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The Europeans, the EC and the Gulf: the nature of the response  
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The Treaty of Rome laid as an objective the laying of "the foundations of an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe."<sup>1</sup> Whilst the treaty identified certain policies, mechanisms and principles for achieving that union, it did not encompass defence, security, or foreign policy. Nonetheless, the Community cannot be understood by a formal, legalistic study of the treaties. It must be located within a wider political environment, especially the aspiration to achieve political integration, integration in fact, with the creation of a Western European political federation with common foreign and defence policies. Inherent in the original ideal was the notion that Europe would act as a single unit in world affairs, would be an actor in its own right. That aspiration surfaced on several subsequent occasions, for example, in the ill-fated attempt in 1972-3 to define 'the European identity' and prior to that in the proposals emanating from The Hague summit in 1969 and the subsequent creation of the Davignon system. Initially, of course, this new system was separate from the EC system per se, a problem brought home in November 1973 when Foreign Ministers met in Copenhagen as the 'Conference of Foreign Ministers' only to have to travel to Brussels in the afternoon for an EC Council meeting. Thereafter the Ministers were somewhat more flexible in their approach.

The 1970s saw the system of EPC evolve, most importantly with respect to the development of the habit of working together and the embryonic reflex of coordinated action. By the end of the decade the various states had begun to take the system for granted and to recognise and accept that there were common European interests. On the other hand, in 1979 Philippe de Schoutheete, the Belgian Political Director, could argue " we have reached a plateau.. We can continue more or less with what we are already doing, but it is difficult to do much more on the basis of present data and structures."<sup>2</sup>

The 1980s brought a bout of renewed activity. This arose from a variety of factors: including disillusionment with the US, a consequent acceptance of the need for greater European consultation and autonomy from American leadership, the pervasive concern to reinforce Europe's capacity to act as a single entity in world affairs( especially to be less reactive and more proactive), and the realization that the inept and delayed response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan had revealed that all was not well with the machinery, a point reinforced by the calls

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<sup>1</sup> Preamble, Treaty Establishing the European Economic Community 25 March 1957

<sup>2</sup>Phillipe de Schoutheete, 'European political cooperation: achievements and prospects', Europe Documents No. 1061, Agence Europe 3 July 1979

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for action over the hostage crisis in Tehran, and the crisis in Poland re-emphasising the artificial nature of the distinctions being drawn between economic, political and security issues, especially when consideration had to be given to the imposition of sanctions against both Iran and the Soviet Union. A key aspect of these initiatives was the growing recognition of the inter-dependence of EC policies, member-states' interests and the external effects of EC decisions. Also crucial was the renewed determination on the part of some (especially the Italians and Germans) to revitalise the debate on 'political union', however defined. Increasing too it was becoming clear that foreign policy cooperation could not be easily separated from 'internal' EC policies and particularly could not be separated from the EC's external relations, that is, the predominantly economic relations the Community had with third parties under the aegis of Article 113. Furthermore, in the 1980s the relationship between foreign policy, security and defence returned to the agenda. The debate focused around the scope of political cooperation, particularly whether it should include the military as well as the political aspects of security. given the role of Ireland, and with help from other states, the narrow interpretation was maintained in the London Report of October 1981, that is EPC was identified with the political aspects of security, although it was clear that the distinctions between the political, economic and military aspects of security were difficult, if not impossible, to maintain. The London Report confirmed the states would only discuss "the political aspects of security".<sup>3</sup> Wider questions of institutional reform remained on the agenda given the Genscher/Colombo initiative, and some of these impacted upon EPC. The 'Solemn Declaration on the European Union', for example, expanded the scope of EPC to "the political and economic aspects of security", but ducked the question of a single Council of Ministers responsible both for EC and EPC matters, of a small secretariat and of the possibility of defence being discussed. <sup>4</sup>Some states still wished to maintain the intergovernmental nature of EPC and the juridical division between EPC and EC.

These issues, however, failed to go away as the member states found that the imperatives that had originally led to a concern with foreign policy remained pertinent. Moreover, there was the cumulative impact of 'acquis communautaire' and the gradual establishment of the reflex of working together, so that a collegiate sense in and of Europe was becoming a real force in international relations. For these, and other reasons, the whole issue of the future of the EC and EPC came under review, leading to the Intergovernmental Conference in July 1985 and the Single European Act. It codified the existing system and contained the basic organizational structure and operational parameters operative during the Gulf Crisis of 1990-91.

The SEA reasserted the distinctive juridical base of the EC and EPC systems, although it did attempt to make explicit that the external policies of the EC and

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<sup>3</sup> London Report Bulletin Supplement 3/81

<sup>4</sup> See R. Pryce (ed) *The Dynamics of European Union* (London Croom Helm 1987)

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the policies agreed in EPC should be consistent. The EPC was at last given a treaty basis, but it was not subject to the ECJ and the commitments remained political rather than legal, if only in the sense that there was no way of enforcing them. After all, how are commitments to "endeavour jointly to formulate and implement a European foreign policy", to "inform and consult", and "to take full account of the positions of the other partners" and to give "due consideration to the desirability of adopting and implementing common European positions"<sup>5</sup>, to be legally judged or enforced? It was precisely this issue that caused problems in 1990-91 between the French and their partners. The SEA also showed that the partners were not united about the scope of their agreement to coordinate their positions on the political and economic aspects of security. Security was among the last points to be settled in the negotiations. Interestingly, even then, the Italians favoured the creation of a mechanism for consultation between EPC and the Western European Union, and EPC discussing a number of security issues. The UK, and to some extent the French, Germans and Dutch at that time favoured primarily using the NATO and WEU. This subject caused difficulties for the Danes and Greeks, as well as the Irish.

The SEA acknowledged the need, as seen, for greater coordination on the political and economic aspects of security to promote a European identity, as well as to maintain the technological and industrial conditions necessary for their security. This, however, was to be achieved within the framework of existing competent institutions, and those who wished were to be free to pursue closer cooperation in the field of security within the framework of the Western European Union or the Atlantic Alliance. Concern with the issue of security was reflected in the 'Declaration' the Irish government submitted with their delayed ratification of the SEA. It declared that the Irish did not believe that Title III of the SEA affected Ireland's "long established policy of military neutrality".<sup>6</sup> The SEA makes clear that far-reaching changes in EPC were rejected by the member-states, and indeed asserts that in addition to the developments outlined in Title III, EPC would "confirm and supplement the procedures agreed in the reports of Luxembourg(1970), Copenhagen(1973), London(1981), The Solemn Declaration European Union(1983), and the practices gradually established among the member-states". One advance was the creation of a small Secretariat, to be based in Brussels, to "assist the Presidency in preparing and implementing the activities of European Political Cooperation and in administrative matters. It shall carry out its duties under the authority of the Presidency." As for the rest of the organizational scheme Title III(or Article 30) confirmed the existing practise with : the central role of the Presidency: the regular meetings of Foreign Ministers; the innovative, preparatory and pivotal role of the Political Committee of senior officials; the responsibility of the European Correspondence's Group for monitoring the system and studying organizational issues and the role of the Working Groups on specific matters under the direction of the Political Committee. The arrangements were to be reviewed after

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<sup>5</sup>Single European Act Title Three

<sup>6</sup>See Trevor C Salmon *Unneutral Ireland*(London Clarendon Press 1989)

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five years<sup>7</sup>. This has been overtaken by the IGC on Political Union, but the arrangements outlined in Title III provided the framework of the basis of EPC in 1990-91, in terms of sphere of competence and organizational procedures.

Any assessment of the state of play relating to EPC as of August 1990, and of the Community generally, must take into account the question of perspective. The member states of the Community have been "increasingly viewed as a coherent force in international relations", acting as a "caucus in international conferences",<sup>8</sup> there being little doubt that on many issues Community states "clearly form an important diplomatic bloc".<sup>9</sup> It may also be argued that "the various collective actions" of the states "generally constitute a policy line from which it is difficult to depart",<sup>10</sup> and that as the London Report put it political cooperation has become "a central element in the foreign policies of all member states." These tendencies have, perhaps been most pronounced at the UN where the Presidency has now routinely spoken for the Twelve in major debates, and in delivering explanations of votes. The Twelve have sought to act together to resolve common problems, such as the Middle East.

Perhaps a major step forward as far as EPC was concerned, and a statement of a distinctive European position, was the formulation of a common position on the Middle East in the Venice Declaration in May 1980. In the Declaration the member states, despite very different interests in and views on the Middle East managed to agree a common position, revolving around the "two principles universally accepted by the international community: the right to existence and to security of all the states in the region, including Israel, and justice for all the peoples, which implies the recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people." Furthermore, it was recognised that the PLO would have to be "associated" with the negotiations, that there should be no "unilateral initiative to change the status of Jerusalem, that the continued occupation of the occupied territories was unacceptable and that the renunciation of violence by all was crucial to the creation of the necessary confidence for peace."<sup>11</sup>

This and other successes have stemmed from the habit of consultation, which has allowed the participants to see a collective dimension and has made the

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<sup>7</sup> SEA Title Three

<sup>8</sup>Brigid Laffan 'The Consequences for Irish Foreign Policy' in D. Coombes (ed) Ireland and the European Communities: Ten Years of membership (Dublin Gill and Macmillan 1983)

<sup>9</sup> P. Keatinge 'The Europeanization of Irish Foreign Policy' in P.J. Drudy and D. Mc Aleese Ireland and the European Community (Cambridge, CUP, 1983)

<sup>10</sup>Schoutete op cit p. 118-9

<sup>11</sup>Declaration on the Middle East issued by Venice meeting of Heads of State and/or Government 12-13 June 1980, Bulletin 6-1980 pp 10-11

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search for consensus 'normal'. In addition, there have been the exogenous and indigenous pressures relating to the perceived need for the Community states to play a wider, more coherent world role. The external world expects it to have a coherent view, and friends such as the US become exasperated when it does not. Equally important was the indigenous pressure on the EC to play a wider role.

Despite all of this, it must be concluded that the record on EPC is at best mixed, that there is really no common European foreign policy, since whilst "a pattern of solidarity has been reached, it is by no means complete or wholly predictable."<sup>12</sup> A number of states have fairly consistently maintained their freedom of manoeuvre, and whilst voting often together at the UN, the issues they have disagreed on have been important.

That divisions occur on such issues is not surprising. Roger Morgan noted perspicaciously many years ago that the development of a common foreign policy was likely to be hampered by the legacies the member states brought with them into EPC, especially their centuries of distinctive experience. He identified four distinct problems, namely: (i) the states in the Community were far from agreement on many aspects of their internal arrangements, and that some of those disputes had external repercussions; (ii) the inevitably divisive factor of straightforward commercial competition; (iii) the differing geographical perspectives from which they viewed the outside world, a factor specifically relating to their varying but long standing historical traditions of each state's view of its place in the world, and; the different substantive interests of the EC members in the international system as a whole, and in both economics and strategy<sup>13</sup>. These tendencies were epitomised in the autumnal debacle concerning the Uruguay Round of GATT. Some have noted the irony of 'grandiose plans' for IGC on economic and political union when it seemed that some states were willing to jeopardise EC standing in the world, the Uruguay Round and international trade, as well as risking a world trade war for at least in part internal domestic political reasons.

To some extent on many issues the divergences are submerged given the highly declaratory nature of EPC, the fact that it consists largely of statements and has few other instruments. This has been coupled with a tendency for the participants to unite "behind a common position sufficiently loosely defined to allow each to add his own interpretation, so producing some forward movement without confronting the major obstacles ahead."<sup>14</sup> This makes assessing the record of EPC prior to August 1990 difficult, although it is clear that record is

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<sup>12</sup>Keatinge op cit p47

<sup>13</sup> Roger Morgan *High Politics, Low Politics: Towards a Foreign Policy for Western Europe* (Sage Publications 1973) pp21-25

<sup>14</sup>Wm. Wallace 'Cooperation and convergence in European Foreign policy' in C. Hill *National Foreign Policies and European Political Cooperation* (Allan & Unwin, 1983)

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patchy.

There are a number of motivations for European cohesiveness. They may be summarised as:(i) a commitment to the ideal of European unity;(ii) the desire for a specifically European influence in the world;(iii)a fear of US economic domination and an increasing awareness of economic competitiveness with the US,as well as the need to demonstrate to US opinion that Europe is 'doing its bit'; (iv)an awareness that US and European interests are not always identical,and;(v)as a way of controlling the Federal Republic of Germany, which after all was one of the original imperatives behind the formation of the EC, and which has acquired a new contemporary relevance.

As against these, there are problems:(i) the diversity of history, values, culture and tradition, referred to above;(ii) the 'sovereignty' issue,especially in the sensitive area security and defence,with many remembering the debacle of the EDC;(iii)the fear if upsetting the US by implying that the US is either not wanted or not needed;(iv) national economic pre-occupations and interests,as latterly exposed over CAP and GATT; (v) as also demonstrated,a number of different views about the future shape of Europe and the EC , epitomized in its starkest form by Mrs. Thatcher's Bruges speech and the opposition it aroused from those who still think in terms of 'European union' and; (vi)the plethora of institutions. In addition, there is the pervasive uncertainty surrounding the new European architecture.

The foregoing provided the environment within which individual states, societies, policy-makers, and institutions had to determine their responses to the Gulf crisis. It is also true that the debate about the nature and scope of EPC has taken on new significance in recent months. Firstly, there are the IGCs; secondly, the challenges of German unification and the developments in Eastern Europe have provided motivation for a re-examination and re-vitalization of EPC, given their profound impact upon the security environment of Europe and NATO and; thirdly the crisis in the Gulf added a compelling, urgent and complicating factor to the debate about the unity, coherence and motivation of the EC's international action.

Initially it seemed as if the debate would focus on improving the organization of EPC and perhaps extending its scope. However, it has become clear that a number of member states wish to elevate the importance of the issue in response to the Gulf. Even before August , Mitterand and Kohl jointly established the objective of defining and implementing a common foreign and security policy, although they did not elaborate on how this might be achieved.The Belgians advocated unrestricted debate on security issues within EPC, the development of principles and guidelines for EPC in relation to Eastern Europe and the establishment of a task force in Eastern Europe. The Greeks agreed re security, and proposed putting EPC directly in the EC process by placing it under the auspices of a Political Affairs Council, and the merging of EPC and Council Secretariats.

The Gulf crisis changed the parameters of the debate on EPC in a very profound sense. The appearance of an 'out-of-area' threat and the possibility of war lent

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urgency to the discussion of EPC and a foreign and security policy. For the Italian Presidency, the Gulf crisis represented as opportunity to launch a 'maximalist' drive for a common security policy. In an aide-memoire' of the 18 September 1990 the Italians sought quantum leap forward by proposing the transfer of the competence of the Western European Union (WEU) to the EC Union. this implied the following institutional and policy measures:

- the principle of a security guarantee among the member states
- extension of consultation and coordination of defence and security matters
- the creation of a Defence Council
- concertation on 'out-of-area' conflicts and joint initiatives
- consultation and coordination on disarmament and arms control
- industrial and technological cooperation in the military field
- consultation on arms sales to third countries.

An informal meeting of Foreign Ministers on 5-6 October 1990 provided as opportunity for the member states to respond, and to put forward their own views and suggestions. France and Germany issued a joint statement in support of the project and advocated that the EC ministers should be able to agree foreign and defence policies by majority vote, accepting that member states could be outvoted on specific issues and still be bound by the majority decision. Roland Dumas, the French Foreign Minister, whose statement was agreed in advance by Hans-Dietrich Genscher of Germany, suggested a limited list of common interests could be identified at the outset. These might include agreeing EC positions in international conferences and united responses to human rights abuses. Dumas argued that the Gulf crisis could have been handled as one had the proposed constitutional changes been made. He, and the Germans, also proposed that the Commission should be accorded the right of initiative on foreign policy.

Whilst almost all ministers welcomed the principles of the proposals, their positions varied on the scope and degree of the changes. The Italian proposals for a fusion of WEU and EC appeared to receive scant support, although there was support for a strengthening of the ties between the two institutions. The Ministers accepted that the initial goal should be to identify those areas where common policies could be agreed and not to attempt a single foreign policy for all members on all issues. Reflecting conventional wisdom and rhetoric on EPC, Gianni de Michelis, the Italian Foreign Minister, said the approach had to be "pragmatic and sensible"<sup>15</sup>. Britain, Ireland, and to some extent Denmark voiced reservations about departing too far from the current arrangements for coordinating policy by consensus and avoiding defence matters usually left to NATO and WEU. The UK's Douglas Hurd showed little enthusiasm for majority voting, but accepted that some lessons might have to be learnt from the Gulf. Sir Geoffrey Howe, whilst arguing for more political effort to strengthening foreign policy coordination, stopped short of proposing an explicitly military role for the EC, that rather should be left to NATO and WEU. The Irish have problems with their rhetorical attachment to neutrality, and noted that the SEA did not cover the military aspects of security. The Danish Parliament has long been loath to endorse political union.

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<sup>15</sup>The Independent 7 October 1990

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Given these reservations the Italian Presidency floated the idea of an 'opting out' clause, which would allow states to participate in the system but retain the right to opt out of any specific action. This posed difficulties for those with reservations, since it raised the spectre of a two-tier Europe, and it would also make it difficult for dissenters to criticise colleagues.

There are two main themes in the debate on EPC reform. The first is the call for a common foreign policy and security policy which would represent a 'quantum leap forward' and second is a concern for improving the internal workings of EPC, a gradualist approach. With varying degrees of priority Italy, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands and Greece have declared their interest in the first approach. Ireland seeks to limit the extent and nature of the change. The UK does not support developments that undermine NATO or WEU, and Denmark is cautious because of its traditional hostility to the development of a strong security profile by the EC. Portugal is also committed to NATO.

The Luxembourg 'non-paper' presented by them as the President-in-Council on 17 April 1991 dealt with the issues of a common defence and security policy. The non-paper argued that the policy's content could evolve, with heads of government deciding as they go along which areas of business were ripe for common EC handling. Foreign Ministers would decide on specific measures and, where possible, could enact policy by majority vote. Member states would be expected to resist acting against agreed common policy, but would not be legally restrained. The draft includes a list of security-related areas appropriate for joint handling. They include disarmament, participation in UN peace-keeping and humanitarian efforts. On defence, the treaty proposes that the WEU take up defence questions arising from common security discussions on behalf of the Twelve. The potential for a review in 1996 to merge the WEU into the European Union, thus creating a defence dimension of the Union, is also written in. Jacques Delors has summed up the differing views as should WEU:

"be a forum for increased cooperation between the countries of Europe, a bridge to the Atlantic Alliance, or should it be a melting-pot for a European defence embedded in the Community, the second pillar of the Atlantic Alliance?" He preferred the second option.<sup>16</sup> The UK and Holland are strongly against the idea of merger between WEU and NATO, the Dutch in particular picking up US concerns about the creation of a European caucus inside NATO that would allegedly undermine the Alliance. The Dutch position appears to reflect in part historic German phobia. The UK is less verbally hardline, arguing that WEU should act as a bridge between the Twelve and NATO, with its HQs in Brussels, and should be equi-distant from both. The WEU should be an effective bridge between the Twelve and NATO, not a new mutual defence commitment. Douglas Hurd is clear, however, that there should be no loss of veto over decision-making, and that NATO was the basis for defence. It would be wrong in his view to catapult the EC into a defence role for which it was not prepared. He has also noted that the defects in the Community's common response to the

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<sup>16</sup> Delors speech to IISS, London 7 March 1991, Survival March / April 1991



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Gulf war were not caused by the absence of machinery or the breakdown of the machinery, but by differences in the view of the questions of substance involved. An apparently small detail encapsulates the debate: should the WEU Council comprise the Ambassadors to the EC, as France suggests, or should they be the NATO ambassadors, as the UK prefers? The model is also made messy because the memberships of the organizations do not match, although the hope would be that Denmark, Greece and Ireland might join WEU. Genscher was reportedly somewhat irritated by the Dutch position, and is adamant that "the development of a common European foreign, security and defence policy is not intended to create an ersatz NATO, but to reinforce the European pillar.... A growing sense of identity in Europe does not make the Atlantic wider"<sup>17</sup>

As has become clear from the foregoing, one of the difficulties facing European states is the problem of which institution should do what, and, moreover, the question of how to rationalize the activities of a number of defence related institutions in Europe with over-lapping functions and heterogeneous memberships. The Gulf crisis has focused attention on the WEU, an organization largely moribund until 1984. Part of the reason for its revival was precisely because of the perceived need to agree and articulate a European view on security. The revival was prompted by the Belgians, French and Germans. It was a reflection of growing concern with US leadership and the necessity to fill the gap left by ECs failure to cooperate on defence. The Rome 1984 revival sought to make the WEU the forum to increase cooperation between the seven members in the field of security, and to ensure greater European collaboration within the Alliance. Initially its revival was uncertain, but the shock of 1986 Reykjavik summit was to give it new life. It also prompted the Common Platform on European Security Interests issued by the WEU Ministers in October 1987. Amongst other things the Platform pronounced the members as remaining "determined to pursue European integration including security and defence and to make a more effective contribution to the common defence of the West." It recalled the commitment of the seven members "to build a European Union in accordance with the Single European Act, which we all signed as members of the European Community. We are convinced that the construction of an integrated Europe will remain incomplete as long as it does not include security and defence."<sup>18</sup> This European effort was placed within the context of Atlantic Alliance solidarity. What was equally significant about the Platform was that Spain and Portugal accepted it when they became members of the WEU in 1988. Their membership of WEU was to be significant in 1990-91. Nine if the Twelve are now members of WEU.

This newly activated WEU has helped to enhance armaments collaboration, and has come to be regarded as the basis of the European pillar. A important event for WEU was that from August 1987 there was political consultation between the

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<sup>17</sup> Genscher IHT 110 April 1991

<sup>18</sup> Alfred Cahen 'The emergence and role of the Western European Union', in Clarke and Hague (eds) European Defence cooperation (Manchester U. P. 1990)

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members on the Gulf. "On that basis, but within the framework of national operations, five of them stationed naval vessels in the region whilst the other two expressed their political solidarity with their partners. The two....were the Federal Republic of Germany and Luxembourg.....The national operations were technically coordinated both on the spot and at admiralty levels." The Germans agreed, in fact, to transfer vessels from the North Sea to replace any of its partners leaving the Mediterranean for the Gulf, whilst Luxembourg made a financial contribution. The WEU had some success because its treaty permitted it to take out-of-area action.<sup>19</sup> This action was particularly important to the NATO members who wanted to coordinate out-of-area issues. To some extent, as later, it provided a diplomatic veil or umbrella for intervention. Whilst much remarked upon at the time, it was not immediately apparent whether such initiatives portended a serious organizational revival or that WEU had temporarily proved to be a convenient vehicle for European governments to work together for a brief period. The events of 1990-91 brought that question very much back into focus.

At the level of individual states, domestic politics played an important part in determining reactions to the Gulf. In Italy, for example, there was a coalition government and it could be argued that there were divisions between the Prime Minister, Andreotti, a Christian Democrat, and De Michelis, a Socialist. These divisions were somewhat embarrassing as Italy held the Presidency of the EC since the beginning of July 1990, and they contributed to a number of complaints from some of Italy's allies. Complaints concerned lack of leadership; and some of Italy's own decisions as a state, especially what was perceived as a limited initial response to the crisis, both in terms of sending only two frigates and a support ship; the lack of any sense of urgency re EC meetings and ;the ambiguity of Andreotti's earlier statements, although by late September there were signs of a firmer and more united Italian reaction. In January the Italian Parliament did agree to participation in an 'international policing operation' such wording being used because the constitution forbids recourse to war to settle disputes. Some of the military believed war could have been avoided and resigned. The position of Andreotti was seen to be reflective of domestic political exigencies, and public support for war was approximately 61% in mid-February. One way Italy tried to overcome these problems was by emphasising its EC responsibilities and by making clear that Italy would only contribute initially to the naval embargo if it was covered by the WEU umbrella. This conjunction of concerns was one reason why Italy promoted the merging of WEU and EPC/EC. Italy ultimately sent 3 frigates and 10 Tornado planes, and suffered one death.

Another state with internal difficulty was the Federal Republic of Germany. It has, of course, been pre-occupied with unification, its costs, and the support to the Soviet Union for pulling its forces out of the former DDR. The real issue, however, has been the Basic Law. It is perhaps surprising that few appeared to have actually looked at the Basic Law. The relevant articles appear to be 24, 26, and 87a. These articles state:

Article 24 (Entry into a collective security system)

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<sup>19</sup> Cahen *ibid*

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(1) The Federation may by legislation transfer sovereign powers to inter-governmental institutions

(2) For the maintenance of peace, the Federation may enter a system of mutual collective security; in doing so it will consent to such limitations upon its sovereignty as will bring about and secure a peaceful and lasting order in Europe and among the nations of the world.

(3) For the settlement of disputes between states, the Federation will accede to agreements concerning international arbitration of a general, comprehensive and obligatory nature.

Article 26(Ban on war of aggression)

(1) Acts tending to and undertaken with the intent to disturb the peaceful relations between nations, especially to prepare for aggressive war, shall be unconstitutional. They shall be made a punishable offence.

Article 87a (Build-up, strength, use and function of the Armed Forces)

(1) The Federation shall build up Armed Forces for defence purposes. ....

(2) Apart from defence, the Armed Forces may only be used to the extent explicitly permitted by this Basic Law.....

[ (3) &(4) no bearing on argument]<sup>20</sup>

Not unnaturally there has been debate in the Federal Republic and elsewhere as to what these articles taken together mean. The initial reaction of Chancellor Kohl was that the FRG would take part in any action "within the framework of its legal and practical means", particularly if there were coordinated WEU action.<sup>21</sup> A more narrow view was held by his coalition partners, the FDP, and by the opposition SPD. They argued that the paragraph 'Apart from defence, the Armed Forces may only be used to the extent explicitly permitted by this Basic law', implied that the use of German force anywhere outside the NATO area was prohibited. Kohl was more impressed by the argument that there was a need to repay the US for its support over unity, and that a Germany coming of age needed to show a willingness to undertake responsibilities. However, by mid-September in a meeting with Baker, Kohl bowed to domestic pressure and decided that military action was impossible, and instead pledged financial and economic support. He was "dismayed we are not completely free to act in the community of nations in a way we would like to act." He pledged himself to seek a constitutional amendment that would release the apparent restrictions on 'offensive' German military activity abroad.<sup>22</sup> This row has lingered on as Kohl has promised his military leaders that the matter will be resolved by the end of 1991, although that is now in doubt. In March 1991 he told the Bundestag "Our partners in the world rightly demand that united Germany make its contribution in the future toward security and stability, not just in Europe but outside Europe as well." He urged a review of several options, but emphasized that merely playing a role in UN peacekeeping missions was insufficient. There was also

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<sup>20</sup>The Basic Law (FRG Press and Information)

<sup>21</sup>As quoted by de Michelis IHT 15 August, According to Financial Times 16 August Kohl claimed to have been misquoted

<sup>22</sup>IHT 17 September 1990

actions within the framework of the UN Charter or in conjunction with WEU.<sup>23</sup> The coalition FPD supports a wider role but only under strict UN control, and missions such as those in the Gulf would still not qualify as permissible. The SPD wishes any change to limit action outside NATO to UN peacekeeping. Kohl needs the support of other parties because constitutional change requires a two-thirds majority. A poll in early January showed 75% of Germans felt that Germany should keep of international crises. Other responses suggest that the Germans may be becoming rather more inward looking.

Germany did send some forces abroad. NATO had announced in August 1990 that it would honour its North Atlantic Treaty commitments to Turkey. In January 1991 Germany sent Alpha fighter aircraft and some 300 air personnel to help defend Turkey, this representing the first deployment of German forces outside German territory since 1945, and was just before the aerial bombardment of Iraq began. It was later to send Patriots to Israel, and at the end of the war sent a flotilla of minesweepers to the Gulf to help the allies mop up. There was, however, a certain angst in Germany over these actions, especially in relation to Turkey. This angst caused some to observe that NATO had protected FRG for forty years, but now the Germans were hesitant in doing their duty to Turkey. The Germans also did allow the US to use its bases in Germany for transport etc. More importantly it was assiduous in its financial and economic support of the coalition and provided support for Turkey, Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. With some reluctance it agreed to provide financial support in terms of technical aid to US troops in Saudi and to contribute to US and UK costs. Subsequently, however, it refused to sell arms to Saudi, in line with its apparent policy of not exporting arms to areas of tension, although this provoked a certain reaction given the alleged involvement of German firms in exporting certain chemicals earlier on to Iraq.

The Germans, for obvious reasons, have wanted to identify with the actions of international organizations, whether it be the UN, EC or WEU. To some extent this crisis came at an unfortunate time for Germany as it brought onto the agenda rather sooner than they wished the question of their international role, especially in the military field.

France had no constitutional problems on the Gulf, but there were divisions within the government and society. Governmental division centred around Jean-Pierre Chevenement, Minister of Defence, who sought to distance himself from a more combative French position. He was concerned with the conflict spilling over into other areas of the Middle East and was impressed by the likely number of casualties. He also became entangled in a row as to whether French forces would confine their activity to targets in Kuwait, Chevenement claiming on 17 January 1991 that French forces would only fight in Kuwait but not in Iraq. However, on 20 January Mitterand denied there was any geographical limitation, and on 24 January France started bombing Iraq. The French also faced criticism from Jean-Marie Le Pen on the right and some Chevenement supporters from the radical left. The government was also concerned re the size of the Arab

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<sup>23</sup>IHT 14 March 1991

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community in France. At times there was strain on the consensus. France also had difficulties because of its previous enthusiasm for Iraqi regime, and its general support for the Arab cause.

A further difficulty was how to maintain and assert traditional French independence in a collaborative endeavour clearly led by the US. The French were clearly less willing to be associated with US policy than the British and have rejected an out-of-area role for NATO. In the earlier phase it sought to maintain a discreet distance from US and UK military plans, and in August it launched a major diplomatic offensive to try to explain its position. Basically it pledged to support coordination in all fields with the allies yet sought to maintain French control of both French naval forces and its ground forces. France gradually evolved its role towards a less independent position, especially after the Iraqi incursion into the French, Belgian and Canadian diplomatic compounds. Nonetheless, they continued for a long period to insist that French forces would remain under French control, that France would keep its "autonomy of decision and autonomy of action", that any decision would be Mitterand's.<sup>24</sup> On the other hand some voices recognized that if fighting were to occur there would be strong pressures for a single unified command. The Chairman of the Senate Foreign and Defence Committee, Jean Lecanuet, noted that "Since the Americans have the strongest contingent, they are obviously best placed to assume the leadership", although he admitted this upset the French who "want to maintain the fiction of their independence in the event of conflict."<sup>25</sup> On the eve of conflict the French Premier, Rocard, announced that French forces would be placed under US military command "for a strictly defined time and missions."<sup>26</sup> France also broke with Gaullist precedent when it allowed US combat aircraft to be temporarily based on French soil in the context of refuelling for the B-52s. There was in any case much French collaboration behind the scenes with the US and UK, France providing, for example, intelligence regarding Iraqi weapon systems.

In order to square the circle of cooperation without identification France promoted the role of the UN and the WEU. It has argued that WEU is the structure which could allow Europe to take charge of its fundamental military security, noting that Europe would be deceiving itself if it thought that it could live off the peace dividends of a peace maintained by the US. Moreover, recently the French have come to believe that they can become the military leader of Europe, and would now like to see complementarity between NATO and a European defence. France has also begun to join NATO meetings on recasting NATO strategy (the first such involvement for 25 years). France appears to see the WEU as away out of the problem of taking part in an international military operation without giving up the appearance of acting independently. They hope that a higher profile for WEU might blur the extent of practical French

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<sup>24</sup>Chevenement Times 21 September 1990

<sup>25</sup> Times 25 September 1990

<sup>26</sup>Keesings Record of World Events for January 1991 p37941

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cooperation with allies. French policy in the Gulf in January/February 1991 achieved 70-78% popular support.

The real issue regarding France was the continuing suspicion on the part of its friend that the French were trying to arrange separate deals in their own interests. This began as early as August, when it appeared that they were trying to arrange special treatment of their citizens, and later when it appeared that they might seek separate talks. These fears emerged, for example, with Mitterand's speech to the UN General Assembly in October. Having said that no compromise was possible until Iraq withdrew from Kuwait and complied with UN resolutions, Mitterand tempered his remarks with the promise that, if Iraq withdrew its troops and freed its hostages, "everything is possible", and appeared to open the door to an international conference and a Kuwaiti referendum.<sup>27</sup> Some of France's neighbours, especially Belgium, noted that Mitterand's speech did not tally with repeated French calls for a joint EC foreign policy, and the Belgian Foreign Minister noted that "This was a nice example of where we could have had common deliberations. It did not happen."<sup>28</sup> This became a real issue in January 1991. In January the French appear to have maintained contact with Iraq through an 'unofficial' envoy, Michel Vauzelle. At an EPC meeting on 4 January Dumas argued for EC talks with Aziz and again floated the idea of 'linkage' between an Iraqi withdrawal and a peace conference on the Middle East. The disagreement was overcome by the Iraqi attitude on other matters which made it moot. But the French persisted with their basic position and attracted criticism of 'freelance diplomacy'. These criticisms were substantially increased when on 14 January the French made new proposals to the UN Security Council, calling for an Iraqi withdrawal but also stating that a peace conference would be held on the Middle East at some appropriate time. Not only was there displeasure at the nature of the French proposal, but more particularly that it had not informed its Community partners. This was particularly relevant because there had been a Foreign Ministers meeting the morning of the French proposal and nothing had been said. Indeed the ministers seemed agreed that there was no point in sending a peace mission to Baghdad, "The European Community and its member states regret to have to conclude that the conditions for a new European initiative do not exist as of this moment."<sup>29</sup> That lunch time the British Premier John Major had lunch with Mitterand and again had been told nothing. So much for the exhortations in the SEA! The British played down suggestions of irritation but clearly were unhappy not to have received a hint of a French proposal. The French argued that they had mentioned the idea of an initiative but had not gone into detail because the text was still being worked on. The French Foreign Minister, Dumas, apparently did phone Hurd, British Foreign Secretary, after it had been drafted. The Germans and Italians appeared ready to support the French initiative but again it became moot with the lack of

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<sup>27</sup>25 September 1990 Financial Times

<sup>28</sup>2 October 1990 Scotsman, Times

<sup>29</sup>Keesings Op Cit p37935

Iraqi response.

The British position can be dealt with more briefly, as there was little real internal debate, and the UK was from the outset an enthusiastic supporter of action. In Parliament in two votes in January only 50 and 30 MPs voted against the bipartisan policy. In January that policy had 61% popular support and this increased to 78% in February. Only fringe parties and politicians objected to government policy on substantive points. The UK took a tough stance against Iraq from the beginning, with unreserved condemnation of the invasion. Mrs Thatcher espoused the view that "An aggressor must never be allowed to get his way", and that Iraqi action defied "every principle for which the United Nations stands. If we let it succeed no small country can ever feel safe". The UN, therefore, was to assert its authority.<sup>30</sup> In general this met with cross party support, and except for aberrations the only real divide was on the issue of whether further military action, initially to enforce the embargo and later to engage in military action re Kuwait and possibly Iraq itself, required further UN resolutions and approval. The FCO was clear that Britain was prepared to go war with Iraq over Kuwait without further UN sanction.

A feature of the British response was a certain readiness to criticize the EC response. At the end of August Mrs Thatcher called the European response "patchy and disappointing", that only Britain and France had done more than the minimum demanded by the UN. She was especially critical that even a NATO ministerial meeting had not been able to agree on issuing a statement because some members had reservations about NATO involving itself in out-of-area issues. In her view Europe had not lived up fully to expectations, and this faltering response gave the lie to the rhetorical commitment to a common security policy as part of a move towards political union in the EC. "When it comes to something practical, which affects us fundamentally, some countries are hesitant. It is not what you say that counts, but what you do."<sup>31</sup> This reaction was not confined to Mrs Thatcher. John Major made the same point in January. On 22 January he told the House of Commons that "There is undoubtedly a considerable disparity in the extent to which individual European countries have committed themselves to the problems of the Gulf. Political union and a common foreign and security policy in Europe would have to go beyond statements and extend to action. Clearly, Europe is not ready for that and we should not be too ambitious when it comes to the intergovernmental conference on political union."<sup>32</sup> His remarks came amid other indications of irritation within the government at what was seen as an irresolute stance by many of the twelve EC members to the Gulf war. Hurd suggested it was wrong to see the EC response as a farce, although the poor response had coloured the public view. It had made clear that the UK would find intolerable any question of majority

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<sup>30</sup>6 August 1990 Scotsman

<sup>31</sup>31 August 1990 Times

<sup>32</sup> 23 January 1990 Financial Times

voting on such matters. What had emerged was the need for greater unity of analysis. As noted earlier he was clear that it was not absence of machinery that had caused the problem but differences in view on questions of substance. A sector by sector approach, event by event was the appropriate way forward, gradually working towards a more effective common policy. He was clear that NATO already dealt with defence, and that WEU should become "an effective bridge between the 12 and NATO. It is not feasible to consider a mutual defence commitment among the 12"<sup>33</sup>. Neil Kinnock, leader of the opposition, broadly concurred, arguing that the EC had no place in defence, that WEU should play a larger role, and that there was the danger of Europe becoming too introspective if it did not remain close to the US.

The crisis brought tension between the European and Atlantic tendencies in UK policy in recent years. It provided an opportunity for Mrs Thatcher to reinforce the 'special relationship' between London and Washington, a relationship that was thought to be on the wane in the post-Reagan period. The crisis and war saw very close consultation between Bush, Thatcher and later Major. There was not the same public insistence, as in France, on keeping autonomy of control, decision, and action. General Schwarzkopf had de facto command of the British contingents, and took the on-the-ground decisions on the conduct of the war. The Saudi-based commander of the British forces in the Gulf had power of veto over Schwarzkopf's orders re British activity, after consultation with the Prime Minister.

Other member states of the EC similarly exhibited a variety of nuances and emphasis in their response. The Dutch, for example, agreed to a military response because of the "vital importance for Europe of the stability, territorial integrity and sovereignty of Gulf States." They were also concerned to bolster "international solidarity" and discourage aggression. <sup>34</sup>For them sending, initially two frigates had the advantage of providing a highly flexible presence during the naval blockade. These were put under US command on 11 January. The Dutch also sent Patriots and some personnel to Turkey. This reflected their general desire to be near to the US, a position which also was reflected in their attitude to certain European proposals. They were not keen on some of French independence. They and Belgium showed a preference for WEU umbrella for operations. The Belgians, for example, delayed sending two mine-sweepers and a logistics vessel pending a WEU meeting, and only after the WEU meeting on 21 August did they confirm that they would send vessels to enforce the UN embargo on Iraq. Subsequently it increased its presence but it doggedly pursued unity of European action, and criticized those who appeared to place that in jeopardy. In January the minesweepers were declared as hospital/refugee ships, and a few aircraft were placed at UK and French disposal. Another discordant note as far as Britain was concerned re European solidarity was the refusal at the end of 1990 of the Belgians to sell ammunition to Britain. In January they met an American request. Early in January Mr. Martens, the Prime Minister, had spoken

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<sup>33</sup> Hurd IHT11 DEcember 1990

<sup>34</sup> 14 August Times



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of his country not having "chosen to become embroiled in a military conflict".<sup>35</sup>The Belgians refused to reveal the reasons for their rejection of the UK request,which also did not help matters.Incidentally, the Dutch and Germans responded favourably to the UK request.Polls in Belgium suggested some 80% were opposed to the war. Denmark praised the US response to the Iraqi invasion, and thought it "almost shameful that ..Europeans come limping behind." <sup>36</sup>They stressed the importance of international organizations.After some hesitation the Greeks sent a frigate to join the blockade,but there were protests from both socialists and communists. The Greeks became concerned with the aid being directed towards Turkey as events progressed.Portugal supported international action, contributed to the Western fleet,and made commitments of cargo ships and airliners to aid the deployment of US forces. It allowed the US to use the air base in the Azores as an important staging post.Spain had rather more problems,there being considerable agitation over the decision to use conscripts to help crew three warships on their way to the Gulf. This reflected a fear that the intervention could prove a watershed in Spain's traditional policy of seeking a placatory relationship with the Arab Middle East and Moslem North Africa. It was something of a right/left divide,but Premier Gonzalez insisted that Spanish EC membership demanded that Spain play a role.He was also clear that Spain would only contribute to the naval operation to enforce the embargo if it was covered by the WEU umbrella. When the war came Spain did not become involved in the fighting,and the three combat ships were removed from the combat zone. Spain did allow the use of bases for B-52s on route to Iraq but Spain was particularly outspoken after the bombing of the Baghdad building in which hundreds reputedly died,calling for a halt to aerial attacks against cities . Some Spanish demonstrations during the war gathered the support of up to 100,000 people, and some polls suggested only 30% support for the war.

The Irish had a number of problems given their previous rhetorical position. Ireland is not in NATO or the WEU,but has claimed to be a loyal member of the UN.In the Gulf crisis ,of course, the UN did not order its members to take military action in January. In an earlier phase,when Iraq failed to comply with Security Council calls to withdraw, the Council did call for wide ranging mandatory sanctions,using its authority under the Charter(Chapter VII),and by international law members were obliged to comply. Resolution 678, of course,merely authorised those member states who wished, to "use all necessary means to uphold and implement" the previous resolutions,and to "restore international peace and security in the area". It further requested all states "to provide appropriate support" for these actions. The Irish Prime MInister,Mr Haughey, told the Dail that this was not a decision to take military action ordered by the Security Council,and although there was a general requirement to comply with Security Council decisions,the Irish were under no legal requirement to take any specific action. The issue became whether the Republic would provide facilities for those states cooperating in the liberation of Kuwait,it being clear that the Republic would not be involved in any direct military action. The Dail

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<sup>35</sup> Independent 28 January 1991

<sup>36</sup> 14 August 1990 Times

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agreed to provide facilities, although ingenious as ever Mr Haughey sought to distinguish this from participation in war. He argued that: "Whether any role adopted or action taken by the government in relation to a Gulf war would constitute participation in war is, in the last analysis, a matter of substance and degree. For example, if the state were to provide combat troops or other personnel fighting or working with the forces of the participating states in the actual conduct of military hostilities, clearly it could be treated as participation by Ireland in the war. What may occur is something very different. The United States may wish to use Shannon airport for the landing and refuelling of aircraft carrying US forces. Merely to permit the use of a civilian airport in this manner is not of sufficient degree or substance to constitute participating in the war. It would place an extraordinary strain on ordinary language if the mere granting of peripheral facilities could be interpreted as making Ireland a participant in the war." Minority parties thought that it did. Irish 'neutrality' is a very sensitive issue, and Haughey's statement reveals something of the contortions that it now requires. Interestingly the Gulf has apparently convinced a majority of Irish people that the EC should have a common European military intervention force, although a majority also wanted to preserve Irish 'neutrality'. There remain fears in Ireland that it will have to confront the issue of its real position on such matters.<sup>37</sup>

It is not surprising given the foregoing that the EC and EPC should have found certain difficulties in seeking to arrive at a common European position on the Gulf. Hardly any two positions of the Twelve were identical. The differences reflected all the points made earlier about why it was difficult for them to agree. It is also obvious that domestic political considerations were very important. Without being xenophobic or parochial it is difficult to gainsay the arguments of the British that if unity is impossible on such a clear cut issue then it will be incredibly difficult to reach a common position on a whole range of matters. There is also the question of the nature of the response in terms of speed and efficacy. The challenge posed by the Gulf was that in the words of Jacques Delors it provided an object lesson - if were needed - on the limitations of the European Community... All around us, naked aggression, lust for power, national uprisings and underdevelopment are combining to create potentially dangerous situations, containing the seeds of destabilization and conflict, aggravated by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The Community must face this challenge. If it is to be worthy of the European ideal, it must square up to the challenges of history and shoulder its share of the political and military responsibilities of our older nations, which have always left their mark on history.<sup>38</sup> How did the Community meet the challenge posed by the Gulf and what lessons can be drawn?

European officials were initially apparently pleased with the speed and nature of the European response to the crisis and the invasion, particularly the speed (48

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<sup>37</sup>Trevor C Salmon Fortnight February 1991

<sup>38</sup>Delors op cit

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hours) with which the Twelve members of the EC implemented the UN resolution on sanctions. Indeed, officials pointed out that the Twelve determined to impose economic sanctions on Iraq before the UN embargo was agreed. What did, however, become clear very quickly was the inhibitions felt about the relationship of the EC to military aspects of the crisis, the embargo, security, and later the war, despite the fact that early in September the Italian Foreign Minister, De Michelis, was claiming that the most important aspect of the EC's response was that the defence and security issues had been discussed within an EC framework, without any problems including no particular objections from Ireland.

More generally, however, what became clear as early as the second week of August was the general expectation in Europe that it would be the WEU that would be the pivotal European organization as regards the military aspects of the question, and that it would be the substitute for the defence arm that the EC lacked. For example, on 21 August Jacques Delors pointedly noted that the WEU confirmed the UN decisions against Iraq as endorsed by the EC Council of Ministers at their meeting of 10 August.

The WEU very quickly came to be seen as crucial in attempting to work out an agreed European response, in reconciling British and French positions, in providing an umbrella for states to contribute, and in coordinating the activities of NATO's European members. The Secretary-General of WEU, Willem van Eekelen, was clear on the need for a European response, "so that the United States is not left to have to do the job alone. Europeans appreciate that the rapid American action may have saved the situation, but now it is of the essence that we join in every way feasible in order to help sustain the US commitment." He went on: "Besides adding military assets, Europe wants to show that, while Europe obviously has a major economic stake because we are even more dependent than the United States on Middle Eastern oil, it is very plain that Europe in this crisis, also sees its political interest in Western solidarity. We have a political stake in proving that aggression does not pay." He was aware that Europe had reacted in "dispersed order. Ideally, we should have got together at the outset to determine the military mission and parcelled out tasks, but nations sent forces individually and in some cases waited for UN action." After this initial hiatus, however, he felt that by mid-August "everyone has recognized the need for a framework of coordination among the European forces." He was hopeful of WEU members arriving at a common position, and perhaps even some integration among European forces, but was doubtful about any joint operational command, although there was a general feeling that more should be done under WEU auspices and that there should be greater joint operational planning and control than there had been in 1987<sup>39</sup>.

There clearly were hopes by some that WEU would emerge as the European pillar of NATO, whilst others saw this as an opportunity to link WEU and EC action. Whatever opinion on that issues, it was hoped that WEU would be the source of activity and focal point to tighten and strengthen Europe's collective

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<sup>39</sup> Interview IHT 20 August 1990

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response, and to coordinate European opposition to the invasion. WEU was also regarded as a source of legitimation for European responses and enabled hesitant governments to commit forces to the allied military effort in a way that they would not be prepared to do unilaterally. It is quite striking as to the number of European states who predicated their contributions upon WEU decisions and actions. Italy, Spain, and the Netherlands, for example, pressed for WEU coordination at 21 August meeting of WEU. Italy and Spain in particular made clear that they would only contribute to the embargo if it was covered by the WEU umbrella.

France was especially keen to see a WEU role and coincidentally it was the WEU President at this moment. France had obvious interests in promoting a WEU involvement given its long standing attitudes to various other institutional arrangements and its non-membership of arrange of other institutions . WEU also appeared to offer a solution to how French troops could operate in the Gulf without appearing to follow US orders, although with a change in Ministers and the actual outbreak of war this became less relevant. France in the earlier phase of the crisis sought to underline the close links between the WEU's security interests and the broader process of European integration. It did this, for example, by inviting all 12 members of the EC to attend a WEU meeting on 21 August, even though only nine of the twelve were members. Denmark and Greece agreed to send their ambassadors as observes, whilst Ireland declined the invitation. The links between WEU and EC were also shown by the number of occasions foreign ministers went immediately from meetings in one forum to meetings in the other forum. Again the meeting of EC foreign ministers on 21 August illustrates this. This was a French idea, and they wanted "symbolically to stress the continuity" of WEU and EC processes.<sup>40</sup> The early naval and political moves were linked as ministers went from one meeting to another, and as they attempted to show that Europe was a significant element in the international response to events in the Gulf. The French actions may also have been an attempt to deflect criticism of France itself for waiting ten days before convening a meeting of the WEU. There had also been widespread disappointment at the failure of Italy to use its position as EC President to convene an early or immediate summit on the crisis.

At the initial stage there seem to have been a number of hesitations in responses and tensions between rhetoric and action. For example , at the 21 August meeting of WEU Germany disappointed some of its allies by stress its economic commitment to help Jordan, Turkey and others, but not offering anything significant in the military field. Whilst apparently supporting the WEU's basic position on the need for Europe to act together militarily in the crisis, it seemed to others as if it was a question of merely sounding positive. More generally, this reflected a belief that vocal advocates of EC political union were delivering less than many had expected.

More concretely, the WEU meeting on 21 August produced a communique outlining the principles of European coordination, saying it would cover"

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<sup>40</sup> 21 August 1990 Financial Times

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overall operational concepts and specific guidelines for coordination between forces in the region, including areas of operation, sharing of tasks, logistical support and exchange of intelligence."<sup>41</sup> Following this WEU staff and a meeting of chiefs of staff started work on how to translate these principles into operational practice. This was complicated by Anglo-French disagreements with some other members who wanted further UN endorsement for further use of force. The WEU agreement opened the way for meetings of European and American military commanders if tightening their cooperation, a meeting held under the joint chairmanship of the US and France. The issues of European coordination and command, and European-US coordination and command remained difficult, especially given a European preference (except for UK) to stake out a distinct role for Western Europe in the Gulf. Also exacerbating the issue was the desire on the part of many European states for explicit UN backing if military action was to be undertaken to force Iraq out, although not all took that position. The WEU did play a role during the naval embargo, and that aspect continued during the war as well, but when it came to fighting the war, those contributing forces made their own arrangements with the US.

The Gulf crisis as noted earlier prompted a revival of interest in the WEU and its putative role in the future of European defence. It was almost thrust into that role by default, given the EC's reluctance to become involved too directly in military affairs and the refusal of NATO to take on, at least for the moment, out-of-area responsibilities. The US has repeatedly urged a NATO military response to such problems but the North Atlantic Council meeting on 10 August at Foreign Minister level excluded any military coordination under NATO's specific military structure for any hostilities outside NATO's specific geographical area. It was agreed the "members of the alliance should contribute each in their own way", with NATO providing only a "forum for close consultation". It was, however, made clear that any attack on Turkey would be considered as an attack on all member states and would, therefore, draw a response from the alliance as a whole.<sup>42</sup> This fundamentally remained the position of NATO, although as seen there were hesitations before actually contributing to the defence of Turkey. The general position as seen by the European members of NATO was summed up in a Eurogroup communique of 5 December 1990. It spoke of "the individual participation of Alliance members" and emphasised the considerable "contribution being made by European countries, both collectively and individually. The European Community has coordinated much of the broader political, economic and humanitarian activities of its members. The WEU has helped to coordinate the military commitment of its members. The efforts of the European members of the Alliance have contributed to a more rapid and effective international response to the crisis than could have been achieved by any single nation acting alone. Recent and continuing developments have reinforced our conviction that the European allies should take on an even greater degree of responsibility for our own defence. We welcome the development of a strong, coherent and outward

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<sup>41</sup> 22 August 1990 Financial Times & 5 September Financial Times

<sup>42</sup> Keesings op cit august 1990 p 37640

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looking European identity, including in the security area. It is part of a long term trend that the Alliance has welcomed and encouraged. It is also necessary for the maintenance of a balanced and equitable transatlantic partnership."<sup>43</sup> The question remains as to whether this was just words and whether there was a vacuum in the European response? In November two reports from WEU were published on the subject of setting up a rapid deployment force, possibly of 100,000 troops and a naval counterpart, to help deal with regional crises such as that of the Gulf. This whole debate, however, has become embroiled in the IGC on Political Union, and the discussions within NATO on rapid deployment.

Given that the WEU and NATO responded as described, what of the EC? Iraq overran Kuwait on Thursday 2 August. That weekend the EC reached a decision at an emergency meeting to embargo oil imports from both Iraq and Kuwait. In other words, it adopted economic sanctions before the UN Security Council. That weekend meeting agrees to call for and support UN sanctions. The EC condemned the Iraqi invasion, froze Iraqi assets, froze military sales and suspended cooperation on military, scientific and technical matters. By mid-August Italy, as EC President, responded on behalf of all the EC members to the UN request for information on their response to the Security Council resolutions. However, some of the Twelve, including the UK, sent their own response as well. Italy also sought to mobilise the WEU to coordinate military missions to the Gulf, and according to De Michelis, even at an early stage, covertly introduced the principle of European citizenship by deciding that the treatment of any one national group of hostages in Iraq was a matter of concern to all EC states. This, a week after the invasion, at a further meeting which also saw an expression of solidarity with any other state threatened by Iraqi aggression.

The EC was the first to send relief aid to Jordan, and moved to draw up a new energy policy to deal with the oil price rise, as well as beginning to think about a revived Mediterranean and Middle East policy to deal with the underlying political problems of the area. By the end of the second week of August, the Italian Presidency was preparing for an EC 'trioka' mission to Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt. The trioka included Irish, Italian and Luxembourg ministers, as well as Abel Matutes of the Commission. This latter was somewhat unusual but reflected the need for any action to jointly involve EPC and the EC, a matter raised in Title III of SEA, but was also a matter of urgent necessity in the Gulf case. The 'trioka' looked a ways to mobilise the EC-Jordan cooperation agreement so as to provide and demonstrate practical support for Jordan. This was to be an incentive to Jordan in the enforcement of UN sanctions. The 'trioka' also became involved in efforts to release Western nationals and to seek to ensure that their embassies in Iraq and Kuwait would be able to continue to operate. part of the mission's rationale was to have been to demonstrate that the conflict over Kuwait should not be seen as a conflict between Arabs and the West. This was perhaps particularly important to the Italian Presidency, given the Italian's generally good relations with the Arab states. It also reflected a view that the EC had in the 1980s demonstrated a more even-handed approach to the Middle East than had the US, and that this might allow it a special role in the

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<sup>43</sup> NATO Review February 1991

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current crisis.

During this period the EC states had to face the issue of the Iraqi demand for their embassies in Kuwait to close down and move to Baghdad. This demand was rejected and the diplomats received instructions to continue operating at their posts as long as possible, but not to resist if they were forcibly closed. Whilst initially impressive, the EC states failed to maintain a consensus on this issue in practice if not in principle. A month later there was renewed consensus on the issue of the response to the Iraqi incursions into diplomatic missions in Kuwait; however, although the moves were coordinated, they were not identical, given the differing levels and nature of Iraqi representation in the different member states.

Also active was the European Parliament, although this took a little more time to get its act together. The initial response was an emergency meeting of 35 strong Political Affairs Committee. One outcome was the EP sending its own five member delegation on a fact-finding mission to the Gulf. This mission met with President Mubarak, King Fahd, President Assad, Crown Prince Huassan, Yassar Arafat, and representatives of the Arab league. As well as 'fact finding', the delegation sought to impress upon those that they met Europe's total opposition to the invasion, the EP's support for sanctions, and its concern for the hostages. The report of this group contributed to the EP's debate on the crisis on 12 September. Parliament adopted a joint resolution, tabled by six political groups and the 'ad hoc' delegation, which unequivocally condemned Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and called for an unconditional withdrawal of forces. The strength of European opinion was demonstrated in an impressive vote of 265 to 37 in favour of the resolution (49 abstentions). The resolution condemned the holding of foreigners as hostages and called for full support of UN sanctions imposing an embargo on Iraq until it withdrew troops from Kuwait. Although it stated that Parliament "is convinced the only a diplomatic solution can finally settle the crisis" and expressed support for a peaceful solution, it did not rule out further action under UN auspices. It referred to the need for "additional measures", as mentioned by Presidents Bush and Gorbachev, should those already decided upon not yield results. It argued that individual states should not seek to try and secure the release of their own citizens without regard to the fate of others. The EC was requested to organize an airlift in conjunction with other international organizations to help with the repatriation of refugees.

Other points taken up in the resolution reflected EP's general concerns, relating to arms sales, the need for treaty reforms to allow the EC to deal more effectively with foreign and security questions, the need for a common energy policy and the need to resolve other outstanding problems in the region such as the situation in Lebanon and the Palestinian question.<sup>44</sup>

The European Parliament did not distinguish itself as war approached. In January its attempt to agree a declaration on the Gulf war collapsed in acrimony and confusion after more than six hours of debate and a series of motions and

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<sup>44</sup> The Week in Parliament PE 144.551 10-14 September 1990

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amendments. Every motion was either voted down or withdrawn. The only vote which passed was a proposal for a break in proceedings while party leaders tried to unravel the confusion. Delors was disgusted. Part of the problem was the question of 'linkage' with the Palestinian issue. On 20 February, just before the outbreak of the land war, the EP did manage to adopt a joint resolution, supported by the seven main political groups, which called on all parties to strive for peace and stresses the need for Iraq to comply with Security Council resolutions. This was adopted by 184 votes in favour to none against with three abstentions.

Andreotti addressed the EP in September as Council President, reviewing what the EC had done and seeking to set out guidelines for future action. It was a significant statement in as much that the Presidency is required to consult with the other member states before making such pronouncements. It reflected a collective view. The invasion was described as a major violation of the international order and he deplored the despicable treatment of thousands of foreign citizens. He spoke of the EC's legitimate and collective interests in the matter, not least because the Gulf region was a major energy source, but also because Iraq's action would have particularly serious effects for the weaker third world countries. He pointed out that the EC's action to date had been necessary to stop further aggression, to restore the freedom of Kuwait and to ensure the safety and freedom of foreign citizens. It was not a matter of a conflict between the West and Iraq. He tried to show that the EC action in adopting the trade embargo, giving aid, and the decision of the twelve to act together was exemplary in terms of speed and effectiveness. He rejected any criticism that the EC had failed to act properly. Its approach had been governed by the UN and Security Council resolutions, where the aim was to ensure a negotiated and peaceful settlement to the crisis. He acknowledged a debt to the US for its timely intervention. He stated that close links with the Arab states were being established and that the negotiations for a free trade agreement with the Gulf states was being speeded up. The EC recognised that complete implementation of the embargo would mean heavy sacrifices for Turkey, Egypt, and Jordan, and therefore it was essential for the EC to show solidarity to these states. The EC was committed to helping with emergency measures and to evacuate refugees. Andreotti deplored the situation in the Middle East, and reaffirmed belief in the right of Palestinians to self-determination and the need for a fair and lasting solution. A final settlement also had to guarantee the security of Israel.

The Gulf crisis was regarded as highlighting the need for the EC states to work together, making political and economic and monetary union more than ever necessary in order to increase the ability of the EC to act as one voice. The Community had to adopt a higher profile in political matters and in foreign policy, and this necessitated institutional structures to achieve this.

At the same session, Delors expressed his satisfaction with the unity shown by the Twelve since the crisis broke in August, adding that fears of a split had proved groundless, the Community as a whole agreeing to uphold international law and to apply UN resolutions. Delors spoke of the EC's special role in the



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Middle East, because of historical links, and wanted to emphasize that it was not a North/South conflict, and the Europeans had to act on the blatant inequalities that existed in the region. The question was how would the Community respond? Delors spoke of the 6m. ECU already sent in medical and emergency aid, a further 15m. ECU that had been committed, and noted that the commission was requesting an extra 30m. ECU from the EC budget. He warned of the need to avoid the errors of 1973-4, the steps to set up oil reserves which could be called upon and the regular pooling of information. He called for action to curb speculation in the oil market.

Delors stressed, however, that the Community did not possess adequate institutional means to respond rapidly to the invasion and expressed sympathy with those that would have liked to have seen an EC task force sent to the region. Perhaps one lesson to be learnt he thought was the need to improve political cooperation and enable the Community to make that leap forward and to take on a new role in the future. <sup>45</sup>In March 1991 his basic analysis was unaltered. The EC took some steps well, but "once it became obvious that the situation would have to be resolved by armed combat, the Community had neither the institutional machinery nor the military force which would have allowed it to act as a community." He reaffirmed his view that the "only option compatible with the complete vision of European union [was].. to insert a common security policy.. Not that transitional arrangements should be ruled out. Indeed, they will be essential, notably in the area of defence where the Western European Union can play a very useful role. However, we must make it clear that what we are proposing is a single community as a logical extension of the ambitions of European union heralded by the Single European Act." Delors in March noted that "A common defence policy will be meaningless unless it reflects two types of solidarity: unity of analysis and action in foreign policy and a reciprocal commitment to come to the aid of any member state whose integrity is threatened." Indeed he wanted the commitment of Article V of WEU treaty to be incorporated into the Union, namely that they would agree that "any of the member states...the object of an armed attack in Europe..[would lead to the other members] afford the party so attacked all the military and other aid and assistance in their power." Delors wanted the new treaty to allow for common defence issues to be dealt with by the European Council, and by joint councils of foreign and defence ministers, so that "[L]ittle by little a framework for decision-making and action would be set up between the Community and the WEU". The war, as noted, had shown the "limitations of the European Community".<sup>46</sup>

Initially the analysis from EC officials had been rather upbeat. De Michelis insisted that EC states had acted "effectively and with clarity of intentions and decisions" to the Gulf crisis, and was clearly irritated by criticisms of the Italian response as a state, its response as the incumbent EC President, and, indeed, the EC's response. He regarded Mrs Thatcher's Helsinki speech as "unjustified and

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid

<sup>46</sup> Delors 7 March 1991 Op cit

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ungenerous."<sup>47</sup> He preferred a positive assessment of the EC's role, particularly wishing to see the crisis and the EC's response as greatly enhancing the possibility of the Twelve making significant steps towards political union. He felt the intensity of the Twelve's collaboration had been "a real start on building political union in Europe", and that their reaction had been "light years ahead of any of its previous actions to major international crises both in speech and in content." Whilst in July it had been on open question whether defence and security questions could be built into deeper foreign policy collaboration, by early September "in a certain sense the problem is solved and we will now have to discuss the legal aspects, institutions and powers." Not everyone agreed then or now with this assessment of the response or the upbeat view of the future.<sup>48</sup>

Sceptics rather than looking at the rhetoric, saw resurfacing of old national positions and divergences of interests and views. They pointed to the limitations in the Community's response, and particularly the clear divergence between those who were reluctant to back any policy with force, especially the Italians and Greeks, with the more resolute British attitude. There was also originally the striking French determination to remain somewhat detached, and to assert its traditional policy of acting somewhat independently. The rejoinder to this argument is that the EC could not have done more with its current legal, indeed quasi-constitutional framework. It is sometimes overlooked, particularly in the UK, that the EC is a very Treaty based organization and that, outwith EPC, the starting point of any discussion is always on what treaty article base the discussion is taking place and what will be the legal basis of any action. This may be irritating at times, but it is also a position of some considerable strength for an international organization like the EC. Although the EPC procedures are not so treaty-bound, the member states are then faced with the question of what instruments to apply to implement their foreign policy decisions. These are either fundamentally national measures, and therefore up to each individual state, or are EC based. If the latter, the states are again driven back to the treaty issue. It is this issue which has provoked the perception that the framework needs to be changed in the directions closer and swifter political integration. This reaction was evident in the attitude of Delors, Andreotti and De Michelis, and in the frustration felt by several EC Commissioners at the limits on what the EC could do and agree. This surfaced in the proposals by Sir Leon Brittan for a new 'European Security Community' to pool the defence and military strategies of the twelve member states of the present Community. Whilst the EC's response had been "swift and impressive", the issue, according to Brittan had raised fundamental questions for the future of the Community. What was needed now was "the charter and the mechanisms to articulate a genuine European foreign policy", with EPC moving beyond a mere process of intergovernmental cooperation. The ESC was to be the "true European Pillar" within NATO, replacing the WEU, the Eurogroup, and IEPG, and would provide the EC with teeth to back its policies in such confrontations as the Gulf. He, like others before him, argued that economic, foreign, and defence

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<sup>47</sup> 1-2 September 1990 IHT

<sup>48</sup> 6 September 1990 Financial Times

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policy were too deeply entwined to be separated and it was the EC which had "unique, and uniquely successful, mechanisms for collaboration and common decision-making between independent democratic countries. It[was] therefore right and natural that the EC should be the basis for a new European Security Council within NATO". The IGC on political union had to focus on creating effective EC security arrangements<sup>49</sup>.

As the crisis unfolded the Community became less optimistic and faced a number of difficulties. One such was over the originally much vaunted EC humanitarian aid for refugees and financial support for the states most affected by the UN embargo. In the first week of September, the Foreign Ministers met in Rome to discuss the Commission proposals for a step up in EC aid to these states. The Commission was anxious, astutely as it turned out, to table its proposals for significant EC contribution before the issue became bogged down in wrangling about how the burden should be shared. It was hoping also to use the crisis as a lever to enable member governments to unblock the negotiations with the Gulf Co-operation Council on free trade, as well as generating funds for a revived Mediterranean policy. On 7 September the Foreign Ministers agree in principle to offer £1 billion to the three Arab states hardest hit. This was seen as about 15% of what was needed; the rest was to come from elsewhere. It was made clear that the support was a contribution towards loss of revenue, and meant that the EC would not accept arguments for any of the three trying to break the UN embargo.

Embarrassingly for the EC, and epitomizing both its internal decision-making problems and the member states' divergent interests, the EC Finance Ministers meeting one day late put off a decision on how much relief money should go to Jordan, Egypt, and Turkey, although not challenging the principle that aid should be provided. They, however, insisted on more details of the three states' needs and furthermore a study of the competing demands for EC emergency aid. John Major and the Dutch Finance Minister, Wim Kok, voiced reservations over the large sums originally suggested by the French, and noted that the EC had other commitments, for example, to Eastern Europe. The British also took the view that financial aid must take into account the military costs of those EC states that had sent forces to the Gulf.

The saga of the aid for the front-line states was to continue for a month. On 17 September the Foreign Ministers failed to agree, a fact that provoked Jacques Delors to publicly argue that this was "deplorable"<sup>50</sup>. On this occasion it was again the UK and Dutch, with some support from Spain, that argued that a recent flood of contributions from the rest of the world, especially Japan, should alter the Commission's arithmetic. Douglas Hurd also referred to the £2 million per day the British military effort was costing the British tax payer, and that that needed to be taken into account.

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<sup>49</sup> 12 September 1990 Times & The week in Europe WE/31/90 EC Commission

<sup>50</sup> 18 September 1990 Financial Times

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It was only in the beginning of October that the EC Foreign Ministers finally reached agreement on aid totalling £1.04 billion to Jordan, Egypt, and Turkey. One-third of this was to come from EC grants and loans, and two-thirds from the twelve national exchequers. This differed from the Commission's hope that the split would be 50-50. It had proposed this in the hope that this would reduce disagreements as to who should contribute what, and indeed this has proved to be a problem. Later a further issue became a Greek bid to require interest on the loan to Turkey, an attempt that was voted down. Even in January 1991 the Commission was still trying to speed up the delivery of the EC aid to these three states, and at that time only one-third of the aid pledged by individual EC member states had reached the putative recipients. The Commission was given responsibility for sharing out the EC aid.

At the same meeting in the first week of September, the Foreign Ministers decided not to promise to contribute to the cost of the US' deployment of troops in the Gulf. This decision also caused some internal tension. There was general sympathy for the US' call for burden-sharing, which De Michelis describes as "justified and legitimate" but he also argued that "we want to contribute autonomously and directly, and not to the national expenses of a single country, even if that country is an ally." He went on to note that the US' military action was "taken autonomously. Don't forget the principle of no taxation without representation." The US should also appreciate that the EC economic aid package to the front-line states would 'relieve' the US of a burden it would otherwise have had to meet.<sup>51</sup>

A further problem in the financial area was the question of aid to Syria. The British government had blocked EC-Syrian talks since 1986 when it broke off diplomatic relations with Syria because it believed Syria had helped in the abortive plot to place a bomb on board an EL Al aircraft at Heathrow. By the middle of September 1990 Hurd gave consent for the Commission to open talks with Syria on grants and loans expected to be worth at least £105m. over five years. Despite this change of view, a few weeks later at the UK's request, some diplomatic sanctions remained against Syria. On 28 November Britain announced it would resume diplomatic relations with Syria.

Simultaneously with these activities, the EC agreed a joint declaration on the Gulf with the Soviet Union at the end of September, although it was expressed in very general terms. This declaration seems to have stemmed from a Soviet initiative. More problematical was the attempt to re-launch the Euro-Arab dialogue. following the issuing of a declaration by EC Foreign Ministers which reaffirmed their "determination to consolidate and reinforce the historic ties of friendship which bind them to the whole of the Arab world",<sup>52</sup> it had been hoped that the Euro-Arab dialogue, which had had some success in the 1970s, might be revived. In fact, a meeting between EC Foreign Ministers and their Arab League counterparts had to be postponed. Not, on this occasion, because of EC

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<sup>51</sup>8-9 September 1990 IHT

<sup>52</sup> 3 October 1990 Financial Times

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differences, but rather because of a profound rupture among the Arab League members. Nonetheless, a complicating factor in its Middle East policy began to emerge for the EC, namely whether there was or should be any 'linkage' between the Gulf crisis and the Palestinian issue.

An area where Saddam Hussein exacerbated directly the problems of EC cohesion was in regard to the hostages in Kuwait and Iraq. In mid-August it was thought some 7000 EC nationals were involved, and it was also felt to be crucial that EC solidarity was maintained over their plight, especially given the ringing EC declaration that "any attempt to harm or jeopardize the safety of any EC citizen will be considered as a most grave offence directed against the Community and all its member states and will provoke a united response from the entire Community", <sup>53</sup>the step which de Michelis saw as the introduction of a common EC citizenship. Concern for the hostages had also figured highly during the 'trioka' visits, when they asked Jordanian help in reminding Iraq of its international obligations. The EC had as early as 10 August condemned the detention of foreigners, and followed this by indignantly condemning the positioning of the hostages in or near military targets. It warned that individual Iraqi citizens would be held responsible for any illegal actions effecting the security of EC and other foreign nationals.

In early September the EC Foreign Ministers agreed to ask the UN Secretary General to send a mission to contact the Western diplomats trapped in Kuwait, and remained concerned about the general hostage issue. By the end of the month and in October there was growing and real concern that Iraq's selective release policy might erode EC unity over the Gulf crisis, particularly given the decisions to free all of the more than 300 French hostages and to allow 33 Britons to fly home after the visit of Mr Heath. The French tried to insist that the release was a unilateral action by Baghdad. President Mitterand said France had had "no contact with Iraq, no delegates, no emissary,"<sup>54</sup> although some entertained doubts following Mitterand's UN General Assembly speech and when Baghdad claimed that they had been contact with Claude Cheysson (former French Foreign Minister and EC Commissioner) shortly before the hostages were put on the plane. Cheysson refused to either confirm or deny that he had met the Iraqi Foreign Minister.

It was concern over such initiatives by former statesmen, including Brandt, and Heath, that prompted a clear declaration by the EC Heads of State and/or Government at the European Council meeting in Rome in October 1990. The Twelve expressed concern at Iraq's persistent violation of international law, the continuing occupation of Kuwait, the holding of hostages and the repeated violations of conventions relating to diplomatic relations. They reaffirmed the importance of resolution of crisis on the basis of UN Security Council resolutions. The European Council noted especially "their determination not to negotiate with Iraq the release of foreign hostages and to discourage others from

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<sup>53</sup>The Week in Europe WE/30/90

<sup>54</sup> 29 October IHT

doing so."<sup>55</sup> They wanted UN action in this matter. Mrs Thatcher saw this as a very strong "signal to Iraq..on the determination not to have wedges between the allies."<sup>56</sup>Mr Haughey saw it as creating a responsibility "to discourage other s form going to Iraq to negotiate the release of hostages,"(three Irish TDs were planning to go.)<sup>57</sup>

Despite the ringing declaration,it subsequently appeared as if the declaration had had an immediate political objective, namely to deter a visit by Willy Brandt, on the model of Heath's. It failed in this, and within hours of the declaration German political leaders were meeting to discuss how the Federal Republic could support Brandt's visit with minimum diplomatic damage. What appears to have been decisive for Bonn was not EC solidarity,but concern at opposing an apparently humanitarian visit by a respected elder statesman of German politics and public opinion with an election only weeks away.

The proposed visit caused outrage in a number of European capitals,partly because it came so soon after the Rome Declaration, and partly because it was a fairly devastating example of the kind of national interest and concern that undermined the goal of united action and, indeed. the rhetoric of unity. Craxi,the Italian Socialist called it "shameful and humiliating", d'Estaing saw it as "messy , offensive, and to be condemned".<sup>58</sup> The British were none too pleased either. The Germans tried to put a brave face on it, as well as belatedly seeking to surround the visit with an EC and UN mantle,although despite some apparent official Italian support for the former this was not very successful. Genscher claimed that the visit was purely humanitarian, that Brandt "did not intend to negotiate but instead express expectations". Brandt himself somewhat undermined this approach when he argued "It's obvious what humanitarian means. It means political efforts to find out if there is still an alternative to war."<sup>59</sup>The Federal Republic claimed the visit was not out of line with the Rome Declaration,that it was still against individual action, but that the "a mission of leading European personalities acting on its own responsibility[w]as the most suitable way in the current situation to put the case by international society to the Iraqi leadership for the release of the hostages."<sup>60</sup> A caustic British comment was that it was a "bad example of governments deciding on a policy in conclave and then one of them deciding to do something else and trying to persuade

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<sup>55</sup> Conclusions of the Presidency: European Council Rome 27 & 28 October (SN 304/90 rev.2)

<sup>56</sup> 29 October 1990 Scotsman

<sup>57</sup>ibid

<sup>58</sup> 6 November 1990 IHT

<sup>59</sup>6 November 1990 IHT

<sup>60</sup> 2 November 1990 Times

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other European governments to copy its bad example."<sup>61</sup>The Belgians and Dutch called for an emergency EC Foreign Ministers meeting, and this led to another declaration, including reaffirmation that the Rome Declaration not to bargain with Baghdad.

Ultimately this paled into insignificance besides the problems posed by the French last minute initiative, although that too was soon overtaken by events, by the fact of war.

The Europeans and the European Community did not cover themselves with glory during the Gulf crisis, showing notable examples of breaking rank and following their own perceived interests when it suited them. This experience has clouded the IGC on political union, and has raised profound questions as to the relationship between rhetoric and common action.

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<sup>61</sup> 6 November 1990 IHT