

given sanctions more time? This is a serious question, but there are compelling answers why force had to be used when it was.

Since the passage of the initial UN resolution on August 2, Saddam Hussein used the intervening 168 days to:

- build up a massive military presence in Kuwait, up from 160,000 troops and 1,400 tanks in September to more than 550,000 troops and 3,500 tanks now;
- construct extensive defensive positions in Kuwait -- making it more and more difficult to dislodge his army as it added daily to a system of huge earthworks, reinforced concrete fortifications, incendiary trenches for burning oil, road and communications networks for reinforcement and the placement of up to half a million land mines along the border with Saudi Arabia;
- expand his offensive capacity through the construction of additional SCUD missile launchers;
- work feverishly to perfect his ability to deliver chemical weapons via missiles to places like Israel -- did we want to wait while Saddam Hussein developed the means to rain terror on his neighbours, Arabs and Israelis alike, in chemical missile attacks?
- create the capacity to dump hundreds of thousands of barrels of oil per day into the sea as a form of environmental terrorism -- did we want more such pipelines built?
- mine the Kuwaiti oil fields to blow them up as required -- some were already burning.

There is no doubt that Saddam Hussein's continuing objectives have been to make the effort to dislodge him as costly as possible, while improving an offensive capacity to strike out at Israel and other neighbours with weapons of mass destruction. Those who argued for more time were unwittingly playing into this strategy.

We saw no diminution of Iraq's military capabilities as a result of sanctions. Iraq continued to give top priority to the military for food, petroleum, spare parts and personnel. Industries producing goods for the military did not experience, and were not likely to experience, significant slowdowns soon. Strategic imports, such as chemical additives, lubricants, water purification chemicals and spare parts were reaching Iraq undetected. They were needed in relatively small volumes, and could be transported by air, overland (by truck or pack animal), or by small boats capable of eluding naval interdiction.