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January

1939-1946 World War II

5 January 1940

New Zealand - The main body of the First Echelon, comprising 354 officers and 6175 soldiers, sailed for Egypt on 5 January 1940.

US Congress votes for war in Iraq, 12 January 1991

The United States Congress votes to authorise the use of military force against Iraq to end its occupation of Kuwait.

In December 1990 - April 1991 the New Zealand government provided defence personnel and aircraft to the multinational Coalition Forces formed to effect the removal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait and to restore security and stability in the Gulf region.

113 NZDF personnel comprising aircrew, ground support staff, an Army medical team, a NZDF medical contingent and two C130 Hercules aircraft were attached to British and American units in Saudi Arabia and Bahrain.

- Medical Teams
 - Team 1: 32 personnel Army Medical Team attached to the US Navy Fleet Hospital
 - Team 2: 20 personnel Tri-Service Composite Medical Team attached to the RAF Hospital
- Air Force
 - No 40 Squadron: 61 personnel and two C130 aircraft. The RNZAF was attached to the RAF working from King Khalid International Airport, Riyadh. The RNZAF was one of the first Hercules to go into Kuwait and had the honour of carrying Commander British Forces, Middle East, [General Sir Peter de la Billiere](#).

[John Belcher](#) was on one of the resupply RNZAF flights into Kuwait and had this to say, "although it was mid afternoon most of the flight was spent in darkness flying through the burning oil fields of Kuwait. The Iraqis

had set fire to the oil wells as they retreated. I had about 10 minutes to look around at Kuwait airport. Just long enough to see the remains of the British Airways Jumbo jet that had landed at Kuwait as the invasion was taking place. It had been bombed during the air war."

For more information about the Gulf War visit www.britains-smallwars.com

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