
Interview: Dr. Hazem Nusseibeh

We are convinced that the war option is eventually inevitable

Dr. Nusseibeh is the former foreign minister of Jordan and Jordanian ambassador to the United Nations. The interview was conducted by telephone with Joseph Brewda on Oct. 28.

EIR: Dr. Nusseibeh, some believe that the Iraqi seizure of Kuwait on Aug. 2 merely served as a convenient pretext for a preexisting Anglo-American plan to move into the region. What in your view is the Bush and Thatcher administrations' objective in deploying their fleet into the Persian Gulf?

Nusseibeh: The Anglo-American plan to deploy massive forces in the Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf has been motivated predominantly by a penchant to achieve physical and direct control over the huge oil resources of the region amounting to, at least, 65% of the world's oil reserves. This is hardly new since it is well known that such a plan had been formulated in the mid-1970s in the aftermath of the first oil crisis, and could have been implemented in total disregard of Saudi wishes, interests or sensitivities, at a far earlier date. There was no alleged Iraqi threat whatsoever to Kuwait or anyone else in the mid-1970s and some pretext would have had to be invented, to justify a takeover.

The prolonged Iraq-Iran War in which the two most populous regional powers savaged themselves ruthlessly for eight years, put the Anglo-American plan of occupation in abeyance, while the "Desert Shield" rapid deployment force was continually readied for eventual action. The pretext came in Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on Aug. 2, in exasperation over Kuwait's deleterious oil-dumping policies, no doubt aided and abetted by Britain and the United States, which reduced the price of a barrel to less than \$10, which spelled disaster to a populous and debt-ridden Iraq. In addition to Kuwait's adamant refusal to make the slightest concessions to Iraq, or to give a helping hand to an Iraq choking under the burden of its huge war debts.

These are the objective and clear facts which any well-informed person knows and recognizes. But there is one equally important, if not more important dimension which has been the trigger and the sustaining underlying force behind the Gulf Anglo-American deployment. There is almost a consensus amongst the vast majority of our people that the new dimension and catalyst has once more been Israel. How?

Our people remember all too well President Saddam Hussein's television statement in April of this year in which he said that if Israel attacked Iraq or any other Arab country, Iraq possessed the capability to burn half of Israel. That was meant to be a deterrent and not a threat to attack, as Israel claims.

Since that statement, all hell broke loose, and Israel, with the formidable participation of its worldwide Zionist influence, was mobilized to bring down Saddam Hussein and to "destroy," to use Kissinger's wording, "the military assets of Iraq." This meant the entire range of Iraq's capabilities and its thrust to modernize Iraq in all walks of life including, of course, scientific research.

We are all convinced that Saddam's aforementioned statement was the true genesis of the Gulf crisis. We truly and firmly believe that it was then, and not the invasion of Kuwait, that the decision was made by Britain, America, and world Zionism to destroy Iraq, at the first opportune moment, and under whatever pretext, Kuwait or no Kuwait. There was no Kuwait factor when Israel destroyed Iraq's Osirak research center in 1981, no doubt with American acquiescence and AWACS reconnaissance participation.

And it is in light of this conviction that our people believe that the war option would eventually prevail, no matter what concessions are made by Iraq over Kuwait, and even if the Arab world were to achieve a consensus over Kuwait.

This is what gives to the Anglo-American deployment the ominous and most dangerous character which it has already acquired. What is at stake is the devastation of the region, and the earthquake which will follow it. The oil interests of America will also be included in the carnage, so long as the Israeli factor—subdued publicly as it is—is the ultimate factor.

EIR: Last September, U.S. Secretary of State Baker testified before the Senate, and he called for forming a new permanent security structure in the region, similar to NATO. Defense Secretary Cheney has made similar remarks. What is your view of the charge that the deployment was intended to help establish a new version of CENTO? What would be the possibility of success of such an effort?

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Nusseibeh: There is little doubt that what is intended is not a replica of the CENTO of the mid-1950s, under which, at least the Arab and Islamic countries would have been the centerpiece and the main players in the bulwark against communism, alongside the West.

The world has changed drastically since. There is no longer a communist or a Soviet danger. But to our people, there is the nuclear-armed Israeli danger of continual expansion at the expense, not only of the Palestinian cause, but of the entire Arab and Islamic worlds. It would simply try to extend the arm of the Zionist-American strategic alliance into the entire region. That would be touching the most sensitive raw nerve in this vast region and lead to sustained conflicts and revolutions throughout the region for a long time, i.e., decades.

This is the more so since Israel has opened its floodgates to Soviet Jewish immigration, the eventual decapitation of the Palestinian people, and the certain threat posed by Israeli hegemony over the region with American support. This may not have been what Secretary Baker intended. But, this is how it will turn out regardless of American intentions.

EIR: Western Europe and Japan are heavily dependent on Middle East oil. Several Western European nations and Japan have been denounced increasingly by the Bush administration for allegedly unfair trading practices. Last year, CIA director William Webster announced the formation of a new directorate at his agency to combat economic competitors of the U.S., even when those competitors are political allies. What is your view of the charge that the deployment was intended to put Japan and continental Europe, particularly Germany, under Anglo-American economic blackmail?

Nusseibeh: The feeling is widespread in the Arab region that the armed deployment has amongst its other principal components, putting Japan and a united Western Europe, particularly Germany, under Anglo-American economic blackmail. But then, these two most powerful blocs—Japan and united Europe—would not take such a threat lying down. They will find many many allies in the Arab and Islamic worlds because of America's "association-subservience" to the Zionist will. America's dilemma and predicament would vastly multiply rather than diminish, less still be swept away.

EIR: What do you believe are the possibilities of a peaceful resolution to the crisis?

Nusseibeh: We are perfectly convinced, indeed we know that if the Arab mediation effort had been given a working chance, the Gulf crisis would have been solved right from the beginning, in the early few days of the crisis. At the Arab summit conference held on Aug. 10, King Hussein, King al-Hassan of Morocco and Chadli Benjeddid [of Algeria], along with other Arab heads of state were set to go to Baghdad, with the prior arrangement of President Saddam Hussein on the withdrawal from Kuwait, to resolve the crisis to the satisfaction of all parties concerned, and of the world community at large.

Tragically, this effort was openly and deliberately sabotaged and aborted. A prearranged draft resolution, evidently at the prodding of the United States to give legitimacy to Anglo-American intervention, was hastily forced on the summit, and passed by a slight majority (substantial issues at the Arab League require a consensus). The resolution strongly condemned Iraq and rendered a brotherly Arab solution impossible. Further mediation efforts by King Hussein and others became an exercise in futility.

The rock-bottom answer to your question is: Israel is out to destroy Iraq—Kuwait or no Kuwait—in order to maintain its vast military technological capability and thereby hegemony over the region. It would tolerate no equivalence in any shape or form, nor a deterrence capability by any Arab country.

It is sheer nonsense for a superpower like the United States to fear Iraq even with a rudimentary advanced weapon, be it chemical or some other, when the United States has 25,000 nuclear warheads. But Israel does, in spite of its 100 nuclear warheads, because it wants to dominate unchallenged.

So long as Israel has such a predominant voice in American decision-making (albeit subtly), it will involve America in the war option, no matter how devastating. Such being the case, where U.S. policy has been manipulated as a blind tool of Zionist objectives, the masses of our region see no way or hope of escaping the carnage, even if Iraq abandons Kuwait without conditions. No one understands the real motivations of the Zionist as we do, and we are justifiably convinced that the war option is eventually inevitable.