of a military establishment which might challenge the power of its founders before confronting external security problems.

The Carter Doctrine

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was seen in Washington as a direct threat to the oil lifeline through the Straits of Hormuz at the entrance to the Gulf. In his 1980 State of the Union Address, President Carter warned the Soviets : "Let our position be perfectly clear: An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States. It will be repelled by use of any means necessary, including military force" (26).

The Gulf states (except Oman which had its own reasons for, and history of, close defence cooperation with the West) greeted Carter's statement with dismay - they had consistently been opposed to outside military intervention in the region, especially the permanent basing of foreign military forces there. The thrust of

the Gulf states' reaction was that security was the responsibility of the states themselves, and that they were not prepared to turn the area into a battleground between the superpowers (27).

But despite the rhetoric of self-reliance, the Gulf rulers had little detailed idea of how to go about protecting the area. When the Iran-Iraq conflict escalated in 1984 into attacks on oil tankers, the GCC was "goaded ... to work even harder toward developing an integrated defense system" (28). The previous year the GCC had commenced its regular "Peninsular Shield" exercises, but it did not amount to much more than "a venture more satisfying on paper than in reality" (29).

Writers such as Zbigniew Brzezinski have viewed the Gulf primarily in terms of a "geostrategic focal point of global significance", and have devised doctrines aimed exclusively at containing the Soviets, with only passing regard to the impact of global strategic theory on local strategic realities (30).

However, the strategic perspectives of the Gulf states have their roots deep in regional history, which is replete with intense competition between immediate neighbours. Their view of the rest of the world has been coloured by the early relationship with the UK (31).

It should come as no surprise then that by the mid-1980s, the GCC states were providing substantial support to Iraq, effectively paying Baghdad to fight a war for them. For the GCC states, the prospect of a hostile Shia hegemony in southern Iraq (on the border of Saudi Arabia's largest Shia province) was unthinkable. Tehran had already openly questioned the religious/political legitimacy of the regime in Riyadh. Paying the Iraqis was easier than risking direct Iranian attack by appearing too much of a threat themselves.

Baghdad was used as a mercenary by the Gulf Arab states, which were so preoccupied with the Iranian revolutionary threat, that they failed to appreciate fully the dangers posed by a secular Ba'athist state in Iraq. Iraq had never fully accepted Kuwaiti independence, and had nothing in common with what it saw as corrupt and anachronistic theocracies lower down the Gulf.

Nonetheless, a substantial commitment by the GCC to common defence strategy would have become increasingly attractive as the military disparity between the GCC and its northern neighbours deepened.

The GCC states were, however, careful to minimise the inevitable negative reactions from both Baghdad and Tehran to their plans of defence cooperation - military cooperation was not included in the Council's original charter. By the end of 1981, the GCC started to discuss

openly defence matters (and internal security, following the abortive Iranian-backed coup attempt in Bahrain in December) (32).

The Gulf rapid deployment force, albeit a gesture towards defence cooperation, was hamstrung by a lack of military coordination, and also by a need to adopt a low profile in the face, for example, of Soviet protests over the AWACS sale, or Iranian hostility over US military cooperation with Oman (33). Not given to risk-taking in defence policy, the GCC states were never able to develop a preparedness beyond one "aimed at the lower end of regional threat scenarios" (34).

For the whole of the 1980s, the GCC remained divided over its relations with the superpowers (35), and therefore incapable of pursuing much more than reactive policies.

The failure of the GCC to meet US strategic hopes, yet move much more quickly and successfully on other forms of cooperation (for example currency exchange and border controls), should have sent a clear message to Washington. What Anthony Cordesman described wishfully in 1987 as "slow but steady progress towards creating a collective regional security structure" (36), was in reality an indication of the limits to which Gulf states were prepared to go, or politically capable of going, towards regional defence (as opposed to internal security arrangements) just to suit Western strategic interests.

This is not to say that GCC and Western security interests in the Gulf do not to a large extent converge, as Cordesman and others eagerly point out. But when progress is slow, or Gulf policies seem perhaps a little ambiguous, or inconsistent with Western interests (for example, Saudi Arabia's funding of Syria's military build-up in the 1980s), it may be more appropriate to look for the regional imperatives behind the policy (what Cordesman calls, in the Syrian example, "Saudi weakness").

Israel

Late in 1979, President Reagan pledged his unequivocal support for Israel as "America's trusted ally" in the Middle East, at the same time drawing an unflattering comparison with the reliability and worth of Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf states (37). By the time of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, and also in view of the US-Israeli Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on strategic cooperation signed the previous year, life was being made hard for Gulf states to move much further on defence cooperation with the United States.

Since 1967, the close US relationship with Israel has impeded the construction of really close and overt defence links between Washington and the Gulf, although

the issue assumed greater urgency in Washington as the UK withdrew from the Trucial States in 1971. Soviet influence in the region increased (notably in Ethiopia and then South Yemen, and also through Moscow's relatively good relations with Kuwait), culminating in 1979 with the invasion of Afghanistan, putting further pressure on the United States to heighten its presence in the Gulf.

Although Gulf States had never accepted the level of US support for Israel, it was the humiliating defeat of Arab armies in 1967, the loss of Arab lands, and the further dispossession of the Palestinian people, which added to the difficulties experienced by the Gulf states in openly accepting of US protection.

A number of factors have a bearing on Riyadh's difficulty in coming to terms with its security dependence on Israel's closest ally. There is no other single issue over which all Arab states agree than their opposition to Israel. Before the Gulf war, Palestinians made up a large proportion of the expatriate Gulf workforce - and Saudi public commitment to their cause was absolute.

The Saudis, as guardians of Mecca and Medina, could not risk being seen to accept the Israeli occupation of Islam's third holiest city, East Jerusalem (and Tel Aviv's subsequent annexation of it). Although the United States did not accept the Israeli annexation, and does

not accept the legitimacy of Israeli occupation of the territory seized in 1967, Washington placed little pressure on Israel before the Gulf war to accept, in particular, United Nations Resolution 242 and the principle of 'land-for-peace'. Diplomatic niceties aside, the view from the Gulf was that the United States had acquiesced in the Israeli possession of Palestinian lands.

Iran

As noted above, even before the Iranian revolution, the Gulf Arab states may have had some cause to be concerned over United States reliance on Iran as its major ally in the Gulf.

For some time after the revolution and the start of the Iran-Iraq war, the rhetoric from Tehran was uncompromising towards the Gulf, threatening to "turn off all the oil taps in the Persian Gulf" if its own exports were stopped (38). By the mid-1980s, however, Tehran appeared to be softening its line; during a tour of the Gulf in early 1986, an Iranian presidential envoy declared that Iran had "no covetous eye on Iraqi territory and it has high respect for the Persian Gulf littoral states" (39).

Although a few overtures from Tehran did not cause the GCC states to cease their support for Iraq, the provision of American arms to Tehran at this time "in close cooperation with Israel ... suggested, at best, that the United States was insensitive to their security concerns" (40). This extraordinary development must have confused the GCC leaders who, although in no doubt of the US commitment to protect Gulf oil supplies, were now even more unsure of Washington's long term goals in the region.

The conservative Gulf regimes, haunted by the spectres of secular rebellions in Yemen, Libya, Egypt and Islamic revolution in Iran, all against established conservative monarchies, found themselves incapable of developing defence policies which might call into question their own legitimacy - by aligning themselves with the West. To admit their weaknesses in relation to the regional superpowers of Iran and Iraq would have undermined their national legitimacy and provided a fertile breeding ground for secular and fundamentalist extremist dissidents.

There was a continually uneasy feeling in the Gulf over being seen to move closer to the West, while at the same time opposing the Israeli occupation of lands taken in the 1967 war. To devise a truly competent anti-Iran, anti-Iraq, defence force would have been to move the Gulf states squarely into the Western military camp and, despite that being more ideologically palatable than normalising relations with, or courting an atheistic and revolutionary Soviet Union, it could never be admitted publicly.

The GCC might toy with the idea of an effective rapid deployment force, and urge greater military integration, but it has been hamstrung from formulating an effective common defence policy.

Firstly there was a split in its own ranks about the strategic direction the region should be going. Oman's concern over the security of the Straits of Hormuz, and its willingness to work closely with the United States, (in the 1970s even letting in the Shah's army to help put down a local rebellion) underscores the diversity of views from one end of the peninsula to the other (where Kuwait had a much closer relationship with the Soviet Union).

Secondly, the area was riddled by territorial and other disputes, partly left over from the days of British cartographical imprecision, but also the result of resource and population distribution, as well as religious, tribal and economic jealousies. In the area of security policy, the former Trucial States had relied entirely upon the protection of the United Kingdom from extra-regional interference in their affairs. But the protection had also kept a lid on local tensions.

The West's approach to Gulf security in this period after the British withdrawal in 1971 failed not just because it left a power vacuum, but because all attempts to fill the vacuum were unable to get the Gulf states to give up publicly, as they had previously, all their defence and security policy responsibilities to one foreign protector.

The Gulf has been told to manage its own security, but within ill-defined and nebulous limits dictated not, as in the days of British rule, by a single imperative to maintain imperial hegemony, but by the employment of a shifting set of parameters which have never given the Gulf states a clear definition of what or what not they are supposed to be responsible for.

On the one hand, they have been encouraged towards greater independence, political moderation and regional cooperation, while on the other left to guess the nature, direction and intent of Western policy.

The West seems to have learnt little over the past two decades; it has exhibited neither the necessary political will nor sought to develop the economic wherewithal to wean itself off dependence on Gulf oil supplies. Equally, it has failed to develop a sophisticated appreciation of the policy priorities, and methodology, of the Gulf sheikhdoms and Saudi Arabia.

A decade ago, William Quandt argued persuasively in favour of a convergence of interests, based on a closer understanding between Riyadh and Washington. But Washington remains dependent on Saudi oil for economic prosperity, and Saudi Arabia, and the other Gulf states, will continue to hesitate to aid the West's strategic security interests while they need to attend first to their own.

So, the prospects for more viable security arrangements in the Gulf seem as bleak now as they did in 1971, not only because there continue to be fundamental disagreements over how to put them in place, but also because "essentially the root causes of political instability ... are just as strong as they have been for the last three decades" (1).

Notes to Chapter 1

- 1 In the mid 1980s, GCC defence expenditure comprised half of the Third World's, running at about \$40 billion annually

- 2 S Tahir-Kheli & W O Staudenmaier, "The Saudi-Pakistani Military Relationship : Implications for U.S. Policy" *Orbis*, Spring 1982. The authors do not see the Pakistani troops as mercenaries, but as committed Islamic troops

- 3 D Pipes, *Orbis*, Spring 1983, pp 30-34

- 4 J E Peterson, "Defending Arabia : Evolution of Responsibility", *Orbis*, Fall 1984, p 473

- 5 J B Kelly, *Arabia, the Gulf and the West*, 1980, p 47

- 6 *ibid*, p 51

- 7 *ibid*, p 103

- 8 Peterson, *op cit*, p 472

- 9 W B Quandt, *Saudi Arabia in the 1980s*, 1981, p 8

- 10 J Akins, "The New Arabia", *Foreign Affairs*, Fall 1991

- Notes to Chapter 2
- 11 Z Brzezinski, "After the Carter Doctrine: Geostrategic Stakes and Turbulent Crosscurrents in the Gulf", in H R Sindelar & J E Peterson (eds), *Crosscurrents in the Gulf*, 1988, pp 7-8

- 12 Book review, *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1987, p 1116

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- 1 H W Maull & O Pick (eds), *The Gulf War - Regional and International Dimensions*, 1989, p 125
- 2 G Sick, "Iran's Quest for Superpower Status", *Foreign Affairs*, Spring 1987, p 128
- 3 *ibid*
- 4 *ibid*
- 5 B Korany & A E H Dessouki (eds), *The Foreign Policies of the Arab States*, 1991, p 340
- 6 N Entessar, 'Superpowers and Persian Gulf Security', *Third World Quarterly*, October 1988, p 1432 (for US statements on military intervention in the Gulf)
- 7 Quandt, *op cit*, pp 126-128
- 8 *ibid*, p 128
- 9 *ibid*, p 135
- 10 Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries
- 11 W C Eveland, *Ropes of Sand*, 1980, p 346

- 12 *ibid*, p 347
- 13 D E Long, *Stability in Saudi Arabia*, Current History, 1991, p 12
- 14 R E Looney, *Economic Developments in Saudi Arabia*, 1990, p 281
- 15 Sreedhar, "The Gulf Oil Scene", *SDSC Working Paper* 48, 1982, for Saudi isolation in OPEC and the Gulf
- 16 A Mordechai, *Saudi Arabia in the Oil Era*, 1988, p 202
- 17 *ibid*, pp 202-203
- 18 R H Sindelar & J E Peterson (eds), *Crosscurrents in the Gulf*, 1988, p 113
- 19 *ibid*, p 114
- 20 *ibid*
- 21 Abir, *op cit*, p 202
- 22 Sreedhar, "Flashpoints in the Gulf", *SDSC Working Paper* 46, 1982
- 23 Quandt, *op cit*, p 96

24 *ibid*, p 95

25 *ibid*, p 97

26 M Kramer, "Tragedy in Mecca", *Orbis*, Spring 1988,
p 231

27 Long, *op cit*, p 9

28 *ibid*, p 10

Notes to Chapter 3

- 1 C Kupchan, *The Persian Gulf and the West*, 1987, p 57
- 2 *ibid*
- 3 A Cordesman, *Western Strategic Interests in Saudi Arabia*, 1987, p 262
- 4 *ibid*, p 265
- 5 *ibid*, p 263
- 6 *ibid*
- 7 J A Sandwick, *The Gulf Cooperation Council*, 1987, p 198
- 8 *ibid*
- 9 Kupchan, *op cit*, pp 57-59
- 10 Cordesman, *op cit*, p 210
- 11 *ibid*
- 12 *ibid*, p 211
- 13 Peterson, *op cit*, p 474

- 14 *ibid*
- 15 *ibid*, p 476
- 16 Entasser, *op cit*, p 1438
- 17 *ibid*, p 1447
- 18 *ibid*, p 1448
- 19 R K Ramazani, *Revolutionary Iran*, 1986, p 125
- 20 *ibid*, p 126
- 21 S H Amin, *Political and Strategic Issues in the Persian-Arabian Gulf*, 1984, pp 180-183
- 22 Pipes, *op cit*, p 32
- 23 Kupchan, *op cit*, p 151
- 24 *ibid*, p 152
- 25 Ramazani, *op cit*, p 127
- 26 *ibid*, p 124
- 27 *ibid*

28 *ibid*, p 137

29 *ibid*, p 136

30 Brzezinski, *op cit*, pp 1-9

31 *ibid*, pp 14-15

32 Maull & Pick, *op cit*, p 91

33 *ibid*, p 92

34 *ibid*

35 Kupchan, *op cit*, p 15

36 Cordesman, *op cit*, p 13

37 Kupchan, *op cit*, pp 152-153

38 Sick, *op cit*, p 712

39 *ibid*, pp 712-713

40 *ibid*

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- 1 R Dannreuther, "The Gulf Conflict: A Political and Strategic Analysis", *Adelphi Paper* 264, 1991, p 81

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