

UNEASY WELCOME:  
THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF MIGRATION POLICY

IN KUWAIT

by

Volume 1

SHARON STANTON RUSSELL

A.B. Wellesley College  
(1966)

A.M. University of Chicago  
(1974)

M.P.A. Harvard University  
(1982)

Submitted to the Department of  
Political Science  
in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements of the  
Degree of

DOCTORATE IN PHILOSOPHY

at the

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

September 1987

© Sharon Stanton Russell 1987

The author hereby grants to M.I.T permission to reproduce and  
to distribute copies of this thesis document in whole or in  
part.

Signature redacted

Signature of Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Department of Political Science  
May 1987

Signature redacted

Certified by: \_\_\_\_\_

Myron Weiner  
Thesis Supervisor

Signature redacted

Accepted by: \_\_\_\_\_

Harvey M. Sapolsky  
Chairman, Graduate Program Committee



Archives

Volume 1

## ABSTRACT

UNEASY WELCOME  
THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF MIGRATION POLICY  
IN KUWAIT

By the early 1980's, it was estimated that over 20 million migrants world-wide had crossed international boundaries to seek employment in countries other than their own. Yet, theories of migration for employment, developed largely within the disciplines of economics and geography, have continued to explain the process as the consequence of wage rate differentials, or decisions at the individual and household levels. With some exceptions, political scientists, as well, have neglected to take cognizance of the fact that, when people cross international boundaries, government policies are likely to influence migration for employment.

This dissertation seeks to fill both theoretical and empirical gaps in our understanding of international migration for employment by addressing the central question: what has been the role (if any) of government policies in shaping international migration for employment? Policies are here defined as discernable actions (or inactions) taken by government with respect to the process of international migration for employment or toward immigrants themselves. The study undertakes to identify the determinants of migration (or migration-related) policies, their objectives, and their effects, as bases for extracting a set of propositions that move migration theory toward taking account of the role of governments and governmental policies.

The study results are based on textual analysis of laws, decrees, and other documented policy actions; review of archival material at the Public Records Office in London; and analysis of published and unpublished documents from government agencies, research institutes, scholars, technical advisors and the media, from both Middle Eastern and Western sources. Analysis of these materials was augmented by over 150 interviews with government officials, representatives of national and international agencies, scholars, and individuals conducted during six months of field work carried out during the spring of 1985 in Kuwait, Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Israel, and the West Bank.

The dissertation focuses on Kuwait as an "extreme case" through which to examine in depth the process and outcome of migration policy formulation.

Perceptions among Western and Middle Eastern scholars and officials alike are that Kuwait has had no migration policies,

or that if they existed, they were ineffective. This study has identified over forty policy actions (laws, decrees, regulations, official pronouncements) undertaken between 1959 and 1985, and a major chapter of the dissertation traces the evolution of these policy actions in the context of domestic and regional political, economic, and demographic events, showing how specific policy tools (such as visas, work and residence permits, security checks, etc.) have been used recurrently in different forms to implement policies. Both the objectives and the policies in which they are articulated can be seen to change, as the context of policy formulation has changed over the past 25 years.

Analysis of the Kuwait case suggests three propositions to guide future research on international migration for employment. The first is that migration policies have many objectives other than to determine rates or levels of immigration. Equally important have been the objectives of regulating the status of migrants relative to the national population, and controlling the mobility of migrants, particularly in the labor force. Reducing rates of settlement and dependency in the immigrant population, screening out dissidents, and affecting the strength of domestic political factions also appear among other policy objectives.

A second, related proposition to emerge from the study is that migration policies are determined not only by labor demand (and the economic and demographic conditions underlying it) but also by the salience of security issues, current and expected future economic conditions, recent rates and composition of demographic change, the relative positions of political actors in the policy-making process, and the perceived social costs and consequences of immigration.

Finally, the study undertakes statistical analysis to assess the effectiveness of Kuwait's policies in attaining three selected objectives: reduction in levels of immigration, establishment of a comprehensive work permit system, and "Kuwaitization" of the labor force. Results of this analysis suggest a third proposition: that changes in levels of immigration are better explained by a model that includes political and related policy factors than by one that includes only economic factors.

Analysis of the Kuwait case, together with the propositions extracted from it, provide new bases for extending theories of international migration for employment, to include consideration of policy factors heretofore neglected in both theoretical and empirical treatments of the subject.

Thesis Advisors: Myron Weiner (Chair), Nazli Choucri, and Robert Lucas (Economics, Boston University).

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	8
1. INTRODUCTION.....	13
1.1. The Emergence of International Migration for Employment.....	13
1.2 The Challenge to Migration Theory.....	18
1.3 Methods.....	21
1.4 Kuwait: An Historical Overview.....	25
2. THE ROLE OF POLICY IN MIGRATION.....	73
2.1 Introduction.....	73
2.2 Approaches to International Migration for Employment.....	74
2.3 The Definition of Migration-Related Policies.....	87
3. THE EVOLUTION OF MIGRATION POLICY IN KUWAIT.....	95
3.1 Migration Policy Before 1959.....	95
3.2 Laying the Foundations of Migration Policy: 1959 to 1964.....	111
3.3 Transition: 1965 to 1966.....	132
3.4 Security, Restriction, and Rebalance: 1967 to 1973.....	140
3.5 Liberalization: 1974 to 1977.....	154
3.6 Consolidation and Regulation: 1978 to 1979.....	172
3.7 Political and Cultural Security: 1980 to 1983...	193
3.8 Population Balance: 1984 to 1985.....	221
4. ANALYSIS OF THE KUWAIT CASE.....	266
4.1 Introduction.....	266



4.2	The Forms of Migration Policies.....	267
4.3	Components of Policy Content.....	269
4.4	The Context and Outcomes of Migration Policy Formulation: An Analytic View.....	277
4.5	The Determinants of Migration Policy.....	318
4.6	Are Migration Policies Effective?.....	334
4.7	Objectives and Determinants of Migration Policy: Theoretical Implications.....	359
5.	CONCLUSION.....	387
	SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	396

## TABLES

	<u>PAGE</u>
TABLE 1-1 POPULATION OF KUWAIT IN CENSUS YEARS.....	65
TABLE 1-2 KUWAITI CRUDE LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATES (LFPR) 1965-1985 (IN CENSUS YEARS).....	66
TABLE 1-3 LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATES OF KUWAITIS BY SEX IN CENSUS YEARS.....	67
TABLE 1-4 KUWAIT: GDP, GOVERNMENT REVENUES, EXPENDITURES AND SURPLUS 1957-1983 (IN MILLION KD) AT MARKET PRICES.....	68
TABLE 1-5 POPULATION OF KUWAIT BY NATIONALITY, SEX, AND LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION IN CENSUS YEARS.....	69
TABLE 3-1 GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT AT CURRENT PRICES (IN MILLION KD).....	262
TABLE 3-2 PERSONS ATTAINING KUWAITI CITIZENSHIP BY NATURALIZATION: 1961 TO 1984.....	263
TABLE 3-3 NON-KUWAITI POPULATION BY DURATION OF RESIDENCY IN CENSUS YEARS.....	264
TABLE 4-1 KUWAIT: MIGRATION POLICY INSTRUMENTS 1959 TO 1985.....	364
TABLE 4-2 PHASE ONE: 1959 - 1964.....	370
TABLE 4-3 PHASE TWO: 1965 - 1966.....	371
TABLE 4-4 PHASE THREE: 1967 - 1973.....	372
TABLE 4-5 PHASE FOUR: 1974 - 1977.....	373
TABLE 4-6 PHASE FIVE: 1978 - 1979.....	374
TABLE 4-7 PHASE SIX: 1980 - 1983.....	375
TABLE 4-8 PHASE SEVEN: 1984 - 1985.....	376
TABLE 4-9 KUWAIT: NUMBER OF WORK PERMIT ISSUES 1975 TO 1985.....	377
TABLE 4-10 KEY ECONOMIC INDICATORS FOR KUWAIT 1977 TO 1985.....	378

TABLE 4-11	NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF WORK PERMIT ISSUES 1975 AND 1985.....	379
TABLE 4-12	SUMMARY OF KEY VARIABLES USED IN EVALUATING EFFECTS OF POLICY ACTIONS RELATIVE TO LABOR DEMAND.....	344
TABLE 4-13a	REGRESSION OF ENTRY ON REAL EXPENDITURE: OBSERVED, PREDICTED, AND RESIDUAL VALUES.....	345
TABLE 4-13b	RESULTS OF REGRESSION OF ENTRY ON REAL EXPENDITURE WITH AND WITHOUT DUMMY VARIABLES FOR POLICY ACTION.....	346
TABLE 4-14	DISTRIBUTION OF KUWAITIS AND NON-KUWAITIS IN TOTAL LABOR FORCE 1965 TO 1985.....	380
TABLE 4-15a	KUWAITI AND NON-KUWAITI EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY 1975.....	381
TABLE 4-15b	KUWAITI AND NON-KUWAITI EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY 1983.....	382
TABLE 4-16a	NUMBER AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYEES IN GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTORS BY NATIONALITY 1975.....	383
TABLE 4-16b	NUMBER AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYEES IN GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTORS BY NATIONALITY 1985.....	384
TABLE 4-17	NUMBER AND PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF LABOR FORCE BY ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND NATIONALITY 1975 AND 1983.....	385
TABLE 4-18	PERCENT CHANGE IN NUMBER OF KUWAITIS IN VARIOUS ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES.....	386

#### FIGURES

FIGURE 3-1	KUWAIT: WORK PERMIT ISSUES 1977 TO 1985.....	265
FIGURE 4-1	TIME PLOT OF MAJOR POLICY ACTIONS.....	369
FIGURE 4-2	DETERMINANTS OF MIGRATION POLICY IN KUWAIT 1959 - 1985.....	320
FIGURE 4-3	EXPECTED RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN MAJOR DETERMINANTS OF MIGRATION-RELATED POLICIES AND SELECTED ASPECTS OF POLICY CONTENT.....	323
FIGURE 4-4	REGRESSION OF ENTRY ON REAL EXPENDITURES: OBSERVED VERSUS PREDICTED VALUES.....	347

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My interest in the links between government policy and international migration for employment was first sparked in 1976 when, while working as a manpower analyst in a Middle Eastern labor-sending country, I had opportunity to observe first-hand the ways in which the prospect of labor emigration shaped long-term manpower development policy. The intellectual road travelled from that critical experience to the completion of this study has been long and intriguing, and I am indebted to many people--family, friends, colleagues, and strangers--who have encouraged and assisted me along the way. Many will remain anonymous, but I should like to extend special thanks to those whose help has been invaluable.

I have been blessed by the friendship of a number of scholars, writers, and analysts who not only share an interest in the substantive issues which this study addresses, but whose sense of collegiality has been manifested in their unstinting willingness to share generously and repeatedly their personal collections of articles, documents, and other research resource materials. For these and other practical forms of assistance and for hours of discussions which have helped me hone my thinking, I am especially grateful to Judy Barselou, Jill Crystal, Yvonne Haddad, Ted Marmor, Ian Seccombe, Jim

Socknat, and Milton Viorst. I would also like to thank Rami Khoury for making available his files on manpower and migration.

My understanding of the evolution of migration policy in Kuwait is based on analysis of numerous documentary and statistical sources, as well as extensive interviews. While the interpretation of that material remains entirely my own, I am greatly indebted to several people who took time to direct me to critical sources and who helped to place my observations in historical perspective. I am grateful to Kamal Abu-Magd, Qutbi Ahmed, Shamlan Alessa, Sayed Badr, Mohamad Galaleldin, Walid Mubarak, Ali Moussa, Mohammad al-Rumaihi, and Eissa Yasin for their generous assistance, and to Ali al-Sabah for making available his collection of dissertations on Kuwait.

Over 150 individuals in the Middle East, Europe, Britain, and the United States granted me interviews in the course of this research and I appreciate the time and understanding each has contributed to this effort.

Field research for this study, carried out in the spring of 1985, would have been impossible without the material and logistical support of institutions and individuals in several countries. Funding was provided through an International

Doctoral Dissertation Research Award by the Social Science Research Council, with funds from the Ford Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Department of Economics at the Royal Scientific Society in Jordan received me as a visiting scholar during this period and I am deeply and especially grateful to Ahmed Qassem al-Ahmed, Fakhri Daghestani, Tayel al-Hajji, Samira Katcherian, and Mohamed Smadi for their warm and generous support. The Kuwait University Offices in Washington, D.C. facilitated my travel to Kuwait, where the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research graciously received me. I should like to thank Dr. Adnan Shehab al-Deen, Abdul Rahman al-Najar, and Abbas Nazar of KISR for their kind welcome and for making available the Institute's excellent facilities. Throughout my travels, both old and new friends and colleagues extended practical support and assistance of various kinds, often on short notice. Special appreciation goes to Judy Barselou and Ghassan Nakad, Robert Bently, Leila Bisharat, Ahmed Jibari, David Partington, Ann and David Patterson, Monquez Shureih and his family, and Jon and Jane Weld.

The Political Science Department at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology has provided a home base and cheered me on for the past five years. Ann Grazewski and Mary Ann Lord have seen to the administrative aspects of my progress

with a special mixture of efficiency and sensibility. Suzanne Berger provided wise intellectual counsel during my first years at MIT and (together with former MIT and Harvard colleagues John Freeman, Debbie Stone, and Francis Bator) made valuable comments on early proposals for this research. Peter Smith, Bill Stanley and Peter Lemieux helped me through the intricacies of the regression analysis when they had a million other things to do.

My very deepest appreciation goes to the members of my dissertation committee, whose contribution to my intellectual development goes far beyond the thesis itself. As Chair and principal advisor, Myron Weiner has been unfailingly supportive, even when, I suspect, he wasn't quite sure either of us knew where I was going. He has always asked the important questions and, in so doing, has pushed me to broaden my thinking beyond the mere technical analysis to which my earlier training inclined me. Nazli Choucri's constructive critiques of this work, from early proposals to final draft, have been informed by her own intimate knowledge of the Middle East context of migration and her exquisite sense of structure: at critical moments, she has pointed out the forest when all I could see were trees. Bob Lucas has brought to his reading of successive drafts the macroeconomist's breadth of perspective on labor markets and migration,

combined with a quantitative analyst's rigorous attention to accuracy of detail. As a result, he has saved me from more than one egregious error and helped to strengthen my argument considerably.

In addition to the Committee, both Robert Russell and Yvonne Haddad have given the first draft the kind of close and thoughtful reading one's best critics do; the subsequent revisions have benefitted immeasurably from their probing questions and frank comments. To them and all the others who have read or contributed to this effort, I am deeply grateful. For whatever errors and omissions or failures of perception mark the final product, I alone remain responsible.

It is customary to thank one's family for hardships endured during undertakings such as these, and it is true that this effort has involved hardships: the jolts to lifestyle that accompany mid-career changes, and longer than usual periods of absence. But far stronger is the sense of unwavering encouragement and support I have received from my husband, Rob, and our daughters, Kim, Brooke, and Sharmeen. They have wished I would hurry up and go back to "work", swallowed disappointment over family events missed and irritation over additional burdens of responsibility, but they have never questioned the worth of what I have been pursuing or the enduring strength of mutual love that binds us together.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 The Emergence of International Migration for Employment.

For centuries, people have undertaken voluntary migration in search of economic opportunities; frequently, since the rise of nation-states, they have crossed international boundaries to do so. Major migrations from Europe followed the explorations of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and the establishment of European colonies in the Americas, Australia and New Zealand, and Africa. In the countries of origin, prevailing economic conditions often combined with political events (wars, famine, religious persecution) to stimulate these population movements, which have been viewed historically as permanent migrations for settlement. By the early part of this century, migration to the United States alone was estimated to have involved more than 35 million people \*.

During the past forty years, international migration for employment has come to be characterized as the "temporary"

---

\* W.A.V. Clark, Human Migration, London: Sage Publications, 1986, p. 75.

movement of people in search of work. With the decimation of Europe's working-age population during World War II, Western Europe once again became the locus of migration for employment, which played a major role in post-war reconstruction during the 1950s and 1960s \*. By the early 1970s, the stock of so-called "guest workers" from Mediterranean Europe and North Africa was estimated to be over 8 million, comprising approximately 10 percent of the labor force \*\*.

With the dramatic rise of oil prices in late 1973, the oil-producing countries of the Middle East came to prominence as a locus for international migration for employment. By the early 1980s, the region was estimated to have approximately 4 million immigrant workers \*\*\*, nearly one-fifth of the more than 20 million people estimated to be involved in international migration for employment worldwide \*\*\*\*. More importantly for the receiving countries involved, migrants

---

\* For discussion of the role of migration in post-war Europe, see C.P. Kindleberger, Europe's Postwar Growth: The Role of Labor Supply, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1967.

\*\* Rosemarie Rogers, Guests Come to Stay: The Effects of European Labor Migration on Sending and Receiving Countries, Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1985, p. 3; Clark, op. cit. p. 76.

\*\*\* Nazli Choucri, Migration in the Middle East: Transformations, Policies, and Processes, Vol. I, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Technology Adaptation Program, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1983, Table 3-7.

\*\*\*\* P.L. Martin and A. Richards, "International Migration of Labor: Boon or Bane?" Monthly Labor Review, Vol. 103, October, 1980, p. 4.

accounted for 40 to 46 percent of the total labor force in the Middle East region and more than three-fourths of all workers in the Gulf countries alone \*.

The authority to determine the conditions for entry, residence, and citizenship is a fundamental characteristic of a sovereign state. Accordingly, migration across international boundaries invariably involves the intervention of government policies concerning the movement and status of migrants. Yet, despite the magnitudes of the population movements just described, theoretical approaches to international migration for employment largely ignore the role of such policies in shaping and directing the phenomenon.

Scholars from a number of disciplines have addressed themselves to the subject of international migration for employment, usually seeking to explain why people undertake such voluntary moves, or to understand the effects of migration on the sending or receiving societies. Implicitly or explicitly, most theoretical approaches to international migration for employment have adopted the neoclassical economic model of internal migration articulated by Harris and Todaro \*\*: specifically, that migration is a function of wage

---

\* Choucri, op. cit. 3-2, 3-12ff.

\*\* Michael P. Todaro, "A Model of Labor Migration and Urban Unemployment in Less Developed Countries", American Economic Review, Vol. 59, March, 1969; John Harris and Michael P. Todaro, "Migration, Unemployment and Development: A Two-Sector Analysis," American Economic Review, Vol. 60, March, 1970.

differentials between labor sending and receiving locations and the probability of finding employment in the receiving location. Extensions of this approach have addressed different aspects of the issue. Some economists have emphasized the characteristics of labor markets; others have stressed the importance of the individual characteristics of migrants, such as their age and education; recent work \* has begun to move from the individual to the household level of analysis, stressing for example the importance of migration as a risk-sharing arrangement among family members. Yet what all these approaches have in common is their treatment of migration as a self-regulating process which is the product of individual and household levels of decision-making in interaction with market forces. What they do not address is the role of government policies in mediating this process.

In contrast, Marxist economists \*\*, have argued that international economic systems, specifically capitalism,

---

\* See, for example, Lucas and Stark 1984; Stark and Bloom, 1985.

\*\* For example, Alejandro Portes, "Alternate Modes of Structural Incorporation and Their Bearing on Present Theories of Labor Immigration", in Kritz et al. eds., Global Trends in Migration: Theory and Research on International Population Movements, New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1981; Saskia Sassan-Koob, "The Internationalization of the Labor Force", Studies in Comparative International Development, Vol. 15, No. 4, Winter, 1980, pp. 3-25; with regard to Middle Eastern migration, this view has been adopted, most notably, by Nader Fergany in his study, Migration to the Oil: The Size and Effects of Migration in the Oil Producing Countries and its Effect on the Development of the Arab Region, Center for Arab Unity Studies, Cairo: 1984.

constitute a structural context in which international migration serves as a source of labor for the continued expansion of the capitalist system, as well as a process that allows poor countries to cope with low wages and impoverished conditions. Yet here again, the focus is on the economic factors that shape international migration for employment, with little or no attention to the role of state policies nor explication of why governments adopt the policies they do.

Interestingly, with few exceptions, political scientists have not jumped into this particular theoretical breach. Weiner and Choucri \* have addressed issues such as the links between migration and ethnic conflicts, the structural causes and consequences of migration, and more recently the role of international migration in international relations. Others have focused on the political activity of migrants or the role of migration in bilateral relations \*\*. In their work on

---

\* Myron Weiner, "On International Migration and International Relations," Population and Development Review, Vol. 11, No. 3, September, 1985, pp. 441-455; "Transborder Peoples" in Mexican Americans in Comparative Perspective, Walker Connor, ed. Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute, 1985; Choucri, op. cit.; Myron Weiner and Nazli Choucri, "The Internationalization of Policies Affecting International Migration: Case Studies in the Middle East and South Asia." Report to the Ford Foundation, summer 1986 (mimeo).

\*\* Stephen Adler, "People in the Pipeline: The Political Economy of Algerian Migration to France, 1962-1974," Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Department of Political Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, September 1975; Wayne Cornelius, "Mexican Migration to the United States: The View from Rural Sending Communities." Cambridge, Mass.: MIT, Migration and Development Study Group Working Paper, 1976.

European migration, Rogers and her colleagues have addressed policies affecting return migration and migrants' rights \*. Migdal \*\* has gone so far as to note that the emphasis on micro and macro level economic factors has obscured the role of political variables, including government policies, in shaping international migration (whether for employment or otherwise). But while these studies have acknowledged the importance of political factors, their focus has not been on explaining the role of government policies themselves in international migration for employment.

## 1.2 The Challenge to Migration Theory.

This dissertation addresses both theoretical and empirical gaps in our understanding of international migration for employment by posing the central question: what has been the role of government policies in shaping international migration for employment? Government actions are the unit of analysis and policies are here defined as discernable actions (or inactions) taken by government with respect to the process of international migration for employment or toward immigrants themselves. By examining the evolution of Kuwait's migration policy between 1959 and 1985, the study seeks to explain why

---

\* Rogers, op. cit.

\*\* Joel Migdal, "Policy in Context: The Intended and Unintended in Migration Policy in the Third World" in John D. Montgomery et al., eds., Patterns of Policy: Comparative and Longitudinal Studies of Population Events, New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Books, 1979.

governments adopt the migration policies they do, and to identify the determinants of migration (or migration-related) policies, their objectives, and their effects, as bases for extracting a set of propositions that move migration theory toward taking account of the role of governments and governmental policies.

Specifically, it will be argued here that migration policy is the product of complex interactions among economic, demographic and political factors which, together, form the context of migration policy formulation. Despite the presumption that migration for employment is "temporary" in nature, it will be seen that the phenomenon is a long-standing one, and that in the Middle East (as in Europe) many migrants themselves have become long-term residents, not the temporary sojourners they were expected to be.\* As a consequence,

---

\* The presumption that Middle Eastern migrants are temporary is widely held. See Gurushri Swamy, Population and International Migration, World Bank Staff Working Paper Number 689, Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, 1985, p. 7. Swamy classifies both European and Middle Eastern worker migration as "temporary"; the quotation marks imply a degree of skepticism about the appropriateness of the term and, indeed, the analysis goes on to note that, in the European case, "many migrants acquired...permanency status;" (p. 19). However, the characterization of the Middle Eastern migration as "temporary" goes unchallenged. Even sharp critics of the recent Arab migration have taken the view that the phenomenon is a "temporary" one: see Fred Halliday, "Labour Migration in the Arab World: The Ugly Face of the New Economic Order", in LABOUR Capital and Society, vol. 15, No. 1, April 1982, p. 15: "...the boom is bound to be a temporary one, since oil is a limited resource....Therefore, unlike the migration to North America in the nineteenth century or to Western Europe in the post-war epoch, this migration to the oil states cannot result in a permanent transfer of labour."

migration policies are shaped not only by short-term political and economic factors, but also by the changing context that is itself the result of past migration processes and their effects on the society.

While the emphasis here is on policies toward migration for employment, it will become apparent that these are inextricably linked to a broader range of population policies embedded in a wider political context that encompasses both domestic and regional political realities. The policies themselves thus reflect the resolution of conflicts among competing objectives salient at the time of policy formulation.

In keeping with the long duration of the migration process and the sovereign role of the state in relation to it, it will not be surprising that many policy tools currently in use have been in existence for some time; they are formal and written, as well as verbal \*. The fact that migration has continued does not necessarily mean the policies have been ineffective--the judgement as to effectiveness depends upon

---

\* The identification and definition of major policy tools adopted by states to control international migration for employment is one of the products of this study. An annotated listing will be found in Chapter 4. In summary, they include visas; security checks; No Objection Certificates; Residence Permits; Work Permits; the Declaration and Undertaking; work contracts; controls over internal mobility; grace periods; penalties; and provisions for national preference. These measures are not necessarily alternative to one another; indeed, they are often found in combination. At other times, they are conspicuous by their absence.



the objectives of the policy and, as will be seen in Chapters 3 and 4, reducing the flow has not always been the objective.

### 1.3 Methods.

The core of the analysis is a case study of the evolution of migration policy in Kuwait. Although international migration for employment has been particularly salient in the Middle East in recent years, very little empirical information exists on the migration policies of the region, let alone on the politics of policy formulation. For these reasons, the basic "story" for analysis had to be constructed from the ground up and a case approach was adopted.

Apart from reasons of access, why Kuwait? While Kuwait shares the economic and demographic characteristics of other Arab Gulf states, it represents an extreme case which, for that very reason, stands to highlight the role of governmental policies. Since the 1950s, immigration has played a major role in the country's development strategy, and since the mid 1960s, migrants have outnumbered nationals in the total population. The fact that the polity stands to be so directly and significantly affected by the demography makes it reasonable to expect that government policies toward migration should have emerged in Kuwait. At the same time, Kuwait is a small, market oriented economy, with limited indigenous labor

resources, circumstances that one would expect to strengthen the role of economic forces and minimize the role of political factors in shaping migration policy. Indeed, conventional wisdom is that these economic and demographic forces have been so strong, that Kuwait and other Middle Eastern countries have had no migration policies \*. Thus, the tension provided by the coexistence of optimal and minimal conditions for the emergence of migration policy makes Kuwait a particularly suitable case in which to examine the role of government policies.

Economic and demographic data analyzed for this study were from Kuwait government and official national and international agency sources. Material for analysis of the evolution of migration policy in Kuwait was assembled from original and amended texts and notes accompanying Kuwaiti law, principally the Nationality Law (No. 15) of 1959, the Alien's Residence Law (No. 17) of 1959, and the Private Sector Labour Law (No. 64) of 1964; from government and international agency documents; published and unpublished papers, reports, and dissertations; and historical sources in the Public Records Office, London. Comparative textual analysis emphasized identification of the nature and significance of "marginal changes" in the policy tools. Once it was organized in chronological order, the policy material was juxtaposed with

---

\* For an example of this view, see Alan Richards and Philip Martin, "The Laissez-Faire Approach to International Migration: The Case of the Arab Middle East," Economic Development and Cultural Change, Vol. 31, No. 3, April 1983.

material (of which there is relatively little published) on the internal politics and foreign relations of Kuwait, derived from a wide variety of sources \*. Newspapers, periodicals, and subscription analyses (eg. The Economist Intelligence Unit Country Reports) covering political events of the region were also invaluable. Finally, written material was supplemented by over 150 interviews conducted during the Spring of 1985 with government, regional and international agency officials, scholars, and migrants in Kuwait, Jordan, Jerusalem and the West Bank, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain, as well as in New York, Washington, and Geneva.

The balance of this chapter will provide a brief overview of the history and political economy of Kuwait, with special reference to salient demographic developments and to identification of the political groups that play a major role in the evolution of migration policy. Chapter 2 reviews the economic and political literature pertaining to international migration for employment, in order to place this study more firmly within its theoretical context. The definition and scope of migration policies are also discussed.

Chapter 3 traces the evolution of migration policy in Kuwait, touching upon the policy actions of the 1940s and 1950s, but focusing on the period from 1959 (immediately prior to

---

\* Among the most useful and important of these are: Crystal 1986; Al-Ebraheem 1975 and 1984; Ismael 1982; Alessa 1981; Moubarak 1979; Khoury 1981; Joukhadar 1980; and Farah et al. 1980.

independence) to mid 1985. Seven phases in policy evolution have been identified, each defined by sharp changes in the economic, demographic and political context which, together, make the dominant issues of each period distinct from those of preceding or subsequent phases.

Chapter 4 then analyzes the Kuwait case for the lessons it offers concerning the determinants and objectives of migration policy. One useful consequence of understanding policy objectives is the resulting ability to evaluate policy effectiveness. The chapter illustrates the point with evaluation of three types of policy measures. Finally, propositions are put forward for testing in future extensions of international migration theory.

Chapter 5 concludes the study by considering some of the long range political implications of international migration, particularly for the Arab Gulf states, whose societies have been transformed by the process. It will be argued that migrants are deeply embedded in these host societies, much as they are in Western Europe thirty years after initiation of guest worker programs there, and despite evident differences between the European and Middle Eastern cases. In both cases, governments face severe constraints to unilateral action; in both migration has posed new challenges to internal cohesion; in both, migration will be a continuing factor in regional political economy for years to come.

#### 1.4 Kuwait: An Historical Overview.\*

##### Early History.

As presently constituted, Kuwait occupies nearly 18,000 square kilometers, bordering the Arab Gulf between Iraq and Saudi Arabia and across the Gulf from Iran. Eastern Arabia had become part of the Ottoman Empire during the mid-sixteenth century, but the Ottoman presence was successfully resisted by the Bani Khalid, an 'Adnani (or Northern Arabian) tribe which kept peace in the area from Qatar to Kuwait during the late seventeenth century. According to Abu-Hakima, the Bani Khalid built a fortress at Kuwait about 1680, although East India Company records suggest that the town of Kuwait (or Grane, as it was called) was first built about 1716 A.D.

Even at this early period, Kuwait was an attractive destination for migrants. Sometime in the early seventeenth century, as a result of intra-tribal conflicts, a federation of families belonging to the large Anizah Tribe migrated from Najd in central Arabia to the shores of the Gulf. By the end of the century, this federation (which came to be called the

---

\* Recent compilations of earlier sources on the history of Kuwait can be found in Jacqueline S. Ismael, Kuwait: Social Change in Historical Perspective, Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1982; Jill Crystal, "Patterns of State-Building in the Arabian Gulf: Kuwait and Qatar," Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, April 1986; and in the officially commissioned study by Ahmad Mustafa Abu-Hakima, The Modern History of Kuwait, London: Luzac & Company Limited, 1983. Unless otherwise noted, the material in this section on early history is drawn from these sources.

Bani Utub or "sons of trekkers") had begun to settle in what is now Kuwait. Apart from groups of bedouin, fishermen and the outpost of the Bani Khalid (with whom the Bani Utub enjoyed good relations) the area was relatively unsettled and, despite estimates that the Bani Utub comprised no more than 10 to 15 percent of the population, they were quickly able to apply the maritime skills acquired during their earlier sojourn along the Gulf. With its strategic location, excellent natural harbor, and proximity to the pearling and fishing banks of the Arab Gulf, Kuwait grew rapidly into a center for trade among India, the Middle East, and Africa. By 1760, a German traveller described Kuwait as a thriving port town of about 10,000 people.

The Bani Utub, like other tribal groupings, brought with them to Kuwait a form of patriarchal political organization linked to kinship forms of social organization in which family lineage was central. Where earlier divisions of labor among kinship groups had been based upon the economy of the desert, the reorientation toward commerce and the sea entailed new arrangements within these traditional patterns. Accordingly, as Kuwaiti historical traditions report it, in 1716 an alliance was struck among the three most prominent Bani Utub families in Kuwait. In this pact, it was agreed that one family (al-Khalifah) would take leadership in the financial aspects of commerce; a second (al-Jalaahmeh) would control seafaring; leadership in government would be exercised by

a third family, al-Sabah; and profits would be divided equally among them. Although fifty years later substantial segments of the al-Khalifah and al-Jalaahmeh groups would themselves migrate again (this time to Qatar and then Bahrain\*), this early pact was to leave its legacy in two ways. First, there would continue to be a division of labor between merchants and government. Secondly, leadership in government was to pass continually through al-Sabah to the present time.

#### Kuwait and the Imperial Powers.

By the end of the eighteenth century, the Bani Khalid's ability to protect the Arab Gulf from major foreign powers had diminished, and increasingly, regional events drew Kuwait into alliance with the Ottomans and the British. Kuwait's first official contact with the British came about as the result of Persia's invasion and subsequent occupation of Basra in 1775, following which the British made Kuwait the center of communications between Aleppo and the East India Company in Bombay.\*\*

---

\* Crystal (p. 51ff.) has argued that until the early 20th century, secession constituted an important political option for the merchants (upon whom the ruling family was financially dependent) and that, whatever the reasons for the merchants' departure in 1766, it made clear their willingness to exercise this option.

\*\* The Persian invasion also resulted in a considerable flow of wealth to Kuwait, first as prosperous Arab merchants from Basra sought refuge there, and subsequently as trade was diverted from Basra to Kuwait. See Hassan A. Al-Ebraheem, Kuwait: A Political Study, Kuwait: Kuwait University Press, 1975, pp. 25-28.

The Wahabi threat also helped to forge closer links between Kuwait and the imperial powers. By the middle of the 18th century, the alliance between the house of al-Saud and the religious leader Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahab had been forged in Central Arabia, and over the next half century the Wahabis turned their sights on the sheikdoms of the Gulf. By the 1780s, Kuwait was directly threatened, and both the British and the Ottomans responded with military support.

Britain's interest in the Gulf had started with her mercantile activities, but became increasingly political following Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798 and subsequent naval incursions in the Gulf. These events aroused concerns over France's intentions in the region, which were viewed as potentially threatening to British imperial interests in India, and provided grounds for Britain's growing diplomatic and military presence in the region.

It was in this context that Kuwait's relations with Britain developed after their initiation in 1775. Britain found Kuwait to be a convenient retreat when differences arose with the Ottomans in Iraq, as they did on several occasions (in 1775, 1793, and 1821). With military support, Kuwait could be counted upon to help repel the Wahabis, an objective upon which both Britain and the Ottomans agreed. Finally, Kuwait was not only a center for British communication with India, it was a place where news of political events occurring in the



Gulf and Central Arabia converged. Although Britain could see Kuwait's commercial and strategic possibilities as a potential future terminus for railway links between the Gulf and the Mediterranean, her direct economic interest in Kuwait during most of the 19th century was comparatively minor.

Kuwait, for its part, found Britain's occasional presence in the Sheikdom lucrative, and her support against the Wahabis useful, but Kuwait's position toward Britain was by and large one of calculated neutrality. The British were discouraged from considering Kuwait as a potential naval and military facility in 1839, and Kuwait participated only briefly (in 1841) in Britain's treaty with the Trucial Coast sheikhs and Bahrain\*. Britain's efforts to forge stronger ties with Kuwait were effectively resisted.

Kuwait's relations with the Ottoman imperial powers were at first equally cautious. During the first part of the 19th century, Kuwait gave nominal allegiance and occasional military support to the Ottomans in exchange for autonomy and the prospect of military alliance when needed. By the latter part of the century, however, a resurgence of the Wahabi threat and the Ottomans' growing power in the region led to strengthened political, military and economic ties. When Sheikh Abdullah accepted the Turkish title of Qaim-Maqam

---

\* This treaty, first signed in 1820, gave Britain the right to punish acts of piracy and introduced a system of ship registration which effectively enabled her to monitor activities on Gulf waters.

(sub-governor) in 1871, Kuwait officially became an administrative unit of the Ottoman Empire and, for the next 22 years, Kuwait's contacts with the British declined.

### Realignment.

Kuwait's alignment with the imperial powers changed abruptly with a coup d'etat in 1896. Evidence suggests that divergent views toward alignment with the Ottomans had begun to emerge within Kuwait's merchant elites during the latter part of the 19th century. By the middle of the century, Basra had become the major port of entry to Ottoman markets in Europe and the Middle East. Descendants of the Basra merchants who had migrated to Kuwait in 1775 played a major role in financing this long-distance trade. While the wealth and power of the Ottomans grew, Utubi merchant elites experienced a decline in their own circumstances, as steam-powered ships introduced by the British in 1862 rendered their small sailing vessels obsolete. The Utubi merchants saw closer alliance with the British as offering them a way to improve their situation.

Meanwhile, the British were attempting to find a legitimate basis for establishing a protectorate over Kuwait. Piracy continued to plague Britain's transport; Russian intervention in Persia, Afganistan and the Ottoman Empire had the potential to reach the Gulf; by 1881, Britain was actively involved in controlling the flow of arms to Central Arabia, where they saw

imperial interests behind the conflict between Ibn Saud and al-Rashid. Finally, the British were anxious to forestall establishment of Kuwait as a terminus for the Berlin-Baghdad railway under Ottoman and German auspices. But none of these exigencies provided adequate justification for risking open conflict with the Ottomans, which establishment of a British protectorate would have induced. Political developments in Kuwait, however, provided the conditions they needed.

In 1892, Sheikh Muhammad came to power and rapidly handed substantial control to his close advisor and relation by marriage, Yousef al-Ibrahim, a merchant from the Basra group with close ties to the Ottomans. Conflicts within the al-Sabah family followed quickly and on May 17, 1896, Muhammad's half-brother Mubarak, assisted by his sons and a handful of supporters, entered the palace and killed the Amir and his brother. Yousef escaped to Iraq where he was soon joined by the slain men's sons.

Initially, the Ottomans declined to act against Mubarak, whom they viewed (with some reason) as having ties to the British. But by 1898, at the urging of Muhammad's sons and others in Iraq, the Ottomans announced an investigation of complaints against Mubarak and their direct intervention appeared imminent.

In Kuwait, Mubarak's accession had met with little opposition, but even with internal support he was no match for the Ottomans. Indeed, since coming to power, he had urged the British to extend formal protectorate status to Kuwait. In January 1899, Mubarak and the British concluded a secret agreement under which Mubarak bound

himself, his heirs and successors, not to receive the agent or representative of any Power or Government at Kuwait, or at any other place within the limits of his territory, without the previous sanction of the British Government; and he further binds himself, his heirs and successors, not to cede, sell, lease, mortgage, or give for occupation or for any other purpose, any portion of his territory to the Government or subjects of any other power without the previous consent of Her Majesty's Government for these purposes.\*

In exchange, the British assured Mubarak of "the good offices of the British Government" and agreed to do what they could to protect the ruling family's estates at Fao.

While Britain's obligations were rather vaguely stated and the arrangement did not always work to Kuwait's advantage, \*\* it served to draw the British into protecting Kuwait from further Ottoman attacks and ushered in a period of relative peace and prosperity during the balance of Mubarak's rule. Trade with Iraq, Persia, India and East Africa flourished; British

---

\* Text of the agreement is found in Abu-Hakima, The Modern History of Kuwait, p. 184.

\*\* With the agreement of 1899 and others that followed, Britain was effectively authorized to handle Kuwait's foreign affairs. Britain exercised this authority on several occasions, notably in 1913, when they negotiated with the Ottomans over the borders of Kuwait, Nejd and Iraq and at the 'Uqair Conference in 1922, where the British gave two-thirds of Kuwait's territory to Abdul Azziz al-Saud.

steamers docked in Kuwait; postal and telegraphic services were introduced. In 1911, a medical mission was established and the same year al-Mubarakiiyya School was begun. During most of the 19th century, Kuwait's population remained stable at about 10,000; by 1910, it had grown to 35,000.

#### The Foundations of Twentieth Century Domestic Politics.

Not all of Mubarak's initiatives were well-received. In 1899 he introduced an import tax; in 1907 he imposed a hajj tax and a new house tax; he instituted price controls.\* Finally, in 1909, he announced a tax on pearl boat shares. In response, several leading merchants, with financial interests in 250-300 boats which employed 6-8,000 men, seceded to Bahrain. Only after the Amir conceded did the merchants return. Crystal has characterized this secession as a turning point in relations between the ruling family and the merchants:

It was both the last time the merchants would use secession as a political weapon and the first of several times in the 20th century that they would organize in opposition to the amir: it was the last large scale use of political exit and the first experimentation with new political institutions. \*\*

For a time after the events of 1909, conflicts between the ruling family and the merchants were held in abeyance.

Mubarak's death in 1915 was followed quickly by that of his son and successor, Jabir. In 1917, Mubarak's son Salim became

---

\* Previous rulers had imposed zakat and import taxes, but not of the weight and variety of Mubarak's initiatives.

\*\* Crystal, p. 66.

amir. During his brief reign, external threats engendered a tenuous cohesion within Kuwait. The first world war was close at hand, with Britain's blockade to keep supplies from Turkey. More importantly, relations with Abdul Azziz al-Saud (who had taken refuge with Mubarak earlier in the century) deteriorated rapidly following 1915. \* Once Abdul Azziz consolidated his alliance with the Wahabi Ikhwan [the Brotherhood], he encouraged them to head for Kuwait, where, in April of 1920, the Ikhwan massacred an encampment of Salim's soldiers. Within the space of two months, Salim had built a wall of defence around Kuwait town. The Ikhwan forces never reached the town; they were repelled at the Siege of al-Jahra on October 10, 1920, where the Kuwaitis were helped by a show of force from the British. Although Salim's wall was thus never put to use as a line of defence, it was to figure importantly in Kuwaiti identity.

In 1921, Salim died and the latent conflict between the merchants and the ruling family became open. The immediate question concerned the rights of the merchants to advise in the matter of succession; the deeper issue concerned their rights to participate in political decision-making.

According to tribal custom, relations between the amir and other tribal notables were essentially egalitarian in nature.

---

\* According to Abu-Hakima (p. 32 ff), Salim, acting under Mubarak's orders, refused to assist Abdul Azziz in thoroughly crushing the 'Ajman, who were already defeated by al-Saud's forces. Mubarak allowed the 'Ajman to recover in the vicinity of Kuwait.

Ismael cites a poem by a tribal elder to illustrate the point:

We are friends of his highness the shaikh,  
But we shall reject him if we see evil intentions.

If you accept advice, we will advise you.  
And if you do not accept advice,  
We will banish you to hell. \*

In practice, this relationship was implemented through the majlis or the amiri diwan--hearings at which public concerns could be expressed and conflicts of opinion resolved. Now, in keeping with Kuwait's modernization and in response to perceptions that the ruling family was becoming increasingly authoritarian, the merchants sought to institutionalize the notables' advisory role in a formal Consultative Council (al-Majlis al-Istishari). \*\* The Council placed before the al-Sabah a list of three acceptable successors; if the family failed to select from among these candidates, the Council vowed to take the issue of succession to the British.

The family did choose from the list and their choice established the principle of succession which continues to the present: the alternation of leadership between the Salim and Jabir lines. Furthermore, the new amir, Ahmad Jabir, agreed to work with the Council. As it turned out, the Council

---

\* Ismael, p. 19.

\*\* The Council was comprised of twelve prominent merchants: Hamad Abd Allah al-Sagr; Hilal bin Fajhan al Mutayri; al-Shaykh Yusif bin Isa al-Qinaie; al-Sayid Abd al-Rahman Sayyid Khalif al-Naquib; Shamlan Ibn Ali bin Sayf; al-Shaykh Abd al-Azziz al-Rushayd, Ahmad Ibn Salih al-Humadi; Marzuq al-Dawud al Badr, Khalif bin Shahin al-Ghanim; Ahmad al-Fahd al-Khalid; Mishan al-Khudayir al-Khalid; and Ibrahim ibn Mudhif. See Ismael, p. 71.

lasted only two months but it signalled a new era in relations between the ruling family and the merchants.

Major shifts in the underpinnings of Kuwait's economy occurred in the inter-war period. Neither the siege of al-Jahra in 1920 nor the agreement at 'Uqair brought an end to conflicts with the house of al-Saud. Between 1923 and 1937, in an effort to force Kuwait to align with the Nejd, Abdul Azziz continued to wage economic war against the Kuwaitis, demanding that they collect taxes from the Nejdi bedouin and then banning the tribes from trading in Kuwait, resulting in severe losses for the merchant community. In the late twenties, Japanese cultured pearls entered the world market, bringing about the collapse of the pearl industry in Kuwait. The worldwide depression of the 1930s only added to Kuwait's economic woes.

At the same time that Kuwait's traditional sources of wealth were thus being disrupted, oil was entering the picture. By 1907, the British navy had developed its first oil-fueled ships and oil was rapidly becoming a mainstay of industrial production. In 1913, Mubarak had concluded an agreement with Sir Percy Cox granting the British a monopoly on oil exploitation and production in Kuwait. Negotiations between the British and Ahmad began in 1923\* and the first concession

---

\* See A.H.T. Chisholm, The First Kuwait Oil Concession: A Record of the Negotiations for the 1934 Agreement, London: Frank Cass, 1975.



agreement was signed in 1934. Exclusive rights were given to the Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), a British-American consortium. The first well was drilled in 1936 and oil discovered at the Burgan field in 1938; following delays imposed by the Second World War, export began in 1946.

With the prospects of new wealth from oil, the economic foundations of the relationship between the Amir and the merchants now shifted. Previously, the merchants had been an essential source of financing for Kuwait's commercial activities and for the ruling family's purse as well. Both Abdul Azziz's embargo on Kuwait and the collapse of the pearl market had eroded the merchants' economic position; the oil concession promised to alter their position even further. Throughout the negotiations and in the concession agreement itself, both Kuwait and the proceeds from oil were treated as the Amir's personal property, potentially rendering him independent of the merchants.\*

The issue of democratization now emerged again, this time around participation in determining distribution of the new wealth. Following their experience with the Consultative Council of 1921, the merchants had been active in developing a number of other institutions, including the Education Council of 1936 and the Municipality begun in 1930, both of which were characterized by elected leadership. Encouraged by the

---

\* The changing relationship between the amir and the merchants is treated at length in Crystal 1986.

success of these ventures and increasingly disturbed by poverty, bankruptcy, government corruption, and Sheikh Ahmad's policies, the merchants then turned to seek more fundamental reforms. In early 1938, they petitioned the Amir to form an elected Legislative Assembly in fulfillment of his 1921 promise of support for such a body. Organization among the merchants was strengthened by the formation of Kuwait's first political party, al-Qutlah al-Wataniyah (The National Bloc)

In their undertakings, the merchants were encouraged not only by the British Agent (who felt reforms were needed) and Iraq (which, in 1936, had announced claims to Kuwait) but also by members of the ruling family who questioned both the distribution of wealth within the family and the wisdom of continued autocratic rule. The future amir, Abdullah Salim, was prominent among the merchants' supporters.

In July 1938, leaders from 150 families elected a 14-member Legislative Assembly\* and asked Abdullah Salim to head it. Under pressure from all sides, Ahmad ultimately consented to the council, which then proceeded to prepare a basic law outlining the prerogatives of the Assembly. This document, which the Amir reluctantly signed, designated "the people"

---

\* The fourteen were Shiyan al-Ghanim; Abdullah al-Hamad al-Sagr; Yusif bin Isa al-Qinaie; al-Sayid Ali al-Sayid Sulayman; Yusif Marzug al-Marzug; Salih al-Uthman; Mishan al-Khudayir al-Khalid; Abdul Latif Muhammad al-Uthman, Sulayman Khalid al-Adsani; Yusif Salih al-Humayd; Muhammad al-Dawud al-Marzug; Sultan Ibrahim; Mishari Hasan al-Badr; and Khalid al-Abd al-Latif Muhammad. (This list is given in Ismael, p. 73.)

(represented in the Assembly) as the source of authority, and specified the Assembly's right to legislate in matters of budget, justice, security, welfare, construction, and treaties--including concessions.

The legislative experiment of 1938 was to prove short-lived. In December, after violent conflict between the members and the Amir, the body was dissolved. Crystal has pointed to several reasons for its failure: Britain withdrew her support when the Assembly persisted in relations with Iraq and initiated direct contacts with the oil companies; secondly, the body excluded many in the society, particularly the Shia, estimated to have numbered 10,000 in 1933.\* Finally, without British military support, Abdullah Salim was ultimately unwilling to break with the Amir completely.

Although the relationship between the ruling family and the merchants was not to change radically until after oil, the events of the interwar period, including the Assembly of 1938, would leave their impression. They coalesced nationalist and pan-nationalist sentiments; they gave the merchant elites a sense of their potential political power; conversely, they motivated the ruling family to think about broadening their bases of political support in the society. As forerunners of the National Assembly, the experiments in democratic institutions helped to shape the future political context of migration policy formulation.

---

\* Crystal, p. 108, based on IRO R/15/5/179.

### The Legacy of Earlier Migrations.

Migration is certainly not new to Kuwait. The founding elites, the Bani Utub who settled in Kuwait in the early 18th century, were themselves migrants. They were soon joined by the Basra merchants who fled Persian attack in 1775. Although their stay appears to have been only temporary, it signalled the close economic links and frequent flows of population that would continue between Kuwait and Iraq. Always, there were the tribes, a number of whom came to settle in Kuwait city, but many of whom continued to move about in the desert until well into the middle of the 20th century.

Throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries, seasonal labor migration to Kuwait from Iraq, Saudia Arabia, Persia and other points in the Gulf was common, largely in response to the demands of the pearling industry and transport trading,\* although political events in the surrounding areas undoubtedly played a role in these movements and migrants from these origins were already settled in Kuwait by the 1930s.

As a consequence, on the eve of oil, the structure of Kuwaiti society already showed the effects of earlier migrations: it

---

\*For a discussion of historical patterns in labor migration to Kuwait, see Ian James Seccombe, "International Migration for Employment and Domestic Labour Market Development: The Jordanian Experience," Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Durham, UK: University of Durham, Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, November 1983, especially Ch. 2.2 and Ch. 4.

was stratified, segmented, and (except at the top) already becoming heterogeneous. At the top (apart from the ruling family) was the small elite, comprised of descendants of the Bani Utub. They were long-settled, urban, Sunni, Nejdi, the wealthy trading families who financed and intermarried with the rulers. Below them, in descending order of economic and social prominence, were the traders, brokers and middlemen; the ship captains; and finally, the divers, pullers and seamen.\*

Shia Muslims comprised a significant numerical proportion of Kuwait's population by the middle of this century; in 1938, Fowle estimated their community at 17,000 (out of a total population of 75,000).\*\* They had come to Kuwait from different places: the Baharna were linked to the original inhabitants of Bahrain; the Hasawiyya were from eastern Arabia; the Fuwadna were Arab Shia who went to Persia and returned; the largest group, the Ajam, were Persians. There were some prominent families, especially among the latter group, and a small number of merchants and shopkeepers, but the vast majority were laborers. As a group, Shia remained apart: there was little intermarriage with the Sunni and community services, such as education, were maintained separately. Politically, the Shias access to participation

---

\* See Crystal pp. 99-110 for discussion of the social, economic, ethnic and sectarian divisions of Kuwaiti society by the 1930s.

\*\* Fowle in FO 371-21833, cited in Crystal, p. 108. Total population estimate from Ismael, p. 60.

was, at best, indirect. In the Assembly of 1938, they were frankly excluded by the dominant Sunni merchants. Other cleavages in the society were minor compared to the Sunni-Shia split.\*

The collapse of the international pearl market brought an end to the seasonal pattern of labor flow and, with the development of oil, new patterns of migration--and employment--began to emerge. New skilled and semi-skilled jobs in the oil sector were filled by Indians as well as Persians. Unskilled labor needs were met locally, often by workers previously engaged as divers.\*\* The 1930s also witnessed new efforts to build social infrastructure (especially education) and Palestinians, Jordanians and Egyptians came to staff the social services. Nonetheless, between 1938 and 1949, the total population of Kuwait rose only from 75,000 to 100,000.\*\*\* Migration for employment was not yet a major phenomenon.

---

\* There were differences between the long-settled and still-nomadic families, but shared tribal affiliations tended to blur these distinctions. There was also a small Jewish community (which Dickson estimated to be about 161 merchants and goldsmiths) and a black community consisting largely of slaves (which he estimated to be about 400). See Crystal, p. 109.

\*\* This transition of local labor is reflected in The Pearl Divers Law of 1940 (translated in Ismael pp. 161-172) which required seamen who took government or oil company jobs to pay a percentage of their salary to the chief of divers. As Crystal points out (p. 102) this was probably to ensure payment of debts.

\*\*\* Ismael, p. 60, 117.

The Beginnings of Large-Scale Migration.

This situation changed during the 1950s. Several economic and demographic factors formed the underlying conditions for immigration to Kuwait (or, for that matter, to other destinations in the Gulf) during the 1950s and would continue to underly future migrations as well. First, in 1951, renegotiation of the oil concession agreements resulted in 50-50 profit sharing arrangements which substantially increased financial resources available to the government.\* Expenditures for non-oil development programs created the economic foundations for increased labor demand. Similarly, renegotiations of government's share in KOC during the late 1960s and early 1970s were to provide the resources that fuelled the development boom of the 1970s.

---

\* See I.J. Seccombe and R.I. Lawless, "Foreign Worker Dependence in the Gulf, and the International Oil Companies: 1910-1950," International Migration Review, Vol. 20, Fall 1986, p. 549. They link the decline of the companies' dominance in the regional labor market to these new arrangements. See also Crystal, p. 155 for discussion of Kuwait. She points out that Sheikh Ahmad died in 1950 and Abdullah Salim became Amir. His previous experience in directing finance and customs, together with the example of Saudi Arabia (which had previously obtained a 50-50 agreement) and the rise of Mossadeq in Iran (which was followed by production declines) all helped to bring about the renegotiation in Kuwait.

Secondly, as may be seen in Table 1-1, the absolute size of the Kuwaiti population was--and remains--small, particularly relative to the manpower or labor market needs of the country. Another aspect of Kuwait's demography which has remained relatively unchanged is crude labor force participation rates among Kuwaitis (see Table 1-2). They have been low, as a result of several factors: a large proportion (nearly 50 percent) of the Kuwaiti population is under working age; crude female labor force participation (although now rapidly rising) has remained relatively low, as shown in Table 1-3; and increasingly, a sizable proportion of the population between the ages of 15 and 21 is enrolled in school. These factors, together with low prevailing levels of educational attainment have meant that much of the needed skilled and semi-skilled manpower had to be recruited from outside.

Finally, the pace and technologies of the development strategies through which these new resources were expended further shaped the levels and composition of labor demand and the migration it has stimulated.\* By the mid-1950s, Kuwait had embarked on an ambitious program to develop infrastructure and social services. Within the space of a few years, the

---

\* J.S. Birks and C.A. Sinclair, Arab Manpower: The Crisis of Development, London: Croom Helm, 1980, p. 36. There is an extensive literature on the economic development of Kuwait. For analyses of this early period, see also International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, The Economic Development of Kuwait, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1965. and R. Mallakh, Economic Development and Regional Cooperation: Kuwait, Chicago: Center for Middle Eastern Studies, No. 3, 1968.



supply of fresh water and electricity were established on a national scale and roads, schools, hospitals and government offices were built. Relatedly, new administrative systems were established and the size of the bureaucracy grew.

In contrast to the oil sector, these activities were labor-intensive. Although, as will be seen in Chapter 3, immigration was not uncontrolled, the fact remains that between 1949 and the census of 1957, the total population of Kuwait more than doubled, implying annual rates of growth over 4 percent. By the time of the first census in 1957, non-Kuwaitis numbered close to 100,000 and had come to comprise nearly 45 percent of the population. Iranians and Iraqis continued to be the largest groups, but now Jordanians and Palestinians and Lebanese were close behind.\*

#### The Context of Migration Policy Formulation 1959-1964.

By the end of the 1950s, then, international migration for employment had become a lynch-pin in Kuwait's development program. It would remain so following independence in 1961, when a second stage of development began, characterized by some diversification of the economy with establishment of the banking sector and introduction of manufacturing for import substitution.\*\*

---

\* See Seccombe 1983, p. 192, Table 4.2.

\*\* Birks and Sinclair, Arab Manpower, p. 36.

Arrangements for Kuwait's assumption of full independent status were already under way and they focused on the legal foundations of the new state. Previously, Britain had taken a direct role in Kuwait's judicial system through the courts. Young nationalists objected to this manifestation of colonialism and merchants were dissatisfied because they felt the British system accorded them too little protection from foreigners. Accordingly, an Egyptian jurist was engaged in 1959 to overhaul the legal system.\* In 1959, a new Nationality Law and Aliens Residence Law were promulgated; in 1960, Kuwait assumed jurisdiction over foreigners within its territory. By 1964, a new Labor Law was in place.

The political context for adoption of these laws was rooted in developments during the 1950s, when the Amir had made judicious use of newly available oil revenues to secure support for the regime. After coming to power in 1950, Abdullah first turned his attention to solidifying factions within the ruling family. He increased allowances for family members and introduced administrative reforms, engaging British advisors to help set up governmental units which served both to contain family members under the Amir's control and to build a centralized state bureaucracy.

---

\* Crystal, p. 183 based on Ahmad Hijazi, "Kuwait: Development from a Semi-Tribal, Semicolonial Society to Democracy and Sovereignty," American Journal of Comparative Law, Vol. 13, 1964.

Employment in the newly expanded bureaucracy was central to the program of distributive policies which the Amir now introduced to build a broader base of support within the society. By 1963, there were 36,300 civilian government employees, 45 percent of them Kuwaitis.\* Poorer Kuwaitis also benefitted directly from the introduction of water and electricity, expansion of the educational system (which was opened to all), extension of health services, and low cost housing programs.

Abdullah then turned his attention to the merchants. Despite their recollections of the Amir's support for the Assembly of 1938, the merchants had become angered by the vast sums they saw going to the ruling family and by the intrusion of family members into contracting activities during the early 1950s. When matters reached a crisis in 1954, the Amir restructured the arrangements:

[he] agreed to distribute significant revenues through the market and to legitimate the merchants' position through a free enterprise ideology....Where merchants were happy to invest--trade, construction, services--the government not only offered encouragement, it stayed out. The amir made a quiet promise to keep Sabahs out of Kuwaiti business.\*\*

The quid pro quo was that, in exchange for a lucrative monopoly over local business affairs, the merchants would give their tacit agreement to remain outside politics. By the late 1950s and early 1960s, relations between the Merchants and the

---

\* Department of State "Economic Survey," p. 35 in Crystal, p. 174.

\*\* Crystal, p. 166.

ruling family were considerably improved, but this new alignment remained to be fully solidified. In the formulation of migration policy, the Merchant elites' ideological commitment to minimal government interference in trade, free movement of labor, and preservation of their own special priveleges was not to be ignored. Their views were made known in several ways: through the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and the newspaper, al-Qabas; through access to government officials, strengthened by intermarriage with the ruling family; and through the diwaniyya--a men's social institution which had become regular gatherings for discussion of social and political topics:

A diwaniyya...will tend to embrace members of similar social standing, religion, and even age. Thus a man cannot really choose to 'join' a diwaniyya; he is born into one. a group of friends from similar backgrounds may, at their coming of age, join an existing diwaniyya of older men or they may form their own. One can be invited to a diwaniyya, or eventually become part of it, but subtle and longstanding ties among the members generally characterize diwaniyyas...Certain subjects are taboo, while others are approached in prescribed ways. Politics is not taboo. Above all, a diwaniyya is where wasita, connections or influence become tangible or are felt...The members of a diwaniyya form a society which operates for their collective benefit. Here, appointments are decided, contracts settled, introductions made, jobs awarded...\*

While the Amir was restructuring alliances, new political developments were under way to complicate the process of building regime support. The Arab Nationalist Movement (ANM), which had begun to emerge in Kuwait during the 1950s,

---

\* Tawfic Farah, "Inculcating Supportive Attitudes in an Emerging State: the Case of Kuwait," Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 2, 1979, p. 51.

constituted both a new source of challenge to the power of the ruling family and a potential new ally. Emanating from Nasser's Egypt in the 1950s and spreading with the Algerian revolution and the rise of the Baath parties in Iraq and Syria, Arab Nationalism had taken root in Kuwait during the 1950s and early 1960s among two seemingly disparate elements in the society. Under the leadership of Dr. Ahmed al-Khattib, the ANM had attracted leftists, progressive trade unionists, and others without entrenched economic interests who wanted a greater voice in Kuwait's political processes. They were joined in this cause by some younger sons of the traditional Merchant groups (among whom Jasim al-Qatami emerged as a leader) whose desires for participatory democracy were not satisfied by the economic benefits the Amir conferred on their families. Ideologically, both groups within the Arab Nationalist Movement shared a commitment to the basic tenets of the regional movement: the unity of the Arab people, endorsement of Kuwait's involvement in regional issues, the free movement of Arab labor, and the extension of basic rights to resident Arabs. These views were expressed through the National Culture Club and written about in al-Tal'ia; they would quickly find expression in the National Assembly, established shortly after independence as an elected body, with powers to pass legislation, question the actions of Cabinet, and to convey the comments and wishes of the people to the Amir.

Partly in response to the emergence of the ANM, signs of a countervailing Kuwaiti nationalism had become evident by the early 1960s. This third emerging political faction found its strongest base of support among the al-Sabah family's traditional Bedouin supporters, many of whom were small business people, ordinary members of the labor force, police and defense workers, or lower-level civil servants, although members of the merchant elite and intellectuals were not absent from its ranks; Abdul Azziz Masa'id, owner of the pro-government newspaper al-Rai al-Am, and merchant scion al-Rumi, editor of al-Yagiza were among them. Ideologically, Kuwaiti Nationalists sought to preserve the traditional bases of Kuwaiti identity: loyalty to the patriarchal leadership of the monarch and adherence to the principle that anyone who was not a member of one of the original tribes is an alien with no legitimate claims on the rights or perogatives of tribal membership. In contrast to the Arab Nationalists, the Kuwaiti Nationalists tended to regard the stream of Arab migrants as competitors in the labor market and to view Pan-Arabism as a drain on financial resources that could be put to better use at home.

The migration policies adopted between 1959 and 1964, in the political, economic, and demographic climate just described, will be taken up in chapter 3. In summary, it can be said that they served to permit relatively free immigration of labor, while maintaining close government control over entry,

internal movement, rights and employment. The new legal instruments embodied in law the principles of segmentation which had characterized Kuwaiti society in the 1930s. Only now, the lines of distinction were drawn between Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis.

Transition: 1965-66.

In 1965, the new state experienced a drop in government budget surplus, a reminder that financial resources were limited (see Table 1-4). Demographically, the census of that year showed the effects of previous immigration policies: the proportion of non-Kuwaitis increased to more than 50 percent of total population. By far the largest group amongst the immigrants were Jordanians and Palestinians, whose numbers had risen from 14,000 in 1957\* to 78,000 by 1965. Lebanese, Muscati and Omanis, Syrians, and Egyptians now also had sizable communities, as may be seen in Table 1-5.

In November 1965, the Amir died and his brother, prime minister and crown prince Sabah Salim succeeded him. Politically, Sabah faced new challenges to his authority as the result of the growing strength within the National Assembly of the Arab Nationalist bloc, which had succeeded in forcing dissolution of a cabinet containing six Merchants, in

---

\* Janet Abu-Lughod, "Social Implications of Labor Migration in the Arab World," in Ibrahim Ibrahim, ed., Arab Resources: The Transformation of a Society, Washington, D.C.: Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, and London: Croom Helm, 1983, p.241.

violation of the unwritten agreement that Merchant groups would confine themselves to the commercial sphere. The cabinet crisis shifted the locus of political opposition from the Merchant elite to the National Assembly, specifically to the progressive faction of the Arab Nationalists which enjoyed broad support amongst the Arab immigrant population. Now, the Assembly refused to ratify the 1965 agreement between the government and the KOC; in response to growing opposition, government curtailed political and religious activities, closed down several newspapers and deported a number of foreign workers.\*

These circumstances formed the context for a discernible shift in migration and related population policies. It was, as yet, undesirable actually to limit the inflow of migrants; this would have jeopardized the growing alliance between the ruling family and the merchants. But it was not too soon to anticipate the need to do so if opposition got out of hand. Accordingly, administrative control over migration was moved from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour to Interior, which enacted new measures enabling government to clamp down on immigration. It was also not too soon to build support among Kuwaiti Nationalists, as an antidote to the Arab Nationalist Movement; in 1965 government expanded its program

---

\* Events during this period are discussed in Walid Moubarak, "Kuwait's Quest for Security: 1961-1973," Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Political Science, Indiana University, May 1979, p. 125ff., and Crystal, p. 193ff.



for naturalization of Bedouin--strong Kuwaiti Nationalists and traditional supporters of al-Sabah.

Security, Restriction, and Rebalance: 1967-1973.

In January 1967, the Amir dissolved the Assembly and called for new elections.\* When elections for the second National Assembly were held in June, the Arab Nationalists suffered a resounding defeat, amid protests of alleged election irregularities. Marginalized by the election results and growing disaffection amongst their more moderate liberal supporters, the Arab Nationalists coalesced under al-Khattib's leadership and became increasingly radicalized following the Arab defeat in the 1967 war with Israel, which also resulted in a new wave of Palestinian immigrants to Kuwait. Now, protests mounted over conditions surrounding the elections and over renegotiation of the oil agreement between KOC and the government. The rising number of security incidents were increasingly linked to regional tensions, which soon included conflicts between the PLO and King Hussein in Jordan, protests over Britain's presence in the Gulf, and the 1973 Arab-Israeli war.

As in the past, deportations were the immediate response to specific security incidents, but now the Ministry of Interior moved directly to limit immigration by fully implementing the

---

\* Events of this period are discussed in Hassan A. Al-Ebraheem, Kuwait: A Political Study, Kuwait: Kuwait University, 1975, p. 139ff.; also see Crystal, p. 195 and Moubarak, p. 139.

measures put into place in 1965. As a consequence, annual rates of growth in the immigrant population slowed considerably: from a high of over 10 percent prior to 1965, to a low of 2 percent in the early 1970s.

Simultaneously, efforts to strengthen the Kuwaiti Nationalist base of support (and to weaken further the domestic Arab Nationalist opposition) continued with the naturalization program. Estimates based on official data suggest that nearly 90,000 people had been naturalized between 1961 and 1970, a figure that represent 26 percent of the total Kuwaiti population in the latter year.\* The growth in the number of Kuwaiti citizens, together with slower rates of growth in the immigrant population had two effects: demographically, it preserved the proportionate balance between Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis at their 1965 levels (48 percent Kuwaiti, 52 percent non-Kuwaiti. Politically, the naturalization program swelled the ranks of a constituency whose demands would increase significantly in years to come. For the time being, it strengthened popular calls for granting greater preference to Kuwaitis.

---

\* See Table 3-2. Unofficial estimates of the numbers naturalized run as high as 200,000 (Crystal, p. 198). Although there are no data on the exact origins of those naturalized, it is likely that most were Bedouin, as Crystal assumes. See also Ahmad Jamal Zahir, al-Mar'ah fi Duwal al-Khalij al-'Arabi: Dirasa Midaniyya, Kuwait: Dar al-Salasil, ca. 1985, p. 53.

Liberalization: 1974-1977.

Even as immigration was being restricted, the ground was being laid for a new phase in Kuwait's migration policy. In 1970, a decade after Kuwait joined Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela to form OPEC, the cartel agreed upon a unified pricing policy. In October of 1973, in the context of the Arab-Israeli war of that year, OPEC members announced price increases. In February 1974, previous efforts to renegotiate the government's position in the Kuwait Oil Company resulted in an agreement giving the state 60 percent ownership; in March 1975, government announced takeover of the remaining shares.\*

With control of KOC and its oil revenues now entirely in government hands, government expenditures, channelled largely through the private sector, soon began to generate increased labor demand, at a time when Kuwait was experiencing the lowest rates of growth in its immigrant population since the 1940s. Politically, in the face of an increasingly contentious National Assembly, the first priority was to enable the use of Kuwait's rapid economic growth in a way that

---

\* Crystal, pp. 204-205. For discussion of the economic factors underlying migration for employment in the Middle East during this period, see Ismail Serageldin, et al., "Manpower and International Labor Migration in the Middle East and North Africa," Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, Technical Assistance and Special Studies Division, June 30, 1981, as well as Birks and Sinclair, Arab Manpower. Kuwait's role in OPEC is also discussed in Nazli Choucri, International Politics of Energy Interdependence: The Case of Petroleum, Lexington, Massachusetts: D.C. Heath and Company, 1976.

would help to solidify regime support, which, increasingly, came from the Merchant elites.

The second priority was to diffuse debate concentrated in the Assembly, where conflicts between liberal and conservative factions had become sharp. Political realignments during the late 1960s and early 1970s had altered somewhat the composition of these two groups. Liberals still included the Arab Nationalists, who had become increasingly pro-Palestinian in recent years and strongly endorsed Kuwait's support regionally for the Palestinian cause.\* In this, and in their call for more open political participation by all within Kuwait, they were joined by many trade unionists and liberal intellectuals including some from the merchant elite. At the same time, a number of merchants had become wary of the ANM's radical attachments and were put off by the persistence of security incidents. The majority of merchants moved toward a more centrist position; some, including earlier ANM supporters, became frankly more conservative. By the mid 1970s, conservative Kuwaiti Nationalists were comprised of several different groups: the Bedouin, whose numbers had grown in

---

\* At the Khartoum "summit" in August 1967, Kuwait committed to financial contributions in support of the states in direct confrontation with Israel and had played a diplomatic role in resolving the Palestinians' conflicts with Jordan in 1970 and Lebanon in 1973. Kuwait joined with other Arab League states in recognizing the PLO as the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people (backing their support with financial contributions), and stood with Iraq in rejecting Security Council Resolution 242, which characterized the Palestinian issue as a mere refugee problem. See Moubarak, p. 146ff. for discussion of relations between Kuwait and the Palestinians.

recent years; Shia who felt economically and politically disenfranchised, and now some merchants.

Liberals and conservatives were divided over a number of issues, including the appropriateness of liberal democratic forms of political participation, and the desirability of Kuwait's high degree of attention to regional issues. In debate over these issues, the role of immigration and immigrants in Kuwaiti society became a central point of contention. Conservative Kuwaiti Nationalists expressed anger over unemployment and underemployment among Kuwaitis and called for more rapid Kuwaitization. "[W]hy should Kuwait be giving foreign aid when we need the money at home to develop our own human resources" they argued.\* Liberals voiced their resentment over naturalization of Bedouin, while highly qualified, long-time Arab residents were denied citizenship and effective participation in Kuwait's political processes. The acrimonious debate over these issues was to play a major role in the Amir's decision to dissolve the National Assembly in 1976.

As will be seen in Chapter 3, restrictive migration policies of the previous phase were now reversed, and control over the migration process was once again shifted to the Ministry of

---

\* Al-Kuwait al-Yowm 1976, No. 39, p. 11, cited in Nabeel A. Khoury, "The Politics of Intra-Regional Migration," in International Migration in the Arab World, Vol. II, Beirut: ECWA, 1981, p. 761. Khoury discusses the parliamentary debate over these issues in some detail.

Social Affairs and Labour. Between 1976 and 1977, the number of new work permits issued more than doubled.\* Furthermore, the composition of the new immigration was significantly different from that of earlier flows: Asians now began to arrive in substantial numbers.\*\*

Consolidation and Regulation: 1978-1979.

The heated economic climate generated by the first oil price rise was cooled slightly by a mild recession in 1978 before the second oil price rise in 1979. Rapid demographic growth, particularly amongst the Asian population, began to generate tensions between Arab and Asian migrants, and between Kuwaitis and Arab migrants, who felt dismayed at the growing distinctions made between themselves and their fellow-Arab Kuwaitis. For the time being, however, these tensions were dominated by other issues more salient for migration policy formulation.

Sheikh Sabah died on December 31, 1977 and Jabir Ahmad, who succeeded him, quickly moved to introduce a program of civil service reform. In this context, migration-related policies enacted by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour addressed

---

\* State of Kuwait, "Annual Report on Employment and Essential Characteristics of Immigrant Manpower," Kuwait: Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, Manpower Organization Office, Employment Control, 1978.

\*\* The causes for this shift to Asian labor are multiple and complex. Both the economic and possibly political reasons for the shift are discussed in Chapter 3.

two issues of immediate salience: the tensions between the need for labor market stability on the one hand, and growing concerns over settlement of migrants on the other. The result was a complex network of provisions that gave Labour, in concert with Interior, the tools for restricting as well as controlling immigration for employment. While conditions did not--yet--warrant any clamp-down, government had positioned itself for such a contingency.

Political and Cultural Security: 1980-1983.

Demographically, the census of 1980 presented Kuwaitis with a shock: since 1975, their proportion in the total population had dropped from 47 percent to 41.6 percent. Furthermore, the proportion of Asians in the total population had grown from 9.8 percent in 1975 to 15 percent in 1980, and they now comprised nearly 26 percent of non-Kuwaitis. The census also exploded the myth that Kuwait's migrants were "temporary" in any meaningful sense of the term. Despite recently introduced measures to reduce settlement, nearly a third of all non-Kuwaitis had been resident for 10 years or more; nearly 16 percent had been resident for 15 years or more.\*

In the economic sphere, the boom bombed: by 1981, worldwide recession had started, resulting in declines in both oil prices and government revenues. In 1982, Kuwait's unofficial

---

\* State of Kuwait, Statistical Abstract 1985, p. 51, Table 36.

stock market, Suq al-Manakh, collapsed, leaving more than US \$90 billion in claims and counterclaims.\*

Politically, security-related tasks assumed a new and dominating prominence: following the Iranian revolution in 1979, there had been mass demonstrations of support by Kuwait's sizable Shiite population. These, in turn, were followed in the spring and summer of 1980 by new security incidents: bombings in Kuwait and of Kuwaiti offices in London, and the highjacking of a Kuwaiti jetliner. The onset of the Iran-Iraq war in 1981 brought armed conflict to Kuwait's borders.

A second major development in the political context of migration policy formulation was the growing strength of conservative political factions, composed of traditional Bedouin tribal leaders and Islamic groups, both of which made significant gains in the 1981 elections which restored the National Assembly. Indeed, the role of "opposition" passed from Arab Nationalists to religious conservatives.\*\*

As will be seen in Chapter 3, migration policy moved to respond to the twin concerns with security and cultural

---

\* Crystal gives a fuller account of this crisis, p. 227ff.

\*\* The elections and their effects on the mood of the National Assembly are discussed in Middle East Review 1983, p. 189; Crystal, pp. 225-226. An overview of Islam's development as a political force since the late 1970s is given in James A. Bill, "Resurgent Islam in the Persian Gulf." Foreign Affairs, Fall 1984, pp. 109-127.



identity. A registration and deportation campaign was mounted in 1982 and 1983, and new measures were added to strengthen government's ability to restrict immigration. \* Among the first legislative initiatives of the new Assembly was an amendment to the Nationality Law restricting naturalization to Muslims. \*\* While decried by more progressive Kuwaitis, the measure had support of many (including some Arab migrants) who felt their cultural authenticity (as well as their future position in Kuwait) assaulted by growth in the largely non-Muslim Asian population.

Population Balance: 1984-1985.

By 1983, revenues had dropped below expenditures and government had begun to draw down on its reserves to maintain a stable level of expenditures. Demographically, despite the registration and deportation campaign of the preceding two years, government had not, as yet, fully exercised the tools it had in place to limit immigration. Consequently, it was evident to all that immigration had continued in the early 1980s. This sense was confirmed in 1985, when the census revealed that Kuwaitis had dropped to 40 percent of total population, despite a markedly higher than average number of naturalizations during the preceding four years. The census contained another sobering revelation: over 300,000 aliens

---

\* Law 55 of 1982 amending the Aliens Residence Law, and implementing regulation in Ministerial Order No. 262 of 1982.

\*\* Law No. 1 of 1982.

--nearly 30 percent of the non-Kuwaiti population--had been born in Kuwait. \*

Security issues continued at the forefront of the political agenda in 1984, but now migration itself emerged as a related and central issue. Following the December 1983 bombing of the U.S Embassy, and French and Kuwaiti installations, the Minister of Interior, acting on the long-perceived link between migration and security, called for an end to immigration. In 1985, Interior made a proposal to limit outright the number of immigrants in Kuwait, a measure that was vetoed by parliamentary committee.\*\*

Added to the security concerns about immigration, were now vocal expressions of concern over other aspects of the issue. First, under conditions of financial constraint, all social expenditures were under review and those costs incurred for the maintenance of migrants and their dependents, long an irritant to Kuwaitis, came under particular fire. Secondly, the non-monetary social costs of immigration had, by this time, become a central concern: terms such as "cultural pollution" were widely heard. Finally, however, it was the sheer fact of the Kuwaitis' growing numerical minority in

---

\* Naturalization figures are given in Table 3-2 in the following chapter; the figure on non-Kuwaitis born in Kuwait is from National Bank of Kuwait, Kuwait Economic and Financial Bulletin, No. 10, summer 1986, p. 10.

\*\* Al-Ra'i al-Am, 1 April 1985.

the total population that became the touchstone for the shift in attitudes toward migration during this period.

The forum for public expression of views on this objective was Assembly debate over the draft National Development Plan, unveiled by government in April 1985.\* The Plan proposed outright to make population balance a central objective of Kuwait's development and called for attainment of a "50-50" balance between Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis by the year 2000. Responses to these proposals reflected the extent to which different groups had come to distinguish among different aspects of the immigration issue. Both members of the old merchant elite and those with more recently established commercial interests tended to favor free entry of workers with the lowest wage rates (regardless of nationality), but then to endorse limiting the rights of migrants. They generally opposed naturalization, although some who had earlier sympathized with the Arab Nationalists retained a liberal attitude toward naturalization of well-educated Arab migrants and favored entry of Arabs over Asians.\*\*

---

\* The following characterization of the Plan objectives and positions of different groups on immigration issues is based upon local Kuwaiti press reports of Assembly debates concerning the Plan and upon author's interviews.

\*\* In the early 1980s, Jasim al-Qatani, an early ANM supporter who had broken with al-Khattib after 1965, had formed his own faction, The National Coalition (Tujam'a al-Watani). The National Coalition aligned with the Chamber of Commerce on a number of issues including support for liberal entry of immigrants and opposition to naturalization in general, but shared with al-Khattib's group support for the principle that immigrants should be Arabs. In the Assembly debates, National Coalition supporter Dr. Nasser Sarkhouh made a special plea for the Palestinians.

Kuwaiti Nationalists, including many poorer members of Kuwaiti society as well as some wealthier and intellectual supporters, tended to oppose both entry and the extension of rights to migrants and to favor naturalization only for Bedouin. Arab Nationalists (now under the banner of the Democratic Progressive Alliance or Tujam'a al-Demucratiyun al-Taqadumiyn) tended to support the entry of Arabs but not Asians, to argue for better treatment of migrants, and to favor the naturalization of those amongst their constituency: trade unionists and union sympathizers among the lower classes, teachers, employees, and Bedouin. Islamic groups expressed less concern with levels of immigration or national origin per se, but greater concern that migrants be Muslims.

In the final resolution, government's proposal to achieve population balance through slower immigration was adopted. The very centrality accorded to the "population question" signalled Kuwait's open recognition that what had begun as economically-driven "migration for employment" had become transformed into a political issue with deep and long-lasting consequences. The role of government policies toward migration in shaping this transformation in Kuwait is the subject of Chapter 3, which follows a review of the literature on the topic in the next chapter.

TABLE 1-1  
POPULATION OF KUWAIT IN CENSUS YEARS

YEAR	TYPE	MALES	FEMALES	TOTAL	%OF TOTAL	%INTER CENSAL GROWTH	% ANNUAL GROWTH
1957	K	59,154	54,468	113,622	55.03	--	--
	NonK	72,904	19,947	92,851	44.97	--	--
	Tot	132,058	74,415	206,473	100.00		
1961	K	84,461	77,448	161,909	50.34	42.50	9.26
	NonK	116,246	43,466	159,712	49.66	72.00	14.52
	Tot	200,707	120,914	321,621	100.00	55.77	11.72
1965	K	112,569	107,490	220,059	47.08	35.91	7.97
	NonK	173,743	73,537	247,280	52.91	54.83	11.55
	Tot	286,312	181,027	467,339	100.00	45.30	9.79
1970	K	175,513	171,883	347,396	47.03	57.86	9.56
	NonK	244,368	146,898	391,266	52.97	58.23	9.61
	Tot	419,881	318,781	738,662	100.00	58.06	9.59
1975	K	236,600	235,488	472,088	47.45	35.98	6.32
	NonK	307,168	215,581	522,749	52.55	33.60	5.96
	Tot	543,768	451,069	994,837	100.00	34.68	6.14
1980	K	280,649	284,964	565,613	41.65	19.81	3.68
	NonK	495,990	296,349	792,339	58.35	51.57	8.67
	Tot	776,639	581,313	1,357,952	100.00	36.50	6.42
1985	K	338,285	341,291	679,576	40.09	20.15	3.74
	NonK	627,935	387,614	1,015,552	59.91	28.17	5.09
	Tot	966,223	728,905	1,695,128	100.00	24.80	4.54

Sources: 1957-1980: Population figures from Kuwait Facts and Figures, Kuwait: Ministry of Information, 1984; percentages calculated by author.

1985: Preliminary results from Census taken April 23 1985. Population totals and sex ratios reported in Arab Times, April 30, 1985, p. 1; number of males and females and percentages calculated by author.

Table 1-2

KUWAITI CRUDE LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATES (LFPR)\*  
1965-1985 (IN CENSUS YEARS)

	(1) KUWAITI POPULATION	(2) KUWAITI LABOR FORCE	(3) CRUDE LFPR (2)/(1)
1965	220,059	40,166	18.25
1970	347.396	59,634	17.17
1975	472,088	86,971	18.42
1980	565.613	103,499	18.30
1985	679,576	126,702	18.64

Sources: 1965-1980: Table 1-5 this study; 1985: Labor force figures from National Bank of Kuwait, Bulletin No. 10, summer 1986, p. 10; population figures from Table 1-1 this study.

\* nb. For 1965, Labor force includes persons aged 12 and over, thereafter aged 15 and over. The labor force includes individuals who are employed (employers, self-employed, employees, and unpaid workers); first-time job seekers; and unemployed persons. Those considered to be inactive (i.e. not in the labor force) include students; housewives; "persons not willing to work"; and "disabled (inactive)" individuals.

TABLE 1-3  
 LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATES\* OF KUWAITIS  
 BY SEX IN CENSUS YEARS

	LFPR MALES	LFPR FEMALES
1965	64.7	1.8
1970	62.8	2.1
1975	71.2	6.2
1980	66.8	9.6
1985	59.5	13.8

Sources: 1965-1985: State of Kuwait, Statistical Abstract 1985, p. 109, Table 98.; 1985: National Bank of Kuwait, Bulletin No. 10, p. 10.

\* nb. LFPR = Number of persons of each sex in the labor force/working age population of each sex. For 1965, labor force includes persons aged 12 and over, thereafter, aged 15 and over. The labor force includes individuals who are employed (employers, self-employed, employees, and unpaid workers); first-time job seekers; and unemployed persons. Those considered to be inactive (i.e. not in the labor force) include students; housewives; "persons not willing to work"; and "disabled (inactive)" individuals.

TABLE 1-4

KUWAIT: GDP, GOVERNMENT REVENUES, EXPENDITURES AND SURPLUS  
1957-1983 (IN MILLION KD) AT MARKET PRICES

YEAR	GDP	GOV'T REVENUE	GOV'T EXPENDITURE	SURPLUS
1957	N.A.	116	91	25
1961	653.0	174	162	12
1965	749.0	245	241	4
1970	961.0	344	334	10
1975	3,230.0	1,737	920	817
1976	3,839.7	2,706	1,378	1,328
1977	4,053.2	2,712	1,753	959
1978	4,194.5	3,285	1,728	1,557
1979	6,723.8	6,088	2,192	3,896
1980	7,447.0	4,659	2,630	2,029
1981	6,738.0	2,985	3,092	(107)
1982	5,998.0	2,567	3,158	(591)
1983	6,415.0	3,175	2,922	253
1984	6,425.0	3,227	3,578	(351)
1985	-	3,116	3,432	(316)

Sources: 1957-1975: Annual Statistical Abstract 1976, General Information in Population Census Years. Figures for 1975 are estimates. 1976-1978: Annual Statistical Abstract 1981, Selected Economical and Social Indicators. p. xxxvii. 1979-1985: National Bank of Kuwait, Kuwait Economic and Financial Bulletin No. 9, November 1985, pp. 7 (GDP through 1984) and 15 (Revenues and Expenditures). Calculations of surplus by author.

n.b.: 1 KD = 2.80 USD from 1957 through 1970; thereafter, rate of exchange ranged from 3.04 to 3.68.



TABLE 1-5

POPULATION OF KUWAIT BY NATIONALITY, SEX,  
AND LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION IN CENSUS YEARS

1965					
NATIONALITY	TOTAL	LABOR FORCE	CRUDE LFPR *	TOT # FEMALE	% FEMALE
Jordan & Palestine	77,712	36,027	0.46	27,968	35.99
Iraq	25,897	11,720	0.45	10,135	39.14
Saudi Arabia	4,632	1,741	0.38	1,751	37.80
Lebanon	20,877	9,022	0.43	8,057	38.59
Syria	16,849	10,237	0.61	4,774	28.33
Egypt	11,021	5,555	0.50	5,225	47.41
Yemen (N&S)	2,779	5,822	2.09	86	3.09
Muscat & Oman	19,584	14,766	0.75	2,736	13.97
Other Gulf Arabs	2,011	3,152	1.57	650	32.32
Other Arabs	6,561	361	0.06	177	2.70
TOTAL NON-K ARABS	187,923	98,403	0.52	61,559	32.76
Iran	30,790	27,955	0.91	1,765	5.73
India	11,699	6,990	0.60	3,964	33.88
Pakistan	11,735	5,550	0.47	4,102	34.96
Other Asian	259	157	0.61	77	29.73
TOTAL ASIAN	54,483	40,652	0.75	9,908	18.19
TOTAL NON-ARAB AFRICAN	412	297	0.72	67	16.26
AMERICAN & EUROPEAN	4,430	1,877	0.42	1,991	44.94
NOT STATED	32	50	1.56	12	37.50
TOTAL NON-KUWAITI	247,280	141,279	0.57	73,537	29.74
KUWAITI	220,059	40,166	0.18	107,490	48.85
GRAND TOTAL	467,339	181,445	0.39	181,027	38.74

Sources: Total population figures and Kuwaiti labor force for 1965, 1970, and 1975: Annual Statistical Abstract 1977, Kuwait, MOP, Central Statistical Office, pp. 25-26, and 59. Non-Kuwaiti labor force figures: Annual Statistical Abstract 1981, Table 112. Figures for 1980: Statistical Abstract 1982, Tables 9, 79, and 80. Reclassifications and calculations by author. There are enumeration errors in the cases of Yemen (N & S) and Other Gulf Arabs.

\* Crude LFPR=number in labor force/ total population;  
LFPR greater than 1.0 results from enumeration errors.

TABLE 1-5 cont.d

POPULATION OF KUWAIT BY NATIONALITY, SEX,  
AND LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION IN CENSUS YEARS

1970					
NATIONALITY	TOTAL	LABOR FORCE	CRUDE LFPR	TOT # FEMALE	% FEMALE
Jordan & Palestine	147,696	41,600	0.28	67,762	45.88
Iraq	39,066	17,456	0.45	15,483	39.63
Saudi Arabia	10,897	2,773	0.25	4,872	44.71
Lebanon	25,387	8,469	0.33	11,242	44.28
Syria	27,217	12,765	0.47	10,037	36.88
Egypt	30,421	17,765	0.58	13,029	42.83
Yemen (N&S)	10,967	8,645	0.79	1,102	10.05
Muscat & Oman	14,670	10,563	0.72	2,238	15.26
Other Gulf Arabs	5,518	2,082	0.38	1,673	30.32
Other Arabs	1,010	536	0.53	270	26.73
TOTAL NON-K ARABS	312,849	122,654	0.39	127,708	40.82
Iran	39,129	33,599	0.86	3,631	9.28
India	17,336	10,438	0.60	6,826	39.37
Pakistan	14,712	6,755	0.46	5,274	35.85
Other Asian	662	524	0.79	132	19.94
TOTAL ASIAN	71,839	51,316	0.71	15,863	22.08
TOTAL NON-ARAB AFRICAN	676	320	0.47	188	27.81
AMERICAN & EUROPEAN	5,826	2,488	0.43	2,703	46.40
NOT STATED	76	49	0.64	24	31.58
TOTAL NON-KUWAITI	391,266	176,827	0.45	146,486	37.44
KUWAITI	347,396	59,634	0.17	171,883	49.48
GRAND TOTAL	738,662	236,461	0.32	318,369	43.10

TABLE 1-5 cont.d

POPULATION OF KUWAIT BY NATIONALITY, SEX,  
AND LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION IN CENSUS YEARS

1975					
NATIONALITY	TOTAL	LABOR FORCE	CRUDE LFPR	TOT # FEMALE	% FEMALE
Jordan & Palestine	204,178	47,653	0.23	96,408	47.22
Iraq	45,070	17,999	0.40	18,571	41.20
Saudi Arabia	12,527	2,644	0.21	5,907	47.15
Lebanon	24,776	7,232	0.29	11,568	46.69
Syria	40,962	16,548	0.40	16,321	39.84
Egypt	60,534	37,558	0.62	24,739	40.87
Yemen (N&S)	17,163	11,415	0.67	3,097	18.04
Muscat & Oman	7,313	3,660	0.50	2,196	30.03
Other Gulf Arabs	4,056	784	0.19	2,043	50.37
Other Arabs	2,608	1,225	0.47	912	34.97
TOTAL NON-K ARABS	419,187	146,718	0.35	181,762	43.36
Iran	40,842	28,933	0.71	7,483	18.32
India	32,105	21,633	0.67	15,326	47.74
Pakistan	23,016	11,038	0.48	8,020	34.85
Other Asian	1,732	982	0.57	350	20.21
TOTAL ASIAN	97,695	62,586	0.64	31,179	31.91
TOTAL NON-ARAB AFRICAN	440	107	0.24	123	27.95
AMERICAN & EUROPEAN	5,259	2,033	0.39	2,433	46.26
NOT STATED	168	0	0.00	84	50.00
TOTAL NON-KUWAITI	522,749	211,444	0.40	215,581	41.24
KUWAITI	472,088	86,971	0.18	235,488	49.88
GRAND TOTAL	994,837	298,415	0.30	451,069	45.34

TABLE 1-5 cont.d

POPULATION OF KUWAIT BY NATIONALITY, SEX,  
AND LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION IN CENSUS YEARS

1980					
NATIONALITY *	TOTAL	LABOR FORCE	CRUDE LFPR	TOT # FEMALE	% FEMALE
TOTAL NON-K ARABS	574,495	228,546	0.40	234,289	40.78
TOTAL ASIAN	204,104	145,731	0.71	56,148	27.51
TOTAL NON-ARAB AFRICAN	1,601	810	0.51	702	43.85
AMERICAN & EUROPEAN	12,139	5,521	0.45	5,210	42.92
TOTAL NON-KUWAITI	792,339	380,608	0.48	296,349	37.40
KUWAITI	565,613	103,499	0.18	284,964	50.38
GRAND TOTAL	1,357,952	484,107	0.36	581,313	42.81

\* In 1980, the government of Kuwait ceased to publish population data by specific nationalities.

## 2. THE ROLE OF POLICY IN MIGRATION.

### 2.1. Introduction.

Both theoretical and empirical approaches to international migration for employment are characterized by a lack of attention to the role of government policies in shaping the migration process. To the extent that policy-related issues are considered at all, it has been in the context of discussing the political causes and consequences of migratory movements. Few theoretical or empirical treatments of international migration have taken government actions as the unit of analysis. As a consequence, there are only scattered efforts to define the range of motives and considerations that interact to shape the migration policies of labor-receiving countries.

This chapter reviews the treatment of policy factors within dominant theoretical approaches to international migration for employment and the small body of literature on migration policies, with particular reference to the Middle East. Drawing upon the literature of public policy analysis, the chapter then turns to consider the definition of migration-related policies and the scope of issues policies may be expected to address in the case of Kuwait.

## 2.2 Approaches to International Migration for Employment.

Much of the discussion and debate surrounding international migration for employment generally, and in the Middle East specifically have focused on the size of migratory flows or on the determinants and consequences of migration per se.<sup>\*</sup> The vast majority of studies have assumed the dominance of economic causes and consequences of migration. Even scholars who elsewhere note the relevance of demographic, social and, occasionally, political factors, tend to emphasize the primacy of market forces, and to dismiss the need for theoretical accommodations to the international character of contemporary migration for employment:

"It is not proposed here to derive a theory of international migration to explain the presence of these migrants. The economic demand for their services existed at a price sufficiently high to persuade a sufficient number to travel to Kuwait."\*\*

---

\* Some of the more prominent examples include Birks and Sinclair, Arab Manpower; Serageldin, et al. "Manpower and International Labor Migration in the Middle East and North Africa"; Nader Fergany, Migration to the Oil: The Size and Effects of Migration in the Oil Producing Countries and its Effect on the Development of the Arab Region; Galal Amin and Elizabeth Awmy, International Migration of Egyptian Labour: A Review of the State of the Art; Kingsley Davis, "International Inequality and Migration in the Middle East and North Africa: An Analysis of Trends and Issues"; Ijaz Gilani, et al., "Labor Migration from Pakistan to the Middle East and its Impact on the Domestic Economy".

\*\* Stace Birks, Ismail Serageldin, Clive Sinclair and James Socknat, "International Labor and Associated Population Movements in the Arab Region," paper presented at "Conference on Population Development and Distribution in the Arab Region," sponsored by Arab Planning Institute, University of Kuwait, and International Labor Office, held in Kuwait 22-26 November 1981, p. 8. Elsewhere, they have acknowledged the role of government immigration policy and administrative capacity as determinants of non-national

The theoretical construct upon which such views are based emanates from neoclassical economic models of internal migration (exemplified by Harris and Todaro\*) which hold that migration is a function of wage differentials between labor-sending and receiving locations and the probability of finding employment at the point of destination.

Few neoclassical economists have attempted to push migration theory to take cognizance of the fact that when markets cross international boundaries, governmental policies invariably mediate economic forces. Lucas has

---

population growth in Kuwait. See J.S. Birks and C.S. Sinclair, "Migration for Employment Project: Nature and Process of Labour Importing: The Arabian Gulf States of Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates." Geneva: International Labour Organization, World Employment Programme Research Working Paper (WEP 2-26/WP 30) August 1978, p. 6.

\* Michael P. Todaro, "A Model of Labor Migration and Urban Unemployment in Less Developed Countries", American Economic Review, Vol. 59, March, 1969; John Harris and Michael P. Todaro, "Migration, Unemployment and Development: A Two-Sector Analysis", American Economic Review, Vol. 60, March, 1970. Adherence to this neoclassical economic model is also characteristic of approaches that are more centrally concerned with spatial variables, as well as those that focus on the characteristics of migrants or features of the sending and receiving locations ("push-pull" and "affinity" approaches). See W.A.V. Clark, Human Migration, London: Sage Publications, 1986, p. 75ff. for acknowledgement of this point with respect to spatial models. Recent extensions of the wage-differential model to international migration have continued the focus on causes and consequences: eg. Lucas and Stark 1984, and Stark and Bloom 1985, who stress the importance of migration as a risk-sharing arrangement among family members and shift the focus of analysis from the individual to the household level. A variant of the preoccupation with causes and consequences of migration is the treatment of benefits and

recognized the importance of considering policies when extending wage-differential models to international migration for employment.\* Bhagwati has explicitly asserted that "internal-migration models...are not readily transferable to analyzing international migrations."\*\* Papademetriou has noted that international migration "intertwines almost inextricably with economic, cultural, social and political questions" \*\*\* and has argued for greater attention to policy factors. Still, these scholars are exceptions.\*\*\*\* By and large, neoclassical economic theory and the approaches which draw upon it have treated migration as a self-regulating process, the product of individual and household levels of decision-making in

---

costs of the process. See S.S. Russell, "Remittances from International Migration: A Review in Perspective," World Development, Vol. 14, No. 6, pp. 677-696 for a critique of this literature and discussion of gaps in theoretical and empirical treatments of political factors in international migration for employment.

\* Robert E.B. Lucas, "International Migration: Economic Causes, Consequences, Evaluation and Policies," in Kritz, et al., Global Trends in Migration: Theory and Research on International Population Movements, Staten Island, NY: Center for Migration Studies, 1981.

\*\* Jagdish Bhagwati, "Incentives and Disincentives: International Migration," Weltwirtschaftliches Archiv, Vol. 120, No. 4, 1984, pp. 678-700.

\*\*\* Demetrios G. Papademetriou, "International Migration in a Changing World: The Political Economy of International Migration," International Social Science Journal, Vol. XXXVI, No. 3, 1984, pp. 409-423.

\*\*\*\* For the sake of completeness, it should be noted that Lee postulated the presence of "intervening obstacles" to movement between areas of origin and areas of destination, but omitted any mention of policies among such obstacles (Everett Lee, "A Theory of Migration," Demography, Vol. 3, No. 1, pp. 47-57.)



interaction with market forces. The role of government policies in mediating this process is ignored.

Marxist economists have argued that international economic systems--specifically capitalism--constitute a structural context for international migration, in which the process serves to provide a source of labor for the continued expansion of the capitalist system while allowing poor countries to cope with low wages and impoverished conditions.\* Yet in the Marxist approach, as in the neoclassical tradition, the focus is on the economic factors that shape international migration, or on the economic and class structural consequences of the process. There is little or no attention to the role of state policies nor explication of why governments adopt the policies they do.

In their theoretical and broader empirical treatments of international migration for employment, political

---

\* For example, Alejandro Portes, "Alternate Modes of Structural Incorporation and Their Bearing on Present Theories of Labor Immigration", in Kritiz et al. eds., Global Trends in Migration: Theory and Research on International Population Movements, New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1981; Saskia Sassan-Koob, "The Internationalization of the Labor Force", Studies in Comparative International Development, Vol. 15, No. 4, Winter, 1980, pp. 3-25; with regard to Middle Eastern migration, this view has been adopted, most notably, by Nader Fergany in his study, Migration to the Oil: The Size and Effects of Migration in the Oil Producing Countries and its Effect on the Development of the Arab Region, Center for Arab Unity Studies, Cairo: 1984.

scientists have exhibited greater awareness of the political dimensions of the subject. Weiner and Choucri have addressed issues such as the links between migration and ethnic conflicts, the structural causes and consequences of migration, and more recently the role of international migration in international relations \*. Others have focused on the political activity of migrants or the role of migration in bilateral relations.\*\* After more than two decades, the European case has begun to yield explicit consideration of policies--especially those affecting assimilation of migrants, return migration, and migrants' rights.\*\*\* Migdal has gone so far as to note

---

\* Myron Weiner, "International Migration and International Relations," Population and Development Review, Vol. 11, No. 3, September, 1985, pp. 441-455; "Transborder Peoples" in Mexican Americans in Comparative Perspective, Walker Connor, ed. Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute, 1985; Choucri, op. cit.; Choucri, "Asians in the Arab World: Labor Migration and Public Policy," Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 22, No. 2, April 1986, pp. 252-273; Myron Weiner and Nazli Choucri, "The Internationalization of Policies Affecting International Migration: Case Studies in the Middle East and South Asia." Report to the Ford Foundation, summer 1986 (mimeo). In several places, these works have begun to postulate and document the significance of migration policies.

\*\* Wayne Cornelius, "Mexican Migration to the United States: The View from Rural Sending Communities," Migration and Development Study Group Working Paper, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT, 1976; Stephen Adler, "People in the Pipeline: The Political Economy of Algerian Migration to France, 1962-1974," Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Department of Political Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, September 1975;

\*\*\* See Rosemarie Rogers, Guests Come to Stay: The Effects of European Labor Migration on Sending and Receiving Countries, Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1985.

that the emphasis on micro and macro level economic factors has obscured the role of political variables, including government policies, in shaping international migration (whether for employment or otherwise).\* But while these studies have acknowledged the importance of political factors, their focus has continued to be on explaining the movements of people, not on explaining the role of government policies as factors intervening in such movements.

Among writers who have undertaken empirical studies of migration in the Middle East, there are scattered references to political aspects of the process. Al-Salem and Dhaher have discussed the broad political ramifications of migration to the Gulf, and described a number of governmental policies toward immigrant labor.\*\* Farah et al. have considered migration in the broader context of political socialization in the Gulf.\*\*\* Joukhadar links migration to Kuwait to regional political events as well as to Kuwaiti immigration policies, while Khoury has pointed

---

\* Joel Migdal, "Policy in Context: The Intended and Unintended in Migration Policy in the Third World" in John D. Montgomery et al., eds., Patterns of Policy: Comparative and Longitudinal Studies of Population Events, New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Books, 1979.

\*\* Faisal al-Salem and Ahmed Dhaher, Expatriate Labor in the Gulf, Kuwait: (undated, ca. 1984).

\*\*\* Tawfic Farah, Faisal al-Salem, and Maria Kolman al-Salem, "Alienation and Expatriate Labor in Kuwait," Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. IV, No. 1, Fall 1980, pp. 3-40.

to the role of migration in political debates in Kuwait and Egypt.\* Saad Eddin Ibrahim has noted that Middle East migration "is not free labor flow in response to strict supply and demand". The intervening variable he postulates, however, is not immigration policy but a deeper factor: "the sociopolitical fear of being overwhelmed by outsiders." \*\* Dessouki is among the few to have considered explicitly the role of policies in shaping migration. \*\*\*

Despite the willingness of some observers to acknowledge a role for policies, it is a reflection of the state of the art that, writing in mid 1985, Weiner should formulate the notion that "states affect international migration by the rules they create regarding exit and entry" as a "proposition" to be tested, rather than a foregone conclusion.\*\*\*\*

---

\* Abdul-Halim Joukhadar, "Les Etrangers au Koweit," Population (Paris) 1 (January-February 1980, p. 64. and Nabeel Khoury, "The Politics of Intra-Regional Migration," in International Migration in the Arab World, Beirut: ECWA, Vol. II, 1981, pp. 753-776.

\*\* Saad Eddin Ibrahim, The New Arab Social Order: A Study of the Social Impact of Oil Wealth (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1982, p. 13.

\*\*\* Ali E. Hillal Dessouki, "The Shift in Egypt's Migration Policy: 1952-1978," Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 18, No. 1, January 1982, pp. 53-68.

\*\*\*\* Myron Weiner, "On International Migration and International Relations," Population and Development Review, Vol 11, No. 3, September 1985, p. 442.

While there has been some attention to the role of migration policies among other political factors shaping international migration for employment, there has been notably little attention to exploring the determinants of those policies or the political context in which they were formulated. A number of authors have noted the fundamental importance of the concept of sovereignty as the basic justification for state intervention in matters of entry and exit. Arendt has observed that "sovereignty is nowhere more absolute than in matters of emigration, naturalization, nationality and expulsion."\* Similarly, Bohning has noted that "Sovereignty endows every State with the right to refuse the entry of non-nationals and to determine the criteria for authorizing their admission, stay and activities."\*\* Most recently, Weiner has postulated that "the role of sovereignty is central to understanding the role of states in influencing international migration."\*\*\*

Postulates as to factors other than sovereignty that may constitute the domestic political context of migration-related policies are less frequent in the literature. Sirageldin has maintained that

---

\* Hannah Arendt, The Origins of Totalitarianism, New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1973, p. 278

\*\* W.R. Bohning, "Freedom of Movement within a Community of Developing Countries," (Geneva: International Labour Office, International Migration for Employment Working Paper 10 E, December 1983) p. 1

\*\*\* Weiner, "On International Migration and International Relations", p. 442.

Migration is an event deriving from social, economic and political structures and processes...National policies concerning international migration, if they exist explicitly, more often focus on immigration than on emigration. The regulation of immigration usually derives from the national concept of citizenship and nativity and concerns about economic impact and cultural mixing; stated emigration policies, more rare, represent purer economic and, in the case of refugees, political concerns.\*

Bhagwati has linked the causes of immigration restrictions not only to the issue of sovereignty, but also to nation-states' concerns with territoriality, national character and ethnic preference.\*\* Warwick has asserted that population policies, in general, are shaped by a country's sociohistorical and political environment, the political context and process of policy formulation and, eventually, by the consequences of earlier policy implementation, although his argument does not test these propositions for international migration for employment specifically.\*\*\*

---

\* Ismail Sirageldin, "Lecture on Population Policies and Development in the '80s," Islamabad: Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, Lectures in Development Economics No. 3, 1984, p. 18. For a contending view concerning emigration policies, see Alan Dowty, "The Assault on Freedom of Emigration," paper presented at The Joint MIT-Harvard Seminar on Migration and Development, Cambridge, Massachusetts, February 26, 1987.

\*\* Bhagwati, p. 681.

\*\*\* Donald P. Warwick, "Cultural Values and Population Policies: Cases and Contexts," in Montgomery et al., Patterns of Policy: Comparative and Longitudinal Studies of Population Events, New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1979.

One reason for the lack of attention to understanding the determinants and consequences of migration policies is undoubtedly the paucity of empirical data on both the structure and the content of those policies, especially in the Middle East. To date, the most comprehensive effort to assemble available data and analyze the nature and role of policies is the United Nations Fund for Population Activities' International Migration Policies and Programmes: A World Survey, published in 1982. While this study focused on a broad review of existing policies, rather than on their determinants per se, its analysis of the policies of more than 50 countries formed the basis for Brennan's subsequent conclusions about the range of factors that influence why and when receiving governments decide to intervene:

Frequently, policy decisions have been influenced not only by the nature and characteristics of the undocumented migrant population, but also by the current political, economic and social situation in the receiving country....governments' perceptions of irregular flows have changed following an upsurge of nationalistic sentiment, in response to fears over national security, or following a war or other dispute with another country, which often leads to the expulsion of nationals of that country....Policies also reflect and change in response to perceived negative social and cultural impacts, such as rising crime, domestic violence, the undermining of traditional values, etc. Finally, it is well known that in many countries of attraction, enforcement varies according to economic circumstances, with a lenient enforcement policy in times of economic prosperity and more vigorous enforcement during an economic downturn.\*

---

\*Ellen M. Brennan, "Irregular Migration: Policy Responses in Africa and Asia," International Migration Review, Vol. XVIII, No. 3, Fall 1984, p. 411.

While Brennan is writing specifically about irregular migration and the cases of Asia and Africa, her conclusions appear equally relevant for migration policies of labor-receiving countries more generally, including those of the Middle East.

To the extent that the literature has characterized the climate of migration policy in the Middle East, it has stressed the laxness of the existing policy framework:

Within the Middle East, migration for employment occurs in a fundamentally laissez-faire environment. Although there are stringent restrictions on migration for settlement, labor emigration is relatively unimpeded....National boundaries and the nation-state itself coexist uneasily with the tradition of mobility, rooted in long-distance commerce and Islamic political thought....the ideological view of artificial borders, coupled with Islamic beliefs and practices, provides considerably less legitimacy for restricting labor migration than do the political traditions of, say, Western Europe.\*

The assertion that "labor migration is relatively unimpeded" leaves the impression that there has been little effort to develop a framework of policies related to labor migration, let alone any serious effort to implement such policies. Country-specific migration studies that even touch upon existing policies in the Middle East are few;\*\*

---

\* Alan Richards and Philip L. Martin, "The Laissez-Faire Approach to International Labor Migration: The Case of the Arab Middle East," Economic Development and Cultural Change, vol. 31, No. 3, April 1983, p. 460-461.

\*\* Among the better examples are George Dib's "Migration and Naturalization Laws in Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates," Population Bulletin, U.N. Commission for Western Asia, Part One: Migration laws, No. 15, December 1978, pp. 33-62, Seccombe's studies of Jordan and Kuwait, and al-Moosa and McLachlan's Immigrant Labor in Kuwait.



those that do exist challenge the characterization of labor migration as "unimpeded", but at the same time give little sense that there may be any overall structured policy framework or dynamic policy subsystem. Rather, they tend to describe isolated policies and provisions that affect the movement and status of migrants at the time of the observation. There is virtually no attention to the evolution of migration policies or the historical and political context of that evolution.

Richards and Martin's contention that Middle East governments have "less legitimacy for restricting labor migration" than Western Europe, suggests there are few internal domestic forces pushing for migration controls. Yet, as was noted earlier, Brennan has pointed out that a variety of political, as well as social and economic factors have been seen to affect migration policies, at least with respect to irregular migration in the cases of Asia and Africa. It will be argued here that the case of legal migration to the Middle East is no different.\*

This brief review has pointed to major gaps in both theoretical and empirical treatments of policy factors in international migration for employment. Existing economic

---

\* This dissertation is concerned principally with legal migration. Illegal migrants in Kuwait were estimated to number between 40,000 and 50,000 in 1982. Abdulrasool al-Moosa and Keith McLachlan, Immigrant Labour in Kuwait, London: Croom Helm, 1985, p. 68.

models fail to consider the role of policies in mediating market forces when people cross international boundaries. Treatments of political factors in migration attend primarily to broad causes and consequences of population movements, not to the determinants and consequences of policies affecting these movements. Government action is seldom the unit of analysis. Finally, there is a dearth of empirical data on the nature of policies themselves, particularly in the Middle East. By tracing the evolution of migration policy in Kuwait, in the economic, demographic and political context of their formulation, this dissertation undertakes to fill these gaps.

If migration theory is to be extended to include consideration of the role of government policies in shaping population movements, it is first necessary to define the nature of those policies--indeed, in the Middle East case, to establish their existence. It then becomes possible to identify the range of motives and considerations that interact to shape the form and context of those policies, and thence to elucidate their objectives and determinants. Evaluation of policy effectiveness can proceed only once those objectives are more fully understood.

### 2.3 The Definition of Migration-Related Policies.

There are at least two aspects of a "definition" of policy to be clarified. The first of these pertains to the model, or paradigm, of how policies are arrived at, the assumptions concerning the factors that are important in shaping policy outcomes. The second aspect concerns the nature of the instruments that embody the policies adopted, and the scope of issues those policies address.

Dye has defined public policy as "whatever governments choose to do or not to do."\* While this definition is excessively broad, it illustrates one central feature of public policies: they have to do with the actions of governments. Within the field of policy studies, approaches to understanding what it is governments choose to do or not to do and why have shifted (if not evolved) as different analysts have sought to apply a given model to a particular policy issue. Perhaps the most traditional approach has been to focus on institutional structures of policy making. As Bloomfield has put it, "It used to be that if people wanted to know how U.S. foreign policy was made, they looked at the organization chart of the U.S. government."\*\*

---

\* Thomas Dye, Understanding Public Policy, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972, p. 1. The following discussion draws in part on Dye's overview of the dominant trends in public policy analysis.

\*\* Lincoln Bloomfield, The Foreign Policy Process: A Modern Primer, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1982, p. 3.

In part because such a structural view is, by itself, static and lacking connection to the content of policy, "behaviorist" approaches have tended to focus on the processes of public policy formulation. Within this approach, various models exist. Allison has considered three of these in depth: the "rational actor" paradigm, the "organizational process" paradigm, and the "bureaucratic politics" paradigm.\* The paradigms differ from one another along a number of dimensions: the basic unit of analysis; the organizing concepts they use; their patterns of inference (i.e., the ways in which the paradigms explain the adoption of a particular policy); the general and specific propositions that result from applying the paradigm to a particular policy issue; and, finally, the evidence they choose to consider and the methods for analyzing that evidence. Despite these differences, the classic behaviorist approaches share an emphasis on examining the nature of the process; the content of the outcome of that process is not quite incidental, but is of secondary interest.

A third approach to the study of public policy has focused more centrally on the causes and consequences of public policy, with particular attention to the interplay between these determinants and consequences on the one hand, and the content of policy on the other. Within this general

---

\* Graham T. Allison, Essence of Decision, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1971. passim.

approach, a variety of analytic models are distinguishable: systems models emphasize the range of environmental factors that shape policy responses; incremental models assess the effects of historical context on policy choices; institutional models focus on the combined effects of organizational structures and processes on policy; while elite-mass and group models emphasize the importance for policy of alternative ways of aggregating interests.

The task of choosing from among this array a model appropriate to the study of migration policy in Kuwait (or any other of the Gulf countries) is confounded by the fact that little has been written in Western literature either about the structures and processes of domestic politics in these countries\* or about the content of migration policies. Furthermore, as Allison has concluded, these approaches (or paradigms or models) are not mutually exclusive; nor does any one of them alone yield a complete explanation of policy determinants, content or consequences.

Accordingly, this study will draw upon the full spectrum of possible analytic models. To the extent that the demographic changes described in Chapter 1 are rooted in

---

\* Jill Crystal has described the literature on the domestic politics of Kuwait as "virtually nonexistent". "Patterns of State-Building in the Arabian Gulf," Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, April 1986, p. x.

the economic conditions of Kuwait, this is a study of the political economy of migration; but its emphasis is on the political dimension, on the role of public policies in mediating the economic determinants of migration, and specifically on the political factors that shape those policies. The content of migration policies is the dependent variable; governmental actions are the intermediate variables; the determinants of those actions are the "independent" (or perhaps "interdependent") variables. To the extent we begin with very little understanding of what any of these variables might be, their very definition becomes part of this inquiry and its contribution to theories and methods of migration and public policy.

The second definitional aspect, that is the nature of migration policy instruments and the scope of issues they address, is not unrelated to the issue of how one chooses to examine policy. Rational choice models, for example, tend to the view that policies are only bona fide if they are the result of considered selection among clearly identified alternative means to achieve agreed upon goals and objectives. An incrementalist model, on the other hand, tends to assume that there is seldom agreement on long term goals and that policies are the measures adopted as the result of bargaining over near-term objectives. In both cases, the process by which the policy is adopted is

assumed to be part of the definition of what constitutes a "genuine" policy. But when the nature of that process is not known, a more independent definition is needed. For this study, a policy is defined as: an instrument, pronouncement, declaration, or instruction by government that articulates a principle to guide the decisions and actions of public officials or private citizens.

By this definition in the Kuwaiti context, policies would include formal instruments such as laws, decrees, and orders issued by organizational entities and/or individuals duly empowered by the legal system to do so. As legislative power is vested in the Amir and the National Assembly\* and executive power is vested in the Amir, the Cabinet [or Council of Ministers] and the Ministers, instruments designated as "Laws", "Decrees of the Council of Ministers", "Ministerial Decrees" or "Ministerial Orders" all constitute policies. Policies may also be reflected in official publications that do not carry the force of law but which reflect official thinking, such as development plans or reports of government agencies, or press reports of statements by government officials. Finally, policies may be made known through verbal directives issued by government authorities. For western social scientists, to term these as "policies" may be pushing the rules of evidence. For the scholars and

---

\* See Articles 51 and 52, The Constitution of the State of Kuwait.

bureaucrats--and migrants--who live within the systems we are seeking to examine, verbal directives (and the behavioral responses of those who heed them) are perceived as being of crucial importance. In interviews conducted for this study among nationals and long-time non-national residents, it was found to be commonly believed that a) policies are generally unwritten in Kuwait, and b) policies are very clear without being written; "everyone knows." In the analysis that follows, it will become apparent that the first assumption is incorrect. In fact, most of the policies that are described by various observers have their basis in either law or public pronouncement. For those few policies that lack such corroboration, both the testimony of multiple respondents and supporting evidence from statistical analysis have been relied upon.

In the definition of policy adopted for this study, it is explicitly not required that the policy be enforced in order for it to be considered to exist. The question of the degree to which a policy was implemented, of its effectiveness in achieving some imputed goal, or of a state's capacity to implement its policies are crucial issues that will be addressed in the analytic discussion in Chapter 4. The prior question is, why did some people take the trouble to adopt the policy to begin with?



Definition of the scope of issues that constitute the boundaries of migration policy is tied to implicit assumptions about the proximate objectives of those policies and the points in the migration system upon which pressure is to be brought to bear. In an early effort to develop a framework for analysis of migration policy, Choucri defined migration policies as those measures

designed to regulate, control, or change the flow of manpower across national boundaries. Policies in this respect are toward the size, composition, and distribution of migrants.\*

While these aspects of migration are clearly of central concern, their stated emphasis is upon the demographic features of migration. For purposes of this study, which seeks to extract from empirical evidence the full range of possible motives for adopting migration policies, a broader definition of their scope is needed.

Termote has identified two "axes" of migration policy:

frontier policies, that is to say the body of measures related to migratory movements and which concern entry and exit; and internal policies, that is the body of measures to organize and define the place, in the receiving society, of immigrants and nationals, arising from international migration.\*\*

This definition invites consideration not only of the rules of entry and exit and the ways in which these affect

---

\* Nazli Choucri, "Overview of Policy Perspectives on Labor Migration," Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, mimeo, October 1983, p. 2.

\*\* Marc Termote, "La Place de la Migration dans la Recherche Demographique," Cahiers Quebecois de Demographie, Vol. 12, No. 2, October 1983, p. 185.

demographic features of migration, but also suggests that the relevant range of issues to be examined encompasses measures that bear upon the social, political and economic status of migrants within the receiving society, particularly vis a vis the national population. As such, this definition of migration policies serves as a useful guide to the types of policy content that will be considered in the effort to trace the evolution of migration policy in Kuwait, the subject of the next chapter.

### 3. THE EVOLUTION OF MIGRATION-RELATED POLICY IN KUWAIT

#### 3.1 Migration Policy Before 1959

This study focuses on the evolution of migration policy in Kuwait between 1959 and 1985. Yet the framework for many of the policies adopted in Kuwait during this period is grounded in an earlier era. As was seen in Chapter 1, successive changes in Kuwait's political economy between the 1930s and 1959 created new demands for wage labor. At the same time that Kuwait was suffering a period of economic decline associated with collapse of the pearl market and disruptions to trade accompanying Ibn Saud's economic war and worldwide depression, the foundations of the oil industry were being laid.

The first oil concession agreement was signed in 1934 between Kuwait and the Kuwait Oil Company (KOC)--jointly owned by the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (APOC) and the American firm, Gulf Oil Company.\* Drilling began in 1936

---

\* See I.J. Seccombe and R.I. Lawless, "Foreign Worker Dependence in the Gulf, and the International Oil Companies: 1910-50," International Migration Review, Vol. 20, Fall 1986, pp. 548-574.

and oil was discovered in 1938. With the resumption of drilling after the Second World War, exports commenced in 1946.

The structure of the oil agreements was to have two important implications for migration to Kuwait. First, it placed new revenues in the hands of the Amir, enabling Kuwait to embark on the ambitious development programs of the 1950s that drew the first major wave of migrants for employment. Secondly, although the oil companies' dominance of the regional labor market declined after renegotiation of the agreements in 1951 gave Kuwait a 50-50 share of profits,\* the 1934 concession agreement expanded the basis for Britain's role in shaping the migration policies of this period, beyond that accorded by her protectorship alone.

On the supply side, events following the Second World War formed the regional political context of migration during the subsequent period. The formation of the State of Israel and the resulting Arab-Israeli wars in 1948 and 1956 marked the beginnings of the Palestinian diaspora. The war of 1947-48 displaced an estimated 700,000 Palestinian Arabs. While a significant number relocated to the West Bank, others fled to Lebanon and Syria or to Amman, which grew from a town of less than 60,000 in 1945 to a city of

---

\* Seccombe and Lawless, p. 549.

approximately 200,000 by the early 1950s.\* Still others found employment in the Gulf, where Kuwait was a major point of destination.

Turmoil in Iran surrounding the struggle between Shah and Mossadeq (and his Tudeh party followers) was accompanied by nationalization of the Anglo-Iranian oil company in 1951 and subsequent reductions in Iranian oil exports.\*\* Closure of the refinery at Abadan in 1958 put millions of Iranians out of work, creating upheaval across the Gulf.\*\*\* The Egyptian Revolution of 1952 and that in Iraq in 1958-59 created further "push factors" from these countries.

Kuwaiti policy toward labor migration in this period, as later, has generally been characterized as "lax". Joukhadar has observed that, "Before 1962, the policy of Kuwait with regard to immigration appeared relatively tolerant. The nationals of neighboring countries could establish themselves there freely."\*\*\*\* Some scholars have expressed the view that the concept of nation-statehood has not developed until recently and that, in a social context

---

\* Janet Abu-Lughod, "Recent Migration in the Arab World," in Saad Eddin Ibrahim and Nicholas S. Hopkins (eds.), Arab Society: Social Science Perspectives, Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, p. 178.

\*\* Donald N. Wilber, Iran Past and Present, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967, p. 223.

\*\*\* Abdul-Halim Joukhadar, "Les Etrangers au Kuwait, p. 64.

\*\*\*\* Idem.

in which people had traditionally moved freely without borders, migration was not restricted.\*

Yet, the fact that the nation-state concept is relatively new to the Middle East does not necessarily mean the absence of a sense of attachment between a people and a territory. Kuwait's present boundaries had been established by the 'Uqair agreement of 1922\*\*; although the boundaries thus drawn were not necessarily to Kuwait's liking (in that they reduced rather than augmented her territory), their effect was hardly to create an "artificial" entity. Although the trappings of a modern nation-state were yet to be developed, and the definition of membership has yet to be resolved, Kuwaitis had had a sense of identity for well over 200 years. Similarly, the growth in Kuwait's migrant population should not be construed to mean that there was an absence of policy toward immigration; the historical record suggests that migration was not totally unimpeded. Seccombe's recent archival work has brought to light new evidence on the role played by KOC recruitment policies and the interests of the British government in shaping migration to the Gulf as early as the 1930s. In addition, the present study will submit new evidence to argue that Kuwaitis were also

---

\* See Alan Richards and Philip L. Martin, "The Laissez-Faire Approach to International Labor Migration: The Case of the Arab Middle East," Economic Development and Cultural Change, vol. 31, No. 3, April 1983, p. 460-461 for an example of this view.

\*\* Abu-Hakima, The Modern History of Kuwait, p. 147.

engaged in formulating migration policy at the very time their approach was being characterized as "lax".

The oil concession agreement signed in December 1934 had been preceded by (and was subservient to) a political agreement signed in March of that year. In the negotiations leading up to the political agreement, the British had made it clear they would not sign a concession agreement unless,

... they were satisfied that British interests were adequately safe-guarded--notably in regard to the question of the nationality of the personnel actually operating the concession.\*

Despite vigorous opposition from Guy Stevens, the American representative of Gulf Oil, the final political agreement provided that,

The employees of the company in Kuwait shall at all times so far as it is consistent with the efficient carrying on of the undertaking be British subjects or subjects of the Sheikh. With the consent of His Majesty's Government, which consent shall not be unreasonably withheld, persons of other nationalities may be employed if in the opinion of the Company they are required for the efficient carrying on of the undertaking. Notwithstanding anything contained in the Agreement between the Company and the Sheikh, the importation of foreign native labor shall be subject to the approval of the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.\*\*

---

\* United Kingdom, Public Record Office, India Office Records (IOR) L/PS/12/3808, Minutes of meeting with Sir John Cadman and Mr. William Fraser of the APOC, held at the India Office, January 4, 1934, cited in Seccombe and Lawless, p. 552.

\*\* IOR R/15/5/247, Political Agreement between His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Kuwait Oil Company, cited in Seccombe and Lawless, p. 553.

As expressed to Stevens, the rationale for Britain's position was couched in terms of immediate economic and political expediency, not by,

...any desire to discriminate against Americans, but to safeguard the interests of the undertaking and its personnel; the peculiar conditions in the Gulf Sheikdoms necessitate caution in regard to the admission of Europeans and Americans and greater caution is necessary in the case of non-British subjects, both because they might not understand so well as British subjects the desirability of following the advice of the political authorities, and also because, if they should get into trouble with the local or neighboring populations, the case might involve international complications, instead of being a domestic matter of the British government.\*

In fact, however, Britain was clearly interested in preventing the establishment of a sizable American presence in Kuwait or elsewhere in the Gulf. The evidence suggests that, for a time at least, they were able to exert considerable control over the composition of the oil-related labor force. In 1949, reductions to the senior American staff of the International Bechtel Company (which had contracted for KOC construction the previous year) were attributed by the Americans to direct British intervention.\*\*

---

\* IOR L/PS/12/3808, Minutes of meeting with Sir John Cadman and Mr. William Fraser of the APOC, held at the India Office, January 4, 1934, cited in Seccombe and Lawless, p. 552.

\*\* Seccombe and Lawless, p. 555, based upon National Archives of the United States of America (NAA), Record Group (RG) 59, Box 547, File 886d. 2553/5-850, Clifton English (Consul, Basra) to State Department.



Despite provisions of the 1934 concession agreement granting preference to Kuwaitis and then to Arabs of neighboring states, the political agreement helped to ensure that a substantial number of workers were recruited from British India. Ties already established between the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and Bombay were drawn upon by KOC when it began to recruit labor for large-scale expansion of facilities in the late 1940s. The number of Indians employed by KOC grew from 177 in 1946 to nearly 5,000 in 1949.\*

The British view that Indians would better serve to solidify British interests in the region were linked to concerns over the growing migration of Persians to Bahrain and their potential role as instruments in the Persian claims to sovereignty over Bahrain. These concerns were evident in policies adopted by the Bahrain Petroleum Company (BAPCO). A 1937 memo from the British Political Agent suggested that, "Indians should be employed as far as possible in the place of Persians."\*\* BAPCO's response was to issue instructions "that Iranians are to be laid off

---

\* Seccombe and Lawless, Table 3, p. 563. They point out that non-oil construction, which was being contracted on a cost-plus basis, paid higher wages than KOC, thus siphoning off a large proportion of the local labor force, and contributing to the need for importation of labor in the oil sector.

\*\* Ian Seccombe, "International Migration for Employment and Domestic Labour Market Development: The Jordanian Experience," Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Durham (U.K.), November 1983, p. 155.

first when numbers are reduced on completion of the refinery construction..." Subsequent correspondence between BAPCO and the Political Agent make it clear that administrative ease of recruitment and financial cost factors favored the Persians in the eyes of industry; for Government, however, the political considerations were overriding: in 1944, in response to BAPCO's stated intention to recruit more Persians, the Political Agent (Hickinbotham) stated flatly that this was viewed with disfavor by government and he explained why: "...it is not the prospect of their remaining here without employment which causes concern to the government, it is the prospect of increasing the number of Persians in these islands..." A few days later Hickinbotham reinforced this stand more directly: "...you will undertake that Persian labour imported by you will not be permitted to remain in Bahrain after the completion of the work for which it was imported..."\*

The BAPCO example illustrates several points. First, the policies of both the British and the local leaders are of relevance here. Secondly, it reflects what will be seen to be a recurrent tension in the interests that shape migration policies: that between the economic interests as seen by industry, and the political interests as viewed by government--the tension between manpower and security

---

\* Seccombe, op. cit., p. 155ff. His construction of the Bahrain case is based upon exchange of correspondence in India Office Records.

considerations. The apparent solution adopted in the Bahrain case illustrates a third point: the notion that employers are to be made responsible for "undertaking" to see that the migrants depart following completion of the job for which they were recruited is a long-standing compromise measure.

Uneasiness over Persian migration to the Gulf was no less acute in the 1950s; nor was apprehension confined to the British. A May 1952 report in the Sunni Moslem newspaper, Al-Sijill concerning Kuwait was cited by the Foreign Office as claiming

'peril' threatening the country from its Persian neighbors, 'which is at present taking the form of enforced large-scale emigration of Iranians into Kuwait, which the Kuwaiti authorities are doing nothing to curb....What is more significant and ominous about this carefully planned emigration is that most immigrants are young men, who belong to the Tudeh party' the paper pointed out, adding the warning that Persia may one day demand a plebiscite in Kuwait, once it is assured of a majority of Persians there.\*

British interest in the national composition of labor migration to Kuwait in the early 1950s was not confined to Persians. During the summer of 1953, there was a notable upsurge in the number of Palestinian and Jordanian migrants arriving in Kuwait, many illegally, adding to the numbers already employed there. The 1899 agreement with Mubarak (and other agreements that followed) had given Britain effective authority to handle Kuwait's foreign affairs,

---

\* PRO, FO 371/98442, EA 1581/2, Baghdad Telegram No. 32. nb., the Tudeh party was under Mossadeq's leadership.

including visa applications. The growing number of applications from Jordanians and Palestinians\* prompted the Political Agent in Kuwait, C.J. Pelly, to seek clarification of British policy (and interests) in the matter; the ensuing exchange of correspondence provides an interesting glimpse into the state of policy at the time and of Kuwait's own position as distinct from that of Britain. In a confidential despatch dated 21 September 1953, Pelly noted that the actual numbers of Jordanians and Palestinians already admitted to Kuwait were unknown because, "...our records are so incomplete and our own immigration control so lax that it is not possible to give a figure."\*\*

Kuwait's position on the matter of admitting Jordanians and Palestinians, however, was not seen to be uniformly "lax". Rather, abrupt changes in policy were evident, consistent with the view that there was some divergence of opinion on the subject among Kuwaitis. Pelly writes,

When applications for visas for these people are received, they are referred by this Agency to the Department of Public Security of the Kuwait Government. That Department's recommendation is almost invariably accepted and as long as its permanent head, Shaikh Abdullah Mubarak, is here it is usually to the effect that the visa may be granted; he is known to be under the influence of Palestinians, often with

---

\* In June of 1953, following Jordan's annexation of the West Bank the previous year, the Jordanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs formally requested that the British Political Agents in Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar be authorized to grant visas for Jordan. PRO, FO 371/104420, EA 1624/7, Despatch No. 95, June 26, 1953.

\*\* PRO, FO 371/104420 58839

unhealthy results. When, however, this Shaikh went on leave in early August, Shaikh Abdullah Ahmed, who was acting for him, took a very different line; he insisted that no entry visas whatsoever should be given to the people in question. Shaikh Abdullah Mubarak has now returned and begun to reverse this policy, if such it may be called.\*

The debate concerning the desirable content of British policy focused on a number of competing considerations, in Pelly's view. Arguments in favor of a "liberal" policy regarding admission of Palestinians were several. First, on humanitarian grounds, it was felt that "these people [were] deserving of help." Secondly, because of Britain's role as agent for Jordanian and Palestinian visa affairs in the Gulf, the British, not the Kuwaitis, were receiving the blame for the new visa restrictions, which were said to be causing "great bitterness" among Palestinians seeking entry to Kuwait from Iraq. Thirdly, the higher degree of education and often professional qualifications among Palestinians and Jordanians were seen likely to contribute to Kuwait's development. The final argument for a liberal immigration policy was that during 1952, it had come to British attention that Kuwait had made direct bilateral agreements with Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon (as well as Saudi Arabia) abolishing visa requirements.\* Britain was concerned about the prospect that Kuwait might reach a similar agreement with Jordan for the very reason that argued most strongly against a liberal policy: "It is

---

\* Idem.

believed that the vast majority of the Palestinians and Jordanian immigrants are basically anti-British"\*\*\*

The second major argument proffered against a liberal policy was that there was "no machinery for accurate discrimination between those who ought and ought not to be admitted." Pelly called for better organization within the British political agency structure and coordination among the Middle East Missions to check and report on "intending immigrants about whom we entertained doubts." He closed his despatch with a proposal that Britain ask Kuwait to cooperate on a common policy for the immigration of Palestinians and Jordanians.

It did not take long for the British to formulate their response to Pelly's despatch of September 14. G.W. Furlonge, writing for the British Embassy in Amman several weeks later\*\*\* found the prospect that Kuwait might enter into direct agreement with Jordan (thus cutting the British out of their intermediary role) most persuasive.

Furthermore, Furlonge noted, the Embassy in Amman had received unofficial inquiries from the Jordanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs asking whether the British might do anything to facilitate the entry of Jordanians into Kuwait,

---

\* PRO, FO 371/104419 EA 1622/1,/3, and /4.

\*\* PRO, FO 371/104420 58839

\*\*\* PRO, FO 371/104420 58839 EA 1626/7

since "the word has got round that Jordanians are being discriminated against in this respect."

Furlonge was also optimistic about the prospect of instituting a system of security checks as proposed by Pelly. The Civil Intelligence Department in Amman was at that time headed by a British officer who was in fact "endeavouring to secure powers to prevent the departure of undesirables from Jordan." On balance, Furlonge concluded that, while "sooner or later" the flood of migrants expected to result might create problems for the Kuwait administration, the fact that Iraqis, Syrians and Lebanese could enter freely, together with all the other considerations, argued for a liberal policy toward migration of Jordanians to Kuwait.

Subsequent correspondence reflected the adoption of this policy in coordination with the Kuwaitis. In Kuwait, Pelly obtained the agreement of Shaikh Abdullah Mubarak for the appointment of a British Security Advisor to help control immigration\* and it appears that Shaikh Ahmad's concurrence was obtained as well: the Foreign Office in London noted, "The question of entry into Kuwait of Jordanians has been referred by MFA [Ministry of Foreign Affairs] and Ahmad Kuwait agree together immigration will largely increase."\*\*

---

\* PRO, FO 371/104420 EA 1624/8

\*\* PRO, FO 371/104420, EA 1624/9

The fact that the restrictions imposed by Sheikh Ahmad during his brief tenure as acting Director of Public Security were so successful implies that there was no lack of capacity on the part of Kuwaitis to control immigration. This view is supported by perceptions of the British Foreign Office in London, one member of which noted, "I do not think that the flooding of the Kuwait labor market is a great problem. The Kuwait Gov't [sic] can always stop immigration when this looks like happening."\* Kuwait's ability to control her borders is further reflected in the unfortunate fact that a number of Palestinians died trying to enter illegally. This incident prompted Kuwait to remove entry requirements for Palestinians and Jordanians in 1958. The resulting influx of Palestinians in 1959 led to the reimposition of entry controls until 1960.\*\*

Indeed, by the early 1950s there was already an armamentarium of measures for immigration control, of which visas for entry were only one type. According to Seccombe, "No Objection Certificates" (NOCs) were in use in Bahrain as early as 1937; these were issued by the Political Agent not only for immigrant workers but for their dependents as

---

\* PRO, FO 371/104420, EA 1624/9, 27/10.

\*\* Seccombe thesis, p.163. While, as was discussed in the previous section, both Britain and Kuwait adopted a liberal immigration policy toward Jordanians and Palestinians, they were still required to obtain visas before 1958.



well. It is highly likely that a similar system was in use in Kuwait. The requirement that immigrants obtain work contracts in advance of their migration was selectively imposed on Indian and Pakistani nationals seeking to enter Kuwait.\*

Restrictive--or potentially restrictive--measures were not the only policy tools in use during this time. A set of incentives to induce qualified manpower was also in force. In addition to relatively high wages, at least some migrants received perquisites that included rent-free housing, water and utilities paid by government, and a car with chauffeur.\*\*

Several points emerge from this review of the situation prior to 1959. First, the issue of migration to Kuwait was clearly seen at the time to be tied not only to the economic and demographic factors that necessitated the importation of manpower, but also to a complex set of political considerations. These included Kuwait's perceived political interests vis a vis her neighbors, and British perceptions with respect to their regional interests. The fact that the greatest number of prospective migrants were Palestinians, Jordanians, and Persians figured centrally in these considerations.

---

\* Joukhadar, "Les Etrangers au Koweit," p. 64.

\*\* Shamlan Alessa, The Manpower Problem in Kuwait, London and Boston: Kegan Paul International, 1981, p. 44-45.

Together, these factors played a central role in Kuwait's policies during the 1950s.

Secondly, the characterization of Kuwaiti migration policy as "lax" needs to be distinguished from the supposition that there was no policy in effect. The record shows that the relative freedom of immigration was in fact a matter of policy agreed upon by both the British and the Kuwaitis. Immigration could be, and in fact was, restricted from time to time. Furthermore, during the 1950s (as in the 1930s) restrictive and permissive policies were applied differentially to different nationalities, not only in response to economic and demographic factors such as relative wage rates and the skills of migrants, but also in response to both British and Kuwaiti perceptions about their political desirability.

Finally, the structure and content of instruments for policy implementation to be found in Kuwait and elsewhere in the Gulf during the 1950s are markedly similar to measures found thirty years later. The issuance (or waiver) of visas for entry, the use of security checks in cooperation with labor-sending governments, No Objection Certificates, the requirement for work contracts prior to entry, and even the government's requirement of an "undertaking" by employers to repatriate migrants at the conclusion of the work contract were all in use.

### 3.2 Laying the Foundations of Migration Policy: 1959 to 1964

The period between 1959 and 1964 was a transitional one, as Kuwait moved from a status of independence under British protection to full independent statehood. Kuwait's economy was beginning to shift from basic infrastructure development to diversification. Demographically, as a result of immigration during the 1950s, total population had grown from 100,000 in 1949 to over 206,000 in 1957. Non-Kuwaitis were nearly 45 percent of total population, with Iranians and Iraqis comprising the two largest groups amongst them, followed closely by Jordanians and Palestinians. Lebanese and Omanis also had sizable populations.\*

Politically, Kuwait faced several major tasks. The first was to lay the legal foundation for the new State and develop further the bureaucratic structures for its administration. The second was to build regime support and a sense of national identity within the framework of Kuwait's new independent status and in view of political developments during the preceding decade. The third major political task facing Kuwait was to strengthen the country's foreign policy position of neutrality and

---

\* 1949 figure from Jacqueline S. Ismael, Kuwait: Social Change in Historical Perspective, Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1982, p. 117; 1957 total population data from Chapter 1 of this study, Tables 1-1 and 1-5; nationality data from Seccombe thesis, Table 4-2.

reciprocity. One immediate task was to repel external challenges to its sovereignty, specifically from Iraq, which, within days of Kuwait's independence, threatened to annex the new State.

These conditions formed the context for the formulation and promulgation of three major bodies of law bearing upon both the entry and exit of migrants and their status and conditions of employment while in Kuwait: Decree No. 15 of 5 December 1959 concerning Nationality (the Nationality Law); Amiri Decree No. 17 of 1959 regulating the residence of aliens (Aliens Residence Law); and Law 38 of 1964 (the Private Sector Labour Law). These laws and their subsequent amendments form the bedrock of Kuwait's migration policy

The need to develop the formal legal instruments of statehood sharpened the underlying issues already seen reflected in the 1953 policy debate between Shaikh Mubarak and Shaikh Ahmad. During the 1950s, the Amir had made efforts to solidify support amongst the merchant elite by channeling government resources through the private sector. He had worked to build new and broader bases of support among the masses of Kuwaiti society by rapid expansion and extension of social services. Both initiatives had contributed to immigration of labor. While these workers were necessary to overcome Kuwait's manpower

constraint, they were cause for growing ambivalence from a political point of view.

In the wake of post-war regional events, including Nasser's accession to power in Egypt, Arab Nationalism had taken hold in Kuwait during the 1950s and growth of this political faction at first helped to support liberal immigration policies toward Arabs. At the same time, Arab Nationalist opposition to Kuwait's regime had become increasingly outspoken during the latter part of the decade, with Arab immigrants often seen to be among those fomenting dissent.\* For these reasons, for the competition the migrants introduced in the labor force, and for their potential to encroach upon the privileges of citizens, Kuwaiti nationalists were increasingly skeptical about migration. Now, the prospect of impending statehood focused attention on issues of national identity and strategies for fostering a sense of integration among the disparate groups in Kuwaiti society. Policies toward migrants figured centrally in this task. Permitting liberal entry was one issue; defining the position of the migrants in Kuwaiti society was another. As one observer put it, "Kuwaitis had matured enough; they knew that others

---

\* See Chapter 1 of this study, pp. 33-39 and Crystal 1986, pp. 180ff. for a fuller discussion of internal political events in this period. Crystal (p. 183) points out that legal reform in the late 1950s was in part a reaction to political demonstrations and that 1959 marked the year an Egyptian jurist was brought in to help overhaul the entire judicial system.

would be coming. They feared that government would decide to give [the migrants] citizenship."\*

One of the most fundamental forms of political integration is the development of a sense of identity with a particular nation or state.\*\* Similarly, citizenship constitutes the most basic mechanism for integration within the state.

Plender has observed that "citizenship, subjecthood and nationality are all descriptions of the status of a legal person vis-a-vis a political environment" \*\*\* and that, although a concept of citizenship existed in ancient times, the modern use of the term as synonymous with nationality coincides with the emergence of the nation-state as a political entity. In the Middle East, it is common to emphasize the Western origins of the nation-state concept and the role of colonialism in the relatively recent

---

\* Author's interview.

\*\* See Myron Weiner , "Political Integration and Political Development", The Annals of the American Academy of Political Science, Vol. 358, March 1965, pp. 52-64 for a discussion of political integration. He describes "national integration" as "the problem of creating a sense of territorial nationality which overshadows--or eliminates--subordinate parochial loyalties" (pp. 53-54). Here, the term "statehood integration" is used in lieu of "national integration" in recognition of the fact that, in the Arab context, "nation" is used often to connote the Arab Nation.

\*\*\* Richard Plender, International Migration Law, Leiden: A.W. Sijthoff, 1972, pp. 3-4.

emergence of many Arab states,\* yet these facts should not obscure the historical origins of the concept of citizenship from within the region.\*\* During pre-Islamic times, primary affiliation was tribal and an "alien" was, by definition, anyone who did not belong to the tribe. With the coming of Islam and establishment of the principle of Ummah, religious identification became intrinsically tied to the concept of nationality. Dhimmies or Peoples of the Book (mainly Christians and Jews) were incorporated into the Islamic world by virtue of the status accorded them by the Qu'ran and by their payment of a special tax (the jizya) as well as of the land tax (kharaj) which Muslims also paid. Temporary residents (must'aminun or mu'ahadun) possessing safe conduct agreements were permitted to remain in the Islamic world for a year and a day, after which time they became ipso facto dhimmies and subject to the jizya tax.

Many of the principles of the Islamic Caliphate, including the implicit linkage between religion and nationality, were continued during the Ottoman period. Then, in 1869, the

---

\* See, for example, Hassan al-Ebraheem, Kuwait: A Political Study, Kuwait: Kuwait University Press, 1975, p. 19.

\*\* This discussion of the historical origins of the concept of citizenship in the Middle East is drawn from George Dib, "Migration and Naturalization Laws in Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates", Parts I and II in Population Bulletin, United Nations Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA), No. 15, December 1978, and 16, June 1979.

Sultan promulgated the first nationality law. This separated the concepts of religion and nationality, and adopted instead the concepts of jus sanguinis and jus soli as the bases for the definition of citizenship. The principle of jus sanguinis holds that citizenship of an individual is determined by the citizenship of his or her parents, while that of jus soli holds that citizenship of an individual is determined by his or her own place of birth.

The Treaty of Lausanne, signed 24 July 1923, established the legal status of the populations which were detached from the Ottoman Empire at the end of World War I and adopted the territorial principle (jus soli) as the basis for determining citizenship. As Dib has observed, however, despite the provisions of the Treaty, today,

The Arab states--especially Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Kuwait, and the U.A.E.--take a middle road between these two principles in their legislation: they employ jus sanguinis as the basic principle and jus soli as an auxiliary principle. The reason is that together these two principles forge the strong bond that is needed in every modern citizenship, the bond that integrates loyalty to blood and loyalty to the land.\*

The beginnings of the first major wave of immigration to Kuwait prompted promulgation of two Amiri decrees concerning nationality in December 1948. These defined Kuwaiti subjects as

members of the ruling family, those residing in Kuwait as from 1899, children of Kuwaiti men (or Kuwaiti mothers, fathers unknown), Kuwaiti-born orphans, and children of Arab or Muslim fathers also born in Kuwait. Men could confer Kuwaiti nationality on wives, but Kuwaiti women lost theirs

---

\* Dib 1979, p.3.



on outmarriage. Naturalization was possible after ten years in Kuwait with work and Arabic proficiency and by special order for valuable services. It was revokable within five years for various reasons, among them propagating anti-Islamic ideas.\*

The Nationality Law promulgated in 1959\*\* retained several features of the earlier law, with some modification: Kuwaiti citizenship was granted to those who had resided in Kuwait before 1920--the date of the siege of al-Jahra replaced the date of Mubarak's secret treaty with the British as the critical point for determination of nationality. The decendants of Kuwaiti men were also accorded Kuwaiti citizenship, as were children born to Kuwaiti mothers if the father was unknown, or to a foreign woman married to a Kuwaiti. (Kuwaiti women who married foreigners continued to lose their citizenship.) Persons who met these qualifications comprised the "original Kuwaitis"\*\*\* whose nationality derived from birth or descent, in recognition of the principle of jus sanguinis.

The provisions for naturalization helped to provide assurances to Kuwaitis that the priveleges of citizenship would not be extended lightly or easily to others. Provisions for

---

\* Crystal, p. 176, based on PRO, FO 1016/126.

\*\* Amiri Decree No. 15 of 1959 Concerning Kuwaiti Citizenship, Kuwait: Department of Legal Advice and Legislation (Arabic). The author is grateful to Mr. Ahmed Jibari for assistance with translation.

\*\*\* In common parlance, they are sometimes called "first class citizens". Although the provisions of "original" citizenship are specified in Article 1 of the law, there is no reference in the law to class as such.

ordinary naturalization were set out in Article 4. Here, a slight concession to Arab Nationalist sentiment was reflected in the distinction introduced between Arabs and non-Arabs: the former could obtain Kuwaiti citizenship after 8 years of residence, while the latter were required to be resident 15 years. Both groups were required to demonstrate a source of livelihood, good character, a knowledge of Arabic, and ability to provide services needed by the country. The number of persons who could be naturalized under Article 4 was limited to 50 per year. Article 5 provided for exceptions to the previous article by allowing citizenship to be conferred on those deemed to have provided honorable service to the country and to sons of Kuwaiti mothers under certain circumstances. As in the 1948 law, there were a number of conditions under which citizenship could be revoked. For all but acts of treason, these conditions applied to naturalized citizens.

Crystal has linked the stringency of Kuwait's provisions for naturalization to primary concern for economic privilege; as she points out, Kuwaiti citizenship now had real economic value.\* While economic considerations may explain limits on the numbers who could be naturalized, political factors are needed to explain the distinctions drawn between "original citizens" and those granted citizenship by naturalization. The acquisition of citizenship permitted naturalized Kuwaitis to enjoy such fundamental rights and privileges as civil

---

\* Crystal, p. 176.

service employment, retirement and educational benefits, and property ownership. But naturalized citizens were barred from voting for any representative body and from nomination or appointment to a representative body or ministerial position until ten years after obtaining citizenship.\*

In summary, the Nationality Law established two basic principles relevant to migration policy. First, it signalled adoption of what has remained Kuwait's fundamental strategy for counterbalancing the decision to permit high rates of immigration: the law contributed to what may be called a "differentiation strategy" by drawing a sharp distinction between Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis. Naturalization provisions limited the prospects that migrants might become citizens among whom government would be obliged to distribute benefits. Secondly, limits on the political participation of naturalized citizens ensured that political control would remain in the hands of "original Kuwaitis". Given that the law was promulgated in the context of pending state independence and recent high rates of immigration, one may question the appropriateness of the Nationality Law as a solution to what was, inevitably, an integration problem. In response, it should be noted that citizens still outnumbered aliens at this time (if not for long thereafter). The

---

\* Amiri Decree No. 15 of 1959, Article 6. As will be seen below, the provisions of this article were amended in 1966 to forbid naturalized citizens from public office altogether and to lengthen the eligibility period for franchise from ten to twenty years. It should be noted that Kuwaiti women, original or naturalized, are not permitted to vote.

restriction of political rights may also have been more acceptable on the grounds that many of the new immigrants and potential citizens were Palestinians whose political interests were focused on their own homeland.

A second major legal instrument, Amiri Decree No. 17 of 1959 which governed the residence of aliens in Kuwait,\* provided that the country's migrant population would remain under control. The term "alien" was not defined specifically, but Dib has noted, "the text of the law...makes it clear that it considers as an alien anyone who does not carry Kuwaiti citizenship".\*\* The law required all aliens wishing to reside in Kuwait to obtain from the Ministry of the Interior a residence permit, valid for a period not to exceed five years. At the end of that time, the alien was to apply for renewal of the permit, which the head of Police and Public security had the option to renew for another five years or to reject. Aliens were also required to notify the Nationality and Passports Department of every trip abroad and every change of address. Any absence from the country of more than six months had to be approved in advance by the Ministry of the Interior, or else the residence permit would be forfeited.

---

\* State of Kuwait, "Aliens Residence Law, Promulgated by the Amiri Decree No. 17 of 1959..." English translation in Contractors' Directory, Kuwaiti Contractors' Union, ca. 1983,

\*\* George Dib, "Migration and Naturalization Laws in Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates," Population Bulletin (ECWA), No. 15, December 1978, p. 43.

The options for treatment of those residing illegally in Kuwait were addressed in Articles 16-22 of The Aliens Residence Law which distinguished between expulsion and deportation.\* Any alien was subject to expulsion from Kuwait by decision of the Minister of Interior if he did not have a residence permit or if his valid permit had expired. However, anyone so expelled was entitled to return after having satisfied proper entry requirements. An alien was subject to deportation under any one of three circumstances: 1) the deportation was ordered by the court as part of a judgement against the alien; 2) he lacked a means of livelihood; or 3) his deportation was judged by the Minister of Interior to be required by public interest, security, or morals. An alien deported for these reasons would not be permitted to return to Kuwait without specific authorization from the Minister of Interior.

While these provisions appear stringent, the Aliens Residence law of 1959 was also lenient in certain respects. Notwithstanding the provisions on expulsion and deportation, Article 27 allowed that upon issuance of a decree by the Minister of Interior, a Committee might be constituted at any time to assess the number of aliens without residence permits, in order to consider granting them residence permits. The

---

\* Dib (1978, p.50) discusses the difference between deportation and expulsion. However, his translation of the terms is directly opposite to that used here, which follows the English translation of the law in the Contractor's Directory, which in turn is consistent with usage in press and other reports of these events.

Committee would include members representing the Ministry of Interior, the Nationality, Passport and Residence Administration, the Ministry of Social Affairs [and Labour] and Kuwaiti members representing contractors and businessmen. The Notes accompanying the law provide some insight into the thinking behind this Article: "This is an essential provision from a practical point of view...since...[the illegal entrants'] stay in Kuwait is deemed to be essential as they constitute the majority of manpower badly required."\* The notes go on to say that in practice, the Minister of Interior has the option to grant residence permits to some illegal entrants, while expelling others who may not be needed. The language of the provision and the notes combine to suggest that the overriding consideration in the formulation of this article of the law was the convenience of access to manpower. In Article 14, the law also allowed anyone entering on a visa to apply for an ordinary residence permit for one year and provided that nationals of Arab countries could be exempted from obtaining visas by decree.

The third major pillar of migration policy was Law No. 38 of 1964 governing work in the private sector. Labor legislation had been under discussion as early as 1954 and the first public sector labor law promulgated in 1955, only to be replaced by a new public sector law in 1960.\*\* In 1959, a

---

\* Aliens Residence Law, p. 194 and notes, p. 185.

\*\* Crystal, p. 179.

labour law for the private sector was promulgated, with amendments adopted in 1960 and 1961.\* While the content of the earlier public and private sector laws is now obscured, the spate of legislative activity attests to the importance Kuwait attached to labor matters.

Law 38 of 1964 Governing Work in the Private Sector superceded these earlier pieces of legislation. It is illustrative of the central role of migration in Kuwait that Chapter II (the first substantive chapter of the law\*\*) is entitled "Migration and Work Permit", preceding Chapter III on "Employment". Indeed, Dib has commented that in this legislation "the Kuwaiti lawmaker's objective is to deal comprehensively with the status of foreign workers and to regulate their migration and employment."\*\*\*

The law prohibited employers from employing non-Kuwaitis unless they possess valid work permits "or are at least registered with the Ministry of Social Affairs & Labour". To be eligible for a work permit, the worker must have entered the country lawfully, hold a valid passport, have secured a residence permit, and exhibited good conduct and behavior.

---

\* Amiri Decree No. 43 of 1960 and Law No. 1 of 1961 both amended the Labour Law of 1959.

\*\* Chapter I defines the terms "labourer" and "employer" and excludes from this law government employees, staff, and laborers, casual seasonal laborers employed for less than six months, domestic servants, owners of small businesses with fewer than five employees, and seamen.

\*\*\* Dib 1978, p. 58.

Article 5 established that work permits would be valid for two years, and renewable once a year. Work permits were made subject to cancellation if the worker ceased to satisfy one of the conditions of eligibility, if the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour found the worker to be in competition with nationals, or if the worker were unemployed for at least three months.

The law gave priority in employment first to Kuwaiti workers, secondly to Arab workers, then to foreign workers; but it established the right of all workers (Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti) to register with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour for assistance in finding work. Private, profit-making employment services were prohibited.

Other provisions required employers to keep detailed records concerning employees, stipulated that contracts (which were required) might or might not be made for a fixed term, but if fixed could not exceed five years, and established the legitimate reasons for which a worker could leave his employment prior to completion of the contract period.

Chapter XIII, Article 72 provided that non-Kuwaitis over 18 years old who secured work permits and certificates of good conduct from their employers, were permitted to join a trade union but

without having the right to elect or be elected. However, they shall have the right to delegate one of them for their representation and expressing their point of view



before the Board of Trade Union. A non-Kuwaiti labourer is prohibited from joining a trade union unless he has been in Kuwait for five consecutive years [from the promulgation of this Law].\*

Shortly after independence, Amiri Decree No. 56 of 1962 had established a Planning Board, attached to the Council of Ministers, with the Minister of Labor as a member from the start.\*\* In a move that reflected Kuwait's administrative development, the Labour Law of 1964 (Ch. XIV, Article 92) now provided for the establishment of a "Higher Advisory Committee for Labour Affairs" comprising representatives from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, other concerned Ministries, as well as representatives of employers and laborers. The Committee was to be responsible for advising on labor legislation and related amendments.

Finally, the 1964 law mandated the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour to promulgate the regulations for issuing work permits. The penalties for violating any provisions of the law, however, were specified in the law itself: offending employers would be served notice to rectify the violation; if he failed to do so, the offender would be fined KD 3/ multiplied by the number of laborers involved. If the violation were still not rectified after the imposition of

---

\* Law 38 of 1964 (Private Sector Labour Law) in Contractors' Directory, p. 209.

\*\* Ibrahim Sa'ad al-Din Abdullah, "The Organizational Structure for the Planning of Manpower in the Gulf States," paper prepared for Conference on Human Resources Development in the Arab Gulf, Bahrain, 15-18 February 1975 (Arabic), p. 16.

this fine, the offender would be fined KD 5/ multiplied by the number of workers.

In summary, the 1964 Labour Law placed another block in the foundation of Kuwait's migration policy, particularly that aspect of policy having to do with "internal" features of the migrants' status in Kuwait. The law reflected the central role of labor migration in Kuwait's economy and of migrants in Kuwait's labor force. It established, within strict limits, migrants' rights as workers in Kuwait; it embodied in law the system of work permit controls; it provided another structural entity for manpower planning; and it devolved upon the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour the responsibility for regulating employment of migrants.

Yet, the predominant tone of the labor law was facilitatory. There was no mention of penalties to be applied directly to workers who failed to secure work permits and the penalties for employers who violated the law were notably light. There was no mention of any time period within which employers were required to correct their violations.

The process of building upon and altering the legal foundations of migration policy, which was to be repeated over the next 25 years, began almost as soon as a law was passed. In 1960, the Nationality Law was amended to lengthen from 8 to 10 years the period of residence required before Arabs could

apply for citizenship. The principle of privilege established in the Nationality Law was extended in the 1960 Law of Commercial Companies, which stipulated that foreigners may not establish businesses in Kuwait except with Kuwaiti partners, who were required to have a minimum of 51 percent ownership. Ownership of property was limited to Kuwaitis; expatriates were prohibited from finance and banking. Law No. 3 of 1964 restricted the import business to Kuwaiti individuals and companies, while Law 36 of 1964 restricted commercial agencies to Kuwaiti firms.\*

Ambivalence toward the foreign workforce was reflected in other institutional developments, as well as in alterations to migration-related policies. The preamble to the Constitution, drawn up in late 1962, articulated Kuwait's commitment to a role in Arab Nationalism and Article 1 declared Kuwait's participation in the Arab Nation (Ummah); yet Kuwaitis were clearly distinguished from their Arab brothers in one crucial respect: under the provisions of Article 28 of the Constitution, no Kuwaiti may be deported from Kuwait or prevented from returning thereto.

Law 1 of 1963 introduced amendments to the Aliens Residence Law of 1959 which reflected both the growing ambivalence toward Arab Nationalism and the incorporation of migration

---

\* See Crystal, p. 202 and Walid Moubarak, "Kuwait's Quest for Security: 1961-1973," Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Political Science, Indiana University, May 1979, p. 140.

policy into the framework of Kuwait's foreign policy of neutrality and reciprocity. First, the provision that permitted nationals of Arab countries to be exempted from visa requirements was modified to stipulate that any exemption should be on the basis of reciprocal treatment. Furthermore, the exemption was no longer limited to Arab countries.

Secondly, under Article 15 of the 1959 law, employees of government agencies with valid passports had been eligible to hold a residence permit for the entire period of employment, but were required to leave Kuwait within a week of completing their service. The amendment introduced in 1963 modified the latter provision to stipulate that the time of departure was to be determined by the Ministry of Interior and could range from not less than one week to not more than three months following completion of service. The amendment added the condition that these employees should pay their indemnities prior to departure. In both versions of the law, the employing agency was obliged to report the worker's termination to the security authorities.

In a third amendment, Article 12 of the residence law was modified to require that application for renewal of the residence permit be made at least one month prior to its expiration (rather than "upon expiration"). The amendment

---

\* See Moubarak, op. cit. for discussion of Kuwait's foreign policy, including the role of migration policy in it.

further specified that if the renewal were rejected, the alien must leave within one week if his residence permit had expired. In the 1959 law, no required departure time had been specified for non-government employees.

In the previous year, development of administrative structures in the new state had become embodied in law. Through Article 35 of Law 1 of 1962 governing the ruling system and Article 1 of Decree No. 2 of 1962, the Ministry of Interior had replaced the Police and Public Security Department. In the 1963 amendments to the Aliens Residence Law of 1959, the Minister of Interior was specifically mandated to issue the conditions and procedures for granting residence permits. In view of this devolution of authority and the other articles of law allowing residence permits to be granted for up to five years, the 1963 amendments repealed Article 14 of the 1959 law, which had allowed anyone entering on a visa to apply for a permit for one year.

In sum, the 1963 residence law amendments reflected the "settling in" of the state's new administrative apparatus and, undoubtedly, the "kinks" that had emerged since promulgation of the 1959 law. The amendments established the legal basis for the series of Ministerial Orders governing aliens' residence that were to follow in years to come. They established the principle that visa exemptions (a long-standing link between migration and foreign policy) were

acceptable only if Kuwaitis were accorded similar treatment by other countries. And they added further specificity to requirements that workers depart Kuwait after their employment. While government employees were granted a slight reprieve with the provision that they might remain up to three months after termination of their employment, this consideration was granted primarily to ensure that Kuwaitis had time to collect payment of any indemnities the migrants had incurred. Ordinary workers were made subject to the one week departure requirement. While migration to Kuwait during the 1950s and 1960s has come to be characterized by some as "permanant" (rather than "temporary") migration\*, and this ultimately proved to be the case, these policy provisions suggest that the Kuwaitis intended something different.

By the end of the first phase of migration policy formulation, then, the new state had in place a body of laws that began to take formal cognizance of the duality within the population, defining the conditions and perogatives of Kuwaiti citizenship, and establishing provisions to govern aliens' residence and employment. A number of competing considerations are reflected in these measures, and through them recurrent themes in the debate about the character of Kuwait's society begin to be evident.

---

\* United Nations, International Migration Policies and Programmes: A World Survey, New York, United Nations, 1982, p. 40.

The need to build regime support through continued economic growth argued for enabling relatively liberal immigration of alien manpower; the need to establish a firm basis for a national identity that would both encompass and transcend tribal affiliations argued for measures to exclude newcomers from the economic and political privileges of citizenship and to assure that the benefits of growth would be distributed primarily among Kuwaitis. The problem of forging a cohesive Kuwaiti identity in the face of growing numbers of aliens was resolved by provisions that limited possibilities for acquisition of citizenship and gave special status to "original" Kuwaitis, as distinct from those who were naturalized. The problem of solidifying economic privilege was addressed by measures requiring foreigners to have Kuwaiti partners in any business enterprise, guaranteeing Kuwaitis majority ownership, and limiting aliens' participation in lucrative sectors. Such measures helped to ensure the support of the traditionally powerful merchant class.\*

The importance of maintaining a distinctive place for other Arab nationals, while at the same time containing the energies of Arab Nationalism was evident in provisions that allowed Arabs the possibility of entry without visas, a shorter length of residency before being eligible for citizenship, and the

---

\* Crystal has argued that the nationality and commercial laws were among a number of mechanisms (including government spending through the private sector) to preserve and extend privileges for Kuwaiti merchants in exchange for "political silence."

potential to be granted citizenship for outstanding service. Finally, tension between the need to control the entry and exit of aliens and the need for manpower to supplement Kuwait's labor force is manifest in provisions that, on the one hand, closely governed aliens' entry, residence, and departure, but at the same time allowed for considerable discretion in the disposition of those illegally residing in Kuwait.

### 3.3 Transition: 1965-1966.

The second phase of policy evolution marked a transition in the context of policy formulation and, relatedly, in policy content. Economically, government revenues continued to grow, but so did expenditures; the level of surplus dropped from 12 million KD in 1961 to 4 million KD in 1965. Demographically, the number of non-Kuwaitis increased by more than 50 percent between 1961 and 1965 and now comprised nearly 53 percent of total population. Kuwaitis had become a minority in their own land. The number of Jordanians and Palestinians alone had increased more than five-fold since 1957, making them the largest group among Kuwait's resident aliens.\*

---

\* See Tables 1-1, 1-4, and 1-5 for economic and demographic data.



Politically, the context also changed. Two years after it was first convened in 1963, the National Assembly had become a significant force on the internal political scene. Soon after the National Assembly was first convened in 1963, (and barely two years after Iraq's aborted claim on Kuwait) Arab Nationalist deputies in the Assembly proposed that Kuwait participate in unity negotiations then under way among Egypt, Iraq, and Syria. The proposal was defeated, but in the process, attention was focused once again on the sizable expatriate population, toward whom the Arab Nationalist deputies were seen to be particularly lenient:

Because of the large number and placement of expatriates, foreigners, even Arabs, were seen by many Kuwaitis as potential enemies, not allies. It was easier to galvanize a crowd with xenophobia, offering the expatriates as scapegoats, than as Arab allies. In 1963, when Al-Khattib [leader of the Arab Nationalist bloc and a deputy] made an assembly speech calling for the extension of Kuwaiti privileges to fellow Arab workers, public reaction against him was so strong that he was forced to back off.\*

In December 1964, another crisis erupted when the Amir appointed a new cabinet that included six merchants, while members of different factions of the ruling family lost several key posts.\*\* Arab Nationalist deputies in the

---

\* Crystal, p. 191 based on Frank Stoakes, "Social and Political Change in the Third World: Some Peculiarities of the Oil-Producing Principalities of the Persian Gulf," in The Arabian Peninsula, Derek Hopwood, ed., London: George Allen & Unwin, 1971, p. 203, n. 31.

\*\* Details of this crisis are discussed in Crystal, pp. 192ff., and in Hassan A. Al-Ebraheem, Kuwait: A Political Study, Kuwait: Kuwait University, 1975, p. 139. Crystal points out that violation of the Constitutional prohibition on conflict of interest was a key issue in this crisis.

Assembly played a leading role in the dissolution of this Cabinet and the formation of a new Cabinet in January 1965.

The climate of crisis continued into 1965 when the Arab Nationalist bloc turned its attentions to opposing ratification of a government-supported royalty agreement negotiated through OPEC and already ratified by Iran, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Libya.\* Acrimonious debate on the royalty agreement was to continue at the center of increasing internal dissent during the next two years.

Given these economic, demographic, and political developments, the major task facing government was to contain the growing power of the Assembly--and particularly of the Arab Nationalists--while strengthening other sources of support. Changes to and extensions of the Nationality and Aliens' residence Laws enacted during this period reflected these circumstances and were directed toward two specific objectives.

The first was to preempt any tendencies toward political activism on the part of migrants by solidifying government control over entry and employment of aliens, but without limiting immigration per se--a move that would have damaged the still-fragile alliance developing between government

---

\* See Al-Ebraheem and Walid E. Moubarak, "Kuwait's Quest for Security: 1961-1973," Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Political Science, Indiana University, May 1979, pp. 125-127.

and merchant groups. Accordingly, Law 26 of 1965 amended The Aliens Residence Law to stiffen deportation and detention provisions. Specifically, Article 18 concerning detention of aliens for whom a deportation order had been issued was amended to lengthen the allowable period of detention from 15 to 30 days. Article 24, concerning penalties for violation of provisions of the law, was amended to allow for imprisonment of aliens for up to three months and the imposition of fines up to KD 75 for the violation of most articles. Deported aliens who attempted to return without the required approval by the Ministry of the Interior became subject to imprisonment of up to six months and a fine of KD 150.

On October 1, 1965, the Minister of Interior issued Order No. 10 containing the regulations for enforcement of the Aliens Residence Law\*. These included a requirement that applicants for residence reveal their sources of financial support and a prohibition against employment of temporary residents. However, the major effect of the regulations was to place the Ministry of Interior--the body most directly concerned with security and protection of the regime--at the center of control over the migration process. In so doing, government put in place the tools to clamp down quickly on immigration if it should choose to do so.

---

\* The contents of this Order are found in Dib, 1978, p. 57 ff.

Notwithstanding the obligation of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour to issue regulations for implementation of the Labor law passed the previous year, the Minister of Interior's Order included a number of provisions governing aliens' work in Kuwait. Aliens were required to present "No Objection Certificates" (NOCs) from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour at their point of entry to Kuwait. The procedure to be followed before an NOC could be issued was also spelled out in detail: employers were required to submit an application along with a character reference issued within the previous three months from the proposed migrant's home country. The application would be evaluated by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour "in view of National manpower needs and consultation with the Ministry of Interior about any objections to the applicant's presence." Once the worker had arrived, the employer was obliged to sign a "declaration" that he would notify the Nationality, Passport and Residence Office whenever the employment relationship ceased and that he would "undertake" the expense of returning the worker to the labor-sending country "or a closer location".

The Minister of Interior's Order No. 10 also spelled out the procedure to be completed before work permits were issued by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour. The prospective migrant was to submit his application (along with a character reference) to a Kuwaiti mission abroad.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs would then forward the applicant's file to the Nationality, Passport and Residence Department of the Ministry of Interior. If the application were rejected, the file would be returned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. If Interior had no objections, it would forward the file to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour where it would be examined in light of labor regulations and manpower needs. If Labour found the application to be in order, it would forward a work permit to the mission abroad through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Taken together, the 1965 amendments to the Aliens Residence Law and the Minister of Interior's Order regulating the law's implementation tightened the hold of the Ministry of Interior not only on entry and exit, but now on the conditions under which the migrants would be permitted to work. Some of the provisions (such as NOCs, character references, and the "declaration and undertaking" that employers would ensure migrant workers left the country after termination of their employment) were not new. But the fact that the procedures specified lines of coordination among the several ministries involved and placed the Ministry of Interior at the center of the process signalled the extent to which security issues had come to dominate migration policy.

Indeed, following the National Assembly crisis of 1965 and the death of the Amir in November (after a heart attack the previous month) the new Amir and his prime minister introduced a number of other security measures aimed at cracking down on the press and "cultural clubs", as well as foreign workers. In May of 1966, several newspapers were shut down, large-scale deportations of workers took place and several Egyptians in the Ministry of Information were sent home.\*

The second objective of migration-related policy was to bolster the dwindling size of the Kuwaiti citizenry in a manner that would help to build support amongst Kuwaiti Nationalists and not add to the ranks of Arab Nationalists. Since independence, the provisions of Article 5 (which allowed "exceptional" naturalization over and above the limit of 50 per year) had been invoked to permit naturalization of Bedouin.\*\* Now, in 1965, government embarked on a mass program to naturalize these traditional supporters of the ruling family.\*\*\*

Other changes introduced new options for naturalization, as well. Law No. 70 of 1966 amended the Nationality Law to allow

---

\* See Crystal 1986, p. 195 and Moubarak 1979, p. 127.

\*\* Crystal, p. 196.

\*\*\* Ahmad Jamal Zahir, "Al-Mar'ah fi Duwal Al-Khalij Al-'Arabi: Dirasa Midaniyya", Kuwait: Dar Al-Salasil, 1985, p. 53.

exceptional naturalization of Arabs who had resided in Kuwait since 1945 and of non-Arabs who had resided there since 1930.\* At the same time, however, the amendment sought to limit further the political participation of naturalized Kuwaitis: Article 6 was altered to prohibit them from running for, or being appointed to, any parliamentary body; they would not be eligible to vote until 20 years after receiving citizenship. For those previously naturalized, the twenty year waiting period began with passage of the amendment.\*\*

In summary, migration-related measures adopted in 1965-66 reflected a shift in the context of policy formulation and in the dominant concerns addressed by policy content. Whereas assuring the provision of manpower had been a salient objective of policies in the earlier phase, measures directed toward the immigrant population now signalled growing unease over internal political dissent and the prospect that migrants could pose a security risk. Changes to migration policy did not yet reduce entry; but they enabled government to do so. Measures directed toward the Kuwaiti population itself reflected government's desire to rebalance the population, to strengthen traditional bases of support, and simultaneously to assure the continuing political dominance of original Kuwaitis.

---

\* Farah et al. 1980, p. 33.

\*\* Article 6, Nationality Law (Law 15 of 1959), and Notes to Article 6. The previous wording implied that naturalized citizens could both vote and hold public office after 10 years.

### 3.4 Security, Restriction, and Rebalance: 1967-1973.

Beginning in 1967, there was yet another shift in the context of migration policy formulation. Economic growth continued to be both modest and uneven. The annual percentage rate of growth in total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) jumped from 1 percent to 14 percent between 1965/66 and 1966/67, but then plummeted again to 2 percent the following year (See Table 3-1). Demographically, the most salient event was the new inflow of Palestinians following the 1967 war; more pervasive demographic changes would become evident as this phase of policy changes evolved. Politically, the number one task at hand was to control not only internal unrest but, increasingly, security incidents linked to regional conflicts, which included two Arab-Israeli wars and conflicts between the PLO and King Hussein in Jordan. The second, and related, political task was to strengthen the Kuwaiti Nationalist base of support and to weaken further the domestic Arab Nationalist opposition, which became increasingly radicalized following the 1967 war.

The security-related measures directed toward immigrants introduced in the previous phase did not quell internal



dissent. Indeed there was little reason to expect that a crackdown on expatriate workers would have a significant effect on political tensions, for there was little evidence to suggest that the immigrants themselves played any central role in the drama, other than to enjoy the benefit of support by Arab Nationalist members of the Assembly.

Tensions building since the Assembly crisis of 1965 finally erupted in January 1967 when the Amir dissolved the National Assembly and called new elections.\* In the results, the Arab Nationalist opposition took only four out of fifty seats; pro-government conservative Kuwaiti Nationalists claimed the remaining majority. In response, the opposition accused government of ballot stuffing, miscounts, gerrymandering and other election irregularities.\*\* When the new Assembly convened in February 1967, seven members boycotted, calling for dissolution of parliament, reapportionment and new elections. Whether or not these allegations were true, the lines of internal division in Kuwaiti politics were now more sharply drawn between Arab Nationalists and Kuwaiti Nationalists.

Internal political developments marginalized the Arab Nationalists; the Arab defeat in the 1967 war with Israel

---

\* Al-Ebraheem, 1975, p. 140.

\*\* Crystal, p. 195, based on Abdullah al-Nafisi, al-Kuwait al-Ra'i al-'Akbar, London: Taha Advertising [distributor], 1978.

radicalized them. The Arab Nationalist Movement (ANM) leader in Kuwait, Dr. al-Khattib, had retained close ties with George Habbash, who had been a fellow-ANM activist during their student days at American University in Beirut.\* When the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PLFP) coalesced under Habbash's leadership shortly after the 1967 war,\*\* al-Khattib's faction became increasingly withdrawn from mainstream Nasserite Arab Nationalism and moved closer to more radical factions of the ANM in Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon. Some within the ANM also lent support to leftist factions in Aden, and elsewhere in the Gulf, which opposed the continuing presence of Britain in the region and the U.S. in Bahrain.\*\*\*

These shifts in ANM alliances had two effects relevant for the context of migration policy. First, they caused growing concern among those members of the merchant elite who had been early Arab Nationalist supporters. Increasingly, the merchants became aligned with government--although not necessarily with Kuwaiti Nationalists. Many, like Abdul Azziz al-Saqr (who would become head of the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce) and Jasim

---

\* Crystal, p. 190.

\*\* William R. Polk, The Arab World, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1965, p. 241.

\*\*\* The author is grateful to interview respondents for clarifying events and alliances in this period.

al-Qatami (who would later form his own Nationalist Coalition) continued to support liberal democratic principles, along with continued immigration. Others, like Jasim al-Marzouk, would become increasingly disaffected with Kuwait's democratic experiment and aligned with Kuwaiti Nationalists who perceived immigrant groups as a political threat.

Secondly, the ANM's growing alliance with leftist groups in the region lent credence to the view that continued unrest in Kuwait was linked to "importation" of regional conflicts. The bonds of mutual support between Arab Nationalists and immigrant groups implicated the latter by association..

Following the 1967 elections, and in the context of the political developments just described, there was continued and increasing unrest, manifest in strikes, bombings, deportations, and further crackdowns on the press and cultural clubs. In January 1969,

on the anniversary of the disputed elections and following an oil workers strike, bombs exploded at three government locations. The next day hundreds were detained and deported. In February [Defence Minister] Saad erected gallows on the Nayif Palace grounds, in view of the Assembly building, the better to concentrate the deputies' minds. In March the government announced new visa restrictions.\*

---

\* Crystal, p. 195.

In response to these events, several policy changes were now introduced to tighten control over entry. Law No. 17 of 1968 amended Article 24 of the Aliens Residence Law, adding to the penalties for those who violated the conditions for legal entry. The new provisions permitted confiscation of vehicles or other modes of transport "used to facilitate committing the violation by assisting the infiltrators to enter the country."\* In March 1969, Minister of Interior Order No. 3 regulating implementation of the Aliens Residence Law introduced the requirement that non-Kuwaitis obtain a visa, whatever their country of origin, \*\* thus effectively suspending the provision of the law that allowed for reciprocal waiver of visa requirements.

Although Kuwait's economy was moving erratically in this period, evidence suggests that the measures introduced in the late 1960s were motivated overwhelmingly by factors other than changes in manpower requirements. Indeed, writing of this period, one observer has noted, "the Ministry of Interior took immigration policy into its own hands, thus giving priority to state security over any consideration of supply and demand in the labor market."\*\*\*

---

\* Law No. 17 of 1968 in Contractors' Directory, p. 195.

\*\* Joukhadar 1980, p. 72.

\*\*\* Moubarak 1979, p. 138. While this study has shown that Interior had taken control of immigration policy as from 1965, Moubarak's observation underscores the importance of security as a factor shaping migration policy.

Deportations sent a clear signal to the immigrant community that Kuwait was serious about security and would not hesitate to use the means available to assure it.

Stringent control policies were not the only measures employed to ensure political quiescence among the migrants. In what may well have been a tacit political bargain not unlike that struck with groups in Kuwaiti society, migrants had benefit of a number of government-sponsored social services. They were not eligible for government housing, but they did have access to "free" medical services. Through the late sixties, education was also available to migrants' children at government schools. In 1970, Palestinians were allowed to set up their own schools with government support.\* Migrants' cultural clubs and civic organizations were allowed some latitude. The press (heavily staffed by Palestinians and Egyptians) and the National Assembly (with its outspoken Arab Nationalist support for migrants' rights) provided avenues for limited and indirect political expression. For a time, some of the stateless had new options for citizenship: in 1972, Law No. 41 amended the Nationality Law and added to Article 5 a provision

---

\* The Ministry of Information Yearbook for 1973 (p. 202) records that the Ministry of Education gave 100,000 KD in assistance to PLO schools serving 17,000 students. Some observers regard the government's allowing Palestinian schools as less a concession to Palestinian interests and more a measure designed to separate Kuwaiti children from outside influence. (author's interviews).

permitting exceptional naturalization of persons born in Kuwait and continuously resident there until their majority, provided they had completed secondary education in Kuwaiti schools, exhibited good behavior, and did not hold any other citizenship. \*

Then too, Kuwait had been consistently supportive of Palestinian concerns on the international front.\*\* Al-Fatah had begun in Kuwait in the early 1960s; the group within the PLO having the largest following among Palestinians in Kuwait, Al-Fatah had also enjoyed substantial financial support from the State. Unlike Egypt and Jordan, Kuwait had joined Iraq in rejecting Security Council Resolution 242 of 1967, which refers to the Palestinians as refugees. In 1970, Kuwait had used its influence to diffuse conflicts between Palestinian guerrillas and the government of Jordan. Finally, despite evident ambivalence toward non-Kuwaitis reflected in the imposition of stringent controls, Kuwait had proven generous in receiving large numbers of Palestinians who fled the 1967 War and the 1970-71 upheavals in Jordan.

For a number of observers, the salient feature of the migrants' situation was the degree of discrimination

---

\* Kuwaiti Nationality Law, Notes to Article 5. This provision was rescinded by Law 100 of 1980.

\*\* For a full discussion of the relationship between Kuwait and the Palestinians before 1973, see Mubarak 1979, p. 146ff.

between non-Kuwaitis and Kuwaitis; for the vast majority of migrants, however, the situation was an acceptable one. The immediate alternatives for many (especially Palestinians) were few. The economic and, to some degree, social benefits were sufficient to keep political ambitions in check. A Stanford Research Institute survey of migrants conducted in this period found most respondents satisfied with living and working in Kuwait.\*

While the immigrant population may have been relatively satisfied with their circumstances in Kuwait, there were growing numbers of Kuwaitis becoming dissatisfied with the situation. Despite the fact that the majority of migrants were not involved in the security incidents that rocked Kuwait, the presence of a growing immigrant population, together with the sharpened lines of division within the Kuwaiti political arena, converged to foster a growing sense of nationalism in the Kuwaiti population at large. Calls for "Kuwaitization" began to be heard. The Labor Law already gave Kuwaitis preference in employment. Kuwaitization was intended to go further: to increase Kuwaiti's share in the labor force, their rates of participation, and their occupational mobility, especially into so-called "productive" sectors of the economy. It was

---

\* Tawfic Farah, Faisal al-Salem, and Maria Kolman al-Salem, "Alienation and Expatriate Labor in Kuwait," Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. IV, No. 1, Fall 1980, p. 3.

a call that would be repeated at various other points in the subsequent evolution of Kuwaiti migration policy.

Underlying demands for Kuwaitization was the program to naturalize Bedouin, intensified in 1965. One immediate effect of the program was evident in the 1967 election results, where Bedouin support for conservative candidates had been crucial to defeat of the Arab Nationalist opposition.\*

A second effect of the program was to add an estimated 90,000 new Kuwaiti citizens between 1961 and 1970.\*\* Naturalization (together with slower rates of immigration) enabled growth of the Kuwaiti population to keep pace with that of the immigrant population: between 1965 and 1970, the rates of growth of the two groups were nearly equal. Although immigrants outnumbered Kuwaitis as from 1965, their proportion in the total population as of 1970 was virtually unchanged from the 1965 level.

It may be argued that without this degree of demographic stability, suspicion of and reaction against immigrants at the close of the 1960s might have been even stronger than

---

\* Crystal, p. 198.

\*\* See Table 3-2. The figure of 90,000 represented 26 percent of Kuwaiti population in 1970. n.b. unofficial estimates of the numbers naturalized run as high as 200,000 (see Crystal, p. 198.)



it was. Over the longer term, however, the third effect of the naturalization program was to bring into the political arena a new group whose interests would not necessarily lead them to support the causes of immigrants. Their adherence to traditional cultural values made them conservative in the face of changes brought by immigrants from different Arab cultures. Bedouin Kuwaitis lacked the entrenched economic interests that led merchant groups to be favorably disposed toward controlled immigration; their lack of education (and in many cases even literacy) put them at a disadvantage with respect to migrants in the labor market. Concerns over labor market competition were reflected in the first development plan, which called for concerted efforts to increase the proportion of Kuwaitis in the labor force through "Kuwaitization" and simultaneously called for a reduction in the number of non-Kuwaitis resident in the State.\*

Partly as a result of the post-1967 inflow of Palestinians, growth in the non-Kuwaiti population continued through the late 1960s, although at reduced rates.\*\* By the early 1970s, however, the tighter immigration policies introduced in the late 1960s began to have an effect on levels of entry. Between 1970-71, the number of non-Kuwaitis

---

\* Abdulrasool al-Moosa and Keith McLachlan, Immigrant Labour in Kuwait, London: Croom Helm, 1985, p. 76.

\*\* Average annual growth of the non-Kuwaiti population was 9.6 between 1965 and 1970, as compared with 11.6 between 1961 and 1965. See Table 1-1.

increased by only 6.4 percent, down from 9.8 percent the previous year.\* The annual rate of non-Kuwaiti population growth rose slightly for the next few years, before plummeting to 2 percent between 1974 and 1975. However, at no time during this period did it rise above 7 percent.

Kuwait was not unmindful of the trade-offs involved in emphasizing security considerations. The State's first five year development plan, for the period 1967/68 to 1971/72, stated that "'population policy is an integral part of the group of overall policies which must accompany the process of economic and social planning. The size and structure of the population deeply affect the objectives of economic growth'"\*\*

By 1972, there were signs that manpower constraints were beginning to be felt. That year, as part of a seemingly ongoing process of reorganization, a consultative committee

---

\* State of Kuwait, Annual Statistical Abstract 1972, p. 22, Table 18. Several observers have attributed the slower rate of population growth between 1970 and 1975 to tighter immigration policies. Al-Qudsi points out that, "For the period 1970/71-1974/75, the average annual rate of growth of GNP was 33 percent while population grew at a much slower rate...basically because of more strict immigration policies." Sulayman Shaban al-Qudsi, "Growth and Distribution in Kuwait: A Quantitative Approach," Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (Economics), University of California at Davis, 1979, p. 42. Moubarak 1979, p. 143, similarly attributes the slower rate of growth to immigration policies.

\*\* Kuwait Development Plan 1967/68 to 1971/72, quoted in United Nations Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA), "The Population Situation in the ECWA Region: Kuwait, Beirut: ECWA, p. 7.

for "Planning of Manpower" was added to the substructure of the Planning Board.\* In 1973, a Kuwaiti planner alluded to the tension between population growth and development:

"The sheer size of the guest labour force and its potential growth have become a delicate issue, or maybe better, a determining factor in deciding the course of development."\*\* At the First Regional Population Conference, held in Beirut in February 1974, the Kuwaiti delegate asserted that

population policy had been given high priority within the general planning framework. The main objective, he said, was to achieve a balance between the size of population and economic resources in order to maintain a decent standard of living.\*\*\*

While most planners in Kuwait (at least until recently) have tended to the view that neither their opinions nor the plans have had much effect on Kuwait's development, their observations suggest mounting concern that continued restrictions on manpower would, if not reversed, begin to constrain Kuwait's economic growth.

---

\* Ibrahim Sa'ad al-Din Abdullah, "The Organizational Structure for the Planning of Manpower in the Gulf States," paper prepared for Conference on Human Resource Development in the Arab Gulf, Bahrain: 15-18 February 1975, p. 16.

\*\* Ali al-Musa, Manpower in Kuwait, Kuwait, The Arab Planning Institute, 1973, p. 106, quoted in Bader Raheem al-Daihani, "The Danger of Heavy Dependency Upon Expatriate Labour Force in Kuwait," Unpublished Masters Thesis (Public Administration), Pacific Lutheran University, 1983, p. 26.

\*\*\* United Nations Economic Commission for Western Asia, "The Population Situation in the ECWA Region: Kuwait", Beirut: 1980, p. 20

These concerns were grounded in economic conditions for manpower constraint which had begun to build by the early 1970s. The OPEC agreement on a unified pricing policy in 1970 was followed by a 40 percent jump in nominal Gross Domestic Product (GDP),\* from 961.5 million KD in 1970-71 to 1,346.6 million KD in 1971/72. Prices tripled following the oil price rise of 1973. By 1973/74, total GDP had risen to 2,111.5 million KD.

Since the development program of the 1950s, government had channelled its oil-financed expenditures through the private sector. With active development programs targeted to industry, trade and services, the ratio of non-oil GDP to total GDP had ranged between 32 and 45 percent during the latter half of the 1960s. The private sector was poised and ready to participate in the new boom--indeed non-oil GDP also jumped over 40 percent annually between 1970/71 and 1972/73. By 1973/74, however, the rate of increase in non-oil GDP slumped to 6 percent, consistent with growing arguments that continued restrictions on new immigrant manpower would at some point begin to constrain economic growth.

Kuwait's commercial laws may have placed limits on non-Kuwaitis' participation in business, but nothing had diminished their importance as a source of manpower.

---

\* See Table 3-1.

In 1970, they still comprised nearly three-fourths of the labor force. Although Kuwaitis had nominal control of business ownership, the "kafeel" (sponsorship) system was a two edged sword: Kuwaiti business had become equally dependent upon migrants, who played a central role in management and staffing of enterprises.\* Despite calls for Kuwaitization, Kuwaiti labor force participation remained in the range of 17 to 18 percent. The prevailing skill level among the citizenry had not been helped by the program to naturalize Bedouin, a significant proportion of whom were illiterate and in no position to participate in Kuwaitization.\*\*

In summary, during the third phase in evolution of Kuwait's migration policy, security restrictions on immigration had slowed growth in the non-Kuwait population, while naturalization had expanded the citizenry. The proportionate balance between Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis had been maintained at the 1965 level. By the early 1970s, however, the emerging economic boom once again began to heighten tensions between the requisites of growth and those of security.

---

\* Of all employers in 1970, 69 percent were non-Kuwaitis. Annual Statistical Abstract 1977, p. 82, Table 72.

\*\* Over 47 percent of the Kuwaiti population was illiterate in 1970. Annual Statistical Abstract 1976, General Information in Population Census Years.

### 3.5 Liberalization: 1974-1977.

In 1974, the forces which had been building toward liberalization of immigration converged, and the context of migration policy formulation shifted once again. The oil price increase itself generated new revenues; changes in its ownership position gave government firm control over the new resources which, as in the 1950s, were channelled largely through the private sector. Labor demand increased at the very point in time that Kuwait was experiencing the lowest rates of growth in immigrant population since the 1940s. Politically, in the face of an increasingly contentious National Assembly, the first priority was to enable use of Kuwait's rapid economic growth in a way that would help to build support not only among the merchant elite, but also among other segments of the population now beginning to find political voice. A second priority was to diffuse debate, concentrated in the Assembly, where liberals squared off against conservatives on a number of issues--including the role of migrants in Kuwaiti society.

In February 1974, barely four months after the initial sharp oil price rise, government signed an agreement giving the state 60 percent ownership of KOC. On April 8, the Council of Ministers adopted a resolution loosening control of the Ministry of Interior over the granting of work

permits; in August, the regulation of employment activity in all its respects was officially transferred from the Ministry of Interior to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour.\* In March 1975, government assumed control of the remaining shares of KOC. That same month, the Ministry of Interior issued Order No. 22, repealing the more stringent provisions of Order No. 3 of 1969 (concerning the implementing regulations of the Aliens Residence Law) and replacing them with new regulations more lenient and responsive to the Council of Ministers' resolution of the previous year.\*\*

The new regulations repealed the requirement that all immigrants possess entry visas, reverting to the provision of the original Alien's Residence Law (Article 3 of Law 17 of 1959) that allowed the waiver of entry visas for nationals of states with which Kuwait had waiver agreements. The regulations stipulated that no "return

---

\* State of Kuwait, "Review of Employment Activity and the Basic Features of Expatriate Manpower During the Year 1978", Kuwait: Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, Manpower Organization Department, Employment Control Division, Statistical Section, January 1979, p. 136 and p. 46. While the Labour Law of 1964 had nominally given the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour responsibility for employment affairs, it will be recalled from section 3.3 that it was in fact the Ministry of Interior that issued the regulations spelling out procedures for granting work permits. Despite the "transfer" (or more properly, the re-assignment of responsibility) to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour in 1974, it was to be another four years before Labour would issue implementing regulations.

\*\* Order of Ministry of Interior No. 22 of 1975, Promulgating the Implementing Regulations of Aliens Residence Law, as translated in Contractors' Directory.

visa" would be required of aliens holding valid residence permits. Entry visas would be granted on the strength of certificates, permits, or licenses issued by the authorities responsible for different types of employment (the employing public institution for government workers, Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour for private sector workers, etc.); there was no mention of security checks. Whereas earlier (after the 1965 regulations), aliens had been required to present "No Objection Certificates" at the point of entry to Kuwait, now the regulations permitted issuance of transit visas and temporary entry visas at airports, border posts and ports, as well as Kuwaiti Consulates abroad. While the validity of stay in Kuwait under these visas was brief (7 days for transit visas, 3 days for temporary visas), the regulations allowed aliens to remain without a residence permit for up to one month. Aliens were also permitted to change the type and purpose of their residence permit, regardless of the type of visa on which they had entered. Those whose residence permits expired were allowed a fixed grace period of one month prior to departure, rather than a period ranging from one week to three months, as stipulated in the 1963 regulations.

Some effort to retain vestiges of the earlier system of control was evident. Aliens were still required to present good conduct certificates in order to obtain residence



permits, to notify the Ministry of Interior of any change in place of residence; transfer of the residence permit from one employer's sponsorship to another required approval of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour (for private sector employees) or the employer (for domestic servants). The "Declaration and Undertaking" was still required of private sector employers. The Ministry's Order was also accompanied by a set of forms which, the Order stipulated, were to be used in applying for entry visas.

Gone, however, were the regulations of 1965 which had detailed instructions for the issuance of NOCs and procedures to be completed before the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour could issue work permits. Within government, the balance between security concerns and economic growth had tipped in favor of the latter.

The political climate within the society at large made it less clear at first glance that such policy changes would meet with wide approbation. The political scene had become more complex and the issue of migration evoked strong opinions.

Whereas the elections of 1967 and 1971 had been decisive conservative victories, results in January 1975 were more equivocal. Out of 258 candidates for 50 seats, only 24 incumbants were returned. The new group included 10 Shia,

for the first time. Although Bedouin now held 23 seats, only a quarter of the deputies were considered to be solidly pro-government.\* The concentration of wealth in the hands of a few \*\* drew fire from many quarters: not only from Arab Nationalists, but also from some Bedouin, Shia, and less prominent Sunni. The concentration of political privilege had long been an irritant not only to Arab Nationalists but to Shia, who had been excluded from the legislative experiments of the 1920s and 30s, and only now gained access to the Assembly. In their calls for a more open political process (although not necessarily on other issues) these groups were joined by those members of the merchant elite committed to democratic principles. They were opposed by those of the elite who felt a more open process threatened their own position. Government's foreign policy positions also came under fire from both liberals (who felt it did too little in support of regional causes) and conservatives (who felt it did too much).

During the election campaign of 1975 and the acrimonious parliamentary sessions leading up to dissolution of the Assembly in 1976, debates over the position of migrants in the society emerged in the context of contention over these broader issues. Given their nature, it is not surprising

---

\* Crystal, p. 206.

\*\* In 1972-73, the wealthiest 20 percent received 50.6 percent of total income; the top thirty percent captured 61.8 percent of income. al-Qudsi, p. 118, Table 6.1.

that conflicts over migrants focused not on the question of entry, but on economic and political matters.

On the subject of migrants, political actors fell roughly into two groups: liberal and conservative. Liberals included, as always, Arab Nationalists and those members of the merchant elite who continued to support democratic principles. While most Bedouin tended toward conservatism on the immigration issue, those active in unions were supportive of migrants, many of whom helped to swell union ranks. Shia, who tended to ally themselves on many issues with conservative Kuwaiti Nationalists, were generally more liberal--on the issue of entry, at least--: the Shia's predominance in retail business made them responsive to the consumer demand migrants generated.\* The majority of Bedouin, and those among the merchant elite who felt threatened by the rising clamor of demands for more political participation, in general were conservative on immigration issues as well.

In the election campaigns of 1975, liberals, concerned about the position of Arab migrants in Kuwait, pressed for the inclusion of Arab migrants' demands in the political agenda of parliamentary candidates. One conservative

---

\* Al-Moosa and McLachlan (p. 97) point out that, by the late 1970s, non-Kuwaitis accounted for 59.4 percent of total private consumption in Kuwait.

candidate retorted, "...they don't have the right to vote."\* This touched upon a particularly sensitive issue for liberals, who

charged that the government had for some time been granting citizenship to Bedouins who for the most part did not even reside in Kuwait, in order to increase its supporters among the population, especially during elections.\*\*

Liberals' resentment over this episode was not motivated merely by a sense of injustice that illiterate Bedouin should be granted citizenship, while educated Arabs, many born in Kuwait or long resident there should be denied it; they saw the growing political power of Bedouin as having contributed measurably to the liberals' substantial losses in the 1967 elections.

Migrants were seen by both sides as contributing to heightened tensions between government and the labor unions over the issue of discrimination toward non-Kuwaitis. In September 1974, non-union foreign workers led two spontaneous labor strikes. Striking workers at Kinko, a Kuwaiti oil-supply company, demanded reduction of working hours during the holy month of Ramadan. The second, among Canada Dry Company workers, demanded better working

---

\* See Nabeel A. Khoury, "The Politics of Intra-regional Migration", in International Migration in the Arab World, Beirut: ECWA 1981, Vol. II, pp. 760 to 770 for detailed discussion of these debates.

\*\* Khoury, p. 761.

conditions and wage increases to offset the rising cost of living.\*

For their part, conservative Kuwaiti Nationalists repeatedly made reference to the rising crime rate, including thefts, kidnappings, assaults and murders, implying that migrants played a major role in these events. Conservatives alleged that Kuwaitis were unemployed and underemployed and renewed the call for Kuwaitization, demanding evidence regarding the number of Kuwaitis employed in companies and their positions.

Conservatives were also concerned about the pro-Palestinian sentiment among liberal Kuwaitis (both in parliament and among student groups) which had come to be reflected not only in debates about citizenship but in responses to regional events. A number of factors contributed to the dissolution of the new Assembly in August 1976,\*\* but among them was the

---

\* Shamlan Y. Alessa, The Manpower Problem in Kuwait, London and Boston: Kegan Paul International, 1981, p. 46.

\*\* Several observers have linked dissolution of the National Assembly directly and indirectly to "migration politics". Crystal (1986, p. 207ff.) identifies four reasons for the dissolution. First was the Assembly's frequent outspoken opposition to government on a wide range of issues and in a form that included verbal attacks on the ruling family. Second was the Assembly's alienation of domestic support, especially among merchants; third was its links to opposition groups outside government. Fourth was the Assembly's links to "inter-Arab politics" particularly through its liberal members' association with Palestinians in Kuwait. Khoury links the dissolution of the Assembly to migration through "the concern over the internal balance of power, and the privileged position of at least a segment of its population" relative to the migrants. Finally, the Middle East Review 1983, ties parliament's suspension to its position on the Lebanese war and its relations with the Palestinian movement.

parliament's passage of a resolution condemning Syrian intervention in the Lebanese civil war. For conservatives, this signaled an intrusion of migrants' political concerns into Kuwait's traditionally neutral stance toward neighboring countries of the region.

The salience that migrants achieved as these domestic political events unfolded did not appreciably enhance the migrants' status in Kuwait. The Palestinian schools that had opened in the late sixties were closed; some feared that they invited an unwanted sense of ethnic solidarity. Despite the general loosening of entry rules, some Arab migrants long resident in Kuwait began to experience difficulties in bringing family members for reunification, a particular concern to those with family in war-torn Lebanon. The differential status of migrants within Kuwait was again underscored with creation of the Social Security system in September of 1976; it applied only to Kuwaiti nationals.\*

Despite these persistent tensions over Kuwait's existing immigrant community, the parliamentary debates did not

---

[continued from preceding page] Crystal (p. 208) also notes that "In 1972 eight PLFP members (to which the ANM had ties) were deported for bombing a Jordanian Embassy vehicle" while in 1976, Palestinians had bombed a Syrian Airlines office in Kuwait. These, together with other politically motivated incidents of violence in the early seventies, added to conservatives' deepening concern that inter-Arab political battles were increasingly coming to be fought out in Kuwait.

\* Shamlan Alessa, Manpower in Kuwait, p. 44.

alter the fundamental decisions of 1974 and 1975 to loosen restraints on entry and residence. As regards employment, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour was to acknowledge that new work permits "were granted free from any restrictions or regulatory interference...during 1975 and 1976."\* The Development Plan of 1976/77 to 1981/82, noted that earlier restrictive migration policies "were reversed to permit a rapid growth of industries based on employment of foreign workers, including a large number of new immigrants."\*\* Modifications to existing laws concerning migration were slight and facilitatory: Minister of Interior Order No. 70 of 1976 added a new article to Order No. 22 of 1975. The new article stated that "An ordinary residence permit not for work may be granted to any person proving the source covering his expenses during the entire period of his residence."\*\*\* However, the new article also provided that the Minister of Interior could

---

\* State of Kuwait, "Review of Employment Activity and the Basic Features of Expatriate Manpower During the Year 1978", Kuwait: Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, Manpower Organization Department, Employment Control Division, Statistical Section, January 1979, p. 3.

\*\* Abdulrasool al-Moosa and Keith McLachlan, Immigrant Labour in Kuwait, London, Croom Helm 1985, p. 76.

\*\*\* Order of Minister of Interior No. 70 of 1976 adding a new article to the implementing regulations of Aliens Residence Law No. 70 issued by the order of the Minister of Interior No. 22 of 1975, in Contractors' Directory, p. 177. The requirement to prove a source of income had been included in the regulations of 1965, but (perhaps inadvertently) had been omitted from the 1975 regulatory order.

exempt people from having to prove their source of income and "meanwhile grant a residence permit for work."

And grant they did. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour characterized 1977 as a year of "brisk activity in the field of employment...compared with the preceeding two years."\* The total number of transactions, including initial residence and work permits, renewals of residence permits, cancellation and transfer, final cancellations, and permits for employers and simple crafts, increased by 61 percent over 1975. New work permits alone increased by over 139 percent between 1976 and 1977. In addition to the 40,954 workers who entered the country with new work permits, the Ministry agreed to grant residence permits for work to some 22,538 people who had entered on visit visas. The resulting addition of 63,492 expatriates workers in 1977 represented an increase of 20.8 percent over the total labor force recorded in the 1975 census. Employment in the construction sector accounted for nearly 53 percent of all new residence permits, while bachelors accounted for 53.6 percent of new permits.

The number of new entrants was only part of the story, however. There were notable shifts in their national

---

\* State of Kuwait, "Review of Employment Activity and the Basic Features of Expatriate Manpower During the Year 1977", Kuwait: Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, Manpower Organization Department, Employment Control Division, Statistical Section, February 1978, p. 1ff.



origins. Among Arabs, Jordanians and Syrians experienced sharp reductions in the number of labor permits issued between 1975 and 1976. As a percentage of labor permit issues, those to Jordanians dropped from 18 percent in 1975 to 14.5 percent in 1976; those to Syrians dropped from 6.4 to 4.8 percent. In the same one year period, issues to Egyptians jumped from 15 to 20.6 percent.\*

The most striking change, however, was the rapid entry of Asians. As a result of earlier migrations, there had been a small but substantial number of Indians and Pakistanis in Kuwait at the time of the 1965 census \*\* and their numbers had grown steadily into the 1970s. By contrast, there were only a handful of "other Asians" recorded in 1965 (259 to be exact); as of the 1975 census there were fewer than 2000.

Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour sources do not provide data for 1976, but arrival and departure statistics provide some indication of the rapidity with which the Asian immigration occurred. In 1975, there was a net

---

\* See State of Kuwait, Annual Statistical Abstract 1977, p. 129, Table 108. The numbers on which these percentages are based are consistent with new permit issues.

\*\* See Table 1-5. The Indian and Pakistani communities numbered slightly more than 11,000 in 1965, about the same number as Egyptians. By 1975, there were slightly more than 32,000 Indians and 23,000 Pakistanis. From early on, there was a relatively high percentage of females among these populations, reflecting their settled status.

addition of 250 "Other Asians"; in 1976, this number reached 49,330. Net additions in 1977 totalled 13,259, while the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour issued new residence permits to 8,075 Asians (primarily from Korea, Bangladesh and the Philippines) suggesting that some 5,000 were present in Kuwait without first-time residence permits. Arabs still accounted for the majority (63.7 percent) of new work permits, but because of the predominance of Asians among those who were permitted to change their visit visas for residence permits, Asians actually accounted for the majority of new residence permits.\*

There were a number of economic and structural reasons which help to explain why many of these new immigrants were Asians, and drawn from a greater number of countries than before. Several of the traditional Arab labor-sending countries were expanding their own development programs and, with substantial numbers of workers already abroad, they were beginning to experience selective manpower shortages and rising wage rates.\*\* Simultaneous growth in the number of Egyptian workers was attributable to other factors. Although Egypt also experienced skill scarcities in certain

---

\* Net addition figures derived from Arrival and Departure data, Annual Statistical Abstract 1981, pp. 264 and 265, Tables 258 and 260. Residence permit data from Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, op. cit. 1978.

\*\* Birks and Sinclair attribute much of the shift away from traditional Arab supplying countries to these factors. See International Migration and Development in the Arab Region, Geneva: ILO, 1980, p. 34.

sectors, \* Egypt had a much larger population from which to draw than other Arab supplying countries. Policy changes in Egypt also contributed to the growth of migration to Kuwait and elsewhere in the Gulf. The restrictive character of Egypt's emigration policies from the mid-1950s to 1967 was altered significantly with the adoption of the open door policy (infitah) in 1973 and the abolition of exit visas in 1974, both of which changes facilitated the movement of Egyptians into the expanding regional labor market.\*\*

Growth in the number of Asians was linked to several factors. Taking advantage of their labor surpluses, comparatively low wage rates, and their ability to organize for response to international competitive bidding opportunities, Asian governments and private entrepreneurs began active policies of labor exportation. Networks of private labor recruiting agents organized local labor markets to supply the needs of Asian multinationals seeking to undertake "turn-key" projects, while government labor bureaus systematized official procedures for legally contracting and exporting labor to support these efforts.\*\*\*

---

\* See Nazli Choucri, et al., Migration in the Middle East: Transformations, Policies, and Processes, Vol. 1, p. 9-4ff.

\*\* Ali E. Hillal Dessouki, "The Shift in Egypt's Migration Policy: 1952-1978", Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 18, No. 1, January 1982, passim.

\*\*\* See Fred Arnold and Nasra Shah, eds. Asian Labor Migration: Pipeline to the Middle East, Colorado: Westview Press, forthcoming 1987.

In comparison, Arab workers and their governments were much less institutionally organized. Then too, from the point of view of employers in Kuwait and elsewhere in the Gulf, Asian workers were viewed as bringing higher levels of educational attainment and skill, making them more productive than their Arab counterparts. In addition, Asians were considered to be highly disciplined and more willing to tolerate austere working conditions. Often segregated in work camps where all their amenities were provided, the Asians were viewed as entailing lower social costs as well.

There is no available written documentation of an explicit government-backed policy to replace workers from traditional labor-supplying countries with Egyptians and Asians on political grounds. Privately, however, many observers in Kuwait express the view that such a policy was adopted in the mid-1970s. Seccombe has demonstrated that Jordanians and Palestinians were the only group to experience reductions in new work permit receipts across all sectors.\* However, for the most part the economic and political considerations as to nationality run in the same direction, making it difficult to substantiate the political argument. Nevertheless, it is clear that what became de facto diversification in sources of labor supply had potential political benefits. Past experience

---

\* Seccombe thesis, p. 216.

suggested that Egyptians would go home. The presence of greater numbers of Asians would help to dilute the concentration of Arab migrants and, relatedly, diffuse the expression of migrants' concerns within the domestic political arena.

Because they came as part of construction contracts that required their repatriation upon completion and because their discipline was tight, Asian construction workers were not viewed by Kuwaiti authorities as a "policy problem". Apart from the construction workers, however, a number of Asians had entered as domestic servants. Their entry and status in-country had been touched upon only lightly in the 1975 regulations concerning aliens residence, which required a "Declaration and Undertaking" from employers and a certificate of "Good Conduct and Behavior" issued by the identification Section at the Ministry of Interior. Following the rapid inflow of Asians in 1976, the Ministry of Interior issued Order No. 84 in mid-September of 1977.\* The Order stipulated that private servants would be granted residence permits for the period of their service or for 5 years, whichever was shorter. The servant's presence and status in Kuwait were clearly tied to the employer. The name and address of the employer were to be included in the servant's passport and, if the servant were to leave his or

---

\* Ministerial Order No. 84 of 1977, Duly Regulating the Condition and Formalities of Private Servants Ordinary Residence. Contractors' Directory, pp. 176-177.

her position before expiration of the service contract, the residence permit was to be revoked. A new permit (eg. for other employment) could not be granted without consent of the original employer unless the servant had been out of Kuwait for two years. Employers whose servant "broke contract" were still held responsible for paying the costs of deporting the worker.

In summary, during the fourth phase of migration policy evolution, previously restrictive migration policies were reversed to permit liberal entry of new manpower. Although government kept in place certain controls over the process, most policy changes were faciliatory in nature.

While debate over the role of immigrants in Kuwaiti society was heated and may have called into question the political wisdom of introducing yet more migrants, there were several countervailing considerations at work. For one thing, pressures to lift restrictions on immigration were rapidly mounting. Economic pressures may have driven the push toward more liberal immigration policies, but the political climate was not as inconducive to change as the character of the migration debate might at first suggest. Arab Nationalist support for immigration on both ideological and political grounds was unswerving. Merchant groups (including Shia) that might be conservative with respect to migrant rights were nonetheless traditionally supportive of

liberal immigration policies, particularly when faced with the potential for serious manpower constraints to economic growth. As for Kuwaiti Nationalist factions, while they might debate the appropriateness of giving expression to migrants' political views and emphasize the social costs of migrants, conservatives in this quarter enjoyed a greater degree of political security than they had in the mid-1960s, if only because their numbers had increased substantially as a result of the naturalization program. Furthermore, nationalism itself could be argued to dictate that Kuwait should seize the opportunity to strengthen its economic foundations while the financial means to do so were at hand. If continuing to restrict immigration meant losing this opportunity (and with it the opportunity to share in the benefits of growth), then perhaps Kuwaiti Nationalist interests would be better served by allowing freer immigration and continuing to concentrate on maintaining distinctions between the national and non-national populations. The fact that the cohesiveness of the immigrant population stood to be fragmented by the admission of new groups (notably Asians) meant that the choice to liberalize might even work to legitimate such distinctions--at least for the time being.

### 3.6 Consolidation and Regulation: 1978-1979.

The fifth period of policy evolution was one of consolidation and regulation. In the economic sphere, Kuwait had survived the mild recession in 1977 without much disruption, thanks to its large foreign reserves. A period of cautious optimism in 1978 was followed by the second oil price rise in 1979. Demographically, the immigrant population was growing rapidly with the entry of new migrant workers, over 50 percent of whom were Asians in 1978. Rapid growth of the Asian population began to generate tensions between Arab and Asian migrants, and between Kuwaitis and Arab migrants, who felt dismayed at the growing distinctions made between themselves and their fellow-Arab Kuwaitis. Politically, without the National Assembly as a forum for debate, these tensions found some degree of expression in the media and conferences. However, government's attention was focused on adjusting to changes brought about by the death of Sheikh Sabah and the accession of Jabir Ahmad at the end of 1977. Against this backdrop of rapid and complex change, there were two issues salient for migration policy formulation. The first was civil service reform; the second was to address emerging tensions between the need for labor market stability on the one hand, and concerns over settlement of migrants on the other.



In its review of activities during 1977, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour had described its objective as "eliminating all obstacles in the way of the inflow of labour force of the required volume and calibre and at the proper time."\* Now, the Ministry sought to use the policy measures at its disposal to address some emerging problems. These included the coexistence of bottlenecks and redundancies in different sectors, as well as the need to achieve stability and continuity in the labor market. Available policy tools included authorizations for renewal of residence permits, cancellations and transfers of sponsorship from one enterprise to another, and outright terminations. The Ministry put these tools to work in several ways.

While noting that the underlying dynamics of the economy helped to influence the degree of stability and continuity, in that these factors are "closely related to the volume of capital outlays invested for development or for determining existing opportunities for employment or creating new employment opportunities", the Ministry expressly viewed the residence permit renewal (or non-renewal) authority "as a measure toward ensuring that the existing rate of momentum in all activities be maintained...[and as a tool]

---

\* State of Kuwait, "Review of Employment Activity and the Basic Features of Expatriate Manpower During the Year 1977", Kuwait: Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, Manpower Organization Department, Employment Control Division, Statistical Section, February 1978, p. 2.

to stave off any rise in the labour turnover and the adverse effects entailed thereby upon the output of the service and productivity [sic] sectors alike."\* A measure was introduced to lower turnover by requiring that a worker remain with an employer at least one year before transferring to another job. As a result, the volume of "cancellations and transfers" from one establishment to another declined to 5,013, from 13,065 the previous year.\*\* Those in small business enterprises and independent craftsmen, who had heretofore been limited to two year residence permits, were now allowed permits for up to five years.\*\*\*

In addition to concerns about the economic costs of high turnover, there was also an expressed concern "to establish a balance between newcomers and loss of manpower; for the phenomenon of counter emigration has begun to raise certain questions at various levels."\*\*\*\* The concern that Kuwait might be losing needed manpower was triggered by a rise in the number of final cancellations and departures, noted during the last quarter of 1978, but it reflected as well a

---

\* Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour 1978, op. cit., p. 15-16.

\*\* Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour 1979, op.cit., pp. 1 and 8.

\*\*\* Ibid, p. 8. The purpose of this change was to ensure available manpower of this type; however, the move also contributed to a decline in the number of transactions handled by the Ministry.

\*\*\*\* Ibid, p. 3.

sense that Kuwait was in competition with other labor-receiving countries. In its annual report on expatriate manpower, the Ministry took care to show that the rise in final cancellations and departures was, in all likelihood, the result of the timely completion of building and construction projects undertaken by Asian contractors who then repatriated their workers. It was not, the report hastened to add, the result of any "regulatory impediments" imposed by the Ministry.

This was not to say that the Ministry was indiscriminate in granting work permits or approving applications for residence permits. On the contrary, the annual expatriate manpower report portrays the Ministry as using the policy measures at its disposal to achieve careful modulation of the labor force. The issuance of entry permits for work was actually halted for a period in early 1978, pending full utilization of permits issued the previous year.\* In addition, the Ministry went so far as to impose restrictions on the recruitment of new immigrant labor by certain sectors perceived to have "redundancies", notably in the Commerce, Restaurants and Hotels sector and in Public and Social Services. Finally, severe restrictions

---

\* Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour 1979, p. 5. Note that periodic halts in the issuance of new work permits are often portrayed by the press as signalling the onset of a downturn in recruitment of expatriate labor. Here, the measure appears to be imposed for reasons of administrative capacity.

were imposed on the entry of workers' dependents.\* This was perhaps the first sign of recognition that the price of increased labor force stability could easily be increased settling (through family reunification) unless steps were taken to forestall this consequence.

As in the previous year, the inflow of Asian workers continued, now including Sri Lankans and Thais as well as other East Asian groups. Among new work permit recipients, Asians dominated the building and construction sector, where they accounted for 69.4 percent of permits (up from 55.3 percent in 1977); the percentage of new permits in this sector going to Arabs dropped from 38.6 to 26.8 percent.\*\* In other sectors, Arabs continued to secure the majority of new permits, but their percentage dropped from 57.5 to 54.3 percent, while both Asians and other nationalities increased their percentage of new permits. In work permit renewals, Arab nationalities did somewhat better. In building and construction, Arabs actually increased their share from 48.9 to 52.6 percent, while in other sectors, their percentage of renewals remained almost constant at 52 percent. Despite the high number of final cancellations and departures noted earlier, however, Asian workers continued to receive a significant share of work permit renewals: 46.1 percent in

---

\* Seccombe dissertation, p. 230.

\*\* See Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor 1979, pp. 19-26 and Schedule 4.1 for the data cited in this section. See Seccombe dissertation, Ch. 5 for extensive discussion of work and residence permit data.

building and construction and 45 percent in other sectors. While new and renewed work permits suggest the changing ethnic composition of the labor force, the relative position of Asians and Arabs was reflected most dramatically in data on entry permits for work. The percentage of these awarded to Asians rose from 34.2 percent in 1977 to 54.6 percent in 1978; the proportion granted to Arabs dropped from 63.7 to 39.7 percent in the same period.

Moreover, there were marked changes in the numbers of new entry permits for work awarded to specific Arab nationalities: the number issued to Jordanians and Palestinians dropped from 5,079 to 2,808;\* to Syrians, from 4,102 to 2,010; although the number issued to Egyptians had risen through 1977, they now dropped, from 23,776 to 13,890. The number of new work permits issued to these nationalities showed a corresponding decline. The percentage distribution of work permit renewals told a somewhat different story: the proportional share of most Arab nationalities remained relatively constant; that of Jordanians and Palestinians, however, dropped from 31.1 to 26.4 percent of all Arab renewals, while that of Egyptians rose from 32.1 to 39.5 percent.

---

\* Seccombe, dissertation p. 216, goes on to show that Jordanians and Palestinians were the only Arab group whose receipts of new work permits were consistently downward across all sectors between 1977 and 1981.

As discussed in the previous section, a number of purely economic factors (e.g. comparative wages, skill composition in relation to local demand) combined to explain at least part of this continuing shift to Asian labor. However, the differential effects of this shift among the different Arab nationalities resulted in the perception that the de facto diversification of nationalities in the labor force was as much a function of policy as of market forces.\* When, for the second year in a row, Arabs were seen to lose market share, Arab Nationalists and expatriate intellectuals began to express renewed concern.

There was considerable television and press coverage of Asian immigration and its effects on Arab labor. While Arab Nationalists and trade union leaders spoke out about the increasing numbers of Asian workers and called for Arab solidarity, Government was notably silent.\*\* In December 1978, The Arab Planning Institute and the International Labour Office jointly sponsored a seminar on population,

---

\* Writing of this period in the Gulf, Janet Abu-Lughod has stated, "It appears that government policies are being changed to minimize both economic cost and the potential tensions that could arise from the existence of a permanent expatriate community with moral claims on the state but without political rights. Given the ancient values of the Islamic Umma and the more recent values of Arab Unity, it has become increasingly anomalous to withhold equal opportunities and citizenship from members of permanently-settled Muslim Arab communities. To minimize this contradiction, as well as to economize on labor costs, there has been a conscious shift to the vast labor pools of Asia..." in Ibrahim, ed., Arab Resources, London: Croom Helm, 1983, p. 252.

\*\* Author's interviews.

employment and migration in the Gulf which focused on the Asian inflow.\*

Numbers alone were not the only concern. By late 1978 and early 1979, the differential socio-economic position of Arab migrants had become the focus of renewed attention. In addition to the longstanding restrictions on business and property ownership, exclusion from subsidized housing, and lack of political enfranchisement, a number of more recent developments exacerbated the sense of relative deprivation.\*\* Arab immigrants saw themselves earning lower salaries than less qualified Kuwaitis doing less demanding work; cooperative markets were open to all shoppers, but only Kuwaitis were permitted to own shares and receive distributions of the profits; with the introduction of Social Security for Kuwaitis in 1976, the migrants' lack of pension benefits was underscored. Education had been "free" for migrant children, but in the course of the 1970s, as non-Kuwaitis came to comprise 47 percent of the total population below the age of 15, as enrollments skyrocketed and schools became overcrowded, preference came to be given to Kuwaitis. Government

---

\* See Arab Planning Institute and ILO, Proceedings of Seminar on Population, Employment and Migration in the Arab Gulf States, Kuwait, 16-18 December 1978.

\*\* Various observers have discussed the differential social and economic status of migrants. See Moubarak, Alessa, Farah, al-Salem and al-Salem, al-Qudsi, and al-Moussa and McLachlan.

assistance was made available only to schools with no more than 90 percent of one nationality and with teaching in Arabic,\* effectively eliminating government subsidy of the private schools that had begun to spring up. Costs of education became exorbitant.

Housing had also become a problem. Landlords had begun to raise rents during the 1970s and, although wage levels were also increased, migrants began to feel the pinch.\*\*

Housing Law 75 of 1979 did nothing to relieve the situation: it continued to prohibit non-nationals from owning title to real estate.\*\*\* Landlords were permitted to increase rents by "no more than 100 percent after 5 years."\*\*\*\*

Although migrants continued to enjoy "free" medical services and an otherwise relatively high standard of living, the social and economic costs of their maintenance in Kuwait were clearly being shifted to the long-time

---

\* Al-Farah et al., "Alienation and Expatriate Labor in Kuwait", Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. IV, No. 1, Fall 1980, pp. 31-32.

\*\* See al-Qudsi, "Growth and Distribution in Kuwait: A Quantitative Approach," Ph.D. dissertation, U. Calif Davis, 1979, p. 52.

\*\*\* Al-Moosa and McLachlan, Immigrant Labour in Kuwait, Croom Helm 1985, p. 40.

\*\*\*\*Financial Times February 26, 1979 in al-Farah 1980, p. 31.



resident migrants themselves.\* With chronic job insecurity now exacerbated by the simultaneous increase in the presence of Asians and decrease in access to entry among Arabs, there were renewed calls for "redefining the rights of imported labor and setting up a sound immigration policy."\*\*

Government was not unmidful of the need to reexamine migration policy. At the end of 1977, The Amir, Sheikh Sabah, died of a heart attack and was succeeded by the crown prince and prime minister Jabir Ahmad. Among the new Amir's priorities was civil service reform, reflected in the Civil Service Law No. 15 of 1979.\*\*\* In this climate of reform and organization, and after nearly four years of rapid growth in the non-Kuwaiti population, existing migration policies were ripe for review. Two new ministerial orders resulted: one from Interior and one from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour.

Ministerial Order No. 54 of 1979, issued by the Ministry of Interior, added a new article to the implementing regulations of the Aliens Residence Law of 1959 contained in Ministerial Order No. 22 of 1975. The old order had permitted any alien

---

\* Kuwait had long used its distributional policies to secure political support among groups in the society, including the migrant community. By the mid-seventies, however, the infrastructural cost implications of importing labor began to receive attention. Among other factors stimulating this awareness was a 1976-77 study by AMIDEAST that modelled the costs of supporting each additional migrant.

\*\* Al-Qudsi, p. 115.

\*\*\* See Crystal 1986, pp. 210ff. for discussion of these reforms and the events leading up to them.

to change the type and purpose of his residence permit, regardless of the type of visa on which he had entered. In other words, someone who had entered on a visit visa was free to obtain a residence permit for any type of employment. The new order limited the situations in which a visit visa might be transferred into an ordinary residence permit to those individuals joining government service, working as private servants, or joining a family supporter.

On January 13, 1979 Social Affairs and Labour issued Ministerial Order No. 37, effective the first of March. In the Ministry's view, this was "the first real effort to organize the labor market."\* Indeed, although responsibility for issuing work permits had been formally transferred from Interior to Labour in April of 1974, to date no comprehensive set of implementing regulations had been issued. The Ministry explained this hiatus in the following way:

The Ministry preferred to bide its time before issuing a decision regulating the issuance of work permits activity and before the adoption of the declaration and undertaking, referred to in Articles 4 and 18 of Ministerial Decision No. 22 for the year 1975, pending such time as the problems which usually appear as a result of practical application have clearly emerged as a result of actual practice. In doing so, the Ministry was aiming at having the decision to be issued in this report fully comprehensive and integrated to the maximum extent possible, so that it would provide for

---

\* Author's interviews.

solutions and for putting an end to undesirable phenomena.\*

The new order clearly took cognizance of the various control mechanisms that Kuwait had used in the past, including those contained in the provisions of the Ministry of Interior's Order No. 10 of 1965 (which had regulated the issuance of work permits), as well as the Ministry of Interior's 1975 Order. Labour now recast some of these earlier provisions and added a number of new ones.

In the 1965 regulations, aliens had been required to present No Objection Certificates at the point of entry. To obtain the NOC (which was issued by Labour), employers had been required to present an application together with a recent character reference for the migrant. Labour was to consult with Interior before granting the NOC. Under the new regulations, employers were required to submit a different set of documents before receiving permission to hire non-Kuwaitis. These included a copy of the organization's license to conduct business (or an individual's license to practice a profession.); a list of the workers already employed, including the name, profession, nationality, date of employment, salary, and number and date of travel document for each; and a

---

\* State of Kuwait, Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, "Explanatory Memorandum to Ministerial Decision No. 37 for the Year 1979 On Regulating the Issuance of Work Permits to Non-Kuwaitis in the Private Sector." in "Annual Report on Employment Activity and the Basic Features of the Expatriate Manpower During the Year 1978", January 1979, pp. 136-137.

certified specimen of the employer's signature (or that of his duly appointed representative "from among his ancestry or offspring"). It was required that the authorized signature be that of a Kuwaiti; non-Kuwaitis, even if they were managing partners, would not be recognized. According to the explanatory notes accompanying the Order, this provision was introduced to restrict signature authority to one person, "thereby putting an end to many of the problems arising from the multiplicity of the persons vested with signature authority." The effect of the requirement was to exclude non-Kuwaitis from initiating any further labor importation and to lay the ground for holding Kuwaiti employers accountable. Subsequent articles reinforced this last point: any employer failing to notify the Ministry of changes in the documents listed above was subject to having all his transactions with the Ministry suspended until he complied. The regulations also provided for inspections to verify the accuracy of the information given. Notably, however, there was no mention of need for a character reference before a migrant might be admitted, nor any mention of required coordination between the ministries of Interior and Labour, as in the 1965 Order.

The 1965 regulations had stipulated that, to obtain a work permit, a prospective migrant was to submit his application together with a character reference to a Kuwaiti mission abroad. Under the new regulations, the employer was to

submit the application, accompanied by a copy of the proposed worker's educational qualifications or a certificate of experience and a copy of the passport page showing particulars about him or her. These measures were expressly designed to eliminate the practice by which

some employers, in an effort to guarantee approval of their application for the recruitment of a worker, resorted to providing incorrect data about the worker's profession, educational qualifications, and experience. Such irregularities would be discovered only after the worker's arrival in the country and the data recorded in his travel document was compared with that submitted by the employer.\*

As in the 1965 Ministry of Interior regulations, the criteria for issuing work permits remained the suitability of the worker's occupation and qualifications for the employer's type of activity and manpower needs, as well as the local labor market's need for the proposed immigrant worker.

In an effort to clamp down on the "trading" of work permits, the 1979 Order introduced a provision obligating employers to engage the worker for whom a work permit had been requested. If the requesting employer "caused the worker to work for another employer, he [would] be deemed as a supplier of labour or recruitment agent"\*\* and thus subject to the fines provided for in the 1964 Labour Law.

---

\* "Explanatory Memorandum to Ministerial Decision No. 37..." p. 139.

\*\* Ministerial Order No. 37 for the Year 1979, op. cit, p. 132.

In addition, the 1979 Order made employers subject to having all transactions with the Ministry suspended.

The major change introduced by the 1979 Order pertained to the "Declaration and Undertaking." Under Ministry of Interior Order No. 10 of 1965, employers had been required to submit a "Declaration" that they would notify the Nationality, Passport and Residence Office whenever the employment relationship ceased, together with a commitment to "Undertake" the expense of repatriating the non-Kuwaiti worker. In the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour's 1979 Order, the combined term "Declaration and Undertaking" was redefined to mean

the declaration submitted by the employer to the effect that he will assume responsibility for the worker throughout the period of the worker's employment with him or after the expiry thereof...\*

Under the new Order, employers were required to submit a declaration and undertaking within one month of a worker's entry into Kuwait. The special form prepared for that purpose was to be accompanied by a set of documents not previously associated with the declaration and undertaking, namely: 1) the worker's travel document; 2) a copy of the work permit stamped by the border authorities or a release from the previous employer indicating his agreement that the worker move to a new employer; and 3) a copy of the employment contract, to include specification of the

---

\* Ministerial Order No. 37 for the Year 1979, op. cit., p. 129.

contract period, its termination provisions, the worker's pay, the extent to which the worker might transfer to another employer, and the extent of the employer's responsibility for repatriating the worker.

The newly required documentation, like the very definition of the declaration and undertaking, represented a departure from previous practices in several ways. First, the Ministry of Interior's Order No. 22 of 1975 had required entry visas (for all but exempt groups), but had dropped the provision of the 1965 regulations that had required presentation of a No Objection Certificate at the point of entry. Now, by requiring that employers submit a copy of the work permit stamped by the border authorities, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour effectively reintroduced a requirement that work permits be obtained prior to entry, and simultaneously strengthened control over the entry of non-Kuwaiti workers. The alternative requirement that the declaration and undertaking be accompanied by a release from the former employer (if the worker was hired in-country), substantively reinforced that provision of Interior's 1975 Order which required Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour's approval before a worker's residence permit could be changed from one employer's sponsorship to another's.

The required submission of the employment contract was an entirely new provision, introduced to prove the existence of an employment relationship and to make the Ministry aware of the agreement reached between the two parties, especially concerning terms, transfer, and repatriation.\* With respect to the last, the Order effected a new balance between flexibility and control: it required the employer to assume financial responsibility for repatriation of the worker, "unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the parties to the contract,...".\*\* Heretofore, the employer's financial responsibility for repatriation had been unqualified. Not only did the new Order give precedence to private contractual agreements, it further specified conditions under which employers would be exonerated from bearing the financial burdens of repatriation. These included instances in which a worker transferred to a new employer in Kuwait (always with the old employer's agreement and after at least one year of service) as well as instances in which the worker's employment was terminated for legal reasons.\*\*\* In the case of transfer,

---

\* Explanatory Memorandum, op. cit., p. 140.

\* Ministerial Decision No. 37 for the Year 1979, op. cit., Article 11, p. 134. Emphasis added.

\*\*\* Employers were not to be held financially responsible for repatriation if the worker were terminated with cause (as specified in Article 55 of the Labor Law of 1964); if a judgement were issued cancelling the contract for no reason connected with the employer; if the worker were deported by administrative order; or if the employee's work permit were cancelled in accordance with the law.



the financial responsibility for repatriation would pass to the new employer.

In all cases (other than transfer) the employer was obliged to apply for final cancellation of the residence permit for any worker whose employment came to an end. The employer was required to return to the Ministry the application form stamped by the border authorities, verifying that the worker had left the country. Failure to submit the application document would be grounds for suspension of any new transactions between the employer and the Ministry.

Finally, the Order introduced new restrictions on the employment of migrant's dependents. Only those who held residence permits issued prior to the date of this Order would be permitted to work, and then only with the approval of the Kuwaiti under whose sponsorship the permit had been issued.

In summary, the 1979 Order marked the end of the relatively unrestricted immigration policies that had been introduced in the mid-1970s. Its provisions struck a delicate balance between the country's manpower needs and the deepening anxiety over expatriate labor, now grounded not only in security concerns, but in social concerns as well.

Previously, the Ministry of Interior alone had taken steps to control migration and migrants. Now, after 15 years of

resounding silence on the subject, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour was moved to act.

On the side of flexibility, both the employers' and the country's manpower requirements continued to be the principle criteria for determining work permit approvals. The shared concern of employers and planners for labor force stability was addressed by provisions expressly allowing workers to transfer from one employer to another, provided that the original employer agreed and that the worker had been employed for at least a year. By releasing the original employer from financial responsibility for repatriation if he agreed to the transfer, the provision served as an incentive for employers to agree to such transfers. By limiting dependents' employment to those in residence prior to 13 January 1979, the Order gave the private sector continued access to this labor pool, granted the "older" group of migrants a benefit not accorded to newcomers, and at the same time took steps to discourage settlement by any future migrants who might be dependent upon more than one income.

On the side of control, the Order reintroduced the requirement that migrants hold work permits prior to entry, took steps to forestall falsification of educational qualifications, and reasserted prohibitions against "labor agency" by the private sector. By requiring submission of

the newly defined declaration and undertaking, which made explicit the employer's responsibility for the worker and entailed disclosure of the employment contract, the Order held employers explicitly accountable for their migrant labor force. Where, previously, employer's infractions of the law and its implementing regulations had been punishable only by negligible fines, the Order now gave the Ministry authority to "hold the file" of an employer who failed to comply with any one of a number of provisions. This was a new era in the relations between government and the private sector.

The Order also reflected new patterns of relations between the Ministries of Interior and Social Affairs and Labour. By omitting any requirement that a character reference be submitted as a precondition for issuance of the work permit, and by omitting any explicit reference to required coordination between Interior and Labour, the Order effected a de jure "de-linking" of the two ministries. Yet, in the strength and explicitness of controls over the employment of migrants, in the careful interlocking of these with provisions governing entry and departure, there was evident a new coincidence of interest between them.

In summary, then, the fifth policy period was characterized by efforts to increase control and regulation of the labor market without significantly deterring immigration itself.

Manpower considerations were still dominant. One outcome was a well articulated system of work permit registration. The fact that it was the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour that took initiative on this score bespoke its "coming of age" among Kuwait's bureaucratic actors. Whether encouraged by government or not, tensions among migrant groups increased as the absolute number of different groups increased and their relative shares of the labor market changed. Differences between migrants and Kuwaitis were also exacerbated by social policies. By 1979, in response to a considered set of economic and political choices, Kuwait had evolved a fairly complex and smoothly functioning set of migration policies, undergirded by a consistently discriminatory set of social policies. In this mix were the elements of demographic and cultural explosion.

### 3.7 Political and Cultural Security: 1980-1983.

The economic context of the fifth period was variable; that of the sixth phase was volatile. Following the 1979 oil price rise, Kuwait's economic indicators jumped dramatically. By 1981, however, demand for oil began to slacken, worldwide recession was setting in, and oil prices started their precipitous decline. In 1982, Kuwait's economy was dealt an additional blow with the collapse of Suq al-Manakh.

Demographically, the effects of the immigration boom during the late 1970s were evident in the results of the 1980 census. Although Kuwaitis had in fact numbered less than 50 percent of the population since the mid 1960s, the 1980 census provided clear evidence of what many Kuwaitis had come to feel: they were increasingly "a minority in their own land". The changing national composition of the population added a new aspect to this feeling: the proportion of Asians in the total population had grown and so had the proportion of non-Muslims.

Politically, regional events now began to intrude upon the domestic scene with an immediacy that differed markedly from the late 1960s and early 1970s, when the locus of conflicts had been at least at some geographical distance.

Internal politics became more sober and complex as regional events exacerbated confessional cleavages and conservative factions gained new political force.

By late 1979, regional political events produced new expressions of unrest and insecurity in Kuwait. In February 1979, the Shah left Iran and the Ayatollah Khomeini returned from years of exile to lead Iran's Islamic Revolution. Barely six months later, Kuwaiti Shia (by then estimated to number between 30-35% of the national population) were holding mass demonstrations in support of Iran's new regime.\* In November, the region was rocked by the attack on the mosque at Mecca, which reportedly included four Kuwaitis. Internal security incidents added to the sense of seige: between May and July 1980, Iran Air offices in Kuwait were bombed, KOC's London offices and the offices of the pro-government newspaper al-Rai al-Am were attacked, and a Kuwait Airways jet was highjacked. With the onset of the Iran-Iraq war in September 1980, armed conflict was at Kuwait's borders.

---

\* See Crystal (p. 219ff.) for discussion of this period. She argues that, earlier, the Amir had encouraged politicization of the Shia population as a force to balance both merchants and progressives. In the events leading up to the September demonstrations, the Shia community at first concentrated on religious demands but rapidly turned to expressions of political support for Iran. The September demonstrations were followed by a November rally in front of the U.S. Embassy. Crystal and a number of other observers estimate the Shia population of Kuwait at about one-third of total population. Bill's estimate is 24 percent; see James A. Bill, "Resurgent Islam in the Persian Gulf," Foreign Affairs, No. 63107, Fall 1984, p. 120.

The government responded swiftly with a crackdown on undocumented workers, expelling some 18,000.\* By April of 1980, the Ministry of Interior had instituted an ongoing campaign to round up and deport illegal workers.\*\* Even legal workers were affected: work permit renewals for Iranians dropped from 11,000 in 1978 to 4,000 in 1980.\*\*\*

Although security concerns motivated these actions, they were undertaken in a manner that continued to take cognizance of Kuwait's manpower needs. Interior and Labour now moved together to balance these two objectives. While Interior "raised the costs" to migrants who remained illegal by increasing deportations, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour offered undocumented workers an attractive alternative by taking steps to encourage their legalization. In October 1980, Labour imposed a temporary ban on the issuance of new work permits, "with the express intention of encouraging the employment of clandestine workers and their transfer to the 'legal' economy."\*\*\*\* In a related move, Labour put pressure on employers to absorb these workers by changing work permit procedures significantly, abandoning the "Quota System" under which foreign contractors had been allowed to recruit workers

---

\* MEED, 30 May 1980, cited in Crystal, p. 222.

\*\* Seccombe, dissertation, p. 257, n. 25.

\*\*\* Seccombe, op. cit., p. 214, Figure 5-2.

\*\*\*\* Seccombe, op. cit., p. 209.

directly from abroad, within allocated "block quotas". Under the new regulations, all unskilled workers were required to be recruited from within Kuwait, while requests for skilled workers required individual approval from the Ministry.\*

While security incidents prompted immediate efforts to ensure greater control over the migrant worker population, results of the 1980 census raised broader issues. The census results shocked the Kuwaitis. Although nationals had in fact been fewer than 50 percent of the population as from 1965, their proportion had held constant at about 47 percent through the 1975 census, largely as a consequence of the Bedouin naturalizations. By 1980, however, the proportion of Kuwaitis had dropped precipitously to 41.65 percent of the total population. The average annual rate of growth among Kuwaitis during the preceding five years had been 3.96 percent (close to a natural rate of increase), while the number of expatriates had grown at an average annual rate of 8.7 percent in the same period. Not all of the population growth among non-Kuwaitis was a result of migration, of course. Total fertility rates were high among the sizable population of "settled" migrants and the numbers they contributed to natural increase were nearly as large as the numbers contributed by Kuwaitis

---

\* MEED 26 September 1980, p. 32, and 10 October 1980, p. 38, cited in Seccombe. pp. 257 and 209.



themselves.\* However, net migration and naturalization were estimated to account for nearly 43 percent of total population growth between 1975 and 1980.\*\*

The dwindling proportion of nationals was of general concern to Kuwaitis. The ethnic and religious heterogeneity of the migrants sparked different concerns among different observers. The concerns which Arab migrants had begun to express with the first large wave of Asian migrants in 1977 were both vindicated and intensified by the 1980 census results. Since the previous census in 1975, the number of Asians had more than doubled; they had risen from 9.8 percent of the total population to a full 15 percent. Arab writers and teachers argued that Asians were threatening the Arab culture. There were suggestions that the Asians posed a physical threat as well: rumors circulated that those coming (especially the Koreans) were really military people, ready to serve as advance forces for the United States in case the U.S. wanted to take a military position in the Gulf. Whether the rumors were true or not, Arab migrants were clearly concerned about "their share" of the labor market. Liberal Kuwaitis (including Arab Nationalists), who had previously been able

---

\* State of Kuwait, Annual Statistical Abstract 1984, Kuwait: Ministry of Planning, Central Statistical Office, pp. 63-64, Tables 45 and 46.

\*\* Ibid, p. 63, Table 44. Natural increase added 210,865 to total population; net migration added 120,272; naturalizations added 37,185 (Tables 44 and 34).

to take a position in support of "migrants" and in opposition to discrimination against them, were now faced with an ethnic cleavage in the migrant community and pressures to discriminate themselves. The moral ground of their argument was beginning to shift.

For the religious conservatives, the migrants represented a different kind of threat. The 1980 census had also revealed changes in the religious composition of Kuwait, at the very time Muslim religious identity was emerging as a political force at home and throughout the region. The number of Christians had nearly doubled between 1975 and 1980--from 44,718 to 87,080; the numbers belonging to other non-Muslim religions had increased more than five-fold in the same period: from 5,338 to 28,161.\* For both Sunni and Shia conservatives, the religious and secular practices of non-Muslims challenged fundamental tenets of Islam.

Although the unity of "the Muslim Nation" was itself challenged by the tensions between Sunni and Shia in Kuwait and regionally (especially following the onset of the Iran-Iraq war), the cross-ethnic and cross-national nature of Islamic belief meant that in the view of those for whom religious issues were most salient, the Arab-Asian division within the migrant community was not the most meaningful line of distinction. There was a sizable Iranian community in Kuwait, as well as a smaller but long-standing Pakistani

---

\* Annual Statistical Abstract 1984, p. 26, Table 11.

community.\* There were even reportedly about 500 Korean Muslims working in Kuwait.\*\*

These differing views toward the immigration situation were soon to become a topic for open debate once again. As domestic and regional tensions mounted, government took steps to channel rising internal dissent by reconvening the National Assembly, suspended since 1976. Now, Crown Prince Saad appointed a Constitutional Review Committee to prepare for restoration of the Assembly; in August 1980, a month before the onset of the Gulf war, it was announced that elections would be held the following February.

Among the legacies of earlier [policy] choices was the institution of the Assembly. In a moment of crisis, the government reacted in an historically reliable way. It broadened its support base and tried to encourage a rift between Kuwaiti nationals and expatriates....The Assembly was another attempt to strike a deal with the public--to tolerate internal dissent in exchange for excluding discussion of foreign issues....The campaign was lively. A variety of issues emerged, among them the revolution and Gulf war, social and public services, women's suffrage, investment policy, and expatriates. The main factions were merchants, beduin, Arab Nationalists, and religious conservatives, Shia and Sunni.\*

Expatriates had been an issue in every campaign since the institution of the Assembly in the 1960s. While, each

---

\* As of the 1975 census, there were more than 40,000 Iranians and over 23,000 Pakistanis in Kuwait. See Table 4.3. With the 1980 census, the government ceased publishing details of the non-Kuwaiti population by nationality, a reflection of the sensitivity that nationality had come to assume.

\*\* Muslim News, Vol. II, No. 1, November 1981, p. 13.

\* Crystal, pp. 223-225.

time, progressive forces could be seen to support migrants and conservatives to oppose them, both the focus of the issues and the alignments of the factions in the debate underwent subtle shifts. In the mid-sixties, concern had focused on migrants as security risks, with conservatives arguing for tighter controls while the Arab Nationalist opposition argued for liberal policies toward their Arab brothers. By the mid-seventies, focus had shifted to the rights of migrants relative to those of Kuwaitis; Liberals argued for an end to discrimination and inclusion of migrants' demands in the Assembly's political agenda, while conservatives--Kuwaiti Nationalists, including newly enfranchised Bedouin--implicated migrants in rising crime rates and unemployment. Now, restitution of the Assembly brought the issue of political integration into the open for consideration by an increasingly conservative parliament.

The February 1981 elections were a conservative victory, with tribal leaders taking 23 out of 50 seats. Among the religious conservatives, the Sunni candidates won, but the Shia vote had been successfully split by redistricting, leaving them only four seats. The Arab Nationalist Movement candidates were defeated. The role of "opposition" now passed from progressives to religious conservatives.\*

---

\* Crystal, pp. 225-226.

The long-range consequences of previous migration policies, underscored by the census results, now sparked Assembly debate over the fact that

more than half of the population is effectively disenfranchised because of their lack of Kuwaiti citizenship. This is particularly resented by segments of the Palestinian and Iranian communities, as well as by other Arabs in Kuwait, many of whom have lived in the country for two or three generations. The elections to the assembly itself only involved voting by about 43,000 electors, a figure that contrasts sharply with the total size of the population.\*

Even before restitution of the Assembly, government had moved to respond to the results of the 1980 census, in the context of continuing administrative reform. While from government's point of view the growing number of Asians may have had some political advantages, the drop in the number of Kuwaitis was another matter. With the rate of natural increase among Kuwaitis already approaching its feasible maximum, and the prospect that drastic cuts in the immigrant population would entail severe political and economic costs, increased naturalization had to be considered as a serious option, much as it was in 1965. Indeed, the number of naturalizations had been gradually but steadily increasing since reaching a low in 1977.\*\* Given the reemerging importance of the naturalization option, the census results contained some pertinent facts: despite recent efforts to reduce settlement, nearly a third of non-Kuwaitis had been resident for 10 years or more;

---

\* Middle East Review 1983, p. 189.

\*\* Annual Statistical Abstract 1984, p. 49, Table 34.

nearly 16 percent had been resident for 15 years or more.\* In accordance with existing provisions of the Nationality Law, this meant that a significant number of non-Kuwaitis were eligible for naturalization.

In changes to the Nationality Law enacted by Amiri Decree with Law 100 of 1980, government now moved--with a characteristic mix of rigor and flexibility--simultaneously to broaden and delimit the naturalization options.\*\* Under Article 4, concerning ordinary naturalization, the required period of residency for Arabs was extended from 10 to 15 years and that for non-Arabs from 15 to 20 years.\*\*\* The clause which stated that an applicant "must be able to provide services needed by the country" was altered to include the provision that he will provide such services.

The paragraph of Article 4 that had limited strictly the number of naturalizations to 50 per year was now replaced by a statement that the number of persons to be naturalized was "limited according to the provisions of this law."

---

\* See Table 3-3.

\*\* The following section is based upon the text of Law 100 of 1980, the attached Clarifying Memorandum, and notes to Amiri Decree No. 15 of 1959, as amended through 1980.

\*\*\* According to The Economist Intelligence Unit, No. 3, 1986, Country Report: Kuwait, p. 5, "One of the last regular items passed by the assembly [before its dissolution by the Amir on July 3, 1986] was to restrict the franchise further by imposing a thirty year residency requirement for naturalization rather than the 20 years previously required."

Precise numbers were not specified. Rather, in a related change, responsibility for setting the numerical limit was now vested in the Council of Ministers. As the Memorandum clarifying Law 100 explained, these changes facilitated consideration of "the country's needs from year to year".

Article 5 had always allowed for exceptional naturalization (over and above any numerical limits) of those who had provided honorable service, and sons of Kuwaiti mothers under certain circumstances. Since 1966, Arabs resident before 1945 and non-Arabs before 1930 (as well as decendants of both) were also allowed exceptional naturalization within unspecified numerical limits. Since 1972, stateless persons who had been born in Kuwait and completed high school there had also been eligible for exceptional naturalization. Law 100 made several changes to Article 5.

First, authority to grant exceptional naturalizations was now put "at the discretion of the Minister of Interior". The Council of Ministers included members from outside the ruling family. The Minister of Interior was always from al-Sabah. Secondly, the article concerning stateless persons born in Kuwait was "eliminated because of potential harm in it perceived by the Council of Ministers", as the Clarifying Memorandum explained. This should not cause hardship, the Memo noted, since applicants could still seek

naturalization under Article 4. Thirdly, the new law required all those who wished to claim citizenship by virtue of their descent from those who inhabited Kuwait before 1920 (Article 1), or from those long-time residents covered by Article 5, should request naturalization within one year following promulgation of Law 100.

The Law provided other options for retrieving citizens. Previously, a Kuwaiti woman who married a foreigner was required to take her husband's nationality if the law of his country permitted. Now, Law 100 allowed her to keep her Kuwaiti citizenship. It further provided that a woman who had lost her citizenship through marriage was eligible to have it restored if she lived in Kuwait.

At the same time some of these changes served to induce naturalization, others gave government greater control over the behavior of those naturalized: the period of time within which their citizenship could be revoked for dishonorable behavior was extended from 5 to 10 years.

In summary, changes to the Nationality Law introduced by Law 100 favored naturalization of (or restitution of citizenship to) those with long-standing ties to Kuwait; simultaneously, they forestalled naturalization of both stateless people and relative newcomers. By giving the Council of Ministers authority to set numerical limits for



ordinary naturalizations, the law introduced a new measure of flexibility. By giving the Minister of Interior discretion over exceptional naturalizations, the law ensured that the composition of the citizenry would reflect the interests of the regime.

By 1981, while security and internal political realignments dominated Kuwait's political agenda, economic concerns were also deepening. All three played a role in shaping migration policy following restoration of the Assembly.

Efforts to introduce austerity measures had begun as early as 1977, when government faced the possibility of a budget deficit.\* In fact, government surplus dropped by only KD 369 million, but this was sufficient to signal the need for changes. In 1980, after reaching a peak of KD 3,896 million the previous year, surplus dropped by KD 1,867 million; in 1981, expenditures exceeded revenues and Kuwait registered a budget deficit.\*\* Now, the 1982-83 budget projected a 42% decline in oil revenues, as world demand slackened. The economic effects of the Gulf war were also beginning to be felt in the domestic economy. Kuwait's role as a center for reexport was particularly affected, with potentially long-term consequences regardless of the length or outcome of the war: Iraqui merchants had

---

\* Crystal, p. 235.

\*\* See Table 1-4.

developed their own lines of credit and Kuwaiti merchants saw dwindling potential to recapture this share of the market.

On the heels of these developments came the Manakh crisis.\* With the decline of Lebanon as the region's financial center and the simultaneous increase in financial capital resulting from the oil price increases, financial markets had moved to the Gulf and, in the course of the 1970s, Kuwait had become the investment center for the region. Government measures to control speculation on the official market provided impetus for development of an alternative known as Suq al-Manakh, after the building in which transactions took place. By the early 1980s, al-Manakh had become a house of cards.

The weakness of the market was not just that companies often existed only on paper, but also that speculation increasingly involved the widespread use of forward dealings--postdated checks carrying premiums of 25-500%. Stocks were transferred immediately against checks written two or three years in advance. The arrangement was based on trust; postdated checks had no legal status and could be cashed immediately....Share prices quickly doubled and quintupled as billions of dinars changed hands. By the end, tens of thousand of Kuwaitis were involved, from ruling family members through at least four cabinet ministers, down to newly settled beduin cab drivers and Kuwait University students.\*\*

The end came in August 1982, when someone tried to cash a postdated check. It bounced and al-Manakh crashed, leaving

---

\* See Crystal, pp. 227ff. for a fuller account of this crisis.

\*\* Crystal p. 231.

behind a rubble of claims and counter claims amounting to more than US\$ 90 billion.

In 1982, as Kuwait girded for economic austerity in the face of mounting concerns over security, steps were taken to tighten control over the migrant labor force. On the 5th of July 1982, following its ratification by the Assembly, the Amir promulgated Law No. 55 of 1982 which amended some provisions of the Aliens Residence Law.\* The new law introduced a new Article 14 (in the space left when this article of the 1959 law was repealed in 1963); and it replaced Articles 10, 15, and 24 of the original law. The measures reflected the growing tensions between manpower and security considerations.

The new Article 14 concerned private servants, codifying in law most of the provisions contained in the Ministry of Interior's Order No. 84 of 1977. Both measures stipulated that a private servant would be granted a residence permit for the period of his or her service contract or for five years, whichever was earlier. Both stipulated that the residence permit should be cancelled in the event the servant left his post and that the worker should leave the country unless he obtained a new residence permit. Yet, the new Article differed from the old Order in several respects. The 1977 Order had required issuance of a

---

\* The text of the Law on which this analysis is based is found in The Contractors' Directory, pp. 173-175.

deportation order for the servant whose residence permit was cancelled because he left his post; the employer was specifically required to bear the associated deportation and repatriation expenses. However, no time period was specified for execution of these steps. The new measure made specific reference to Article 12 of the Law, which required the alien to leave the country within a week if his residence permit had already expired. If the residence permit were still valid when the servant left his post, he was to be allowed a grace period prior to departure, the length of which was to be fixed by the Ministry of Interior but not to exceed three months. The new Article also introduced a requirement that the employer notify the Ministry of Interior within two weeks, if the servant left his post. The 1977 Order had required the employer's consent before any new residence permit could be issued. The new Article stipulated that the employer's consent had to be granted in writing and made it impermissible to employ, shelter or grant residence to any alien who lacked such consent and whose residence permit had been cancelled. In short, while the new Article did not make it impossible for servants to change employment or to remain in Kuwait, it tightened government control over this process by imposing specific time periods and an interlocking set of required permissions and by holding employers and landlords accountable for any dealings with illegal aliens.

Article 10 of the Law originally provided that an alien entering for a visit could stay for a maximum of one month without a residence permit, after which time he was required to depart or face a fine and/or imprisonment. The new Article made it mandatory for the alien to depart unless he secured a residence permit from the Ministry of Interior.

Article 15, pertaining to employees of government authorities, originally stipulated that the employee should be granted an ordinary residence permit for the entire period of service, after which he should leave within the prescribed grace period. The governmental authority was required to notify the Ministry of Interior of the termination. The new Law stipulated that the residence permit should be renewed every five or two years, as determined by the employing authority. The provisions for departure remained the same, but a new clause was added, stipulating that "the alien may not be granted a work permit for any work unless the consent of the Authority at whom he was working is secured".

These new requirements had several implications. By requiring that the residence permits be renewed periodically, the new Law resolved an ambiguity (if not a conflict) in the preexisting law, since the 1963 amendments to Article 12 had specified that residence permits were to

be for five years, even while Article 15 allowed government employees to hold permits for the entire length of their service. By limiting the validity of both work and residence permits to five years, the change thus placed expatriate government workers (most of whom were Arabs) on the same footing as other expatriate workers.

Furthermore, according to the explanatory Memorandum that accompanied the Law, by providing for even more frequent renewals (ie. every two years) and giving the government employer authority over specifying the renewal period, the Law explicitly sought to keep people from using the permit granted while they were in government service for purposes of carrying out other types of work. Implicitly, this change paved the way for either reducing government employment altogether (if cuts in budget so indicated) or for replacing expatriates with Kuwaitis as renewed pressure for "Kuwaitization" mounted.

According to the Explanatory Memorandum, the new clause requiring consent of the government employer before a worker could be granted a residence permit for any other job was introduced because the earlier version had been read and interpreted as having required these employees to leave the country upon termination of their government service before a new residence permit could be obtained. While, on the one hand this change made it easier for

long-time government employees to shift to non-government jobs without a "cosmetic" departure and return, the measure simultaneously controlled job changing within the economy and increased the employer's hold over the employee.

The new Law concluded with a revised schedule of penalties for violation of the Aliens Residence Law. Fines were increased from the earlier range of KD 75-150 to a range of KD 100-300.\* The length of the allowable prison term was raised from three to six months for violation of certain articles, and from six months to one year in the case of violation of Article 19 (failure of those deported to secure a special permit prior to return). The provision that allowed confiscation of any means of transport used for illegal entry was amended to clarify that fines would also be collected.

Security emerged as the dominant concern behind Law No.

55. The Explanatory Memorandum began,

The most prominent aspects of the State's sovereignty over its lands is the protection of its territories from any offender [who] daringly violates the said sovereignty by infiltration and residing in [it] without having secured a proper residence permit.

The Memorandum attributed the increasing number of offenders to the "simple punishment" provided for in the original law. It specifically referred to the problem of

---

\* Market rate of exchange was 1 KD = 3.47 USD in 1982; International Financial Statistics, Vol. XXXVIII, No. 1, January 1985.

private servants who leave their original employers and take new jobs, "which may result in serious social and security problems" and called attention to the new requirement that employers notify the Ministry of Interior when a servant leaves his post.

Yet, once again, the authorities had struck a careful balance between the competing objectives of security and manpower supply. The new Law left open the option to retain expatriate workers who observed the legalities of entry and residence. At the same time, it gave the government a new multiplicity of points at which to intervene and choose the option to reduce the expatriate population.

The changes in the Aliens Residence Law were followed swiftly by a terse Order from Interior launching an intensified campaign to document illegal aliens and forestall entry of dissidents. Ministerial Order No. 262, issued on September 6, 1982, contained two brief articles: the first gave any aliens who had overstayed their residence permits (as well as any servants and employers who had violated provisions of the Law) a maximum of two months to regularize their situation with the Ministry. The second article provided that any who failed to apply to the Ministry within the grace period would be subject to the penalties specified in the new law.\*

---

\* Ministerial Order No. 262 of 1982, text in Contractors' Directory, pp. 170-171.



New measures were brought to bear on those seeking to gain entry to Kuwait as well. The Ministry introduced a requirement that entry permits issued after September 5th be accompanied by an "endorsement" from a Kuwaiti Embassy or Consulate. Those applying for entry from countries without these facilities could obtain endorsements from the Department of Passports, Nationality, and Residence after producing good health and conduct certificates.\*

Even family reunification was affected. In September, restrictions were imposed on visits by relatives of expatriates residing in Kuwait, as well as by those seeking to enter on private visits.\*\* In a separate but related ruling, government limited the granting of family visas to workers whose monthly salary was greater than KD 400, effectively making it impossible for all but a fraction of the expatriates to bring their dependents.

Government issued a special appeal to the private sector. Under a headline reading, "Ministry of Interior urges: 'Report cases of illegal residents; Help us speed exodus; '--plea to businessmen", the authorities urged the business community to cooperate with the Department of Passports, Nationality and Residence before the end of the grace period (which had been extended to December 31st).

---

\* Arab Times, November 16, 1982.

\*\* Arab Times, September 27, 1982.

The crackdown was characterised as a measure to maintain "peace and security in Kuwait", as well as a means of regulating the number of workers entering the country.\*

By November of 1982, the Department reported that it had granted residence permits to 4,586 Arabs and 4,994 non-Arabs; 20,070 illegal entrants and 5,525 people who had overstayed their permits had left Kuwait. By the end of the grace period, the number of departures was estimated to have reached 30,000, creating rippling contractions throughout the economy.\*\*

Concern within the Arab expatriate community was deep. Shortly after announcement of the deadline for residence violators, al-Watan newspaper issued an appeal to "stop the exodus of Arab workers". The paper cautioned that the Arabs would be replaced by Asians and called for increased inter-Arab coordination and cooperation concerning work force requirements for Arab countries.\*\*\* Subsequent news reports kept the public apprised of the effects of the measures on Arab groups. In November, there were reports that "only a small number" of Egyptians had been affected by the new residence rules. Approximately 4,000 Syrian illegals (out of an estimated 50-60,000 Syrians in Kuwait)

---

\* Arab Times, November 16, 1982.

\*\* Abdulrasool al-Moosa and Keith McLachlan, Immigrant Labour in Kuwait, London: Croom Helm 1985, pp. 9-11.

\*\*\* Arab Times, October 2, 1982.

were reported to have left following announcement of the government's deadline. While an equal number of Egyptians were reported to have left, these were a smaller fraction of all Egyptians in the country.\* For all of 1982, it was estimated that residence permits for government employment dropped by 8,000, with Egyptians, Yemenis, and Palestinians being most affected.\*\*

As a result of the campaign's efforts to assure that any remaining aliens were properly documented, the number of work permits issued in 1983 actually rose. First time work permits increased by 25 percent, from 68,799 to 86,075; renewals increased by more than 22 percent, from 85,914 to 105,267. There was a drop in the number of cancellations and transfers to other jobs, but only by 3,849 (from 14,772 to 10,923); the number of final cancellations and departures increased by less than 4 percent, from 20,952 to 21,773.\*\*\* In short, there was a net addition of 64,302 registered expatriate workers.

---

\* Arab Times, November 3, 1982.

\*\* Arab Times, August 21, 1983. Among government employees, only Pakistanis experienced an increase, primarily for laboring jobs.

\*\*\* Calculations based upon Annual Statistical Abstract 1985, Table 142, p. 144. These increases may also have resulted in part from better recordkeeping: in 1981, a computerized system for recording No Objection Certificates was introduced. In 1983, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour computerized its work permit records as well. (Ministry of Information, Yearbook 1983, p. 272.)

Although their Arab Nationalist supporters had been defeated in the elections, the expatriate Arab community now found some of their concerns addressed (albeit indirectly) by the religious conservative members of the National Assembly. For the conservatives, the "expatriate issue" devolved not only on matters of security and manpower supply, but on the fundamental character of the society. If Kuwait was to be a heterogenous society, they wanted it to be Arab and Muslim. As one student expressed the concern,

...an inordinate size of foreign labour force has been introduced into the country of Kuwait. Its faster rate of growth will threaten the existence of the identity of Kuwait society. Moreover, since that foreign labour force is composed of different cultures and nationalities, the social interaction and social integration might be difficult, if not impossible, among that work force.\*\*

Among the first acts of the new Assembly was passage of Law No. 1 of 1982 amending the Nationality Law to restrict naturalization to Muslims, a requirement that extended to applicants for both ordinary and exceptional naturalizations. In May 1982, the Assembly's Interior Defense Committee recommended that Muslim Arabs who had worked in Kuwait for at least twenty years be granted permanent residence.\*\* Efforts to have sharia law recognized as "the" rather than "a" main source of

---

\* Bader Raheem al-Daihani, "The Danger of Heavy Dependency Upon Expatriate Labour Force in Kuwait," Masters Thesis (Public Administration) Pacific Lutheran University, 1983. Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, p. 25

\*\* Seccombe dissertation, p. 232.

legislation was vetoed by the Amir, but the Assembly succeeded in voting down women's suffrage, in banning alcohol, and in restricting the public display of Christian observances.\* By 1983, concerns about the role of migrants in the social fabric of Kuwaiti life were being reflected in another round of studies and workshops as well. The Ministry of Planning undertook a study concerning the influence of foreign domestics on families and society in Kuwait\*\*. The Arab Planning Institute and the Center for Arab Unity Studies held a symposium on "Foreign Manpower in the Arab Gulf States" that included papers on "The Social Influence of Foreign Nannies" and "The Consequences of Foreign Labor on Social Integration".\*\*\* Participants took the opportunity at several points to stress that "foreign" meant "non-Arab", especially in the social realm.

But while Arabs could effectively distinguish themselves from Asians when it came to measuring non-monetary social

---

\* Crystal (dissertation, p. 226-227) goes on to note that "Islamists took over the student union [previously held for years by students sympathetic with the Arab Nationalist Movement], the teachers union, half the elected cooperative council seats, 3 of the 10 Municipality seats, and many of the 43 clubs. The government responded to the Islamist tone by taking a more Islamist posture itself, tightening the ban on alcohol, increasing religious broadcasting, and supporting the Kuwait Finance House, Kuwait's first Islamic Bank."

\*\* Kuwait Ministry of Information, Yearbook, 1983, p. 125 (Arabic).

\*\*\* Nader Fergany, ed., Foreign Manpower in The Arab Gulf States: Research and Proceedings of the Symposium, sponsored by the Center for Arab Unity Studies in Cooperation with The Arab Planning Institute, held 15-18 January 1983, Beirut: Center for Arab Unity Studies, August 1983. (Arabic)

costs, the economic costs of social services associated with maintaining the migrant community as a whole were another matter. Long a topic of grumbling concern among some Kuwaitis, the cost of social services became a major focus as the economic situation worsened. By 1982-83, expenditures for public education had risen to 8 percent of government expenditure and Non-Kuwaiti students accounted for 49.7 percent of all students in government schools.\* For several years, government had been limiting the expansion of free public education, a measure reflected in continued growth in enrollments at private schools.\*\* Now, in 1983, government stopped distributing school uniforms and free meals.\*\*\*

The health sector was also affected. In May 1982, the Ministry of Health announced that fees would have to be introduced for previously "free" medical services.\*\*\*\* Public reaction, reportedly mainly from non-Kuwaitis, was vociferously negative and the measure was never implemented, but the publicity surrounding the proposal helped to focus attention on the economic costs surrounding continued provision of social services to non-Kuwaitis.

---

\* Annual Statistical Abstract 1984, Tables 258, 214.

\*\* Ibid, Table 263. Enrollments at private schools grew by 12.5% between 1981-82, as compared with 6.6% the previous year.

\*\*\* Al-Moosa and McLachlan, p. 31.

\*\*\*\* Seccombe, p. 230.

There was even debate on a proposal to set aside 50 percent of all hospital beds for Kuwaitis.\*

Concern over the costs associated with the migrant workforce were further reflected in efforts to calculate these in quantifiable terms. One member of the National Assembly estimated that continuing to allow entry of workers' dependents would require

additional jobs on the order of 14 in the educational sector, 125 in health services, 135 in security services, 167 in housekeeping and 112 in repair and maintenance services for each 10,000 immigrants.\*\*

The Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences and the University of Kuwait jointly sponsored a field study that included specific estimates of the financial costs to Kuwait of the foreign workforce and attempted to balance these against benefits deriving from the presence of non-Kuwaitis, including their contribution to national income. Although interpretation of the results was deemed "open to speculation", the effort reflected the depth and nature of mounting concerns over the immigrant population.\*\*\*

---

\* Author's interviews. The proposal, put forward by a former speaker of the National Assembly, was frequently cited as an example of the extremes to which public sentiment had moved.

\*\* Kuwait Chamber of Commerce, "Background Information Paper." prepared for Tripartite Inter-Regional Round Table on International Migration (Arab and Asian Countries), Bangkok, Thailand, 17-20 September 1984, p. 4.

\*\*\* Calculation of these estimates formed part of the terms of reference of the study undertaken by al-Moosa and McLachlan and reported in their book, Immigrant Labour in Kuwait, pp. 94ff. and 118ff.

In summary, the sixth phase in the evolution of Kuwait's migration policy was marked by the reemergence of security concerns. These did not outweigh concerns for maintaining manpower supply, but they brought about a new equilibrium between the two. Neither the security situation or Kuwait's declining economic circumstances resulted in mass repatriation of immigrant workers. Actual deportations were limited to illegal aliens, while other security measures focused on heading off the entry of subversives. As it tightened control over resident aliens, however, government positioned itself to effect reductions in manpower supply, if future circumstances were to warrant. The changes to the Nationality Law, and the sense of social and cultural seige they reflected, signalled that socio-political, as well as economic factors would play a role in the future of immigration to Kuwait.



### 3.8 Population Balance: 1984-1985.

As Kuwait moved into the seventh phase of migration policy evolution, economic conditions continued to decline. Government revenues dropped further below expenditures and the country sustained spending only by drawing down on reserves. Demographically, the rate of growth of the non-Kuwaiti population slowed but remained higher than that of the Kuwaiti population. The official results of the 1985 census placed the proportion of Kuwaitis at barely 40 percent of the total population.

In the political arena, the mood was sober. The Manakh crisis had touched Kuwait to the quick. As the search for a "just resolution" went on, Kuwaitis questioned not only the proper role of government in bringing about that resolution, but also the underlying values--the orientation to "quick profits"--that were seen to be at the root of the crisis in the first place. Government's handling of the oil price decline and the need to reform the bureaucracy were among other issues that focused public attention on the need for a clearly defined policy that would guide Kuwait's social as well as economic development. In this context, concern over the links between economic choice and the social foundations of society converged most pointedly on the issue of migration.

New security incidents now deepened and intensified reaction to the immigrant community. Summarizing the mood during 1984, the U.S. Human Rights Report observed,

The role of Kuwait's security organizations increased substantially in 1984, particularly with regard to the non-citizen community. Conscious of being a minority in their own country, the Kuwaitis' sense of vulnerability has been heightened by increased political turbulence in the region. Foreign-inspired terrorism (such as the December 1983 bombings of Kuwaiti installations and the American and French embassies and the hijacking of a Kuwaiti airways flight to Iran in December 1984) and attempts by agents of foreign governments and organizations to subvert elements of the population have led to tightened security measures and legal restrictions on public gatherings and dissemination of "subversive" literature. Increased attention to law and order is also viewed by some Kuwaitis as a means to protect their society against the threat they perceive to Kuwaiti moral and social values from the large foreign population. Since the December 1983 bombings, security organizations have assiduously applied regulations governing expatriate presence in Kuwait. Consequently, larger numbers of non-Kuwaitis have been deported than in past years.\*

In addition, the report noted that roadblocks and spot checks of expatriate gatherings (particularly of South Asians) were being carried out by police in an effort to head off any further subversive activity.

---

\* U.S. Congress, Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate and Committee on Foreign Affairs, United States House of Representatives, "Human Rights Report for Kuwait-1984," in Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1984, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, February 1985, pp. 1-2.

The 1982 crackdown and subsequent deportation campaign had affected primarily those who had entered or remained in Kuwait illegally. There was no evidence that the campaign sought to do more than simply legalize the status of all resident aliens and ensure their political quiescence. By 1984, however, there were clear calls for outright reductions in the non-Kuwaiti labor force. Indeed, in the aftermath of the December bombings, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior reportedly announced that government was determined to end its policy of permitting the entry of foreign labor, and that a committee had been formed to assess the necessity of each foreign employee.\*

The mood in Kuwait was shared by other labor-receiving governments of the Gulf. Within the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), founded in 1981 to facilitate cooperation among member states on a wide range of economic, social, and political issues, migration had emerged by 1984 as a

---

\* Financial Times, January 13, 1984, cited in al-Moosa and McLachlan, p. 135, n. 9. According to the "Human Rights Report for Kuwait-1984" p. 7, the government was characteristically careful to provide assurances to the Palestinian community. Undocumented Palestinians and (beginning in 1984) those with Lebanese documentation received commitments from the government that they would be permitted to stay even without sponsors. These provisions were particularly important as Lebanon had stopped renewing passports for Palestinians in 1982. Kuwait continued to renew the necessary permits on the strength of the old travel documents, although they would no longer admit new entrants carrying only the laissez passer.

\*\* Members include the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, and Kuwait.

prominent topic. GCC Secretary General Abdullah Bishara termed "the population problem" induced by migration to be "the greatest problem facing the Council". \* In their April 1984 meeting, the GCC Ministers of Labour and Social Affairs explicitly recognized "the necessity of creating a Gulf apparatus to supervise the movement of non-GCC Arab labour in the region in a way to best serve both the GCC and labour-supplying states". \*\* In their meeting the following year, the labour ministers reviewed findings of a study commissioned to propose ways of unifying regulations governing the importation of manpower, established a committee to prepare specific recommendations on the subject, and reached agreement on coordinated measures to "protect the rights of migrants and their dependents". \*\*\*

Migration was not treated as a matter solely within the purview of ministers of labour, whose work proceeded under the Council's Man and Environment Affairs Sector.

According to Dr. Ebrahim Homood al-Subhi, Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs, the issue of migration and migrants had come to form part of the programme of work of the Political Affairs Sector as well.

---

\* Al-Mujtama', Vol. 15, No. 668, April 24, 1984, p. 17.

\*\* Kuwait News Agency, Special Dossier on the Occasion of the Fifth Gulf Cooperation Council Summit Conference in Kuwait, November 1984, p. 126.

\*\*\* Gulf Cooperation Council, "Decisions of the Third Meeting of the Ministers of Labour and Social Affairs in the GCC Member Countries, General Assembly 6th of May, [1985] Riyadh," GCC Information Department, Riyadh.

In 1984, member states began to consult collectively, through the GCC, with some Asian labor-exporting countries. By 1985, in an effort to reduce perceived political and security risks associated with migration, member states had begun to establish mechanisms to share information about individual workers.\*

In Kuwait, within two months after the December 1983 bombings and barely a month after Interior's call for new limits on immigration, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour issued Ministerial Order No. 77 of 1984, replacing the regulations issued under Ministerial Order No. 37 of 1979.\*\*

The new regulations incorporated most of the provisions of the earlier Order, but with some subtle and notable changes. Before being permitted to engage non-Kuwaitis, employers were still required to submit a copy of their Ministry of Commerce and Industry permit to operate and a signature specimen signed by a Kuwaiti. In addition to the required submission of the job contract for which a worker was being sought, however, employers were now required to specify the address of the firm's home office and its

---

\* Author's interviews, May 8, 1985, Riyadh. See also Middle East Times, 6-8 October 1985, p. 1.

\*\* Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, Ministerial Order No. 77 for 1984 Concerning Work Permits for non-Kuwaitis in the Private Sector, published in al-Kuwait al-Youm, No. 1531, February 2, 1984.

various branches, a move aimed at preventing entry of those with undesirable affiliations abroad. The requirement that employers provide a list of all workers, together with particulars about each, was dropped. The requirement that the employer notify the Ministry of any changes in the necessary documentation or else face having his transactions with the Ministry suspended was carried over to the new regulations.

The documentation required with the application for the work permit was essentially unchanged: a copy of the worker's educational or experience qualifications, a copy of his visa, and the signature of the employer. The criteria for issuance of the work permit were simplified: consistency of the workers' job with the employer's type of activity and future plans were the main factors to be considered; there was no mention in the new Order of "the local market's need for the worker in question" as there had been in 1979.

The new Order continued to oblige employers to engage the worker for whom a permit had been requested.\* However, penalties for violation of this provision were modified; there was no mention of the fines allowable under the 1979 Order. Rather, in the event of violations, the Ministry

---

\* It remained permissible for employers to assign workers to subcontractors.

would simply not issue any new work permits to the employer.

The 1964 Labor Law expressly prohibited employers from engaging non-Kuwaiti workers unless the expatriates held valid work permits or were "at least registered with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour".\* Yet, while this prohibition had been clearly implied in the language of the 1979 Ministerial Order, it had not been expressly reasserted. The new Order stated flatly that it was forbidden for an employer to engage workers who had no work permits. There was no mention of "registration with the Ministry" as an alternative option. Furthermore, the new Order prohibited employment of those who held permits for another job. If an employer violated these provisions, the permits of the workers in question would be considered invalid and the workers would be returned to their countries at the expense of the violating employer. In addition, the Ministry reserved the right to suspend granting the employer any work permits for a period of three months or until correction of the violation.

The article pertaining to the "declaration and undertaking" continued to require presentation of the worker's travel papers, among other documents. However, while the old Order had required a copy of the work permit

---

\* Law No. 38 of 1964, Article 3, Contractors' Directory, p. 221.

stamped by the border authorities only, the new order required that the work permit be signed by the worker's embassy as well, to verify his identity and screen out known dissidents.

The 1979 Ministerial Order had not specified the period of validity for work permits issued to those employed in the private sector, although again the Labor Law spoke to this point: work permits were to be valid for two years, renewable annually.\*. The new Order not only reasserted this provision, it also stipulated that the Ministry had the option not to renew the work permit if it found reason not to do so.

Law No. 55 of 1982 (which modified the Aliens Residence Law to regulate the granting of residence permits to private servants) had effectively permitted servants to change employment by allowing them to change the basis of their residence permit, albeit under tight controls. Domestic servants were not subject to application of the 1964 Labor Law, but once they sought to move into the regular labor market, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour might rightly claim jurisdiction. Accordingly, the 1984 Order provided that "non-related dependents" such as nannies or other servants would be permitted to work in the general labor force, if the supporter agreed and if the dependent had been resident in Kuwait for at least one year.

---

\* Law No. 38 of 1964, Article 5.



Job changing by other types of expatriate workers had been addressed by the 1979 Order in the article specifying limits to an employer's obligation to repatriate a worker.\* The new Order addressed job changing directly, in a separate article. It was made explicit that job changing was permissible, with the employer's agreement, after one year of service, and with the submission of documentation that included the worker's visa and identification document; copies of the old and new work contracts; and the signature of the employer. The Order also permitted the Ministry to authorize a worker's transfer to another employer (without resorting to the old employer) if the worker had been hired locally, if the work contract were no longer valid, if the worker had "due cause" to leave his employer, if the company had stopped producing, or if the employment relationship had been deemed no longer feasible for legal reasons. Otherwise, if the employer failed to agree to a transfer while the employee continued to insist upon it, the employer was obliged to release the worker but the latter was then required to return to his country at his own expense. In any other circumstances, unless the employee's work contract specified his right to transfer to another job, the employer remained responsible for the costs of

---

\* According to Article 11, the employer was not obliged to pay for repatriation of a worker if that worker requested to change jobs, provided that the employer agreed to the change and that the worker had spent at least a full year in the employer's service.

repatriating the worker and for submitting documents proving his departure.

Overall, the new Order reflected compromise with the private sector on some points: it simplified the documentation requirements (eg. by not requiring a list of all an employer's workers) and removed mention of fines as a penalty for violations. The measure also contained some provisions likely to find favor with long-time expatriate residents. The new order omitted limits on the employment of related dependents, which had appeared in the 1979 regulations. Further, it explicitly permitted job changing and limited the ability of employers to stand in the way of transfers by locally hired employees.

At the same time, the Order was direct and strongly worded in prohibiting employment of those without work permits or those with permits for other jobs. Nor did the omission of fines signal any real leniency on the part of the Ministry; the Labor Law itself provided for the imposition of fines, if the Ministry ever saw need to levy them, and the ability to suspend transactions with an employer was viewed by the Ministry as a more effective tool for bringing about compliance than fines had ever been.\* The requirement that the work permit be signed by the worker's embassy was introduced to provide assurances that the

---

\* Author's interviews.

applicant was who he claimed to be. This was consistent with the perception among expatriates that (as had been the practice in the 1950s) the Kuwaiti Ministry of Interior was cooperating with its counterparts in the labor-sending countries to verify the worker's identity and to certify that he was not a security risk.

The announcement that the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour might not renew work permits, even if presented with all the required documentation, represented a new, stiffer stance on the part of the Ministry and put the private sector on notice that the government reserved the right to clamp down.

In summary, the 1984 Order modified the policy framework to further enable reductions in the rates of immigration. The measure asserted government's right not to renew the permits of workers deemed to be unneeded, but allowed labor mobility among those who remained. Its provisions, like those of the Ministry of Interior concerning residence, supported a government-wide effort to maintain tight control over the immigrant workforce.

For all this, however, the 1984 Order looked increasingly like an exercise in tinkering at the margins of the problem. Indeed, by 1985, given the nature of the issues facing it, there was a growing sense that Kuwait had

probably gone as far as it could within the framework of existing migration-related policies. It had become increasingly evident that there were limits to what even effective policies could be expected to accomplish, whether for security or for management and control of the migration process. The constraints on those policies, the complexity of the interrelationships among the policy variables, as well as the increasing salience of the socio-cultural consequences of migration, all pointed to the need for a sober reappraisal of the fundamental choices underlying Kuwait's reliance on immigrant labor.

The data on labor permits indicated that the provisions of the new Order, put to use during 1984, did have an effect on entry of new workers; but they also demonstrated what the related consequences would be. The number of permits for entry declined by 37 percent, from 81,657 to 51,347; the number of first time work permits declined by 54 percent, from 86,075 to 39,422, while renewals rose by 32.6 percent, from 105,267 to 139,625. Cancellations and transfers also rose substantially, from 10,923 to 33,585. Final cancellations and departures, however, rose only slightly, from 21,773 to 24,567 (an increase of only 12.8 percent).\* On balance, the increase in renewals and transfers more than offset the reductions in first time

---

\* See Figure 3-1. There were unofficial estimates that 14,000 Jordanians and 10,000 Syrians (workers and families) went home in 1984. (author's interviews).

permits and the increased departures, leaving the size of the labor force only slightly affected: there was a net addition of 14,855 documented workers. Its composition, however, was another matter; with a 49 percent increase in the number of renewals and transfers combined, the labor force showed signs of becoming even more settled.

There were several factors at work that encouraged expatriates to stay on in Kuwait. Although officials denied the existence of a policy to "rotate" workers (a policy known to result in costly labor market instability), it was privately acknowledged that the Saudi policy in this regard had been viewed with interest and that reliance on Asian-staffed turn key projects had, de facto, achieved the same result. There was by now, however, greater willingness to acknowledge a policy to diversify the national composition of the labor force. The Chamber of Commerce openly attributed the inflow of Asians to a combination of market forces and the "[d]iligence of Arab States of the Gulf to diversify the sources of manpower supply to avoid problems of dependency on certain sources of manpower and possible serious economic consequences."\* In addition, it was widely observed that, since the late 1970s, Syrians, Iraqis, Lebanese, Palestinians and Jordanians had experienced particular difficulty in gaining

---

\* Kuwait Chamber of Commerce, "Background Information Paper", prepared for Tripartite Inter-Regional Round Table on International Migration (Arab and Asian Countries), Bangkok, Thailand, 17-20 September 1984, p. 4.

entry.\* The more recent conflicts in Lebanon and the Iran-Iraq war had only deepened the political roots of this trend. Now, as the worsening economic situation augered cuts in the labor force across the board, those who had positions inside sought to hang on to them. Even Egyptians, who had always been viewed as able and willing to go home, now sought to extend their stay in Kuwait. While the Egyptian government had been seen to encourage repatriation of their workers so that others could have a chance to share in the migration bonanza, it was now considered that government was primarily concerned to avoid losing the places of Egyptians in Kuwait altogether.

The economic recession encouraged local hiring (and thus increased length of stay in Kuwait) in another way as well. If a worker was hired from abroad, the employer was, in many cases, obliged to provide air tickets and accomodation. If a worker was hired locally however, the employer could often eliminate these expenses and engage the worker at a lower salary as well. The new labor regulations offered other opportunities for employers to save on employment costs: if the employee's work contract failed to guarantee him the right to transfer but he chose to do so anyway, over the employer's objection, the burden of paying repatriation costs shifted to the worker.

---

\* See sections 3.5 and 3.6 of this text for evidence of this phenomenon during the mid to late 1970s.

In an effort to counteract the "settling effects" of these economic shifts, government raised to KD 450 the level of income required for expatriates to be permitted to bring their families.\* In response to public pressure, new regulations, characterized as "more relaxed procedures", were issued by the Ministry of Interior to permit the return to Kuwait of expatriates' children studying abroad. However this privilege (limited to children of workers with valid residence permits) provided only for temporary visit visas during school vacations.\*\*

In February 1985, Kuwait held National Assembly elections.\*\*\* A number of issues dominated the campaign, in which 231 candidates vied for the 50 elected seats. The government's handling of the 1982 Manakh crisis topped the list, with Arab Nationalist candidates particularly vocal in calling for a "just solution" to the problem of the remaining unresolved indebtedness.\*\*\*\* The government's handling of declining oil prices and the need to reform

---

\* MEED, 7 September 1985, Vol. 29, No. 36, p. 28 [1 KD = 3.38 USD].

\*\* Kuwait Times, 4 April 1985, p. 3.

\*\*\* The following account of these elections is based upon several sources, including Crystal, pp. 236ff; The Economist Intelligence Unit, "Kuwait", No. 1, 1985; the International Herald Tribune, February 23-24, 1985, p. 5; the Jordan Times, February 20, 1985, p. 2; the Middle East Times, 16-23 March 1985, p. 7; and author's interviews.

\*\*\*\* By the spring of 1985, the original debt of KD 19.2 billion had been reduced to KD 1.05 billion. Kuwait Times, April 10, 1985, p. 9

the State's burgeoning bureaucracy further argued for a "clearly defined economic policy". For its part, the government was increasingly concerned to control the Islamic fundamentalists, even if it meant allowing the Arab Nationalists to regain some of their former political strength.

In addition to these issues, the expatriate workforce was once again on the agenda for political debate. In its report of the campaign, The Economist noted,

The high proportion of expatriates and their especially prominent role in the labour force have long been matters of concern in Kuwait, which has strict nationality laws. Perhaps greater attention is now focused on this issue, however, as a result of the bomb attacks [on the French and U.S. embassies and Kuwaiti installations] which took place in the State in December 1983 and for which a number of foreigners later stood trial. Kuwait fears infiltration of subversive ideas and the election campaign shows that this fear is shared not only by the government but also by indigenous Kuwaitis....The rise in the expatriate workforce, particularly its non-Arab component, was seen by some as a 'dangerous trend' and more coherent population policies were advocated.\*

Elections were held February 20. Of the 50 members elected, 31 were new candidates, the majority considered to be government supporters. Two religious conservative leaders lost: Khaled Sultan (leader of the Islamic Revival Society) and Issa Shaheen (leader of the Social Reform Society); two other Sunni conservatives were elected, while two of the Shia fundamentalist candidates were replaced by Shia with "more moderate views". Change was

---

\* The Economist Intelligence Unit, "Kuwait", No. 1, 1985, pp. 3,7.



evident in other quarters as well: the Bedouin districts, accustomed to elect only "traditional" candidates, this time elected several "progressive" (ie. well-educated) members.

The primary beneficiaries in the elections, however, were the loose grouping of Arab Nationalists and progressives now called the Democratic Alliance. The Arab Nationalists had experienced a period of eclipse after the dissolution of the Assembly in 1976. During the latter part of the 1970s, members of the so-called Tal'ia group (named after their magazine) reorganized under the banner of The Democratic Progressive Alliance (Tujam'a al-Demucratiyun al-Taqaalumiyyun). With six candidates elected, this group formed the new "opposition" in the National Assembly.

Public debate over the "expatriate issue" did not die down after the campaign; it merely found a new forum, as the spring session of the National Assembly turned its attention to consideration of Kuwait's Five Year Plan.\*

---

\* Strictly speaking, Cabinet was obliged to present to the National Assembly a document called a "programme", not a "plan" and, legally, it was necessary to interpret the constitutional requirement for a programme to accommodate presentation of a plan. Article 98 of the Constitution provided that "the Assembly may make comments with regard to such a programme." The Assembly's comments were not binding, although politically they carried the force of being the expressed views of the "people's representatives". One of the undercurrents in debate about the 1985-90 plan was the tension between the government and the Assembly over their respective roles and powers with regard to the plan's formulation and implementation. A certain amount of Assembly discussion focused on these

In the past, development plans had not enjoyed a particularly notable position in the conduct of Kuwait's economic affairs. The 1976-81 Plan was never adopted by the government; furthermore, just as it was ready for presentation to Parliament, the Assembly was dissolved. The 1981-85 Plan was a bulky tome of some 400 pages and the newly restored Assembly lacked the mechanisms to handle it.

The 1985-90 Plan differed from these earlier efforts in several respects. For one thing, it was developed under the general direction of a professionally-trained planner who was also a politician. Dr. Abdel-Rahman al-Awadi, who carried a dual portfolio as Minister of Planning and Minister of Health, was a physician trained in health planning at Johns Hopkins University. Earlier, he had overseen development of Kuwait's Health Plan 1982-2000, an exercise that (in addition to producing a model of its genre) had focused the Minister's attention on Kuwait's complex demography.

Formulation of the Five Year Development Plan had been an intensive process, lasting nearly a year. Beginning in mid-1984, each ministry's technicians, with participation

---

issues. One deputy proposed that the plan should pass through the Assembly in a manner that would make it binding. Deputy Hadel al-Jellawi observed that the government had "incorporated its action programme in the development plan"; he demanded that the two be separated and called for "public participation in the development process." Kuwait Times, April 28, 1985, p. 1.

from the University and the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR), developed draft submissions articulating objectives and related policies for each sector. These, in turn, were synthesized into a "General Framework" which was submitted to an inter-ministerial committee for its review.\* It then passed to the Council of Ministers where it was approved, except for the "financial balances"--government revenues and expenditures. On this point, it remained to be determined whether Kuwait would draw down on its reserves to balance the budget, or introduce new forms of taxation.\*\* By mid-April 1985, the Draft Plan was ready for presentation to the Assembly.

Out of seven or eight goals originally identified as priorities, six were selected as being key. Among these, "population policy" vied with "fiscal responsibility" and "non-oil diversification" as the paramount issues of the plan. In the course of the plan preparation, however, population policy evolved as the central issue. As Dr.

---

\* This committee was chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmed; Dr. Al-Awadi served as rapporteur; other members included the Ministers of Finance and National Economy, Oil and Industry, Education and Social Affairs, Public Works and Housing, and the State Minister. The Ministry of Interior was not involved.

\*\* Crystal (p. 235, n. 141) notes that proposals to introduce taxation had been considered by the Cabinet in 1977, when the possibility of a budget deficit loomed. In November of 1978, the Finance Ministry had begun to enforce a 1955 decree taxing companies.

al-Awadi was later to observe, "In the planning process, it became clear that everything pointed to manpower. The debate will be, 'Is it time to say no?'. Government will just present the facts. This is the first time we are going to have participatory planning."\*

It was also the first time the government had called the population question for public debate. Indeed, when the plan was publically unveiled in the press on April 23, 1985, it flatly proposed an equilibrium between the Kuwaitis and the immigrant population: "50-50 by the year 2000" was the catch-phrase.\*\* It was the first time in Kuwait's history as a country of immigration that such a proposal had been made.

In presenting the draft plan to the National Assembly, Ministry of Planning Undersecretary Abdul Hadi al-Awadi put the issue starkly: "This draft contains six basic objectives and the central one is to alter the population balance." \*\*\* He noted that other Plan objectives--development of national manpower, administrative development, improvement in production processes (especially through adoption of less

---

\* Author's interview.

\*\* The motto was evokative of "Health for All by the Year 2000", familiar to those active in international health as the slogan of the World Health Organization's Alma Ata Declaration of 1978.

\*\*\* Al-Ra'i al-Am, 28 April 1985, p. 2.

labor-intensive technologies), social development, and the assurance of good financial resources through an active private sector--all converged toward achieving this pivotal objective. The Plan not only gave population balance central prominence but adopted a correspondingly modest target rate of 3.9 percent annual growth in GDP. By electing to place population balance at the center of its development objectives, Kuwait signalled a new era in migration policy formulation.

On the same day the plan was first made public, the 1985 census was completed. Preliminary results of the census, reported a week later,\* served only to underscore the gravity of the population situation: the proportion of Kuwaitis had dropped by 2 percent since 1980; citizens were now only 40 percent of the population. At the same time, total population had increased nearly 25 percent; two-thirds of that increase was the result of immigration. There were now reported to be more than 120 nationalities resident in Kuwait. Furthermore, the census revealed that over 300,000 aliens--nearly 30 percent of the non-Kuwaiti population--had been born in Kuwait. \*\* Although the census results were reported as front page news and may have been surprising to some, the findings were in fact

---

\* Kuwait Times, April 29, 1985, p. 1 and Arab Times, April 30, 1985, p. 1.

\*\* National Bank of Kuwait, Economic and Financial Bulletin No. 10, summer 1986, p. 10.

less dramatic than expected. Privately, a number of officials had estimated that the proportion of Kuwaitis had actually dropped as low as 32 percent of total population.

Within days after presentation of the plan, the Assembly approved formation of a committee to prepare a detailed study of the government programme and to report on its findings within two months.\* Only three days into full debate on the plan, discussion had been overshadowed by controversy surrounding the resignation of the Minister of Justice. Referral to committee was, in part, a means to ensure that the plan received sustained consideration by the Assembly.

By proposing to make "population balance" a central goal, the plan brought to the foreground the complex set of relationships between Kuwait's demography and other aspects of the economy and the society. At a fundamental level, it posed difficult choices about the type of society Kuwaitis wanted. Among themselves, Kuwaitis had been and continued to be divided in their views about immigrants and about the options posed concerning them. Interests and attitudes were by no means sharply delineated by class or social grouping; there were too many cross-cutting memberships. Still, certain patterns were evident.

---

\* Members of the committee included deputies Hamad al-Joua'n, Dr. Abdullah al-Nafisi, Dr. Yacoub Hayati, Dr. Nasser Sarkhou, Faisal al-Sani and Khamis Iqab. Kuwait Times, April 28, 1985, p. 1.

The Kuwait Chamber of Commerce (KCC), under the leadership of Abdul Azziz al-Sagr and representing the traditional merchant families and commercial interests, had long favored minimum restriction on the free flow of labor. In debates over how to hasten the State's economic recovery, merchants, landlords, and hotel owners, meeting in diwaniyyas and in the Chamber of Commerce, had argued that further reducing the number of migrants would have negative effects on the domestic economy. Non-Kuwaitis, it was estimated, accounted for nearly 60 percent of private consumption. \* "Even Kuwait Airlines is complaining", one observer noted. In a proposed strategy for economic recovery issued the previous year, the Chamber of Commerce had commented on the evident tension between "security and development requirements", acknowledging grounds for concern but arguing that,

...security and caution requirements cannot be fulfilled through temporary unstudied procedures and complex measures which are closer to spasmodic reflexes,....

In our opinion, security requirements do not require any unjustified complications for entering Kuwait whether as a visitor, resident, residence renewal, transfer, or getting the work permit and driving license, but they require putting down clear criteria and rules implementing the same,....The [continuation] of the present situation for a [longer] period shall adversely affect the reputation of Kuwait, its international status and moreover its economy and development."\*\*

---

\* Al-Moussa and McLachlan, p. 97.

\*\* Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry, "Memorandum about reviving the Economic Activities in Kuwait," mimeo, February 22, 1984, p. 46.

During formulation of the plan, the KCC had urged greater emphasis on Kuwait's tradition as a private enterprise country and had pointed out inherent contradictions among manpower, population, investment and growth objectives. As a whole, the private sector had become particularly concerned about the rising number of empty apartments and hotel rooms, falling land prices, and perceptions that consumer spending was down as migrants saved for the possibility they might have to leave Kuwait. For both cost and security reasons, the KCC aligned with government in favoring entry of Asians.

To the extent the religious factions voiced concern about the immigrants, it focused particularly on non-Muslims (mostly Asians) whom they viewed as threatening the society's traditional values. The more traditionally inclined were also not at all sanguine about one option for increasing the Kuwaiti labor force: increasing the participation of women. At the same time, in initial discussions of the plan's population proposals in the Assembly, Dr. Sharahu, a Shia religious member, stressed that Palestinians should be allowed to stay.

This last view was shared by members of the National Coalition (Tujam'a al-Watani), founded in the early 1980s by Jasim al-Qatami. A member of a prominent merchant family, al-Qatami had been an early supporter of the Arab



Nationalists but later broke with the Movement as it shifted leftward. The National Coalition was now alligned with the KCC on a number of issues, including support for liberal entry of immigrants. On the subject of national composition, however, the Coalition shared with Arab Nationalists the view that immigrants should be Arabs. In the Plan debate, Coalition members also expressed support for Palestinians. The Arab Nationalists' return as the "opposition" in the Assembly following the elections of 1985 was expected to give greater indirect voice to Kuwait's longstanding Arab migrant communities, particularly the Palestinians.

Strongest opposition to immigration continued to come from the Bedouin factions. As staunch Kuwaiti Nationalists, conservative Bedouin had long opposed immigration. After the elections of 1985, the older traditional leaders were joined by younger leaders, representative of the newly educated generation just beginning to find their way into the more attractive government posts. They were the group most threatened by competition from Arab immigrants. In response to the Plan, one Bedouin deputy attacked its flexibility in allowing a continued modest level of immigration, while another argued that government had failed to make significant strides toward Kuwaitization.\*

---

\* See parliamentary debates reported in Al-Ra'i al-Am, 28 April 1985.

Choices to be made about the plan now threw policy conflicts into sharp relief. Perhaps the most fundamental was the trade-off between economic growth and population balance. The initial presentation of the plan to the National Assembly had given no detailed annual growth targets for the economy; the planners recognized that the choice of these was inextricably linked to the population question. If agreement was reached to endorse the principle of population balance, "50-50 by the year 2000", the growth targets were implicit. Kuwait's economic planning "technology" was state-of-the-art; its manpower model was linked to the World Bank Compound Model and policy makers could easily see the implications of their choices. As early as 1979, the World Bank had made clear the link between population and economic growth. Using analysis based upon 1975 census data, the Bank concluded,

...to bring about a parity between Kuwaiti and foreign population (50:50) by 1990, growth targets should not be allowed to exceed 5.5%. To reduce the foreign population below 50% by 1990, say to 47%, growth targets should not be allowed to exceed 5.0%. [In summary,] low growth targets produce a Kuwaiti majority by 1990. Medium growth targets produce a population parity by 1990. High growth targets maintain the 1975 population distribution throughout. Growth targets above 6% will raise the foreign population ratio over time."\*

While it called for the formulation of a population policy for Kuwait, the Bank study also stressed that, to reduce

---

\* The World Bank, "Kuwait - Manpower Planning Project Working Paper: Structural Change and Forecasting Sectoral Employment in Kuwait," Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, Technical Assistance and Special Studies Division, Europe, Middle East and North Africa Projects Department, December 21, 1979, pp. 40-41, and p. 46.

the foreign population ratio, the policymaker need not rely solely on reducing economic growth targets. It pointed out that accelerating productivity growth would lead to the same objective and, furthermore, could be combined with reduced growth targets.

When the final version of the 1985-90 plan was put forth,\* it was evident that policymakers had chosen to do just that. The plan projected that Gross Domestic Product would grow at an annual average of 3.9 percent, characterized as "sustainable growth". Under the heading "population balance", the plan confirmed that "[c]urbing the labor market imbalance is definitely a high-priority of the new Five-Year Plan" and acknowledged that "[i]mproving manpower productivity appears as a necessary complement to the successful implementation of this strategic goal." Value added per capita was projected to increase by an average of 0.59 percent annually.

Apart from choosing modest growth targets and boosting productivity, the plan focused attention on another option for decreasing dependence on expatriate labor: increasing Kuwaiti labor force participation, which had hovered around 18 percent since 1965. Now, the plan proposed to increase

---

\* Details concerning the final version of the plan are taken from National Bank of Kuwait, Kuwait: Economic and Financial Bulletin No. 9, November 1985.

participation to 23.7 percent. \* How to do so was not entirely clear.

The chronically low labor force participation rate was partly the result of the low rate of labor force participation among women, the large percentage of the population under working age, and the high ratios of enrollment among older youth.\*\* Apart from these causes, the reliance on expatriate labor itself lent credence to the contention that Kuwait had become a "rentier society", a charge that irked many Kuwaitis and spurred calls for a return to 'the productive work ethic which characterized Kuwait in the days of pearling and fishing.' The Minister of Planning openly regarded the attitude of the people toward work as "one of the most important features affecting migration." Recognizing the need for a change of attitude was one thing; effecting such a change was

---

\* See Table 1-2. The plan, as described in the National Bank report, assumes a base year labor force participation rate of 22.6 percent, while labor force data from the 1985 census, reported in "Statistical Review 1986", published by the Ministry of Planning's Central Statistical Office, yield a crude labor force participation rate of 18.6 percent. According to these statistics, Kuwaitis comprised 19 percent of the total labor force.

\*\* Kuwait's labor force is defined as those employed, those seeking work for the first time, and those unemployed. Those reported as inactive (i.e. not in the labor force) include students, housewives, "persons not willing to work" and "disabled (inactive persons)". As will be seen in Chapter 4, declines in labor force participation among Kuwaiti males between 1975 and 1980 were only partly attributable to increased school enrollment among those of working age. The percentage of Kuwaiti males 15 years and over in school rose from 19.8 to 22.2. Those reported as "not willing to work" and "disabled or inactive" rose from 5.6 percent to 11 percent.

another. Although a variety of programs to boost Kuwaitization were suggested, including a fund to provide incentives for Kuwaitis to enter socially undesirable jobs, neither the plan nor the public debate was specific about how any fundamental change in the attitude toward work was to be achieved.

Increasing overall Kuwaiti labor force participation rates by increasing the labor force participation of women was discussed, however, becoming the subject of lively debate in the press. Even before the plan was presented or the census taken, columnist Nuria Sadany called upon the National Assembly to address the problem of the declining proportion of Kuwaitis, suggesting that study of the issue should consider the question, "Does Kuwait use all its available resources, women and men?"\* In late April, an article on the plan was published next to a piece issued by the official news agency entitled "Women Lack Opportunities." In it, a Kuwait University professor "regretted that the Kuwaiti women's participation in the local workforce was still limited"; he called for their increased involvement in the productive (as opposed to service) sectors of the economy.\*\* A month later, a feature article on the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training noted that the number of females in

---

\* Al-Siyassa, 31 March 1985, p. 28 (Arabic).

\*\* Kuwait Times, April 28, 1985, p. 3.

the Authority's programs had risen to 40 percent of all students. The deputy director was quoted as saying,

'The general tendency among Kuwaiti girls today is that they want to work...It's partly an economic role, to help with family expenses, but it's also a general committment.'

"All in all," the article concluded, "the Public Authority can be proud of its role in helping to fulfill the ambitions of today's forward-looking Kuwaiti girls."\*

About the same time, a brief article took note of a recent pronouncement by the president of Saudi Arabia's Department of Religious Research, Sheikh Abdul-Aziz Bin Baz, claiming that "mixing men and women at work was 'an evil door that, once opened, is hard to shut' and asserting that mixed work teams lead to 'corruption, the destruction of family life, and the ruin of society'". The Sheikh's comments were reported to be in response to press articles calling for more use of women in the work force in Saudi Arabia.\*\*

While the Sheikh was widely regarded as ultra-conservative in such matters, and while Kuwait prided itself on being quite different from Saudi Arabia in its forms of religious observance, the article was a reminder of the force with which religious opposition to women's economic participation could be expressed. If the more conservative among Kuwait's religious leaders declined to react vocally to proposals that women's labor force

---

\* Arab Times, May 22, 1985, p. 9.

\*\* Kuwait Times, May 21, 1985, p. 2

participation rates be increased, it may have been because their attentions were focused on responding to simultaneous calls for women's suffrage.\*

Whatever the attitude among religious leaders, available evidence suggested that women's labor force participation had already begun to gain momentum. The number of Kuwaiti women employed, although still small, had nearly doubled between 1975 and 1980; as Table 1-3 indicates, their overall labor force participation rate had risen from 6.2 percent to 9.6 percent in the same period. By 1985, it had risen to 13.8 percent. \*\* Among single women aged 25-29, the rate was 53 percent, close to the rates for women in the U.S. and Western Europe.\*\*\* While reports about the Plan were silent on the subject of increasing women's participation, the Plan's target labor force participation rate was probably unattainable without it.

Increasing the labor force participation of Kuwaitis was closely linked to the longstanding policy of Kuwaitization

---

\* Proposals to allow women the vote were defeated on religious grounds during the summer of 1985 when the Fatwa and Legislative Department issued a ruling stating that "under Islam, women cannot be given the right to vote or be elected to the National Assembly in Kuwait." (Arab Times, July 27, 1985, cited in Nasra Shah, "The Transition in Female Status in Kuwait: Issues and Likely Impacts," Population and Development Symposium, 3-7 November 1985, U.N. - A.R.E. Cairo Demographic Centre, Contributed Paper No. 12., p. 11.)

\*\* National Bank of Kuwait, op. cit..

\*\*\* Shah, op. cit., p. 7.

under which Kuwaitis would replace retiring or departing expatriate workers, or fill newly created jobs. Government had periodically reasserted its commitment to Kuwaitization and the Plan provided yet another opportunity to do so. The initial Plan presentation stressed the importance of training nationals in technical areas and in the professions and proposed to assure that limitations on public spending would not impede the appointment of Kuwaiti graduates.

At one level, the policy of Kuwaitization was unassailable. Yet the Plan again exposed policy conflicts between the commitment to Kuwaitization and the commitment to other goals. In a paper developed during the Plan's formulation, KISR economists touched upon one of these conflicts. The Plan had expressly recognized that productivity growth was a necessary complement to its goal of balancing the population. However, the paper pointed out, in its effort to support Kuwaitization, government had become the employer of last resort, guaranteeing a job for every Kuwaiti citizen.

Such public employment policy serves as a fiscal tool along with other transfer and subsidy programs to redistribute oil revenues among Kuwaitis....[but] Such strategy has very serious implications for productivity and growth that need to be carefully assessed.\*

---

\* Ismail Sirageldin and Djehane Hosni, "The Manpower Dynamics of Kuwait: Towards a Balanced Structure," unpublished mimeo, circa 1985, pp. 18-19.



Both the educational and occupational structure of the Kuwaiti labor force were characteristic of a "low productivity country" and the concentration of Kuwaitis in the non-productive government sector only exacerbated this phenomenon. In addition, the plan's stated intent to tackle "administrative reform" (a response both to the unwieldy size and structure of the burgeoning bureaucracy and to the need to cut public spending) was also at odds with continuing to achieve Kuwaitization through a public employment policy.

Achieving a greater degree of balance in the labor force was, of course, only part of the picture. The more general concern was to achieve greater balance between Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis in the population as a whole. Increasing the number of Kuwaitis was one way to do this. Here again, the options were limited and the potentials for policy conflicts numerous. Kuwait's total fertility rate already stood at 6.6. Rapidly rising levels of education among women and a trend toward higher age of marriage were likely to have a downward effect on total fertility. In considering the prospects for achieving greater growth in the size of the Kuwaiti population, the KISR team noted that, "In 1980, the number of live births dropped from 6.5 [per thousand] for illiterate women to 3.6 for those with secondary education in the age bracket 35-39."\*

---

\* Sirageldin and Hosni, p. 16.

Furthermore, any efforts by the government to increase fertility would not only run counter to these demographic trends but would conflict with the benefits in Kuwaitization to be gained from more female employment.

In 1983, Kuwait's infant mortality rate (IMR) was 29--low for the oil exporting countries but still far from the average of 10 among industrial market economies.\* Not surprisingly, the Plan proposed to reduce the IMR. Still, the benefits of this measure for improving the population balance would, at best, be far in the future.

A more immediate way to increase the Kuwaiti population lay through naturalization. Changes to the Nationality Law introduced in 1980 had provided greater flexibility in the use of naturalization by leaving determination of numerical limits up to the Council of Ministers. As noted earlier, the government's policy of naturalizing its Bedouin supporters had drawn fire from progressive Kuwaitis. Arab Nationalists, in particular, had criticized the practice as grossly unfair to those highly educated Arabs who had served Kuwait for decades or (increasingly) been born there.\*\*

---

\* The World Bank, World Development Report 1985, Table 23, p. 219.

\*\* As of the 1985 census, 303,938 people in the non-Kuwaiti population had been born in Kuwait, up from 229,273 in the 1980 census and 156,395 in 1975. National Bank of Kuwait, Economic and Financial Bulletin No. 10, summer 1986, p. 10 and Annual Statistical Abstract 1985, Table 17, p. 34.

Debate over naturalization emerged again in 1984, when the National Assembly had passed a bill fixing the authorized number of ordinary naturalizations at 500 persons annually.\* Reimposition of specific numerical limits reflected the degree to which the issue remained politically contentious.\*\* A number of Kuwaitis, especially those small merchants and crafts people with only modest economic interests and recently naturalized Bedouin, resented deeply the prospect of having to divide what appeared to be a shrinking array of benefits among a greater number of people, the moreso if they were very different kinds of people. On the other hand, liberals continued to oppose naturalization of Bedouin merely to swell the ranks of Kuwaitis. Added to the underlying concern that they constituted a potentially opposing political force was the argument, now given greater force by the Plan, that naturalizing those who were illiterate or had only low levels of education would conflict with other objectives: it would delay Kuwaitization and further erode productivity of the Kuwaiti workforce.

Apart from increasing the number of Kuwaitis, the other means to achieve a population balance was, of course, through outright limitations on the number of expatriates

---

\* U.S. Human Rights Report 1984, p. 9.

\*\* For reporting on the Nationality Law debates of 1984, see "Jalawat Majlis al-Amn", al-Mujtama', May 8, 1984, Vol. 15, No. 620, p. 11.

permitted to enter or remain in Kuwait. Previous efforts to ensure the legality of those entering or to expedite the cancellation of work permits for those no longer needed or to limit entry or reentry of dependents were all measures toward this end. Still, the authorities had stopped short of introducing outright limitations on the numbers of expatriates. In the spring of 1985, however, the Ministry of Interior proposed such a limitation. In April, a parliamentary committee rejected the idea.\* Parliament's decision reflected the persistent concern that, no matter how deep the ambivalence about the expatriate population, such limitations would have more deleterious than beneficial effects. Economically, as the KCC had already made clear, outright limits on immigration risked constraining economic growth by creating manpower bottlenecks, pushing up wage rates, and cutting into profits. From a political point of view, the large size of the established Arab population and its wide support among otherwise differing political factions also constrained government action. Internationally, the maintenance of good relations with other Arab countries had become a cornerstone of Kuwait's foreign policy.

Accordingly, Kuwait was not prepared to "ship people home", although the fear of such action was rife. Saudi Arabia was, in fact, on the brink of announcing that some 600,000

---

\* Al-Rai al-Am, April 1, 1985.

expatriate workers would be cut during the succeeding five years of its new plan implementation. For Kuwait, however, a far more palatable compromise was to attempt to reduce the dependency ratio among non-Kuwaitis. While this would not reduce the expatriate population (indeed it would keep open the possibility of a relatively free flow of labor and avoid the prospect of having higher wage costs further squeeze profits), a reduction in the dependency ratio would, at least in the short term, reduce the likelihood of settling and be a move toward reducing the consumption of social services (such as health and education) by non-productive members of the expatriate population. As the deficits deepened and it became clear that government would draw down reserves to finance continued spending, Kuwaitis had increasingly come to feel that foreigners were consuming at the expense of liquidating Kuwait's national assets.

The desire to reduce the dependency ratio among non-Kuwaitis was clear enough, but how to do it? There were several options, a number of which had already been tried. The first was by limiting all new migration to bachelors. The relatively high income level required for family accompaniment was a step in this direction. However, this option posed conflicts with the objective of increasing productivity, as labor market instability (in the form of more rapid turnover) could be expected to

result among workers who are not permitted to bring or form families.

The option of limiting the return of expatriate children sent abroad for education had already been tried, with some success. But there were humane and political limits as to how rigidly this policy could be applied, as reflected in the Ministry of Interior's recent easing of regulations on this point.

A third option was to increase labor force participation among non-Kuwaiti wives not currently in the labor force. As of the 1980 census, there were slightly more than 100,000 female Arab non-Kuwaitis over the age of 19, with only about 27,000 non-Kuwaiti Arab women in the labor force\*. Yet apart from questions about the suitability of their educational qualifications or their interest and willingness to seek employment, there remained the problem of the social acceptability of women's employment.

Not the least of the problems associated with reducing the dependency ratio was that by the 1980 census, as may be seen in Table 3-3, nearly one-third of the non-Kuwaiti population had resided in the country for ten or more years. A large portion of the dependent-aged population

---

\* The labor force figure included women aged 15 years and over and thus the statistical groupings are not strictly comparable. Annual Statistical Abstract 1985, Table 37, p. 52 and Table 100, p. 110.

(over 48 percent of the productive age groups) emanates from this group, most of whom are Arabs and many of whom are Palestinians. Retirement and natural attrition could be expected to reduce the number of these workers and their dependent families somewhat. Still, as noted above, more draconian measures would likely be politically unpalatable, to Kuwaiti progressives, expatriate Arabs, and to the Arab labor-sending governments.

The final version of the Plan reflected Kuwait's decision to effect changes in its population balance "only gradually, ... in a slow equilibrating process."\* The Kuwaiti labor force was targeted to grow at an average annual rate of 4.2 percent, while the non-Kuwaiti labor force would also grow, but at a slower rate, 3.2 percent. At the same time, in addition to increasing labor force participation among Kuwaitis, the Plan proposed to reduce the dependency ratio among non-Kuwaitis from 109 dependents to 101 for every 100 active persons. By 1990, the Plan projected, Kuwaitis would represent 44.8 percent of total population (expected to be 1.8 million), up from 40 percent in 1985.

With the 1985-1990 Plan, Kuwait had, for the first time, explicitly adopted "population balance" as a central policy objective, electing to move slowly toward that objective

---

\* The National Bank of Kuwait, Kuwait Economic and Financial Bulletin No.9, p. 28.

through a combination of measures that included setting its economic targets at levels consistent with that policy, increasing productivity, as well as Kuwaiti employment, and reducing the dependency ratio among non-Kuwaitis. The options of reducing the expatriate population through numerical strictures on entry or through mass expulsions were ruled out. As an economic strategy, the plan charted a moderate course. As a political statement, it was a masterful compromise; like so many of the statements of migration policy before it, the Plan contained something for everyone.

With the Five Year Plan, government had posed the central question: would Kuwait continue to pursue a strategy of economic growth predicated on continued immigration? The question was a radical one. Heretofore, "the migration question" had been put in other ways: how much should security concerns be allowed to limit immigration of the manpower needed for economic growth? What rights should migrants have? What should be the relative position of different migrant groups? How should the process of immigration, residency, and departure be controlled? None of these formulations, however, had asked whether Kuwaitis were prepared actually to limit economic growth in order to have a more balanced population structure. Now, this was precisely the question. Lest anyone miss the implications



of this decision, the Plan made them clear: if population balance was to be a central objective, it would entail a number of sacrifices. Kuwaitis would not only have to make do with less than "boom rates" of growth, more of them would have to work and work harder. They would have to increase labor force participation among both men and women, and increase labor productivity overall. Attaining the latter objective would mean moving out of the comfort of government employment and into jobs in the productive sectors.

In summary, the seventh phase in evolution of Kuwait's migration policy differed from previous phases in several important respects. Security, economic, and socio-cultural factors in the environment converged to force a fundamental reappraisal of basic choices regarding economic growth and population structure. Perhaps weary of extremes in all these spheres, Kuwaitis chose to question the future of immigration more directly and more comprehensively than heretofore. With the sharp schisms among political factions softened somewhat by the results of the 1985 elections, enough of a fragile consensus existed in the political arena to invite posing the migration question and to make the response a moderate one. Nonetheless, by electing to place changing the population balance at the center of its development objectives, with economic growth targets as the derivative, not the driving choice, Kuwait signalled an altogether new approach to migration policy.

TABLE 3-1

GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT AT CURRENT PRICES  
(IN MILLION KD) \*

YEAR	TOTAL GDP	% CHANGE	NON-OIL GDP	NON-OIL GDP TO TOTAL GDP	% CHANGE IN NON-OIL GDP
1962-63	653.0				
1963-64	679.0	4			
1964-65	740.0	9			
1965-66	749.0	1	275.0	37	
1966-67	854.0	14	341.0	40	24
1967-68	972.0	2	394.0	45	16
1968-69	951.0	9	417.0	44	6
1969-70	987.0	4	426.0	43	2
1970-71	961.5	(3)	309.0	32	(27)
1971-72	1,346.6	40	443.0	33	43
1972-73	1,562.2	16	625.0	40	41
1973-74	2,111.5	35	664.0	31	6
1974-75	3,450.3	63	788.0	23	19
1975-76	3,279.2	34	985.0	30	25

Source: Sulayman Shaban al-Qudsi, "Growth and Distribution in Kuwait: A Quantitative Approach," Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (Economics), University of California at Davis, Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1979, p. 47, Table 3.5.

TABLE 3-2. PERSONS ATTAINING KUWAITI CITIZENSHIP BY  
NATURALIZATION: 1961-1984

YEAR	NUMBER	CUMULATIVE NUMBER *	CUM AS % OF TOT K POP **
1961 ) through ) 1966 )	72,857	72,857	
1967	5,545	78,402	
1968	3,329	81,731	
1969	4,083	85,814	
1970	4,041	89,855	25.87%
1971	4,662	94,517	
1972	5,509	100,026	
1973	7,210	107,236	
1974	8,148	115,384	
1975	6,174	121,558	25.75%
1976	8,153	129,711	
1977	6,437	136,148	
1978	7,445	143,593	
1979	8,976	152,569	
1980	10,141	162,710	28.77%
1981	9,921	172,631	
1982	14,356	186,987	
1983	12,427	199,414	
1984	13,046	212,460	31.26%

\* Not adjusted for deaths or subsequent births to naturalized Kuwaiti parents.

\*\* For Total Kuwaiti population in Census years, see Table 1-1.

Sources: 1967 to 1984: Statistical Abstracts of Kuwait: 1985, p. 51, Table 35; 1984, p. 49, Table 34; 1977, p. 62, Table 54. For 1961-1966: author's calculation based on analysis of intercensal changes in sizes of already born cohorts using data from Statistical Abstract 1977, pp. 40-41, Table 36.

TABLE 3-3. NON-KUWAITI POPULATION BY DURATION OF RESIDENCY IN CENSUS YEARS

CENSUS YEAR	DURATION IN YEARS													
	15+			10-14			5-9			0-4			Not	Total
	No.	% of Tot	Cum %	No.	% of Tot	Cum %	No.	% of Tot	Cum %	No.	% of Tot	Cum %	Stated	Number
1965	7,506	3.04%	3.04%	22,121	8.95%	11.98%	67,852	27.44%	39.42%	147,620	59.70%	99.12%	2,181	247,280
1970	25,602	6.54%	6.54%	57,915	14.80%	21.35%	104,254	26.65%	47.99%	202,498	51.75%	99.75%	997	391,266
1975	66,458	12.71%	12.71%	85,588	16.37%	29.09%	150,193	28.73%	57.82%	220,445	42.17%	99.99%	65	522,749
1980	128,228	16.18%	16.18%	126,697	15.99%	32.17%	178,719	22.56%	54.73%	358,695	45.27%	100.00%		792,339

Source: Statistical Abstract 1985, Table 36, p. 51.

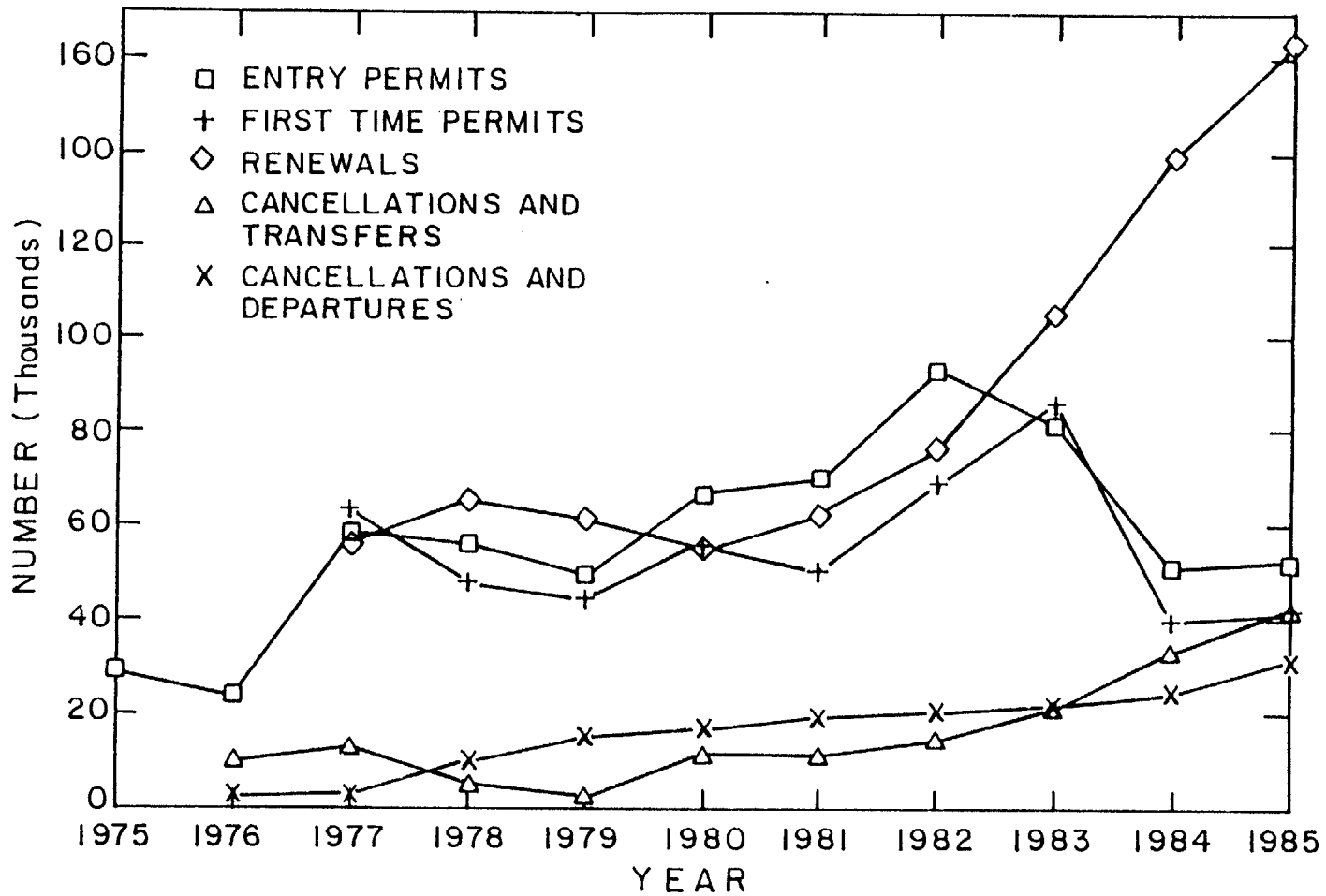


FIGURE 3-1 KUWAIT: WORK PERMIT ISSUES 1977-1985

Source: Table 4-9

#### 4. ANALYSIS OF THE KUWAIT CASE

##### 4.1 Introduction.

The utility of the Kuwait case lies in the lessons it holds concerning the structure of migration policy, the objectives and determinants of those policies, the assessment of policy effectiveness, and the implications of findings on these points for future research. These issues are the subject of this chapter.

Before embarking on this analysis, it may be well to recall that prevailing perceptions take the view there are no migration policies to speak of in Kuwait. According to this view, if there are any policies governing migration, they are not written nor formulated in any consistent way by identifiable groups of policy makers. In support of this view, it has been argued there is little evidence to suggest that whatever policies may exist have had any effect: the numbers migrating to Kuwait continued unimpeded until economic factors dictated their reduction.

The accuracy of these perceptions and assumptions are of interest to both political scientists and economists, and to policy makers as well as theoreticians. Economists

treat issues such as the number of workers permitted to enter or the number of workers sent home as "policy variables", that is as issues amenable to choice by policy makers. Yet if policies do not exist or, where they do, if they are ineffectual, such an operating assumption is ill-founded. If governments lack the capacity to formulate and implement migration policies, the presence of international boundaries and the possibilities for state intervention would seem to be of little consequence. In this case, international markets for labor would in fact not differ greatly from internal labor markets. Analysis of the Kuwait case challenges prevailing assumptions concerning both the existence and effectiveness of migration policies.

#### 4.2 The Forms of Migration Policies.

The case presented in Chapter 3 confirms that there are indeed migration policies in Kuwait. Not only are they written (with few exceptions), they are codified in laws or in implementing regulations associated with laws. Table 4-1 identifies forty-three laws, decrees or actions in which policies were promulgated between 1959 and 1985. Figure 4-1 shows the locus of each policy action in time and by type of legal instrument to which it pertains. Thirty-four of these come under the rubric of three major bodies of law: the Aliens Residence Law, the Nationality

Law, and the Labour Law. Six of the other nine policy measures are contained in laws or legal instruments: the Law of Commercial Companies, the Constitution, the Housing Law, a law and a decree pertaining to administrative reorganization, and a Resolution of the Council of Ministers. All of the remaining four policies have been publically announced: the policy of Kuwaitization is frequently referenced in government documents as well as in the press, beginning in the late 1960's and continuing to the present; measures announced in 1978 to restrict the entry of dependents are noted in Annual Reports of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour and in the press; policies to encourage or limit population growth through immigration are documented in the Five Year Plans of 1976 and 1985 as well as in press and other published reports about the Plans.

The content of these policies is the product of political processes involving a number of different actors, factions, and interests. In the Kuwait case, these have been seen to include the Amir, Ministers of government agencies (particularly Interior and Social Affairs and Labour) as well as the full Council of Ministers, the National Assembly, and major political factions both in and outside government--Arab Nationalists, Kuwaiti Nationalists, Bedouin, and Islamic groups.



### 4.3 Components of Policy Content.

Before turning to analysis of the context of migration policy formulation in Kuwait, it is useful to have an overview of the types of specific components or policy tools that have been manipulated to give expression to broader policy objectives. These basic building blocks of policy content appear and reappear in the case in what at first seems to be a bewildering profusion. On closer inspection, there are in fact a relatively modest number of tools. These are outlined below, together with variants or options associated with them. The policy tools are not necessarily alternatives to one another; indeed, they are often found in combination. At other times, (as in the case of visa requirements or security checks) they are conspicuous by their absence.

A) Visas. These are permits issued to aliens seeking to enter Kuwait. Visas are issued by the Ministry of Interior in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its embassies and consulates abroad (for those seeking entry from outside Kuwait.) Changes or modifications in the type of visa (see below) are issued by the Ministry of Interior for aliens inside Kuwait. Kuwaiti law has, from time to time, reserved to government the option of waiving visa requirements for certain nationalities. Visas come in a variety of

types: entry visas for work, visit visas, transit visas, temporary visas, and (at some points in time) return visas.

B) Security checks. These may be required by the Ministry of Interior prior to issuance of a visa and/or by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour in conjunction with the issuance of work permits.

Security checks appear in several forms: "Good Conduct Certificates" are, in essence, character references; they are generally submitted by a prospective migrant along with the visa applications. Security checks also take the form of "Endorsements" from Kuwaiti embassies or consulates abroad, an option that allows Kuwaiti officials to check with local authorities in the migrant's country of origin. Security checks appear in yet another form in requirements by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour that work permits be signed by the worker's embassy which thereby certifies that the worker's identity and passport are valid.\*

---

\* "Good Health Certificates", while qualitatively different from the types of security checks discussed here, nonetheless deserve mention. They are required not only to avoid medical indigency but also to avoid transmission of communicable diseases that consistute risks to "health security". The introduction of schistosomiasis into the Jordan Valley in the late 1970's by unchecked migrant Egyptian agricultural workers and the subsequent effects on water supply sources and agricultural productivity is a case in point.

C) No Objection Certificate. A policy tool the use of which dates back at least to the 1930's, the "NOC" may be required by the Ministry of Interior prior to issuance of a visa (and/or work permit) to a prospective migrant seeking entry for employment. When in use, the NOC itself is issued by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, after consideration of labor regulations and manpower requirements (and possibly other factors as well).

D) Residence Permits. Issued periodically by the Ministry of Interior, residence permits are generally required of all aliens who wish to remain in Kuwait. Residence permits give authorities a means of controlling the migrant's transition from entering to staying and a means of knowing at all times the location of the resident non-Kuwaiti population. Options associated with residence permits include the type of visa that is recognized as a valid form of entry for prospective residents (eg. can someone entering on a visit visa subsequently apply for and be granted a residence permit? \*); the length of time for which they are issued; requirements for periodic renewal; reporting requirements (eg. of changes in address, sponsorship, or travel outside Kuwait, etc.).

---

\* The answer was "yes" in 1959 and "only in certain circumstances" in 1979.

E) Work Permits. As noted in the preceding chapter, authority to issue work permits and the regulations pertaining to them was shifted in the mid-1970s from the Ministry of Interior to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour. Like visas, work permits appear in a variety of different types: "entry permits for work", "first time work permits", "renewals" (ie. for the same job and employer), "cancellations and transfers" (ie. a permit to change jobs and employers), and "cancellations and departures" (a permit to workers who are permanently terminating employment in Kuwait and leaving the country. Options associated with work permits include the type or nature of documentation required (of employers and--indirectly--of employees) to obtain a permit; their period of validity; and the criteria for their issuance.

F) Declaration and Undertaking. Like the NOC, the declaration and undertaking has a long history of use in migration to the Gulf region. The term was defined in 1965 (by the Ministry of Interior) as an employer's certification ("declaration") that he would notify the Ministry of Interior whenever an employment relationship ceased to exist with a given immigrant worker and would further assure his committment ("undertaking") to return that worker to the labor-sending country. In 1979, the term was redefined

(by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour) to mean an employer's certification that he would assume responsibility for the worker during the period of employment and (unless otherwise agreed to by the parties) after expiration of the employment.

G) Work Contracts. At various points in time, work contracts between an employer and an immigrant worker have been required. In traditional Western personnel practice, the relationship between an employer and an "employee" is often not codified in a contract. When a worker is engaged by contract, a more "arm's length", conditional, and time-limited relationship is implied. It is difficult to know precisely the significance of the work contract in the Kuwaiti context, but its use would seem to underscore the intention that immigrant manpower is to be temporary. At times, presentation of a work contract has been required before a worker could gain entry to Kuwait. At other times, there has been no absolute requirement for a work contract, but if one exists, its presentation may be required as evidence of the rights and obligations of both employers and contract "employees", particularly if these rights and obligations differ from those expected by the State. For example, an employer may be released from financial obligation to repatriate a worker if the parties have agreed that the worker will pay these costs.

H) Internal Mobility. The degree to which a non-Kuwaiti is permitted (or not permitted) to change his or her type of visa, or to move from a temporary stay to a residence permit, or to change employers has been subject to varying degrees of restriction or leniency at different points in time. "Controlled mobility" has been effected through the use of permits and required reporting of changes in a worker's status. For example, since the late 1970s labor mobility has been allowed, but controlled through the use of "cancellation and transfer" permits; similarly, private servants (who are not covered by the Labour Law) may enter the private sector labor market, but only under certain conditions, one of which is the original employer's written consent and notification to the Ministry of Interior.

I) Grace Periods. The length of time for which a non-Kuwaiti may legally remain in Kuwait following expiration of his or her visa, residence permit, or work permit is a policy tool that has been manipulated in a variety of ways and for varying purposes over the years. In the 1960's, the grace period allowed to departing government workers was lengthened to assure they had time to pay their debts; in the early 1980's, a grace period was permitted to undocumented workers, allowing them to regularize their status before the government's announced crackdown on illegals.

J) Penalties. Penalties (imposed on aliens and employers) for violation of Kuwaiti laws and regulations pertaining to migration have existed since the first bodies of law were set down. Their nature and severity, as well as the extent to which they have been enforced, has varied. Examples include fines, imprisonment, expulsion and deportation, confiscation of property, and (in the case of employers) suspension of work permit transactions with the Ministry of Labour.

K) National Preference. Policies that accord preference to one or another nationality or group have taken a variety of forms, ranging from laws to verbal directives verifiable only by the testimony of interview respondents. The Labour Law of 1964 gives preference to Kuwaitis, then to Arabs, and then to foreigners. Kuwaitization, or affirmative efforts to increase labor force participation and occupational mobility among Kuwaitis, is a long-standing, well-documented policy. Differentiation between Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis (eg. with respect to rights of ownership, housing, or social services) is also acknowledged policy, embodied in law. Diversification of the non-Kuwaiti population to prevent concentration of any one nationality is not reflected in available documentation but is widely reported.

L) Physical Control of Borders. Physical control over entry and exit is exercised by border authorities (passport control posts) at airports, seaports, and land routes to Kuwait. In addition, there are police posts positioned approximately every twenty kilometers around Kuwait's borders. \* Border authorities are the "front line" for implementation of policy tools regarding visa requirements, entry permits for work, and verification of departure. As reflected in the 1979 Order of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, the role of border authorities also has been closely linked to subsequent issuance of work permits and represents a practical means of linking security and manpower aspects of migration policy, particularly since introduction of computerized documentation networks.

The foregoing is a cross-sectional overview of twelve major tools or components of migration policy. The precise pattern or form or combination of these tools in use (or absent) at a given point in time depends on the objectives of migration policy that emerge from the economic, demographic and political context in which they are forged. Lessons from the Kuwait case as to how and why the use of these tools has changed over time is the subject of the next section.

---

\* Map of Kuwait, Gulf Union Company, Kuwait.



#### 4.4 The Context and Outcomes of Migration Policy Formulation: An Analytic View.

Chapter 3 traced the evolution of Kuwait's migration policy through seven distinct phases, each characterized by sharp changes in the economic, demographic and political context of policy formulation. This section now summarizes the context and policy outcome of each phase in order to highlight more clearly the policy determinants and objectives. Subsequently, (in Section 4.6) and in view of the objectives identified, the analysis will turn to consider the degree to which Kuwait's migration policies have been effective.

Drawing from the narrative in Chapters 1 and 3, Tables 4-2 through 4-8 summarize the major characteristics of the context of each phase and extract the principal migration policy objectives.

Phase One: 1959-1964. As summarized in Table 4-2,\* during the period immediately before and after independence Kuwait began its economic transition from development of infrastructure and social services (based largely on oil revenues) to diversification into banking and limited manufacturing. Demographically, the first major wave of immigration (during the 1950s) had brought non-Kuwaitis to

---

\* See Chapter 1, pp. 45-51; and Chapter 3, pp. 111-132.

comprise nearly 50 percent of the total population by 1961. Politically, the tasks at hand were at least threefold. The first was to lay the legal foundations of the independent State. The second was to assure that in so doing the control of Al-Sabah (the ruling family) was sustained through suitable attention to the needs of the major political factions: traditionally powerful merchant elites, Arab Nationalists (including at this point some younger merchant sons) and Kuwaiti Nationalists. After its formation in 1963, the National Assembly emerged as a forum for debate among these groups. A third major political task was to repel external challenges to the sovereignty of the new State, particularly from Iraq.

The migration-related policies promulgated in this period [policy actions 1-11 in Table 4-1 and Figure 4-1] reflect this context. The major bodies of law that, to this day, constitute the legal framework for migration policy were established: the Aliens Residence Law of 1959 and its amendments in 1962 and 1963; the Nationality (or Citizenship) Law of 1959 and its amendment of 1960; the Labour Law of 1964 (which replaced the Labour Law of 1959 and its two subsequent amendments); the 1960 Law of Commercial Companies; Law No. 1 of 1962 establishing the Ministry of Interior; and the Constitution, adopted in 1962.

The fact that these legal instruments were promulgated at all was determined by the requirements for the legal apparatus befitting a newly independent State. Their content, on the other hand, was shaped by the needs to secure internal support for the regime and to protect against external interference. How to accomplish both goals simultaneously? Securing internal regime support was dependent upon providing for continued economic growth, while at the same time assuring that the benefits of that growth were distributed primarily among Kuwaitis. Economic growth, in turn, was heavily dependent upon alien manpower, which had the potential not only for making economic and political demands, but for introducing security risks.

The content of policy actions in this period reflected these concerns in the careful balance struck between potentially competing objectives. The Aliens Residence Law of 1959, for example, contained several provisions that facilitated immigration: it allowed anyone entering on a visa to apply for a residence permit for one year; it allowed those who were deported to return with the permission of the security authorities (those expelled needed only to obtain the proper documents before returning); it expressly allowed renewal of residence permits "upon expiration"; it provided government with a mechanism to regularize the status of aliens without residence permits. At the same time, the Law provided for

a set of controls over aliens: it required residence permits for all aliens; it required that security authorities be notified of each trip abroad and that they approve absences of more than six months; and it provided penalties for the failure to be properly documented.

The Labour Law of 1964 struck a similar balance between facilitation of immigration for employment and control over the process. The eligibility criteria for work permits were clearly laid out and not necessarily particularly difficult to meet: legal entry, a valid passport, a residence permit, and good conduct. At the same time, control was exercised through the very requirement that non-Kuwaitis have work permits, that they must be renewed, that they were subject to cancellation (under clearly stated conditions), and that penalties might be imposed for violations. Furthermore, control over the employment of alien labor was retained firmly in the hands of government, with the provision that private, for-profit employment services were prohibited.

The apparent objectives of these policies were, then, to facilitate migration for employment, but to control the process. In this way, the broader objective of economic growth might be assured with minimum risk that the means of achieving it (ie. reliance on non-Kuwaiti manpower) would get out of hand.

Yet, assuring the manpower needs for economic growth that would place more resources at the disposal of the State was one thing. Providing guarantees to Kuwaitis that they would be the prime beneficiaries of these resources was another issue. Several provisions of the new laws addressed this point. The Nationality Law helped to ensure that the number of Kuwaitis (over whom benefits would be distributed) would remain relatively stable. The basic law of 1959 made foreigners eligible for citizenship after 8 years of residence if they were Arab, or after 15 years if they were non-Arab. The following year, in 1960, the eligibility period for Arabs was raised to 10 years. Eligibility was also dependent upon an alien's having a source of income, knowledge of Arabic, and qualifications needed by the country. However, eligibility did not mean that the acquisition of citizenship was automatic. An alien's application for citizenship had to be proposed by the Ministry of Interior and approved by the Council of Ministers; the State reserved the right to deny citizenship even to those who met the criteria.

Other provisions of the Nationality Law provided further restrictions: only 50 aliens would be granted citizenship in a given year under ordinary naturalization processes, and even those who became citizens would be restricted from voting or holding office "in any representative body" for a period of ten years.

Notwithstanding these restrictions, government was permitted to grant exceptional naturalizations, over and above the numerical limit, to those who had rendered notable service to Kuwait and to sons of Kuwaiti mothers under certain circumstances. This provision effectively provided government with the option to shape the composition of the citizenry to its advantage--an option which was to prove important in years to come.

The Nationality Law allowed government to restrict the numbers of Kuwaitis and helped to ensure that those who did become Kuwaitis would be loyal--or at least unable to do much political damage if they were not. The Law of Commercial Companies of 1960 helped to assure that any economic benefits would be retained in the hands of Kuwaitis. The basic law prohibited foreigners from establishing businesses except with Kuwaiti partners, who had to hold the majority interest (51 percent).

Non-nationals were banned altogether from ownership of banking and financial establishments. Subsequent amendments to the law, in 1964, further restricted import businesses and commercial agencies to Kuwaitis.

While these measures served the interests of building internal support among Kuwaitis, particularly among merchant groups and others with "economic interests", the authorities were not unmindful of the need to provide some

legitimate channels of expression for non-Kuwaitis. The Labour Law of 1964 permitted migrant workers to join and participate in trade unions. Although this privilege was not to take effect until five years after the promulgation of the law and did not include the right to vote or hold office, migrant workers were allowed to delegate a representative to express their views. Outside the framework of the Labour Law, they were also permitted to form "cultural clubs" and other types of "non-political" associations.

The Nationality, Commercial and Labour Laws addressed the matter of securing internal support. Other measures addressed Kuwait's need to protect against external threats. Small in both land area and population, and geographically exposed (to Iraq on the North, Saudi Arabia on the West, and Iran across the Gulf) Kuwait had adopted a two-pronged policy of neutrality and reciprocity (especially through trade and foreign aid) as its best defense.\* This broader foreign policy found expression in several aspects of migration-related policies adopted in this period. Kuwait's Constitution confirmed the State's participation in the community of Arab nations and reinforced that commitment by explicitly extending preferential status to Arabs, not only in the Constitution but in the Nationality and Labour Laws. The Aliens

---

\* See Walid Moubarak's study, "Kuwait's Quest for Security: 1961-1973" for discussion of these points.

Residence Law initially reflected the same principle, by providing that Arab nationals could be decreed exempt from the obligation to obtain visas. In the 1963 ammendment, however, as the strength of Arab Nationalism began to show in the National Assembly, this provision was altered to allow such exemptions only on the basis of reciprocal treatment of Kuwaitis and to extend the provision to non-Arabs as well as to Arabs. The change underscored the foreign policy objective behind the measure.

In summary, the first phase in the evolution of Kuwait's migration policies reflected the broad objectives of the political context in which they were formulated: to establish a legal framework for the new State; to build internal support, and to secure against outside threats. In so doing, migration-related policies gave priority to manpower needs by enabling relatively free entry; they took cognizance of security needs by controlling both that entry and the subsequent movement and status of the migrant inside Kuwait; and they laid the foundations of Kuwait's basic strategy of differentiation between Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis as a means to forge national identity and integration among Kuwaitis.

Phase Two: 1965-1966. The second phase of policy formulation, \* summarized in Table 4-3, was marked by

---

\* See Chapter 1, pp. 51-53; Chapter 3, pp. 132-139.



a drop in government surplus \* and a shift in the demographic balance between Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis. \*\* As of the 1965 census, the latter comprised nearly 53 percent of total population; Kuwaitis had become a minority in their own land. Politically, the Arab Nationalists posed a growing challenge to the power wielded by both the ruling family and the merchant elites. The Assembly's effectiveness as a political force was made clear in December 1964, when it played a major role in dissolution of the new Cabinet which had sought to redistribute power among factions of the ruling family and to include a number of merchants. The increasing aggressiveness of the Assembly and its Arab Nationalist bloc became further evident in its opposition to the government-supported Royalty agreement with the Kuwait Oil Company (KOC).\*\*\*

These changes in the economic, demographic and political climate were reflected in the migration-related policies of the period [policy actions 12-15 in Table 4-1 and Figure 4-1]. From the point of view of government, the major political tasks at hand were to preempt rising internal dissent by solidifying control over aliens while continuing to build the still fragile alliance with merchant groups. Migrants figured in this agenda in several ways. Their presence continued to be needed for economic growth; yet

---

\* See Tables 1-4 and 3-1.

\*\* See Table 1-1.

\*\*\* See Chapters 1 and 3.

the drop in surplus to its lowest point since independence had underscored the fact that resources at the disposal of government were limited. This state of affairs, in turn, sharpened debate over who would be eligible for benefits, ie. over who could become a Kuwaiti and what the political consequences of naturalized citizenship would be.

Accordingly, the Nationality Law was ammended in 1965 and again in 1966. Arabs resident since 1945 and non-Arabs resident since 1930 became eligible for exceptional naturalization (ie. their numbers were not limited to 50 per year). At the same time, political rights of naturalized citizens were further restricted: they would now have to wait 20 years (rather than 10 years) before being eligible to vote and the language of the Law was altered to assure that naturalized citizens would be prohibited altogether from holding public office. Both these amendments paved the way for new naturalizations and at the same time diminished the possibilities that naturalized migrants might add to the political power of the Arab Nationalist opposition.

The latter was not an idle concern. Although, as was stressed in Chapter 3, there was little evidence to suggest that migrants sought to express their concerns through the Assembly, there was little doubt that--had they done so--they would have found a sympathetic hearing among the Arab Nationalists, who were ideologically disposed to favor

leniency in allowing entry of their fellow Arabs and in the extension of rights and priveleges to them.

While merchant groups were generally conservative on the matter of migrant rights and privileges, they were less likely to see any need for restricting the entry of migrants, or for strictly controlling the conditions of migrants' employment once inside. Thus, although their reasons differed, and despite other conflicts between them, the merchants' attitude on entry and employment coincided more closely with that of the Arab Nationalist bloc than with that of government--a potential for alliance that was probably not lost on government.

The emergence of political unrest and the potential that migrants might pose a security threat prompted introduction of stricter controls over employment. To ensure these were exercised by an agency of government that would have security of the State and regime as its first concern, it was the Ministry of Interior that took initiative in 1965 to issue regulations governing aliens' work in Kuwait. Since the provisions were issued by ministerial decree, as regulations implementing the Aliens Residence Law, they neatly circumvented the public debate that a Law might have entailed. The Ministry of Interior's initiative also circumvented the fact that, under the 1964 Labour Law, responsibility for regulation of work permits was mandated

to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour--an agency whose very mission made it favorably disposed toward the views of the merchant community.

The content of Ministerial Decree No. 10 of 1965 served to establish the Ministry of Interior's control over aliens' employment, much in the same way it already had control over their entry and residence. The regulations gave a distinct and central role to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, but it was the Ministry of Interior which specified that role and coordinated the process of issuing work permits. For example, although it was Labour's task to issue No Objection Certificates, prior consultation with Interior was required to ensure that no undesirables received NOCs.

In fact, Kuwait's first regulations concerning work permits had a great deal more to do with security than with "organization of an efficient labor market" (as the objective of later such efforts was to be characterized). Applicants were required to reveal their sources of financial support, a measure designed to exclude not only potentially restive (and costly) indigents but also those with undesirable sources of institutional support. The employment of temporary residents was prohibited, obliging legitimate migrants for employment to go through the more stringent entry process, while making it more difficult

for infiltrators to sustain themselves on the local economy. Finally, the regulations reintroduced that classic compromise between manpower and security needs, the Declaration and Undertaking, by which the employer agreed to notify Interior when the employment relationship ceased and to repatriate that worker. An amendment to the Aliens Residence Law earlier in 1965 had put sharper teeth into enforcement of the Law and its regulations by providing for longer detentions and prison terms, as well as higher fines for violators than were provided for in earlier versions of the Alien's Residence Law or in the Labour Law.

The dwindling size of the Kuwaiti citizenry and the growing strength of liberal Arab Nationalists prompted another policy response. In 1965, government expanded the program to naturalize its traditional Bedouin supporters, most of whom were staunch Kuwaiti Nationalists. It was a move that would have both immediate and long range consequences for migration politics.

The second phase in evolution of Kuwait's migration policy, then, was marked by economic austerity, a tipping of the demographic balance, and the salience of internal struggles for power among the ruling family, the merchants, and the National Assembly, led by the Arab Nationalists. Both the content of migration-related policies and the ways in which they were formulated reflected the objectives of

controlling internal dissent in the present and limiting its growth in the future. Phase Two policies were characterized by continued emphasis on provision of manpower, but security issues were beginning to play a larger role in migration-related policy formulation. It was also becoming clear that both entry and naturalization policies had significant potential to alter the relative strength of domestic political factions.

Phase Three: 1967-1973. As summarized in Table 4-4,\* the third phase in evolution of Kuwait's migration policy witnessed modest but uneven economic growth. \*\* New immigration of Palestinians following the 1967 war was in part countered by recent and ongoing naturalization of Bedouin. When conflicts between government and the Arab Nationalists erupted in dissolution of the National Assembly in 1967, the ensuing elections demonstrated the effectiveness of the naturalization program: the Arab Nationalists were defeated and conservative Kuwaiti Nationalists emerged as the dominant faction in the new Assembly, amid outcries of election fraud.

The Arab Nationalists' defeat in the domestic elections coincided with the Arabs' more profound defeat in the 1967 war with Israel. Together, these events signalled the

---

\* See Chapter 1, pp. 53-54; Chapter 3, pp. 140-153.

\*\* See Table 1-4 and 3-1.

increasing radicalization of Kuwait's Arab Nationalists (accompanied by the growing disaffection of their early merchant supporters) deepening cleavages between Arab Nationalists and Kuwaiti Nationalists, and the onset of a new wave of security incidents, perceived as linked to wider regional conflicts. The two most salient political tasks were thus to control internal unrest and to further weaken Arab Nationalist opposition. If addressing these issues simultaneously helped to rectify--or at least preserve--the numerical balance between Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis which had become evident in Phase Two, so much the better.

The five migration-related policies adopted during this period [policy actions 16-20 in Figure 4-1 and Table 4-1] reflected this climate. Law No. 17 of 1968 amended the Aliens Residence Law to strengthen the penalties against those who entered illegally. In 1969, Ministry of Interior Decree No. 3 rescinded earlier provisions of the Aliens Residence Law that had allowed reciprocal waiver of visa requirements. Now, all non-Kuwaitis were required to obtain a visa, whatever their country of origin.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, as the Ministry of Interior implemented the full range of tools at its disposal to clamp down on new immigration altogether, rates of growth in the non-Kuwaiti population dropped, \* reaching

---

\* See Chapter 3, pp. 149-150.

a low of 2 percent between 1974 and 1975. When coupled with growth in the citizenry from naturalization, the result was maintenance of the proportional sizes of the Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti populations at their 1965 levels.

Simultaneously, growth in the Kuwaiti population gave rise to calls for Kuwaitization of the labor force. Despite the fact that Kuwaitization was severely impeded by the levels of education and skill prevailing among new citizens in particular, Kuwaitization was a cause around which Kuwaiti Nationalists could rally. By the end of the third phase, the manpower constraints on economic growth resulting from these policies were beginning to be felt.

During the third phase of policy evolution, then, domestic security issues, linked to regional political events, came to dominate migration policy formulation. The political consequences of naturalization--the growing numbers and strength of conservative Kuwaiti Nationalists factions--prompted new emphasis on the position of Kuwaitis in the labor market. In the changing rates of demographic growth among Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis were the seeds of the next phase in policy evolution.

Phase Four: 1974-1977. Shortly after the oil price rise of 1973, government signed an agreement giving it 60 percent ownership of Kuwait Oil Company. Much as the



renegotiation of the oil concession agreement in 1951 had placed new resources in the hands of government, so too did the price rise, together with this shift in ownership, give the state expanded resources for development. \* As in the 1950s, government expenditures were channelled through the private sector, resulting in increased labor demand. As summarized in Table 4-5, these shifts in the economic context coincided with the lowest annual rate of increase in the non-Kuwaiti population (2 percent) since well before independence. Politically, the most salient task was to enable the use of Kuwait's renewed economic prosperity to solidify regime support in the face of an increasingly contentious National Assembly.

Domestically, migration issues were coming to play a more central role in political debate, sharpening tensions between the more liberal Arab Nationalists and the more conservative Kuwaiti Nationalist factions, heightened by the election campaign of 1975 and subsequent parliamentary sessions. Regional events of the preceding years, together with low rates of immigration, had altered somewhat the grounds of debate about migrants and migration: liberals argued for the inclusion of migrants' concerns in the candidates' political agenda, while conservatives feared that Kuwait's traditional policy of neutrality was threatened by the Assembly's support for the migrants'

---

\* See Chapter 1, pp. 55-58; and Chapter 3, pp. 154-171.

homeland issues. Liberals protested the denial of citizenship rights to long-resident migrants, while conservatives argued that migrants already enjoyed higher rates of employment and promotion than did Kuwaitis. In short, the focus of debate was on the role and status of migrants in Kuwait rather than on whether immigration itself should continue.

This focus, however, did not make the debate any the less acrimonious. On the contrary, as was discussed in Chapter 3, "migration politics" were implicated among the factors leading to dissolution of the National Assembly in 1976. Why then did government adopt a radically more liberalized set of immigration policies? Economic pressures to lift restrictions on immigration were rapidly mounting and may have driven the push toward more liberal immigration policies, but the political climate was not as conducive to change as the acrimonious tone of the migration debate at first might suggest. Although debate raged over the rights and status of migrants, the merchant elites, Arab Nationalists and Shia merchants active in retail trade all had vested economic and political interests in allowing new immigration. While Kuwaiti Nationalists, including many Bedouin, were more dubious about the consequences of immigration, it was difficult to foreclose the prospects of economic benefits on ideological grounds alone. The fact that all of the six policy actions taken during this period

[No.s 21-26 in Table 4-1 and Figure 4-1] were adopted by the very government with which Kuwaiti Nationalists were so loyally alligned made critique especially awkward for them. The first policy action was made by the Council of Ministers, in Resolution No. 16 of 8 April 1974, which loosened the Ministry of Interior's control over immigration and transferred regulation of employment activity to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour.

The following year, as government assumed total control over KOC, the Minister of Interior issued Decree No. 22, several provisions of which reflected a shift to "manpower driven" (rather than "security driven") policy. The requirement that all immigrants have entry visas (imposed in 1969) was lifted, leaving in place the original provisions of the Law that allowed for waiver of visas by reciprocal agreement. Entry visas for work would be granted by Interior on the strength of certificates (or licenses or permits) issued by the employing institution. The requirement that NOCs be issued in advance was replaced by permission for authorities to issue transit or temporary entry visas at airports, border posts and ports. After gaining entry, aliens were now permitted to remain without a residence permit for up to one month and could change the type and purpose of their residence permit regardless of how they entered. The effect of these provisions was to make it feasible for those who had entered on transit or

temporary visas to find employment and to remain in Kuwait. Restrictions on the movement of those already holding residence permits were similarly loosened. Aliens with valid residence permits would no longer be required to have "return visas" if they travelled outside Kuwait; those whose permits had expired were permitted a grace period of one month before they had to depart. Transfer of residence permits from one employer to another were also allowed with permission from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour.

In 1976, Interior added an additional article to its decree of the previous year, providing that an ordinary residence permit (ie. "not for work") might be granted to anyone able to prove a means of covering his or her expenses. In addition, the article gave Interior the discretion to exempt people from proving a source of income and at the same time to grant them a residence permit for work. While good conduct certificates were still required in order to obtain a residence permit, the doors were effectively opened to all who could get themselves to Kuwait and sustain themselves until they found employment.

Other policy statements of this period similarly reflected the intent to liberalize immigration. While never adopted, the draft Five Year Plan considered in 1976 clearly based its projections of rapid growth on immigration. In its

annual report for 1977, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour stated its policy to "eliminate all obstacles to labour inflow and create stability and continuity" in the labor market. The Ministry of Interior's decree of 1977 regulating employment of private servants reflected similar objectives. Servants were granted residence permits for up to five years; their presence and status in Kuwait was tied to their employers, who were responsible for repatriating them; and their residence permits could be revoked if they broke contract. On the other hand, it was also possible for them to secure new permits with the consent of their original employer.

The fact that many of the new immigrants who poured into Kuwait as a result of these policy changes were Asians was at least in part the result of economic and structural factors. Asians offered lower wages together with relatively high levels of skill and education at a point in time when traditional Arab labor supplying countries were beginning to experience manpower constraints in their own development programs. The entry of Asian contractors (supported by their governments) into international bidding on turn-key projects throughout the Gulf also facilitated the entry of Asian workers. The absence of written documentation concerning explicit Gulf state policies promoting the entry of Asians did not obscure the possibility that Kuwait and the other countries of the Gulf

may well have found this shift in national composition politically advantageous. The Asian workers were disciplined and temporary, unlikely to make the same moral and political claims on the host society as Arab migrants. The resulting fragmentation of the migrant community promised to diffuse debate over the rights of migrants as well.

In the fourth phase of policy evolution, then, with the resources available to it from the oil price increase, Kuwait faced an unprecedented opportunity to invest in further economic growth at the very point in time when a reduced rate of immigration made its longstanding manpower constraint even tighter. At first glance, the political environment may have appeared inpropitious for liberalizing immigration policy. Kuwaiti nationalists, their ranks swelled by naturalized Bedouin, had become a political force to be reckoned with. They were vocal in their opposition to some aspects of migration, notably to the tendency for migrants to "import" their own political issues and to seek expression for them inside Kuwait. Still, even before dissolution of the National Assembly made debate on migrant issues less visible, government took steps to liberalize immigration policy. That it chose to do so was the probable result of careful political calculation. Whatever portion of conservative opposition focused on further immigration per se, it was outweighed by

consideration of the foregone opportunities if a manpower bottleneck were to choke off possibilities for economic growth. With greater revenues at its disposal, government possessed the means not only to stimulate economic growth but also to compensate opponents to immigration through generous social welfare benefits, at least until such time as migration-fuelled growth itself could begin to engage the economic-self interest of those opponents. Meanwhile, merchants, Arab Nationalists, and migrants could be counted on to support the new policies which were, once more, dominated by manpower considerations.

Phase Five: 1978-1979.\* Just as the wave of growth in the first policy phase had been followed in 1965-66 by a move toward greater control, so was the fourth phase followed by a period of consolidation in the fifth. The economic climate was variable: several years of economic growth during the preceding period had been followed by a mild recession and potential budget deficit in 1977. A cautiously more optimistic outlook in 1978 was followed by the second oil price rise in 1979. Demographically, the non-Kuwaiti population had not only increased at rates approaching 10 percent per year for the previous four years, but the composition of that increase was becoming notably Asian. Further, the traditional Arab labor-supplying countries found themselves losing "market share" not only to Asians but to other Arabs, particularly to Egyptians. Politically, the accession of Sheikh Jabir Ahmad following the death of Sheikh Sabah in late 1977 signalled the beginning of new attention to administrative reforms. As reflected in Table 4-6, this turn of events gave new prominence to the need for balancing labor market stability with concerns over the settlement of migrants.

In the balance between manpower and security objectives, manpower still carried the greater weight. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour now took initiatives to "fine

---

\* See Chapter 1, pp. 55-58; Chapter 3, pp. 172 to 192.



tune" the labor market in ways that would bring about a greater degree of stability and continuity, as the high costs of rapid labor turnover\* and competition from other labor-receiving countries began to be felt. In its Annual Report on Immigrant Labour for 1978, the Ministry noted introduction of several measures to address these problems: a requirement that workers remain with their employers for one year; restrictions on recruitment of new immigrant labor in sectors with "redundancies"; an increase in the period of validity for residence permits from 2 to 5 years.

The dominance of manpower concerns was also evident in Ministerial Decrees No.s 37 and 39, issued by Labour in 1979. In contrast to Interior's 1965 decree governing aliens' work in Kuwait (which had reflected security concerns), Labour's decree emphasized control of the labor market, particularly through the system of work permits. The decrees' provisions were directed toward employers and their relationship to the labor importation process; greater employer accountability at all stages of the process (from recruitment to cancellation and departure) was a primary objective, with more stringent documentation and reporting requirements as the tools for its attainment.

---

\* The number of cancellations and departures had reached an all-time high; in addition, migrant workers reportedly took whatever jobs they could find and then switched employers. Hence the significance of eliminating "redundancies", or work permits for positions that were not really needed.

Accordingly, the 1979 decree called for documentation that would prove the legitimacy of the business enterprise. To assure that Kuwaiti employers could be held fully accountable for their immigrant workers (and to prevent non-Kuwaitis from generating "unnecessary" immigration), work permit applications would be accepted only if signed by the Kuwaiti owner or an agent "from among his ancestry or offspring". The trading of work permits was precluded by the requirement obligating the employer to engage the worker for whom a permit had been obtained. Under the redefinition of "Declaration and Undertaking", employers were held responsible for the immigrant workers they had brought in, throughout the period of employment and even afterwards unless contractual agreements between the parties contravened this requirement.

Control over entry (without actual limitations) and labor market mobility were also apparent objectives of the decree. The Declaration and Undertaking was to be accompanied by either a copy of the work permit stamped by the border authorities or by a release from the previous employer. The effect of this was to ensure that the appropriate type of work permit (entry for work or cancellation and transfer) had been secured. Similarly, employers were required to submit cancellation and departure permits stamped by border authorities for workers

who left Kuwait. A certain degree of policy consistency (if not coordination) was evident in Decree No. 54 issued in 1979 by the Ministry of Interior. This limited the situations in which visit visas could be transferred into residence permits to individuals joining government service, private servants, and those joining family supporters. In effect, this meant that those wanting to enter Kuwait for work in the private sector had to go through the process specified by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour.

A third objective of Labour's 1979 decree was a better database about the immigrant laborforce. The various measures that had the effect of increasing work permit registrations went part way toward meeting this objective. A requirement that worker's educational qualifications and passport particulars be submitted was a further measure toward this end, as was the requirement that employers notify the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour of any change in the worker's status.

Finally, the decree sought to strengthen the ability of the Ministry to enforce its control over the labor market by making employers who failed to comply with its several provisions subject to having their transactions with the Ministry suspended: no compliance, no work permits.

In short, the evident intent of Labour's 1978 and 1979 policy actions was to regulate and control the labor market by means of a well-functioning system of work permit registrations that would ensure stability and continuity of the labor force and eliminate redundancies or unnecessary immigration. Although it was recognized that control measures of any kind had the potential to constrain immigration, there was no evidence that the intent at this time was to limit the number of workers entering the country or otherwise to impede the flow of labor.

While, in principle, employers were likely to find any form of government interference in the labor market irksome, in fact the policy actions of this period [no.s 27 to 31 in Table 4-1 and Figure 4-1] contained several advantages for employers. The requirement that work permit applications be signed by a Kuwaiti reinforced the control of Kuwaiti business owners relative to that of their immigrant managing partners; the measures to reduce turnover helped to reduce costs of recruitment, hiring and training; those measures which increased employer accountability for immigrant labor also served to increase workers' dependence upon employers, making it more difficult for labor to organize.

There is evidence, however, that concern was beginning to mount (within government at least) over one likely

consequence of the policies to reduce turnover: increased settlement. In 1978, various measures were introduced to restrict the entry of dependents. These were codified in Labour's 1979 decree, which restricted employment of dependents to those whose residence permits were issued before promulgation of the decree.

Despite signs of growing ethnic tensions (between Arab and Asian migrants, within the community of Arab migrants, and between Arab migrants and Kuwaitis), there was little observable policy response to these developments. Indeed, some observers have argued privately that government was not unhappy with a certain amount of tension and, in fact may have encouraged it. While wage rate differentials and the changing occupational structure of the labor force could account for some of the changing national composition of immigration, some argued that a more deliberate (if unannounced) policy of diversification was being pursued for strategic reasons: to reduce reliance on any one labor-supplying country, to reduce the predominance of any one migrant group inside Kuwait, and to diffuse the possibilities of potentially troublesome coalitions among migrant groups. In any case, by 1979 some groups were being differentially affected by the changes occurring in the labor force: the number of new work permit issues to Jordanians and Palestinians was down across all sectors, while those to Egyptians rose. In addition, the number of

different nationalities present in Kuwait had increased significantly.

Whether or not government was adopting deliberate policies that encouraged tension among migrant groups, the policies it did adopt to distinguish Kuwaitis from non-Kuwaitis had the effect of sharpening differences between these two groups. Law No. 75 of 1979 prohibited non-nationals from holding title to housing (a measure also consistent with policies to deter settlement) had this effect, particularly in view of other recent laws permitting rent increases of up to 100 percent every five years. Restrictions on migrants' access to "free" government educational facilities was another such policy.

In summary, during phase five, manpower issues continued to dominate migration policy actions. The objectives of the measures adopted reflected government's concern with gaining firmer control over the recent rates and composition of demographic change and over likely socio-political consequences of increased settlement.

Phase Six: 1980-1983.\* During the sixth phase of policy evolution, there occurred marked shifts in the economic, demographic, and political context of policy formulation. As summarized in Table 4-7, declining world demand for

---

\* See Chapter 1, pp. 59-61; Chapter 3, pp. 193-220.

oil resulted in sharp declines in both oil prices and government revenues. Kuwait's domestic economy, already rocked by shifts in the oil market and effects of the Iran-Iraq war, was dealt a further blow by the collapse of the unofficial stock market, Suq al-Manakh.

Demographically, the results of high rates of labor immigration during the previous five years were brought to public attention by the 1980 census, which showed a sharp drop in the proportion of Kuwaitis--from 47 percent of total population in 1975 to barely over 41 percent in 1980.\* Simultaneously, the proportion of Asians in total population had risen more than 5 percentage points \*\* and Asians now comprised over a quarter of all non-Kuwaitis. The numbers of Christians and other non-Muslim groups had more than doubled.\*\*\*

The political agenda was dominated by two interrelated issues: 1) growing domestic unrest (together with a rising number of security incidents) which echoed regional political tensions following the Iranian revolution and the onset of the Iran-Iraq war; and the growing strength of conservative political factions--Bedouin and Islamic.

Together, these changes altered the internal political context of policy formation. The declining proportion of

---

\* See Table 1-1.

\*\* See Table 1-5 for number of Asians as of 1980.

\*\*\* Annual Statistical Abstract 1984, p. 26, Table 11.

Kuwaitis, changes in the composition of the Arab migrant community and the growing proportion of Asians introduced a new complexity in Kuwait's migration politics. Whereas a decade earlier the relative homogeneity of the migrant population gave a certain unity to their interests, the new heterogeneity among migrants created new possibilities for multiple cleavages and shifting alliances. The interests of Arab migrants (as well as the perceived legitimacy of their claims) were now distinguishable from those of Asians. Furthermore, the growing Islamic sentiment not only heightened tensions between Muslims and non-Muslims, it cut across Shia-Sunni differences, and gave Muslims (both Arab and non-Arab) new grounds for claiming support among Kuwait's newly politicized religious factions.

The objectives of migration-related policies enacted during phase six [policy actions 31-38 in Table 4-1 and Figure 4-1] reflected the changes in policy context in several ways. First, in the face of heightened regional tensions, security issues gained in importance relative to manpower considerations, even as Kuwait's manpower needs continued to remain in view. The mutually reinforcing nature of actions by Interior and Labour, as well as the content of those actions, suggests that the balance struck was a conscious one. The Ministry of Interior had responded to Kuwaiti Shia demonstrations of support for the new Iranian regime by cracking down on undocumented aliens, deporting some 18,000. By April 1980, at signs of growing



unrest, Interior had launched a campaign to deport illegal workers. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, for its part, encouraged the registration of workers by halting the issuance of new entry permits, abolishing block quotas (for hiring from abroad), and requiring that unskilled labor be hired from within Kuwait. The objectives were to increase registration and ensure that only legitimate workers remained in Kuwait.

Efforts toward these objectives were intensified in 1982, with the promulgation of Law No. 55 and Decree No. 262, amending and enforcing the Aliens Residence Law. The salience of security concerns was evident in the preamble to the explanatory notes for Law No. 55, which expressly considered anyone without a residence permit to have "daringly violate[d]" State sovereignty. The grace period that had allowed an alien to remain for one month without a residence permit was eliminated. Decree No. 262 gave illegal aliens until November 1982 to regularize their position or face the new, stiffer penalties authorized by Law No. 55. In a series of related measures enacted in September 1982, Interior imposed restrictions on visits by immigrants' relatives and upon family accompaniment (lest dissidents attempt to enter as relatives or dependents) and required security checks or "endorsements" by Kuwaiti embassies abroad before entry permits would be issued.

While there is little evidence to suggest that government sought an absolute reduction in the non-Kuwaiti workforce at this point, there were signs that, even as they preserved the existing manpower supply, the authorities were strengthening the legal foundations that would give them the option to make reductions if they should choose to do so at some point in the future.\* Accordingly, Law No. 55 provided for more frequent renewal of residence permits for government workers and required the employer's permission before the government worker could transfer into the private sector. The Law still permitted private servants to transfer into the private sector labor force but tightened government control over the process.

Policy actions during this phase were not confined to matters concerning the "manpower dimension" of the immigrant population or the immediate security risks that population might introduce. The changes in the demographic composition of the total population and changes in the domestic political context raised much deeper social and cultural issues. With a keener sense of their status as a numerical minority, and faced not only with the familiar distinctions among different Arab groups but now with the far more alien cultures of South and East Asian migrants, many Kuwaitis perceived a challenge to the fundamental character of the society. In 1980, the Council of

---

\* Meanwhile, the heightened sense of job insecurity could only discourage migrants from becoming more vocal.

Ministers responded to these circumstances by enacting administrative changes to the Nationality Law. The original Nationality Law had limited the number of people eligible for ordinary naturalization to 50 per year. The amendment of 1960 had set the required period of residence for Arabs at ten years and that for non-Arabs at 15 years. With Law 100 of 1980, the Council of Ministers laid the groundwork for permitting an increase in naturalizations \* by making the annual number subject to yearly specification by the Council of Ministers. To help forestall naturalization of the most recent wave of migrants, the residency period was raised to 15 years for Arabs and 20 years for non-Arabs. The Nationality Law said nothing about religion, however, a fact that was thrown into sharper relief as political debate reminded Kuwaitis that Islam offered a unifying social, cultural and religious principle. The amendment to the Nationality Law passed by the National Assembly in 1982 restricting citizenship to Muslims (although opposed by more progressive Kuwaitis) was a signal of how deeply the migration phenomenon was felt by some to threaten Kuwait's social fabric.

In summary, as regional political tensions mounted, the migration-related policies of the sixth phase reflected the growing importance of security issues relative to manpower needs. Measures enabling government to limit new

---

\* See Table 3-2 for evidence of subsequent increased naturalizations.

immigration were strengthened but not yet implemented. Following changes to the Nationality Law enacted by the Council of Ministers, however, government took steps to augment the size of the Kuwaiti citizenry through increased numbers of naturalizations. Kuwaiti's deepening concern over the effects of migration on the cultural fabric of the society and the growing strength of Islamic political factions were evident in the National Assembly's restriction of citizenship to Muslims.

Phase Seven: 1984-1985. \* During the seventh and final phase in this analysis of Kuwait's migration policy evolution, the context of policy formulation again shifted. As summarized in Table 4-8, government responded to continued economic decline by drawing down on reserves to maintain a stable level of expenditures.\*\* Results of the 1985 census confirmed what many suspected would be the result of continued immigration during the previous phase: despite an increase in the number of naturalizations, the proportion of Kuwaitis in total population had dropped to 40 percent.\*\*\* Politically, security issues achieved new prominence following the 1983 bombings of Kuwaiti, French, and American targets in Kuwait, the 1984 hijacking of a Kuwaiti airliner, and the attempted assassinations of a

---

\* See Chapter 1, pp. 61-64; and Chapter 3, pp. 221-261.

\*\* See Table 1-4

\*\*\* See Table 1-1

prominent newspaper editor and the Amir himself in 1985.

Policy measures enacted during this period [actions 39-43 in Table 4-1 and Figure 4-1] reflected heightened sensitivity to security issues. Several provisions of the Ministry of Labour's Decree No. 77 (issued shortly after Interior's 1984 call for a halt to immigration) addressed security concerns: the decree required that the declaration and undertaking be signed by a worker's embassy, and that employers disclose the location of their home office and branches. The provision forbidding employers to engage workers with no permits or with permits for other jobs made explicit the illegality of employing aliens who were not properly registered.

The most salient feature of the decree, however, was its reflection of intentions to reduce rates of immigration. This was accomplished in two ways. First, it reasserted the provision of the 1964 labor law (omitted in the 1979 regulations) that work permits were valid for 2 years, renewable annually; further, it stipulated that the Ministry has the right not to renew permits. The effect of these measures was to create opportunities for terminating non-Kuwaiti workers. Secondly, however, the decree provided for some flexibility in the internal labor market by adopting a measure (consistent with the 1982 modification to the Aliens Residence Law) allowing servants

to enter the private sector labor market and by omitting "local labor market needs" as one of the criteria specified for issuance of work permits. If the outcome of the policy debate were to be reduced rates of immigration, at least Labour would be positioned to assure that some portion of manpower needs could be met from the existing labor pool. In fact, work permit issues for this period showed a drop in the number of Entry and First Time permits and a substantial rise in the number of Renewals and Transfers. \*

The likelihood that pressures to reduce immigration would result in greater reliance on those migrants already in Kuwait was evident in continuing concern over settling and its effects on the dependency ratio among non-Kuwaitis. The 1985 hike in the salary level required for dependent accompaniment was one effort to discourage settlement. Yet it was also clear that there were humane (and political) limits to prohibitions on family reunification. The Ministry of Interior's easing of restrictions on the return of migrants' children in 1985 signalled government's recognition that these limits had probably been reached.

Security was not the only salient migration-related issue on the political agenda. The antagonism toward immigrants that security incidents engendered was echoed in other, growing sources of disaffection with the migration

---

\* See Figure 3-1.

process. Studies and conferences proclaimed the deleterious influence of foreigners on the fabric of Kuwaiti culture and identity. The "social costs" of immigration were not merely intangible: in the face of declining revenues and new evidence concerning expenditures for education and health services to non-Kuwaitis, the perceived financial costs of social services for migrants reemerged as a public issue. Finally, as Kuwait pondered its strategy for future economic and social development, the sheer size of the non-Kuwaiti population and the shrinking proportion of Kuwaitis became a focal point of debate.

As the scope of the issues at stake broadened to include the perceived socio-cultural costs and consequences of immigration, so too did the ground of the argument shift, from 'security versus manpower needs' to 'population balance versus economic growth'. Both the process and the content of policy formulation reflected this change. For the Ministry of Interior, security remained the most salient issue; not surprisingly, Interior adopted the most extreme position in the debate over the future of migration, with the Minister of Interior, in 1984, calling for an end to further immigration and, in 1985, for an outright limitation on the number of non-Kuwaitis. Interior took these positions, however, in the context of a wider debate over "population balance": whether to aim for

it, how to achieve it, and how much to trade off against it in targets for economic growth.

The principal vehicle for this debate was consideration of Kuwait's draft Five Year Plan. In it, government posed the central question: would Kuwait continue to pursue a strategy of economic growth predicated on continued immigration? The fact that the migration question could be posed in just this way, as well as the decidedly moderate tone of the answer that emerged, was in part a product of yet another shift in the political context. Apart from the bureaucratic participants in this debate (Interior and Labour) there were now at least four other factions, whose relative positions in Kuwait's political arena were of some consequence for the outcome of the population debate. The Arab Nationalist groups had not fared well in the elections of 1981, when Sunni conservatives had swept to victory. By 1985, however, enthusiasm for unfettered Islamism had dampened; in the election results, the coalition of Arab Nationalists and other progressives emerged once again as the opposition. Meanwhile, the composition of the religious factions was also altered by the elections: the Sunnis lost two conservative members and two conservative Shia were replaced by more moderate members. For the first time, Bedouin districts returned not only traditional leaders but also several educated members. In the population debate that followed the election, the views of



the merchant elite were clearly articulated by the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce (KCC).

As reflected in the final version of the Plan, the policy objectives and the means to achieve them were decidedly moderate. If, in its boldest form, the question was "Is it time to call a halt to immigration?" (as the Minister of Planning had put it), the answer was, "Not a halt, but a definite slowdown." The Plan's specific targets reflected this overarching objective. The annual average GDP growth rate of 3.9 percent was a modest one, and, like the targets for increased productivity, consistent with reducing the proportion of non-Kuwaitis in the population. The Plan called for Kuwaitis' labor force participation rate to increase from 18 to 23.7 percent. The continuing commitment to Kuwaitization was reflected in a renewed emphasis on training Kuwaitis for technical and professional jobs and on enhancing their managerial skills.

All these objectives had to do with the workforce; they differed from earlier pronouncements of migration-related policies not only in their specificity but also in being linked to the underlying economic choices on which immigration was based. The seriousness of Kuwait's intent to achieve a fundamental change in population balance was also reflected in the consideration of a broader set of population objectives. Interior's proposal to limit

outright the number of foreigners was rejected in parliamentary committee. The 1984 amendment to the Nationality Law enacted by the National Assembly reimposing restrictions on the annual number of ordinary naturalizations was a two-pronged message to government. On the one hand, it made clear that naturalization was a recognized tool for redressing population imbalance; on the other hand, by limiting ordinary naturalizations to 500, the Assembly signalled its preference for continued restrictions on the the size of the Kuwaiti citizenry. The Five Year Plan's stated intent to further reduce infant mortality was an objective with longer range consequences. Over the medium term, planned reductions in the dependency ratio among non-Kuwaitis addressed not only population balance but the evidence of increased settling as well.

Under the combined pressure from security incidents, current economic conditions, recent rates of demographic change, and the social costs of migration, Kuwait was at last moving to tackle the underpinnings of population structure and migration policy.

#### 4.5 The Determinants of Migration Policy

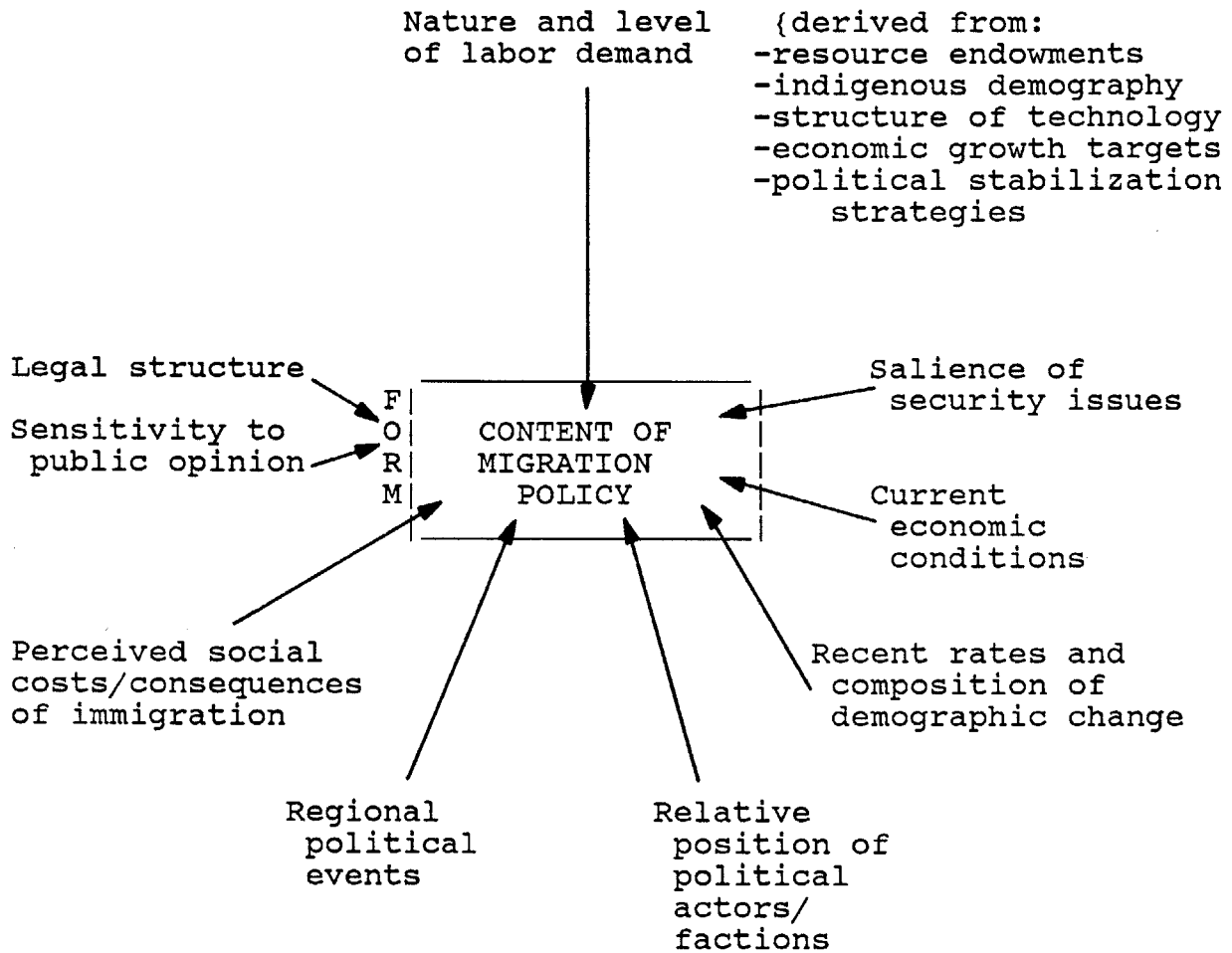
Having summarized the context of migration policy formulation in Kuwait, what can we conclude about the

determinants of those policies? The first point that emerges from the foregoing analysis is that there are multiple determinants. There are also at least two dimensions of policy to be explained: their form and, more importantly, their content. As was suggested in section 4.3, the component elements of policy content, the set of tools that are manipulated to achieve a given outcome, have remained fairly constant. What can be seen to change in the course of policy evolution is the objectives toward which these tools are directed. These objectives, in turn, result from the interactions among determinants in a given policy context.

Just as there is a recurring set of policy components, so is there a set of definable migration policy determinants that can now be seen to have remained fairly constantly in evidence over the past quarter century in Kuwait, even as their relative importance and the effects of their interactions with one another have changed. Figure 4-2, on the following page, represents these schematically.

The forms that policy actions have taken result from at least two factors: the prevailing legal structure and the sensitivity of the policy content to public opinion. Thus, with respect to the first factor, in the period immediately following independence, when Kuwait was in process of establishing the legal foundations of the State,

FIGURE 4-2: DETERMINANTS OF MIGRATION POLICY IN KUWAIT, 1959-1985



migration-related policy actions tended to find expression in basic laws. Many later policy actions took the form of amendments to these laws, or of ministerial decrees implementing these laws. Occasionally, the particular form of a migration-related policy action could be seen to result from the interaction between the available legal structure and the particular nature of the policy content. For example, in 1974, the transfer of responsibility for regulation of employment activity from the Ministry of Interior to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, being an interministerial issue, was effected by a resolution of the Council of Ministers. Similarly, the matter of whether a law is enacted by the National Assembly or Amiri decree depends not only upon whether the Assembly is in session, but on the source of the interest and initiative for its passage in the first place.

At the other end of a spectrum of formality are forms of policy the very existence of which can only be surmised from systematic patterns of outcome and verbal reports of their existence. Here, the sensitivity of the policy content to adverse public opinion plays a role in the choice of form. Policies having to do with nationality preferences are the most salient examples. At the most aggregate level, there is no hesitation to declare that Kuwaitis will be given preference over other Arabs, who in turn will be given preference over foreigners. The 1964

Labour Law includes a provision to this effect. Overt written expressions of official preferences for one Arab group over another or for Asians over Arabs have not been found, although such preferences, based on political and security considerations, are widely believed to have the force of policy and indirect evidence as to the existence of such policies has been discussed in Chapter 3.

With respect to the content of migration-related policies, seven determinants appear and reappear, with varying degrees of prominence, over nearly 25 years of policy history covered by this study. Each can be expected to affect a somewhat different aspect of migration policy, with correspondingly different consequences. For purposes of moving toward a set of empirically testable propositions, the following analysis links these determinants to several selected, measurable policy objectives. These relationships are depicted in Figure 4-3 on the following page. These few variables do not capture the full effects of the interaction of policy determinants, nor are they a complete listing of policy objectives. But they help illustrate the type of analysis toward which it is feasible to move, once we have gained a better understanding of both the determinants and consequences of migration policy.

FIGURE 4-3: EXPECTED RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN  
MAJOR DETERMINANTS OF MIGRATION-RELATED POLICIES  
AND SELECTED ASPECTS OF POLICY CONTENT

AREA & DIRECTION OF LIKELY ASSOCIATION			
MAJOR DETERMINANT	Number of Immigrants	Control over Status & Mobility	Differentiation betw. Nationals and Migrants
1. LABOR DEMAND	+	-	~
2. SALIENCE OF SECURITY	-	+	+
3. ECONOMIC CLIMATE	+	-	-
4. RATES/COMPOSIT DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE	±	+	+
5. POSITION OF POLITICAL ACTORS	±	±	±
6. REGIONAL POLITICAL CONFLICT	-	+	+
7. PERCEIVED SOCIAL COSTS/ CONSEQUENCES	-	+	+

Key: + positive association  
- negative association  
~ indeterminant outcome  
± variable outcome

The first, and most fundamental policy determinant is the nature and level of labor demand, also called "manpower" and "economic growth" factors in discussion of the Kuwait case. It is not the purpose of this study to explain labor demand in Kuwait; numerous economic studies have already done so. Yet to understand fully the role of labor demand in the formulation of migration policy content (which this study does seek to illuminate), it is important to stress that this demand is, in turn, derived from other factors, including the nature of Kuwait's resource endowments; the particular characteristics and limitations of the country's indigenous demography; the structure of the economy and the technology it has employed; and the economic growth strategies Kuwait has pursued. One might add here a fifth factor, political stabilization strategies, for if Kuwait had not chosen to use the broad extension of social benefits or public sector employment of Kuwaitis as strategies for encouraging regime support, the country's demand for immigrant labor might well have been different. Be that as it may, overall, labor demand may be expected to be positively associated with the number of immigrant workers. Other things being equal (which they seldom are) it may be argued from empirical evidence in the Kuwait case that increased labor demand is negatively associated with strictures over internal status and mobility: in both the early 1960s and the period between 1974 and 1977, when labor demand was particularly strong, strictures on status



and mobility were notably relaxed. There are also aspects of migration policy that labor demand will not necessarily affect in a predictable way, such as the degree of differentiation sought between migrants and Kuwaitis. Kuwait's choice to employ a differentiation strategy was fundamentally a political decision concerning how best to achieve a sense of national identity and integration. The effects of other policy determinants on the differentiation objective are predicated on this fundamental strategic decision.

The second major determinant of migration policy content that emerges from the Kuwait case is the salience of security issues. Over time, security incidents have included bombings, strikes, hijackings, and attempted assassinations inside Kuwait, as well as threats of incursion or attack from outside. The incidents have been directed toward Kuwaiti targets and toward targets associated with foreign governments. Their "salience" can be measured not only by their number and severity, but by some bayesian estimate of the probability that they could seriously affect the internal stability of the country. Empirically, the increased salience of security issues is associated with a decline in the number of immigrants entering for work; it may also be argued to affect the composition of immigration although exactly how depends upon other factors, such as perceptions of risk (or safety)

associated with different national groups. Increased salience of security issues is positively associated with increased control over internal status and mobility. Similarly, to the extent that immigrants embody the sense of threat, it is probably positively associated with the degree of differentiation between migrants and the national population, although the prospect of migrants' involvement in security incidents may have played some role in keeping social distinctions from being more pronounced than they are.

A third major determinant of migration policy content is the current economic climate. This encompasses something more than labor demand, although the two are associated.\* The effect of the current economic climate on migration policy objectives operates through the effect of changes among indicators such as GDP, government revenues and expenditures, surplus, balance of payments and so forth on expectations about business conditions. By itself, an expansive economic climate is positively associated with the number of immigrants. Sudden declines in economic indicators may have no demonstrable immediate effect on labor demand (as measured by declines in overall levels of employment or rise in unemployment--although there may be

---

\* It may be argued that they are too closely associated to justify inclusion of both in a set of "independent determinants". If so, this will undoubtedly become evident as future investigation tests the propositions emerging from this study. Meanwhile, the concept of "economic climate" has some utility as a distinct determinant.

selective shifts in demand within certain industries) but rather serve to introduce a mood of caution. Typically in the Kuwait case, sudden but short-lived drops in GDP (as in 1965 and 1977/78) were not accompanied by policy measures to limit immigration, but they did prompt introduction of provisions to increase control over the status and mobility of migrants. Because Kuwait could afford to discriminate in favor of Kuwaitis, sudden adverse changes in economic climate may be expected to be inversely associated with the degree of differentiation between Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis, on the grounds that the expectation (or reality) of economic constraint heightens concerns over sharing economic benefits. Thus, one sees efforts to restrict migrant's access to financially costly social benefits emerging in the context of serious economic decline in the 1980s.

The fact that economic expansion during the mid-to-late 1970s did not lessen the degree of differentiation between Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis signals the importance of a fourth determinant: recent rates and composition of demographic change. The significance of this determinant for subsequent migration policy actions, both independently and in combination with other determinants, is illustrated at several points in the Kuwait case. As indicated in Figure 4-3, the expected direction of the effects of rapid demographic change on the number of immigrants will depend

upon the rates and direction of change among Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti groups. The very rapid rates of growth in immigration during the years immediately preceding and following independence shifted the proportionate balance between Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis, making immigration a salient issue and target of action in the mid-1960s. Conversely, the sharp decline in rates of increase among the non-Kuwaiti population during the late 1960s and early 1970s intensified the push toward liberalization of immigration in the early mid-1970s. Finally, the relatively more rapid rates of increase in the immigrant population during the late 1970s and early 1980s, and their effect on decreasing the proportion of Kuwaitis, contributed substantially to the introduction of measures to balance the population. Rapid demographic change is likely to be associated with increased control over the status and mobility of migrants within the society (illustrated by the policy actions of the mid 1960s and late 1970s) as government attempts to keep matters from getting out of hand. Both rapid rates of growth and changes in the composition of immigration are likely to be associated with increased differentiation between the national and non-national populations, as the indigenous society seeks to preserve its own sense of identity.

A fifth, and critical, determinant of migration policy content that emerges from the Kuwait case is the relative

position of the political actors and factions relevant to the policy-making process. The attitudes and positions of these actors toward immigrants and immigration per se, together with the interests that underly these perspectives, are of particular significance. Equally important is their relative position in the political arena at a given point in time. Thus, it was of relevance to policy outcomes in 1974 that both the Sunni merchant elites and Shia retail merchants tended to favor immigration. It is unlikely that the policy outcome would have been the same had liberalization been supported only by Arab Nationalists (who tended to favor immigration but to challenge the regime), particularly given that liberalization meant reversing the previous policies of one powerful bureaucratic actor (the Ministry of Interior) and strengthening the relatively weak position of another bureaucratic entity (the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour).

The increasing number of factions, together with their shifting attitudes toward migrants and the shifting coalitions among them have also played a role in policy outcomes. Thus, in the 1980s, the political prominence of Islamists (whose attitudes toward immigrants have been mixed), the increasing political sophistication of the Bedouin (and their growing dissatisfaction with their place in the social order), and the changing attitudes of Arab

Nationalists in the face of increasing Asian immigration, formed the political backdrop for fundamental changes in Kuwait's immigration policies, despite the continuing argument of merchant groups that the unrestricted inflow of labor was essential to keeping wage rates down, profits high, and thus to the country's economic recovery.

It is easier to assert the importance of political actors and factions for migration policy content than it is to specify the expected direction of this determinant's effect on measurable policy objectives such as the number of immigrants, degree of control, or degree of differentiation: in all three cases, their effects are variable. This does not, by any means, imply that these political factors are less "deterministic" or less powerful in their explanatory value, but that the nature of the relationship is neither as simple nor as direct as may be the case with other determinants. Further exploration of this relationship will entail a fair amount of complex, qualitative political analysis.

The sixth major determinant of policy content to emerge from the Kuwait case is the character of regional political events. As reflected in Figure 4-3, increased regional conflict has been associated with reductions in the number of immigrants. In Kuwait, this was the case in the late 1960s and early 1970s, when the region was rocked by the

1967 and 1973 wars with Israel, civil wars in Jordan and Lebanon, and Arab Nationalist links to other conflicts in the Gulf. It was again the case in 1984-1985 as the Iran-Iraq war dragged on. Similarly, regional conflicts have been associated with increased control over the status and mobility of migrants, as evidenced by measures introduced in the late 1960s and again following the Iranian revolution and the onset of the Gulf War. The effect of regional political conflicts on the degree of differentiation between the national and migrant populations has been variable. On the one hand, in the context of such conflicts, the presence of aliens has had the effect of heightening the generalized sense of threat. On the other hand, as a consequence of the effects of conflict on reductions in immigration, the host society becomes increasingly dependent on the remaining immigrant population (illustrated in Figure 3-1 by the sharp rise in work permit renewals when the number of new entries dropped in 1984). Under such conditions, there are indications of efforts to ease the prevailing high degree of differentiation. Thus in 1972, the Nationality Law was amended to permit naturalization, under certain circumstances, of stateless persons born in Kuwait; similarly, in parliamentary debates of the early to mid-1970s, it was argued that migrants should have a more legitimate voice in domestic political processes.

The seventh major policy determinant is the perceived social costs and consequences of immigration. This includes perceptions (almost always negative in character) about matters ranging from the involvement of immigrants in crimes or immoral activities, to their effect upon expenditures for social services, to the consequences of immigration for the indigenous culture and national identity. The effects of these perceptions on migration-related policies have depended upon the strength of the given perception, how widely it is held and by whom, the value attached to the perceived costs, and the nature of the issues at stake. Thus, in the mid-1970s, Kuwaiti Nationalist arguments that migrants were a source of rising crime carried little weight in the face of other pressures to liberalize immigration of needed manpower; but evidence as to the rising costs of delivering social services to migrants and their families contributed to increased efforts to reduce the dependency ratio among non-Kuwaitis. By the mid-1980s, perceived negative effects of immigration on the social and cultural fabric of Kuwaiti society came to play a major role in support of demands for population balance. With respect to the likely effects of increased social costs on policy objectives, increased costs are likely to be negatively associated with the number of immigrants, and positively associated with the degree of control over status and mobility and with the degree of differentiation between Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis.



No one determinant alone is sufficient to explain migration policy content in Kuwait. Rather, one or another of them may exert particular influence at a given point in time; it is the relative weight given to each determinant, together with the interactions among them, that will determine the policy content. Options for specification of the weights to be attached to the policy determinants have been implied throughout discussion of the Kuwait case in what has been termed the "tensions" existing among the issues at hand. Thus, in reviewing policy outcomes, one would expect that security determinants would emerge as having had the greatest weight in the periods 1967-73 and again in 1982-83, while labor demand (or economic growth or manpower factors) had the greatest weight in 1962-65 and again in 1974-77. In the period 1984-85, the combined weight of security, social costs, and recent demographic change determinants together pushed migration policy content toward restrictions beyond what economic factors alone would have determined.

This section has sought to identify from the Kuwait case those determinants that shape the content of migration policy and to illustrate the likely relationship between these determinants and several selected objectives of policy content. The question remains, what are the consequences of those policies? Is there, in fact, reason to believe that policy actions, once taken (and regardless of how taken) have any demonstrable effect? The next section will analyse the evidence to answer these questions.

#### 4.6 Are Migration Policies Effective?

The prevailing perception that Kuwait has had no policies regarding international migration for employment has been supported by the fact that the country's immigrant population has continued to grow, and at rates faster than the Kuwaiti population. The persistence of this perception is also, in part, a result of the fact that recent research has tended to focus on the years since 1974, when it was not unreasonable to assume that the strength of labor demand alone could explain entirely the volume and direction of growth in recorded immigration. Thus, the perception was also sustained by the absence of detailed evidence concerning migration policies and their objectives. Implicitly, it has been assumed that the overriding objectives of policies would be to reduce immigration and that if there was no such reduction, then either 1) there were no policies or 2) such policies as were extant were not effective.

Chapter 3 and the foregoing sections of Chapter 4 have demonstrated that some of these assumptions were without foundation. There have been policies and their objectives were not uniformly directed toward reducing immigration.

Yet, so far, this study has not addressed the question of whether Kuwait's migration-related policies have been effective in attaining their objectives. The possibility remains that Kuwait, not unlike many states, has simply lacked the capacity to enforce its policies, be it for institutional or political reasons. This section now turns to explore the question of policy effectiveness.

Within the scope of this study, it is not possible (or even appropriate) to undertake a comprehensive evaluation of each policy action identified (although it is possible to identify one or more objective for each and then to assess the extent to which those objectives have been attained). The approach here, rather, will be to examine evidence of policy effectiveness in attaining three objectives that have pertained either consistently or at several points in the course of Kuwait's policy evolution. These objectives, and the evaluative questions they imply are:

1. The reduction of immigration. Can the state slow the growth of immigration when it sets about to do so?
2. The control of immigration. Is it possible to create a system of work permit registrations that effects a measure of control over entry into, mobility within, and exit from the labor force?
3. Kuwaitization. Have stated objectives to increase the level and nature of Kuwaiti participation in employment been achieved?

The discussion that follows will consider the evidence concerning these questions.

Twice in its policy history, Kuwait has adopted policies the implicit or explicit intent of which was to reduce immigration. In Chapter 3, it was shown that policy actions taken in the mid-to late 1960s and early 1970s in fact had the effect of reducing the rates of growth in immigration from a high average annual rate of 14.5 percent in the 1957-61 intercensal period,\* to a low of 2 percent between 1974-75.\*\* While indicative of the state's capacity to reduce immigration, the fact remains that these reductions resulted from policy actions taken largely for security reasons, with reduction of immigration itself being more an accepted consequence than a stated objective of policy. What does more recent evidence suggest about the efficacy of policies, such as those adopted in 1984-85, that reflect a growing desire to reduce the rate of immigration? Furthermore, while we are examining the recent period of policy history, what evidence is there concerning attainment of the second objective, ie. establishment of an effective system of work permit registrations to control immigration?

To explore both questions, the study used two sets of data: one on work permits, the other on Kuwait's economy. Data on work permit issues in the private sector were drawn from "The Annual Report on Immigrant Labour" prepared by

---

\* See Table 1-1.

\*\* Annual Statistical Abstract 1977, p. 22, Table 18.

Kuwait's Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour. It will be recalled that Kuwait has evolved five types of work permits: entry permits for work, first time work permits, renewals, cancellations and transfers (to another job), and cancellations and departures. The number of issues for the decade 1975-1985 are shown in Table 4-9 at the end of this chapter. For the years 1975 and 1976, data on renewals were combined with figures for first time permits, while for 1975, cancellations and departures were combined with cancellations and transfers. Accordingly, it is only from 1977 that distinct figures exist for each category.

A similar constraint exists with economic data for Kuwait reported in International Financial Statistics, which was selected for use in this analysis as the most authoritative source providing a longitudinal set of figures for several economic indicators.\* Changes in the fiscal year introduced in 1975-76 make the indicators for those years not comparable with succeeding years. Accordingly, the years 1977-1985 constitute the period for which complete sets of both work permit and economic data exist; these years also encompass a period in which three distinct sets of policy actions have been identified and thus are well suited to the analysis of policy effectiveness.

---

\* The values of economic indicators used in this analysis are shown in Table 4-10 at the end of this chapter.

The first step in the analysis was to explore the degree to which Kuwait's work permit registration system actually "captures" all those who should be registered. Data for work permit issues were calculated as a proportion of the total non-Kuwaiti labor force and of the non-Kuwaiti labor force in the private sector for 1975 and 1985. The results are shown in Table 4-11. Total issues as a percentage of total labor force rose, from 56.0 percent in 1975 to 60.9 percent in 1985, suggesting some gain in the rate of registration. Total labor force figures, however, include those participating in the governmental and mixed sectors, as well as the private sector. Thus, it is possible that the observed increase in the proportion of issues might result from changes in the sectoral distribution of employment. To rule out this possibility, the size of the non-Kuwaiti labor force in the private sector was calculated and issues taken as a proportion of this base. Here again, registration is seen to improve, from 79.6 percent in 1975 to 85 percent in 1985.

In both years, however, there remains an unexplained difference between the total non-Kuwaiti work force in the private sector and the number of work permit issues. The difference may result from reporting errors or may represent undocumented workers. In either case, the absolute size of the unexplained difference suggests that there is still room to improve the registration system:

although the proportion of workers registered increased (and, correspondingly, the proportion unexplained declined), the absolute number unexplained nearly doubled. This qualification, however, does not change the fact that work permit issues constitute the best year by year source of data on the entry and status of immigrants.

The second step in the analysis was to pose the central question: when the effects of economic forces (particularly labor demand) are taken into consideration, is there any evidence that policy actions have had an effect on recorded levels of immigration? Addressing this question first required selection of an economic indicator to reflect labor demand (as the independent variable) and selection of an indicator of immigration (as the dependent variable). It is arguably simplistic to suggest that a single economic variable can capture the complexities of labor demand.\* However, given the small number of observations possible within the data constraints mentioned above (N=9, one for each year 1977 through 1985) and given the desirability of introducing dummy variables for policy actions later in the analysis, it was considered preferable to find a single measure of labor demand.

---

\* The 1981 version of the Manpower Requirements Model (MRM) in the World Bank's Compound Model, for example, uses base year GDP by sector, projected annual sector production targets, base year sector productivity, and sector productivity growth rates to project manpower requirements.

The range of possibilities included GDP, government revenues, government expenditures, and surplus, as well as transformations of these (adjustments for inflation and percentage changes for both nominal and real values). \* Among these, government expenditure is intuitively the one variable that may be expected to have the greatest independent effect on the demand for immigrant labor. As discussed in Chapter 3, the political decision was taken early in the 1950s to channel a large proportion of government expenditure through the private sector as a means of securing support amongst the merchant elite; there has been no change to that fundamental strategy since. As shown in Tables 4-17 and 4-18, over 70 percent of immigrant labor is employed in the private sector.

There are several problems with other possible indicators of labor demand. Given the dominance of petroleum related sources of GDP \*\* and the capital-intensive (as opposed to labor-intensive) nature of the oil industry, GDP alone is unlikely to have a direct bearing on labor demand.

Government revenues are similarly dominated by income from

---

\* Although in some cases unemployment (or a variant thereof) might be considered as a relevant indicator of labor demand, this is not so in the Kuwait case. Rates of unemployment are not published regularly in the Monthly Digest of Statistics; available figures, published for census years in the Annual Statistical Abstracts, are extremely low--ranging from a high of 1.6 percent in 1965 to less than 1 percent in 1980.

\*\* Petroleum related sources accounted for 45.2 percent of GDP in 1984; Statistical Abstract 1985, p. 240, Table 212.



petroleum-related products. \* Government surplus, as a derivative of government revenues minus government expenditures, is similarly unlikely to have any independent effect on labor demand. Accordingly, the Kuwaiti Dinar value of government expenditure was selected as the best single indicator of labor demand. To reduce the effects of inflation on the results, the expenditure figure was expressed in constant prices (i.e. as real government expenditure).

The number of entry permits for private sector employment was selected as the dependent permit variable for several reasons. Data on immigration for government employment are not readily available on a year by year basis.

Furthermore, as noted above, over 70 percent of non-Kuwaitis are employed in the private sector, and it is private sector employment which is most likely to be responsive both to changes in economic conditions and to migration policies. Since those immigrants who are in the public sector provide critical support for the 88 percent of all Kuwaitis who work in government, there is little margin for adjustment in response to either market or policy factors. Indeed, the proportion of all non-Kuwaitis employed in government remained generally stable between 1975 and 1985 (see Tables 4-17 and 4-18).

---

\* Petroleum sources accounted for nearly 86 percent of government revenues in 1984-85, Annual Statistical Abstract 1985, p. 244, Table 214.

In addition, while provisions of the Aliens Residence Law pertain to all aliens, regardless of employment status or sector of employment, policy actions by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour pertain exclusively to workers in the private sector. Thus the use of work permit data captures that group of immigrants likely to be affected by the full range of policy tools.

The choice of the number of entry permits \* was based on the argument that it is the number of entries which reflects most directly government's intent to allow or disallow new immigration. First time permits are highly correlated with entry permits (in that the latter is a prerequisite to the former) but may be subject to time lags, while renewals, cancellations and transfers, and cancellations and departures all reflect adjustments within the labor market but not immigration directly. Furthermore, the permit variables other than entry are likely to show secular changes with time as a result of past growth of the labor force. \*\*

---

\* The range of possibilities included the numbers of permits issued for entry, first time work, renewals, cancellations and transfers, and cancellations and departures, as well as transformations of these (summation, percentage changes, and ratios of one permit type to another).

\*\* In zero-order correlations, renewals, cancellations and transfers, and cancellations and departures are all found to be significantly correlated with time, while entry is not.

Table 4-12 summarizes the characteristics of key variables used to evaluate the effects of policy actions relative to labor demand.

The next step in the analysis was to regress Entry on Real Expenditure in order to examine whether the observed number of entries differ from the values predicted by levels of real expenditure in the directions that would indicate any policy effects in the years expected. The results are shown in Table 4-13a and b and depicted graphically in Figure 4-4 on the following pages. It will be recalled that 1978 and 1979 were the first years following the onset of the oil boom in which notable policy actions were taken to regulate the labor market. Although the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour was anxious not to be seen to be impeding the flow of necessary labor, the fact that there were efforts to "eliminate redundancies" and more stringent documentation and reporting requirements to cut down on unnecessary importation, would lead one to expect a downward effect on entries. The residuals for 1978 and 1979 are, in fact, negative for both years. That is, the number of persons who entered for work in the private sector was less than the number predicted by the level of real expenditure. Further, these are the only two years between 1977 and 1983 for which the number of entries is less than predicted.

TABLE 4-12. SUMMARY OF KEY VARIABLES USED IN EVALUATING EFFECTS OF POLICY ACTIONS RELATIVE TO LABOR DEMAND

VARIABLE	UNIT	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
1) (Dependent) Entry Permits for Work (ENTRY)	No. of permits issued by Ministry of Labour	64,402.78	15,040.83
2) (Independent) Real Government Expenditure (REALEXP)	Kuwaiti Dinars	1,553.33	289.82
3) Dummy Var. 1 (POLICY 1)	1 in 1978 and 1979; 0 in other years		
4) Dummy Var. 2 (POLICY 2)	1 in 1982 and 1983; 0 in other years		
5) Dummy Var. 3 (NATISM)	1 in 1984 and 1985; 0 in other years		

TABLE 4-13a. REGRESSION OF ENTRY ON REAL EXPENDITURE:  
OBSERVED, PREDICTED, AND RESIDUAL VALUES  
FOR NUMBER OF ENTRIES

YEAR	OBSERVED	PREDICTED	RESIDUAL
WITHOUT DUMMYS FOR POLICY ACTION			
1977	58,357.00	51,790.35	6,566.65
1978	56,017.00	56,986.52	-969.52
1979	49,705.00	53,311.88	-3,606.88
1980	66,795.00	63,531.97	3,263.03
1981	70,158.00	68,670.72	1,487.28
1982	93,277.00	73,120.47	20,156.53
1983	81,657.00	71,685.07	9,971.93
1984	51,347.00	70,364.50	-19,017.50
1985	52,312.00	70,163.54	-17,851.54
WITH DUMMYS FOR POLICY ACTION			
1977	58,357.00	54,782.74	3,574.26
1978	56,017.00	55,326.96	690.04
1979	49,705.00	50,395.04	-690.04
1980	66,795.00	70,541.78	-3,746.78
1981	70,158.00	78,731.38	-8,573.38
1982	93,277.00	84,703.63	8,573.38
1983	81,657.00	81,484.48	172.52
1984	51,347.00	51,964.36	-617.36
1985	52,312.00	51,694.64	617.36

TABLE 4-13. RESULTS OF REGRESSION OF ENTRY ON REAL EXPENDITURE

WITHOUT DUMMYS				WITH DUMMYS			
Intercept	t	B	Beta	Intercept	t	B	Beta
	(sig t)				(sig t)		
19809.51	1.757	28.708	0.5532	11859.598			
	(.1224)			a) NATISM	-3.952	-27747.714	-0.81349
					(.0168)	**	
				b) REALEXP	2.982	38.531	0.74245
					(.0406)	*	
				c) POLICY 1	-0.938	-6429.827	-0.18851
					(.4016)		
				d) POLICY 2	0.180	1292.611	0.0379

No. of observations = 9  
 Adjusted R square = .2069  
 Degrees of Freedom:  
     Regression = 1  
     Residual = 7

F = 3.0866  
 Sig F = .1224

No. of observations = 9  
 Adjusted R square = .8060  
 Degrees of Freedom:  
     Regression = 4  
     Residual = 4

F = 9.3086  
 Sig F = .0264

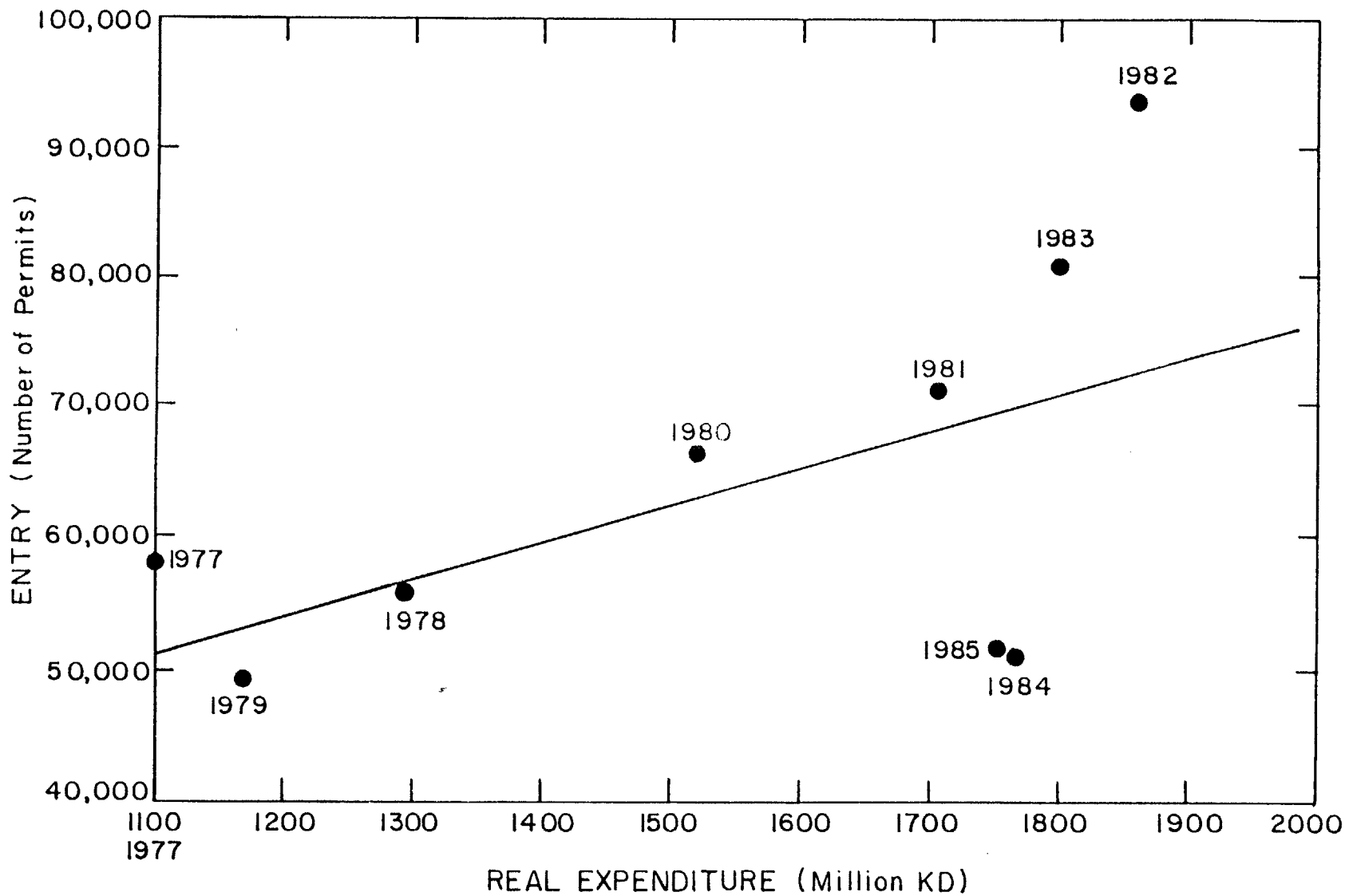


FIGURE 4-4 REGRESSION OF ENTRY ON REAL EXPENDITURES: OBSERVED VS PREDICTED VALUES

Efforts to encourage registration of illegals in the labor force began as early as 1980, but 1982 marked the undertaking of an intensive campaign to register illegals. The effectiveness of this policy action is suggested by the sizable jump in the number of entries: in 1981 there were only 1,487 more entries than predicted by the level of expenditures for that year; in 1982, there were 20,156 more than expected.

By 1984 and 1985, concerns over population balance were surfacing and there were calls for an outright reduction in immigration. With its system of visas and work permits, government had (at least on paper) the mechanisms to respond. Were the policy tools and government's will to use them sufficient to reduce the rate of immigration? Again, the direction and magnitudes of the residuals for 1984 and 1985 suggests that they were: entries were, respectively, 19,018 and 17,852 less than expenditures would have predicted for these years.

The final step in this analysis was to construct dummy variables for the three policy actions and to regress entries on these together with real expenditure. Despite the small number of observations and the further loss in degrees of freedom resulting from introduction of the dummy variables, the regression results provide an indication that policies do help to explain the number of entries, as



may be seen in Table 4-13. The directions of the effects were as expected: the policies of 1978-79 (POLICY 1) had a negative effect on entries ( $B = -6429.8$ ); those of 1982-83 (POLICY 2) had a positive effect ( $B = 1292.6$ ); the nationalistic policies of 1984-85 (NATISM) had a negative effect ( $B = -27747.7$ ).

The beta weights for the four variables indicate that the policies of 1984-85 exerted the strongest effect and the  $t$  value was significant at the .02 level. Real expenditure was the next most important variable, with a  $t$  value significant at the .05 level. The contributions of POLICY 1 and POLICY 2 were substantially less and neither effect was statistically significant. The  $F$  statistic for the equation was significant at the .05 level.\*

The results of this analysis suggest, contrary to prevailing perceptions, that Kuwait's migration policies have, indeed, had a demonstrable effect on reducing the level of immigration, when that was the objective. They further suggest that the system of work permits has been sufficiently strong as to exert a measure of control over both immigration and registration.

---

\* The  $F$  statistic for the three policy variables was also calculated, to assure that together their values were jointly different from zero. The value of  $F$  thus derived was 8.205, which is significant at the .05 level. In other words, adding the policy variables significantly improves the explanatory power of the model at the .05 level.

Now, what about the third objective selected for analysis, Kuwaitization? Kuwaitization has been a declared objective of the country's employment policy since at least the late 1960s. Strictly speaking, Kuwaitization is not a "migration" policy in a direct sense but rather a "migration-related" policy: to the extent that Kuwaitis can and do fill the country's manpower requirements, the need for non-Kuwaiti labor (and thus immigration) is reduced. Kuwaitization is also intended to be something more than a system of national preferences, such as that signalled by the 1964 Labour Law, which stipulates by law that Kuwaitis will be given preference over Arabs, who in turn will be given preference over foreigners (ie. non-Arabs). Rather, Kuwaitization, as generally defined, seeks to increase Kuwaitis' share in the total labor force (by having them, to the maximum extent possible, fill job vacancies resulting from attrition or new job creation), to increase the rate of their participation in the labor force, to increase their occupational mobility, and (more recently) to increase Kuwaitis' move into productive sectors of employment. This analysis will consider the extent to which progress has been made toward these objectives.\*

---

\* This analysis will put aside the question as to whether these are the most appropriate or desirable objectives for Kuwaitization policy. Sirageldin and Hosni, in their memo on "The Manpower Dynamics of Kuwait" (p. 17) have called Kuwaitization, as presently practiced, a "short-term policy", often running counter to longer range objectives of developing Kuwaiti manpower and of increasing productivity in the labor force. These and other drawbacks to Kuwaitization were discussed in Chapter 3.

As may be seen in Table 4-14, Kuwaitis' share in the total labor force rose from 22.1 percent in 1965 to a high of 29.2 percent in 1975. During the oil boom of the mid to late 1970s, Kuwaitis dropped to 21.4 percent of total labor force in 1980, only to slide to an all-time low of 18.9 percent in 1985. Clearly, the objective of steadily increasing Kuwaitis' share in the labor force has not been met.

The picture is only slightly more positive for labor force participation rates; as Table 1-2 indicated, crude labor force participation rates have held rather steady for the past 20 years, hovering around 18 percent for most of this time. There was actually a slight increase in the crude rate between 1980 and 1985, from 18.30 to 18.64.

Changes in the labor force participation rates (LFPR) of working age male and female Kuwaitis show a somewhat different picture, however, as was shown in Table 1-3. Male LFPR, never higher than 71.2 (achieved in 1975\*) dropped steadily over the following decade to an all-time low of 59.5 in 1985. The slight gain in crude labor force participation noted above resulted from a substantial increase in female LFPR, which more than doubled in the decade from 1975 to 1985 to reach 13.8 in the latter year.

---

\* It will be recalled that low rates of immigration in the early 1970s had led to manpower supply constraints that were just beginning to ease, following liberalization of immigration in 1974.

Of the 4.4 percentage point drop in Kuwaiti male LFPR, only 2.4 points are attributable to increases in school enrollment. There was also a 2.0 percentage point increase in the proportion of Kuwaiti males recorded as either "not willing to work" or as "disabled/inactive". \*

In summary, the objective of increasing labor force participation rates among Kuwaitis was met in only two of the four intercensal periods covered in this analysis; even then, only small increases were observed. Male LFPR has declined; only among Kuwaiti women has labor force participation increased.

Kuwaitization has progressed somewhat further toward increasing occupational mobility. Tables 4-15 a and b compare Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti employment by occupational categories for the years 1975 and 1983. During this period, the distribution of Kuwaitis in professional and technical occupations increased from 11.2 percent to 21.3 percent. Non-Kuwaitis also increased their distribution in this category (from 15.2 percent to 18.6 percent) but in percentage terms their gains were less than those of Kuwaitis, so that Kuwaitis increased slightly their share of all professional and technical jobs, from 23.3 percent to 26.5 percent, while non-Kuwaitis experienced an offsetting drop in their share of these jobs.

---

\* Statistical Abstract 1985, p. 109, Table 98, and p. 113, Table 104.

The distribution of Kuwaitis in administrative and managerial occupations increased slightly, from 1.2 percent in 1975 to 1.8 percent in 1983. However, the proportion of non-Kuwaitis in these occupations also increased and, overall, Kuwaitis share of all these jobs dropped from 38.1 percent in 1975 to 28.3 percent in 1983.

The proportion of all Kuwaitis in clerical and related occupations also increased, rising from 20.5 percent in 1975 to 29.4 percent in 1983. Although non-Kuwaitis experienced a smaller percentage point gain, their larger base meant that, overall, Kuwaitis' share of all clerical and related jobs was again lower in 1983 than in 1975.

The total number of all workers in sales occupations actually dropped between 1975 and 1983, with Kuwaitis experiencing the greater drop, not only in absolute numbers but in both the distribution of Kuwaitis in sales and in the Kuwaitis' share of all sales jobs. By 1983, non-Kuwaitis accounted for well over 90 percent of all workers in this occupational group.

The number of service jobs grew substantially in this period; while the number of Kuwaitis in service occupations grew as well, the proportion of Kuwaitis in service (as opposed to other) occupations dropped. The Kuwaiti share (relative to that of non-Kuwaitis) of this occupational

group dropped as well, from 42.0 percent in 1975 to 30.5 percent in 1983.

As with sales occupations, the absolute number of people engaged in agricultural and husbandry occupations declined in this period, as did the distribution of Kuwaitis in this category. The balance between Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis in this occupational group underwent the most dramatic shift, with the Kuwaiti share dropping from 50.7 percent to 8.3 percent over the period.

While the overall number of people engaged in production and laboring occupations increased, both the number of Kuwaitis and their proportionate distribution in this category declined, as did their share relative to non-Kuwaitis in this occupational group.

In summary, between 1975 and 1983, the distribution of Kuwaitis increased in three occupational categories (professional and technical, administrative and managerial, and clerical and related). The value to be attached to these shifts is open to some debate: those in administrative and managerial occupations are the highest paid\*, followed by professional and technical workers; however, those in sales have higher wages than those in clerical occupations. By the wage criterion for ranking

---

\* Wage rate data are shown in Ministry of Planning, State of Kuwait, Statistical Abstract 1985, Table 133, p. 136.

occupations, we might then say that the occupational mobility objective of Kuwaitization was achieved in two of these three instances.

A similar "valuation dilemma" exists with respect to judging the increased share of Kuwaitis among all workers in professional and technical occupations. It may be argued that the "gains" for Kuwaitization are not only limited, but of somewhat secondary value: this is the only occupational grouping in which Kuwaitis increased their share of the category. Furthermore, the professional and technical category not only ranks second (after administrative and managerial) in pay levels, but the difference between Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti pay levels is least in this category.

However, in view of the declines in the overall share of Kuwaitis in total labor force and in male labor force participation rates, the fact that Kuwaitis increased their concentration in any of the "upper level" occupational groups and raised their relative share in even one category may be taken as some indication that Kuwaitization policies have had at least a modest effect on occupational mobility.

The final objective of Kuwaitization policy to be assessed here concerns the effort to increase the movement of Kuwaitis into the more productive sectors of employment.

Concern over this issue has grown, in part, because the policy of guaranteeing every Kuwaiti a job has led to a significant amount of job creation in the public sector. Tables 4-16 a and b show the number and distribution of employees by nationality in government and private sectors in 1975 and 1985. By 1975, over three-quarters of all Kuwaitis were concentrated in government and mixed sectors (with the latter accounting for only a small number of employees). In contrast, slightly less than 30 percent of non-Kuwaitis were in the public sector. The Kuwaitis' share of government employment was slightly more than that of non-Kuwaitis (51.3 percent versus 48.7 percent).

By 1985, the concentration of Kuwaitis in public, as opposed to private sector employment had increased: 88 percent of all Kuwaitis were now employed by government. Despite the growth of employment in the private sector, only 11.7 percent of Kuwaitis were now employed there. Correspondingly, their share of all private sector employment dropped to a miniscule 3.6 percent, with non-Kuwaitis accounting for over 96 percent of employment in the sector. At the same time, however, non-Kuwaiti employment in the government sector had also grown, and faster than Kuwaiti employment, so that despite the increasing concentration of Kuwaitis in the public sector, Kuwaitis as a proportion of all public sector employees actually dropped.



Changes in the distribution of the Kuwaiti labor force by economic activity (shown in Table 4-17) is only slightly more encouraging. The proportion of Kuwaitis engaged in manufacturing rose by only .2 percent (from 2.6 percent to 2.8 percent) between 1975 and 1983. The proportion in mining and quarrying rose by slightly more (from 2.0 percent to 3.3 percent); the proportions in finance and business and in transport, storage and communications rose by 1.8 percent and 2.3 percent, respectively. As might be expected from the evidence above concerning government employment, the proportion of Kuwaitis in social services (which includes public administration) showed the greatest growth, increasing 4.5 percentage points. The proportions of Kuwaitis in agriculture, electricity, construction, and trade activities actually declined. Overall, over three-quarters of all Kuwaitis were employed in social services by 1983, and the small net gains achieved in some productive activities were offset by losses in others.

There is some consolation to be found, however, in examining the differential rates at which Kuwaitis entered the different spheres of economic activity. As may be seen in Table 4-18, for the categories of economic activity in which there was an increase in the number of Kuwaitis, the rate of entry into social services was lowest (a 39.3 percent increase). The rate of entry into manufacturing was only slightly higher (40.9 percent), but the rates for

transport, mining, and finance were substantially higher, ranging from 89.6 percent to 182.1 percent. The base numbers, of course, are low but the direction and magnitude of the percentage changes are nonetheless encouraging.

The effectiveness of Kuwaitization, as measured by the extent to which the policy's generally understood objectives have been attained, is, at best, mixed. Kuwaitis have not increased their share of the labor force. Their labor force participation rates have vascillated; the recent modest increase in the crude LFPR is largely the result of rapid gains in female participation, with male participation actually declining. There are some indications that Kuwaitization has resulted in greater mobility into professional and technical occupations, but gains in administrative and managerial positions have been negligible. Efforts to shift Kuwaitis into productive sectors of the economy have been less than successful, as reflected in the increasing concentration of Kuwaitis in the government sector and, relatedly, their concentration in social services. They are entering some productive areas of economic activity at rates exceeding that for social services, but the absolute numbers remain small.

On balance, it is not clear how much more Kuwaitization policy could have done. It remains to be seen whether

lowering rates of immigration will, in fact, draw more Kuwaitis into the labor force, as seemed to have occurred by the end of the slowdown in immigration in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Many Kuwaitis themselves have voiced the opinion that what is needed is a fundamental change in attitudes toward work; if so, the objectives and timing of Kuwaitization, and the role of government policy in the process, may require fundamental rethinking.

#### 4.7 Objectives and Determinants of Migration Policy: Theoretical Implications.

The foregoing analysis of the Kuwait case, with its delineation of objectives and determinants and assessment of policy effectiveness, suggests several propositions for inclusion in a theory of international migration for employment. It will be recalled from Chapter 2 that, to date, policies concerning this particular type of population movement have been given only glancing acknowledgement as having a role in shaping international migration. It has been assumed that economic factors (wage rate differentials, labor supply factors, employment and unemployment, development strategies or technology) explained most of what needed explaining. This was assumed to be particularly true in the Middle East, where migration policies have been presumed nonexistent. By identifying

migration policies and their objectives and testing their effectiveness at given levels of expenditure, this study has provided evidence in support of the proposition that:

\* Changes in levels of immigration are better explained by a model that includes political and related policy factors than by one that includes only economic factors.

This is not to deny the central importance of economic factors. Even in the illustrative analysis provided in this study, the economic variable (in this case, expenditure) was seen to be a powerful explanatory factor. Yet it was not the only factor that explained recorded levels of immigration. The exercise of policy options to increase registrations had a demonstrable impact, while measures to reduce rates of immigration had a significant effect. The inclusion of policy variables significantly improved the explanatory power of the regression model.

From the outset, this study has taken the view that one barrier to the consideration of policy factors in migration theory has been, quite simply, a lack of understanding as to how to approach the subject. By identifying the forms that policies have taken and by exploring the ways in which their content was shaped by the economic, demographic, and political context in which they were formulated, the study has provided evidence to support the proposition that:

\* The determinants of migration policies include not only by labor demand (and the economic and demographic conditions underlying it) but also the salience of domestic and regional political events, security issues, current and expected future economic conditions, recent rates and composition of demographic

change, the relative positions of political actors in the policy making process, and the perceived social costs and consequences of immigration.

The precise outcome of policy content depends upon the interaction among these determinants and the relative weights ascribed to them in a given policy context. In order to understand why governments adopt the policies they do, it is necessary to understand how these factors interact with one another to produce the particular context of policy formulation.

Some observations from the Kuwait case may form the basis for "subpropositions" concerning these determinants, amenable to testing in future research:

- \* Judgements by political actors as to what will best secure regime control and stability play a critical role in explaining the content of migration policy.
- \* Regional politics help shape migration policies via the positions of domestic factions toward regional events. (eg. Thus support for pan-Arabism translates into support for Arab migrants.)
- \* The greater the number of security incidents, the more likely are restrictions on immigrants and, potentially, on the numbers of immigrants or rates of immigration.
- \* Rapid population growth from immigration followed by economic decline results in calls to limit rates or levels of immigration. Security incidents increase the likelihood of this effect.
- \* The effects of previous migration become part of a changing political context for migration policy formulation.

The third major proposition to be drawn from the identification of policy objectives is that:

\* Migration policies have many objectives other than simply to determine rates or levels of immigration.

Equally important have been the objectives of regulating the rights and status of migrants relative to the national population; facilitating or restricting internal or labor market mobility of migrants; reducing rates of dependency and settlement in the immigrant population; screening out dissidents; and affecting the strength of domestic political factions.

This point is raised to the level of a proposition because, too often in the Middle East case generally, it has been assumed that evidence of continued immigration meant there were no policies in effect, or that governments were simply too weak to implement what policies there may have been. To test for both the presence and the effectiveness of migration policies, future research needs to take cognizance of the multiplicity of objectives toward which policies are aimed.

Understanding the role of policies in international migration for employment and, in turn, understanding the causes and effects of those policies is not of merely academic interest. The lives of over 20 million international "economic migrants" are daily affected by these policies. The economic, demographic, political, and social prospects for countless labor-sending and receiving

countries will be influenced by the choices that governments make concerning migration policy. The long-range consequences of these choices affect not only the pace of economic development and structure of the labor force in host countries. The migration policy strategies of labor-receiving countries affect the fundamental character and political viability of these societies.

TABLE 4-1. KUWAIT: MIGRATION POLICY INSTRUMENTS 1959-1985

	DATE	NAME	TYPE	ISSUING ENTITY	MAJOR SUBJECT
1)	1959	Decree No. 17	AD	Amir	Aliens Residence Law
2)	1959	Labour Law for the Private Sector			Private Sector Labor
3)	5 Dec. 1959	Decree No. 15	AD	Amir	Nationality Law
4)	1960	Decree No. 2	AD	Amir	Amendment to Nationality Law
5)	1960	Decree No. 43	AD	Amir	Amendment to Labor Law of 1959
6)	1960	Law of Commercial Companies			Foreigners in Business
7)	1961	Law No. 1			Amendment to Labor Law of 1959
8)	1962	Law No. 1 & Decree No. 2			Admin Reorg. creates Ministry of Interior; penalties for violation of Aliens Res. Law
9)	1962	Constitution			
10)	1963	Law No. 1			Amendment to Aliens Residence Law
11)	1 Aug. 1964	Law No. 38			Work in the Private Sector



TABLE 4-1 KUWAIT: MIGRATION POLICY INSTRUMENTS 1959-1985  
contd.

DATE	NAME	TYPE	ISSUING ENTITY	MAJOR SUBJECT
12) 1965	Law No. 21			Amendment to Nationality Law
13) 1965	Law No. 26			Amendment to Aliens Residence Law
14) 1 Oct. 1965	Decree No. 10	MD	Min. of Interior	Enforcement of Aliens Residence Law
15) 1966	Law No. 70			Amendment to Nationality Law
16) 1968	Law No. 17			Amendment to Aliens Residence Law
17) 1969	Decree No. 3	MD	Min. of Interior	Enforcement of Aliens Residence Law
18) late 1960's early 1970's	Kuwaitization	var	var	emphasis on employment of Kuwaitis
19) 1970	Law No. 30			Amendment to Nationality Law
20) 1972	Law No. 41			Amendment to Nationality Law
21) 8 Apr. 1974	Resolution No. 16	CMR	Council of Ministers	Regulation of employment Activity transferred from MOI to MOSA&L

TABLE 4-1. KUWAIT: MIGRATION POLICY INSTRUMENTS 1959-1985  
contd.

DATE	NAME	TYPE	ISSUING ENTITY	MAJOR SUBJECT
22) 16 Mar. 1975	Decree No. 22	MD	Min of Interior	Enforcement of Aliens Residence Law
23) 1976	Five Year Plan			Rapid growth based on immigration
24) 1976	Decree No. 70	MD	Min of Interior	Enforcement of Aliens Residence Law
25) 1977	[Annual Report]		Min of Social Affairs & Labour	Policy to eliminate all obstacles to labour inflow + create stability & continuity
26) 1977	Decree No. 84	MD	Min of Interior	Enforcement of Aliens Residence Law (re Private Servants)
27) 1978	various		Min of Social Affairs & Labour	Restrictions on recruitment of new immigrant labor in sectors with redundancies. Require workers remain with employer one year; increase residence permit from 2 to 5 years.

TABLE 4-1. KUWAIT: MIGRATION POLICY INSTRUMENTS 1959-1985  
contd.

DATE	NAME	TYPE	ISSUING ENTITY	MAJOR SUBJECT
28) 1978	various			Restrictions on entry of dependents
29) 1979	Law No. 75			Housing (prohibits non-nationals from title.)
30) 13 Jan 1979	Decrees No. 37 & No. 39	MD	Min of Social Affairs & Labour	Enforcement of Private Sector Labour Law
31) 1979	Decree No. 54	MD	Min of Interior	Enforcement of Aliens Residence Law
32) 1980	Law No. 100	AD	Amir	Amendment to Nationality Law
33) April 1980	var.	orders	Min of Interior	campaign to deport illegals
34) Oct. 1980	var	orders	Min of Social Affairs & Labour	Encourage proper registration of illegals
35) 1982	Law No. 1		National Assembly	Amendment to Nationality Law: citizenship restricted to Muslims
36) 5 Jul 1982	Law No. 55			Amendment to Aliens Residence Law
37) 6 Sept 1982	Decree No. 262	MD	Min of Interior	Enforcement of Aliens Residence Law

TABLE 4-1. KUWAIT: MIGRATION POLICY INSTRUMENTS 1959-1985  
contd.

	DATE	NAME	TYPE	ISSUING ENTITY	MAJOR SUBJECT
38)	Sept 1982	var	orders	Min of Interior	Restrictions on visits of immigrants' relatives; KD 400 minimum salary for family accompaniment; all entry permits require "endorsement" from embassy at point of origin.
39)	2 Feb 1984	Decree No. 77	MD	Min of Social Affairs & Labour	Enforcement of Private Sector Labour Law
40)	1984	Law	NA	National Assembly	Fix annual number of ordinary naturaliza- tions at 500.
41)	4 Apr 1985	?	MD	Min of Interior	Reg ease return of expat children
42)	1985	?			Salary req'd for dependent accompaniment >KD 450
43)	1985	Five Year Plan			Population Policy: 50- 50 by Year 2000



TABLE 4-2

PHASE ONE: 1959-1964

ECONOMIC CONTEXT:

Transition from Basic Infrastructure development to diversification.

DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT:

Following high immigration in 1950s, non-Kuwaitis comprise 49.7 percent of total population, with Jordanians and Palestinians the largest single group.

POLITICAL TASKS/ISSUES:

- 1) Lay legal foundation for the new State.
- 2) Build regime support within framework of new independent status.
- 3) Repel external challenges to sovereignty, especially from Iraq.

MAJOR MIGRATION-RELATED POLICY OBJECTIVES:

- 1) To assure continued availability of manpower for economic growth through continued relatively free immigration.
- 2) To assure government control over entry, internal movement and employment of aliens through a system of documentation.
- 3) To strengthen traditional foreign policy strategy of neutrality and reciprocity.
- 4) To develop sense of national identity through "differentiation" between Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis.

TABLE 4-3

PHASE TWO: 1965-1966

ECONOMIC CONTEXT:

Drop in government budget surplus.

DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT:

Proportion of non-Kuwaitis in total population increases to 52.9 percent.

POLITICAL TASKS/ISSUES:

- 1) Address new challenges to ruling Family (Al-Sabah) authority from Arab Nationalist bloc in National Assembly.
- 2) Strengthen alliance between ruling family and other political factions (merchant elites and traditional Bedouin supporters.)

MAJOR MIGRATION-RELATED POLICY OBJECTIVES:

- 1) To preempt rising internal dissent by solidifying control over employment of aliens, without disrupting non-Kuwaiti manpower flows.
- 2) To bolster dwindling size of citizenry and counter growing strength of liberal Kuwaiti political factions through expansion of program to naturalize conservative Bedouin supporters.

TABLE 4-4

PHASE THREE: 1967-1973

ECONOMIC CONTEXT:

Modest and uneven economic growth.

DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT:

New immigration of Palestinians following 1967 war.  
Recent and ongoing naturalization of Bedouin.

POLITICAL TASKS/ISSUES:

- 1) Control internal unrest and security incidents linked to regional conflicts (Arab-Israeli wars and PLO-Jordanian conflicts).
- 2) Weaken further Arab Nationalist opposition domestically by strengthening Kuwaiti Nationalist base of support.

MAJOR MIGRATION-RELATED POLICY OBJECTIVES:

- 1) To tighten control over entry and registration by full-scale implementation of Ministry of Interior authority, with resulting drop in rates of growth in immigrant population.
- 2) To respond to calls for "Kuwaitization": increase Kuwaitis' share of labor force, rates of participation, occupational mobility.
- 3) To maintain preexisting proportionate demographic balance between Kuwaiti and Non-Kuwaiti populations.



TABLE 4-5

PHASE FOUR: 1974-1977

ECONOMIC CONTEXT:

Sharp rise in oil prices, with revenues accruing to government and disbursed through government expenditures to private sector, creating increased labor demand.

DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT:

Policies of previous phase reflected in all-time low annual rates of growth in immigrant population: 2 percent between 1973 and 1974.

POLITICAL TASKS/ISSUES:

- 1) Enable use of economic growth to solidify regime support in face of increasingly contentious National Assembly.
- 2) Diffuse debate over the role of immigrants in Kuwait, particularly over extent to which Arab migrants' concerns should be expressed in Kuwait's political processes.

MAJOR MIGRATION-RELATED POLICY OBJECTIVES:

- 1) To liberalize entry of immigrant manpower.
- 2) ? To diversify sources of labor supply?

TABLE 4-6

PHASE FIVE: 1978-1979

ECONOMIC CONTEXT:

Mild recession in 1978 followed by second oil price rise in 1979.

DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT:

Rapid demographic growth resulting from new immigration, especially of Asians.

POLITICAL TASKS/ISSUES:

- 1) Reform administration and civil service.
- 2) Address tension between need for labor market stability on the one hand, and concern over settlement of migrants on the other.

MAJOR MIGRATION-RELATED POLICY OBJECTIVES:

- 1) To regulate the labor market to eliminate "redundancies" and "unnecessary immigration" without deterring entry of needed manpower.
- 2) To discourage settlement by placing new limits on entry of dependents and migrants' access to social services.

TABLE 4-7

PHASE SIX: 1980-1983

ECONOMIC CONTEXT:

Worldwide recession results in declines in oil prices and government revenues. Collapse of Kuwait's unofficial stock market.

DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT:

1980 census shows proportion of Kuwaitis in total population fell from 47 percent in 1975 to 41.6 in 1980. Proportion of Asians in total population rises from 9.8 percent to 15 percent in the same period, with Asians now 26 percent of all non-Kuwaitis. The number of Christians and other non-Muslims increases from just over 50,000 in 1975 to over 115,000 in 1980.

POLITICAL TASKS/ISSUES:

- 1) Control new wave of security incidents: bombings in Kuwait and London; hijacking of Kuwaiti jetliner. Iran-Iraq war at Kuwait's borders.
- 2) Address growing strength of conservative political factions: Bedouin tribal leaders and Islamists gain in 1981 elections, with "opposition" passing from Arab Nationalists to religious conservatives.

MAJOR MIGRATION-RELATED POLICY OBJECTIVES:

- 1) To balance manpower and security needs by encouraging registration of alien workers through campaign undertaken with vigor in 1982-83.
- 2) To strengthen government's ability to restrict immigration.
- 3) To lay ground for prospect of increase in naturalizations through modification of Nationality Law.
- 4) To preserve Muslim character of Kuwaiti society.

TABLE 4-8

PHASE SEVEN: 1984-1985

ECONOMIC CONTEXT:

Revenues drop below expenditures; government begins to draw down on reserves.

DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT:

Continuation of immigration in previous phase shows results in 1985 census: proportion of Kuwaitis in total population drops to 40 percent.

POLITICAL TASKS/ISSUES:

- 1) Control security incidents which have increasing prominence after December 1983 bombings of U.S. Embassy and French and Kuwaiti installations.
- 2) Respond to Ministry of Interior calls for end to immigration, limits on number of immigrants.
- 3) Address eruption of concern over financial and non-monetary social costs of immigration.
- 4) Address continuing decline in Kuwaitis' share of total population.

MAJOR MIGRATION-RELATED POLICY OBJECTIVES:

- 1) To reduce immigration, so as
- 2) To achieve "population balance" between Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis.

TABLE 4-9 KUWAIT: WORK PERMIT ISSUES 1975-1985

TYPE OF PERMIT	YEAR										
	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.
(1) Entry Permits for Work	29,232	24,380	58,357	56,017	49,705	66,795	70,158	93,277	81,657	51,347	52,312
(2) First Time Work Permits	74,743	86,290	63,492	48,270	44,474	56,178	50,454	68,799	86,075	39,422	41,623
(3) Renewals of Work Permits	-(a)-	-(a)-	56,357	65,397	61,185	54,905	62,332	75,914	105,267	139,626	163,474
(4) Cancellations & Transfers	14,380	10,381	13,065	5,013	3,027	11,765	11,432	14,772	21,463	33,585	42,482
(5) Final Cancellations & Departures		2,731	3,348	10,527	15,619	16,890	19,928	20,952	21,773	24,567	31,379
(6) Total No. All Issues	118,355	123,782	194,619	185,224	174,010	206,533	214,304	273,714	316,235	288,547	331,270

Source: Kuwait Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour  
Annual Reports, various years.

notes: For 1975 and 1976, renewals are recorded with First Time Permits. For 1975, Cancellations & Transfers are reported with Cancellations and Departures.

TABLE 4-10 KEY ECONOMIC INDICATORS FOR KUWAIT 1977-1985

INDICATOR	YEAR									
	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	
GDP	4,057	4,260	6,724	7,447	6,738	5,728	6,219	6,425	6,040	
GOVT REVENUE	2,996	3,050	3,647	6,923	6,351	4,280	4,155	4,363	3,806	
GOVT EXPEND	1,272	1,612	1,632	2,147	2,577	3,028	3,089	3,047	3,077	
GOVT SURPLUS	1,724	1,438	2,015	4,776	3,774	1,252	1,066	1,316	729	
CPI (1975=100)	1.142	1.245	1.399	1.410	1.514	1.631	1.709	1.730	1.754	
REAL EXPEND	1,114	1,295	1,167	1,523	1,702	1,857	1,807	1,761	1,754	

Sources: 1977-1984: IMF International financial statistics, various years; 1985: Kuwaiti sources.

TABLE 4-11. NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF WORK PERMIT ISSUES,  
1975 & 1985

	1975	1985
(1) TOTAL # WORK PERMIT ISSUES	118,355	331,270
(2) TOTAL NON-K LABOR FORCE	211,444	543,683
(3) ISSUES AS % OF NON-KLF (1)/(2)	56.0%	60.9%
(4) NON-K EMPLOYED IN PRIVATE SECTOR	148,661	387,130
(5) ISSUES AS % OF NON-K IN PRIVATE SECTOR (1)/(4)	79.6%	85.0%
(6) UNEXPLAINED DIFFERENCE (4)-(1)	30,306	55,860

## Sources:

(1) Kuwait, Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, "Annual Report on the Essential Characteristics of Immigrant Workers" for 1979 (includes 1975), p. 52; and for 1985, p. 4.

(2) For 1975: Census results; for 1985, author's calculations based on 1985 census data reported in National Bank of Kuwait, Economic and Financial Bulletin #10, Summer 1986, p. 10.

(4) For 1975: Annual Statistical Abstract 1985, Table 137, p. 138. For 1985: Author's calculations based on NBK Bulletin #10, p. 10.

(3), (5) and (6) Author's calculations.

TABLE 4-14. DISTRIBUTION OF KUWAITIS AND NON KUWAITIS IN LABOR FORCE, 1965 TO 1985

	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985
KUWAITI					
No.	40,166	59,634	86,971	103,499	126,702
%	22.1%	25.2%	29.1%	21.4%	18.9%
NON-KUWAITI					
No.	141,279	176,827	211,444	380,608	543,683
%	77.9%	74.8%	70.9%	78.6%	81.1%
TOTAL					
No.	181,445	236,461	298,415	484,107	670,385
%	100.0%	100.0%	100 0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Table 1-5.



TABLE 4-15 a. KUWAITI AND NON-KUWAITI  
EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY, 1975 & 1983

1975							
CATEGORY	TOTAL	KUWAITI			NON-KUWAITI		
		No.	%	% OF DISTRIB CATEGORY	No.	%	% OF DISTRIB CATEGORY
(1) PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL	41,880	9,741	11.2%	23.3%	32,139	15.2%	76.7%
(2) ADMINISTRATIVE & MANAGERIAL	2,736	1,044	1.2%	38.1%	1,692	0.8%	61.8%
(3) CLERICAL & RELATED	37,916	17,829	20.5%	47.0%	20,087	9.5%	53.0%
(4) SALES	24,147	6,175	7.1%	25.6%	17,972	8.5%	74.4%
(5) SERVICE	78,422	32,962	37.9%	42.0%	45,460	21.5%	58.0%
(6) AGRICULTURAL & HUSBANDRY	7,720	3,914	4.5%	50.7%	3,806	1.8%	49.3%
(7) PRODUCTION & LABORERS	105,592 <sup>f</sup>	15,307	17.6%	14.5%	90,285	42.7%	85.5%
	298,413	86,970	100.0%		211,441	100.0%	

Source: 1975: Birks and Sinclair, Arab Manpower,  
Table 2.12, p. 47, from Census 1975 (Kuwait  
1976), Tables 57 and 58, pp. 214-216.

TABLE 4-15 b. KUWAITI AND NON-KUWAITI EMPLOYMENT BY  
OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY, 1975 & 1983

1983							
CATEGORY	TOTAL	KUWAITI			NON-KUWAITI		
		No.	%	% OF DISTRIB CATEGORY	No.	%	% OF DISTRIB CATEGORY
(1) PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL	86,025	22,829	21.3%	26.5%	63,196	18.6%	73.5%
(2) ADMINISTRATIVE & MANAGERIAL	6,919	1,961	1.8%	28.3%	4,958	1.5%	71.7%
(3) CLERICAL & RELATED	70,374	31,561	29.4%	44.8%	38,813	11.4%	55.2%
(4) SALES	17,094	1,073	1.0%	6.3%	16,021	4.7%	93.7%
(5) SERVICE	125,208	38,221	35.7%	30.5%	86,987	25.6%	69.5%
(6) AGRICULTURAL & HUSBANDRY	3,108	259	0.2%	8.3%	2,849	0.8%	91.7%
(7) PRODUCTION & LABORERS	138,232	11,285	10.5%	8.2%	126,947	37.4%	91.8%
	446,960	107,189	100.0%		339,771	100.0%	

Source: 1983: Ministry of Planning, State of Kuwait,  
Statistical Abstract 1985, Table 133, p. 136.

TABLE 4-16 a. NUMBER AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYEES IN GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTORS BY NATIONALITY, 1975 AND 1985

1975						
	GOVERNMENT AND MIXED			PRIVATE		
	NO.	% OF SECTOR	% OF NATIONALITY	NO.	% OF SECTOR	% OF NATIONALITY
KUWAITI	66,235	51.3%	76.2%	20,736	12.2%	23.8%
NON-KUWAITI	62,783	48.7%	29.7%	148,661	87.8%	70.3%
TOTAL	129,018	100.0%		169,397	100.0%	

Sources: 1975: Calculated from Annual Statistical Abstract 1985, Table 137, p. 138.

TABLE 4-16 b. NUMBER AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYEES IN GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTORS BY NATIONALITY, 1975 AND 1985

1985						
	GOVERNMENT AND MIXED			PRIVATE		
	NO.	% OF SECTOR	% OF NATIONALITY	NO.	% OF SECTOR	% OF NATIONALITY
KUWAITI	109,109	42.1%	88.3%	14,451	3.6%	11.7%
NON-KUWAITI	149,805	57.9%	27.9%	387,130	96.4%	72.1%
TOTAL	258,914	100.0%		401,581	100.0%	

Source: Calculation based on statistics in National Bank of Kuwait, Economic and Financial Bulletin No. 10, Summer 1986, p. 10.

TABLE 4-17. NUMBER AND PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF LABOR FORCE BY  
ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND NATIONALITY, 1975 AND 1983

ECONOMIC ACTIVITY	1975				1983			
	KUWAITI	% DIST NON-KUWAITI	% DIST		KUWAITI	% DIST NON-KUWAITI	% DIST	
AGRICULTURE & HUNTING	3,983	4.6%	3,531	1.7%	629	0.6%	2,553	0.7%
MINING & QUARRYING	1,779	2.0%	3,080	1.5%	3,774	3.3%	2,701	0.7%
MANUFACTURING	2,258	2.6%	22,209	10.5%	3,182	2.8%	36,482	9.7%
ELECTRICITY, GAS & WATER	2,034	2.3%	5,237	2.5%	814	0.7%	4,551	1.2%
CONSTRUCTION	1,756	2.0%	30,500	14.4%	1,073	0.9%	80,290	21.3%
TRADE & RESTAURANTS	6,327	7.3%	33,232	15.7%	4,514	4.0%	50,283	13.3%
TRANSPORT, STORAGE & COMMUNICATION	4,567	5.3%	11,118	5.3%	8,658	7.6%	22,903	6.1%
FINANCE & BUSINESS*	1,377	1.6%	5,146	2.4%	3,885	3.4%	13,690	3.6%
SOCIAL SERVICES**	62,888	72.3%	97,391	46.1%	87,616	76.8%	164,280	43.5%
NOT STATED	2		0		0		0	
TOTALS	86,971	100.0%	211,444	100.0%	114,145	100.0%	377,733	100.0%

Sources: 1975: Ministry of Planning, State of Kuwait, Statistical Abstract 1977, Table 75, p. 85 (from Census 1975).

1983: Ministry of Planning, State of Kuwait, Statistical Abstract 1985, Table 131, p. 135 (estimates from sample survey.

n.b. size of labor force differs from that in Table 5.9b, presumably because of estimation techniques.)

\* includes insurance and real estate

\*\*includes public administration and defence

TABLE 4-18. PERCENT CHANGE IN NUMBER OF KUWAITIS  
IN VARIOUS ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

ECONOMIC ACTIVITY	No. KUWAITIS % CHANGE		
	1975	1983	
AGRICULTURE & HUNTING	3,983	629	-84.2%
MINING & QUARRYING	1,779	3,774	112.1%
MANUFACTURING	2,258	3,182	40.9%
ELECTRICITY, GAS & WATER	2,034	814	-60.0%
CONSTRUCTION	1,756	1,073	-38.9%
TRADE & RESTAURANTS	6,327	4,514	-28.7%
TRANSPORT, STORAGE & COMMUNICATION	4,567	8,658	89.6%
FINANCE & BUSINESS	1,377	3,885	182.1%
SOCIAL SERVICES	62,888	87,616	39.3%
NOT STATED	2	0	
TOTALS	86,971	114,145	

Source: Table 4-17

## 5. CONCLUSION

This dissertation began with the observation that international migration for employment has come to involve upwards of 20 million migrants whose movements stand to be affected by actions of the sovereign states they seek to enter. Yet both migration theory and empirical analyses have tended to ignore governments' behavior toward immigration as an important variable in the migration process. This thesis posed the central question: what has been the role of government policies in shaping international migration for employment? Have there been, as some have argued, no policies to speak of in Kuwait, or at best only "laissez faire" policies? If there are policies, what determines their content; what have been their objectives; and have they been effective?

The answers which emerge from exposition and analysis of the Kuwait case are that policies do indeed exist. They are discernable in written bodies of law and related legislation and can be seen to shift over time. It has been argued that these policies are determined by a range of factors, among which manpower and security concerns are paramount and often conflict with one another. In addition, policies have been shaped by domestic and regional political events, the rates and composition of

preceding demographic change, the relative positions of political actors, and the perceived social costs and consequences of immigration.

It has also been argued that migration policies are directed toward multiple objectives, of which affecting the levels of immigration (or the numbers entering) is only one. Determining the rights and status of migrants, facilitating or restricting their mobility and settlement, screening out dissidents, and affecting the strength of domestic political factions--including potentially migrants themselves--have all been demonstrable objectives of specific policy actions.

The assessment of policy effectiveness in Chapter 4 provided evidence to support the conclusion that a theoretical model which incorporates policy factors explains changes in levels of entry significantly better than a model which relies on economic factors alone. The evaluation demonstrated that it is possible for labor-receiving countries to implement a system of recording and reporting the entry and work status of migrants, providing the tools for control over immediate aspects of the migration process. It was seen to be rather more difficult, however, to alter the labor force behavior of the national population under the conditions that prevail in Kuwait.



So far, this thesis has focused on ways in which the Kuwait case can sharpen our understanding of policy factors in international migration for employment. Yet one (perhaps unexpected) finding of the case is that what began as a labor market solution to a manpower problem has become, over the course of time, a challenge to the country's fundamental strategies for political integration and to traditional patterns of leadership. Kuwait is an extreme case, but in facing these challenges, it is not unlike other Gulf states which have adopted similar strategies of differentiation between citizens and non-citizens. In discovering that migrants for employment are not the temporary sojourners they were expected to be, Kuwait and other states of the Gulf are not unlike the labor-receiving countries of Western Europe whose "guests came to stay". The remainder of this chapter, then, turns to consider some longer-range implications of labor migration for Kuwait and other Gulf states.

Kuwait's recent Five Year Plan and the population debate it served to focus was a step toward acknowledging the centrality of demographic issues for the future of the polity. Among other things, the Plan illustrated an important reversal of the generally accepted notion that countries set economic targets and let the rest follow. In Kuwait (and in Saudi Arabia as well), achieving a population balance has become an objective in and of

itself. Yet, in the Plan are seeds of policy conflict inherent in the links among Kuwait's demography and its economic, political and social dynamics. The tension between economic growth and population growth may have been resolved for the moment, but other tensions remain. In the near-term, there are trade-offs between both Kuwaitization and reduction of the expatriate dependency ratio on the one hand, and the objective of productivity growth on the other. There are tensions between meeting the objectives of Kuwaitization and reduced dependency by means of increased labor force participation of women, and the social values of more traditional forces within the society.

Perhaps the greatest tension, however, is a longer term one which the plan does not address: Kuwait is, and has been for more than twenty years, a heterogeneous society, comprised not only of a national population but of a resident immigrant population. It is also a country proud of its claim to being the only democracy in the Gulf. How long it can remain so will depend upon how traditional patterns of leadership are blended with new forms of political participation that take cognizance of the fact that "50-50 by the year 2000" is the best that can be hoped for.

Constriction of migration and more moderate levels of economic growth may intensify the importance of the participation issue, by limiting the ability of the regime to maintain the practice of dispensing benefits to Kuwaitis, a strategy used in the past to build and sustain support. The limitations on monetary resources to be distributed put increasing pressure on the regime to distribute political participation, an option that, while consistent with the principle of democracy, is at odds with persisting patriarchal patterns of leadership.

Despite recently imposed limitations on rates of immigration and widely reported incidents of repatriation, there appears to be little prospect that the concentration of migrants in Kuwait or elsewhere in the Gulf will diminish significantly. Immigrants are deeply embedded in their host societies where, it may be argued, they have already achieved a degree of political integration in their host societies.\* They are, increasingly, native-born sons and daughters whose commitment to their country of birth remains an unchannelled resource for stability. Overall, immigrants constitute a majority of the population in several states, and three-fourths of all workers in the

---

\* Sharon Stanton Russell, "Migration and Political Integration in the Arab World", in Luciani and Salame, eds., The Politics of Arab Integration, London: Croom Helm and Cairo: Center for Arab Unity Studies (forthcoming 1987).

Gulf as a whole.\* Nor is the presence of these workers linked to the vicissitudes of private sector business activity alone; in many countries, migrants are a substantial proportion of civil service manpower, ranging from 22 percent in Saudi Arabia to 58 percent in Kuwait.\*\* From a strictly economic point of view, there are limits on the extent to which governments can constrain labor entry without eventually pushing up wage rates and cutting into profits. Similarly, and particularly in view of the emphasis being placed on worker productivity as a means to reducing need for new immigration, there are limits on the extent to which governments can rely on rapid labor turnover as an antidote to settlement, without adversely affecting economic growth. In addition, there are domestic, bilateral, and regional political constraints on government policies toward entry and exit. Massive repatriation of Arab workers to labor-sending countries already plagued by rising levels of unemployment, from labor-receiving countries where their numbers, their role in pivotal institutions, and their regional links give these migrants a modicum of latent political force, risks further domestic instability in both sending and receiving countries at a time when the Gulf war demands the strengthening of regional ties. While declines in construction activity, readjustments in comparative wage

---

\* Nazli Choucri, Migration in the Middle East: Transformations, Policies, and Processes, Vol. I, Cambridge, MA: MIT, pp. 3-2, 3-12ff.

\*\* Russell 1987, pp. 24-25.

rates, and ideological concerns over growing heterogeneity in Gulf societies suggest that repatriation of Asians is more feasible,\* such action has the potential to undercut oil exports to that region, which in Kuwait alone account for 65 percent of crude export volume.\*\* Furthermore, massive repatriation of Asians would increase the labor-receiving countries' dependence on their existing Arab workforce, a consequence perceived as being of dubious political value. Finally, from both humanitarian and political points of view, there are constraints on repatriation of selected groups of migrants--Palestinians and, now, Lebanese most prominent among them.

If migrants are in the Gulf to stay, what is their future in these societies? The question is an especially sensitive one, not only because of the proportionate size of the migrant communities there, but because these states are at a critical juncture with respect to the very issue of political participation itself. It may well be, as Roger Owen has argued, that the long-range tasks of building diversified, export-oriented economies, of achieving public consensus on the use of national resources (especially oil and investment earnings), and of

---

\* Sharon Stanton Russell, "Remittances from International Migration: A Review in Perspective", World Development, Vol. 14, No. 6, p. 692.

\*\* State of Kuwait, Annual Statistical Abstract 1985, p. 173.

facilitating technology transfer all require greater political expression, freer exchange of ideas and less authoritarian rule.\* Yet, under the immediate pressures of budget constraints, internal political dissent, and security risks--including those posed by the Iran-Iraq war--constraints on popular political participation by citizens, let alone non-citizens, has seldom been greater.

The future status of migrants in the polities of the Gulf must be determined in the context of rethinking how long-range political stability and economic prosperity are best achieved. The underlying assumptions on the bases of which Gulf states chose to ensure domestic political stability and regime support by differentiating sharply between citizens and non-citizens have changed. In many places, citizens are not the majority they were when basic nationality laws were passed, nor are they as homogeneous as they once were. Kuwait, in particular, will have to face up to being a permanently heterogeneous society. The question as to how long it can adhere to the principle of being a "democratic society" and at the same time keep a longstanding non-Kuwaiti population disenfranchised remains to be answered. The first generation may have accepted this, but will the growing second generation of migrants? Where is the point of inflection, beyond which lies open ethnic conflict?

---

\* Roger Owen, "The Political Environment for Development" in Ibrahim, ed., Arab Resources: The Transformation of a Society, Washington, D.C.: Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, and London: Croom Helm, p. 143ff.

In Kuwait and elsewhere in the Gulf, both past naturalizations and rising levels of education and technical skill have introduced new subgroups, expectations and complexities among the citizenry itself. The increased sensitivity of the population to basic Islamic principles has only deepened the moral and political dilemmas inherent in differential treatment of Muslims, whether they are naturalized citizens or non-citizens of either Arab or Asian origin. At the same time, opposition to naturalization of migrants remains strong among the existing citizenry, a fundamental attitude it will be difficult to change.

Together, these factors pose new challenges to the internal cohesion of Gulf societies, argue for a careful reassessment of the role of migrants in their host countries, and will make migration a continuing factor in the political economy of the region for years to come.

## SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abdel-Aziz, Hussain. "The Role and Extent of Effectiveness of Population Programs (Non-Family Planning Programs) in Development." Paper presented at Conference on Population Policies and Development in the Arab World, 17-19 March 1985, Amman, Jordan. (in Arabic).
- Abdel-Fadil, M. "The Economic Impact of International Migration with Special Reference to Workers Remittances in Countries of the Middle East." Paper presented to the XXth General Session of the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP), Florence, 5-12 June 1985.
- Abdel-Mu'ti, Abdul Basit. Migration to the Oil and the Social Question: Field Study of a Sample of Egyptian Workers in Kuwait. Cairo: Madbouli Books, 1984. (Arabic)
- Abdel-Rahman, Ibrahim Helmy. "Human Resources Development and Utilization: A General Exposition." Aswan: mimeo, dated December 5, 1984.
- Abdullah, Ibrahim Sa'ad Al-Din. "The Organizational Structure for the Planning of Manpower in the Gulf States." prepared for Conference on Human Resources Development in the Arab Gulf, 15-18 February, 1975, Bahrain. (Arabic)
- Abdullah, Ibrahim Sa'ad Al-Din, and Mahmoud Abdul-Fadil. The Movement of Arab Manpower: Problems, Effects, and Policies. Beirut: Center for Arab Unity Studies, 1983.
- Abou-Gamrah, Hamed. "National Surveys of International Migration." UNESCO, ECWA Conference on International Migration in the Arab World, 11-16 May 1981, Beirut.
- Abu-Hakima, Ahmad Mustafa. The Modern History of Kuwait. London: Luzac & Company Limited, 1983.
- Abu-Lughod, Janet. "Recent Migrations in the Arab World." in Saad Eddin Ibrahim and Nicholas S. Hopkins (eds.) Arab Society: Social Science Perspectives. Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 1985.
- Abu-Lughod, Janet. "Social Implications of Labor Migration in the Arab World," in Ibrahim Ibrahim, ed., Arab Resources: The Transformation of a Society. Washington, D.C.: Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, and London: Croom Helm, 1983.



- Al-Akhras, Safouh. "Aspects and Factors of Immigrant Labour Force Stability in the State of Kuwait." UNESCO, ECWA Seminar on Population and Development in the ECWA Region, 18-30 November 1978, Amman.
- Al-'Alabi, Abdul-Mu'min Mohammad. "Population and Per Capita GDP in the Arab World." Prepared for Regional Conference on Population in the Arab World, 25-29 March 1984, Amman, Jordan. (Arabic)
- Adler, Stephen. Migration and International Relations: The Case of France and Algeria. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Migration and Development Study Group, Center for International Studies, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, April 1977.
- Adler, Stephen. "People in the Pipeline: The Political Economy of Algerian Migration to France, 1962-1974." Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Department of Political Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, September 1975.
- Alessa, Shamlan Y. The Manpower Problem in Kuwait. London and Boston: Kegan Paul International, 1981.
- Allison, Graham T.. Essence of Decision. Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1971.
- Alker, Hayward R., Jr. "A Methodology for Design Research on Interdependence Alternatives." in International Organization, vol. 31, No.1, (Winter 1977), pp. 29-63.
- Alonso, William. "A Theory of Movements." in Human Settlement Systems: International Perspectives on Structure, Change and Public Policy, Niles M. Hansen, ed. Cambridge, MA: Ballinger Publishing Company
- Amin, Galal A. and Elizabeth Awny. International Migration of Egyptian Labour: A Review of the State of the Art. Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, Manuscript Report, May 1985.
- Arab Bank Limited. Annual Report 1985.
- Arab Employment Institution. "Promotion of Labor Mobility within the Arab World." Tangiers: AEI, Report # 23, February 1983.
- Arab Employment Institution. "Arab Cooperation to Limit Import of Foreign Labor." Tangiers: AEI, 4(50) 1983.
- Arab Fund for Economics and Social Development. Annual Report 1983.

"The Arab Immigrants." ARAMCO World Magazine. Vol. 37, No. 5, September-October 1986.

Arab Monetary Fund. The Unified Arab Economic Annual Report, 1984. (Arabic)

Arab Perspectives, Vol. 6, January-February 1985.

Arab Planning Institute and ILO. Proceedings of Seminar on Population, Employment and Migration in the Arab Gulf States. Kuwait, 16-18 December 1978.

Arab Planning Institute and ILO. "Regional Cooperation in Human Resources Development in the Arab Countries." Mimeo, October 1983.

Arab Times. (various issues).

Arab Thought Forum. Collected Papers of Conference on Jordanian Migration, January 1986, Amman.

Ardittis, Solon. "Le Retour Assiste des Migrants Qualifies dans leurs Pays d'Origine: Les Programmes Multilateraux du PNUD et du CIM." Geneva: International Labour Office, International Migration for Employment Working Paper, October 1984.

Arendt, Hannah. The Origins of Totalitarianism. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1973.

Arnold, Fred and Nasra Shah, eds. Asian Labor Migration: Pipeline to the Middle East. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, forthcoming, 1987.

Askari, Hosein and John Thomas Cummings. "The Middle East and the United States: A Problem of 'Brain Drain'." Int. J. Middle East Studies, 8 (1977), pp. 65-90.

Azzam, Henry T. "Population and Labour Policies: Regional Programme for the Middle East, Working Paper No. 1. Labor Market Structure in Saudi Arabia.

Bach, Robert L. "International Relations, Economic Development and Migration." Prepared as a Background Paper for the International Migration Workshop, March 18-19, held at The Population Council, New York.

Badran, Nabil. "Palestinian Migration: Trends and Socio-Economic Consequences." UNESCO, ECWA Conference in International Migration in the Arab World, 11-16 May 1981, Beirut, Lebanon.

- Beauge, Gilbert, and Makram Sader. "The Pattern of Employment, Migration and Labour in the Gulf Countries." in Population Bulletin of ECWA, No. 21, December 1981, pp.85-103.
- Bergsten, C. Fred, Robert O. Keohane, and Joseph S. Nye. "International Economics and International Politics: A Framework for Analysis." International Organization, vol 29, No. 1, (Winter 1975) pp. 3-36.
- Bhagwati, Jagdish. "Incentives and Disincentives: International Migration." Weltwirtschaftliches Archiv, Vol. 120, No. 4, 1984, pp. 678-700.
- Bill, James A. "Resurgent Islam in the Persian Gulf," Foreign Affairs, Fall 1984, pp. 109-127.
- Birks, Stace, Ismail Serageldin, Clive Sinclair, and James Socknat. "International Labor and Associated Population Movements in the Arab Region." Presented at Conference on Population Development and Distribution in the Arab Region, Kuwait, 22-26, 1981, sponsored by Arab Planning Institute, University of Kuwait, and ILO.
- Birks, J. S., and C. A. Sinclair. Arab Manpower: The Crisis of Development. London: Croom Helm, 1980.
- Birks, J. S., and C.A. Sinclair. International Migration and Development in the Arab Region. Geneva: International Labour Office, 1980.
- Birks, J. S., and C. A. Sinclair. "Migration for Employment Project: The Nature and Process of Labour Importing: The Arabian Gulf States of Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates." Geneva: International Labour Office, World Employment Programme Research, Working Papers, August 1978.
- Birks, J. S., I.J. Seccombe, C.A. Sinclair. "Re-evaluation of Education Policy in Oman." Paper presented at the International Conference on Middle Eastern Studies, University of London, 6-9 July 1986.
- Blake, Gerald. "The Wandering Arabs." in The Geographical Magazine, (London), December 1972, pp. 179-182.
- Bloomfield, Lincoln. The Foreign Policy Process: A Modern Primer. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1982.
- Bohning, W.R.. "Estimating the Propensity of Guestworkers to Leave." in Monthly Labor Review, vol 104, May 1981, pp. 37-40.

- Bohning, W.R.. "Freedom of Movement Within a Community of Developing Countries." Geneva: ILO, International Migration for Employment Working Paper (MIG WP 10 E, December 1983.
- Bohning, W.R.. International Contract Migration in the Light of ILO Instruments, With Special Reference to Asian Migrant-Sending Countries." Geneva: International Migration for Employment, Working Paper 8, July 1982.
- Brennan, Ellen M. "Irregular Migration: Policy Responses in Africa and Asia." International Migration Review, Vol. XVIII, No. 3, Fall 1984, pp. 409-425.
- Burki, Shahid Javed. "International Migration: Implications for Labor Exporting Countries." The Middle East Journal, vol. 38, No. 4, Autumn 1984, pp. 668-684.
- Central Bank of Kuwait. The Kuwaiti Economy 1980-1984.
- Chisholm, A.H.T.. The First Kuwait Oil Concession: A Record of the Negotiations for the 1934 Agreement. London: Frank Cass, 1975.
- Choucrist, Nazli. "Asians in the Arab World: Labor Migration and Public Policy", in Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 22, No. 2, April 1986, pp. 252-273.
- Choucrist, Nazli. "The Hidden Economy: A New View of Remittances in the Arab World", in World Development, Vol. 14, No. 6, June 1986, pp. 697-712.
- Choucrist, Nazli with Vincent Ferraro. International Politics of Energy Interdependence: The Case of Petroleum. Lexington, Massachusetts: D.C. Heath and Company, 1976.
- Choucrist, Nazli and Supriya Lahiri. Macroeconomic Impacts of Remittances in Egypt: An Exploratory Analysis. Cambridge, Massachusetts, Technology Adaptation Program, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, July 1983.
- Choucrist, Nazli with the collaboration of Peter Brecke. Migration in the Middle East: Transformations, Policies, and Processes, Vols. I and II. Cambridge, Massachusetts, Technology Adaptation Program, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, July 1983.
- Choucrist, Nazli. "Overview of Policy Perspectives on Labor Migration." Massachusetts Institute of Technology, October 1983. (mimeo).

- Clark, W.A.V.. Human Migration. London: Sage Publications, 1986.
- Cornelius, Wayne. "Mexican Migration to the United States: The View from Rural Sending Communities." Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT, Migration and Development Study Group Working Paper, 1976.
- Council of Arab Economic Unity. Demographic Yearbook for Arab Countries, vol. 1. Amman: CAEU General Secretariat, Arab Central Bureau of Statistics and Documentation, March 1984.
- Council of Arab Economic Unity. "Economic Indicators for Arab Countries." Amman: June 1984.
- Council of Ministers of Labor and Social Affairs of the Arab Gulf States, Follow-up Bureau. Labor Law of the Arab Gulf States: A Comparative Study. Social and Labor Studies Series, No. 2, prepared by Dr. Yousef Elyas (Arabic)
- Council of Ministers of Labor and Social Affairs of the Arab Gulf States, Follow-up Bureau. "Principles and Aims for Social and Labor Policies, and Organizational and Internal Plans.
- Council of Ministers of Labor and Social Affairs of the Arab Gulf States, Follow-up Bureau. Symposium on Optimal Employment of National Manpower, Muscat, 26-29 1984. Final Report, Research and Studies, and Original Working Papers. (3 vols.) (Arabic)
- Council of Ministers of Labor and Social Affairs of the Arab Gulf States, Follow-up Bureau. Symposium on Labor Statistics in the Arab Gulf States. Kuwait, 7-11 April 1984. Final Report, Research and Papers (2 vols.) (Arabic)
- Council of Ministers of Labor and Social Affairs of the Arab Gulf States, Follow-up Bureau. Workshop on the Levels of Work of Arab and International Manpower and Indigenous Labor Legislation. al-Shariqah, 8-12 May 1982. Final Report, Research and Working Papers (2 vols.) (Arabic)
- Crystal, Jill. "Patterns of State-Building in the Arabian Gulf: Kuwait and Qatar." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Government, Harvard University, April 1986.
- Al-Daihani, Bader Raheem. "The Danger of Heavy Dependency Upon Expatriate Labour Force in Kuwait." Unpublished Masters Thesis (Public Administration) Pacific Lutheran University, 1983.

- Davis, Kingsley. "International Inequality and Migration in the Middle East and North Africa: An Analysis of Trends and Issues." Population Bulletin of ECWA, No. 21, December 1981, pp. 5-26.
- Demir, Soliman Mohamed S.. "The Political Economy of Effectiveness: The Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development as a Development Organization." Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation (Graduate School of Public and International Affairs) University of Pittsburgh, 1975.
- Dessouki, Ali E. Hillal. "The Shift in Egypt's Migration Policy: 1952-1978." Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 18, No. 1, January 1982, pp. 53-68.
- Dib, George. "Migration and Naturalization Laws in Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates." Population Bulletin, United Nations Economic Commission for Western Asia., No. 15, December 1978.
- Dowty, Alan. "The Assault on Freedom of Emigration." Paper presented at The Joint MIT-Harvard Seminar on Migration and Development, Cambridge, Massachusetts, February 26, 1987.
- Dye, Thomas. Understanding Public Policy. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972.
- Al-Ebraheem, Hassan Ali. Kuwait and the Gulf. Washington, D.C.: Center for Contemporary Arab Studies and London: Croom Helm, 1984.
- Al-Ebraheem, Hassan Ali. Kuwait: A Political Study. Kuwait: Kuwait University, 1975.
- The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU). Country Report: Kuwait, various issues.
- Farah, Tawfic, Faisal al-Salem, and Maria Kolman al-Salem. "Alienation and Expatriate Labor in Kuwait." Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, vol. IV, No. 1, Fall 1980, pp. 3-40.
- Farah, Tawfic. "Inculcating Supportive Attitudes in an Emerging State: The Case of Kuwait." Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 2, 1979.
- Fargues, Philippe. Reserves de Main-d'Oeuvre et Rente Pétrolière: Etude démographique des migrations de travail vers les pays arabes du Golfe. Beyrouth, Liban: Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches sur le Moyen-Orient Contemporain (CERMOC), 1980.

- Farrag, Abdelmegid M.. "Migration Between Arab Countries." in Manpower and Employment in Arab Countries: Some Critical Issues, Geneva: International Labour Office, 1975, pp. 84-109.
- Fergany, Nader, ed.. Foreign Manpower in the Arab Gulf States: Research and Proceedings of the Symposium. Sponsored by Center for Arab Unity Studies in cooperation with The Arab Planning Institute, held 15-18 January 1983 in Kuwait. Beirut: Center for Arab Unity Studies, August 1983 (in Arabic.)
- Fergany, Nader. Migration to the Oil: The Size and Effects of Migration in the Oil Producing Countries and its Effect on the Development of the Arab Region. Cairo: Center for Arab Unity Studies, 1984.
- The Ford Foundation. The Ford Foundation's Work in Population. New York: The Ford Foundation Working Papers, August 1985.
- Galaleldin, Mohammad Al Awad. "The Immigrants into Middle Eastern Countries: Current Situation and Prospects for the Future." Kuwait: Arab Planning Institute, 1984.
- Galaleldin, Mohammad Al Awad. "The Study of Sudanese Workers Abroad Project." Kuwait: Arab Planning Institute (mimeo) 1984.
- German Development Institute. "The Importance of the Oil-Producing Countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council for the Development of the Yemen Arab Republic and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan." prepared by Burghard Claus and Michael Hofmann. Berlin, September 1984.
- Ghalib, Sharif. "How the Saudis Tighten Their Belt." in Euromoney, May 1984.
- Gilani, Ijaz, M.F. Khan and M. Iqbal. "Labour Migration from Pakistan and the Middle East and its Impact on the Domestic Economy." Final Report, Research Project on Export of Manpower from Pakistan to the Middle East. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, June-July 1981.
- Gilpin, Robert. "Three Models of the Future." International Organization. vol. 29, No. 1 (Winter 1975), pp. 37-60.

- Goodwin-Gill, Guy S.. "International Covenants and Agreements Governing International Migration." United Nations Economic and Social Council, Economic Commission for Western Asia, Conference on International Migration in the Arab World, Beirut, 11-16 May 1981.
- Gulf Cooperation Council. "Decisions of the Third Meeting of the Ministers of Labour and Social Affairs in the GCC Member Countries, General Assembly 6th of May, [1985] Riyadh." GCC Information Department, Riyadh.
- Haddad, Yvonne. "Muslim Revivalist Thought in the Arab World: An Overview." The Muslim World, Vol. LXXVI, Nos. 3-4, July-October 1986, pp. 143-167.
- Halliday, Fred. "Labour Migration in the Arab World: The Ugly Face of the New Economic Order." in LABOUR Capital and Society, 15:1 (April 1982), pp. 8-22.
- Harris, John and Michael P. Todaro. "Migration, Unemployment and Development: A Two-Sector Analysis." American Economic Review, Vol. 60, March 1970.
- Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Conference on Population Policies and Development in the Arab World. Proceedings of conference held March 17-19, 1985, Amman, Jordan, sponsored by Ministry of Labour and Social Development. Published June 1986. (English and Arabic).
- Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Five Year Plan for Economic and Social Development, 1981-1985. Amman: National Planning Council.
- Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Results of Housing and Population Census 1979, East Bank, volume 2, Population Characteristics, Part One and Part 2. [two volumes]. Amman: Department of Statistics, 1983.
- Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. "Housing and Population Census 1979, Summary Results for Localities in the East Bank." Amman: Department of Statistics, April 1982.
- Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. "Housing and Population Census 1979, Governorates Main Results." Amman: Department of Statistics, June 1984.
- Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Manpower Survey, 1982 (vol. 1, Results of First Round) and 1983 (vol. 2, Results of Second Round.)



- Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. "Ministry of Labour Annual Reports" 1978, 1981, 1982, 1983. (in Arabic).
- Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. "Perspectives on Manpower Planning and Administration." Amman: National Planning Council, Manpower Planning Section.
- Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Proceedings of Symposium on Population, Fertility & Family Health in Jordan, 28-30 August 1984. Amman: Department of Statistics, Demographic Analysis & Research Unit, April 1985.
- Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The Seven Year Program for Economic Development of Jordan, 1964-1970. Amman: The Jordan Development Board [undated].
- Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Statistical Yearbook 1983, No. 34. Amman: Department of Statistics.
- Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. "Summary of the Five Year Plan for Economic and Social Development, 1981-1985." Amman: National Planning Council.
- Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. "Yearly Statistical Series (1964-1983)" Amman: Central Bank of Jordan, Department of Research and Studies.
- Helmy, Aziza. "Toward an Arab System for Labor Market Information." Lecture presented in behalf of The Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, Amman, 11-30 August, 1984.
- Hill, Allan G. "Les Travailleurs Etrangers dans les Pays du Golfe." Revue Tiers-Monde, vol. XVIII, No. 69, January-March 1977, pp. 115-130.
- Hill, Allan G. "People and Politics: Jordan's Population Since 1961." unpublished article, July 1978. (mimeo.)
- Hill, Allan G. "The Palestinian Population of the Middle East." Population and Development Review, Vol. 9, No. 2, June 1983.
- Hill, Allan G. "Segregation in Kuwait." Special Publication No. 5, British Institute of Geographers, July 1973.

- Ibrahim, Ibrahim. Arab Resources: The Transformation of a Society. Washington, D.C.: Center for Contemporary Arab Studies and London: Croom Helm, 1983.
- Ibrahim, Ibrahim. "The Impact of Arab Expatriates on Social and Political Development in the Gulf States." Paper prepared for ECWA Seminar on the Arab Brain Drain, 4-8 February 1980, Beirut, Lebanon.
- Ibrahim, Saad Eddin. The New Arab Social Order: A Study of the Social Impact of Oil Wealth. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1982.
- International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The Economic Development of Kuwait. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1965.
- International Encyclopedia of Comparative Law. Vol. I, National Reports. Tubingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck) and Paris: Mouton.
- International Herald Tribune. various issues.
- International Labour Conference. (ILC) Migrant Workers: General Survey by the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations. Geneva: ILO, ILC 66th Session, 1980.
- International Labour Conference. (ILC) "Report of the Director-General, Appendices." Geneva: ILO, ILC 71st Session, 1985.
- International Labour Office. "Bibliography on International Return Migration", International Migration for Employment Working Paper 16, September 1984.
- International Labour Office (ILO). "Manpower Assessment and Planning Projects in the Arab Region: Current Issues and Perspectives." Geneva: ILO, 1979.
- International Labour Office (ILO). "Provisions of the ILO Conventions and Recommendations Concerning Migrant Workers (Excluding Social Security Instruments.)" Geneva: ILO undated.
- International Labour Office (ILO). The Rights of Migrant Workers. Geneva: International Labour Office, 1986.
- International Labour Office (ILO). "Tripartite Inter-Regional Roundtable on International Migration (Arab and Asian Countries) Bangkok, Thailand, 17-20 September 1984, Informal Summary Record." Geneva: ILO Regular Budget Technical Co-operation Programme, 1984.

- "International Migration for Employment" in World Labour Report. Geneva: International Labour Office, 1984.
- International Monetary Fund. International Financial Statistics. various issues.
- International Monetary Fund. World Economic Outlook. Washington, D.C.: IMF Occasional Paper No. 9, 1982.
- Ismael, Jacqueline S. Kuwait: Social Change in Historical Perspective. Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1982.
- Issa, Najib. "Demographic Situation of the Palestinian People." ECWA, 8 May 1979.
- Jordan Times. various issues.
- Joukhadar, Abdul-Halim. "Les Etrangers au Koweit." Population, (Paris) Vol. 1, January-February 1980, pp. 57-82.
- Kanovsky, Eliyahu. "Migration from the Poor to the Rich Arab Countries." Department of Economics. Bar-Ilan University, Israel, May 1984 (mimeo).
- Keely, Charles. "Labour Migration: Points of Policy and Programme Influence by Sending Countries." Paper presented at Manpower Workshop, sponsored by National Planning Council, Manpower Planning Section, June 2-5, 1975, Amman, Jordan.
- Keely, Charles. "Uncontrolled Borders." Talk delivered at Georgetown University, January 17, 1985, Lecture Series on Immigration.
- Kelly, Geraldine. "The International Migration of Professional and Skilled Labor: Issues and Policies." in International Migration: Political, Economic, and Social Ramifications. Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: University of Pittsburgh, Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, ca. 1981.
- Keohane, Robert O. and Joseph S. Nye. "Beyond Dreams of World Government." Draft September 1984.
- Keohane, Robert O.. "International Institutions and Cooperation." Draft, September 12, 1984.
- Khoury, Nabeel. "The Politics of Intra-Regional Migration." in International Migration in the Arab World. Beirut: ECWA, vol. II, 1981, pp. 753-776.

- Kindleberger, C.P.. Europe's Postwar Growth: The Role of Labor Supply. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1967.
- Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Achievements of the Development Plans 1390-1403 (1970-1983): Facts and Figures. Riyadh: Ministry of Planning Press, 1984.
- Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. "Labor and Workmen Law and Attached Procedures." Jeddah: Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Labor Affairs Agency, Vocational Training Center Press, First Edition.
- Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. "Regulations for the Recruitment of Non-Saudis to Public Positions." Riyadh: Civil Service Bureau, General Department of Non-Saudi Recruitment, February 1979.
- Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Statistical Bulletin, 1984. Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency, Department of Economic Research and Statistics.
- Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Statistical Yearbook, 1981, 1983 Riyadh: Ministry of Finance and National Economy, Central Department of Statistics.
- Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Summary of the Fourth Development Plan, 1985-1990. Riyadh: Ministry of Planning, April 1985, Preliminary Draft.
- Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. "Summary of Employment and Vocational Training Affairs, 1978." Ministry of Labor, Division of Employment.
- Kirwan, Frank. "Labour Exporting in the Middle East: The Jordanian Experience." Development and Change, Vol. 13, No. 1, (January 1982), pp. 63-89.
- Kuhnhardt, Ludger. "Root Causes of Refugee Movements in Contemporary History." The Journal of International Studies (Institute of International Relations, Sophia University, Tokyo) No. 13, July 1984.
- Al-Kuwait al-Yowm. various issues.
- "Kuwait: An Oasis of Peace in the Arc of Crisis." AfricAsia, March 1984.
- "Kuwait: Social Progress and Democracy." Middle East Review, 1983, pp. 184-191.
- Kuwait Chamber of Commerce. Annual Report, 1984

- Kuwait Chamber of Commerce. "Background Information Paper." Prepared for Tripartite Inter-Regional Round Table on International Migration (Arab and Asian Countries), Bangkok, Thailand, 17-20 September 1984.
- Kuwait Chamber of Commerce. "Memorandum about Reviving the Economic Activities in Kuwait." Kuwait Chamber of Commerce, February 22, 1984. (mimeo)
- Kuwait News Agency. Special Dossier on the Occasion of the Fifth Gulf Cooperation Council Summit Conference in Kuwait. November 1984.
- Kuwait Times. Kuwait: various.
- The League of Arab States. New York: The League of Arab States, Arab Information Center, April 1983.
- Lee, Everett. "A Theory of Migration." Demography, Vol. 3, No. 1, pp. 47-57.
- Lesch, Ann Mosely. "Egyptian Labor Migration: Economic Trends and Government Policies." UFSI Reports, 1985/No. 38/Africa.
- Lesch, Ann Mosely. "The Impact of Labor Migration on Urban and Rural Egypt." UFSI Reports, 1985/No. 39/Africa.
- Lichtblau, George E. "The International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions" Mimeo January 9, 1985. [no location/amemb].
- Lofgren, Hans. "Migration from the West Bank." Stockholm: Stockholm University, mimeo, May 1982.
- Lucas, Robert E.B.. "International Migration: Economic Causes, Consequences, Evaluation and Policies." in Kritiz, et al., Global Trends in Migration: Theory and Research on International Population Movements. Staten Island, New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1981.
- Lucas, Robert E.B. and Oded Stark. "Motivations to Remit." Cambridge, Massachusetts: Migration and Development Program Discussion Paper Series, No. 10.
- Mahmoud, Dr. Mahgoub El-Tigani. "Sudanese Emigration to Saudi Arabia." in International Migration, vol. 21, No. 4, 1983.
- Mallakh, R.. Economic Development and Regional Cooperation: Kuwait. Chicago: Center for Middle Eastern Studies, No. 3, 1968.

- Martin, P.L. and Richards, A.. "International Migration of Labor: Boon or Bane?" Monthly Labor Review, Vol. 103, October 1980.
- Mazur, Michael. "Economic Development of Jordan." in Economic Development and Population Growth in the Middle East. Charles A. Cooper and Sidney S. Alexander, eds. New York: American Elsevier Publishing Co., Inc. pp. 211-275.
- McGreevey, William Paul. Economic Aspects of Historical Demographic Change. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, Staff Working Papers No. 685, Population and Development Series No. 10, 1985..
- McVoy, Edgar C. "Perspectives on Manpower Planning and Administration." Amman: National Planning Council, Manpower Planning Section, April 1972.
- Middle East Economic Digest (MEED). various issues.
- Middle East Executive Reports. Washington, D.C., Middle East Executive Reports, Ltd. (various issues.)
- Middle East Review 1983.
- Middle East Times. various issues.
- Migdal, Joel. "Policy in Context: The Intended and Unintended in Migration Policy in the Third World." in John D. Montgomery et al., eds., Patterns of Policy: Comparative and Longitudinal Studies of Population Events. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Books, 1979.
- "Migrant Workers in the Middle East." MERIP Reports, No. 123, vol. 14, No. 4, May 1984.
- "Migration, Population Growth, and Development." in Population Reports, vol. 11, No. 4, Series M, No. 7, September-October 1983.
- Miller, Mark, "The Political Impact of Foreign Labor: A Re-Evaluation of the Western European Experience." in International Migration Review, vol. 16, No. 1, 1983, pp. 22-60.
- Mitchell, C.R. "On Sharing Sovereignty" City University London, Department of Systems Science, Mimeo, July 1984.
- Montgomery, John D., Harold Lasswell, Joel S. Migdal, eds. Patterns of Policy: Comparative and Longitudinal Studies of Population Events. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Books, 1979.

- Al-Moosa, Abdulrasool and Keith McLachlan. Immigrant Labour in Kuwait. London: Croom Helm, 1985.
- Moubarak, Walid E.. "Kuwait's Quest for Security: 1961-1973." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Political Science, Indiana University, May 1979.
- Moussa. Ali. "Population Policy and Development Prospects in the Oil Producing Countries of the Arab Peninsula." Draft presented at Development Symposium for the Oil Producing Countries in the Arab Peninsula, Bahrain, January 1985. (Arabic)
- Al-Mujtama', Vol. 15, No. 668, April 24, 1984.
- Muslim News, Vol. II, No. 1, November 1981.
- Al-Naqueeb, Khaldoun H. Changing Patterns of Social Stratification in the Middle East: Kuwait (1950-1970) As a Case Study. Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation (Sociology) The University of Texas at Austin, 1976.
- National Bank of Kuwait. Kuwait Economic and Financial Bulletin Nos. 9 (November 1985) and 10 (summer 1986).
- Niblock, Tim. "The Prospects for Integration in the Arab Gulf." in Social and Economic Development in the Arab Gulf, Tim Niblock, ed. New York: St. Martins, London: Croom Helm, 1980.
- Omran, Abdel-Rahim. "Population Problems and Prospects in the Arab World." New York: United Nations Fund for Population Activities, July 1984.
- Owen, Roger. "The Arab Oil Economy: Present Structure and Future Prospects." in Arab Society: Continuity and Change. London: Croom Helm, 1985.
- Owen, Roger. "The Political Environment for Development." in Ibrahim, ed., Arab Resources: The Transformation of a Society. Washington, D.C.: Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, and London: Croom Helm, 1983.
- Palestine Liberation Organization. Palestinian Statistical Abstract, 1982, No. 4. Damascus: PLO Economic Department, Central Bureau of Statistics.
- Papademetriou, Demetrios G.. "International Migration in a Changing World: The Political Economy of International Migration." International Social Science Journal, Vol. XXXVI, No. 3, 1984, pp. 409-423.

- Plender, Richard. International Migration Law. Leiden: A.W. Sijthoff, 1972.
- Polk, William R.. The Arab World. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1965.
- Portes, Alejandro. "Alternate Modes of Structural Incorporation and Their Bearing on Present Theories of Labor Immigration." in Kritz et al., eds., Global Trends in Migration: Theory and Research on International Population Movements. New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1981.
- "Prophets of the Holy Land." Harpers', Vol. 269, No. 1615, December 1984.
- Al-Qudsi, Sulayman Shaban. "Growth and Distribution in Kuwait: A Quantitative Approach." Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation (Economics) University of California, Davis, 1979.
- Al-Qutub, Ishaq Yaqoub. "Characteristics of Manpower Migration in Kuwait." Paper prepared for Symposium on Population in the Arab World, 21-25 November 1983, Kuwait University, Kuwait. (Arabic)
- Al-Qutub, Ishaq Yaqoub. "Urbanization in Contemporary Arab Gulf States." Paper presented to International Symposium organized by the National Authority for Scientific Research (Tripoli, Libya) and University of Pittsburg and University of Utah (U.S.A.) on "Urbanization and Social Change in the Arab World," Bellagio, Italy, May 10-14, 1982.
- Al-Qutub, Ishaq Yaqoub. "Socio-Economic Impact of Migration in the Arab Gulf States." Paper prepared for the Third Scientific Symposium of The Center for Gulf Studies, Busrah University, "Man and Society in the Gulf" 19-31 March 1979. (Arabic)
- Al-Ra'i al-Am. various issues.
- RAPID Project. "Population and Labor Force [in Jordan]." Washington, D.C.: The Futures Group. Unpublished working document, 1980.
- RAPID Project. "The Effects of Population Factors on Social and Economic Development." Presentation prepared for the First Arab Conference on Population Policy and Development, Amman, March 1985.
- "Report on the Study Group on Worker Migration Abroad held at the Royal Scientific Society, Amman, Jordan, 2-3 December 1978." Amman: RSS, Economics Department, and The Population Council.



- Richards, Alan, and Philip L. Martin. "The Laissez-Faire Approach to International Labor Migration: The Case of the Arab Middle East." in Economic Development and Cultural Change, vol. 31, No. 3, April 1983, pp. 455-474.
- Robins, Philip. "Jordan's Unemployment Problem." MEI, 9 January 1987, pp. 14-15.
- Rogers, Rosemarie. Guests Come to Stay: The Effects of European Labor Migration on Sending and Receiving Countries. Boulder, Colorado and London: Westview Press, 1985.
- Rosecrance, R., and A. Alexandroff, W. Koehler, J. Kroll, S. Laqueur, and J. Stocker. "Whither Interdependence?" in International Organization, Vol. 31, No. 3, (Summer 1977), pp. 425-472.
- Royal Scientific Society. "Report on the Study Group on Worker Migration Abroad held at the Royal Scientific Society, Amman, Jordan, 2-3 December 1978." Amman: Royal Scientific Society, Economics Department and The Population Council.
- Royal Scientific Society. The Socio-Economic Impact of Guest Workers in Jordan, Vol. 1 and Vol. 2 (Appendices). Amman: Royal Scientific Society, Economics Research Department, March 1986.
- Rumaihi, Mohamed. "Factors of Social and Economic Development in the Gulf in the Eighties," in Rashid Kalidi and Camille Mansour, eds., Palestine and the Gulf. Beirut: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1982.
- Russell, Sharon Stanton. "Migration and Political Integration in the Arab World." in Luciani and Salame, eds., The Politics of Arab Integration. London: Croom Helm and Cairo: Center for Arab Unity Studies, forthcoming 1987.
- Russell, Sharon Stanton. "Remittances from International Migration: A Review in Perspective." World Development, Vol. 14, No. 6, (June 1986) pp. 677-696.
- Al-Salem, Faisal and Ahmed Dhaher. Expatriate Labor in the Gulf. Kuwait: Dhat al-Salasil (Arabic).
- Sassan-Koob, Saskia. "The Internationalization of the Labor Force." Studies in Comparative International Development, Vol. 15, No. 4, Winter, 1980, pp. 3-25.

- Schmida, Leslie C.. "The Effects of Labor Migration on Education." in Human Resource Developments in the Middle East and North Africa, No. 45, Fall 1983. Washington, D.C.: AMIDEAST.
- Schuck, Peter H. and Rogers M. Smith. "Consent, Community and the Illegal Alien: A Reappraisal of Birthright Citizenship." New Haven: Yale University, mimeo, Draft 1/11/85.
- Seccombe, Ian J. "Economic Recession and International Labour Migration in the Arab Gulf." The Arab Gulf Journal, Vol. 6, No. 1, April 1986, pp. 43-52.
- Seccombe, Ian James. "Emigration for Employment and Regional Disparity: Evidence from the Al-Kura District of North-west Jordan." Paper prepared for the Anglo-Dutch Symposium on Regional Disparities and Migration in the Third World, April 12-13th, 1985, Free University, Amsterdam.
- Seccombe, Ian James. "International Labour Migration and Skill Scarcity in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan." Geneva: ILO, International Migration for Employment Working Paper 14, July 1984.
- Seccombe, Ian James. "International Migration for Employment and Domestic Labour Market Development: The Jordanian Experience." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Durham (U.K.), November, 1983.
- Seccombe, Ian James. "International Migration for Employment in the Middle East: An Introductory Bibliography." Durham, England: University of Durham, Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, Occasional Papers Series No. 24, Manpower and Migration Series No. 4, 1984.
- Seccombe, Ian James. "Labour Emigration Policies and Economic Development in Jordan: From Unemployment to Labour Shortage." Durham, England: University of Durham, Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, Paper prepared for conference on "Economic Development in Jordan," held at the Centre d'Etude et de Recherche sur le Monde Arabe Contemporain, Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgique, November 1984. (mimeo).
- Seccombe, Ian James. "Manpower and Migration: the Effects of International Labour Migration on Agricultural Development in the Eastern Jordan Valley 1973-1980." Durham, England: University of Durham, Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, Occasional Papers Series No. 11, 1981.

- Seccombe, I. J. and R.I. Lawless. "Foreign Worker Dependence in the Gulf, and the International Oil Companies: 1910-50." International Migration Review, Vol. 20, Fall 1986, pp. 548-574.
- Seccombe, I. J. and R.I. Lawless. "Some New Trends in Mediterranean Labour Migration: The Middle East Connection." International Migration, Vol. XXIII, No. 1, 1985.
- Seccombe, I. J. and R.I. Lawless. "Travailleurs Migrants et Debuts de l'Industries Petroliere dans le Golfe Arabe, 1930-1950." Maghreb-Mashrek, No. 112, April-June 1986, pp. 22-42.
- Serageldin, Ismail, William Alonso, Chang-I Hua, Takashi Takayama, Bob Li. Simulating Flows of Labor in the Middle East and North Africa. Washington, D.C.: World Bank Staff Working Papers, No. 736, 1985.
- Serageldin, Ismail, James Socknat, Stace Birks, Bob Li, and Clive Sinclair. "Manpower and International Labor Migration in the Middle East and North Africa." Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, Technical Assistance and Special Studies Division, June 30, 1981.
- Serageldin, Ismail, James Socknat, Stace Birks, Bob Li, and Clive Sinclair. "Some Issues Related To Labor Migration in the Middle East and North Africa." Middle East Journal, vol. 38, No. 4, Autumn 1984. pp. 615-641.
- Shaban, Dr. Fuad. "Arabization of Education." in Human Resource Developments in the Middle East and North Africa, Fall 1984, No. 49. Washington, D.C.: AMIDEAST.
- Shah, Nasra M. and Fred Arnold. "The Non-Economic Consequences of Asian Labor Migration to the Middle East." Paper prepared for the XXth General Conference of the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population, Florence, Italy, 5-12 June 1985.
- Shah, Nasra. "The Transition in Female Status in Kuwait: Issues and Likely Impacts." Presented at Population and Development Symposium, 3-7 November 1985, CDC/Sympo.85, Contributed Paper No. 12, U.N.-A.R.E. Cairo Demographic Centre.
- Sherbiny, Naiem A.. "Expatriate Labor in Arab Oil-Producing Countries," Finance and Development, Vol. 21, No. 4, December 1984, pp. 34-37.

- Sherbiny, Naiem A.. "Expatriate Labor Flows to the Arab Oil Countries in the 1980s," The Middle East Journal, Vol. 38, No. 4, Autumn 1984, pp. 643-667.
- Shihab-Eldin, Adnan. "Arab Brain Drain to the West-Why and How to Reverse the Trend." Paper presented at Regional Conference, Association of Arab-American University Graduates, San Francisco, Calif, 18 August 1984.
- Sirageldin, Ismail. "Lecture on Population Policies and Development in the 80's." Islamabad: Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, Lectures in Development Economics No. 3, 1984.
- Sirageldin, Ismail. "Some Issues in Middle Eastern International Migration." in The Pakistan Development Review, Vol. XXII, No. 4, Winter 1983, pp. 217-237.
- Sirageldin, Ismail and Djehane Hosni. "The Manpower Dynamics of Kuwait: Toward a Balanced Structure." Mimeo, undated.
- Sirhan, Bassem Toufic. "Modernization and Underdevelopment: The Case of a Capital-Surplus Country: Kuwait." Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, American University, 1980.
- Al-Siyassa. various issues.
- Socknat, J.A. "Progress and Problems in the Development and Utilization of Human Resources in the Arab Gulf States." mimeo, revised August 8, 1983.
- Socknat, James A.. "The Potential Relationship of International Migration for Employment and a Middle East Peace Settlement: An Assessment." Middle East Review, Vol. 11, No. 4, 1979.
- Socknat, J.A. Untitled analysis of manpower in Jordan, draft, dated April 15, 1982.
- Standing, Guy. Conceptualising Territorial Mobility in Low-Income Countries. Geneva: International Labour Office, July 1982.
- Standing, Guy. Population Mobility and Productive Relations: Demographic Links and Policy Evolution. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, Staff Working Papers, No. 695, 1984.
- Stark, Oded and David E. Bloom. "The New Economics of Labor Migration." Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University, Migration and Development Program, Discussion Paper Number 14, January 1985.

State of Kuwait. "Aliens Residence Law promulgated by Amiri Decree No. 17 of 1959." [and related orders and amendments] English translation published in Contractor's Directory. Kuwait: Kuwaiti Contractors Union, ca. 1983.

State of Kuwait. "Amiri Decree No. 15, 1959 Concerning Kuwaiti Citizenship [and related orders and amendments through 1982]." (Arabic)

State of Kuwait. Annual Report 1983. Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor.

State of Kuwait. "Annual Report on Employment and Essential Characteristics of Immigrant Manpower for [1978 and successive years through 1985]." Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Manpower Organization Office, Employment Control, January 1979. (Arabic and English versions)

State of Kuwait. Annual Statistical Abstract. Kuwait: Ministry of Planning, Central Statistical Office. Various years.

State of Kuwait. "Consumer Price Index Numbers." Ministry of Planning, Central Statistical Office, November 1984.

State of Kuwait. "Institutes of Special Education." Ministry of Education, 1982.

State of Kuwait. Kuwait Facts and Figures 1984. Ministry of Information, 1984.

State of Kuwait. "Kuwait in Figures: Twenty Five Years of Independence." Kuwait: Ministry of Planning, Central Statistical Office, 1986.

State of Kuwait. "Kuwait Health Plan, 1982-2000, Vol. 4, Executive Summary." Kuwait: Ministry of Public Health, Office for National Health Planning, April 1982.

State of Kuwait. "Law No. 38 of 1964, Concerning Labour in the Private Sector." English translation published in Contractor's Directory. Kuwait: Kuwaiti Contractors Union, pp. 202-222.

State of Kuwait. "Manual of Schools of Kuwait." Ministry of Education, 1978-79.

- State of Kuwait. "Monthly Digest of Statistics, February 1985, Vol. 6, No. 2." Ministry of Planning, Central Statistical Office.
- State of Kuwait. "National Accounts Statistics 1973-1982." Ministry of Planning, Central Statistical Office.
- State of Kuwait. Results of the Survey of Employment, Salaries and Hours of Work, March 1981. Ministry of Planning, Central Statistical Office, May 1982. (Arabic).
- State of Kuwait. "Review of Employment Activity and the Basic Features of Expatriate Manpower During the Year [1977 and 1978]." Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, Manpower Organization Department, Employment Control Division, Statistical Section, [February 1978 and January 1979]. (Mimeographed)
- State of Kuwait. "Silver Jubilee of Kindergartens." Ministry of Education, 1979.
- State of Kuwait. "Social Statistics 1984 (Edition XIII)." Ministry of Planning, Central Statistical Office.
- State of Kuwait. "Statistical Review 1986." Kuwait: Ministry of Planning, Central Statistical Office, 1986.
- State of Kuwait. Study of Family Budget: Cumulative Final Results for the Second Year, April 1978-March 1979, vol. 1. Ministry of Planning, Central Statistical Office, June 1982. (Arabic)
- State of Kuwait. "Survey of Government Employees as of February 1976.": Analysis of Results, July 1978; Statistical Tables, Part 2, Vol.s 1, 3 and 4, August 1978. Ministry of Planning, Central Statistical Office. (Arabic)
- State of Kuwait. The Annual Report 1979-1980. Ministry of Education, Control of Public Relations.
- State of Kuwait. The Constitution of the State of Kuwait. Kuwait Government Printing Press.
- State of Kuwait. Yearbook. Ministry of Information. 1973, 1977, 1979, 1980, 1983. (Arabic).
- State of Kuwait. Yearbook: Educational Statistics 1980-1981. Ministry of Education, Planning and Follow-Up Bureau. (Arabic)

- Sullivan, Kathy. "Brain Drain and International Migration of Workers in the Arab World." Amman: AMIDEAST [circa 1983]
- Swamy, Gurushri. Population and International Migration. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, Staff Working Papers, No. 689, 1985.
- Tabbarah, Riad. "Population, Human Resources, and Development in the Arab World." Population Bulletin of ECWA, No. 21, June 1981.
- Talafha, Hussain. "The Effects of Workers Remittances on the Economy of Jordan." Irbid, Jordan: Yarmouk University, Department of Economics, July 1984, (mimeo).
- Tapinos, Georges. "The Economics of International Migration." Population Bulletin of ECWA, No. 21, June 1981. pp. 39-46.
- Termote, Marc. "La Place de la Migration dans la Recherche Demographique." Cahiers Quebecois de Demographie, Vol. 12, No. 2, October 1983, pp. 175-198.
- Todaro, Michael P.. "A Model of Labor Migration and Urban Unemployment in Less Developed Countries." American Economic Review, Vol. 59, March 1969.
- Tripartite Inter-Regional Round Table on International Migration (Arab and Asian Countries). Background Information Papers [for Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia.] Bangkok, Thailand, 17-20 September 1984.
- United Kingdom, Public Record Office, Foreign Office. Kuwait, Jordan, Palestine, 1951-1953.
- United Nations. International Migration Policies and Programmes: A World Survey. New York: Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, Population Studies, No. 80, 1982.
- United Nations. "Mexico City Declaration on Population and Development." International Conference on Population, Mexico City, 13 August 1984, doc. E/CONF.76/L.4, (draft mimeo, limited distribution.)
- United Nations Secretariat. "Concise Summary of National Population Policy: Kuwait." Preliminary Draft Prepared by the Population Division of the Council of Economic and Social Affairs, mimeo, 20 March 1975.

- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. "Consideration of Possible Approaches Aimed at the Formulation and Implementation of Policies and Concrete Measures to Mitigate the Adverse Effects of the Reverse Transfer of Technology." Geneva: UNCTAD Trade and Development Board, Third Meeting of Governmental Experts on the Reverse Transfer of Technology, 26 August 1985, Note by the UNCTAD Secretariat.
- United Nations Economic Commission for Western Asia. "The Population Situation in the ECWA Region: Jordan." Beirut: ECWA, 1979.
- United Nations Economic Commission for Western Asia. "The Population Situation in the ECWA Region: Kuwait." Beirut: ECWA, 1980.
- United Nations Fund for Population Activities. "The Arab World and Population, 1979." (The Work of the Arab League Ministerial Follow-up Committee on Population and the United Nations Fund for Population Activities.)
- United Nations Fund for Population Activities. "UNFPA and the Arab World." Prepared for ECWA Third Regional Population Conference. (undated, ca. 1982.)
- United Nations Fund for Population Activities. 1983 Report. New York: UNFPA, 1983.
- United States Department of Labor. "Foreign Labor Trends: Kuwait." Bureau of International Labor Affairs, prepared by American Embassy, Kuwait, 1985.
- U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce. U.S.-Arab Trade 1984. New York: U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce Research Department, June 1986.
- U.S. Congress, Committee on Foreign Relations U.S. Senate and Committee on Foreign Affairs U.S. House of Representatives. "Human Rights Report for Kuwait - 1984" in Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1984. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, February 1985.
- Warwick, Donald P.. "Cultural Values and Population Policies: Cases and Contexts." in Montgomery et al., eds., Patterns of Policy: Comparative and Longitudinal Studies of Population Events. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Books, 1979.
- Weiner, Myron. "On International Migration and International Relations." Population and Development Review, Vol. 11, No. 3, September 1985, pp. 441-455.



- Weiner, Myron. "Political Integration and Political Development". The Annals of the American Academy of Political Science, Vol. 358, March 1965, pp. 52-64.
- Weiner, Myron and Nazli Choucri. "The Internationalization of Policies Affecting International Migration: Case Studies in the Middle East and South Asia." Report to the Ford Foundation, summer 1986 (mimeo).
- Weiner, Myron. "Transborder Peoples" in Mexican Americans in Comparative Perspective, Walker Connor, ed. Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute, 1985.
- Wilber, Donald N.. Iran Past and Present. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967.
- Workshop on Population Distribution and Development in the Arab World. Proceedings. Sponsored by The Arab Planning Institute, Kuwait University, and The International Labor Office, 22-26 November 1981, Kuwait. (Arabic and English).
- The World Bank. "Kuwait - Manpower Planning Project Working Paper: Structural Change and Forecasting Sectoral Employment in Kuwait." Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, Technical Assistance and Special Studies Division, Europe, Middle East and North Africa Projects Department, December 21, 1979.
- The World Bank. "Labor Migration from Bangladesh to the Middle East." Washington, D.C.: World Bank Staff Working Paper No. 454, April 1981.
- The World Bank. World Development Report. Washington, D.C.. various years.
- Youssef, Ahmed. "The Effect of Egyptian Arab Relations on the Flow of Egyptian Labor to the Arab Countries." Paper prepared for the Project on Egyptian Labor Migration, Cairo University/MIT Technology Adaptation Program, 1981.
- Zahir, Ahmad Jamal. Al-Mar'ah fi Duwal al-Khalij al-'Arabi: Dirasa Midaniyya. Kuwait: Dhat al-Salasil, ca. 1985.
- Zahlan, A.B.. "The Problematique of the Arab Brain Drain." Arab Studies Quarterly, Vol. 2, No. 4, pp. 318-331.
- Zahlan, A.B. and Rosemarie Zahlan. "The Palestinian Future: Education and Manpower." in Journal of Palestine Studies, vol. VI, No. 4, Summer 1977, pp. 103-112.

Zar, Z. "Recruitment Practices and Working and Living Conditions of Asian Migrant Workers in the Middle East: Problems and Possible Solutions." Geneva: International Labour Office, International Migration for Employment Working Paper 12, May 1984.

Zarour, Tawfiq A.. "Determinants and Consequences of the Arab Brain Drain." UNESCO, ECWA Conference on International Migration in the Arab World, 9-14 May 1981, Amman, Jordan.