

Iran and Iraq are very considerable; any attempt at negotiations will have to take these facts into consideration. The ball is now in Iran's court and it may well be that there is no hope of resolving the dispute until Khomeini has left the scene. The struggle for the succession is already underway in Iran, despite the official designation of Ayatollah Montazeri as the Imam's successor. The mullahs are at odds with each other because of political and religious differences and this would seem to indicate that there will certainly be significant changes in Iran once Khomeini is dead. Whether the result will be a more liberal regime or one in which power is much less centralized it seems likely that this is bound to have some effect on the war. If the regime does become more liberal this may produce leaders who are more conciliatory. But if, on the other hand, central authority disintegrates then this is likely to have an adverse effect on popular support which has hitherto been an important element in the conduct of the war. All one can hope is that one or another of the factors mentioned above will lead to the resolution of a conflict which has already produced far too many victims.

#### NOTES

1. Judging by the contents of a letter which Iraq sent to the UN Secretary-General on 6 October 1980, shortly after war had broken out, the three factors mentioned do seem to have been at the root of its action. In the letter Iraq makes several precise demands: that Iran should recognize Iraq's historic territorial rights over its land and waters; that it should act as a good neighbour; that it should renounce any intervention in the internal affairs of any Arab states, whether in the Gulf or elsewhere and should return the territory usurped from Iraq; that it should also recognize the rights of Iraq and of the Arab nation. It also speaks of Iraq as "having been forced to take up arms in response to continuous acts of aggression on the part of Iran."
2. According to then Secretary of Defense, Caspar Weinberger, the aim of this policy was to:
  - maintain freedom of navigation for US flag vessels;
  - preserve Free World access to the oil resources of the region;

- promote the security and stability of the moderate Gulf-Arab regimes in the face of Iranian intimidation and prevent the spread of Iranian radicalism;
- limit the expansion of Soviet influence in the region.

Statement before the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, 23 October 1987.

3. Another study, made public by the United Nations in 1987, emphasized Iraq's continuing use of chemical weapons against both enemy troops and civilians.
4. Air-to-air missile (AAM), Air-to-surface missile (ASM), Surface-to-air missile (SAM), Air-launched cruise missile (ALCM).
5. In fact, on 9 May 1988, the Security Council adopted resolution 612 condemning the continued use of chemical weapons in the Gulf War, and calling for strict controls on the export of chemical products to the two countries.

#### FURTHER READING

- Karsh, Efraim, "Military Power and Foreign Policy Goals: The Iran-Iraq War Revisited," *International Affairs*, Winter 1988, Vol. 64, No. 1.
- King, Ralph, "The Iran-Iraq War: The Political Implications," *Adelphi Papers* 219, International Institute for Strategic Studies, Spring 1987.
- Joffé, George and Keith McLachlan, *Iran and Iraq: The Next Five Years*, Economist Intelligence Unit Special Report, No. 1083, London, 1987.

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