

neglecting the cause of Palestinians. The government's policy of allowing the American planes to be refueled, the congress party charged⁵² had made India an ally as well as a "tool" of the US V.N Gadgil, its spokesman, said on 28th January 1991 that "this minority government" had no right to make the refueling decision⁵³.

The reliable defense news on January 21 reported that "India supplied the allied forces some intelligence on the interdiction tactics practiced by [Soviet] MIG-23 Floggers, MIG- Fox bats, Mig-29 Fulcrums, SU-22 Fitters and SU-24 Fencers of the Iraqi air force". There could be an elements of truth in this report because India, who along with the Soviets had trained Iraqi pilots, gunners and armored officers, possessed the same weapons systems as Iraq. As regards motivation on India's part, it can be argued that India had a vested interest in sharing the data about the actual combat performance of Iraqi MIG-29's vis-à-vis the America F-16s which Pakistan has. The effectiveness of US Electronics Counter Warfare (ECW) capabilities against Soviet made weapons systems in the inventory of the both Iraq and India could have been and additional motive for Indo- US military cooperation as Pakistan also possess US supplied ECW equipment.

The "realist" argued that , economically, India had as much interest as the west in the availability of reasonably priced oil imports from the gulf region. Since an overwhelming majority of poor countries were oil importers, they stood to lose more by the cartelization of oil. So India would gain enormously from the end of regime most likely to cartelize oil in the years ahead, the arguments went, and besides, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Iran had been bigger donors to India than Iraq since the early 1980's. India's total trade with Kuwait the UAE, and the Saudi Arabia was seven times more than with Iraq. It was also pointed out that Iraq had failed to pay. India more than US \$ 4 billion it owed on construction contracts dating back to the early 1980's. Now a repayment formula through Iraqi oil deliveries had been agreed upon , only to be wrecked by the UN trade embargo. As for remittances from the gulf, there were usually only 20,000 Indian workers in Iraq against 1.3 million in other gulf countries⁵⁴. In short India had a direct and parallel interest with the major western powers in seeing to it that continued to get reasonably priced oil imports from the Gulf region.

Finally it may be conclude that the throughout the Iraqi-Kuwaiti crisis, India failed to play a constructive role, and signals coming from New Delhi were confusing and contradictory. What is particularly striking is that India did virtually nothing substantive during the August 1990 - March 1991 period either to activate the non-aligned movement (NAM) or to use New Delhi's traditional access to Baghdad to engage Saddam Hussein in meaningful dialogue. India belated efforts to please both sides in the conflict appeared in the end to have pleased no one. The Iraqi and pro- Saddam Arabs accused India of being and pro- Saddam Arabs accused India of being and American lackey for following the refueling facilities. The Kuwait and anti-Iraqi forces labeled India a Saddam storage for initially failing to condemn unequivocally the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and then for stopping the refueling⁵⁵. Unwilling to fight against Iraq alongside the US and its coalition allies but

unable also to broker peace, India in the aftermath of the crisis, found its self sidelined on the international scene.

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