

# We should have finished job, says Thatcher

**By Richard Beeston**  
.....

THE setting was perfect. As the sun went down over the British Embassy in Kuwait yesterday, assembled servicemen, diplomats and veterans of the war to liberate Kuwait paid tribute to those who fell and raised a glass to the victory over Iraq.

A bagpiper played, the canapés were passed around and the guests of honour, Baroness Thatcher and John Major, appeared to put aside their differences for a tree-planting ceremony on the Embassy lawn. But the passing of a decade since Kuwait was liberated by allied forces does not seem to have cooled passions when it comes to the heated debate on whether the coalition should have gone on to destroy the regime of President Saddam Hussein.

"I wish I could have stayed on [in power] so that we could have finished the job," Lady Thatcher said. "Perhaps we would not be where we are

today if we had acted then. Saddam is a cruel and terrible man. He should not be allowed to remain in power."

Her views were widely applauded by British expatriates and military officers.

After the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, Mrs Thatcher was credited with persuading the Americans that the West should respond militarily against the attack. The move helped to create a huge coalition of forces including Arab states.

Mrs Thatcher did not stay in power long enough to see through the allied victory after she lost the Tory leadership battle and Mr Major replaced her as Prime Minister.

Mr Major said: "I know of no military or political leader at the time who was for going to Baghdad . . . We went to war to uphold international law. It would have been wrong to then break it ourselves by invading a country. The coalition would have collapsed if we had gone on to Baghdad."