

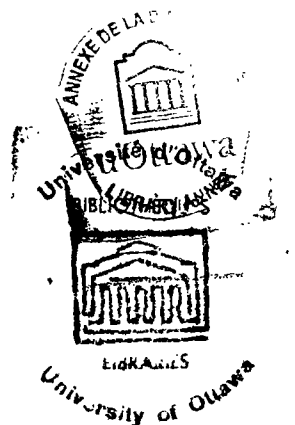
SOME POLITICAL PROBLEMS OF THE MIDDLE EAST
SINCE WORLD WAR I

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and Social Sciences of the
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S.M.A.

Ottawa,
May 2, 1954

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Ever since the creation of the world, its inhabitants have been confronted with a never ending series of problems; problems of food and space; individual and group problems; family and community problems; national and international problems. The source of all such problems in the history of civilization, in fact, has been the conflict between the growing needs and ideals of man and the search to satisfy these needs and the attempts to realize his ideals. The development of means of communications, scientific inventions and innumerable idealistic theories, helped to a large extent in solving many of the problems with which human beings are concerned; but they could no less be held responsible for creating complex and complicated problems of a devastating nature. Man appears bent upon destroying his own world and its achievements by his own inventions, and for the sake of his own ideological theories.

Today, when nations are much more conscious than ever of the division of the world into two ideological groups, there exists more than ever before, a chain of grave problems of the highest political importance all over the globe. These are problems whose solution could possibly mean life or death to millions of people; and the cost might even result in the

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destruction of our entire civilization and its achievements. We are at present watching an act of such a drama in the Far East and Southwest Asia, with definite fear of its repetition somewhere else; it might be in the strategically important land of the Middle East, the cradle of civilization, where the stage is set and the rehearsal already in progress.

Before we actually discuss the political drama of this region, it is necessary to study the stage, to know the actors, and to know more of the role they play behind the footlights of a universal audience.

THE MIDDLE EAST

Before World War II, there had been somewhat vague geographical definitions and loose divisions of Southern Asia in the Near, the Middle and the Far East. A few authorities on the subject defined the Near East as the Balkan States, Egypt and the Coastal area on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean and of the Black Sea, while the Middle East was roughly defined as being Iran, Afghanistan and the Arabian peninsula.¹ The second version of the term Middle East was the territory from Afghanistan to Crete, excluding Egypt. The third version included Iran and Arabia, usually also the lower basin of Euphrates - Tigris and occasionally Afghanistan and India, while the Near East comprised the Balkans and included most of

1. Fisher, W.B., The Middle East (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd.)P.1.

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the countries adjacent to the basin of Eastern Mediterranean.¹
 The campaigns of Wavell, Alexander, Montgomery during World War II, the establishment of the Middle East Command and Supply centre, and the appointment of a British Resident Minister of State for that region, leave little doubt of the legality of the term Middle East, as adopted by the British, and the grouping of the countries from the geographical and political points of view. This line of distinction is still not universally accepted,² notwithstanding the fact that the countries concerned have themselves adopted the general term, Middle East.

However, our reference and adoption of the British coined phrase will be based on; firstly that Iran, Turkey, Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Transjordan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Egypt and Sudan form a single geographical unit in which occur a similar physical environment and way of life etc; secondly that these countries are politically, historically and culturally inter-linked; thirdly, that the political grouping of the countries has almost universal approval.³

HISTORICAL SURVEY

The importance of the history of the Middle East can be judged from the fact that civilization, according to archaeologists, was born in this region (Egypt or Mesopotamia) approximately between the years 3500-4000 B.C., when both

1. ibid P.1

2. The United States Government officially refer the area as the Near East.

3. The Middle East (3rd Edition, 1953-London Europa

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regions had a highly evolved social life.¹ Of the twenty-one present and past full-grown civilizations, twelve originated from the Middle East, including the western civilization, the Orthodox Christian and its Russian offshoot. Three of the world's most important religions, Islam, Christianity and Judaism have their origin in the same land.

The earlier history of the Middle East was marked by numerous incursions by pastoral people from the north in the second millenium B.C. The Hyksos (Shepherd kings), the Kassites, Mitanni's and the Hittites, all settled down in the well watered regions of Syria, Mesopotamia (between the Tigris and the Euphrates) and Anatolia in the north. They were followed by several small communities, such as Israelites, Philistines and Phoenicians, who also established themselves in the lush regions of Levant and in the region of the "Fertile Crescent" until the rise of Assyria in 1200-1000 B.C. All during that period, new contributions to their progress were made by introducing iron, horses and chariots, etc. More changes occurred when Asia Minor and Persia were incorporated in the old Middle East culture. "The Middle East, as a single unit",² was created in the same ancient period with the conquest of the Mesopotamian lowland by Cyrus of Persia, in 539 B.C. His empire extended from the Hindu Kush to the Aegean, and enjoyed

1. Fisher, Op. cit., P.125
 2. ibid, P.127

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a highly developed social and economic life.

The conquest of Alexander the Great in 331 B.C. brought Hellenic influence on the natives, but this influence disappeared with the assimilation of the settling Greeks, and with the rise of militant Judaism in Palestine, and of other native kingdoms.

Important world wide developments began with the Romans, after their conquest of the Middle East-; among them, the establishment of trade and cultural relations with other highly-organized foreign countries, such as China and India. The Roman influence, however, began to decline with the warfare which preceded the establishment of the Sassanid dynasty in Persia in 224 A.D. The material devastation, which this long warfare brought on both powers was , according to some historians, an important contributing factor in the rise of Islam.¹

While it can be said that the Middle East gave birth to civilization, it was Islam who nurtured and developed the stripling society and brought it to full power. The Middle East was introduced to the world as a new idealistic force with immense potentialities.

The Islamic philosophy was quite distinct from either Christian spirituality and Greek philosophical thinking in the West or Hindu mysticism in the East. It cannot be denied

1. ibid P.134

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that certain factors of Hebrew-Christian and Greek thinking influenced the tenets of Islam. But Islam introduced not only a new religion, but a more comprehensive way of life, embracing social and economic factors as well as spiritual doctrines. Because of its divine principles and strict discipline, Islam achieved world-wide success, shortly after its birth in the seventh century. Its empire ranged from Spain to India including Asia Minor and parts of Europe. The reasons for its success can be attributed to the universal character of the Islamic doctrine which taught equality of poor and rich alike.

This fundamental belief, preached by the Prophet Mohammed, was the earliest manifestation of a creed in modern days interpreted by Abraham Lincoln that all men are born equal in the sight of God.

This new concept of life dealt an effective blow to the narrow tribal and family unions in Arabia itself, and with its strong appeal, especially to the vast numbers of the common man, forged bonds uniting peoples of different nations and heritage to the oneness of the Islamic culture. The differences and individualities of various peoples were melted into a common aspiration; and Islam flourished.

It became the dominating factor in the daily life of its followers and of their governments. It was the state religion of the former Ottoman Empire and is still the state religion of most of the Middle Eastern countries.

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A brief review of Islamic history, however, will bring to light the many-faceted achievements brought about by this tidal wave of new thought; and also the shortcomings which were to bring about its decline.

With the sudden death of Prophet Muhammad in 632 A.D. and the consequent lessening of his dominating personal power, old family and tribal conflicts between the Muslim Arabs broke out afresh. The main issue rested upon the selection of a Caliph. Abu Bakr was eventually elected the first Caliph and was followed by Omar, who was succeeded by Osman from the house of Omeyyads. With the martyrdom of Osman, and the succession of Ali as Caliph, what was to become the never-ending conflict within Islam, started. This dissension in time divided them into two different sects - Shias and Sunnis, - though it did not materially harm expansion. The increasing internal feud between the supporters of the rival groups of Hashimites and Ommeyyads, did, however, bring the Caliphate of the most respected and learned Ali, of the House of Hashim, to the point of failure. Insurrections threatened the Islamic world, and finally, the Ommeyyads under the leadership of Amir Muawiya, the then Governor of Syria who belonged to the House of Mecca, became victorious.

Following Muawiya's success, the Arab outlook prevailed on Islamic outlook and spirit. The office of the Caliph was declared hereditary instead of being elective according to the

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principle laid down by Islam. In spite of much internal conflicts, the Ommeyyads rule became firm and secure. This situation prevailed for almost a century, until a major revolution led by Abu Muslim Khorasani broke out in Islam's own bosom. This uprising sought to revive the Caliphate¹ in the religious sense of the term, in the house of Hashim. Khorasani's success ended the period of the Ommeyyad's rule in Arabia and a new Abbasides dynasty was established. The rule of Abbasides lighted the horizon of the Islamic culture and civilization. Under the prosperous reign of Caliph Haroun-al-Rashid (786-809), Baghdad became the centre of cultural activity; universities, hospitals were founded, canals and roads were constructed, intellectual societies were formed. Now the flame of Islam burned its brightest; its light was reflected in all phases of life; in Muslim countries, and indeed in Europe. Noted philosophers, physicians, astronomers and historians (such as Abu Hanifa, Ghazali, Ibn Sina and others) in various fields of science and art, shone the light of Muslim culture on a groping European civilization.

It can fairly be said that the great material progress and cultural achievements attained during the three Caliphates (Rashida, Ommeyyads and Abbasides) was engendered almost entirely by the guiding spirit of Islam. The search for knowledge

1. Hell, Joseph, The Arab Civilization, translated from German by S. Khuda Bakhsh, (Lahore: Ashraf Publications, 1943, P.71)

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is an intrinsic part of the Muslim religion for Prophet Muhammed explicitly stated "it is the duty for every Muslim man and woman to seek knowledge. Seek knowledge even though it be in China"¹.

The happy state of affairs during the Caliphate of Abbasides was destined to fail due to the frequent and ferocious attacks of Mongols from Central Asia. The political unity of Islam broke down in the Middle East, and a number of kingdoms arose. The Fatimides and Hamdanides partitioned almost the whole area. Rival Caliphates were proclaimed in Egypt by the Fatimides and in Spain by the survivors of the Omeyyads. In 1055, the Abbaside Caliph accepted the "protection" of the Seljuk Turks, a warrior people from Central Asia, who had been converted to Islam and established an empire extending from India and the Aegean. Due to the Turkish princes in North Syria and the Kurdish dynasty, which was founded by Salaheddin in Egypt, the attempt of European Crusaders to establish a frontier kingdom in Levant was broken. However, the Crusaders in their recurring invasions of the Holy Land, "learned much from Islam": and this is considered "an indication of the advances made in the Middle East during the period of the Dark Ages in Europe"². In the 13th century, the Muslim world was invaded four times by pagan Mongols, who were repressed by Turkish slave troops (Mamluks), who had been ruling Egypt, Palestine and Syria since 1250.

1. Zaki Ali, Islam in the World, (Lahore, Ashraf Publications)
2. Fisher, op.cit, P.137. 1947-P.73

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After the break up of the Seljuk clan by the Mongols in Asia Minor, there arose from its ruins a Turkish dynasty, the Ottomans or Osmanli Turks, whose dynasty lasted from 1517-1923. The Ottoman expansion actually started with the occupation of Constantinople, the capital city of the Byzantine Empire, in 1453. In 1516-1517, Sultan Selim I destroyed the Mamluk Sultanate and incorporated Syria and Egypt into the Empire. During the reign of Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent (1520-66), the Ottoman Empire was at the height of its power. The whole of Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Anatolia, Iraq, Arabia and certain parts of South-East Europe were all under Turkish domination until its expansion was stopped at the doors of Vienna in 1683. It was then that the decay of the Turkish empire started.

The Renaissance and the Reformation, the rapid development of science and technology, the emergence of strong centralized states, with constantly improving military techniques, the deflection of the main routes of international trade from the Mediterranean to the open seas, all combined to strengthen Turkey's western adversaries, while it left her own resources unchanged or diminished, and helped to relegate her into a backwater of cultural and economic stagnation. This earned her the derisive appellation "the sick man of Europe". Austria and Russia were making territorial advances in the Black Sea area; England and France were gaining from Turkey's commercial and diplomatic concessions, while th

1. The Middle East-1953, Op. cit. P.315.

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internal conditions in Turkey were growing from bad to worse. Nationalist forces were rising among the non-Muslim subjects of the Ottoman Empire against the military-religious autocracy of the Caliph, under whom they were not feeling safe. One by one, Serbs, Greeks, Romanians and Bulgarians seceded from the Empire and attained independence. Among the muslim provinces, a feeling of nationalism was also growing against the despotic rule of the Caliph, and particularly during the reign of Abdul Hamid who ruthlessly suppressed any attempt for liberal reforms. Nevertheless, a new spirit was stirring among the young Turks themselves, who in 1908 succeeded in forcing Abdul Hamid to abdicate and took over the reigns of the Government. It may be mentioned here, that during Abdul Hamid's reign and during the dictatorial period of Young Turks, the German influence had been steadily increasing, and it was this which finally dragged Turkey into World War 1.

Defeated on all sides and cut off from their allies by the Salonica expedition, the Turks decided to abandon the struggle and signed an armistice at Mudros on October 30, 1918. The period between 1918-23, however, was very critical in Ottoman history. The Greeks under allied protection invaded the mainland; the allied occupation of main territories and the loss of the former Ottoman provinces were a bitter blow to Turkish national pride.

Kemal Ataturk's advent to power opened a glorious chapter in the history of that country by overthrowing the

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existing religious autocracy and declaring Turkey a Republic on western lines of secularism. 'Turkey for Turks', was his watchword and the rest of the provinces, Arabia, Iraq, Egypt sooner or later became independent; Syria and Palestine were placed under the mandates of Britain and France. In this way were sown the seeds of what was to grow into one of the thorniest problems of the present day, the division of Palestine.

In another part of the Middle East, i.e. Persia, the Seljuk kingdom was broken up in the 12th century into a number of minor states with no strong central authority. These states then lasted until Safavid Empire reintegrated them in the 16th century. Under Shah Abbas (1587-1629), the Safavid Empire reached its zenith. The Safavids, at later stages, suffered at the hands of the Afghans, and other foreign power invasions, like that of Turkey. The Safavids were overthrown by another strong dynasty, the Qajars, who ruled Iran until Reza Shah's coup d'etat, in 1921.

During the Qajar period events in Iran were strongly affected by the rivalry of the Great Powers, Britain and Russia. Britain ruled India and wanted southern Iran for strategic and political reasons; Russia was seeking to control northern Iran to safeguard her territories in Central Asia. The Russo-British convention of 1907, however, divided Iran into two zones of influence and one neutral zone:-

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"The convention, which included a mutual undertaking to respect the integrity and independence of Persia, divided the country into three areas, that lying to the north of a line passing from Qasri Shirin to Kakh where the Russian, Persian and Afghan frontiers meet in the east, that lying to the south of line running from Qazik on Perso-Afghan frontier through Birjand and Kirman to Bandar Abbas on the Persian Gulf, and that lying outside these two areas. Great Britain gave an undertaking not to seek or support others seeking political or economic concessions in the northern area; Russia gave a similar undertaking with reference to the southern area".¹

During World War I, Iran became a centre of political activity, although officially it was neutral. British, Russian, and German military and secret service agents were intriguing. The British expeditionary forces, violating Iranian territorial integrity, set out for Russia through Iran. This was after the Bolshevik revolution and signing of the armistice between Russia and Turkey. By the end of the war, the political condition of Iran, however, was unstable; new nationalist forces were rising, which under Reza Shah Pahleve, opened a new chapter in the history of the country.

The whole state of the Middle East countries in the period between the two World Wars, had been a ferment of unrest politically. Nationalist voices cried for independence; communists declared open revolt; other foreign powers jockeyed for position and concessions. Out of this cauldron of revolt and counter-revolt have emerged states of varying independence such as Iran, Turkey and Egypt.

1. The Middle East, 1953- Op. cit; P. 245.

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With the above mentioned historical facts, we come to the conclusion that the Middle East has been the cradle of two highly developed civilizations; firstly, the ancient civilization of Egypt and Mesopotamia, and secondly, and more universal in character, the Islamic civilization.

Whatever distinction and historical merits there are and were in the ideological concepts of Islam, one thing is clear, that there is today a steady degeneration in Middle East society. This is evident in the chaos and confusion all over the Islamic countries. Rulers ascend and governments are formed with excellent intents, but frequently the result is assassination or deposition. - Why? Because Islamic ideology, an old and classical ideology created a thousand years ago, has not been able, in the 20th century, to fulfill the needs of the people. It has not found the answer to the many pressures afflicting the masses - pressures as diverse as equitable distribution of wealth, intellectual crises, poverty and starvation, a shaky economy, tottering governments.

If the fundamental ideology of the Middle East was basically satisfying even intricate international problems like Palestine, Defence of the Middle East, the Suez and Oil disputes, etc., would be subject to solution. Without a firm foundation, these problems of normal international stature become gargantuan, a colossus that threatens the whole Middle East structure.

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The countries of the Middle East are today at the crossroads. Three distinct ideas prevail- the fanatic traditionalists who would revive orthodox Islam; those who see no prospects in Islamic traditions and wish to follow a materialistic (or Communist) pattern; and those who want a true national democracy on the western pattern while retaining the spiritual strength of Islam.

The intelligent solution lies in the adoption of an ideology based on nationalism and on the rule under law (i.e. as secular western democracies) and aimed at social and economic reforms, while retaining the religious character of Islam. Such an ideology would allow political thought and religion to be pursued in parallel paths.

By the harnessing of the best factors of eastern and western ideologies, a nation would be well-equipped to progress technically and materially, and yet retain religious scruples that would prove a firm bulwark against Communism.

The strong spirit of nationalism which is so prevalent in the Middle East today, is a valuable characteristic, but only so far as it can be adapted to the modern world under Western guidance. Unless a decisive lead is taken by the West

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millions of people will be led, almost without volition,
into the Communist orbit.

PART I

INTERNAL ISLAMIC PROBLEMS

CHAPTER II

FACTORS OF DISINTEGRATION

The history of the disintegration of the Islamic civilization and of Islam as a political unity goes back to the fall of Cordova (1236), in the West ; in the Middle East, the Mongol invasion terminated the rule of Abbasides in Baghdad (1268). Nevertheless, for centuries after the golden age, Islam has been the dominating factor among the people of the Middle East. The political unity, however, was again revived by the Ottoman Turks under the rule of Caliph-Sultan which lasted until the end of World War I.

Western civilization began penetration of the Middle East, through missionaries, schools, and literature, bringing with it new ideas of nationalism. This movement filtrated through to the Islamic Empire of Ottoman, and other Middle Eastern countries, encouraging self-determination demands for economic and social reform, and modernization. These ideas spread like wild-fire and proved fatal to the concept of religion on the sole base of political unity.

Followers of Arabi Pasha attempted to intervene in state affairs in 1878 in the name of Egyptian nationalism. Thirty years later 'Young Turks' seized control in the name of Turkish nationalism. In Iraq, nationalists attempted to seize control, under Bakir Siddiqui in 1936; and again in 1941 the

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pro-Axis revolt occurred under Rashid-al Gilani in the name of Pan-Arab nationalism. The Kemalist revolution and the Arab war of independence completely disintegrated the Islamic Empire. In Iran, Reza Shah Pahlevi came to power with the same ideas of nationalism. In this manner, attempts of nationalism all over the Middle East disintegrated religion as a political force and as a source of unity between different religious groups. As Mr. Gibb has said: "The growth of nationalism has paralleled the decline of religion as a political force."¹

The reasons for accepting this western idea could be described as (i) the absence of a reasonably equitable basis for the distribution of wealth between social classes in the Islamic system of administration, (ii) the cultural crisis within Islam (iii) Lack of modernization. The extreme contrast in the way of living, and in fact the whole social organization, were the same during the Caliph's rule in the 20th century as were noted by the Arab geographer, Ibn Batutta, in the 13th century, particularly among the Bedu (Nomad) and the Hadhar (settled people) of Arabia. There has always been a gap or cleavage between the life and traditions of the urban population and those of the rural population."³

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- 1 Philip W. Ireland, or edited The Near East, Problems and Prospects, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press) 1942, p.192
 - 2 Fisher, op. cit; -p.113
 - 3 Ireland, (ed) op. cit; p.37

(FACTORS OF DISINTEGRATION)

As an example of this "cleavage" even today in the Middle East there are the Bedouins and Egyptian fellahs on one hand and on the other, the Grand Pashas, owners of land and industries, and the tribal chieftains with luxurious palaces and automobiles. "The average income per person is less than \$100 a year, as compared to \$1400 a year in America."¹ Discontent and unrest grew, even in the most backward countries, by the continuation of such contrasts in social and economic life. It became obvious that a spirit of nationalism was the only possible alternative. Thus were fanned the fires of nationalism.

THE ARAB AND EGYPTIAN NATIONALISM

Arab nationalism began a century ago with literary societies and political groups recalling the glories of the Arabian past and deploring the oppression under the Turks. As the result of this oppression many Arab secret militant societies were formed with the object of eventual independence.² Finally, with assurance and support from the British for their cause, Sharif Husain of Mecca raised an Army in 1916 and revolted against the Caliph-Sultan.³ His army served as an auxiliary force to General Allenby's main expeditionary force in the Middle East.

- 1 Frye, Richard (Edited by), The Near East and the Great Powers, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press) 1951, p.43
- 2 Antonius, George, (The Arab Awakening, (London:Hamish Hamilton), 1938, p.119
(Al-Tanzimat, Al-Ahad were the different societies.)
- 3 Antonius, op.cit; Appendix A.(Sir Henry MacMohan-Sharif Husain correspondence.)

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Arab chieftains followed Husain, in the common cause of liberation. The Caliph called for Jihad (Holy war) against the British and their allies, but the call for unity under Islam could not win the favour of Arab nationalists. Jemal Pasha, in a speech at Damascus during the war, said of the Arab attitude, particularly of Husain, that:-

"Unfortunately, the course of the holy Jihad has been blocked by a mean individual who, in the very heart of the Holy Land of Islam, has allied himself to those Christian powers whose object is to despoil the world of Islam and purloin Constantinople, its capital".¹

It is, of course interesting to note that the Grand Vizier failed to recognize that the Germans, who fought beside him and whose co-operation he rated a triumph for Islam, were Christians no less than the allies.

In the post war period, the process of liquidating the Islamic Empire involved the growth of sentiments of strong nationalism, while some of the former provinces came into being as independent states, (Arabia, Egypt for instance) and others were bound in virtual subjugation to foreign powers (Palestine); and this diversity was bound to bring in its train a corresponding variation in the aims and the tactics of nationalist activity in each country. The sacrifices of the war, the controversies with France and Britain and the Zionists, may all be interpreted as major obstacles to the cause of independence.

¹ *ibid*, p.208

(FACTORS OF DISINTEGRATION)

Now that the disintegration of Islamic political unity was nearly complete, Arab nationalism dropped whatever programme it might once have attempted to adopt for social and economic reconstruction. Instead, rivalries and jealousies developed among various chieftains, and as a consequence, the destiny of most of the Asiatic Arabs fell into the hands of those who took them back to the centuries-old traditional system of government based on historical past. In all Arab land, the government became a feudal machine, and the exclusive function of the land owning classes. Their prime interest, of course, was the maintenance of their feudal rights and privileges, instead of wider common interests. It may also be mentioned here that the Army, as the only westernized body in the Arab countries, and in contradiction to government's policy, played a major role towards the achievement of the cause of the common man, then as now. Though the sentiment of nationalism sparked revolt in the army, as in the case of Co. Zaim's coup d'etat, Shishekely's dictatorship, and Naguib's extremism, the fundamental ideology has not been sufficiently absorbed to lead to unqualified success. The situation vacillates between superficial acceptance of western political thought, and deeply rooted eastern traditions. Often this uncertainty results in the failure of an ideal. As in the words of Mr. Quincy Wright:

(FACTORS OF DISINTEGRATION)

"Today Arab nationalism has leaders, organization and a literature, but its program is not entirely clear. Does it contemplate a nation of all Arabs from the frontiers of Persia to the Atlantic or a nation only of Asiatic Arabs, or does it contemplate many independent States?" ¹

In this connection it may be added that Arab nationalism after the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire was merely a change of masters, without any programme of reformation on western lines.

Repudiating Mr. Quincy Wright's statement, as quoted above, Amir Faisal, while leading the Hejazi delegation, said as far back as January 29, 1929:

"As representing my father who, by request of Britain and France, led the Arab rebellion against the Turks, I have come to ask that the Arabic-speaking peoples of Asia, from the line Alexandretta-Diarbekr southward to the Indian Ocean, be recognised as independent sovereign peoples, under the guarantee of the League of Nations." ²

We, therefore, come to the conclusion that Arab nationalists fostered the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire in order to create Arab speaking states in Asia, independent from religious ties, and more or less fashioned on the line of western democracy. We have seen that their actual achievement fell far short of their original objective and is today the cause of much political shilly-shallying and confusion.

1. Frye (ed) op. cit. p.192
 2 Antonius, op. cit.; p. 286

(FACTORS OF DISINTEGRATION)

The Egyptian nationalism, before World War I, was almost the same as that of Asiatic Arabs, except that Egypt was more open to the penetration of western ideas. For this reason its attitude towards reforms has all long been different from that of the Asiatic Arabs. In common with the spirit of military revolt in all Arab countries, Egypt's own military officers, like Major Aziz Ali Misri, has taken very active part in the disintegration of the Islamic Empire. Like their brother Arabs they did not respond to the Caliph's call for Jihad against the allies in World War I.

"The people were in fact neutral in feeling that the war was no concern of theirs, and in spite of the Sultan's call to a Jihad, there was no active pro-Turkish movement in Egypt, even when in January 1915 the Turks made an attack -easily repulsed - on the Canal." ¹

The Egyptain nationalists were without question against the Caliph's autocratic rule, but they were just as definitely anti-British. The British deposed the Khedive, Abbas Hilmi, and, without any invitation, undertook the responsibility for the defence of Egypt.

Thus the spirit of active nationalism in Egypt started after its liberation from the Ottoman rule. Contributing factors of nationalism, thereafter can be attributed to (1) the presence of large British, Australian, and New Zealand forces and the inevitable incidents deriving from its wounded

1 Bullard, Sir Reader, Britain and the Middle East, (London: Hutchinson House), 1951, p.75

(FACTORS OF DISINTEGRATION)

Egyptian national pride; (ii) the large scale spending of foreign armies which produced inflation and profiteering, from which fixed-income groups suffered severely; (iii) British recruitment of Egyptian labour battalions which depleted Egypt's labour forces and resulted in a severe breakdown in food production; (iv) and last, but not least, Wilson's Fourteen points and the Anglo-French Declaration to the Arab countries which helped to arouse a keen desire for complete freedom from foreign tutelage.

From that time onwards the whole history of Egypt's nationalism has been a fight between the Wafdists and the British; firstly, under the leadership of Saad Zaghlul Pasha, a militant orator, and later under Mustafa Nahas Pasha, until more recently Major-General Mohammed Naghib's coup d'etat which again changed the history of Egypt.

The long conflict between British and Egyptian resulted in the proclamation of Egyptian independence in 1922. The constitution was promulgated in 1923 on western pattern, and the royal decree granted considerable rights to the crown. Nationalist demands were not completely satisfied. The conflict continued, broadly speaking on two main issues - the presence of British troops in Egypt and the Sudan; and the King's power to interfere in all state affairs. This latter

(FACTORS OF DISINTEGRATION)

privilege, exercised frequently in Egypt, was even at that time nothing more than a nominal right in England itself.

Demands of the nationalists constantly produced mob demonstration and anti-British violence until the Anglo-Egyptian treaty in 1936, and Italy's invasion of Ethiopia calmed down the situation a little. After World War II, there had been disturbances in the Egyptian social and economic structure, similar to World War I, and its effects on the political psychology of the Egyptians were analogous. It also provoked a wave of anti-foreign feeling which tended to assume violent forms as the British began to withdraw their large military contingents. The Anglo-Egyptian treaty of 1936 was abrogated in 1951 by the Egyptian government. New parties were organized, noted among which was the Moslem Brotherhood (el-Ikhawan el-Muslimin) which was anti-West and believed in the revival of orthodox Islam. At last, a state of chaos flooded Egypt and tension with Britain still continues.

To be brief, Egypt participated in the disintegration of the Islamic rule as the result of the spread of western ideas of state, in a spirit of self-determination and reforms. But, surprisingly, in Egypt there had not been firm example of liberal internal reforms, in the western concept. The condition of an ordinary Egyptian is deplorable even today. "Egypt's glory, the man who with his hand whips the wealth out of the rich lands, the fellah, is also Egypt's supreme tragedy".

¹ Hindus, Maurice, In Search of a Future (New York: Doubleday and Co. Inc.,) 1949, p.143

(FACTORS OF DISINTEGRATION)

TURKISH AND IRANIAN NATIONALISM

Unlike Arab demand for self-determination, the Turkish and Iranian nationalisms were the result of the constant demand for reformation on western pattern. The former, after World War I, adopted western civilization as a whole, and bid farewell to the oriental civilization, while the latter accepted it outwardly, at least.

In Turkey, after the expulsion of the Greek invaders, and the disposal of the Caliphate, Kemal and his nationalist party had to face the tremendous task of re-building the nations and strengthening the elements of weakness in the Turkish society and state, which had brought Turkey to the verge of extinction. Kemal saw the solution of Turkey's problem in a process of westernization - in the integration of Turkey, on a basis of equality in all phases of the modern western world. To do this, it was not sufficient to borrow the outward forms and trapping of western civilization. It was necessary to change the very basis of society in Turkey, and to suppress, ruthlessly, if need be, the opposition that was bound to come from the entrenched forces of the old order.

Kemal and his Party thus professed a philosophy of nationalism, to quote Zia Gok Alp:

"The nation is neither race nor tribe nor the whole of the people who live in the same country, nor all

(FACTORS OF DISINTEGRATION)

the Muslims together. The nation consists of the complex of individuals who have a common language, a common national loyalty, a common morality and aesthetic feeling, that is to say, of those who derive the culture from these sources."¹

Kemalists demanded the right of self-determination for Turkey proper and in return recognized the same rights for Arabs. They rejected the idea of imperialism and argued that the expansion of the Ottoman Empire had brought more misfortune than advantage to the Turkish nation. It condemned Pan-Islamism as a nefarious movement which not only retarded the modern secular development of Turkey, but also entangled her in adventures and responsibilities that were of no concern to the people of Turkey. Pan-Islamism, it was maintained, was also a chronic source of friction with foreign powers.

In her search for a new, more prosperous, and more humane future, Turkey adopted the western political ideology, and emerged as a model state for the whole of the Middle East.

On the other hand, Kemal and his new "Turkey for Turks" represented a basically different trend than did the contemporary totalitarian machines. Instead of scorning and rejecting the western heritage (which the totalitarian of Russia, Germany and Italy did) the new Turkish Republic considered it an ideal worth struggling for. Of all the nationalist movements in the twentieth century world, Turkey had the distinction of being sober minded, restrained and non-adventurous.

¹ Bisbee, Eleanor, The New Turks (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press), 1951, p.47

(FACTORS OF DISINTEGRATION)

In Iran, the Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917 threw long shadows. The Iranians had long been showing signs of discontent with the extravagances and tyrannical rule of the Shah, who governed by decree. With the advent of Reza Shah Pahlevi, in 1921, the impact of the west was felt not only in government circles in the capital, but all over the country. Iran entered new era of its history. Reza Shah sought to strengthen and unify his country following the example of Ataturk, but he had a much more difficult task, as the diverse social and religious forces were far stronger in Iran than in Turkey.

The method adopted by the Shah was primarily to campaign against the religious leaders, the stronghold of reaction and traditions. Privileges of the aristocracy were curbed, titles and national costumes forbidden.

"During his reign nationalism became the slogan of the day, and foreign influences in Persian culture were played down as much as possible. The reform of the language, art and architecture took place, and there were many other changes in the interest of nationalism".¹

Not all the reforms of the Shah were accepted by the public. Violent opposition in public places frequently resulted from the promulgation of a new decree of westernization, opposition which was sometimes suppressed by force. New forces

1 Thomas, Lewis V. and Frye, Richard N,
The United States and Turkey and Iran,
 (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press)
 1951, p.226

(FACTORS OF DISINTEGRATION)

of religious fanaticism started, along with the communist movement which was also rising. The army, which long had been faithful to the rules, became the power behind and constituted a separate social group. In spite of this, the nationalist movement under Reza Shah never attained the power of Turkey under Kemal. The Shah, in fact, revolutionized the social and religious life of his people - but on the surface. To put it another way, nationalism greatly weakened the political force of religion, partly through Reza Shah's reforms, and partly through the British-Russian contest for supremacy, which in itself seeded new ideas and new frustrations in Islam. But it did not entirely eradicate religion's influence on politics. Religious leaders are represented in Parliament, and may declare any legislature null and void if it conflicts with the principles of Islam, thus acting as a kind of Supreme Court above the Shah and Parliament.

The Majlis can hardly be said to be truly representative of the people; it represents instead the interest of aristocracy and the religious leaders.

Both of Iran's revolution's were movements of the upper classes against authority. Its roots did not reach down to the lower echelons; its revolutions was only skin-deep. The results were a superficial westernization. Both of Turkey's revolutions

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on the other hand, were a revolt of the lower classes. Its roots ran deep, and the results were not only the overthrow of the Ottoman aristocracy, but also a much more complete westernization.

To sum up, - Turkey, under Kemal, secularized itself and threw her lot in with the west.

Iran, under Reza Shah, proceeded in that direction.

Egypt, Syria and Lebanon are making headway.

The creation of Israel, although indirectly causing re-integration of the old society and of the idea of Pan-Arabism, may become a shining example of the successful westernization of a Middle East country, once good relations with her Arab neighbours are established.

Professor Gibb, describing the 'Social Change in the Middle East says:-

"They (Turks) not only secularized the state; they also secularized all social relations within the state. So, it was sometimes said the twenties, would be the ultimate destiny of the Arab countries. Secular nationalism in Egypt, for example is making visible headway; there was some loosening, in the towns, of the old Muslim social tradition and a new freedom in thought and expression." 1

1 Ireland, op.cit; p.55

CHAPTER 111

RECENT FACTORS OF REINTEGRATION

The Western idea of nationalism, which caused the disintegration of religion as a political force in the Middle East and broke up the Ottoman Empire after World War 1, gradually started reviving among Arabs and Egyptians, during the World War 11, in the name of Pan-Arabism or Arab nationalism. Politically there were two factors of reintegration: the major problem of Palestine and the problem of the liberation of the Arab peoples from foreign domination. Such issues as the Palestine problem, the union of the Sudan with Egypt, the emancipation of Libya, and the liberation of Morocco and Tunisia could and did provide a platform for united political action and harmonious agreement. We will discuss the Palestine problem next, and give some idea of the reintegration of various forces in the Arab world.

THE PALESTINE PROBLEM

The revalry between Jews and Arabs which had existed for centuries was sorely aggravated when the immigrant Jews from foreign lands, with the help of the Great Powers, succeeded in establishing a state by dispossessing a large number of Arabs from their homeland, and disturbing the peace-

(FACTORS OF REINTEGRATION)

ful atmosphere of the Holy land.

Dr. Herzl's theory of Jewish nationalism known under the name of Zionism took active shape in Europe and America, when during the days of World War 1, it became known that Dr. Chaim Weizman was trying to secure an official British declaration in favour of the return of the Jews to their promised land. After several months of close negotiations with Jewish leaders in England, the British Government entered into a commitment which conflicted with their previous pledges to the Arabs. This was the famous Balfour Declaration:-

"His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object....."¹

To those parts of the Arab world which were in direct touch with the Allies, the Balfour Declaration created surprise, especially among those who knew of the previous British pledge to the Arabs. The feeling aroused by the appearance of the Sykes-Picot Agreement was demoralizing the Anglo-Arab alliance. During the Paris Peace Conference, the Jews brought strong delegations, both from Great Britain and from the United States. On April 25, 1920, the Allies Supreme Council allocated the mandate over Palestine to Great Britain, which was confirmed by the Council of the League of Nations.

¹Antonius, op. cit., p266

(FACTORS OF REINTEGRATION)

The mandate expressly provided for a Jewish national home in Palestine, incorporating into its text, almost verbatim, the Balfour Declaration.

However, in the early years of the mandate of Palestine, the main source of Arab discontent was the denial of independence, but later due to the unprecedented flood of Jewish immigration and settlement which began in 1932, the fears of the Arabs became more definite. At the rate at which immigrants were coming in during 1935, it was feared that the Jews, who had formed only 8% of the total population in 1918, might acquire a majority in another ten years. The Arabs demanded that Jewish immigration be stopped and the sale of land to Jews forbidden. From the beginning, the Arabs refused to cooperate with the mandatory Power because they felt betrayed, and feared what they considered a biased pro-Jewish policy. Violent disturbances and anti-Jewish riots frequently occurred until the outbreak of World War II. On the other hand, the British attitude was to send a Commission after every Arab nationalist movement. In 1937, the Royal Commission, having abandoned hope for a reconciliation between Jews and Arabs came forward with the proposal of a partition of Palestine into an Arab State, a Jewish State and a neutral enclave around Jerusalem and Bethlehem. Realising the gravity of the situation, Britain convened a

(FACTORS OF REINTEGRATION)

Round Table Conference in 1939, composed of Zionist and Arab representatives from Palestine and delegates from the existing Arab States. The very composition of the Conference contained an element of reintegration of the Arab countries, as these countries became interested in the solution of a common problem - i.e. the danger to the Arab world and solidarity of Islam.

"The composition of the conference introduced an element of novelty into Palestinian politics. Hitherto the British had tried to settle the controversy by consultation with Arab leaders from Palestine. Now, however, yielding to the growing insistence of surrounding Arab countries, they decided to invite representatives of Iraq, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and Transjordan!"¹

The same year the British Government issued a White Paper which laid down new principles for the partition of Palestine. The most important provision concerned immigration and land transfers. The proposals, however, were not quite acceptable either to the Jews, the Arabs, nor to the Permanent Mandate Commission of the League of Nations. Except for a short intermission during World War II, a new upsurge of terrorism, this time by the Jews, was witnessed. It may be relevant to say here that in 1942, the American Zionist Organization took an active part in the movement, and adopted

¹

Lenczowski, George, The Middle East in World Affairs, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press), 1952, p. 27.

(FACTORS OF REINTEGRATION)

the so-called Baltimore programme, which called for, above all, the establishment of a Jewish State for the whole of Palestine. From that period onward, very intensive Zionist activity appeared in the United States politics. In 1945, President Truman, influenced by American internal politics, asked the British Prime Minister Clement Attlee, for immediate admission of 100,000 Jewish refugees to Palestine. "The Arabs protested against this proposal, because it contradicted President Roosevelt's earlier assurances to Ibn Saud that Arab leaders would be consulted before any decision was taken."¹

Facing difficult situations on all sides, Mr. Bevin announced in the House of Commons (Feb. 18, 1947) that "His Majesty's government had decided to refer the Palestine question to the United Nations General Assembly without recommendations."¹ The United Nations, after considering the British request, appointed a Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCP), and after discussing its report, the United Nations General Assembly in November 1947, recommended the partition of Palestine. However, immediately after Britain's termination of the mandate in August 1948, a new state of Israel was proclaimed by the Jews, which was recognized

¹
Fry, R.N. (Ed), op. cit; p. 153

(FACTORS OF REINTEGRATION)

immediately by the United States, and later by most of the members of the United Nations.

The long-lived Jewish-Arab dispute was thus aggravated, and is still far from being settled. The establishment of a state of Israel soon became a powerful factor in strengthening Arab solidarity.

The Arab rulers were called to a meeting at Inshas (Egypt) by King Farouq in May 1946, and at that memorable meeting the Arab rulers solemnly pledged their co-operation in their opposition to Zionist claims to Palestine. Here was another link forged in Pan-Arab nationalism.

"A secret resolution was adopted to the effect, that if Britain and the United States failed to uphold Arab rights in Palestine, the Arab State will then reconsider their diplomatic and economic relations with Britain and the United States, including the cancellation of oil concessions."¹

Soon after, the Arab Foreign Ministers' meeting in Alexandria decided that they would never accept any plan for partition or federation as a basis of discussion with Britain.

So, to the outside world, the Arab States pretended unanimous agreement against partition of Palestine; actually serious controversy, accusation and counteraccusation were being exchanged among themselves, regarding the Greater Syria Plan, as Mr. Majid Khaddauri reports;

¹
Ibid, p. 153

(FACTORS OF REINTEGRATION)

"The rivalry between the Hashimi and the Saudi-Egyptian blocks aggravated by the opposition to an extension of Hashimi rule to Syria, resulted in a sharp disagreement on the question of Palestine."

1

The controversy proved detrimental to the very cause they defended, since it meant that responsible Arab leaders pledged to their people something they could not fulfil owing to their conflicting views on other issues. The gulf between Arab League members kept widening. During the series of the Arab League meetings, from the time when the partition resolution was passed by the United Nations to the acceptance of the first truce. Disagreement was aggravated by such questions as the implementation of the secret Bludan resolution and the question of Arab Military Command. When hostilities were resumed, disagreement over the signing of subsequent truce agreements, and Abdullah's claim to Palestine were facts which were no longer possible to conceal. To these initial differences between responsible Arab statesmen could be ascribed the subsequent failure of the Arab States to win the Palestine war.

So we see that inner dissension was a prime factor in the Arab defeat in the Palestine issue.

The second factor was the deplorable lack of Arab

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ibid, p.153

(FACTORS OF REINTEGRATION)

knowledge in the fields of diplomacy, technological warfare and of modern ideas of nationalism. In the diplomatic field, even at the beginning of the Palestinian question, Amir Faisal himself showed extraordinary sympathy towards Jewish intention, by signing the Faisal-Weizman Agreement, Article 4 of which reads : -

"All necessary measures shall be taken to encourage and stimulate immigration of Jews into Palestine on a large scale, and as quickly as possible to settle Jewish immigrants up the land through closer settlement and intensive cultivation of the soil. In taking such measures the Arab peasant and tenant farmers shall be protected in their rights, and shall be assisted in forwarding their economic development."

1

Amir Faisal also wrote a letter to Mr. Felix Franfurter, then professor at the Harvard University, saying : -

"We feel that Arabs and Jews are cousins in race, have suffered similar oppressions We Arabs, especially the educated among us, look with the deepest sympathy on the Zionist movement. We are working together for a reformed and revived Near East, and our two movements complete one anotherIndeed, I think that neither can be a real success without the other."

2

Had Faisal not made such commitments, indirects as they were, it is not likely that Britain would have felt in such a strong position. As it was advantage was taken of

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Antonius, op. cit; p. 438

2

Ireland, (Ed), op. cit; p. 21

Amir Faisal's simpleness and lack of political acuity.

A third determining factor was the indisputable truth that the Jewish Agency was far superior in every respect to the Arab Higher Committee, which was headed by the Mufti of Jerusalem, or to the Arab League itself.

The Jewish Agency, which represented world Jewry, as well as the Jews of Palestine, had their own communal organization on western pattern. The Jewish community possessed a number of social and economic organizations, among which was Histadruth or the Jewish Federation of Labour. The Jewish community, no doubt, displayed a marked tendency toward collectivism, despite the fact that the financing of the Zionist settlement in Palestine was accomplished mainly by contributions from wealthy Jewish capitalists abroad. Jews from western countries, well-trained and educated, were pitted against the backward Arabs. Describing the Arab community Mr. Lenczowski says : -

"The Arab community presented an altogether different picture. Politically the Arabs were far from being as efficiently organized as were the Jews. There was no Arab equivalent of the Jewish Agency, nor was there anything resembling the Jewish community organization, Vaad Leumi."

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In the military field, the Arab forces suffered heavy defeats and proved unequal to the task. Israel owed her

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Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs,
op. cit; p. 267

(FACTORS OF REINTEGRATION)

victory to her higher morale, better equipment and superior organization. It represented Western efficiency. The Arabs were defeated largely because of the poor morale of troops, bad leadership, and, above everything, political dissension among the participating states as described before.

However, the Jewish-Arab conflict brought many Western ideas to the Middle East; it played its part in the process of reintegration and unity among the Muslim countries of that area.

We may not agree with the principle of the creation of Israel in the heart of the Arab world, but as an example of Islamism versus Westernization, this conflict between Arab and Jew, and its outcome, points up with startling clarity the superiority of the newer ideology (i.e. western) over traditionalism (i.e. Islamism).

Basing itself solidly on a Western structure, the State of Israel has built, in a few short years, a society of progress and prosperity. We are forced to agree with Mr. Hindus when he wrote: -

"Lands which had witnessed neither cultivation nor civilization save that of the wandering Bedouin for centuries, and not only in the Negeb, have with the aid of Histarut cleared and plowed and now flourish with plants and trees and grasses and grains."

1

1

Hindus, op. cit; p. 249

PART II

ISLAM AND WORLD AFFAIRS

CHAPTER IV

THE IMPACT OF MIDDLE EAST NATIONALISM ON INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

The political interest of all nations in the Middle East is a product of both history and geography. The historical source of three religions, Islam, Christianity and Judaism, attracted many pilgrims, missionaries and scholars from different nations, later leading to conflicts between their followers. Furthermore, as the highway connecting three continents--Europe, Asia, and Africa--and linking two oceans, and as a large producer of petroleum, it has been of great interest to strategists, imperialists and capitalists¹. Britain and Russia, in particular, were constantly engaged in competition for supremacy in that region in one way or the other. Both used the same methods, either by making alliances with other Great Powers or subjugating the native kingdoms. Great Britain exercised every political, economic, and military means in order to maintain her Imperial lifeline, while Russia's interest has always been to expand towards the Aegean Sea and the Persian Gulf.

At the present time, the Middle East is of great concern to the Western Great Powers, firstly, because of its strategic position with reference to the Soviet Union, and

¹Ireland, op.cit; p. 183

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as a producer of a large quantity of oil. Secondly, because an intense ideological conflict exists between Islam, Communism and Western political thought, which exists alongside the political manoeuvring. Therefore, while discussing the political problems of Middle Eastern countries (Turkey and Egypt, as it is going to be discussed here) in International Affairs and the role of the Great Powers, we have to keep in mind, the strategic economic importance of the region, and the clash of different ideologies.

We have seen that Turkey, under Kemal, adopted wholeheartedly the Western Democratic Government. Now we shall see that this nationalist policy, applied to foreign relations, was a major factor in promoting her to a position of importance in World Affairs. Egypt, by contrast, still fettered by Islamism, has only partially accepted westernization, and because of this is still in the throes of political instability and economic duress. Her voice in international spheres is weak, even though her strategic position, if not superior, is at least comparable to that of Turkey.

TURKEY

The foreign policy of Turkey since her transformation from an Empire to a Republic was one of strict non-involvement in foreign disputes, and maintenance of friendly relations with almost all powers until, recently, due to communist

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pressure, it was compelled to take sides, and decided to throw its lot with the West.

(a) Turkey and the U.S.S.R. : In the early twenties, Turkish-Soviet friendship increased due to the unfriendly and hostile policies of the imperialist powers. The British revisionist war, the problems of Mosul, difficulties regarding the Sanjak of Alexandretta, and the question of the Straits led to a treaty of friendship with the U.S.S.R. in 1921¹. After the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne, Turkey was generally satisfied with her relations on both sides. Although Russia continued in her policy of opposition to the status quo, and since Turkey still disagreed with Britain and France on certain points, the Turko-Russian friendship continued, despite differences in their basic political ideologies.² Russia's relations with Britain and France were, however, strained.

When the clouds of World War II began appearing on the European horizon, negotiations got under way for a new pact between Turkey and the Soviet Government, though this time with different objectives. Turkey desired a pact that would reaffirm the Soviet support of the status quo in the Black Sea region, and would confirm respect of Turkish inde-

¹Bakir Sami, Kemal's Foreign Minister visited Moscow for that purpose.

²Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs op.cit; p. 129 (The Russian delegation at the Treaty of Lausanne supported Turkey on Straits issue)

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pendence and territorial integrity, thereby clearing the way for a proposed Turkish alliance with Great Britain and France. Russia's objectives were quite different. The Russians resented the prospect of a British-French-Turkish entente, the more so because of her own closer relations with the allied enemy, Germany. After a long period of negotiations in Moscow, the Soviet leaders, to oblige Germany, informed the Turkist Foreign Minister Sarajoglu, of their disinterest in the pact. In the meantime Prime Minister Refik Saydam on October 19, had signed the Treaty of Alliance with Great Britain & France.

Turkish-Soviet relations became increasingly strained, not only because of Turkish alliance with the West, and after the German invasion, her neutrality, but also because of Turkey's endorsement of a French plan to bombard Baku from Turkish bases in the event of war with Russia. Turkey, on the other hand, feared Soviet revisionism in the Straits.

Their relations continued tense all during World War II, until Russia, in 1945, denounced the Soviet-Turkish pact of 1925. That year Russia insisted on the return of Kars and on the granting of military bases in Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, on a revision of the Montreux Straits Convention and on a revision of the Thracian boundary in favour of Bulgaria. This was to be the price for the revision of the pact.¹

¹ibid, p. 146

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More fuel to the fire was added when the Turkish Government banned the Communist party, arrested their members and suppressed their press. Ever since, the relations between the two countries have continued on a hostile basis, and the attitude of Turkey has become increasingly anti-Soviet. The inevitable result was that Turkey accepted military aid from the USA and joined the forces of NATO.

(b) Turko- German Relations : The bond of Turkish-German friendship, after World War I, was revived with the employment of many German nationalists in the Kemal administration, and by increased commercial relations. Among a certain section of people, sympathy towards Germany existed merely because of their hatred towards the victorious powers of World War I, who had imposed humiliating peace terms on both countries¹. But as a whole Turkey was very cautious in her relations with Germany both before and during World War II, which was a period of intense diplomatic manoeuvre. Turkey had, nevertheless, with her policy of status quo and her negotiations with Britain and France, indicated a marked separation from the Axis camp.

Realising the gravity of Turkish participation on the side of the Allies in case of war, and realising her strategic

¹Refers to Pan Turanians and other pro-German leaders like Marshal Feuzi Chakmak.

(IMPACT OF M.E.NATIONALISM.....)

importance, Germany accredited her one of her top diplomats and an ex-chancellor of the Reich, Franz Von Papen, as Ambassador to Ankara in 1939, with a view to preventing Turkey from joining the Allies.

Von Papen's tactics were described by Mr. Lenczowski as follows:

"Generally speaking his diplomacy in Ankara passed through three distinct stages. During the first (1939-1940) he attempted to keep Turkey neutral and to dissuade her from an Anglo-French alliance. During the second (1941-1943) he exerted pressure to bring about closed economic, political and military ties between Berlin and Ankara. During the third (1944) he again reverted to an effort to keep the Turks neutral.¹"

Von Papen, however, succeeded in concluding a ten year treaty on non-aggression with Turkey, and later in concluding a trade pact by which Turkey supplied chrome, an essential strategic material, to Germany. Article I of the Treaty of Non-Aggression reads:

"The Turkish Republic and the German Reich undertake to respect mutually the inviolability and integrity of their territories, and to abstain from all action aimed directly or indirectly against one another."²

Von Papen's mission had been successful, so far as the neutrality of Turkey and the establishment of trade relations

¹ Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs op.cit; p.140

² T.C.Resmi Gazette ("Official Gazette") No.4849, July 2, 1941; New York Times, June 19, 1941.

(IMPACT OF M.E.NATIONALISM.....)

were concerned, but it had been a failure in the matter of obtaining transit facilities through the Straits for German forces.¹ He also failed in his attempt to obtain Turkish collaboration by forming a Pan-Turanian organization for the annihilation of Russia.

(c) Turkey and the West : The end of World War I, saw the end of one phase of the Turko-British friendship. Later, settlements with Greece were to effect political reconciliation. (Lloyd George's support of the Greek cause stemmed mainly from a strategic point of view, but nevertheless his pro-Christian and Anti-Gurkish bias contributed.)

The chief causes of British Turkish hostility may be enumerated here; Turkey was indignant because Britain:

- 1) inspired the invasion of the Turkish homeland in 1919, under protection of allied guns.
- 2) suppressed the Turkish national movement, arresting and deporting its leaders.
- 3) continued occupation of Constantinople after World War I.
- 4) conspired, with supporters of the Caliph, a revolt of the Kurdish Tribe against the newly-emerged Turkish national State (1925).

¹Turkey also gave secret passage to minor German naval craft through the Straits, in the days of war.

(IMPACT OF M.E.NATIONALISM.....)

- 5) supported the Greeks against Turkey.
- 6) insisted on awarding the Kurdish Province of Mosul to Iraq.

Turkey's relations with France, after World War I, were not cordial either, due to many problems, especially that of Sanjak of Alexandretta, in which a third party, Syria, was also involved. This difficulty led to the Turkish denouncement of the Turko-Syrian Treaty of friendship, signed in 1926. However, public opinion and nationalist pressure compelled France to make some political compromise with the Turks. A referendum, in Sanjak, recognized the Turkish supremacy in that area and finally it was absorbed in Turkey proper, in spite of Syria's opposition.

Fearing German and Italian aggression, the imperialist powers of Britain and France decided to look on Turkey as an equal partner and succeeded in concluding a non-aggression pact, as well as other economic and trade pacts.¹ This pact paved the way for closer relations throughout World War II, between Turkey and the West, in spite of Russian and German disfavour.

The most important factor in Turkey's foreign policy after World War II has been its relation and friendship with

¹Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs
op.cit; p.144.

(IMPACT OF M.E.NATIONALISM.....)

the United States of America. During the two World Wars, Turkey-American relations were mainly centered on missionary-educational interests, and the activities of a restricted number of American businessmen who were engaged in purchasing Turkish tobacco or in the marketing of petroleum products. The United States' political interest in Turkey was of little importance, even during World War II, and could be characterized as supporting Britain's policy, with a certain amount of exploitation of Turkish neutrality to the advantage of the Allies, due to her strategic position. With the deterioration of Soviet-Turkish relations soon after the war, and the division of the world into two hostile ideological groups, American foreign policy towards Turkey was revised. Both Turkey and the U.S. were violently anti-communist; besides Turkey's control of strategic waterways and its position as a possible base for bombing Russian industries and airfields in case of war, were valuable assets to America and the western world. As we know, the United States offered military aid to Turkey and it was accepted. Had Turkey not made this decision to support and be supported by the West, with the resulting upgrading of her economic and military strength, it is fair to say that she would not have been in a strong enough position today to ward off Communism. Communism would have attacked, through religion, if necessary, as is being done in the backward Middle Eastern countries right now.

(IMPACT OF M.E.NATIONALISM.....)

Thus, the implementation of the "Truman Doctrine" to support Greece and Turkey was officially recognised as of the utmost importance in America's effort to check Russian expansion.¹

We have seen the first impact of Middle East nationalism on International Affairs by examining the foreign policy and internal conditions of Turkey. The adoption of western civilization as a whole uplifted Turkey and ranked it among the leading nations of the world, and a model state for the Middle East region.

Let us now compare the effect of nationalism on another leading Middle East nation, one which also occupies one of the most strategic positions of the world. This is Egypt.

EGYPT

Here extreme nationalism is mixed with religious sentiments; the combination is damaging the cause of the defence of the region and of the democratic society, to the advantage of Communism. The loss of the Suez Canal in any future war will be equivalent to the loss of half the world to the Western Powers; and, therefore, while examining the Egyptian nationalism and its impact on International Affairs, we have also to see whether the religious sentiments embodied in Egyptian nationalism are sufficiently strong to withstand

¹ibid, p.148.

(IMPACT OF M.E.NATIONALISM.....)

a socio-economic onslaught of the Communist type, and whether Egypt, having driven Britain from the Suez Canal Zone, will be able to defend it in case of a Third World War. We will, therefore, discuss the Suez Canal issue here, as it represents the whole sentiments of Egyptian nationalism and has much bearing on International Affairs.

THE SUEZ CANAL PROBLEM

The Suez Canal is another strategic waterway in the Middle East, and though much younger than the Turkish Straits, has equalled, if not actually surpassed, them in international importance.

The concession to construct the Suez Canal, to link the Mediterranean with the Red Sea, was granted to a French consular official in Egypt, Ferdinand de Lesseps, by the Khedive of Egypt, Mohammed Said Pasha, on November 30, 1854. It was to be valid for ninety-nine years from the date of opening of the Canal. The Egyptian Government was to receive, from the Company, 15 per cent of the net annual profits, apart from the dividends it was to receive as owner of a number of Company shares. This concession was replaced in 1856 by a new one which contained more detailed provisions concerning the rights and obligations of Egypt and the Company towards each other.

(IMPACT OF M.E.NATIONALISM....)

A Khaedival decree of July 1856 subsequently determined the conditions of use of Egyptian labour. When the Company began its construction work, large numbers of the Egyptian workers were actually conscripted as forced labour, and it was only in 1866 that a new convention between Egypt and the Company released the Egyptian Government from this obligation, on the payment of a considerable indemnity to the Company.

After long negotiations and in spite of British intervention, the Canal was inaugurated in 1869.¹ After the inauguration the British attitude changed radically. Instead of opposing it, Britain became interested in the Canal as a commercial and strategic route. In 1875, Disraeli, the British Prime Minister, bought 172,602 shares of the Company from Khedive Ismail, who was in precarious financial straits. With the purchase of the Egyptian shares, the British became an important factor in the Suez Canal affairs, so much so that in order to protect their interests they occupied Egypt in 1882.

"While Arabi Pasha's revolt supplied an excuse for this move, the occupation was largely due to Britain's desire to control the Suez Canal, this new strategic link in her imperial communications."²

¹ibid, p.387

²ibid, p.388

(IMPACT OF M.E.NATIONALISM.....)

Because of the increasing interest of the major powers, especially those of Britain, a convention was signed in Constantinople defining the International Status of the Canal. Article 1 provided that :

"The Canal is open in time of peace as well as of war to merchant-men and men-of-war of all nations. No attempt to restrict this free use of the Canal is allowed in time either of peace or of war. The Canal can never be blockaded."²

But the experience of both World Wars has shown that Britain used the Canal for its own purposes. Britain made some of the signatory powers renounce their claims after their defeat; for example in their Treaties of Peace, Germany and Austria were almost forced to consent to the transfer to the British Government of the powers conferred by the Suez Canal convention. In the same manner, by Article 17 of the Treaty of Lausanne (1923) Turkey renounced all her rights and titles over Egypt.² Thus Britain monopolised and established her position in the Canal Zone and used it for her own purposes although it meant violating the Constantinople Convention:

"Britain's enemies were refused access to the Canal on both occasions. Whereas during the First World War Britain freely used the Canal for her own purposes."³

Britain's de facto control of the Suez Canal was more or less legalised in 1936 by the Governments of Great Britain

¹Oppenheim, L. International Law, Vol.1, Peace (London: Longmans Green and Co.), p.436

²ibid, p.437

³Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs op.cit; p.389.

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and Egypt, who by that time feared Mussolini's expansion in Africa. The treaty recognised Britain's vital interest:

"Recognising Britain's vital interest in the Suez Canal, Egypt consented to a British garrison of 10,000 men and 400 pilots in the Canal Zone, where barracks were to be constructed at Egypt's expense. British troops were to evacuate the rest of Egyptian territory, but Britain was allowed to retain her naval base at Alexandria for eight more years."¹

Nahas Pasha, the leader of the Nationalist Wafd Party, himself led the Egyptian delegation to London. During World War II, however, the pattern of Egyptian politics became more complicated. The treaty of 1936, which was not quite satisfactory to the Egyptians who considered it signed under duress, led to Egypt's struggle for emancipation from British rule. Britain, on the other hand, with palace connivance, strove to break the Wafd monopoly of public appeal by encouraging splinter parties and personal rivalries by the time-honoured principle of "divide and rule".

Having signed the treaty, the Wafd fell into dissension, a large group led by Ali Mahir Pasha breaking away to form the Sadist Party. The Nahas Cabinet fell shortly after and a series of minority governments followed each other. Fanatic groups appeared, such as the Misr-al-Fatat (young Egypt) in the form of blatantly Fascist Green Shirts and the Ikhwan-al-Muslamin (Muslim Brotherhood) which we have mentioned before. Hasan-al-Banna's intention was to wean the public away

¹Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs op.cit; p.320.

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from the western concept of nationalism--hitherto only comprehended (and even here not perfectly) by the middle class--to a puritanical Muslim fanaticism, a concept emotionally in time with the outlook of the masses and thus a pointer to the future development of mass movement in Egypt. Thus Egyptian nationalism was almost absorbed in Arabism and mixed with religious sentiments, a current which had hitherto been centred in the Fertile Crescent but which now, under the double impetus of increased Muslim consciousness and Axis propaganda, made rapid headway among her intelligentsia.

During World War II, relations between the various Egyptian nationalist groups and Britain were tense, not only because of the Suez Canal issue, but also because of Britain's interference in Egyptian domestic politics. In terms of internal politics, the situation had its roots in the events of 1942, when the British Ambassador, Lord Killearn, presented himself at Abdin Palace with an escort of armed troops and delivered an ultimatum to King Farouk; he was either to appoint a Wafdist Government, or be forcibly deposed.¹ By this radical move, the British hoped to secure the support of the Wafdist government, which in turn controlled the Egyptian masses, in the critical days of the war. The immediate British aim was achieved. But the extreme nationalist terro-

¹ibid, p.325.

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rist activities against Britain and its sympathisers reached a peak, and led to many assassinations and uprisings. Meanwhile the gulf between the King and the Wafd widened. Ahmad Mehr Pasha, Prime Minister of Egypt, reluctantly declared war on the Axis in 1944; and was thereupon assassinated. He was replaced by Mahmud Fahmi al-Nukrashi Pasha, who, under the growing pressure of the Muslim Brotherhood and Wafdist press, made an official request to Britain to begin negotiations on the revision of the 1936 treaty. In 1946, an agreement was reached by which British troops should be withdrawn from the Delta into the Canal Zone by March, 1947, and should be evacuated completely from Egypt by September, 1949, and the security of the Canal Zone entrusted to a Joint Defence Board.¹ Although negotiations remained inconclusive, the British Government removed its troops from Cairo and other points, but not from the disputed Canal area; and this conciliatory move was not sufficient to prevent violent outbursts of mob fury in which students were prominent. A number of British soldiers were murdered, and attempted assassination of Egyptian statesmen continued. Nukrashi Pasha was killed by a gunman of the Muslim Brotherhood, and in turn, Sheikh Hasan al Banna, leader of the Muslim Brotherhood himself fell at the hands of an unknown assassin. "In assessing the value of such outbursts it

¹The Middle East, 1953, op.cit; p.77.

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should, however, be remembered that Egyptians treat each other with the greatest violence, and that the murder rate, in Egypt, is fifty times higher than in the United Kingdom."¹

In 1947, Egypt formally accused Great Britain before the Security Council of non-withdrawal of its troops. Finally in 1951, Nahas Pasha presented to the Parliament a series of decrees unilaterally abrogating the 1936 Anglo-Egyptian Treaty, providing for the eviction of British troops from the Canal Zone, reuniting the Sudan with Egypt, and proclaiming Farouk "King of Egypt and Sudan". A further wave of anti-British riots failed to induce the British to leave the Canal Zone. Britain declared Egypt's step illegal and reinforced her garrison in the Canal Zone. At the same time in an effort to break the deadlock, the Governments of the United States, Great Britain, France and Turkey submitted to Egypt a long-contemplated proposal to establish an Allied Middle East Command to assure the defence of Egypt and the adjacent area, but the Egyptian Government flatly rejected these proposals.

The Nahas Government now found itself powerless to control the massed forces of extreme nationalists, such as the Muslim Brotherhood, to which it had given release and legal status. Students supported by various nationalist organisations began guerilla attacks on British forces in the Canal Zone,

¹Bullard, op.cit; p.148.

(IMPACT OF M.E.NATIONALISM.....)

while Egyptian officials began obstructing the movement of military supplies. In the succeeding weeks the situation grew increasingly grave, involving severe loss of life due to the British assault on the Egyptian Police Barracks in Ismailia. Anti-foreign riots broke out in Cairo in which scores were killed and millions of dollars worth of damage caused. King Farouk's dismissal of Nahas, on account of mismanagement, roused bitter hatred towards the King. Finally on the historic day of July 23rd, a bloodless coup d'etat organised by the Army and led by General Mohammad Naghib, succeeded in deposing and expelling the King, and opened a new era in the Egyptian history. The Suez Canal dispute, however, still today remains unsolved.

Considerable credit must be accorded to the military regime which succeeded in controlling the extreme nationalist forces, and for the progress already achieved.

"As this is written, the staying of the new regime cannot yet be assessed. Substantial progress, it is undeniable, has already been made in consolidating its internal position, framing a domestic programme and winning popular support. But many hurdles still have to be crossed, especially the development of a country-wide political machine and the successful execution of economic reforms, before the military dictatorship can become secure in its controls."¹

¹Hurewitz, J.C. Middle East Dilemmas (New York: Harper and Brothers), p.99.

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While it is undoubtedly true that much of the violence and confusion in Egypt in the past few years sprang from British policy, and especially from their determination to maintain troops in the Canal Zone, yet we submit that the Egyptian Government, on its part, has not yet faced up to the realities of the present day world situation and contemporary international problems, prime among them being the defence of the Middle East.

Egypt, torn with suspicion and intrigue within herself, regards the Four Power proposal for the defence of the strategic waterways with the same suspicion. She believes that the whole object of the Four Powers, under the Middle East Defence Command, is to exert pressure on her internal affairs.

Had Egypt adopted a more rational, and less radical, nationalistic Government, as did Turkey, it is highly probable that the British would have turned over the Suez to Egypt even before the requisite period. However, with the Communist menace growing apace, Britain realised that Egypt would be incompetent to defend it, if and when necessary; and that in fact Egypt is unqualified even to operate the Canal in the literal technical sense. So that it may be argued that the very cause of discontent and strife, i.e., British refusal to evacuate the Canal Zone, was due to Egypt's own lack of vision in failing to prepare, either militarily or technically,

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for the day when Britain would feel sufficiently confident to relinquish her interest.

Even if Egypt's leaders had recognized the need for preparation, her internal conditions were such that it could not have been carried out effectively. Neither has she yet realised that the whole question of the Suez is more than a local problem; the welfare of too many nations hinges on it and, therefore, its disposition and maintenance becomes international in scope.

The sooner that Egypt can face this implication, the sooner she will be able to concentrate on her other problems-- of poverty, social inequality, terrorist activities, etc.,-- for all the reforms which she may desire in spirit are being hampered by this dispute.

It would seem that the Suez Canal problem could best be solved by an international administration even before the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of Alliance ends in 1956.

CHAPTER V

CHIEF ECONOMIC RESOURCES OF THE MIDDLE EAST; AND THE EFFECT ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.

The greater part of the land surface in the Middle East is either mountain, desert or swamp. The cultivated areas are extremely small in extent, covering about 6% of the total area. Nevertheless, agriculture is the main occupation of at least four-fifths of the inhabitants; tobacco, olive oil, cotton, fruit are the main products. The mineral resources, apart from petroleum, are fairly scattered and vary in character. They are generally small in amount and often difficult to work, so that unless world prices are high, their exploitation is uneconomic.

In the field of industrial activity, some degree of development has, however, recently taken place in Egypt, Turkey, Israel and Iran. Increasing quantities of light consumer goods are now produced, but heavy capital goods such as machinery and vehicles are still imported. Oil is important, not simply as a profitable industry, but because it is closely linked with the politics of the Middle East. Therefore, we shall outline fairly fully the story of oil and its effect on the foreign policies of many nations.

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OIL RESOURCES

At present, oil is exploited commercially in Bahrein, Egypt, Iraq, Kuwait, Iran, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Turkey.

The major fields, and their production quotas are as follows : -

- (1) The fields of south-west Iran, discovered in 1908. Oil is produced from six centres, and flows through a pipeline to Abadan. Anglo-Iranian Oil Company exploited this region, and until recently it was the leading producer in the Middle East.
- (2) Kirkuk oil fields in Iraq is in the hand of the Iraq Petroleum Company, owned equally by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, Royal Dutch Shell, Standard Oil of U.S.A., and the Compagnie Francaise des Petroles.
- (3) The Saudi Arabian oil fields at Damman, Abqaiq, and the Qatif. This area is entirely American owned, and is the chief supplier since the fall of Iranian output.
- (4) The Burgan field of Kuwait, exploited by the Kuwait Oil Co., which is owned equally by AIOC and the U.S. interests.

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(5) The Bahrain field, American owned.

There are smaller fields in the Suez district of Egypt; in the Sirt district of Turkey and at Qatar.

Production of Middle East Oil
(in thousands of tons)

<u>Iran</u>	<u>Iraq</u>	<u>Arabia</u>	<u>Kuwait</u>
16,000	9,000	37,000	28,000
<u>Bahrain</u>	<u>Egypt</u>	<u>Turkey</u>	<u>Qatar</u>
1,500	2,400	20	2,400

A recent estimate of petroleum reserves in the whole Middle East gives a figure of over 4,000 million tons, distributed as follows : -¹

Kuwait	1,300	million	tons
Iran	940	"	"
Iraq	700	"	"
Saudi Arabia	700	"	"
Qatar	150	"	"
Bahrain	110	"	"
Egypt	24	"	"

The total proved reserves are now known to exceed those of the entire United States by some 30%. It may seem on the surface reasonable to suppose that within a relatively short time, the United States will no longer supply approximately two-thirds of the world's oil; as she does at present.² But certain stipulations would have to be made. The Middle East will have to exploit her resources; it must produce and market it on a competitive market. Are the Middle East countries

¹ Middle East - 1953, op.cit; p. 9

² ibid, p. 9

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able to do this? So far, divided amongst themselves, they have succeeded only in allowing themselves to be exploited. Would the oil refineries remain closed, as in Iran, and the incipient natural wealth remain locked in the earth? In short, would it again be a question of western efficiency and Middle Eastern inefficiency? If the Middle East did not make use of her oil fields, who would? Would communism fill the vacuum?

These questions lead one to the answer - let the Middle East adopt western methods (of administration etc.,) and reap the oil of their lands for their own benefit. Here is another example of the advantage of nationalism.

The interest of the Great Powers in the Middle East market and raw materials goes to the early nineteenth century when the development of the region was being undertaken by highly technical European nations for their own profit. The construction of the dam at Aswan (1898-1902) by British Engineers, as the first step in harnessing the Nile river, while completed with public funds, had, as one of its principal purposes, increasing the output of cotton, most of which was destined for Lancashire market. "There are also great schemes afoot for the development and irrigation of other parts of the country (the Ottoman Empire in Asia), and of Chaldea and Mesopotamia,"¹ observed Lord Curzon of Kedleston in the upper

¹

Hurewitz, op. cit; p. 207

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chamber of the British Parliament on 22nd March, 1911. Curzon's scheme became reality with the growing interest of British tradesmen investing their money in different fields of economy in the Middle East. Not only the British, but other European nations like Germany and France, had their paramount interest in the Middle East market and resources. The German Baghdad Railway had its economic aspect too, and was thus a challenge to British supremacy, politically and economically, in the Middle East.

The political importance of the Middle Eastern countries increased when the British Government in 1914, upon the motion of Winston Churchill, then First Lord of The Admiralty in the Asquith Cabinet, purchased a large interest in the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, Limited.¹ The Middle East became of vital interest to Britain, and the cause of many political and economic crises in the Middle East itself, as we will show.

The Anglo-Iranian oil dispute attained headline proportions with the cancellation of the concession by Reza Shah Pahlevi in 1932. After fruitless diplomatic exchanges, the matter was referred to the Council of the League of Nations. This dispute was settled in May, 1933, when the Majlis ratified a new and much reduced concession between the

¹
ibid, p. 10

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Company and the Iranian Government. World attention was again focused on Middle East Oil in 1944, when a Soviet Mission of some sixty persons, headed by Sergei Kavardze, Vice Commissar for Foreign Affairs, appeared in Teheran and demanded the reinstatement of the old Keshtaria concession of 1916 in the northern provinces. This concession had been cancelled by the Russian-Persian treaty of Friendship of February 16, 1921.

Of the various interpretations given to the new Soviet move, two deserve special mention. One was that the real aim of the Soviet demand was not to obtain oil concessions herself but to prevent the granting of the concession to American Companies, who were reported to be on the verge of successfully concluding their negotiations with Iran.¹ Realizing fully Iranian reluctance to grant oil concessions to the Soviet, Moscow thus would compel the Iranian Government to refuse all concessions rather than incur Soviet hostility. According to this interpretation, Soviet Russia did not begrudge America the oil, so much as the fact that an oil concession might link the United States and Iran politically. Russia's main aim, it was asserted, was to keep America at arms length from Iran, so that Soviet schemes might not be frustrated by the presence of powerful newcomer in this part of the world.

1. Lenzowski, George, Russia and the West in Iran, (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Univ. Press) 1949, p. 216.

(ECONOMIC RESOURCES....INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS)

Another interpretation was that Russia really wanted oil and believed that the war period was most propitious for obtaining a concession. Such a concession, it was argued, would place Russia not only in possession of a coveted raw material, but would also serve as an instrument of Soviet influence on Iranian politics.

Whatever the motives of the Soviet action at the time, the fact is that the Iranian Government rejected all offers for concession, on the grounds put up by Premier Saed : -

"(a) the presence of foreign troops in Iran, (b) the uncertain economic situation due to the war, (c) the fact that some questions remained unsolved during the recent Anglo-American oil conference in Washington, and (d) advice from Iranian diplomatic representatives abroad not to grant concessions."

1

There followed the Soviet inspired separatist revolution of 1945 and 1946 in Soviet-occupied Azerbaijan and the northern provinces. Political instability and chaos was widespread in Iran. The Tudeh Party and Soviet propaganda was gaining ground.

More immediately menacing, however, was the impact of these developments on Iran's relations with the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. The law, which the Majlis adopted in 1947, rejecting the draft Soviet-Iranian oil contract, also stipulated that no concessions should be granted in future to foreigners or to companies in which foreigners had an interest. The bill further laid down that : -

"In all instances wherein the rights of the Iranian people in the economic wealth of the country have been infringed-whether in the matters of subsoil resources,"

1

ibid, p. 220

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or otherwise, and especially with regard to the southern oil concession-the Government is directed to enter into negotiations and to take appropriate action towards the reestablishment of these rights, informing the Majlis of the results obtained."

This law resulted from a combination of political forces within Iran; anti-Soviet politicians who were determined to frustrate Russian designs; nationalists who were bent on nationalizing all the country's oil resources; and those among them the Shah, who hoped to earmark the country's revenue from the AIOC for the seven-year plan. Since anticipated economic aid from the United States and loans from the International Bank failed to materialize, the pressure on the British company intensified.

In a memorandum, Iran argued that she was victimized by the high corporation taxes paid by the company to the British Government and by the low rate of royalties. Iran pointed also to more favourable deals that Saudi Arabia and some Latin American countries had obtained with American oil corporations. The AIOC was prepared to make certain concessions but they were regarded as insufficient by the Iranian Government. In the meantime, Dr. Mossedegh's national front in the Majlis concentrated their energies on the idea of nationalization of the oil industry. Prime Minister Razmara opposed it as impractical. The result was obvious; the Prime Minister became a special target of Fidayan Islam (Crusaders of Islam"), an organization which preached liberation

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from foreign influence and advocated immediate nationalization of the oil industry. On March the 7th, 1951, Razmara was assassinated by a member of Fidayan Islam. On April 28th, 1951, Dr. Mossadegh became Prime Minister and the crisis came to a head.

Dr. Mossadegh national front rode to power on the firm pledge of implementing the nationalization of oil industry. The law, unanimously voted for by the Majlis, received mass support. To British protests, the government replied firmly that the matter was entirely within Iran's domestic jurisdiction.¹ Mr. Herbert Morrison, British Foreign Secretary, then addressed to the Iranian government apprising it of the United Kingdom's application to the International Court,

"in regard to the action of the Persian government in attempting to enforce against the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, in breach of the latter's 1933 concession agreement, the implementation of the Persian nationalization laws."

While it cannot be denied that the nationalization laws violated the letter and intention of the 1933 contract, the Mossadegh Government's contention that the concession instrument represented an undertaking between a sovereign government and a private company, was upheld by the International Court on 22 July, 1952.

¹
Lenczowski, Russia and the West in Iran,
op. cit; p. 128

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The arguments of Dr. Mossadegh and his party were brought before the United Nations. His contention was that petroleum resources are a country's national asset and belong to the people. Iran had become one of the leading oil producing countries of the world, but its wealth was being exploited chiefly for the benefit of a foreign nation. "I may say that in 1948, according to the accounts of the former Anglo-Iranian Company," observed Dr. Mossadegh, "its net revenue amounted to £61 million; but from those profits Iran received only £9 million, although £28 million¹ went into the United Kingdom treasury in income tax alone."

While the Company was being accused of exploiting the wealth of the people, and of not contributing to their benefit, riots broke out in the oil areas. The situation became very critical since all the British subjects were already expelled and the plants were shut down.

In the dispute of economic warfare, the British government was bent on keeping the AIOC enterprise, the largest British commercial concern in Iran. Besides feeding the Mediterranean fleet and the RAF bases in the Middle East, AIOC in 1950 supplied more than one-quarter of Britain's crude oil and a sizeable quantity of other types of oil.

¹

United Nations, Security Council, Official Records, 6th Year, 560th meeting, 15th October, 1951. p. 4

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AOIC not only saved hard currency but earned dollars by sales to the Economic Co-Operation Administration for distribution in New York.

Deprivation of the oil facilities in Iran seriously dislocated both AICO operations and the United Kingdom economy. But the damage was temporary, not irreparable. AOIC still owned a fifty per cent interest in the Kuwait Oil Company, and its proved reserves exceeded those of the former British concession in Iran. AOIC also owned a 23.75% interest in the Iraq Petroleum Company and its subsidiary, in Qatar.

On the other hand, Iran itself suffered severely with the closing down of her industrial plants. The treasury was deprived of oil royalties, which at the 1933 contract rate represented about 15% of the total government revenue. AOIC had also provided Iran with its sterling balances and some of its dollar exchange. Soon after the shutdown Iran's sterling balances in London, amounting to some 25 million, were virtually impounded, and all shipments of scarce materials from the sterling area suspended. The Company's workers, of whom about 70,000 were Iranians, were converted from tax payers to unproductive employees of the Iranian National Oil Company, and thus added to the already swollen ranks of the government's payrolls. In these circumstances, Iran's credit-worthiness abroad, dependent on anticipated oil income, dissolved overnight.

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The Iranian government, believing that its oil was indispensable to the west, and banking on American fear that Iran might invite Soviet co-operation, was convinced that the U.S. would never allow the oil industry to remain idle. Iran, therefore, expected that once the British were removed, U.S. technicians and tankers would be available to keep the refinery operating and the oil moving. The U.S. Government, however, tried to mediate between Iran and Britain, but its attempts proved unsuccessful. While endeavouring to retain the friendship of both disputants, the U.S. weighted its policy toward Iran in the scale of Western defence.

The Tudeh party, joined by Fidayan Islam, became the strongest force in the country. In other words, it was mob rule in Iran. Anti-Western riots were the feature of the day. The U.S.S.R. and world communism as a whole was thus winning a cheap victory in Iran as it was elsewhere in Asia. The Soviet Union did not create the nationalization dispute but nevertheless it became its chief beneficiary.

In the midst of political upheavals, in which governments were changed under nationalists pressure the Shah fled the country. He returned after Prime Minister Mossadegh's arrest, but the instability still continues. How much the mutual economic interests of the West and of Iran has suffered under these conditions can only be assessed after the re-opening of the oil refineries. Politically much damage has

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been done to the interests of the West as well as to the international prestige of Iran. Communism alone has profited.

The political tide in Iran, however, has a traditional way of reversing itself. Whether another reversal will strengthen Iran and restore the mutual political and economical interest of the West and Iran is a question of interest to the whole world.

It has been indicated that oil is by far the most important natural resource of the Middle East. Reserves are large but not inexhaustible. Profits from them should be regarded as depletion of capital assets, and should be used to re-invest into alternative sources of employment and income.

Such a plan is imperative if the very low standard of living is to be maintained, ^{or rather} ~~much less~~ raised. Due to the rapidly increasing population, without parallel expansion, there are signs in some parts of a decline even in the existing standard of living.

How can this downward trend be halted? In actual fact it should not only be halted but reversed.

There are three requisites for development. First, a determined drive to raise the level of the masses on educational, social, and even hygienic fronts. Secondly,

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there must be co-operation and integration between Middle East countries, as each country alone is too small to provide world markets by itself. And, thirdly, there must of necessity be enormous investment of both capital and technical skill.

Middle East countries are, metaphorically speaking, caught on the horns of a dilemma; their low income limits their power to invest and their low investment can result only in low income.

There are but two ways of increasing investments and thus breaking the vicious circle. One is investment by the savings of the Middle East itself and the other investment by foreign capital.

The former course must be discounted as enforced savings among Middle East peoples would depress the already low standard to truly inhumane standards. Therefore, only the latter alternative remains, that is, investment by foreign capital (in co-operation with local capital) with added help as required from such institutions as the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

Support for this argument may be found with Mr. Issawi, who wrote,

"the partnership of foreign and local capital is in every respect ideal, since the presence of local capital serves as an attraction for foreign while the entry of foreign would stimulate local savings and investment." ¹

¹

Frye, (Ed). op cit; p. 63

(ECONOMIC RESOURCES....INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS)

Here is another circle; this time not a vicious circle leading to bankruptcy but a benevolent one, each premise giving impetus to the other for common prosperity.

We have seen that the solution to Middle East development lies in foreign investment. But this foreign capital, so essential to her development, will not be forthcoming unless the Middle East establishes a more stable economy, and can present to her possible investors a more united political front.

CHAPTER VI

CULTURAL PROBLEMS

A cultural relations policy between any two parties means simply that each should learn as much as possible, in every field about the other. We can presume there is universal agreement on the wisdom of this point. So that it is not the policy itself we have to examine, but the methods of achieving it, or in other words the programme. For the purpose of our frame of reference, a cultural relations programme indicates the programme of the government concerned.

The biggest cultural problem of all the Middle East is the crisis within modernism. Until the end of the middle ages, Islamic culture was vigorous, and in many respects superior to that of Europe. Islamic thought greatly influenced the west, with a parallel superiority, or at least equality in the political sphere. Since that time, however, there has been an appreciable decline in power and intellectual strength; and an inability to apply a classical culture for the raising of material standards to a level expected in this century. There has been, as a result much speculation in the Middle East upon the reasons for this decadence.

Let us first look at the impact of the various cultures of the great powers upon the Middle East. Great Britain, France, the United States and Russia have each in their desire to create a Middle East that is at once friendly and stable, depended upon

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that essence of their own political philosophy in which it has the greatest faith. Mr. Harvey Hall, while describing the great power impact in the Middle East said:

"Each of the major powers has thus tended to follow its own bent in its attempt to establish a firm footing in the Near East; Great Britain through the introduction of political institutions looking to parallel British institutions for inspiration; France through implanting a love for all things French; the United States through providing the means for a more comfortable material life; the Soviet Union through social revolution designed to make the common people feel that power is theirs - the political, "1 cultural, economic and social approaches."

While the conflict for cultural and political supremacy in the Middle East by the West and Communism, with their strong and opposing philosophical and political ideology continues, it would be interesting to analyse some of the reasons for the headway being made in that region by the Communist materialistic ideology.

It is part of ^{her} proven tactics to use diplomatic, military, economic or ideological attacks according to the needs of the moment. In this way she has a fore-pronged weapon to sink into the weakest spot of her victims. In her efforts to penetrate the East and dislodge the West her attempts at first took diplomatic and ideological form. One of the most important ways of achieving the latter was through the Communist International, newly created to rally the East around the State of the Victorious Proletariat. In 1920 the Communist International called

1. Frye, ed. op.cit; p.40-41

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together the first Congress of the Peoples of the East, and shows the key oil city, Baku, conquered by the Red Army earlier, as the site.

The aim of the Congress was "the awakening of the millions of peasants" in the Orient. The East, from Morrocco to Manchuria, sent 1,891 delegates, of whom, 1273 were professed communists. (The East was encouraged to attend irrespective of formal attachment to the party).

In his key note speech, Chairman Gregory Zinoviev, made it clear he expected a full scale communist revolution, although the East had not yet passed through the stage of capitalism. He demanded revolutionary action on two fronts; First, against foreign imperialists, and secondly, Communists were to "educate laboring masses of the east to hatred of the wealthy classes".

Zinoviev concluded with fiery and emotional appeal:

"Comrades, you have heard much during the last few years of a Holy War... But you who have met for the first time in a Congress of the Peoples of the East must hear and now declare a truly Holy War against the English and French robber-capitalists." 1

Karl Radek, a dynamic revolutionist basking in Lenin's approval underlined the social character of the expected revolution and accented Russia's role as saviour of the people. He attacked the native exploiters first, scornfully deriding the "Sultan's Clique, and all sorts of Shahs, Emirs and Khans".

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He exhorted the Congress saying:

"No enemy will be dreadful to you, nobody will stop the stream of workers and peasants of Persia, Turkey and India, if they unite with Soviet Russia. Soviet Russia was encircled by enemies, but now she can produce weapons with which she will arm the Indian, the Persian and Anatolian peasants, and all oppressed, and will lead them to common struggle and to common victory." 1

The Baku Congress was important more as a symbol than as a practical action, inculcated as they were in the traditional structures of their own society the Oriental delegates were unable to absorb communism in toto; and their professed Communism was often merely lip service. The only thing they could readily understand was the Communist hostility towards the British.

As a starting-gun for what was to have been a general Oriental revolution, the Congress failed. But the meeting was an excellent blue print of Moscow's ambitions in Asia, and it revealed the methods by which it hoped to conquer the East.

The Comintern continuously harped on the theme of liberation of colonial and semi-colonial peoples from the imperialist yoke, and in its Second Sixth Congresses of 1920 and 1928 respectively prepared plans specifically dealing with doctrinal and tactical aspects of the revolution in the East.

1 ibid. p.7

(CULTURAL PROBLEMS)

Part III of the Colonial Theses, " on Communist strategy and tactics in China India and similar colonies", dealt with the transition from the bourgeois democratic revolution to the proletarian revolution. Part IV, "the immediate tasks of the countries contained instruction of a concrete character as to what the communist parties should do in colonies and semi-colonies. They were inter alia - (i) overthrow of the imperialist domination (ii) confiscation of foreign enterprise and banks, (iii) overthrow of the powers of the militarists and the Kumintang (iv) establishment of the powers of the Soviets, of workers and soldier representatives (v) alliance with the U.S.S.R. and the world proletarian movement" ¹

Diplomatic action by Russian was instigated simultaneously with the ideological offensive. It was hoped to secure the co-operation of the Middle East governments to woo public opinion. In 1921, the Soviet Union managed to conclude treaties with Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan. These treaties were timely, for the time of their accomplishment coincided with the post-war deterioration in the relations between Britain and these three countries. As time went by it seemed from the economic standpoint, that the new Russia was as eager to dominate the Northern Provinces of Iran and Afghanistan as was the old one.

1. Lenczowski, Russia and the West in Iran, op.cit; taken from the introduction, p.1 to 11.

(CULTURAL PROBLEMS)

Relations cooled somewhat as Communist infiltration in the Middle East continued, and ten years after several mutual friendship treaties had been manoeuvred by the Soviets the same countries, plus Iraq, signed the Saadabad Entente, implicitly directed against the Soviet infiltration of the area. This was in 1937.

The Soviet Union, deprived of making direct headway in the Middle Eastern countries due to the influence of Western nations and to the deep-rooted influence of Islamic cultural institutions and religion, started acting through the small and rather inadequate Communist parties in Arab lands and in Palestine. The official party line favoured Arab nationalism and sided with it against Zionism. Zionism was described as a petty bourgeois capitalist ideology and was considered an instrument of British imperialism. This, however, did not prevent the Russians from sponsoring a Communist party among the Jews of Palestine. But care was taken to keep it separate from the Arab communists in the same country.¹

It is interesting to note here that although the Communists bitterly opposed Zionism, in order to win favour with the Arabs, yet they voted in the U.N. for the partition of Palestine and the subsequent establishment of the Zionist State.

¹ Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs, op.cit; p.419

(CULTURAL PROBLEMS)

In the inter-war period, Communist ideological warfare was severely retarded by the adoption of a strong Western democracy by Turkey, by then the major power in the Middle East; and by the Arab people, phisically isolated from the Soviet Union and largely uninformed and devotedly Islamic. The anti-Communist power of Islamism was not because of Islamism per se, but because the Middle East peoples under Islam are uneducated and politically ignorant.

During World War II, however, Communist culture and ideology made a real invasion of the Middle East through Soviet diplomatic as well as commercial anti-cultural representatives. These representatives established contacts with existing trade unions and helped to organize new ones. The Communist dominated World Federation of Trade Unions took an active interest in the Arab and Iranian labour movement. A number of pro-Soviet dailies and periodicals sprang into existance in Tehran and Arab capitals. "Houses of Culture", bookstores carrying Communist literature, exhibits of Soviet Art, concerts of Soviet artists etc., constituted just so many examples of the manner in which the Soviet Union spread its influence.

Soviet propaganda, fully realizing the cultural crisis within modern Islam and the devotion of Muslims towards their religion, exploited the various religious groups, sometimes

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in the open and sometimes well concealed, but always pursuing its main objectives.

"We find that the Soviet Union applies one set of tactics towards the Arabs, another set towards the Jews, and an entirely¹ different set towards the Christians."

Along with this, the Communists gave encouragement to national minorities and boarderland groups. The Turkomans of the Iranian and Afghan northern plains, the Afghan Uzbecks and the Tajis and above all the Kurds were consistently encouraged in their national aspirations.

From the beginning, the Russians tried to inculcate in the younger Arab generation of nationalists the ideas of dialectic materialism, and thereby to lead them away from their religion.

"Ever since 1941, Soviet publications and broadcasts had laid great stress on the alleged freedom of religion in the Soviet Union and on the good will of their government toward Islam. In the later stages of the war and in the post-war period, delegations of Soviet Moslems made pilgrimages to Mecca and paid visits to Iran."²

However, the materialistic culture of Communism had not much success in the Middle East area due primarily to the fact that Islam basically is quite opposed to Communism. Such fanatic groups like Fidayan-e-Islam and Ikhwan-el-Muslamin

¹ Frye, ed.op.cit; p. 65

² ibid, p.63

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hold the support of the politically conscious and secular minded Uranian and Egyptian people. Neither have Communist succeeded in winning the favour of the intelligentsia whether in the name of a nationalist movement or by exploiting religious sentiments.

Describing Communism in Egypt, Mr. Moshe Perlmann says that:

"Who are the communists? In Alexandria, it was found that 50 percent of them were students, 10 percent were professionals, and 40 percent workers. There are among them communist members of minority groups: Armenians, Greeks, Jews." 1

In Egypt, there are three important groups groping towards the establishment of a unified party on a national scale: "Egyptian Communist Organization", the group called "Toward an Egyptian Communist Party", and the "Democratic Movement of National Liberation." It is of interest to note that they use only their initials and a secret code in which "specialist " designates a member "patient" is a worker, the "hospital Qasr al Ayni", the Cairo branch and "microbe", a policeman.²

In these attempts the action of Soviet Diplomatic missions are obviously well co-ordinated with the local movements. The Tudeh party in Iran has grown in numbers as have Communist parties in Iraq and Israel. However, the mass of the Asiatic Arab people have showed no inclination

1 ibid p.182

2 ibid p.183

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towards communism or for that matter toward the Western democratic form of Government, because they understand neither the complications of dialectic materialism nor the spirit of a democracy. No matter which way their politics may incline, it is safe to say that development will take longer in the Middle East than in the more civilized countries.

The people of the Middle East under Islam glorify their past and are ignorant of the achievements of other contemporary civilizations. Unless they are informed and led by the West, they may be seduced by the provocative materialistic culture of the Soviet.

CONCLUSION

We have seen something of the upheavals in Middle East politics, and the turbulence and uncertainty of the whole of the Islamic society, especially after World War I. We have seen that Islamic culture is an anachronism in the twentieth century. A perusal of its history, past and present, brings us firmly to the conclusion that religion as a political force, as a state system and as a system of administration, has proven to be a failure. It has not succeeded in creating an effective force, economically, politically or socially, in either national or international affairs. The poverty and misery and the sufferings of the people are beyond description. As Count Carlo Sforza has said:-

"My pre-war recollections of Beirut are so sordid alleys, mud, poor suks, beggars infected with leprosy, and in the upper classes, women who never went out for a walk, sagged under the grease of a lazy life, men obsequious in appearance"¹

In the Middle East, people of little education and great prejudice are only too willing to blame "Western Imperialism" for all their ills. But the fact remains that these appalling conditions have always existed for the lower classes in the East; conditions far worse than the poorer sections of the western countries have ever had to contend with. The more educated classes in the East recognize that the West cannot fairly be made a scapegoat for their own inadequacies and follies.

1. Ireland, ed. op. cit: P.15

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There is no doubt that many of the motives and tactics of "Western Imperialism" have been deplorable, since they were designed primarily to service the interests of the initiator and not of the subject. They did exploit the population, economically and politically and brought forced involvements in foreign strategic plans and in wars in which the people of the Middle East had no interest. They caused social strain and in many cases supported the reactionary regimes of day for their own benefit.

But one cannot catalogue the evils without appraising the good. The West gave much constructive material on which the Middle East could build up its society, - British political ideas and faiths, something of France's rationalism, and American techniques. The contact with the West introduced to the Middle East countries new political institutions, and a new form of governmental machinery. In other words, a new civilization based on highly scientific knowledge and the rule of law was introduced by the West, and it is on this foundation that Turkey and Israel are building their nations with such success.

We know that Turkey emerged as an important power as a result only of its adoption of the Western idea of nationalism. Ziya Gokalp's Nationalism, like political thought in England and France has on the whole "Emphasised the political and subjective aspects (of nationalism) connecting the nation closely

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with the state and finding the test of nationality in personal feeling."¹

The Arabs and the Egyptians are experiencing instability in their political institutions. This is fundamentally due to the lack of a basic political idealology on which their state can rest. It is clear that they did not believe Pan-Islamism to be the answer, for they would not then have revolted against the Caliphate. Neither could they embrace Pan-Arabism as the Arab-Jewish war in Palestine and the actions of the members of the Arab League proved. The forces of nationalism which existed among the Arabs dissipated into the pattern of Pan-Arabism, described vividly by Professor Gibbs:

"Pan-Arabism is an ignorant, intolerant, explosive force; it substitutes wishing for thinking. Fiercely resents not only Christian domination but anything that savors of Christian practice and ideas, dreams of driving European and Jew into the ocean and restoring the glorious empire of the Caliphate; it has no grasp of the problems of government, administration and finance, of the economic structure of the world, and the economic poverty of the Arab countries"²

The Iranian situation is no less grave. Westernization has been adopted to some extent, but only outwardly. Had the reforms and modernization schemes, undertaken by Reza Shah, been continued to their logical conclusions, Communist infiltration, in the form of the Tudeh party, would not have gained such momentum.

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1. Foundation of Turkish Nationalism, by Uriel Heyd, (Harvill Press) P. 164.
 2. Ireland (Fd) op. cit; P. 93.

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Bearing in mind the urgent necessity for the defence of the area against Communism, it becomes evident that the most practical solution to the Middle East crisis is the creation of true democracies on the Western pattern, which will fulfill material and humanitarian needs and at the same time allow retention of its religious character. "A more favourable view can be that a generous and enlightened infusion of Western elements into Islamic culture might, if accomplished in time, give the Middle Eastern peoples the means of improving their standard of life, and thus provide¹ an incentive to contain Communist expansion" .

For such infusion and the achievement of the whole purpose of Westernization, it is obvious that some Western power will have to undertake leadership of this cause. Rightly or wrongly, many Western nations do not hold fair reputations in the Middle East. Britain, France and the United States are suspect. Perhaps we may hope that to Canada, a great country of idealistic and humanitarian people, with immense resources, will fall the mantle of leadership. Even the extremists could not claim that Canada has ever had imperialistic or territorial designs towards any nation. By her own sound government and rational policies, she has established herself

1. The Middle East - 1953, op. cit. P.11

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as one of the worlds most respected nations. Without the use of force or imperialistic tactics, she has molded her two nationalities harmoniously and created so strong an economy that today she may well be considered a leading contender for the role of mediator in the Middle East.

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