

Different Aspects of the Gulf War

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Introduction

The Iraqi war is simply known as the Gulf War. It was a war that was conducted by the United Nations coalition force that was comprised of 34 nations. The United States led that force against Iraq due to the point that Iraq was annexed and invaded by Kuwait. The war began on 2nd August 1992. In 1990, troops from Iraq invaded Kuwait. The Iraqi action necessitated the largest military mobilisation after World War 2 (Austvik & Gunnar 2003). The Iraqi troops began to invade Kuwait on 2nd August 1990. It was fulfilled with condemnation of the international communities. It brought instant economic sanctions against Iraq by different members of the Security Council of the United States. The President of the United States sent forces of America to Saudi Arabia.

Besides this, he also urged other nations to send their armies as well to that region. In this way, a coalition was formed among armies of different nations. It was led by the United States. Most of the military forces were from the United States, while Egypt, the United Kingdom and Saudi Arabia were the major contributors. The initial conflict began in January 1991 to remove the troops of Iraq from the territory of Kuwait by aerial bombardment. The ground assault was followed after that on January 23. It was a great victory for the coalition forces who removed the Iraqi troops from Kuwait (Menashri, 2010).

One of the questions raised due to the outbreak of this war is, "Why did Iraq invade Kuwait?". The Iraq war and especially the behaviours of Iraq created several questions about why their leaders preferred war and war-related strategies. Why did Saddam Hussain, the leader of one of the oil-rich countries, invade Kuwait, even after the debilitating and long war against Iran? Why did he refuse all diplomatic offers of withdrawal from the territory of Kuwait and persist in invading Kuwait and facing heavy defeat against the Coalition forces led by the United States army? This paper will discuss several aspects of the Iraqi war, such as the policy of America, the crisis faced by Iraq during that period, and others while keeping the liberal idea in focus.

Discussion

According to the liberalism opinion, it was a rational response from Iraq due to their national interest. During its war against Iran, it suffered from the massive destruction of its infrastructure. When the war against Iran ended, the debts of the country reached up to 80 billion dollars, and Kuwait was the largest creditor. Besides this, hostilities were there between Kuwait and Iraq and Iraqi accusations that Kuwait intentionally made the prices of oil decrease in the international market by producing a large quota of oil. In that situation, the Iraqi government feared that they might face significant

collapse. According to the..... If the dispute between Iraq and Kuwait was not resolved, then the invasion of rich but weak Kuwait was the best option and possibly the only option to survive. On the other hand, the classical liberal theory also tried to explain the two main points: the moral legitimacy of the United States-led coalition military operation and the invasion of Kuwait by Iraqi troops according to the international agreement (Austvik & Gunnar 2003).

United Nations played an important role in the [Gulf War](#). During 1990 and 1991, the General Council of the United Nations passed 19 resolutions that related to the Gulf crisis. These resolutions include non-violent means to pressure Iraq to leave Kuwait. Other Arab countries isolated Iraq and supported the United Nations. International community tried all attempts including “international sanctions” to resolve this issue peacefully before moving towards a sanction 678, which encouraged the use of force. After the declaration of the war, Bush praised the diplomatic efforts of the United Nations, different international communities and Arab leaders to avoid the War.

In that situation, war was the only option left after the failure of all diplomatic efforts to deal with that dispute. One of the major reasons for the failure of all diplomatic efforts is that Iraq failed to respond to the demands of the international community. Besides this, Iraq also threatened the security of other United Nations member countries, particularly its neighbouring countries, which put global security in danger (Blum & William 2005). The ethics of actions during the war could be gauged by the limitation of the military operation within the borders of Kuwait. The sovereignty and integrity of the Iraqi border were respected. The vast scale of the involvement of the international community might be seen as appropriate moral legitimacy to justify the Gulf War (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2003).

In light of this reality the Gulf War appeared to be a simply war, the term got from the “Just War Theory” which manages the morals of both the choice to go to war and lead amid the war. As far as the choice to start the Gulf War, ethical quality could be demonstrated by the significant political endeavours to accomplish a peaceful situation. The morals of activities amid the war could be checked by the constraint of the military task inside the borders of Kuwait. The sway and honesty of the borders of Iraq were respected. The tremendous size of the association of international communities worldwide may be viewed as a suitable moral authenticity to legitimize the Gulf War (Blum & William 2005).

International cooperation is another important point of analysis in the Gulf War. It was developed by international cooperation that included forces and states from different continents around the world. These forces include the Muslim or Arab communities, neutral countries, the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union to release Kuwait. The invasion of Kuwait by the Iraqi troops made the world realize the fact that the security of sensitive regions would be affected if proper action was not taken. It was also believed that insinuations of the invasion of Iraq would be confined to Kuwait and other Gulf countries. Due to this, the Gulf War created fear among international communities, which made them take collective actions to maintain peace all around the world. The international coalition is an excellent example of global cooperation as it made them take collective actions to bring peace (Barzilai & Gad 2003).

After the two hours of invasion of Iraqi troops in Kuwait, the words of the United States president on January 16 1991, showed the “language of liberalism” focusing on another world described by the standards of peacekeeping, the United Nations and international law. One of the best-claimed triumphs of President Bush’s activities in the Gulf was his capacity to activate such expansive cooperation of countries through the United Nations to help “Operation Desert Storm”. Also, apparently essential to this help was his entreaty with fundamental aspects of international law. According to Herring (2005), “With the defence of democracy a relatively less important rationale – most in the West viewed Kuwait as a feudal democracy – an alternative legitimating principle came into play.”

Although the war was led by the United States, they were supported by the armies of 28 other countries under a mandate of the United States. Moreover, the US got support from prominent Muslim countries like Saudi Arabia as well as Western liberal countries. The point that supports liberalism is America’s concern with getting the authorization to secure the United Nations and the establishment of international cooperation as proof of the significance of both institutions along with multilateralism. People who supported liberalism said that enhanced levels of co-action and interdependence via multilateral organizations also restrained the execution of force with the help of enhancing the significance of economics as an instrument of policy development in international matters. They highlighted the role of Japan. It involved no war, but it was the 2nd largest economy in the world with its interest in getting access to reserves of oil, heavily funded by the Gulf War (Menashri, 2010).

Another important point discussed in different literature is that the United Nations and the United States provided different justifications to the public for their involvement in that conflict. One of the most prominent justifications was the violation of the integrity of Kuwait’s boundaries by the Iraqi troops. Moreover, the United States supported its ally that is Saudi Arabia, which was very significant in that region of the world. Firstly, Saudi Arabia was a major oil supplier, which made it very important in terms of politics as well as geography. During the visit of the Secretary of Defence of the United States, the king of Saudi Arabia requested military assistance from the United States at that time (Karsh, 2010).

During the invasion of Kuwait by Iraqi troops, the West was concerned about the threat to Saudi Arabia posed by Iraq. After the invasion of Kuwait, the army of Iraq could have easy access to the oil fields of Saudi Arabia. By controlling these oil fields, Iraq would gain control of most of the oil reserves around the world. Secondly, Saudi Arabia also granted some loans to Iraq during its war with Iran. Liberals believe that Saddam Hussain did not want to pay the debt. Saddam Hussain threatens the Kingdom of Saudi verbally. He stated that Saudi Arabia was the unworthy and illegitimate guardian of the cities of Medina and Mecca. The Iraqi army was ready to launch an attack on Saudi Arabia to invade the country. During that time, the United States president launched a mission to stop Iraq from invading Saudi Arabia, which is one of the important [reasons behind the Gulf War](#) from 1990 to 1991, as explained by several liberals.

The harsh response from the international communities regarding the invasion of Kuwait raised the

question, “Why did the US-led military coalition against Iraq? In the speech made by the United States president Bush after some days of Iraqi troops invasion. In that speech, he explained the policy of the United States related to the conflict. According to several liberal ideas, on the Gulf side of the world, stability was very important and needed a power balance, and Iraq breached that power of balance. The area was one of the most sensitive regions of the world in terms of security and economy. The United States could not ignore that event, which might have serious consequences. Moreover, Iraq can put the security of other Arab countries in danger, particularly Saudi Arabia.

Moreover, the United States is not just worried about the regional security of Gulf countries, but it was also considered a big threat to the national interest of the United States. According to Bennett & Paletz (2004), new international laws were developed after the Cold War. The national security sphere of the United States had increased to the whole world. It was the strategy of America in an era that began after the end of the Soviet Union. Thus, it was necessary for the United States to prevent a security vacuum in that region of the world to get control over the oil industry of the modern world. The presence of the American military, even after the complete removal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait, provided proof of the national interest of the United States. According to Munro & Alan (2006), objectives related to national interest were major drivers of the invasion by Iraq and American interventions. The idea was further supported by Bush (1991) that due to an imbalance of power, one state seemed to be a threat to the other state in terms of both security and national interest. Besides this, both Iraq and the United States considered war as a way to expand their politics rather than an aberration.

Other justifications that were provided by the United States and the United Kingdom for their involvement in this conflict were related to the history of Iraq and the violation of Human rights. It was known by many experts and governments that Iraq had chemical weapons and biological weapons. They used these weapons against the Iranian troops during their war with Iran. They also used these weapons against the Kurdish population. Iraq was also famous for its nuclear weapon programs. During the invasion, the troops from Iraq had committed many crimes. For instance, the Iraqi troops looted and ransacked private homes of Kuwaiti homes (Karsh, 2010).

The Iraq War from 1990 to 1991, a long way from being in opposition to idea realism and the exemplification of liberal motivation, is directly clear as a “hegemonic-pragmatist war”. It is valid regardless of the way that it may have been a poor use of “hegemonic realism” and was, in numerous pivotal courses, screwed up in its execution (Little & Allan, 1997).

Containing over 60 per cent of the world’s recoverable oil resources, Gulf countries had been seen by policymakers of the US as indispensable to the “American hegemonic framework”. The United States had made significant efforts to produce collusions, enlist customers, and finance benevolent administrations in the region. American hegemonic great methodology in the Middle East never connected any noteworthiness to political democratization. Besides this, the United States had fashioned close relations with an assortment of feudal and autocratic monarchical administrations who routinely disregarded Western and American standards of political responsibility and Human

rights (Friedman, 2001).

For the policymakers of the United States, Saddam Hussain was a real threat because he posed a threat to the order of Americans in that region. The Iraqi troops invaded Kuwait, and they had an objective of national consolidation of Pan-Aran. It marked the removal of ancient administrations in [Saudi Arabia and other Gulf](#) countries. To American policymakers, there was no doubt that Saddam Hussein pretended to be a revisionist threat to the American order in the region (Waas, 1991).

It is also important to discuss another aspect of that war that is related to the question of why Iraq did not show a positive response on diplomatic ropes, given the technical superiority and size of the coalition force that was led by the United States against them. The war caused serious consequences in Iraq and caused massive destruction. Saddam Hussain chose the risky path, and his wrong perceptions about his opponents caused serious damage to Iraq. I think one of the points that might have developed in Saddam Hussain's mind was that he could have avoided a military defeat. According to Halliday (2004), the people around Saddam Hussain gave them advice that the United States might not use military forces against Iraq. There were various reports sent before the war to Saddam Hussain that the Iraqi army was not well-positioned and it was inevitable to resist coalition forces.

Saddam Hussain did not think that taking his army out of Kuwait was a threat to his power. He was very happy to take risky actions to absorb risky army attacks from the coalition forces. Even though he knew from his sources of military intelligence that his army would lose in the battleground, he had some hopes inside him that something good would happen. According to Kinsley (1991), "In a strange way, the fact that he survived in power despite the war, the popular uprisings against his rule after the war, and continued economic sanctions confirmed the twisted wisdom of his choice."

Several scholars tried to explain the invasion of Kuwait by the Iraqi troops. They emphasized that Saddam Hussain's personality was the main factor, his proclivity, his ambition and his aggressiveness in terms of both political and personal violence. He was considered a major force in the politics of Iraq after the late 1970s. Moreover, he had shown in the past an ability to retreat in the face of superior force. Without any doubt, a leader who likes to avoid conflict is risk-averse and less ambitious and may choose a diplomatic way to deal with that issue, which is unlikely Saddam Hussain did. However, some people believe that not only the personality of Saddam Hussain but the circumstances that he faced during that period had stimulated Saddam's decision to invade. Besides this, if the decision of Saddam Hussain to invade Kuwait completely relied on cost-benefit analysis, then he would like to wait for two to three more years. After that period, his nuclear programs will be able to produce effective nuclear weapons (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2003).

Conclusion

The Gulf War provided a large number of opportunities to support liberalism theory and explain

different aspects of that war. However, it was also proved that no theory had explained the different aspects of that war effectively. Classical liberal theories explain different reasons for the behaviour of Iraq against Kuwait. Along with this, it also explained the international reaction and involvement in the war and its consequences. International cooperation is another important point of analysis in the Gulf War. It was developed by international cooperation that included forces and states from different continents around the world. These forces include the Muslim or Arab communities, neutral countries, the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union to release Kuwait.

The essay can conclude by stating that classical liberalism provided a logical picture of how international communities and politics acted at the time of the Gulf War and also emphasized how the world needs to deal with similar types of crises in the future.

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