

## Gulf Security - 2000 A.D.\*

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The conclusion of the Iran-Iraq War in 1988, put the Gulf Region - its politics and security issues on the backburner. Little did the world realise that within two years it would be in the forefront again and witness an unprecedented application of military power as witnessed during the Gulf War in 1991.

This book is a perspective study of the Gulf Region issues as reflected in the title and is a collection of papers by eminent Middle East experts presented at a conference jointly arranged by the U.S. Middle East Institute and John Hopkins University School of International Studies in April 1990. These papers cover the perspective 2000 AD and the conference at the time of its inception was intended to warn policy makers of complacency in viewing and dealing with security and energy issues of the Gulf Region. Besides the analysis of the major regional actors in the Gulf, their policies and perspectives, the book also incorporates analysis of the interest of the major external powers in the region.

The major conclusions arrived at in this 2000 AD perspective study before the Gulf War broke out, seem to have withstood the test of time and remain valid even after the war. The conclusions were that despite rivalries and military build-ups no predominant state capable of exerting its will on its neighbours in the Gulf is likely to emerge, domestic political stability of individual governments within the region would be more broadly evident, the US-Soviet global and regional confrontations would have markedly increased and finally that US presence in the Gulf region will continue to count for a good deal more politically, commercially and militarily.

Since this project was intended to focus attention of US policy planners, the policy implications for the United States were also pointed out. These were that the policy of attempting to safeguard US energy interests with an excessive preoccupation about domestic political stability of Gulf problem is not warranted, diplomatic pressures on Palestinian issue would create helpful spillover of US policy in the Gulf; US must augment its naval and air presence in the Gulf and confront regional threats and that the United States should initiate a two-track arms control policy for the region.

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\* *The Gulf, Energy and Global Security* - by Charles F. Doran and Stephen W. Buck (Eds) Boulder, Colorado: Lynni Rienner Publishers Inc., 1991, p. 234, \$ 35.0.

A review of current events would indicate that the United States is actually implementing what has been recommended above.

The book provides interesting reading, good background knowledge of Gulf problems and issues and a useful perspective analysis for the year 2000 AD of the Gulf. A useful book for all those interested in the study of Middle East and Gulf Region and for policy makers of any country dealing with this region.

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