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Middle East: Saudi Troops Enter Kuwait

Saudi Arabia sent 15,000-20,000 troops into Kuwait March 29 to bolster the sheikdom's defenses in its border confrontation with Iraq. The report, carried March 30 by the Lebanese newspaper Al Nahar, also said Kuwait had received recently-ordered shipments of arms from traditional Western military suppliers. [See 1973 [Middle East: Iraq-Kuwait Border Dispute](#)]

Iraqi Foreign Minister Murtada Abdul Baki had said March 27 there was no legal basis for the current frontier between Iraq and Kuwait and that his country "wants to become a Persian Gulf state--that is the crux of the border dispute with Kuwait." Abdul Baki denied, however, that Iraq's seizure March 20 of a border post at Sameta, claimed by Kuwait, was part of a wider strategic plan for expansion in the gulf. "If this had been our aim we would have occupied strategic positions in other areas of greater importance." The foreign minister insisted that Sameta "lies within Iraqi territory" and was vital to Baghdad because "it commands the movements of Iraqi troops in the area."

Kuwait State Minister Abdul Aziz Hussain said March 27 that Iraqi forces had pulled back from some but not all the territory it had occupied the previous week. He warned that Kuwait would not enter into negotiations with Iraq until all its forces were withdrawn.

Iraq's ambassador to Kuwait, Mohammed Nasser Hadithi, said April 3 that his country's forces had completed withdrawal from all Kuwaiti territory April 2. Hadithi said Baghdad expressed hope that Kuwait "will in turn take the necessary measures to eliminate tensions between the two countries." Kuwaiti Interior Minister Sheik Saad Abdallah Sabah charged that the reports of Iraqi withdrawals were "devoid of any foundation."

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