

A Two-State Solution For years, peace talks have revolved around the idea of a two-state solution, with peaceful coexistence between Israel and a stable, democratic Palestinian state. To achieve this, peacemakers drew up the "road map" to peace, calling for an end to violence and terrorism. Some Israeli and Palestinian leaders accepted the two-state plan. Iran and radical Islamist groups rejected it.

The most recent peace talks opened in the aftermath of the "Arab Spring." The uprisings did little to improve the outlook for peace between Israelis and Palestinians. Islamists won power in some elections, while turmoil engulfed Egypt and Syria.

? INTEGRATE INFORMATION Why is Jerusalem so important to both Israelis and Palestinians?

Conflict in Lebanon and Syria

Internal divisions and the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict impacted neighboring Lebanon and Syria. Both nations gained independence in the 1940s. Both are home to diverse religious and ethnic groups.



>> A woman is helped by the military after a bombing in Beirut, Lebanon, in 1986. **Analyze Visuals** What does this image tell you about the way that the Lebanese civil war was fought?

Interactive Timeline

The Lebanese Civil War Lebanon, a thriving center of commerce. After gaining independence from France in 1943, its government depended on a delicate balance among diverse Arab Christian sects, such as the Maronites, Sunni and Shiite Muslims, and Druze, people with a religion related to Islam. Palestinian immigration after the 1948 and 1967 wars increased the Muslim population. By the 1970s, Muslims outnumbered Christians. In 1971, PLO fighters were expelled from Jordan after attempting to overthrow its government. The enlarged PLO presence in Lebanon and the intensification of fighting on the Israeli-Lebanese border added to the internal unrest in Lebanon.

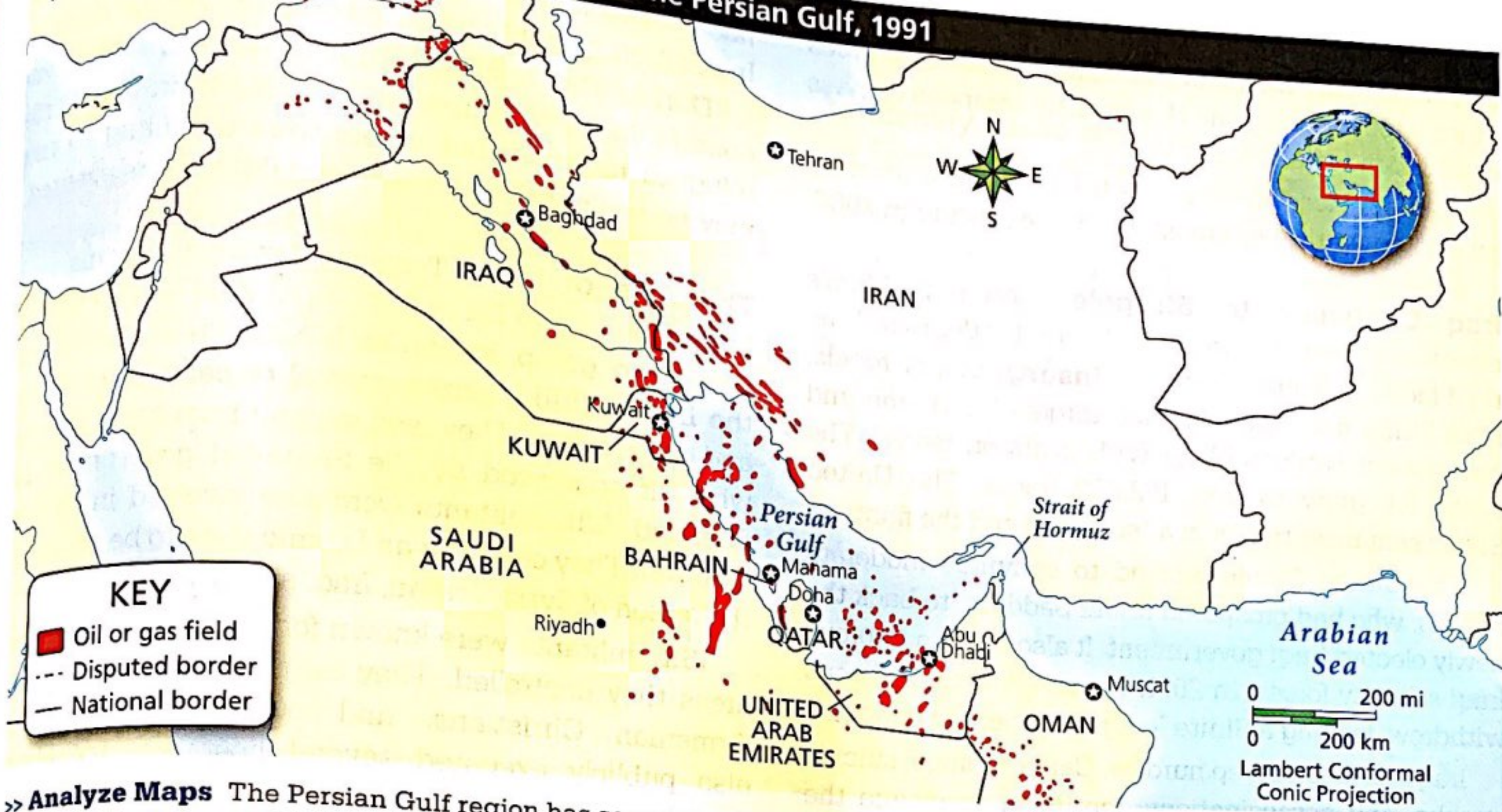
Tensions among the diverse groups erupted into civil war that lasted from 1975 to 1990. Christian and Muslim **militias**, or armed groups of citizen soldiers, battled each other. Syria invaded Lebanon and Syrian troops remained for 29 years. Israel briefly invaded Lebanon to stop cross-border attacks first by PLO guerrillas and later by Hezbollah fighters, the militant group backed by Iran and Syria.

Sectarian divisions remained even after a fragile peace was restored. By 2012, the civil war in neighboring Syria threatened renewed violence among rival militias in Lebanon. In addition, a huge number of refugees fled the civil war in Syria, straining Lebanon's resources.

The Syrian Civil War Syria's diverse population includes Armenians, Assyrians, Christians, Druze, Kurds, Alawite Shiites, and Arab Sunnis. For decades, Hafez al-Assad and later his son, Bashar al-Assad, ruled the country and its diverse population with an iron hand. The Assads opposed peace with Israel and supported militant groups such as Hezbollah and Hamas.

During the "Arab Spring," the Syrian government met pro-democracy protests with brutal force, plunging the country into civil war. Rebel groups were deeply divided between moderates and extremist groups. Hezbollah and Iran supported the Assad regime. Western countries, however, hesitated to support the rebels, fearful that weapons could fall into the hands of radical groups. After Assad was accused of using chemical weapons, global condemnation forced Syria to agree to give up its chemical arms stockpiles.

As the death toll mounted above 100,000, millions more Syrians were displaced by the fighting. Refugees flooded into nearby countries and raised fears that the Syrian civil war could destabilize the region. International efforts to negotiate peace were



>> Analyze Maps The Persian Gulf region has seen numerous wars in recent years. What information on this map suggests one reason why this region is so important to the nations of the industrialized world?

complicated by disunity among rebel groups and Assad's continued grip on power.

2 RECALL What is Hezbollah, and why is it significant?

Warfare in Iraq

The modern nation of Iraq was carved out of the Ottoman empire after World War I. Its population included Sunni and Shiite Arabs, as well as Kurds who lived in the north. Although Shiites were the majority population, Sunnis controlled the government. Kurds distrusted the government and wanted self-rule.

Divisions among these groups fed tensions in Iraq. During the Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union competed for influence in Iraq, which had vast oil resources and was strategically located on the Persian Gulf.

The Iran-Iraq War In 1980, Iraq's neighbor Iran was engulfed in its Islamic Revolution. Iraqi dictator, **Saddam Hussein**, took advantage of the turmoil to seize a disputed border region. His action sparked the long, costly Iran-Iraq War. After both sides attacked foreign oil tankers in the Persian Gulf, the United States sent naval forces to protect shipping lanes. The war

ended in a stalemate in 1988, but with huge human and economic costs for both Iran and Iraq.

During the war, Saddam Hussein brutally suppressed a Kurdish revolt, using chemical weapons on civilians. His actions sparked international outrage and charges of genocide.

The 1991 Gulf War In 1990, Iraq invaded its oil-rich neighbor, Kuwait. Saddam Hussein wanted Kuwait's vast oil fields and greater access to the Persian Gulf. The United States saw the invasion as a threat to its ally, Saudi Arabia, and to the vital oil resources of the region.

In 1991, a U.S.-led coalition of international forces under the UN banner drove Saddam's forces out of Kuwait. Despite this defeat, Saddam remained in power. He brutally crushed revolts by Shiite Iraqis and Kurds. To protect the Shiites and Kurds, the UN set up **no-fly zones**, or areas where Iraqi aircraft were banned.

The Iraq War The 2001 terrorist attacks on the U.S. led to new moves against Saddam Hussein. The United States organized a new international coalition to remove Saddam from power. The U.S. claimed that the Iraqi dictator supported terrorists. The country also charged that Iraq was stockpiling **weapons of**

mass destruction (WMDs), or nuclear, and chemical weapons. In 2003, coalition forces quickly toppled Saddam. However, no weapons of mass destruction were ever found.

Saddam Hussein was later tried for war crimes by an elected Iraqi government. He was executed in 2006.

Iraq Continues to Struggle After Saddam's overthrow, Iraq became a bloody battleground as rival factions fought for power. **Insurgents**, or rebels, from Shiite and Sunni groups targeted civilians and government workers along with coalition forces. The death toll grew to over 162,000 Iraqis. The United States sent more troops in a "surge" to end the fighting.

The United States worked to convince moderate Sunnis, who had prospered under Saddam, to back the newly elected Iraqi government. It also tried to improve Iraqi security forces. In 2011, the last American troops withdrew, leaving a Shiite-led government in control.

Iraq still faced steep hurdles. Car bombings, suicide attacks, and assassinations continued to plague the country. The main political parties, representing Shiites, Sunnis, and Kurds, were often deadlocked over key issues.

The ongoing violence hurt efforts to rebuild Iraq's once-prosperous economy. Although Iraq has the

had left. In addition, corruption and sabotage slowed oil exports. During the fighting, millions of Iraqis fled the country. Many more were displaced within Iraq. Some refugees returned, but others were unwilling to risk moving back until security and stability were assured.

The Rise of ISIL Tensions between Sunnis and Shiites burst into fierce fighting in 2014. An Al Qaeda breakaway group, known as Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), seized control of parts of northern and eastern Iraq. They won support from some Sunnis who felt oppressed by the Shiite-led government in Baghdad. ISIL militants were also involved in Syria's civil war. They called for an Islamic state to be set up in the region of Syria, Jordan, Iraq, and Lebanon.

ISIL militants were known for their brutality in the areas they controlled. They targeted Shiite Muslims, Armenian Christians, and others groups. They also publicly executed several hostages, including American journalists.

The United States launched air strikes to protect various Iraqi minority groups from ISIS atrocities and to destroy weapons and equipment ISIL fighters had seized from the Iraqi army. A new government came

THE IRAQ WAR

THE UNITED STATES INVADED IRAQ IN MARCH 2003. The last U.S. combat troops left Iraq in August 2010. Remaining advisory troops departed by December 2011. Violence in that country continues.

CASUALTIES

U.S. MILITARY DEATHS (2003–2011)

4,487

U.S. CONTRACTORS KILLED

3,418

IRAQI POLICE AND MILITARY KILLED

10,819

IRAQI CIVILIANS KILLED DIRECTLY

134,000 (AT LEAST)

U.S. MILITARY WOUNDED

OVER 32,000

TOTAL REFUGEES

1.6–2.8 MILLION

TOTAL COST TO U.S.

\$2 TRILLION

\$60 BILLION

MONEY GIVEN TO REBUILD IRAQ

OIL REVENUE FROM IRAQ

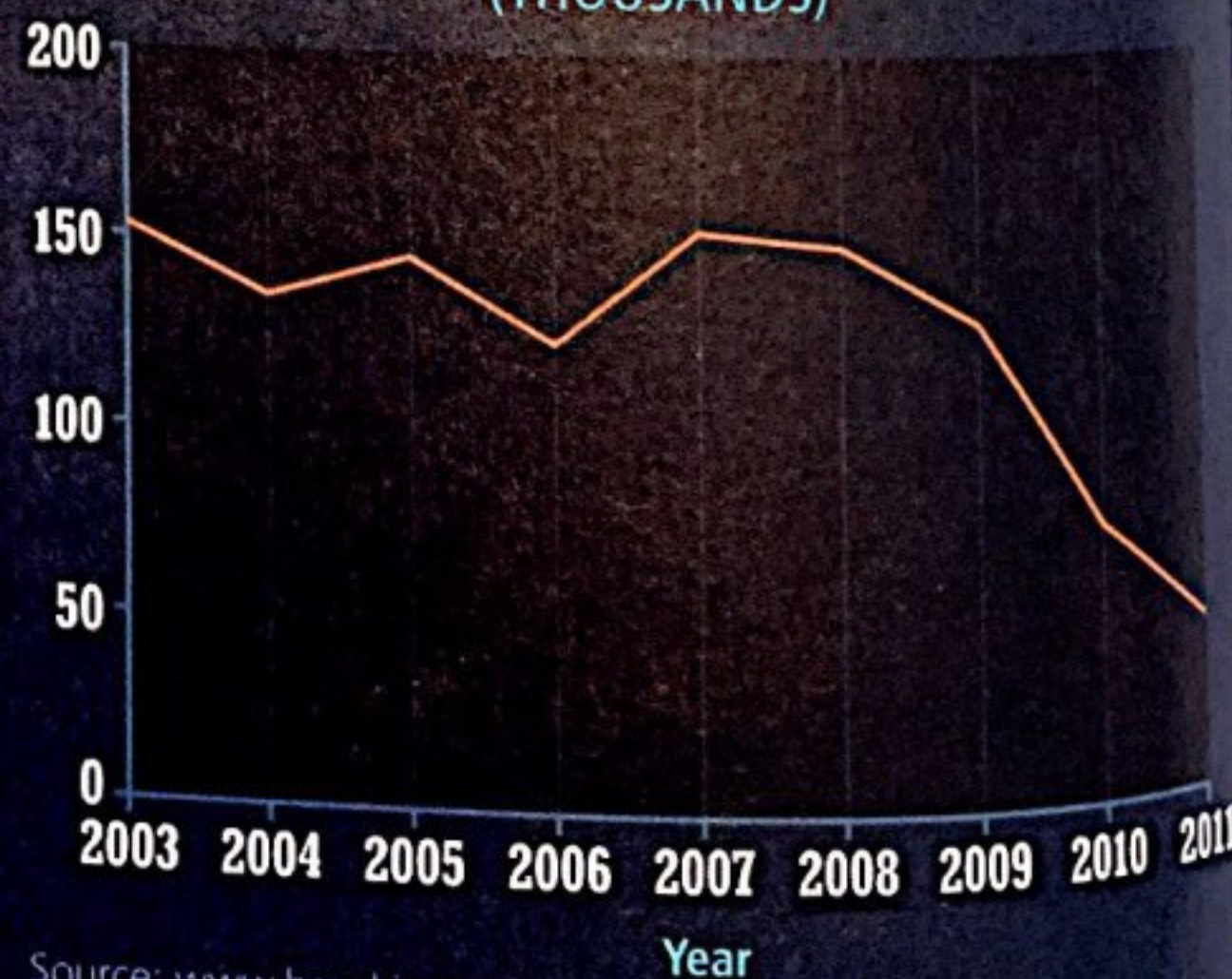
2003 **\$5 BILLION**

2011 **\$85 BILLION**

Sources: Brookings Institution; Brown University; Business Insider

AVERAGE NUMBER OF U.S. TROOPS DEPLOYED PER YEAR

(THOUSANDS)



Source: www.brookings.edu

>> Analyze Charts The Iraq War succeeded in its immediate objective, including deposing Saddam Hussein, but the costs were high. How does the information shown here support this generalization?

Sunnis and regain control of lost territories.

? DRAW CONCLUSIONS Why did Sunni control of government in Iraq create tension in that country?

ASSESSMENT

1. **Identify Central Issues** How did the Israeli-Palestinian conflict begin?
2. **Compare Points of View** Why has peace between Israel and the Palestinians been so

difficult to achieve? Include issues from both perspectives.

3. **Identify Cause and Effect** How did the Israeli-Palestinian conflict affect Lebanon and why?
4. **Draw Conclusions** How has the growth of radical Islamic fundamentalism affected conflicts in the Middle East?
5. **Cite Evidence** Why did the removal of Saddam Hussein's regime fail to bring peace to Iraq? Use details from the text in your answer.